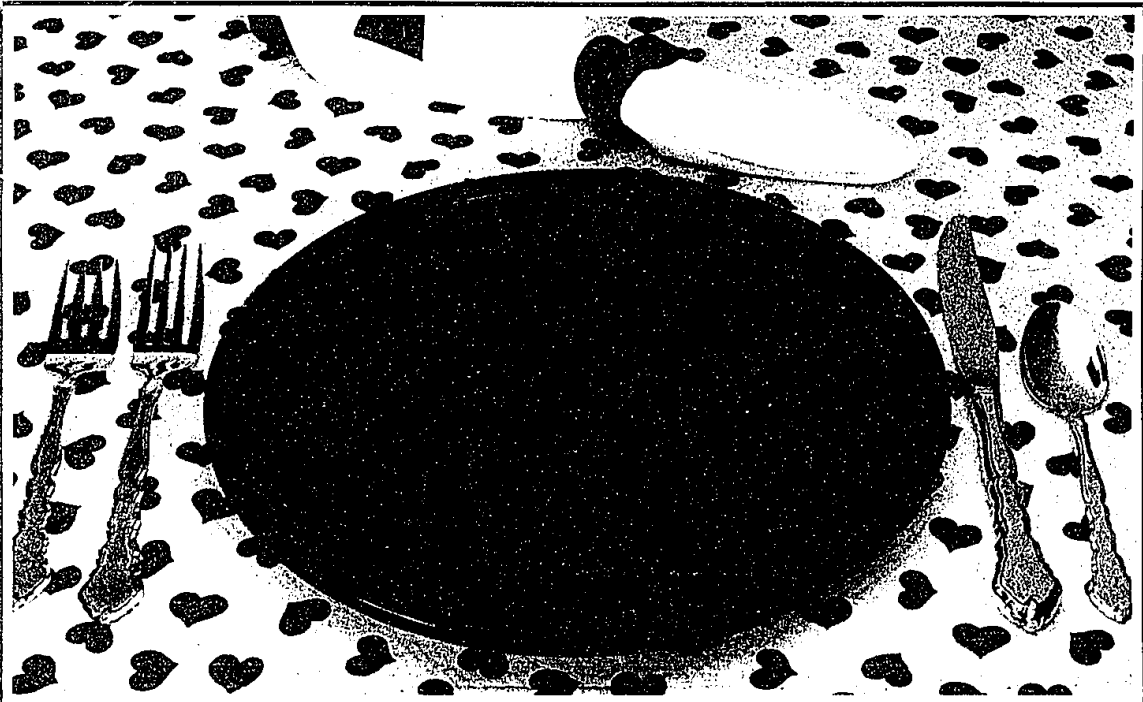


A L I T T L E Romance



Dinner for 2: It'll be love at first sight

The tradition of Valentine's Day is centuries old. Hearts- and cupid-decorated cards, flowers and chocolate are typical expressions of affection, but this year, why not show your Valentine your love by preparing this special meal?

The first course in this Valentine's special is a glamorous grapefruit-cherry soup, served either hot or cold, swirled with a dollop of cream fraiche. The cherries enhance the citrus and vice versa; it will be dazzling in white, unpatterned china.

Roast Pork Tenderloin with Green Peppercorn Sauce is an elegant entree. Served with sliced pineapple and steamed spinach, it's sure to please the discriminating palate. And the Parsled New Potatoes are a fresh and colorful accompaniment to the roast pork.

To top off a special meal, there are several choices of special endings.

photo illustration
by Jerry Zolynsky
text by Diane Frea

Menu

- Grapefruit Soup Cerise with Creme Fraiche
- Roast Pork Tenderloin with Green Peppercorn Sauce
- Parsled New Potatoes
- Dessert of choice (see below)

GRAPEFRUIT SOUP CERISE

1 can (21 oz.) cherry pie filling
1 cup grapefruit juice
3 Tbsp. cherry-flavored liqueur
¼ tsp. ground cardamom
¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground mace
2 cups grapefruit sections

In a large saucepan, stir together cherry pie filling, grapefruit juice, liqueur and spices. Bring to a boil. Stir in grapefruit sections. Remove from heat. Serve hot or cold with Creme Fraiche, if desired.

CREME FRAICHE

½ cup heavy cream (not ultra-pasteurized)

½ cup dairy sour cream

In a small bowl, stir together heavy cream and sour cream; cover loosely with plastic wrap and let stand at room temperature overnight or until thickened. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours before serving.

ROAST PORK TENDERLOIN WITH GREEN PEPPERCORN SAUCE

1 pork tenderloin, about 1 lb. each
2 slices bacon
¼ fresh pineapple or 1 (4 oz.) can sliced pineapple
½ Tbsp. butter or margarine
¼ cup sugar
¼ cup white wine vinegar
¼ cup chicken broth

½ tsp. green peppercorns in vinegar
½ Tbsp. cornstarch
¼ Tbsp. cold water
½ lb. spinach

Place tenderloin in open roasting pan; criss-cross bacon slices over it. Bake in a 400 degree oven for 35 minutes or till meat thermometer reaches 165 degrees. Pare fresh pineapple and slice into ½-inch slices. In a 10-inch skillet melt butter. Saute pineapple; remove. Add sugar to skillet and cook over medium heat till caramelized, about 5 minutes. Add vinegar and chicken broth; bring to boiling and cook till sugar dissolves. (If using canned pineapple, drain and add juice to chicken broth.) Add peppercorns and boil rapidly to reduce to about ½ cup. Combine cornstarch and cold water; stir into hot mixture. Cook and stir till thickened and

bubbly. Season with salt, if desired. Steam spinach and keep warm. To serve, slice tenderloin and serve with pineapple and spinach. Spoon peppercorn sauce on top.

PARSLED NEW POTATOES

12 small new potatoes
boiling salted water
¼ cup butter or margarine
1-2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
¼ Tbsp. snipped fresh dill
OR ½ tsp. dried dill weed

Remove about 1-inch strip of peel from around center of each potato. Cook potatoes in boiling salted water for 15-20 minutes or until tender; drain. Add butter; toss to coat until butter is melted. Add parsley and dill; toss.

Special sweet treats for your special Valentine

STRAWBERRY 'CREAM' PIE

Whole Wheat Pastry (recipe follows)
1 pint fresh strawberries, divided
¼ cups chilled orange juice, divided
2 Tbsp. sugar
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
½ cup nonfat dry milk
2 tsp. grated orange peel
3 Tbsp. safflower oil

Roll Whole Wheat Pastry between 2 sheets of wax paper into an 11- or 12-inch circle. Peel off top sheet of paper; invert pastry into an 8- or 9-inch pie pan; peel off remaining paper. Fit into pan. Flute edges and prick with fork lines. Refrigerate for 1 hour. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place a 12-inch square of aluminum foil on pastry; fill with dried beans or rice. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove foil and beans. Bake until firm, about 5 minutes. Set aside to cool. Hull strawberries. Place in the container of an electric blender. Whirl until smooth, stopping blender and scraping down sides of container if needed; set aside. Chill the small bowl and beaters of an electric mixer.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine ¼ cup of the orange juice and sugar; sprinkle with gelatin. Soften for one minute. Stir over medium heat until sugar and gelatin are dissolved. Cool to room temperature. Place nonfat dry milk and remaining

½ cup orange juice in the chilled bowl. Beat at high speed until soft peaks form. Slowly add gelatin mixture and orange peel, beat until smooth, about 2 minutes. Slowly beat in safflower oil. Fold in pureed strawberries. Refrigerate until mixture mounds on a spoon. Turn into baked pie shell. Refrigerate until firm. Garnish with strawberry halves and mint leaves, if desired. (Filling also may be spooned into dessert glasses instead of pie shell.)

WHOLE WHEAT PASTRY

½ cup unsifted whole wheat flour
¼ cup unsifted all-purpose flour
¼ tsp. salt
3 Tbsp. safflower oil
3 ½ Tbsp. warm water
1 Tbsp. lemon juice

In a medium bowl, mix whole wheat and all-purpose flours and salt. Make a well. Combine safflower oil, water and lemon juice. Pour into well. Stir just until flour is moistened, adding more water if needed. Form into a ball.

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CUPS

¼ cup semi-sweet chocolate pieces
2 tsp. margarine
½ cup miniature marshmallows
3 Tbsp. milk
¼ cup semi-sweet chocolate pieces
1 3-oz. package cream cheese,

softened
1 Tbsp. orange-flavored liqueur
½ cup thawed whipped topping

Melt ¼ cup chocolate pieces with margarine over low heat, stirring until smooth. Pour mixture into two paper baking cups. With back of spoon, spread chocolate mixture evenly up sides of baking cups. Refrigerate at least 1 hour.

Melt marshmallows, milk and chocolate pieces over low heat, stirring until smooth. Chill until slightly thickened; mix well until blended. Combine cream cheese and liqueur; mix at medium speed on electric mixer until well blended. Beat in marshmallow mixture. Fold in whipped topping. Peel paper baking cups from chocolate cups. Spoon marshmallow mixture into chocolate cups; chill.

PRALINE PECAN PIE

2 eggs
1 cup sugar
¼ cup cornstarch
½ cup butter or margarine, melted
2 oz. praline-flavored liqueur
1 cup finely chopped pecans
6 oz. pkg. semi-sweet chocolate chips
9-inch unbaked pastry shell

Beat eggs slightly. Combine sugar

and cornstarch and gradually add to eggs, mixing well. Stir in melted butter or margarine. Add liqueur, pecans and chocolate chips. Pour into unbaked pastry shells. Bake in preheated 350 degree oven 45-50 minutes. Cool. Garnish with whipped cream or scoop of vanilla ice cream. Spoon 1 Tbsp. praline-flavored liqueur over all, if desired.

INDIVIDUAL STRAWBERRY TORTES

3 Tbsp. sugar
2 Tbsp. cornstarch
dash of salt
1 ½ cups milk
1 Tbsp. margarine
¼ tsp. vanilla
1 cup thawed whipped topping
2 sponge cake dessert cups, split horizontally
strawberry halves

Combine sugar, cornstarch and salt in saucepan; gradually add milk. Cook, stirring constantly, over medium heat until mixture is thickened. Boil 1 minute. Remove from heat; stir in margarine and vanilla. Cool; mix until well blended. Fold in whipped topping. For each serving, spread each cake layer with cream mixture; stack. Top with strawberries.

CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE

Crust:

1 cup graham cracker crumbs
2 Tbsp. sugar
3 Tbsp. butter, melted

Combine crumbs and sugar. Mix in butter until blended. Pat in bottom and sides of 7-inch tart pan with removable bottom. Bake in 400-degree oven 8 minutes until set and slightly browned. Cool.

Filling:
3 medium bananas, peeled
2 tsp. unflavored gelatin
2 Tbsp. golden rum
2 eggs separated
¼ cup chocolate syrup
¼ cup sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened

Puree one banana in blender. Soften gelatin in rum. Combine pureed banana, egg yolks, syrup and sugar in top of double boiler. Cook over boiling water 10-15 minutes, stirring, until mixture thickens. Stir in gelatin mixture until dissolved. Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla and cinnamon. Beat cream cheese. Beat in banana mixture. Cool until mounds on a spoon. Beat egg whites until stiff. Fold into chocolate filling. Pour into prepared crust. Refrigerate 2-3 hours or overnight. Slice remaining

bananas. Arrange over top. Garnish with shaved semi-sweet chocolate, if desired.

TOMATO SPICE CAKE

2 ½ cups cake flour or 2 cups all-purpose flour
½ tsp. ground cloves
1 can (10 ½ oz.) condensed tomato soup
¼ cup shortening
2 eggs
¼ cup water

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Generously grease and flour 2 ½-quart bundt pan, 2 round layer pans, 8 or 9 inches, or an oblong pan, 13X9X2. Measure dry ingredients into large bowl. Add soup and shortening. Beat at low to medium speed for 2 minutes, scraping sides and bottom of bowl constantly. Add eggs and water. Beat 2 minutes more, scraping bowl frequently. Pour into well-greased and lightly floured pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 50-60 minutes until done. Cool right side up in pan 15 minutes; remove from pan. Cool, if desired, sprinkle cake with confectioners' sugar.