

Hearts and flowers belong on the refreshment table at any sentimental occasion.

Two of the nicest choices for the salad at a reception-type party are still the classic chicken salad or crab salad, delicately seasoned and blended with mayonnaise.

For such great occasions as anniversaries, showers, birthdays and St. Valentine's Day itself, serve either of these salads in individual tomato aspic hearts.

Or, if the party is more casual, here are two variations on the chicken salad theme to be served simply in lettuce cups. One salad includes crisp apples, the other carrot strips and crunchy almonds.

And have you noticed the price of chicken lately? It's the biggest bargain around.

RECEPTION SALAD
3 envelopes unflavored gelatin
1 cup cold water

4 cups tomato juice
1 tsp. salt
4 peppercorns
1 bay leaf
2 stalks celery, chopped
¼ cup lemon juice
1 tsp. onion juice
1 recipe crab or chicken salad
Iceberg lettuce or salad greens

Sprinkle gelatin on cold water to soften. Mix tomato juice, salt, peppercorns, bay leaf and celery in saucepan. Bring to boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Strain. Add softened gelatin to hot liquid and stir until completely dissolved.

Mix lemon juice and onion juice and add to tomato mixture. Pour into 12 (¾-cup) heart-shaped molds. Chill until firm. Unmold onto serving plate. Spoon crab or chicken salad on top of each. Garnish with salad greens. Makes 12 servings.

NOTE: If heart-shaped molds are not available, pour mixture into two 9-inch

square pans. Chill, then cut with heart-shaped cutter.

CRAB SALAD

For enough crab salad to top 12 aspic hearts, clean and flake ½ pound cooked crab meat or two 5½ to 7½-ounce cans crab meat. Mix with one cup finely chopped celery, two tablespoons minced parsley, and ½ cup mayonnaise. Chill until serving time.

CHICKEN SALAD

Toss together two cups diced, cooked chicken, ¾ cup diced celery, and ½ cup peas. Then mix one tablespoon lemon juice, ¼ teaspoon grated onion, ½ teaspoon salt and dash of pepper into ½ cup of mayonnaise. Chill well.

CHICKEN AND CARROT SALAD
1 tsp. lemon juice
½ cup mayonnaise
2 cups diced, cooked chicken

1 cup shredded carrot
¾ cup sliced celery
½ cup sliced almonds
2 tsp. chopped onion
Salt to taste
Iceberg lettuce

Stir lemon juice into mayonnaise. Toss chicken, carrot, celery, almonds, onion, and salt with mayonnaise. Serve on lettuce. Makes four servings.

APPLE AND CHICKEN SALAD

1½ cups diced, cooked chicken
¼ cup chopped celery
¼ tsp. salt
½ cup chopped unpared apple
½ cup mayonnaise
2 tsp. lemon juice
½ cup chopped nuts
Iceberg lettuce

Mix together chicken, celery, salt and apple. Mix mayonnaise and lemon juice, toss lightly with chicken mixture. Mix in nuts. Serve in lettuce cups. Makes four ½-cup servings.



The Warming Oven by Emily Watson

A SALUTE TO GREAT LOVERS

Roses may be the flower synonymous with romance, but down through the centuries, the gifts of love have more often been food, prepared affectionately by the giver.

Contemporary lovers have expanded this culinary tradition by expressing their romantic feelings over a shared repast in a favorite restaurant. The Magic Pan restaurants throughout the country are saluting great lovers during the month of February.

Inspired by St. Valentine's Day, special tribute is being paid to George and Martha Washington (country beef crepe accompanied by a mixed green salad and a traditional Cherries Royale Almondine dessert crepe.) For Napoleon and Josephine, it is Potage St. Germain, Orange Almond Salad and a Shrimp Bonaparte crepe.

But for those whom the personal touch is the most desirable way to express loving feelings, the following Magic Pan menu can be created at home and served in a romantic setting of one's choosing.

The menu honors two of the most famous lovers of all—Romeo and Juliet. Both the main course and the dessert feature delicate crepes. The Chicken Verona crepe is stuffed with a luscious combination of chicken, green or white grapes and almonds bound in a delicate cream sauce, lightly laced with sherry. The spinach salad has a sweet and sour dressing and the crowning touch is a Chantilly crepe.

BASIC CREPES

1 cup sifted flour
Pinch salt
3 eggs
1-1/2 cups milk
Oil, melted butter or margarine for frying

Resift flour with salt into mixing bowl. Beat in eggs to form a thick paste. Gradually beat in milk until mixture is smooth. (Batter will be consistency of heavy cream.) Let stand, covered, at room temperature 1 hour. Heat 7-inch crepe pan; brush lightly with oil or butter. Add 2 tablespoons batter and tilt pan quickly to spread a thin layer. Cook over medium low heat until browned, about 1 minute; turn and brown second side. Repeat with remaining batter, brushing pan with additional oil as needed.

Makes 18 to 20 (7-inch) crepes.

CHICKEN VERONA CREPES

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 tablespoons flour
1-1/4 cups milk
3 tablespoons dry sherry
1 teaspoon instant chicken bouillon
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup (about 1 ounce) grated Cheddar cheese
2 cups diced cooked chicken
1 cup sour cream
1 can (8 ounces) white grapes, drained or
1 cup seedless grapes
1/4 cup chopped parsley
1/2 cup sliced natural (unblanched) almonds, toasted
6 baked (7-inch) crepes
6 parsley sprigs

In 2-quart saucepan melt butter over medium heat. Stir in flour; cook 1 minute. Gradually whisk in milk and sherry. Cook and stir about 5 minutes until mixture is smooth and thickened. Stir in chicken, bouillon, salt and cheese; cook and stir 2 minutes. Stir in chicken; heat through. Stir in 1/2 cup of the sour cream to blend thoroughly. Stir in grapes and 2 tablespoons of the chopped parsley; heat through. Remove from heat; stir in almonds. On lightly buttered baking sheet spoon 1/2 cup hot chicken mixture across center of each crepe; fold over sides to enclose filling. Heat in 375 degree oven about 10 minutes until edges begin to curl. With large spatula transfer to heated individual serving plates. Dollop with remaining sour cream; sprinkle with remaining chopped parsley. Garnish with parsley sprigs. Serve immediately.

Makes 6 filled crepes.

CHANTILLY CREPES

1 cup apricot preserves
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon aromatic bitters
6 bananas, sliced
6 baked (7-inch) crepes
1 cup whipping cream, whipped
1/2 cup sliced almonds, toasted
Powdered sugar

In small bowl combine preserves, brown sugar, lemon juice and bitters; set aside (or refrigerate, covered, up to 2 days). Just before serving, gently toss bananas (reserving 19 slices for garnish) with 1 cup of the preserves mixture. Place crepes on individual serving plates. Spoon banana mixture across centers of crepes; top each with about 3 tablespoons of the whipped cream. Fold sides of crepes over to enclose filling. Dollop remaining whipped cream across centers of filled crepes; drizzle with remaining preserves mixture. Garnish with reserved banana slices. Sprinkle with almonds and dust with powdered sugar. Serve immediately.

Makes 6 filled crepes.



FRESH SPINACH SALAD

6 cups lightly packed torn spinach, crisped
3/4 cup Magic Pan's Sweet and Sour Dressing (recipe follows)
12 strips bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled
3 hard-cooked eggs, finely chopped

Place spinach in large bowl. Toss with Magic Pan's Sweet and Sour Dressing just before serving. Spoon onto individual serving plates; top with bacon and eggs.

Makes 6 servings.

SWEET AND SOUR DRESSING

1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/4 cup white wine tarragon vinegar
1-1/2 teaspoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon tarragon
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
Dash liquid hot pepper sauce

In small bowl whisk together all ingredients until mixture is creamy and thoroughly combined. Refrigerate at least 20 minutes to blend flavors. Mix again just before serving.

Makes 3/4 cup.