

Monday, March 15, 1982

It's a bright Irish feast for St. Paddy's Day

Whether you observe St. Patrick's Day by simply "wearing the green" or by going all out with a day of parades and parties, an Irish-style dinner shared with family and friends will make the celebration complete. All eyes will be smiling when the traditional corned beef or beef stew is selected to head the menu.

Flavorsome corned beef brisket is always a March 17th favorite, and will be especially enjoyed when crowned with a crispy sweet-sour topping. Traditional corned beef accompaniments of potatoes and cabbage are given untraditional, but delicious, treatment when combined in Paddy's Potato Cups.

"Pear"fection Cheesecake is a most appropriate dessert for the day, or for any other special meal. It features a crunchy nut crust and a fluffy no-bake filling that's easily made with unflavored gelatine. Chopped canned Bartlett pears add refreshing flavor to the smooth filling while crème de menthe pears form a festive shamrock to top it all off.

You don't have to be Irish to appreciate the outstanding qualities of Emerald Isle Beef Stew. Universally appealing is the colorful combination of tender beef strips, rutabaga, parsnips, onions and Brussels sprouts. The stew can start with a boneless beef chuck steak, or even more economically with beef for stew, cut into thin pieces.

In keeping with the spirit of the day serve Shamrock Pear Salads. Tasty canned Bartlett pear halves decorated with green pepper shamrocks are arranged over green salads and topped with a zesty Parsley Dressing.

Corned Beef with Crispy Topping

- 3 to 4-pound corned beef brisket
Water
1 medium onion, studded with 4 whole cloves
4 peppercorns
- 1/2 teaspoon celery seed
1/2 cup apple jelly
1 tablespoon water
1-1/4 teaspoons cider vinegar
1-1/4 cups crushed crisp rice cereal

Place corned beef brisket in Dutch oven; add water to cover, the onion, peppercorns and celery seed. Cover tightly and simmer 3 to 4 hours or until meat is tender. Heat apple jelly, 1 tablespoon water and vinegar in 2-quart saucepan until jelly is melted, stirring constantly. Stir in rice cereal. Remove brisket from cooking liquid; place flat side up, on rack in roasting pan. Spread cereal mixture over top of brisket. Bake in moderate oven (350°F.) 10 minutes. Carve diagonally across the grain into thin slices.

Microwave Directions: Place corned beef brisket in large cooking bag. Cut onion in half lengthwise. Add onion halves, 1/2 cup water, peppercorns and celery seed to bag. Close bag loosely, securing with 1/2-inch strip cut from open end of bag. Place brisket in microwave-safe utility dish. Microwave at 30 percent power (200 watts) 2 to 2-1/2 hours, depending upon size of brisket. Turn bag and rotate dish 1/4 turn every 30 minutes. Let brisket stand 10 minutes in bag. Meanwhile, place apple jelly, 1 tablespoon water and vinegar in 1-quart glass measure and microwave at High 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds. Stir in cereal. Remove brisket from bag; place in utility dish. Spread cereal mixture over top. Microwave at High 30 seconds.

"Pear"fection Cheesecake

- 1 can (29 ounces) Bartlett pear halves, drained (reserve 1-1/4 cups syrup)
2 envelopes unflavored gelatine
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)
3 eggs, separated
2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1 cup (1/2 pint) whipping or heavy cream, whipped
Crunchy Nut Crust*
2 tablespoons green crème de menthe liqueur (optional)

Reserve 3 pear halves and 1-inch pear slice for garnish; chop remaining. In medium saucepan, mix unflavored gelatine with sugar and salt; blend in egg yolks beaten with 1 cup reserved syrup and lemon juice. Let stand 1 minute. Stir over low heat until gelatine is completely dissolved, about 5 minutes. Pour into large bowl; with electric mixer, beat in cream cheese and lemon peel until smooth. Chill, stirring occasionally, until mixture mounds slightly when dropped from spoon. In medium bowl, beat egg whites until stiff. Fold egg whites, then whipped cream and chopped pears into gelatine mixture. Turn into prepared crust; chill until firm. Meanwhile, in small bowl, toss reserved pears with liqueur and remaining reserved syrup. Let stand, stirring occasionally, about 30 minutes; drain. To serve, arrange pears on cheesecake to form "shamrock". 12 servings.

Note: For an all-occasion cheesecake, slice reserved pear halves and garnish in any pattern.

*Crunchy Nut Crust: In small bowl, combine 1-1/4 cups vanilla wafer crumbs, 1/4 cup each finely chopped nuts, sugar and melted butter or margarine. Press onto bottom of 9-inch spring form pan; chill.



Paddy's Potato Cups

- 1 small onion, chopped
1/4 cup butter or margarine
2 cups (1/2 small head) shredded cabbage
2 medium carrots, grated (1 cup)
- 1/2 cup water
1/3 cup chopped green pepper
4 warm baked potatoes
1 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon white pepper

Cook onion in butter or margarine 1 to 2 minutes. Add cabbage, carrots and water; cover and simmer 8 to 10 minutes. Add green pepper and cook 4 to 5 minutes. Meanwhile, cut baked potatoes crosswise in half. Scoop out pulp, leaving 1/4-inch shells. Mash potatoes, season with salt and pepper; stir into vegetables. Fill potato cups with vegetable mixture and heat in a moderate oven (350°F.) 12 minutes. Yield: 8 potato cups.

Microwave Directions: Place butter or margarine and onion in a 7 x 11-3/4-inch baking dish; cover with plastic wrap and microwave at High 2 minutes. Stir in cabbage and carrots, cover, and microwave at High 4 minutes, stirring after 2 minutes. Stir in green pepper and seasoned mashed potatoes. Fill potato cups with vegetable mixture. Cover with plastic wrap, vented at corner and microwave at High 4 minutes, rotating dish 1/2 turn after 2 minutes.

Emerald Isle Beef Stew

- 1-1/2 to 2 pounds boneless beef chuck steak, cut 1 inch thick
3 tablespoons flour
1-3/4 teaspoons salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
2 tablespoons cooking fat
1-1/4 cups water
1 clove garlic, minced
1/8 teaspoon crushed fennel**
- Dash nutmeg
1 small rutabaga, pared, cut into 1-inch pieces
3 medium parsnips, pared, cut into 1/2-inch slices
1 large onion, cut into 8 wedges
1 package (12 ounces) frozen Brussels sprouts

Partially freeze steak to firm and slice across grain into strips 1/2 inch x 2 1/2 inches. Combine flour, salt and pepper; dredge meat. Brown in cooking fat in large frying-pan or Dutch oven. Pour off drippings. Add water, garlic, fennel and nutmeg. Cover tightly and cook slowly 1 hour. Add rutabaga and continue cooking, covered, 10 minutes. Add parsnips and onion; cover, and continue cooking 23 to 30 minutes or until meat is tender and vegetables are done. Cook Brussels sprouts according to package directions; drain. Stir Brussels sprouts into stew just before serving. 6 servings.

*Beef for stew, cut in pieces 1/2 inch thick, can be used.

**Fennel may be ground in a pepper mill.

Shamrock Pear Salads

- 1 can (29 ounces) Bartlett pear halves
Parsley Dressing*
6 cups torn lettuce
- 3/4 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
6 to 8 green pepper rings, 1/4-inch thick

Drain pears; reserve 1/4 cup syrup for dressing. Prepare Parsley Dressing. Toss lettuce and cheese with 1/3 to 1/2 cup dressing. Mound one cup lettuce on each of six individual salad plates. Top lettuce with pear half, cut side up. Cut each green pepper ring at natural indentations. Arrange 3 pieces in shamrock shape on top of each pear half. Use 3/4-inch piece of pepper for stem. Spoon remaining dressing inside Shamrock shapes.

*Parsley Dressing

- 1/3 cup oil
1/3 cup white wine vinegar
1/4 cup reserved pear syrup
1-1/2 tablespoons minced parsley
- 1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1/4 teaspoon tarragon leaves, crushed
Dash pepper

Combine oil, vinegar, pear syrup, parsley, salt, dry mustard, tarragon and pepper; mix well. Yield: 1 cup dressing.

Irish Coffee Dessert

- 2 envelopes unflavored gelatine
1 cup cold milk
1 cup milk, heated to boiling
2/3 cup sugar
2 tablespoons instant coffee powder
- 2 tablespoons Irish whiskey
2 tablespoons crème de cacao
1 cup (1/2 pint) whipping or heavy cream
1 cup ice cubes (to 8)

In 5-cup blender container, sprinkle unflavored gelatine over cold milk; let stand 3 to 4 minutes. Add hot milk and process at low speed until gelatine is completely dissolved, about 2 minutes. Add sugar, coffee powder, whiskey, crème de cacao and cream; process at high speed until blended. Add ice cubes, one at a time; process at high speed until ice is melted. Pour into Irish coffee mugs or dessert dishes; chill until set. Garnish, if desired, with additional whipped cream and chocolate curls. Yield: 6 desserts.

