

COOKING CONQUESTS

CHEF CAROL HASKINS

Resolve to entertain more this year

Now that New Year's has come and gone, how many resolutions have already been broken? Are you remaining steadfast in your commitment to diet, exercise and spend less money? While I cannot offer much advice in those areas, I can provide guidance for those of you who resolved to do more entertaining during the coming year.

Matching food and wine

Instead of buying wine at the grocery store, visit a wine merchant or local sommelier who can provide recommendations to accompany the meal. With these insights, you might even discover a new interest in a particular wine grape or region.

In good weather, take a trip to Detroit's Eastern Market and choose from the best produce available. Also, gourmet food shops are plentiful across metro Detroit, and helpful merchants are available to explain the finer points of their products to you.

Setting

Rather than an elaborately set dining table, a buffet dinner can be just as extraordinary. You will spend less time in the kitchen (plating each entrée), and guests are more likely to mingle if they do not eat their entire meal from the same set. This way, guests can talk to everyone at the party and not just the people seated nearby.

For those of you who prefer a traditional seated meal, there are easy ways of garnishing each plate of food. Make certain your dinner plate is colorful. Mixed greens add variety and color to a salad. Place a sprig of your favorite herb on the plate. Drizzle the sauce and offer extra in a gravy boat. Food always looks more stunning on a large plate.

The sample entrée selections below were planned for buffet service, but can easily be adapted to a plated dinner: simply portion your salmon at 5-6 oz. each and reduce the cooking time, as smaller portions cook more quickly. Salmon can be served straight from the oven or at room temperature.

Two or three slices of tenderloin, if you start slicing from the small end, is an appropriate serving. Overlap the meat slightly when placing on the plate. You can serve your favorite sauce, but do not completely cover the meat; you can pass additional sauce if necessary.

There you have it: a few guidelines to help you prepare a delicious and wonderful meal, graciously served! Time for dessert, coffee, and mingling with your guests.

OVEN POACHED FILET OF SALMON

- 2 to 2-1/2 pounds skinless salmon fillets (boned with belly fat removed)
- 1 cup vinaigrette (store bought)
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt and fresh ground medium black pepper
- 2 thinly sliced lemons
- yogurt-dill sauce (your favorite recipe)
- Lime or lemon wedges to garnish
- 1 bunch fresh dill

Place salmon (skin side down) in a flat oiled pan with sides 1-inch or so high. Whisk the marinade and pour evenly over the fish. Lightly season with salt and pepper.

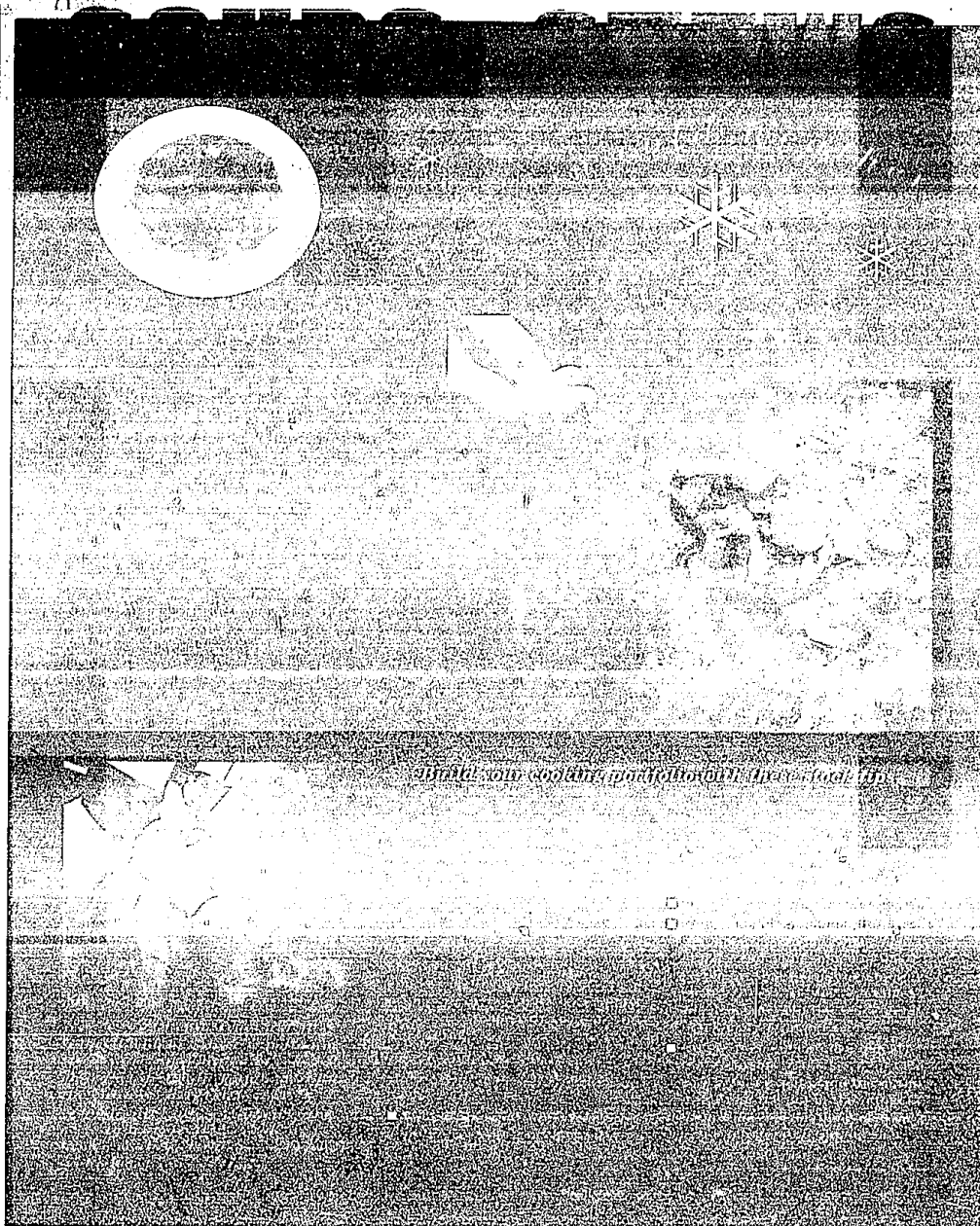
Cover the fish with lemon slices and sprigs of fresh dill. Take a second sheet pan, the same size as the first, and invert it over the fish pan. Line it up

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LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Focus on Wine
- Foods of love



Girl Scout cookies aren't just for snacking anymore

By KEN ABRAMCZYK
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You've seen them stacked up on tables outside of supermarkets.

Boxes and boxes of cookies. The green boxes of mint cookies, the orange-red boxes of peanut butter patties, the shurthro and the caramel delights. You continue to walk away, but you know you can't. You look away, but it's no use.

The world's greatest salespersons suddenly clinch another deal, asking shyly and quietly:

"Would you like to buy some Girl Scout Cookies?"

"Why, yes, I'll take 600 boxes, please."

While millions enjoy the cookies right out of the box each year with a glass of milk or a cup of coffee, they aren't just for eating solo anymore.

Girl Scout councils are also conducting baking contests to raise funds for the Girl Scouts, according to Susan Tammo, product sales and special events manager for the Huron Valley Girl Scout Council. Contestants must use Girl Scout cookies as an ingredient. "Some councils will get chefs to cook with them, making a dessert using the cookies," Tammo said. "That's fairly new. Most people just eat the cookies

by themselves." Here is a sample of recipes, courtesy of the Girl Scouts.

PEANUT BUTTER AND CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM PIE

- 10 Girl Scout Peanut Butter Patties
- 1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened
- 1 cup non-dairy whipped topping, thawed
- 1/2 cup chunky peanut butter
- Prepared chocolate pie crust

Place cookies in a small, self-sealing plastic bag. With a rolling pin, crumble cookies into small pieces; set aside. Combine ice cream, whipped topping and peanut butter. Spoon half of ice cream mixture into pie crust. Sprinkle half of crushed cookies over ice cream. Top with remaining ice cream; smooth top of pie into an even layer. Top with remaining crushed cookies. Freeze until firm. Cut into 8 wedges.

CHOCOLATE COCONUT CARAMEL DESSERT

- 1 box Girl Scout Caramel Delites
- 3 tablespoons margarine, melted
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk



Bake away: Girl Scout Cookies taste delicious all by themselves, but you can bake them into desserts.

STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HAWLEY

- 1/4 cup toasted coconut
- 1 1/4 cups cold milk
- 1 1/4 cups non dairy whipped topping, thawed
- 1 package (4 servings) instant coconut cream pie filling
- 3 tablespoons semi-sweet chocolate mini morsels
- Nonstick cooking spray

Place cookies in a food processor or blender, process until fine crumbs. Spray the bottom of a nine-inch square pan with nonstick cooking spray. Combine cookie crumbs and margarine; press evenly in the bottom of pan. Using an

electric mixer, beat cream cheese with sugar and two tablespoons milk until smooth. Blend 3/4 cup whipped topping. Spread evenly over cookie layer. Pour 1 1/4 cups milk into a bowl. Add pudding mix and beat 1-2 minutes or until smooth. Pour over cream cheese layer.

Chill several hours or overnight. Spread a thin layer of coconut on a baking sheet and bake in 325°F oven for 6-8 minutes, stirring frequently; cool. Just before serving, spread remaining 3/4 cup whipped topping evenly over top of dessert; sprinkle toasted coconut and mini-morsels on top of dessert. Cut into 12 portions.