

Tea time is customary at Townsend Hotel

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powers tea's flavor, so they serve only milk with their tea — and so does the Townsend Hotel. Tea, of course, is the beverage of preference, but the Townsend also offers coffee, and guests may choose (a la carte) a glass of port, champagne or sherry before or after tea.

Tea hostess Palazzolo takes pride in making guests feel pampered, as she greets them and serves the three courses of traditional tea. First come the savories, which include an assortment of canapés and finger sandwiches such as the classic favor-

ites: cucumber and cream cheese, Scottish smoked salmon, and water-cress.

Because the Townsend staff chooses to honor tradition, the daily tea menu always includes some classic fare, but the chefs also like to vary the presentations day to day to offer something new to regulars. One day the seafood or chicken salad will be served as a puff pastry, another day in a croissant, or in filo nest.

Sandwiches and desserts may vary, but Scottish scones are always served as the second course of tea. To be authentic, blisquit-like scones

must be served with Devonshire cream and fresh fruit preserves. Pastry chef Don Palmer adds the sweet/tart flavor of dried cherries to his scones for a uniquely Michigan recipe praised by British guests who know a good scone when they bite into one. Devon cream is similar in consistency and flavor to sweet unsalted butter.

THE DESSERT course offers multiple selections prepared in the Townsend kitchens. Chocolate-dipped strawberries, small layered brownies, tea cakes and lemon curd tarts appear frequently on the tradi-

tional three-tiered plate used for the three courses of tea. This summer Palazzolo hopes to add cold soups and trifle to the tea menu.

Creating an authentic English tea has tapped the joint expertise and enthusiasm of the Townsend staff, from managing director Bonnie LePage to the chefs, Carol Haskins, Palmer and Kirsten Berwick, and tea hostess Palazzolo.

Everybody has a say in the joint venture, and they critique each other's suggestions. The Townsend continues to perfect its tea by renovating the Gallery to increase seating and by importing Irish linen

cloths for the tables, as well as specially ordering English teaspoons, which are smaller than what Americans call teaspoons and larger than demitasse spoons.

The surroundings and the tea service may be elegant, but the Townsend clearly sees itself as a neighborhood hotel, "so our lifestyle is more casual," Palazzolo says. "We're a luxury hotel, but we're not snobby or pretentious," and drop-in tea guests in casual clothes are welcome.

WOMEN WALK to the Townsend for tea after shopping in Birmingham, or come in their tennis clothes

after a game, and couples browsing the art galleries stop for tea on Saturdays to cap a civilized afternoon. Businessmen who want to meet clients in a relaxed setting are beginning to bring them to tea at the Townsend.

Tea is catching on as a way for Americans to entertain, and the Townsend books numerous tea parties and bridal showers. As much as we Americans pride ourselves on being a young, energetic nation with our eyes on the future, we're coming to appreciate the art, the detail and the timeless grace of the fine old custom of afternoon tea.

HERB CHICKEN NESTS

Chef Kirsten Berwick
the Townsend Hotel

Filling:
boneless whole chicken breasts, about 3 pounds
1/2 cup Greek or herb-type salad dressing
1/2 cup Miracle Whip salad dressing
1/2 cup sour cream
1 lemon
2 ribs of celery
2-3 radishes chopped small, but not quite minced
3-4 scallions
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary

Trim breast and toss with Greek

dressing to coat. Arrange chicken breast in a single layer in a large jelly-roll pan. Bake in a pre-heated oven for 20-30 minutes, or until done.

Remove from oven and cool in juices from cooking.
Chop meat into smallish bite-size pieces and transfer to a bowl. Squeeze 1/2 lemon over top of chicken and toss gently.

Whisk sour cream and salad dressing together in a small bowl and pour over chicken mixture. Add celery, radishes, scallions, basil, thyme, rosemary, and salt and pepper to taste, and toss well. Refrigerate for a couple of hours for the flavors to meld. Taste and correct seasoning before serving. Put a spoonful in each filo cup.

FILLO CUPS

Phyllo dough can be bought frozen in grocery stores.

Layer filo sheets on a cutting board. Use a pastry brush to paint melted butter in between each layer and on top layer. Four layers thick is needed for each cup. Trim around the edges so there are straight lines. Cut into 3-inch squares and very gently place into lightly buttered, mini-muffin pan.

Press to form bottom and sides, being careful not to poke through (this is the tricky part). Bake in 350-degree oven until golden brown — watch them. Fill on sheets of paper toweling. Cool filo nests with herbed chicken.

LEMON CURD

Chef Don Palmer
the Townsend Hotel

1 cup sugar
1 egg yolk
1/2 cup lemon juice
1/2 cup unsalted butter
lemon zest (thin strips of rind) from 3 lemons

Mix together sugar and yolks. Stir in fresh lemon juice and beat, stirring constantly in double boiler to 185 degrees or until mixture thickly coats back of spoon. Remove from heat, strain, stir in butter and lemon zest. Stir occasionally until butter is melted and incorporated. Chill thoroughly. May be served in a tart shell

or in a glass topped with fresh raspberries or as a spread. Makes approximately 4 servings.

GRAVLAX WITH DILL

Executive Chef Carol Haskins
the Townsend Hotel

a whole salmon fillet or a 2-pound piece of fillet (remove fins and bones but keep the skin on)
Per 2 pounds of salmon fillet use:
2 tablespoons sea salt
1 and 1/2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon freshly ground white pepper
1 bunch coarsely chopped dill with stems
4 teaspoons dry sherry or brandy (optional)

Mix the salt, sugar and pepper and rub the meat sides of the fish with the mixture. Place one of the sides in an elongated plastic or steel container, then sprinkle the dill over it. Moisten the fillet with sherry or brandy and place the other side on top with the skin side up. Cover container with clear cling wrap and weigh down fillet with plate to keep fish in brine.

Place the salmon in a cool (40-50 degree) location for 2-3 days. Turn the sides over twice daily and baste with the brine that forms. Cut the salmon on a slant in thin slices starting at the tail and serve with fresh butter, capers and onions on pumpernickel bread. Garnish with a sprig of fresh dill.

Be picky about strawberries

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Road, two miles west of Plymouth. Phone: 453-4439.

Sayre's Red Barn Market, on Ecorse Road, one mile west of Hagerly, Belleville. Phone: 397-2763.
Thornbollow Berry Farm, 16280 Martinsville Road, Belleville. Phone: 659-9080

Oakland County

Meyer Berry Farm, 48880 W. Eight Mile, Northville. Phone: 349-0289.

Middleton Berry Farm, 2120 Stony Creek Road, Lake Orion. Phone: 693-6018, 693-6124.

Ridgemere Berry Farm, 2824

Clyde Road, Highland. Phone: 887-5976.

The Seven Lakes Vineyards, 1111 Tinsman Road, Holly. Phone: 629-5686.

Spezia's Strawberries, 1220 Stony Creek Road, Lake Orion. Phone: 693-8434.

The Strawberry Patch, 2375 Wixom Road, Milford. Phone: 685-1393.

clarification

Due to a mechanical error, copy was missing from the recipe for Classic London Broil that accompanied Larry Jones' column last Monday. The complete recipe follows:

CLASSIC LONDON BROIL
Although many people think of London broil as a cut of meat, it is actually a way of cooking meat. A boneless piece of meat is marinated, broiled, then sliced into thin slices and is usually served with a mushroom sauce. Flank steak has traditionally been the best cut for London broil.

1 flank steak, 2-2 1/2 pounds
salt and pepper to taste
juice of 1 lemon
1 clove garlic, chopped fine

A boneless piece of meat is marinated, broiled, then sliced into thin slices and is usually served with a mushroom sauce.

1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1/2 teaspoon thyme or rosemary oil

Place the piece of meat in a dish or saucpan and season it with paprika, salt and pepper. Squeeze the lemon juice over it and then sprinkle with garlic, parsley, thyme

and rosemary. Wet the meat with oil, turning it several times. Marinate the meat in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours (the longer the better), then broil the steak in a preheated broiler. Place the steak on a cutting board and with a sharp knife, cut thin slices on the bias. Serve plain or with a mushroom sauce.

STRAWBERRY SUMMER SOUP

From "The Berry Book"
by Robert Henderson

2 pints strawberries
1 cup orange juice
1 1/2 teaspoons instant tapioca
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 cup buttermilk
2 cantaloupes chilled
4 thin slices of lemon

milk, blending well. Slice whole strawberries into soup and chill 8 hours. Serve in cantaloupe halves, floating a lemon slice in each. Serves 4.

EASY STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM

Without an ice cream maker
4 egg yolks
1 cup sugar
2 cups heavy cream
2 cups strawberry juice and pulp

Beat egg yolks with 1/4 cup sugar. Add remaining sugar to cream in saucepan and bring to boiling point over a medium flame. Stir cream gradually into egg and sugar mixture. Strain. Cool. Stir in strawberry juice and pulp. Freeze.

STRAWBERRY BUTTER

From May 1987 issue
Gourmet magazine

1 pint strawberries, hulled and sliced
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon grated lemon rind
1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter, softened

In a food processor or blender puree the strawberries, scraping down the sides, force the puree through a fine sieve into a small saucepan and pressing hard on the solids, and stir in the sugar and rind. Boil the mixture, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes and let it cool completely.

In a small bowl with an electric mixer, cream the butter, add the strawberry mixture a little at a time, beating, and beat the mixture until it is light and fluffy. Let the butter stand, covered, in a cool place for 1 hour. Serve the butter with croissants, English muffins, pancakes or waffles. The butter keeps covered and chilled, for one week.

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