



Byrd's Kitchen

by Vivian Byrd

Summer nostalgia: Cranking the ice cream maker

Close your eyes and put a spoonful of homemade ice cream into your mouth. Strawberry, peach, blueberry. Your favorite flavor.

Ummm. Good, isn't it? Bet that will make you forget that it is getting toward the end of summer, that it is already September. A dish of homemade ice cream can take your taste buds back to the height of summer.

It is also fun to make. An electric ice cream maker is more convenient and easier on the arm, but a hand-turned model will allow you to savor the nostalgic summer memories.

Once the cranking starts, the handle must be kept turning at all times or the ice cream may become lumpy. Which means the whole family must get into the act, each taking a turn cranking, then lining up again to be ready to relieve other tired arms. And, of course,

cranking jokes to distract the person who is turning from the tiredness building in his or her arm. And anticipating the sweet flavor of the end product.

Ginger Peach Ice Cream is one tasty possibility. However, this is one instance where the creative cook can shine. In place of the peaches and ginger used below, substitute your family's favorite flavor for some homemade excitement.

You can add fruit, nuts, candies, shaved chocolate, ground and chopped peppermint stick candy, or any number of other possibilities, limited only by your family's preferences.

Also, it is not necessary to have an ice cream maker. You can turn out homemade ice cream. It can be made in the ice cube trays from your refrigerator. Instructions appear below.

GINGER PEACH ICE CREAM

To make about 1½ quarts
4 cups heavy cream
¾ cup sugar
¼ tsp. salt
1½ tsp. vanilla extract
6 medium-sized firm ripe peaches
½ cup crystallized ginger, coarsely chopped

In a heavy two- to three-quart saucepan, heat one cup of the cream, the sugar and salt over low heat, stirring until the sugar is dissolved. Do not let the mixture come to a boil. Pour the cream mixture into a deep bowl, stir in the remaining three cups of cream and the vanilla, and refrigerate until chilled.

Meanwhile, drop the peaches, three or four at a time, into enough boiling water to cover them completely and boil briskly for two to three minutes. With a slotted spoon, transfer the peaches to a

sieve or colander and run cold water over them. Peel the peaches with a small sharp knife, halve them and discard the stones, then chop the fruit coarsely. Cover with foil or plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to use.

Pack a two-quart ice cream freezer with layers of finely crushed or cracked ice and coarse salt in the proportions recommended by the freezer manufacturer. Add cold water if the manufacturer advises it. Then ladle the chilled cream mixture into the ice cream can and cover it.

If you have a hand ice cream maker, fill it with the chilled cream mixture and let it stand for three or four minutes before beginning to turn the handle. Then, beginning slowly at first, crank continuously for about five minutes. Stir in the peaches and ginger and crank for 10 to 15 minutes more. Do

not stop turning at any time or the ice cream may be lumpy.

When the handle can barely be moved, the ice cream is ready to serve. If you wish to keep it for an hour or two, remove the lid and dasher. Scrape the ice cream off the dasher and pack it firmly into the container with a spoon. Cover securely, pour off any water in the bucket and repack the ice and salt solidly around it.

If you have an electric ice cream maker, fill the can with the chilled cream mixture, cover it, turn on the switch and let the mixture churn for about five minutes. Stir in the peaches and ginger, cover again and continue to churn for about 10 to 15 minutes more, or until the motor slows or actually stops. Serve the ice cream immediately or follow the procedure above to keep it for an hour or two.

Lacking an ice cream maker, stir the peaches and ginger into the chilled cream mixture and pour the mixture into two ice cube trays from which the dividers have been removed. Spread the ice cream evenly and smooth the top with a rubber spatula. Freeze for three to four hours, stirring every 30 minutes or so and scraping into the ice cream the ice particles that form around the edges of the tray.

Tightly covered, the ice cream may safely be kept in the freezing compartment of the refrigerator for several weeks. Before serving, place it in the refrigerator for 20 to 30 minutes to let it soften slightly so that it can more easily be served.

Letters and recipes are welcomed and should be addressed to Vivian Byrd, P.O. Box 1024, Birmingham, 48012.



A Question of Taste

By Hilary Keating Callaghan

How does Molly's garden grow? Sensationally

I have always been fascinated with gardens of all kinds: formal English gardens, serene Japanese gardens, lush vegetable gardens, fragrant herb gardens, vibrant wildflower gardens. Gardens seem ideal spots for retreating from the world. The perfect garden should be surrounded by a wall and offer shade in which to read a book, undisturbed.

I should hasten to point out that I am not a gardener myself. A real gardener does all the "ant" work — working the soil when it is still cold enough to freeze your fingers, mulching, composting, weeding, spraying, fertilizing, transplanting, thinning and whatever else gardeners do. I actually wouldn't mind any of those chores once. It's just that gardens have the effrontery to demand this kind of care daily — in frigid weather, in blistering heat, and, worst of all, when you just did it yesterday.

Even harvesting is not unadulterated pleasure. Plants have their own time schedules which don't allow for vacations, shortages of canning jars, in-disposition of the gardener or other calamities. Left on the vine even a day too long, berries are eaten by birds, vegetables pass their prime, and flowers to go seed.

A REAL GARDENER has to not only endure but enjoy these inconveniences. I know such a gardener, Molly Hudson, and was recently treated to a long, fascinating tour of her gardens — vegetable, herb, and flower — which included a generous sampling of her harvest. Since she uses intensive planting methods, there was a tremendous amount growing in relatively limited space. Even more impressive than the quantity was the variety of plants. The vegetables alone ranged from the popular Big Boy tomatoes and sugar snap peas to such exotic items as jicama and Egyptian onions.

An accomplished, creative cook as well as a knowledgeable and successful gardener, Molly finds it incredible that I have devoted so much time to vegetarian cooking without ever growing my own vegetables and herbs. I find it equally incredible that anyone can successfully work full time, cook superbly, and garden prolifically. I've actually always envisioned myself turning to

gardening as a hobby in my dotage, wearing a large, floppy-brimmed sun-bonnet over my white hair.

Actually, Molly is right. The taste of vegetables fresh from her garden confirmed what I already knew. There is no comparison between anything purchased in a grocery store — even in season — and the same food, fresh picked from a garden.

IN ORDER TO make maximum use of this freshness, I rushed home with a basket of Molly's vegetables and herbs and immediately set to work sampling them in a variety of dishes. The cucumbers (Green Ice) and fresh dill, of course, combined in a cool, refreshing salad. The fresh savory found its way into an unusual turnip omelet from Richard Olney's Simple French Cooking. The Swiss chard did double duty. Raw, it was mixed with Romaine (also fresh from the garden) in a delicious tossed salad. Since chard has a very strong, distinctive flavor, it should be used with discretion in any salad.

This distinctive flavor works well when it is not competing with other flavors, as in Stuffed Chard Leaves, the dish which used the remaining larger Swiss chard leaves. The filling in this particular recipe is a rice pilaf. Another time you might want to wrap the chard leaves around a wheat pilaf or even fish. Steamed on top of the stove, stuffed chard makes a lovely, light summer entree without ever having to heat your oven.

If you don't have a garden of your own, a visit to a local farmers' market, in the cool of early morning, would be a satisfactory alternative source of fresh produce. This actually seems like a cheater's method — a way of enjoying the "grasshopper" pleasures without the "ant" work. If it assuages anyone's conscience, by such cheating, the non-gardener misses out on such pleasures as long, winter's evenings spent with seed catalogues or, as Molly puts it, "laying back like a princess and braiding onion tops" — simple pleasures rarely experienced in a technological, fast-paced society.

CUCUMBERS IN SOUR CREAM

4 to 5 medium cucumbers
1½ tsp. salt
2 tsp. sour cream

Curried shrimp with hot marmalade soy dip is an old-fashioned recipe with an up-to-date flair. The shrimp are broiled with a savory butter that has a hint of curry to create an aromatic air and an exotic taste.

Complement the hot, crispy shrimp with a tangy dip, a combination of marmalade, lemon juice, soy sauce, garlic and a dash of ginger. This unusual taste treat is sure to rate raves from guests and family.

CURRIED SHRIMP WITH HOT MARMALADE SOY SAUCE

2 pkg. (10 oz. each) frozen breaded shrimp
¼ cup butter or margarine
1 tsp. curry powder
Hot Marmalade Soy Dip (recipe follows)

1 tbsp. chopped chives
2 tsp. chopped fresh dill
1 clove garlic, put through a press
fresh-ground black pepper

Peel the cucumbers, quarter them lengthwise, and scrape out the seeds. Now slice the long strips at an angle, into even little disks. Add the salt, mix well, and set aside for 1 hour. Then rinse the cucumbers thoroughly and press out excess liquid.

Stir in the sour cream, chives, dill, garlic, and enough fresh-ground black pepper to suit you. Chill at least 1 hour, stir again, and serve. Serves 4 to 6. (from *The Vegetarian Epicure* by Anna Thomas)

SAVORY TURNIP OMELET

1 lb. turnips (young and tender)
Salt
¼ cup butter
1 tsp. fresh savory leaves, finely chopped
3 eggs
¼ cup chopped parsley
Pepper
2 tsp. olive oil

Peel the turnips, grate coarsely and leave in salted layers. After ½ hour, drain well, wrap in a clean, absorbent towel and squeeze out any remaining liquid. Cook in the butter sprinkled with the savory over low heat until tender, about 15 minutes. Stir frequently. Test for salt, adding more if necessary.

Stir together the eggs, parsley, and a generous grinding of black pepper. Add the turnips, a little at a time if they are still hot, beating them in with a fork.

Pour the mixture into an omelet pan in which the olive oil has been heated. Stir for a moment. Cook over low heat for about 5 minutes. Using a flexible spatula, flip the omelet and continue cooking until just set. (May add chopped black olives) 2 servings. (from *Simple French Food* by Richard Olney)

STUFFED CHARD LEAVES

16 large leaves Swiss chard
2½ cups cooked brown rice
1 onion, chopped
¼ cup oil
1½ cups low-fat cottage cheese
1 egg, beaten

Cream together butter or margarine and curry powder. Spread curry butter over both sides of frozen shrimp. Arrange on shallow baking pan. Broil about three inches from heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until hot and browned, turning once. Serve with hot marmalade dip. Makes six servings.

HOT MARMALADE SOY DIP

¼ cup orange marmalade
¼ cup lemon juice
¼ cup soy sauce
1 clove garlic, minced
Dash ginger
1 tsp. cornstarch

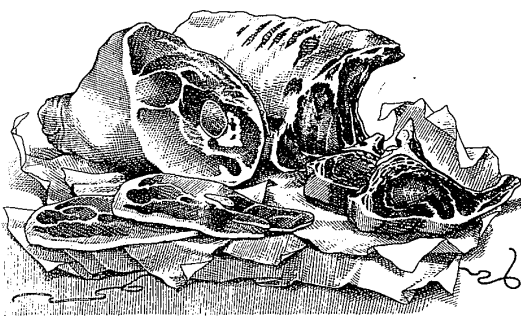
Combine ingredients; mix well. Cook, stirring constantly until clear and thickened. Makes three-fourths cup dip.

1½ cup chopped parsley
¾ cup raisins
1 tsp. dill weed
¾ tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 350. Saute onion in oil. Mix all ingredients except chard.

Wash and dry chard leaves and remove stems. Place 2 tablespoons of filling on the underside of the leaf, a third of the way from the bottom. Fold over the sides of the leaf and roll up into a square packet. Place seam-side down in a greased casserole. Cover and bake for about

30 minutes, or steam in a steamer basket over boiling water until the leaves are tender, about 20 minutes. Bake any extra filling and serve with stuffed leaves. Serves 6 to 8. (from *Laurel's Kitchen* by Laurel Robertson, Carol Flinders, and Bronwen Godfrey)



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Shrimp
broiled
with hint
of curry