

Holidays: Nostalgic Times For Desserts

There's no place like home for the holidays. It's a time to open up your home to welcome family and friends. It's a time to share news about recent events, to reminisce about past holidays and to create new memories for the future. Holidays and hospitality go hand in hand. And there's nothing quite so welcoming as an array of festive holiday foods, including an enticing buffet of holiday desserts.

Dazzle your guests with a collection of classic chocolate and coconut confections. Taking the star role in our buffet is an old favorite — Southern Chocolate Pecan Pie. This delectable pie is chock-full of fresh, chewy pecans and rich Baker's German's sweet chocolate. It's cradled in a flaky homemade pie crust and garnished with a lattice of Coffee-Flavored Topping — a welcoming combination of flavors that's sure to be a hit!

For a change of pace, offer your visitors slices of Carrot Coconut Cake with a Coconut Cream Cheese Frosting. This 9-inch tube cake is moist, light and full of the sensational flavors of freshly grated carrots, crushed pineapple, spicy cinnamon and flaked coconut. It's the addition of Baker's Angel Flake coconut, full of real cream of coconut, that steals the scene. Blended with the cake mixture just before baking, the coconut flakes add a sweet and crunchy touch that's irresistible. And what could be more appealing than a rich Coconut Cream Cheese Frosting that's crowned with more coconut.

Top off your buffet with an assortment of chocolate truffles. They're quick, easy-to-serve treats that will delight one and all. Two special recipes are particularly impressive — Orange Truffle Cups and Chocolate-Coated Almond Truffles. The Orange Truffle Cups are a sweet, nutty candy given a tangy twist by the addition of orange liqueur and orange rind. This wonderful chocolate concoction is spooned or piped into chilled Bonbon Chocolate Crinkle Cups made with Baker's semi-sweet chocolate. The Chocolate-Coated Almond Truffles combine the flavors and textures of both chocolate and almonds. The truffles are shaped into balls, rolled on a bed of ground almonds, chilled and coated with melted semi-sweet chocolate.

No chocolate lover or coconut connoisseur will be able to resist such an extraordinary collection of holiday desserts. There's something for everyone to enjoy over after-dinner coffee and tea or during an afternoon family gathering to talk over old times. These desserts will make this holiday season something to remember, something they'll talk about for many holidays to come.



Carrot Coconut Cake

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 2-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
 - 2 teaspoons cinnamon
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 cup oil
 - 2 cups sugar
 - 3 eggs
 - 1 can (8 or 8-1/4 oz.) crushed pineapple
 - 2 cups grated carrots
 - 1-1/3 cups (about) flaked or shredded coconut
 - 1/2 cup chopped nuts
- Coconut Cream Cheese Frosting

Combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Beat oil, sugar and eggs until well blended. Add flour mixture and beat until smooth. Add undrained pineapple, carrots, coconut and nuts. Pour into greased 9-inch tube pan. Bake at 350° for 1 hour 10 minutes to 1 hour 20 minutes, or until cake tester inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes. Remove from pan and finish cooling on rack. Frost with Coconut Cream Cheese Frosting.

Alternate Baking Pan:

One 13 x 9-inch pan for 50 to 60 minutes.

In high altitude areas, increase flour to 2-1/4 cups; reduce baking soda to 2-1/4 teaspoons, sugar to 1-3/4 cups and oil to 3/4 cup; add 1 tablespoon water with the eggs.

Coconut Cream Cheese Frosting. Sauté 1 cup flaked coconut in 1-1/2 tablespoons butter or margarine until golden brown, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; spread on absorbent paper and cool. Cream 1/4 cup butter or margarine and 1 package (3 oz.) cream cheese, softened, until smooth. Add 3 cups sifted confectioners sugar and 1 tablespoon milk alternately, in small amounts, beating well after each addition. Blend in 1/2 teaspoon vanilla. Add half the coconut; spread on cake and sprinkle with remaining coconut. Makes about 2-1/2 cups.

Southern Chocolate Pecan Pie

- 1 package (4 oz.) sweet cooking chocolate
- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1 teaspoon instant quality coffee
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup coarsely chopped pecans
- 1 unbaked 9-inch Pie Shell
- Coffee-Flavored Topping

Melt chocolate and butter in saucepan over very low heat, stirring constantly until smooth. Stir in coffee. Remove from heat. Combine sugar and syrup in saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Reduce heat and boil gently for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; add chocolate mixture. Pour slowly over eggs, stirring constantly. Stir in vanilla and pecans. Pour into pie shell. Bake at 375° for 45 to 60 minutes, or until filling is completely puffed across top. Cool. Garnish with Coffee-Flavored Topping and pecan halves, if desired.

Pie Shell. Measure 1-1/4 cups flour and 1/2 teaspoon salt into bowl. Lightly cut in 1/2 cup shortening with a pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse meal. Gradually sprinkle in 3 tablespoons (about) cold water, mixing lightly with pastry blender or a fork until all particles are moistened and cling together when pastry is pressed into a ball. Cover with a damp cloth and let stand a few minutes. On lightly floured board roll pastry thin (less than 1/8 inch). Line a 9-inch pie pan. Trim pastry 1 inch larger than pan and fold under to form a standing rim. Flute edge.

Coffee-Flavored Topping. Combine 1 teaspoon instant quality coffee, 1/2 cup heavy cream, 1 tablespoon sugar and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla in a chilled bowl. Whip just until soft peaks will form. Makes 1 cup.

Truffles

- 3 squares semi-sweet chocolate
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 egg yolk
- 2/3 cup sifted confectioners sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup finely chopped nuts or toasted flaked coconut

Melt chocolate in saucepan over very low heat, stirring constantly; cool. Cream butter with egg yolk. Gradually add sugar, blending well. Stir in chocolate and vanilla. Chill until firm enough to handle. Shape into 1-inch balls. Roll in nuts; chill. Store in refrigerator. Makes about 30 candies.

Note: Use clean egg with no cracks in shell.

Orange Truffle Cups. Prepare truffles as directed, adding 1 to 2 tablespoons orange liqueur and 1/4 teaspoon grated orange rind with the vanilla and omitting nuts. Spoon or pipe mixture into Bonbon Chocolate Crinkle Cups. Chill.

Bonbon Chocolate Crinkle Cups. Melt 6 squares semi-sweet chocolate and 2 tablespoons butter or margarine in saucepan over very low heat, stirring constantly. Spread chocolate over inside of 30 paper or aluminum foil bonbon cups, using a spoon to cover entire surface with a thin layer. Chill until firm, about 1 hour. Remove foil cups. Fill with Orange Truffle mixture.

Chocolate-Coated Almond Truffles. Prepare Truffles as directed, adding 2 tablespoons finely ground almonds and 1/4 teaspoon almond extract with the vanilla and using 1/4 cup ground almonds for the nuts. Shape truffle mixture into balls; dip bottoms into ground almonds. Place on rack and chill. Partially melt 5 squares semi-sweet chocolate in saucepan over very low heat, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir until completely melted. Spoon over truffles to cover tops and sides. Then drizzle any remaining chocolate from a fork to make design over tops. Chill.