

Jamaican fruitcake a touch of Caribbean

AP — Caribbean cuisine is the newest food import to catch America's fancy. Here's a luscious sample of that fruit-filled cooking style. This recipe, Jamaica's adaptation of the traditional fruitcake brought to the island by early English planters, is flavored with rum and allspice. Despite its name, allspice is not a blend but a single spice with a mellow, clove-like taste.

JAMAICAN BLACK FRUITCAKE
One 16-ounce carton, diced mixed candied fruits (2 1/2 cups)
One 12-ounce package pitted prunes, snipped (2 1/2 cups)
One 8-ounce package dried figs, snipped (1 1/2 cups)
One 8-ounce package pitted dates, snipped (1 and 1/2 cups)
1 cup raisins
1 1/2 cups dark rum
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup margarine or butter, softened
3 eggs
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
4 teaspoons ground allspice
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt

Kitchen 'helpers' are more of a hindrance

Continued from Page 1

Furthermore, this stunning little gadget is a nightmare (and I am not exaggerating) to clean because nothing is dishwasher-proof and you need a half dozen cotton swabs to clean around the rim.

LET'S NOT FORGET to mention the little plastic "blender tip" that comes off and gets lost all too easily, and a recipe that calls for making an authentic milkshake using real ice cream. In order to make the recipe, you must first "soften" the ice cream to a smooth consistency. What? I thought the box said, "20-second milkshake"?

You haven't even heard the best part of this little gem. The enclosed "gourmet recipe book" (?) includes a personal letter from the company's president, thanking you for your purchase and letting you know that the company is always interested in hearing your comments and suggestions.

I wrote Denver, twice. No response. I called Denver, 18 times.

Broccoli, rice casserole takes 6 minutes to cook

CREAMY BROCCOLI AND RICE
1/4 cup quick-cooking rice
1/4 cup water
One 10-ounce package frozen cut broccoli
1/4 cup chopped onion
1 tablespoon margarine or butter
1 teaspoon all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon finely shredded lemon peel
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/2 cup milk
3/4 cup shredded process Swiss or American cheese (3 ounces)
2 tablespoons broken pecans (optional)

In a 1-quart casserole combine rice and water. Place broccoli on top of rice mixture. Cook, according to the broccoli package microwave directions.

Let stand, covered, while preparing cheese sauce.

For sauce, in a 2-quart microwave-safe measure cook onion in margarine, uncovered, on high for 1 to 2 minutes or until onion is tender. Stir in flour, lemon peel and pepper. Stir in milk. Cook, uncovered, on high 1 to 2 minutes or until thickened and bubbly, stirring every 30 seconds. Stir in cheese until melted.

Drain broccoli-rice mixture if any water remains. In the 1-quart casserole stir together the broccoli-rice mixture and cheese sauce. Cook, uncovered, on high 1 to 2 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle with pecans, if desired. Makes 4 servings. Nutrition information per serving: 155 cal., 9 g pro., 11 g carbo., 9 g fat, 20 mg chol., 347 mg sodium.

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Salt has colorful history

The Bible speaks of the "salt of the earth" and the Greeks said a slave was "worth his weight in salt."

Salt has been used for bartering as pay. It has been fought over, taxed and used as one of the first medicines. Despite salt's colorful history, recent research has linked excessive salt consumption to hypertension.

Salt is sodium chloride. Common table salt is a chemical compound of 40 percent sodium and 60 percent chloride. It's the sodium in the salt that causes health problems for some people.

Sodium plays a major role in maintaining blood volume and pressure by attracting and holding water in the blood vessels. Sodium also plays a role in the transmission of nerve impulses and the contraction of muscles. It is essential for the absorption of glucose into cells and the transport of other nutrients across the cell membrane.

As valuable as sodium is, your body needs very little. It's not uncommon for people to consume as much as four teaspoons of salt daily when our needs could be met with about one teaspoon each day.

One teaspoon of salt contains about two thousand milligrams of sodium. The National Research Council indicates that a "safe and adequate" sodium intake per day is about 1,100 to 3,300 mg for an adult.

About one-fourth of the sodium intake comes from salt added to food. The rest comes from "hidden sources" — sodium that has been added to



Lois Thieleke

home economist, Cooperative Extension Service

products during processing to help preserve or flavor them. Learn to read the labels on food to identify words that mean salt or sources of sodium. These include leavening agents baking powder and baking soda, sodium nitrate, sodium phosphate, sodium ascorbate, soy sauce and monosodium glutamate (MSG), just to name a few. Avoid these products.

THE SALT SHAKER and seasoned salt are a main source of salt in our diets. These are probably the most obvious and overused sources. Many people develop a taste for salt when they are young. This is particularly true if children's foods are salted to adult's tastes. Our salty appetite is so ingrained that many people find unsalted food tasteless. The desire for salt is a learned taste and, therefore, one that can be unlearned.

Salt is second only to sugar as a food additive. Salt is added to many canned vegetables for flavor. If you enjoy canned foods, look for brands without added salt or try fresh or plain frozen vegetables. For example, one raw carrot contains 34 milli-

grams of sodium; 3.3 ounces of frozen contains 43 milligrams; one cup canned has 386 milligrams.

Smoked meats, cured products, hot dogs and canned fish are highly processed and high in sodium. In these, salt is used both as a flavoring and as curing agent. Fresh meat, fish and poultry are fairly low in sodium. Some canned fish are available packed without salt. Three ounces of raw shrimp contains 137 milligrams while three ounces of canned shrimp has 1,955 milligrams.

Pickles, olives and sauerkraut, whether purchased or homemade, are preserved in a salt-water brine and must be avoided by persons on sodium-restricted diets. With canned and dried soups, condiments and salad dressings, read the labels on these foods to determine if sodium is present. If sodium appears as one of the first few ingredients, it means the sodium content is high.

Baking soda and powder contain sodium bicarbonate. Baking powder and baking soda are viewed as leavening agents in purchased or homemade baked goods, such as cookies, cake and quick breads. Bak-

ing soda and powder contain sodium bicarbonate.

SODIUM ALSO is found in drinking water. Home water softeners will add sodium to your diet. This does not mean you must stop drinking water but if your sodium intake must be severely restricted, an alternative water supply may have to be used.

Low-sodium shopping and cooking need not be a difficult task. Start from scratch, then you are the one in charge of the amount of salt added. Three-fourths cup of regular cream of wheat contains two milligrams of sodium while 1/4 cup of mix-and-cream of wheat contains 350 milligrams.

Omit entirely or use only half of the salt called for in a recipe. Many recipes include salt as an ingredient for flavor only. Salt need not be added to cookies, cakes, pie crust or quick breads. Salt can also be omitted from home canned vegetables because it's used for flavor only and does not preserve the product in any way. The exception is a pickled product.

If you have been advised to "de-salt" your diet, it doesn't mean you're doomed to a cuisine of tasteless foods. Salt is only one in a world of seasonings. Remove the salt shaker from the kitchen and dining table. Forget the ritual of dumping salt on food before tasting. If the salt shaker isn't there, people can't reach for it.

Apple contest picks prizewinners

Twenty Detroit-area restaurants, as well as culinary schools and the general public, participated in the first Michigan Apple Cooking Contest, sponsored by the Michigan Apple Council.

A tasting and judging was held recently at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Southfield. Winner in the restaurant category was the London Chop House, chef Grant Brown, for Michigan Apple Tart with Caramel Sauce. Sweet Endings, chef David Sturm, took second place, for Sweet Endings Apple Pastries.

Culinary school winner was Deno Challen of Clawson, who attends the Southeast Oakland Vocational Education Center, for a Greek dish, Mitropoulakis Apple Feta Cheese Triangles. Other schools competing were Schoolcraft Community Col-

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lege and Livonia Franklin High School. The general public's award-winner was Frank Wozolek of Northville, for Venison Tosca with Braised Rum Apples.

All recipes submitted to the contest will be included in an apple cookbook, available in mid-April by writing to the Michigan Apple Council, in care Baker, Abbs, Cunningham & Klopinger Inc., 55 W. Maple, Birmingham 48011.

Other restaurants that took part in the contest were the Kingsley Inn, Golden Mushroom, the Whitney, the Money Tree, Pike Street Restaurant, Machus Sky Fox, Sebastian's, Midtown Cafe, 220 Merrill Street, Machus Red Fox, Chez Raphael, Van Dyke Place, Restaurant Duglass, Applecase, the Farm House, Beau Jack's, Charley's Restaurants and Diamond Jim Brady's.

Charley's offered this dessert recipe:

APPLE PAN DOWDY
Serves 6
12 slices bread, crusts removed
24 tsp. butter, soft
sugar

3 Granny Smith apples
6 tbsp. molasses
1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
3/4 tsp. nutmeg
6 tbsp. rum, dark
1 cup brown sugar
6 tbsp. lemon juice
3 tsp. vanilla

Butter one side of each slice of bread with four tablespoons of the butter. Sprinkle with the sugar. Place slice of bread, with sugar and butter side down, into individual dish. Mix together the molasses, cinnamon, nutmeg, rum, brown sugar, lemon juice and vanilla, and the remaining four tablespoons of butter. Toss in sliced apples. Put mixture into prepared pan. Top with remaining bread, leaving the butter/sugar side up. Bake in water bath at 375° 25-30 minutes.

new products

WunderBar, a gourmet cheese-cake on a stick, is now being sold in the Detroit area market.

This is the product's first time out of the Chicago market, where it has been sold for the last year. Expectations are that WunderBar will go national.

The wedge-shaped cheese-cake may be eaten right from the freezer.

It has a Dixie-cup-type spoon for a handle.

The cake has a Graham-cracker crust and is hand-dipped in a dark chocolate covering. Two four-ounce bars sell for \$2.98. If bars are sold individually, they retail for \$1.69 to \$1.79 each.

WunderBar may be purchased at Farmer Jack's or the Hollywood Market. It also is being sold through drug and convenience stores.

The bar, made from all natural milk preservatives, is available locally in original plain. Chicago also has a chocolate chip variety.

Cheese-cake is the No. One restaurant dessert. It surpasses apple pie. One of four restaurant desserts served is cheese-cake.

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