

The Happy Cooker

by Elaine Susan Stulberg



Wild game go-withs and—some super-rich desserts

Judging from column communications (expletives deleted) regarding last week's article on "Wild Game," it appears I have attacked motherhood, the flag, and apple pie.

I had no idea how strongly some folks felt about the slightest deviation from the traditional meal of turkey-with-the-trimmings for Thanksgiving. In fact, to a goodly number who commented, turkey in all its glory IS Thanksgiving!

My thanks to those avid hunters and wild game devotees who were delighted to garner new ideas for preparing the wild animals their men-folk proudly present them with every fall.

Today we will give you suggestions for dishes to accompany the trophies of the hunter. Of course, the same recipes are excellently served with the traditional turkey.

For those who would like to see me share the fate of many glorious gobblers this time of year—take heart. Within the next few weeks the turkey will get his fair share when we capture the spirit of the holidays by devoting an entire column to it. Both traditional and gussied-up versions will be discussed.

CHESTNUT PUREE

2 pounds chestnuts
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. freshly ground white pepper
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. butter or margarine, melted
1½ tsp. heavy cream (coffee cream may be substituted) slightly warmed

With a sharp knife, split chestnuts in shells at pointed ends. Put chestnuts in saucepan with water to cover; bring to boil. Cook about 30 minutes or until shells peel off easily. Put peeled chestnuts in boiling water with salt and reduce heat. Simmer until tender. Drain and mash, season with pepper and sugar. Stir in melted butter and cream. Makes about 2 cups.

NOTE: To reheat, put puree in

saucepan with a little more butter and cream; reheat and stir well to blend.

WILD RICE CASSEOLE

(From "The Happy Cooker" cookbook by Elaine S. Stulberg)

¾ cups flaked wild rice (when cooked, about 3-¾ cups)
4 cups water
½ tsp. salt
½ pound butter or margarine
1 onion, chopped
4 ounces can mushrooms, sliced and drained of liquid
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper
¼ tsp. sage
1 tsp. parsley flakes

Rinse rice in several changes of cold water in a fine sieve. Place rice and water and salt in large saucepan. Bring to boil, reduce heat to simmer and cook covered for 45-60 minutes or until rice is soft. If any water remains, drain quickly in fine sieve again. Return rice to saucepan and add ¼ pound butter, stirring to melt. Cover pan and set aside.

Melt remaining butter in a frypan and saute onions until transparent but not browned. Add mushrooms and remaining spices. Saute over low heat, uncovered, for 3 minutes. Add to wild rice making certain to include any butter left in bottom of pan. Blend well and cover until needed. May be reheated in double boiler at serving time. Serves 10-12.

WHOLE FRESH CRANBERRY SAUCE

1 quart cranberries, washed and cleaned
1 cup sugar
1 cup water
¼ tsp. (or less) powdered cloves
¼ tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. lemon juice

Put all ingredients into large kettle.

Bring to boil. Lower heat to simmer and cook 12-15 minutes or until berries pop. Remove berries with slotted spoon and continue cooking juice until it is like thick syrup. Pour over berries. Makes about 2½ cups. Refrigerate until serving time.

BRAISED ENDIVE

6 medium stalks endive
2 cups boiling water
1 tsp. lemon juice (juice of fresh lemon preferred, if available) 2 slices bacon, diced
1 small onion, thinly sliced
1½ tsp. butter or margarine
1 cup strong homemade chicken stock (or chicken bouillon cubes, 3 cubes for 1 cup water)
Salt and pepper to taste
1½ tsp. cornstarch mixed with 2 tsp. cold water

Clean endive stalks and split each lengthwise. Pour boiling water over and sprinkle with lemon juice. Let sit for 10 minutes and drain thoroughly. Put bacon, onions and butter into large frypan over medium heat. When butter melts, lay endive side by side; pour stock over and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover tightly and simmer gently for 25 minutes or until endive is tender. Add cornstarch-water mixture; increase heat and stir pan juices around endive until slightly thickened. Serves 4.

WE GET LETTERS

Milford's Ms. Becky Born, who purchases this paper in Southfield near her office, requests "Something" rich to serve holiday drop-in guests. "Since I work fulltime, I would be grateful for a recipe I can prepare ahead to serve with coffee."

Relax, Becky! The National Peanut Council comes to your rescue with delicious Peanut Ribbon Cake. Pound cake, Homemade or store bought, is the basis for this layered loaf with its luscious, light-

as-air filling of chocolate, whipped topping, and crunchy peanuts. Sliced thin, drizzled with a liqueur and filled with a peanuty topping mixture, the plain pound cake turns into gourmet fare. Best of all, it freezes beautifully, eliminating the hurried hostess syndrome.

PEANUT RIBBON CAKE

1 (10 ¼-ounce) frozen pound cake or 1 (8-x-4-inch) loaf pound cake
1 (4-ounce) bar German sweet chocolate
¾ cup cocktail peanuts, finely chopped
1 (9-ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed
¼ to ½ cup liqueur (Crème de Cacao, Kaluha, Grand Mariner, etc.)

Carefully remove frozen pound cake from foil pan; reserve pan. Slice cake horizontally into 5 thin layers. If using bakery or homemade pound cake, freeze cake first for easier slicing. Chill chocolate, break into chunks and grate in a blender or food processor. Fold grated chocolate and finely chopped peanuts into 2 cups whipped topping. Assemble cake: Place bottom slice of cake back in pan. Drizzle cake with about 1 tablespoon of liqueur and spread with ½ cup of chocolate topping mixture. Place next layer on top of filling. Repeat process until all cake layers are reassembled ending with a layer of chocolate topping. Carefully wrap pan containing cake in plastic wrap or place in plastic bag. Freeze. Remaining whipped topping may be mixed with 1 tablespoon liqueur and served as topping for cake. Thinly slice cake to serve. Makes 8-10 slices.

NOTE: I have used this cake both frozen as well as defrosted and at room temperature. However, it slices best in its frozen state using knife dipped into hot water.

"I have enjoyed a dessert called Biscuit Tortoni at several fine Italian restaurants," comments Mrs. L. Burke of W. Bloomfield. "I would love to dupli-

cate this ice cream-like dish at home." This is another excellent recipe for both family and holiday entertaining. Simple to prepare and with the same holding power as ice cream, it can be prepared ahead and frozen until needed.

BISCUIT TORTONI

6 tbs. granulated sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
¼ cup dry sherry
¼ tsp. salt
1 pint heavy cream whipped (you may substitute 2 pints frozen whipped topping, defrosted, but omit the 5 tbs. sugar used in whipped cream)
3 egg whites
½ cup toasted almonds, chopped
4 tbs. dry macaroon crumbs (or crush substituted macaroon cookies to render desired amount)

Fold 5 tbs. sugar, vanilla, sherry and salt into stiffly beaten whipped cream. Whip egg whites until foamy. Add remaining 1 tbs. sugar slowly. Continue to whip until stiff peaks form. Fold cream mixture and half the toasted almonds plus half the macaroon crumbs into stiffly beaten egg whites. Gently blend all.

Spoon into 18 fluted paper cups. The type used for cupcakes are ideal. Sprinkle tops with equal amounts of remaining nuts and crumbs. Freeze without disturbing until firm. Once frozen, cover with plastic wrap and secure with an additional piece of foil. Serves 18 individual portions.

Mrs. J. Shulman of Southfield, an avid cookbook and recipe collector, gourmet cook and frequent entertainer needs a recipe for the fantastic English Trifle she and her attorney husband have enjoyed during their travels. "I would prefer one that isn't as full of

thick jams and assorted fruits as some I have tasted," Mrs. Shulman writes.

Admittedly, this is not the original trifle found in English eaterys. Most are prepared with the thick jams you mentioned. Try this simplified very rich version of the Trifle which I prefer.

ENGLISH TRIFLE

Line the bottom of a cut-glass or crystal bowl (about 9 inches wide and 3 inches deep) with a layer of lady fingers. Line sides of bowl, up to rim, with lady fingers standing them lengthwise. Make certain there are no spaces between each lady fingers. Moisten with a light sprinkling of dry sherry.

Spread thin layer of dried canned peaches, using a light sprinkling of peach juice (use half of one can weighing about 1 pound 13-14 ounces for first layer). Spread thin layer of rich vanilla custard (or instant vanilla pudding) on top of peaches. Spread thin layer of whipped topping over custard (12-18 ounces are needed for recipe use half for this layer).

Repeat as above, ending with whipped topping. Garnish with a few reserved diced or sliced peaches. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 3 hours. This gives flavors an opportunity to blend. Serve, using large serving spoon, and scoop through to bottom of bowl so that you get all layers in each serving.

Serve individual portions on dessert plates. Trifle should render 12-14 servings.

NEXT WEEK: BRUNCH

Mrs. Stulberg, West Bloomfield resident, is a food writer, lecturer, and author of the cookbook for dieters, "The Happy Cooker." Letters, requests and recipes are welcomed.

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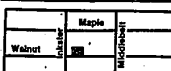
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