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Decadent Desserts



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Mr. Food Decadent Desserts eCookbook

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Letter from Mr. Food

Dear Friend,

Congratulations! You just opened the very first Mr. Food eCookbook! I hope you enjoy reading, trying and serving all these quick 'n' easy desserts as much as I enjoyed putting this collection together for you.

Wondering why my first eCookbook is all about desserts? Because desserts are by far the most-requested recipes and, with so many great ones, I knew you would be anxious to try out a bunch of these with your gang.

You'll find more than 30 pages of incredible desserts here...everything from Black Forest Cake to Whoopie Pies to Bite-Sized Chocolate Cheesecake – plus lots more treats that are sure to create smiles. Just wait till you present Polka Dot Pie, Frozen S'Mores, or Bloomin' Cupcakes at your next party, potluck or family dinner! You know you're gonna hear raves. Why, they'll probably sound a lot like...

"OOH IT'S SO GOOD!!"

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mr. Food".

P.S. Enjoy this eCookbook packed with 25 decadent dessert recipes that I assembled just for you. And remember, this is only the beginning! There are lots more eCookbooks that'll be headed your way now that you've registered. And yes, it's okay to tell your friends to sign up, too, so they can get their very own copies FREE!



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Cakes and Pies

Black Forest Cake



Off-the-shelf all-American ingredients like devil's food cake mix and cherry pie filling are your passport to our version of the German classic Black Forest Cake. It's a rich and decadent dessert that'll make you look like a pastry chef!

Serves: 12

- 1 (18-1/4-ounce) package devil's food cake mix
 - 3 eggs
 - 3/4 cup water
 - 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 - 1 (21-ounce) can cherry pie filling, drained with 1/2 cup sauce reserved
 - 1 cup (1/2 pint) heavy cream
 - 3 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
 - 1 (16-ounce) container chocolate frosting
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat two 9-inch round cake pans with nonstick cooking spray.
 2. In a medium bowl, combine the cake mix, eggs, water, oil, and the reserved 1/2 cup cherry sauce; mix well. Divide the batter evenly between the cake pans.
 3. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow to cool for 10 minutes, then invert onto wire racks to cool completely.
 4. Beat the heavy cream until stiff peaks form; beat in the confectioners' sugar. Place a cooled cake layer upside down on a serving platter and cover the top with half of the whipped cream; scatter the cherries over the whipped cream.
 5. Place the second cake layer over the first and frost the sides with the chocolate frosting. Frost the top with the remaining whipped cream. Serve, or cover loosely and chill until ready to serve.

Finishing Touch: For that elegant finishing touch, top the cake with chocolate curls and additional cherries or chocolate-covered cherries.



Lemon Meringue Cake

Are you a lemon-lover? Everybody is when they taste this cake version of lemon meringue pie.

Serves: 12

- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
 - 1 (18.25-ounce) package lemon cake mix, batter prepared according to the package directions
 - 4 egg whites
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1/2 cup sugar
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9" x 13" baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
 2. Stir the lemon peel into the cake batter then pour batter into the baking dish.
 3. In a medium bowl, beat the egg whites and salt until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in the sugar until stiff peaks form. Spoon the mixture over the cake batter, carefully spreading to completely cover the batter. Form lots of peaks and valleys with a spatula to create a tempting-looking meringue.
 4. Bake 40 to 45 minutes, or until the meringue is golden and a wooden toothpick inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Allow to cool completely then cut into squares and serve.

Option: *This can also be made as two 9-inch round cakes. Just pour the batter into two cake pans then spread the top of each with the egg-white mixture.*



The Best Carrot Cake Ever



Not only is this super-easy to throw together in minutes, but it's the all-time best carrot cake you'll ever have. And the cream cheese frosting is absolutely amazing!

Serves: 12

- 2 cups granulated sugar
 - 1-1/2 cups vegetable oil
 - 4 eggs
 - 2 teaspoons baking soda
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 cup flaked coconut
 - 3 cups grated (about 1 pound) carrots
 - 1 cup chopped walnuts
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat two 8-inch round cake pans with nonstick cooking spray; lightly flour the pans.
 2. In a large bowl, with an electric beater, combine the granulated sugar, oil, eggs, baking soda, flour, cinnamon, salt, coconut, carrots, and walnuts, blending for 30 seconds to 1 minute, until a smooth, thick batter forms. **DO NOT OVER-MIX!** Pour the batter evenly into the cake pans. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean and the tops are golden. Let cool completely then frost, if desired, with Cream Cheese Frosting (on next page).



Cream Cheese Frosting

This rich and creamy frosting is absolutely amazing! Try it on The Best Carrot Cake Ever.

Makes: enough for one 8-inch layer cake

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
 - 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 4 cups confectioners' sugar
1. In a large bowl, with an electric beater, mix the cream cheese and butter until well combined. Add the vanilla; mix well. Gradually add the confectioners' sugar, continuing to mix until well combined.
 2. Place one cake layer on a serving platter and frost the top of the cake. Place the other layer on top of the frosted layer. Frost the top and sides of the entire cake. Serve immediately, or cover and chill frosted cake until ready to serve.



Ricotta Cheesecake



Cheesecake...it's a treat for every season. Why not learn how to make your own with this great recipe for Ricotta Cheesecake?

Serves: 8

- 3/4 cup graham cracker crumbs
 - 2 tablespoons butter, melted
 - 1 (15-ounce) container part-skim ricotta cheese
 - 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt
 - 3/4 cup sugar
 - 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 - 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 - 1 (8-ounce) package reduced-fat cream cheese, softened
 - 2 eggs
 - 2-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs and melted butter; press into bottom and up sides of a 9-inch deep-dish pie plate. Bake 3 to 5 minutes, until lightly browned; let cool. (Leave the oven on.)
 2. In a large bowl, with an electric beater on medium speed, combine ricotta cheese, yogurt, sugar, flour, and lemon juice until smooth; set aside.
 3. In another large bowl, with beater on medium speed, beat cream cheese, eggs, and vanilla until thoroughly combined. Add ricotta mixture, beating on low speed until well combined. Pour into pie crust and bake 60 to 65 minutes, or until center is nearly set. Cool 30 to 45 minutes then refrigerate overnight before serving.



Pineapple Upside-Down Cake



This classic recipe for pineapple upside-down cake uses the easy shortcut of a cake mix. And why not? With this recipe, we get the scrumptious "from scratch" taste we want without missing a beat in our busy lifestyles!

Makes: 2 cakes, 6 to 8 servings each

- 2/3 cup packed light brown sugar
 - 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter, melted
 - 1 (20-ounce) can pineapple slices, drained
 - 10 maraschino cherries
 - 1 (18.25-ounce) package yellow cake mix
 - 1 cup water
 - 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 - 3 eggs
1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
 2. Sprinkle the brown sugar evenly over the bottom of two 8-inch round cake pans and pour the butter evenly over the sugar.
 3. In each pan, arrange the pineapple slices in a single layer over the sugar and place a cherry in the center of each slice.
 4. In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, water, oil, and eggs; beat until well combined.
 5. Evenly divide the batter between the two pans and bake 30 to 33 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center of each comes out clean. Let the cakes stand for 5 minutes.
 6. Loosen gently with a knife and invert onto 2 platters. Serve warm, or allow to cool completely before serving.



Polka Dot Pie

Polka dots are always in style when they taste this good! Check out our secret to making polka dots on the top crust of this yummy cherry pie.

Serves: 6

- 2 (12-ounce) packages frozen dark sweet cherries, thawed
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
 - 3 tablespoons butter, melted
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1 (15-ounce) package folded refrigerated pie crust (2 crusts)
1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
 2. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients except pie crust; mix well. Unfold one pie crust and place in a 9-inch pie plate, pressing crust firmly into plate. Spoon cherry mixture into crust.
 3. Place remaining pie crust on a work surface and, using a 1-inch round cookie cutter, cut fifteen circles from the center, forming "polka dots," leaving a 1-inch border around the edge (see Note). Place crust over cherry mixture. Pinch together and trim edges to seal, then flute, if desired.
 4. Bake 35 to 40 minutes, or until crust is golden and filling is bubbly. Let cool before serving.

Note: *Instead of using a cookie cutter, you can use the plastic cap of a soda bottle to cut out the polka dots -- it's the right size and it works great. Serve this with vanilla ice cream and they'll beg for seconds!*



Banana Cream Pie



This no-fuss, light banana cream pie recipe is a diner-worthy version that's big on flavorful comfort, without the guilt. No need to sacrifice on taste when this easy-as-pie option is chilling in your fridge!

Serves: 8

- 1 (4-serving) package sugar-free cook-and-serve vanilla pudding mix
 - 1 cup fat-free milk
 - 1 large ripe banana, peeled and sliced
 - 1 (9-inch) reduced-fat graham cracker pie crust
 - 1 (8-ounce) container frozen fat-free whipped topping, thawed and divided
1. In a medium saucepan, combine the pudding mix and milk, and cook over medium heat until thickened, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat, cover the surface of the pudding with waxed paper, and let cool.
 2. Place the banana slices on the bottom of the pie crust. Fold half of the whipped topping into the cooked pudding.
 3. Spoon the pudding mixture evenly over the bananas then spoon the remaining whipped topping over the pudding mixture. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours, or until ready to serve. Serve as is or garnish as desired.

Nutritional Information: *Per serving: Exchanges: 2 Carbohydrate, 1/2 Fat*

Calories 173, Calories from Fat 33, Total Fat 4g, Saturated Fat 0.6g, Cholesterol 1mg, Sodium 183mg, Carbohydrate 32g, Dietary Fiber 0g, Sugars 13g, Protein 2g

Nutritional analysis courtesy of the American Diabetes Association



Coconut Cream Pie

There's no easier way to make a pie than to use a prepared pie shell. Prepared pie shells are no-fuss and, believe it or not, this coconut pie and every other pie you make with one really will taste homemade!

Serves: 6

- 1 (9-inch) frozen ready-to-bake pie shell, thawed
 - 2 cups milk
 - 3 eggs
 - 1 cup sweetened flaked coconut
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 - 1 tablespoon butter, softened
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1/8 teaspoon salt
 - 2 cups frozen whipped topping, thawed
1. Bake pie shell according to package directions; set aside to cool.
 2. In a medium saucepan, whisk together all remaining ingredients except whipped topping. Cook over medium heat 5 to 7 minutes, or until thickened.
 3. Pour into baked pie shell and chill at least 4 hours, or until set.
 4. Spread whipped topping over pie and serve, or cover and keep chilled until ready to serve.

Garnishing Tip: Sprinkle this with 1/4 cup toasted coconut to give it a nice golden-topped finished appearance.



Bite-Sized Chocolate Cheesecake



If cheesecake is your weakness, you won't be able to resist these bite-sized mini cheesecakes that are so rich and yummy they'll satisfy your craving without overdoing it!

Makes: 24 miniature cheesecakes

- 24 vanilla wafer cookies
 - 3 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
 - 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa
 - 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted
 - 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
 - 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
 - 3 eggs
1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
 2. Line 24 regular-sized muffin cups with paper baking cups. Place a vanilla wafer in the bottom of each paper cup.
 3. In a large bowl, with an electric beater on medium speed, beat cream cheese until creamy. Add cocoa, butter, and vanilla, beating until well blended.
 4. Slowly add sweetened condensed milk then the eggs, until thoroughly mixed. Spoon into the baking cups.
 5. Bake 30 to 35 minutes, or until set. Cool completely then refrigerate until ready to serve.



Cookies and Bars

Giant Chocolate Chip Cookies



These eye-popping chocolate chip cookies are too big for your cookie jar, but they're so good they won't last long anyhow! Our recipe for Giant Chocolate Chip Cookies is one you'll want to bake and eat today!

Makes: 13 giant cookies (“a baker’s dozen”)

- 2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 teaspoon baking soda
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
 - 3/4 cup granulated sugar
 - 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 2 eggs
 - 1 (12-ounce) package (2 cups) semisweet chocolate chips or chunks
1. Preheat oven to 375°F. In a small bowl, combine flour, baking soda, and salt; set aside.
 2. In a large bowl, beat butter, sugars, and vanilla until creamy. Beat in the eggs. Gradually blend in the flour mixture. Stir in the chocolate chips and form into 13 balls.
 3. Flatten the balls onto ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 9 to 12 minutes, until the edges are brown.



Peek-a-boo Cookies



These bakery-worthy homemade cookies have yummy jam that peeks out from holes in their sugar-coated tops. They're fun to look at, fun to eat and perfect for your next bake sale!

Makes: about 48 cookies

- 1-1/2 cups (3 sticks) butter, softened
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1 egg
 - 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 3/4 cup jam or preserves (see Options)
1. In a large bowl, with an electric beater on medium speed, beat the butter, sugar, egg, vanilla, and salt until creamy. Gradually add the flour, beating until well mixed. Cover and chill 1 hour.
 2. Preheat oven to 375°F.
 3. Divide dough into 4 pieces. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each piece to 1/8-inch thickness. Using a 2-inch round cookie cutter, cut out circles and place 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Using a plastic drinking straw, randomly cut out circles of dough from half the cookies.
 4. Bake cookies 10 to 12 minutes, or until light golden. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.
 5. Spread jam evenly over solid cookies. Sprinkle remaining cookies with confectioners' sugar. Place the cookies with holes over the jam-topped cookies. Serve, or store in an airtight container.

Options: Any flavor of jam can be used, but I like to use an assortment so there are different colors peeking through the holes in the cookies.



PB & J Bars



Kids like PB & J, right? They also love cookies, so imagine if you married those. We did, and the results are guaranteed to create lots of smiles at your house.

Makes: 15 to 18 bars

- 2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, melted
 - 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
 - 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
 - 1/4 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 egg
 - 1 cup strawberry jelly (see Option)
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9" x 13" baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
 2. In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients except the jelly. Beat with an electric beater on medium speed for 2 minutes, or until blended and crumbly.
 3. Reserve 1 cup of the peanut butter mixture. Spread the remaining mixture over the bottom of the baking dish. Spread the jelly evenly over the mixture and crumble the reserved peanut butter mixture over the top.
 4. Bake 35 to 40 minutes, or until the topping is golden. Allow to cool completely then cut into bars and serve.

Option: Sure, if strawberry isn't your favorite, you can use another flavor of jam or preserves in place of the strawberry jelly.



Puddings and Mousses

Raspberry Bread Pudding

When we use frozen fruit, we don't have to wait 'til it's in season to use it in our baked goods. This raspberry bread pudding is a perfect example of how we can highlight frozen raspberries any time of the year in a homestyle dessert.

Serves: 6

- 4 eggs
 - 1- 3/4 cups milk
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1/8 teaspoon salt
 - 1 (12-ounce) bag frozen fresh raspberries (not in syrup)
 - 4 thick slices Hawaiian sweet bread, cut into 1-inch cubes (about 7 cups)
1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Coat a 2-quart baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
 2. In a large bowl, combine eggs, milk, sugar, and salt; mix well. Add raspberries and bread cubes and toss gently to mix well. Pour into the baking dish.
 3. Bake 45 minutes, or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Serve warm or chill until ready to use.

Finishing Touch: Top with whipped cream, ice cream, or a sprinkle of confectioners' sugar.

Recipe courtesy of Washington Red Raspberry Commission



Classic Rice Pudding

Rice pudding is one of those desserts that people rarely think of making at home anymore, yet whenever we eat it, we always say it's our favorite. So use some leftover rice or make it just for your pudding. Either way, there's no need to wait any longer to dig in.

Serves: 8

- 8 cups (1/2 gallon) milk
 - 1 cup uncooked long- or whole-grain rice
 - 3 egg yolks, beaten
 - 3/4 cup sugar
 - 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1. In a large pot, combine the milk, rice, egg yolks, and sugar. Bring to a boil over medium heat, and cook for 20 to 25 minutes, until thickened and the rice is tender, stirring frequently to keep the rice from sticking.
 2. Remove from the heat, stir in the vanilla, and allow to cool slightly.
 3. Spoon into a serving bowl or individual dessert dishes, and chill 2 to 3 hours. Serve, or cover and keep chilled until ready to serve.

Finishing Touch: All you need to top this off just right is a generous dollop of whipped cream and a sprinkle of nutmeg just before serving.



Honey Mousse

Don't wait for a party to enjoy the buzz over this honey-kissed dessert treat. It's easy enough to make for satisfying a weeknight sweet tooth, so try it tonight!

Serves: 4

- 1/2 cup honey
 - 3 eggs, beaten
 - 2 cups (1 pint) heavy cream
1. In a small saucepan or a double boiler, combine the honey and eggs over very low heat, whisking until the mixture is thick and bubbling. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature.
 2. In a large bowl, beat the cream until soft peaks form. Slowly beat in the honey mixture, continuing to beat until well mixed and stiff peaks form.
 3. Serve, or cover and chill until ready to serve.



Other Dessert Recipes

Bloomin' Cupcakes



Cupcakes are all the rage now, and these flowery ones are sure to make a splash when you serve 'em! You can make these springy cupcakes at home for a fraction of what they cost at the bakery, and they'll look like you fussed, even though you didn't!

Makes: 18 cupcakes

- 1 (18.25-ounce) package devil's food cake mix, batter prepared according to package directions
 - 1/2 cup toffee chips
 - 1 (16-ounce) container vanilla frosting
 - 1/4 teaspoon green food color
 - 18 large marshmallows
 - 18 small gumdrops
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 18 muffin cups with paper baking cups.
 2. Stir the toffee chips into the cake batter; mix well and fill the baking cups 3/4 full.
 3. Bake 20 to 22 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center of the cupcakes comes out clean; cool completely.
 4. In a medium bowl, combine frosting and food color; mix well. Cover the tops of the cupcakes with the green frosting.
 5. With scissors, cut 7 petal-shaped pieces from each marshmallow. Place a gumdrop in the center of each cupcake and place petals around the gumdrops, forming flowers. Serve, or cover until ready to serve.



Frozen S'Mores

Everybody loves s'mores, you know, the campfire treats made with graham crackers, chocolate bars and marshmallows. This frozen version that lasts longer in the freezer is sure to please!

Makes: 12 s'mores

- 1 quart chocolate ice cream, softened (see Options)
 - 1 cup mini marshmallows
 - 3 (1.55-ounce) chocolate bars, broken up
 - 12 whole graham crackers, split in half
1. In a medium bowl, combine the ice cream, marshmallows, and chocolate pieces until well mixed. Cover and freeze until firm.
 2. Place the graham cracker halves on a flat surface. Using an ice cream scoop, place 1 scoop ice cream mixture on each of 12 graham cracker squares. Top each with a second square, and press together firmly to form sandwiches. Wrap individually in plastic wrap and freeze until firm.

Options: *You can make these with any flavor ice cream you like!*



Lemon Blueberry Tarts



A dessert this easy to make that tastes so gourmet is a real find! The filling is a unique blend of lemon curd and blueberry. These are great for a spring or summer bash.

Makes: 6 tarts

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
 - 5 tablespoons lemon curd, divided
 - 6 graham cracker tart shells
 - 1 cup fresh blueberries
1. In a medium bowl, mix the cream cheese and 3 tablespoons lemon curd until smooth. Evenly spoon mixture into the graham cracker tart shells.
 2. In a small bowl, gently stir the blueberries and remaining 2 tablespoons lemon curd until thoroughly combined. Spoon the blueberries evenly over the cheese layer. Cover loosely and chill at least 1 hour before serving.



Apple Strudel



This Old World classic will make us feel like we took a cruise along a winding European river! We can enjoy the classic tastes of German-style strudel with the shortcut of store-bought puff pastry, sliced apples, raisins and a few baking basics.

Serves: 6

- 1 sheet (from a 1.25-ounce package) frozen puff pastry, thawed
 - 1/3 cup sugar
 - 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 - 1 (20-ounce) can sliced apples, drained
 - 1/3 cup raisins
 - 1 egg, beaten
1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Place the pastry on a cookie sheet and unfold. In a medium bowl, combine the sugar and cinnamon; mix well.
 2. Reserve 2 teaspoons of the sugar mixture. Add the apples and raisins to the remaining mixture; mix well. Let sit about 2 minutes; drain off any excess liquid.
 3. Spoon mixture down center of dough. Cut slits in dough 1 inch apart lengthwise down each side of filling. Brush each 1-inch dough strip with beaten egg and fold over dough.
 4. Brush top of pastry with remaining egg and sprinkle with reserved sugar mixture. Bake 20 to 25 minutes, or until golden. Serve warm, or allow to cool before serving.



Chocolate Caramel Brownies

A box of cake mix gets you started on this tempting chocolate dessert. Mix some up and enjoy the sinful sensation created by the gooey chocolate-covered caramels. Mmm!

Makes: 24 brownies

- 1 (18.25-ounce) box German or other chocolate cake mix
 - 3/4 cup (1-1/2 sticks) butter, melted
 - 2/3 cup evaporated milk, divided
 - 1 cup chopped pecans
 - 2 (7-ounce) packages chocolate-covered caramels (see Option)
 - 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9" x 13" baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
 2. In a large bowl, combine cake mix, butter, 1/3 cup evaporated milk, and the pecans, stirring with a spoon until a dough forms. Press half the dough into the baking dish and bake 6 minutes, reserving the remaining dough.
 3. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, melt caramels with remaining 1/3 cup evaporated milk over medium heat, stirring frequently. Remove baking dish from oven and sprinkle chocolate chips over the warm dough. Spread melted caramel mixture over chips then crumble remaining dough over the top.
 4. Bake 20 minutes. Let cool then refrigerate at least 1 hour before cutting.

Option: *If you prefer, you can use plain caramels rather than chocolate-covered ones.*



Poached Pears



Adding cinnamon candies to pears is a unique idea that your guests probably haven't tried before. Poached Pears has just the right amount of sweetness after a heavy meal.

Serves: 4

- 1 cup red-hot cinnamon candies
 - 3 cups apple cider
 - 4 large pears, peeled (see Note)
1. In a large saucepan, melt the cinnamon candies in the apple cider over medium heat.
 2. Add the pears and spoon the sauce over them, coating completely. Cover and cook for 25 to 30 minutes, or until tender, turning occasionally and basting with the sauce.
 3. Serve warm with the sauce spooned over the pears, or allow to cool and chill in the sauce until ready to serve.

Note: To make sure the pears will stand up when being served, slice a small piece off the bottom of each one before poaching.



Peanut Butter Chocolate Pizza

Pizza for dessert? Why not! You'll love the combination of rich dark chocolate and creamy peanut butter in this dessert pizza. Promise!

Serves: 12

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
 - 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, melted
 - 1 -1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
 - 2 cups confectioners' sugar
 - 1 (12-ounce) package semisweet chocolate chips, melted
 - 1/4 cup chopped salted or unsalted peanuts
 - 1/2 cup crispy rice cereal
1. Coat a 12-inch pizza pan with nonstick cooking spray.
 2. In a large bowl, combine the peanut butter, butter, graham cracker crumbs, and confectioners' sugar; mix well with a wooden spoon.
 3. Press the mixture evenly over the bottom of the pizza pan. Pour the melted chocolate evenly over the top then sprinkle with the peanuts and cereal.
 4. Cover, and chill 15 minutes. Slice and serve immediately, or cover and keep chilled until ready to serve.



Peachy Berry Tart

With this recipe for homemade Peachy Berry Tart, using fresh or frozen peaches and blueberries, you're gonna look like a professional pastry chef! Nobody has to know you baked up this homey fruit tart in minutes!

Serves: 8

- 1 folded refrigerated pie crust (from a 15-ounce package)
 - 3 cups fresh peeled and sliced peaches *OR* frozen peeled and sliced peaches, thawed
 - 1/2 cup fresh blueberries *OR* frozen blueberries, thawed
 - 3 tablespoons sugar
 - 1 tablespoon apple jelly, melted
1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Place the pie crust on a rimmed baking sheet.
 2. In a large bowl, combine the peaches, blueberries, and 2 tablespoons sugar. Arrange the mixture in the center of the dough, leaving a 2-inch border.
 3. Fold the edges of the dough toward the center, pressing gently to seal (dough will only partially cover peach mixture). Brush the melted jelly over the peach mixture and edges of dough.
 4. Bake 10 minutes then reduce the oven temperature to 350°F. Bake 20 more minutes, or until lightly browned.
 5. Sprinkle with the remaining tablespoon of sugar. Serve warm or at room temperature.



Pistachio Banana Wedges

Now, here's a dessert you don't see every day! Make delightful Pistachio Banana Wedges as a quick snack or an elegant, no-fuss dessert for company.

Serves: 8

- 3 1/2 cup granulated sugar
 - 1/4 cup vegetable shortening
 - 1 egg
 - 1 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 2 ripe bananas, mashed
 - 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1 cup chopped pistachio nuts, divided
 - 1 (3-ounce) package cream cheese
 - 2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
 - 2 tablespoons semisweet chocolate chips, melted
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9-inch pie plate with nonstick cooking spray.
 2. In a large bowl, with an electric beater, cream together the granulated sugar and shortening until light and fluffy. Add the egg and beat thoroughly.
 3. Gradually blend in the flour, baking soda, and salt. Beat in the mashed bananas and vanilla until smooth.
 4. Fold in 3/4 cup of the chopped pistachios. Spread the mixture into the pie plate.
 5. Bake 20 to 25 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool 30 minutes.
 6. In a medium bowl, beat the cream cheese and confectioners' sugar until fluffy. Spread evenly over the top. Drizzle with the melted chocolate and sprinkle with the remaining 1/4 cup pistachios.



Whoopie Pies



This sinfully good recipe for Whoopie Pies, which are an Amish Pennsylvania Dutch specialty, tastes incredible with a cold glass of milk. With a rich creamy filling sandwiched between two mini chocolate cake rounds, "from scratch" was never easier!

Makes: about 12 sandwich pies

- 1 (18.25-ounce) package devil's food cake mix
 - 3/4 cup water
 - 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 - 3 eggs
 - 1 cup milk
 - 5 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 - 1-1/4 cups sugar
 - 1 cup vegetable shortening
 - 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat cookie sheets with nonstick cooking spray.
 2. In a large bowl, combine cake mix, water, oil, and eggs; beat well. Drop on cookie sheets in 2-1/2- to 3-inch circles. Bake 7 to 8 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Let cool slightly then remove to a wire rack to cool completely.
 3. In a saucepan, combine milk and flour, and cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly until it forms a thick paste. Let cool.
 4. In a medium bowl, beat sugar and shortening until fluffy; stir in vanilla extract then add cooled flour mixture and beat until doubled in volume.
 5. Turn half of the cooled cakes over on their backs. Spoon a dollop of filling onto half of them. Place the other half of the cakes on top of the filling, forming sandwiches.



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