

MONDAY, MAY 23, 1994

# TASTE

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## TASTE BUDDS



CHEF LARRY JAMES

## Book solves mysteries about processed foods

The Russian composer Peter Tchaikovsky always busy trying to get people to spell his name correctly - never got around to penning words to his "1812 Overture." Fortunately, someone else did. As any faithful viewer of the television show "Sky King" or "Rin Tin Tin" in the late 1950s remembers the words to the "1812 Overture" are "This is the cereal that's shot from guns!"

The commercial also showed a gun the size of a redwood tree booming forth enough Quaker Puffed Rice to feed the entire little league of the state of Michigan. Every kid knew how Quaker Puffed Rice was made, but today, even with television, newspapers magazines and CNN, there are still many mysteries.

Have you ever wondered how they get cheese into a squirt can? Where do candy canes get their even stripes? And the big one that's been perplexing me because I love them so much, how do M&M's get their "m's"?

**Mysteries solved**  
All of these questions, and more, are answered "Brands, Trademarks and Good Will" by Arthur Marquette. To answer the question about the puffed cereals, the device Quaker uses is dubbed "an automatically loaded, self-firing, multiple-barrel device" or in other words, a gun. When grain is placed under extremely high pressure and temperature, the moisture in the grain turns into a gas, causing the steam to explode out of the kernel. This in turn causes the rice, corn or wheat to puff.

When it comes to making those stripes on candy canes, one of the nation's largest makers of candy canes is Spangler Candy Cane Co. in Bryan, Ohio. Candy canes are made from a mixture of sugar, corn syrup and flavorings. The mixture is shaped into logs 3 feet long by one and one-half feet in diameter. The logs are taken to a striping table where trained workers apply red candy stripes to the sides of the logs by hand. Next, the logs are sent through a series of other machines that stretch and twist the candy into canes.

During the holiday season, Spangler produces more than 1.25 million candy canes a day, enough to make the James Gang family dentist choke on his dental floss.

The folks at Nabisco Brands surely know all about the science of making things work. Can you imagine the monumental task of producing more than 6 billion Oreo's per year? The process starts with mixing vats the size of bathtubs where dough for the cookie bases is mixed.

The dough moves up to another floor where it is passed through a cylindrical cookie cutter and stamped with the Oreo insignia. The cookies then move through ovens the size of a football field for baking. Then a machine drops the white cream filling onto the bottoms while the tops are flipped on. Then they're wrapped.

**Snack Mate**, another Nabisco specialty, is the cheese that's shot from cans instead of guns. To make this handy treat that sits on just about everyone's Ritz, Nabisco takes real cheddar cheese, grates it and mixes it with water, cream and emulsifiers to help keep it stable.

They cook it under steam pressure, which also pasteurizes it. Then the cheese is squished into cans. The ritual of getting the cheese into the can pales in comparison to how the folks at M&M/Mars get the little "m" on each M&M.

### Making M&M's

"The truth is," claims M&M external manager Marlene Machut, "we only print 'm' because there isn't space to print two, and the process involves a delicate transfer similar to offset printing." And so the truth is told. The process of making M&M's is a fairly simple.

First the chocolate centers are molded by machine. They are then tossed in a colored corn syrup and sugar mixture and literally coat themselves. The candies are then sent to a printing machine that's designed to prevent them from cracking under pressure. After all, as the saying goes, M&M's are supposed to melt in your mouth, not on the press.

By the way, the folks at M&M/Mars say they produce more than 100 million M&M's daily but have a tougher time making sure each one-pound bag has the precise color blends, which are 30 percent brown, 20 percent each red and yellow and 10 percent green, orange and tan.

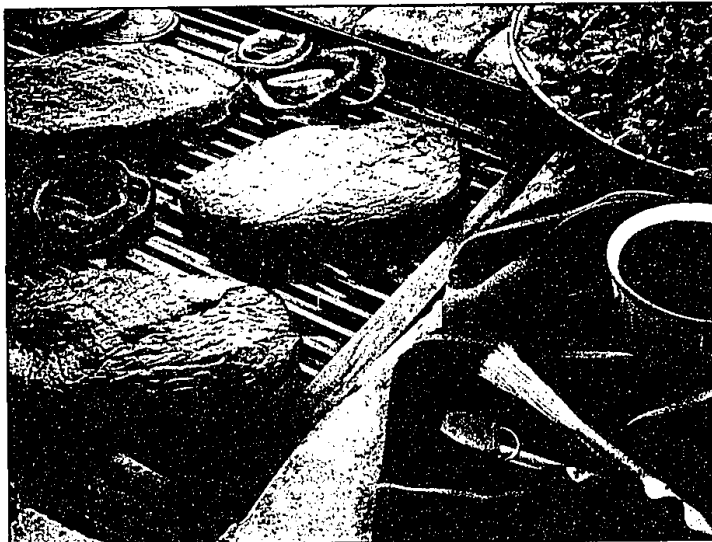
If you ever wonder how food items are made, drop me a line and I'll try to answer the question.

See Larry Janes' family-tested recipes inside. To leave a message for Chef Larry, dial 953-3247 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1886.

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Make the kitchen a classroom for learning.
- Restaurant offers visitors a Taste of History.



Western menu: Plan a country-western barbecue. Spicy western steaks and 20-Minute cowboy beans fit the theme. Grill the chuck shoulder steaks and brush with the zesty barbecue sauce for lots of great flavor.

## BRUSH UP ON BARBECUING TECHNIQUES

### Barbecue Sauce Contest

We're fired up about grilling this summer and looking for the best homemade barbecue sauce recipe. Barbecue sauce enhances the flavor of ribs, steaks, chicken, fish, vegetables and other grilled foods. What's your secret?

The winner will receive a \$50 gift certificate for grilling supplies, second place is a \$25 gift certificate for groceries, third prize is a copy of "The Best Covered and Kettle Grills Cookbook Ever," by Melanie Barnard. (HarperCollins Publishers, April 27, 1994, \$16.95).

Our Homemade Barbecue Sauce contest is open to all readers of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, age 18 and older. Observer & Eccentric employees and their families are not eligible. One entry per household. All recipes must be postmarked or faxed by 5 p.m. Monday, June 6. Send recipes to: Keely Wygonik, Taste Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc., 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, MI 48150. To fax recipes, (313) 591-7279.

Recipes will be reviewed by Chef Larry Janes, and three finalists will be selected. The three finalists will be asked to make their sauce for judging on Monday, June 13. A panel of three judges will choose a first, second and third place winner based on a point system with the winner receiving the most points. Recipes will be judged on originality of recipe, versatility of use and overall taste.

All recipes submitted for the contest will become the property of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. All recipes submitted must be typed and cannot make more than 1/2 gallon (2 quarts) of barbecue sauce. All recipes must be original and finalists will be required to sign an affidavit stating such. Call (313) 953-2105 or Chef Larry Janes, (313) 953-2047 on a Touch-Tone phone, then mailbox number 1886, if you have any questions.



Roll out the grill and fire it up for quick and tasty summer meals. Local chefs and cookbook author Melanie Barnard share their expertise.

By KEELY WYGONIK  
STAFF WRITER

Get out of the kitchen, enjoy summer and the great outdoors by expanding your grilling repertoire beyond burgers and hot dogs.

The Michigan Beef Industry Commission recommends barbecuing beef chuck shoulder steak, which is a less tender but extremely flavorful cut that benefits from marinating in sauce prior to grilling. These steaks are at their best if grilled medium rare to medium doneness. Brushing with barbecue sauce during the last five minutes of cooking adds even more zesty flavor to the beef.

Chef Stephen Phillips of Troy, who is an executive chef at Chimayo restaurant in Pontiac, likes to use a gas grill when he barbecues.

### Great Grilling Tips



- When a grill rack is oiled or sprayed with a nonstick coating, most foods can be cooked with no added fat.
- Keep the grill rack clean by brushing after each use with a stiff wire brush while the rack is still hot.
- Empty the ash catcher in a charcoal unit so that the bottom vents will remain unobstructed.
- To reduce sticking, heat the grill rack for a few minutes over the fire before cooking.
- Cut excess fat from all meats before grilling to reduce the chance of flare-ups when the grill is open.
- For optimum results and minimum cooking time, foods to be grilled should be at cool room temperature. Cold foods may burn on the outside before being cooked through.
- If using bamboo skewers, soak in cold water for at least 30 minutes to prevent burning.
- Turn foods with tongs or a wide spatula to avoid piercing them and losing juices.
- Make professional-looking cross-hatch grill marks by searing the food over a hot fire on a hot grill rack until brown lines appear, usually 2 minutes. Rotate about 45 degrees and grill about 2 minutes longer. Turn over and repeat the process on the other side.
- Brush on thick or sweet sauces during the last 10 minutes or so of cooking time to prevent burning.
- Know the grill. Like a conventional oven, each has its own quirks and hot spots. Read the directions and follow for safety, best performance, and long grill life.
- Check foods after the minimum recommended cooking time, since grilling times are variable, even with a covered grill.

Look for "The Best Covered and Kettle Grills Cookbook Ever" by Melanie Barnard at HarperCollins Publishers, \$16.95.

"Make sure the grill and grill racks are hot and seasoned before you start to cook," said Phillips. "Brush the grill racks with oil so the food won't stick to them."

If you haven't tried fish on the grill, Phillips recommends it. He likes swordfish, mahi-mahi and tuna. Before grilling, Phillips marinates the fish for about an hour in either a mixture of olive oil and fresh herbs such as basil and parsley, or olive oil, lemon and lime juice and zest. Figure approximately 10 minutes per inch of thickness for grilling fish.

"When I grill swordfish, I grill it for 2 to 3 minutes, turn it on a 45-degree angle, cook it 2 to 3 minutes more. Then flip it, cook 2 to 3 minutes, then turn it on an angle to finish it off."

See GRILL, 2B

## Make your own crust to cut fat in raspberry yogurt pie



LAURA LETOBAR

This month's recipe make over was a real eye-opener for me! When Betty Beiser of Livonia sent in the "original" version of this yogurt pie recipe, I thought I was going to have to work backward to create a high-fat version of the recipe. Was I ever surprised when I calculated the fat grams of this supposedly "lite" recipe.

First I called Kraft General Foods Inc. to find out exactly how much fat is in an eight-ounce container of Lite Cool Whip. I had to do this because the container lists the fat as being "less than one gram per serving." One serving is only one tablespoon. So, at a quick glance, it appears to be nearly fat-free. In actuality, there are 29.3 grams of fat per container!

Most of us would also consider a graham cracker pie crust to be low fat. But, this type of pie crust has 6.0 grams of fat per serving. One serving is 1/8th of the shell. Per-Ritz brand 9-inch pastry pie shells have 11.0 grams of fat per serving. Compared to a pastry shell, a graham cracker crust would seem low fat.

Unfortunately, our "original" low fat recipe has 11.0 grams of fat per serving. This is definitely too high for a dessert. Don't worry, there's hope as long as we are willing to do a little extra work.

Making a fat-free pie crust is easy, just not as easy as taking the lid off the store-bought brand. Use the recipe provided in the reduced-fat recipe to make crusts for other pies.

Fat-free chocolate pie can be made with a box of chocolate-flavored instant pudding and pie filling mixed with skim milk instead of whole milk.



### "Lite" Fruity Yogurt Pie Original Recipe

- 2 cartons (8 ounces each) non-fat raspberry flavored yogurt
- 1 container (8 ounces) Lite Cool Whip non-dairy whipped topping
- 9-inch prepared graham cracker pie crust
- 1 cup fresh raspberries

Combine yogurt and whipped topping in a medium mixing bowl. Mix well. Pour into pie crust. Freeze. Thaw 20 minutes before serving. Garnish with fresh raspberries. Serves 6.



## RECIPE MAKE OVER

### "Lite" Fruity Yogurt Pie Reduced-Fat Recipe

- Pie filling:**
- 2 cartons (8 ounces each) non-fat raspberry flavored yogurt
  - 1 envelope Dream Whip whipped topping mix
  - 1/2 cup cold skim milk
  - 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
  - 1 cup fresh raspberries

- Crust:**
- 1 box (5 ounces) Nabisco SnackWell's Fat Free Cinnamon Graham Snacks
  - 3 tablespoons skim milk
  - 2 tablespoons sugar
  - 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Grind graham snacks in a food processor until very fine. Add 3 tablespoons skim milk, sugar and cinnamon to processor and mix thoroughly. Place mixture in a 9-inch pie dish and press into bottom of pan and up sides. Combine topping mix, 1/2 cup skim milk, and vanilla in a medium bowl. Beat on High speed with an electric mixer for 4 minutes or until stiff peaks form. Once mixture is stiff, blend in yogurt. Pour yogurt mixture into pie crust. Freeze until solid. Thaw for 20 minutes before serving. Garnish with raspberries. Serves 6.

See YOGURT PIE, 2B