

Children heralded arrival of pie lady's old blue car

The people who came from the cities and suburbs to rent cottages by the lake during the summer called her the "pie lady."

On Tuesday and Thursday mornings, she baked pies. On these same afternoons, she would drive her battered old blue car through the birch trees around the houses by the lakefront, the back seat filled with pies.

Some had been ordered on her last trip and had scraps of torn paper taped to their covers with strange names scrawled across them.

She was a shy, hesitant woman, not at all the salesperson. People who were there for the whole summer would tell the one- and two-weekers about her. The children would watch for her car on the days she made her rounds and run to get their mothers when she arrived.

We met her on a visit to a relative's cottage. The pie lady would stand by her car with the door open. She spoke very little, but it wasn't necessary as the children rounded up customers for her.

My most vivid memory of her was in a baked raspberry pie. It was a shallow pie with only a bottom crust filled with berries. Quite rich in its simplicity, it needed no cream or whipped cream topping. We parceled it out in silvers, partly because it was so rich and partly because we were leaving before she would return, so there would only be that one pie.

THE FOLLOWING year, we and the relative took different kinds of vacations. Not long after that, the group of

cottages we had frequented was sold, and the atmosphere of the place changed with the management. We never went back, so I only saw her once and never knew her name. Still, the taste of raspberries reminds me of the "pie lady."

I did not get her recipe for raspberry pie. However, the favorite method now seems to be to fill a shell with fresh berries and pour a glaze over them. This bright red, jewel-like creation is then served with heavy cream or whipping cream.

Raspberries should be prepared and eaten or frozen shortly after picking as they are quite perishable, particularly when picked ripe. Ripe berries should be eaten and enjoyed immediately, while at their peak, either plain or lightly sugared. Below are some other ways to enjoy raspberries that might strike your fancy.

FRESH RASPBERRY SAUCE

2 cups fresh raspberries
2 to 3 tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. vanilla extract

Put the berries through a blender or food processor briefly. Or, crush the berries and put them through a sieve. Add the sugar, lemon juice and vanilla extract. Mix well. Serve over ice cream, plain cake, or puddings. Makes approximately 1 1/2 cups sauce.

RASPBERRY CHANTILLY CREAM

2 cups whole fresh raspberries
1/2 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
1/2 tsp. salt

Turn egg whites and cream of tartar into small bowl of electric mixer. With mixer at high speed, beat whites until soft peaks form. Gradually sprinkle in sugar, one tablespoon at a time, beating well after each addition until sugar is dissolved. Continue beating until mixture holds stiff, glossy peaks. Lightly fold in peanut butter until just mixed. Drop by teaspoon onto greased cookie sheet. Bake in 300-degree oven 25 to 30 minutes or until meringues are lightly browned and dry. Remove from cookie sheet immediately and cool on wire rack. Makes about two dozen cookies.

1/4 cup kirsch or orange juice
1 1/4 cups cake crumbs or 6 lady fingers, crumbled
2 cartons (8 ounces each) raspberry flavored yogurt
Sweetened whipped cream

Thaw raspberries; set aside six whole berries for garnish. Combine remaining raspberries and syrup with cornstarch. Cook until thickened, stir constantly. Stir in kirsch, cool. Place 2 tablespoons cake crumbs into six (5 oz. each) parfait glasses. Spoon 2 tablespoons each raspberry mixture then yogurt into each glass. Repeat layers. Chill. To serve, top with whipped cream and reserved whole raspberries. Makes 6 servings.

RASPBERRY TRIFLE PARFAITS
2 pkg. (10 ounces each) frozen raspberries
2 1/2 tsp. cornstarch



Byrd's Kitchen

by Vivian Byrd

2 cups heavy cream
2 tsp. vanilla extract
Combine raspberries, 1/4 cup of the

sugar and the salt. Whip cream until almost stiff and then gradually beat in the remaining 1/4 cup sugar and the

vanilla extract. Fold in the berries. Serve in clear glass goblets to highlight the color.

RASPBERRY COMPOTE

1 quart raspberries
1/4 cup sugar
1 cup water
2 tsp. cornstarch
2 tsp. water

Wash the berries briefly and drain well in a colander. Set aside. Combine sugar and water in a one quart saucepan. Mix well and stir and cook to the soft-crack stage (290 degrees F.). While the syrup is boiling, pour it over the

berries. Cover and let stand until the raspberries have given up their juice. Using a perforated spoon, transfer raspberries to a serving dish. Blend the cornstarch with the 2 tablespoons water (put cornstarch in container first, then add water and stir), then add to the hot syrup. Bring to the boiling point and cook until syrup has thickened slightly and is transparent (3 or 4 minutes). Pour over raspberries. Cool and chill. Makes 6 servings.

Recipes, comments or questions are welcomed and should be addressed to Vivian Byrd, P.O. Box 1024, Birmingham 46012.

Peanut butter meringues

Chunky peanut butter combines with beaten egg whites for these chewy, yet crunchy meringues.

PEANUT BUTTER MERINGUES

2 egg whites
1/4 tsp. cream of tartar
3/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup chunky peanut butter

Turn egg whites and cream of tartar into small bowl of electric mixer. With mixer at high speed, beat whites until soft peaks form. Gradually sprinkle in sugar, one tablespoon at a time, beating well after each addition until sugar is dissolved. Continue beating until mixture holds stiff, glossy peaks. Lightly fold in peanut butter until just mixed. Drop by teaspoon onto greased cookie sheet. Bake in 300-degree oven 25 to 30 minutes or until meringues are lightly browned and dry. Remove from cookie sheet immediately and cool on wire rack. Makes about two dozen cookies.

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