



A Question of Taste

By Hillary Keating Callaghan

Anatomy of a torte — the chemistry of pastry making

Clad in simple, white bakers' smocks, Yvonne Gill and Chef Dennis stood in stark contrast to the sybaritic displays of pastries lining the shelf behind them. For the next two hours, the proprietor of Tweeny's Cafe, Birmingham, and her assistant presented what amounted to an anatomy of a torte, Part I.

The second of a four-part seminar at Hudson's Oakland store, this class was billed as "Pastry I: A repertoire of crusts and layers that will enable you to invent desserts ad infinitum."

Using a lecture-demonstration format, Ms. Gill concentrated on the basic techniques and even some of the chemistry involved in pastry-making.

In demonstrating the use of air as a raising agent, the two chefs prepared three varieties of meringue layers. As a first step, Chef Dennis separated the eggs in an impressive display of manual dexterity. Cracking the egg with one hand, he deposited the contents into his other hand, allowing the whites to run between his slightly spread fingers as he gently jiggled the yolk.

THE NEXT STEP consisted of a parallel demonstration in which Ms. Gill

whipped egg whites in a large copper bowl, finishing the task at the same time as Chef Dennis, who used an electric mixer.

The advantage of hand-mixing, which I had always thought to be an exercise in masochism, was explained to be the slower incorporation of air, resulting in smaller, tighter air bubbles which provide greater stability in the finished product. An electric mixer, by contrast, incorporates air quickly, resulting in larger air pockets and a product that will deflate more quickly. This can be minimized by running the mixer at medium speed for a few moments before switching to a high speed.

Regarding the advantage of a copper bowl in beating egg whites, Ms. Gill estimated that it might take her "about two seconds" longer if she used a stainless steel bowl.

Tilting the bowl was recommended as a test of whether the proper consistency has been achieved. Underbeaten or overbeaten whites will slide out while those correctly beaten will remain in the bowl. In cooking school, students perform this test with the bowls over their heads.

THE SECOND half of the parallel demonstration ended in disaster as Ms. Gill's "roughly-handled, over-mixed" batter behaved as well as her partner's "correct" version. Termining it, "the least successful demonstration I have ever done," she speculated that years of conditioning had rendered her incapable of truly mishandling the ingredients.

The Nut Layer made in class contained almonds, but it was pointed out that hazelnuts, walnuts or pecans could be substituted. The latter two types of nuts tend to be more oily, however, and a pinch of baking powder might be needed to dry them out. Any of the nuts might require the addition of a little flour for drying if ground in a food processor, which tends to release the oils. A heavy-duty grinder was recommended as being better suited for the task.

The recipe for Grated Chocolate Layer came about when a man from Vienna suggested the use of grated chocolate in preparing a Sachertorte rather than the usual melted. The resultant, lighter cake is what Ms. Gill proudly refers to as "Yvonne's Sachertorte," a name which she does not officially apply to her creation in order to

avoid disputes about the authenticity of her version.

THE CHOCOLATE does take a long time to distribute in this batter, requiring about 10 minutes of beating at medium speed in an electric mixer. You can't overbeat this one.

In making the Chocolate Meringue Layer, the chefs re-emphasized how important it is that all ingredients be evenly distributed. In this case, the cocoa and sugar must be thoroughly combined before being added to the other ingredients.

It was suggested that all three of these layers be combined in creating tortes. The possibilities for spectacular desserts are dizzying when these layers are combined with any one or combinations of suggested fillings — whipped cream, buttercream, praline, chocolate mousses, raspberry filling, chestnut cream, fresh strawberries.

NUT LAYER

- 12 eggs, separated
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- Zest of 2 lemons, grated
- 3 cups finely-ground almonds

Beat egg yolks until light and lemon-colored. Gradually beat in sugar. Fold in grated lemon rind. In separate bowl, beat egg whites until soft peaks. Pile half of egg whites onto yolk mixture and sprinkle with half of the almonds. Fold mixture. Repeat with last part of whites and almonds. Turn batter into 2 buttered and flour 9-inch pans. Bake in 375 degree oven for 20 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350 and continue baking 25 to 30 minutes or until cake springs back when touched lightly.

GRATED CHOCOLATE LAYER

- 6 ounces sweet butter
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 8 egg yolks
- 8 ounces grated semi-sweet chocolate
- 4 tsp. flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 8 egg whites
- 2 tsp. chocolate liqueur

Cream butter and sugar until light. Add egg yolks one by one, beating well after each addition. Add chocolate liqueur and grated chocolate and cream until chocolate is well blended. Sift

flour and baking powder together. Beat egg whites until firm and shiny. Fold half of the egg whites sprinkled with flour and baking powder into the chocolate mixture; then fold in remaining egg whites. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Divide batter evenly between two buttered and sugared 9-inch cake pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until cake tester comes out clean.

CHOCOLATE MERINGUE LAYER

- 3/4 tsp. cocoa
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 5 egg whites
- 7/8 cup granulated sugar

Sift together cocoa and powdered sugar. In a separate bowl, beat egg whites until three-quarters stiff, then add some sugar, then all. Fold in sugar and cocoa. Butter floured parchment. Bake at 300 degrees for 1 hour to 1 hour 10 minutes. Yields 3 layers.

NEXT WEEK: Pastry II class. Address letters to Hillary Keating Callaghan, c/o OGE Newspapers, 461 S. Main, Plymouth 48170.



Sweet and sour pork in crepes combine for an unusual entree.

Crepes add interest to sweet-sour pork

By using your regular pancake or waffle mix for the crepes, you can create an interesting entree combining them with this sweet and sour pork recipe.

SWEET AND SOUR PORK IN CREPES

- 1 tsp. oil
 - 1 1/2 pounds lean pork, thinly sliced
 - 1 1/2 cups water
 - 2 tsp. soy sauce
 - 1 tsp. salt
 - 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
 - 1/2 cup diced green pepper
 - 1/2 cup pancake and waffle syrup
 - 2 tsp. vinegar
 - 1 can (8 oz.) chunk pineapple in juice
 - 2 1/4 tsp. cornstarch
- Entree Crepes
Flaked coconut, toasted

der. Cover tightly and simmer until pork is almost tender, about 20 minutes. Add remaining water, the green pepper, syrup and vinegar. Cover and cook 10 minutes longer. Meanwhile, drain pineapple, reserving juice; cut chunks in half. Dissolve cornstarch in reserved juice. Stir into pork mixture; add pineapple. Cook and stir until thickened and clear. Spoon filling onto Entree Crepes, allowing a generous 1/4 cup for each; fold over, and sprinkle with coconut. Makes 4 cups or 6 servings, 2 crepes each.

ENTREE CREPES

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk

- 2 tbsp. melted butter or margarine
- 3/4 cup pancake and waffle mix
- 2 tsp. onion powder
- 1 1/2 tsp. ginger

Beat eggs well in bowl; stir in milk and melted butter. Add pancake and waffle mix, onion powder and ginger and blend until smooth. (Batter will be thin.) Let stand at least 15 minutes. Using about 2 1/2 tablespoons batter for each crepe, bake in hot lightly buttered 6 or 7-inch crepe pan or skillet, tilting pan to spread batter and turning to brown on both sides. Keep warm in oven at 250 degrees. Makes 2 cups batter enough for 12 crepes.

Heat oil in large skillet. Add meat and brown well. Add 1/2 cup of the water, the soy sauce, salt and garlic powder.

Inflation strikes again. Starting today, the price of hot lunches in the Livonia Public Schools

will be increased from 65 cents to 70 cents. In the high schools, prices will jump from 75 cents to 80 cents.

Chocolate cheesecake cups are as good as they look

These cupcakes are easy to prepare yet add an elegant finish to any meal.

CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE CUPS

- 12 vanilla wafers
- 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 pkg. (4 oz.) sweet cooking chocolate, melted
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans

Place a vanilla wafer, flat side down, in each of 12 aluminum foil baking cups (usually available at cake decorating shops). Place on baking sheet. Beat cream cheese until smooth. Gradually beat in sugar and continue beating until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well. Blend in flour and vanilla, then blend in chocolate.

Spoon into cups, filling about 3/4 full, and sprinkle with pecans. Bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes. Cool on rack and serve cool or chilled. Garnish with



Cheesecake cups begin with a vanilla wafer.

whipped topping and chocolate curls or maraschino cherries, if desired. Store in refrigerator. Makes 12 cakes.

COMING SOON

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