

CALENDAR

Send items for Taste calendar at least two weeks in advance of event to Ken Abramczyk, Taste Editor, Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.

M-FIT CLASSES

Don't let the cold, harsh days of winter drag you down. The M-Fit Culinary team of the M-Fit Community Health Promotion Division offers cooking classes, such as a Valentine's Day Menu for the Ones You Love, noon-2 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 13; at the East Ann Arbor Health Center Demonstration Kitchen, 4260 Plymouth Road, Ann Arbor. Individual class fees are \$30, \$50 for a two-person fee, and \$80 for a series of three classes. Nutrition education class fees are \$20. Pre-registration is required. Register online at www.mfitnutrition.com. Call Nicole Goyaris at (734) 975-4387, Ext. 236 to register by phone.

How about a little chocolate for your Valentine?

Recipes courtesy of Kelli Lewton. See related column on Taste front.

WARM VALRHONA CHOCOLATE CAKES

- Cakes
6 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 1/2 ounces Valrhona bitter-sweet chocolate, chopped
2 eggs
2 egg yolks
1/2 cup sugar
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
Garnish
Unsweetened cocoa powder for dusting
4 fresh mint sprigs

Butter and flour four 4-ounce fluted molds or custard cups and set aside.

Pre-heat oven 350° F. Melt the butter and chocolate in a double boiler over barely simmering water, stirring until smooth, set aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs and yolks. Add the sugar and whisk until foamy. Add the flour and stir to combine.

Pour in the chocolate mixture and stir to combine. Pour the cake batter into the prepared molds. Bake the cakes in the pre-heated oven for 8-10 minutes, or until slightly puffed.

Invert the cakes onto four individual dessert plates. Dust the cakes with cocoa. To serve, make a cut into the center of the cake to show the texture; the middle of the cakes should be soft and liquid.

Garnish with fresh mint sprigs and serve.

ALL CHOCOLATE CHOCOLATE-CHIP COOKIES

- 1/4 cup butter
1/4 cup vegetable shortening
1/2 cup semisweet, dark or milk chocolate chips
2 eggs
3/4 cup brown sugar
3/4 cup granulated sugar
2 tablespoons instant coffee crystals
1 1/2 tablespoons boiling water
1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
2 cups unbleached white flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder

- 1/4 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa (not 'dutched')
3/4 cup best quality semisweet chocolate chips (such as Ghirardelli or Calaboot)
1/2 cup white chocolate chips
3/4 cup pecans or walnuts, chop and toast

Non-stick cooking spray
Preheat oven to 360° F. Combine butter, vegetable shortening and semisweet chocolate in a small saucepan until melted, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, stir again to smooth, and let cool to room temp. At medium-high speed for 5 minutes, beat the eggs, brown sugar and granulated sugar. Combine hot water and coffee

crystals and dissolve them. Stir in vanilla. After eggs and sugar have been beaten, add the coffee, vanilla mixture and reserved melted chocolate mixture. Beat another 2 minutes.

Combine mixed dry ingredients, flour, baking powder, salt, and unsweetened cocoa. Remove chocolate mixture from mixer stand and stir flour cocoa mixture into it by hand. Add chips and optional nuts. Spray two double insulated styro cookie sheets with non-stick cooking spray.

To make ordinary sized cookies (about 3 inches in diameter), drop batter by rounded teaspoons, about 2 inches apart, onto cookie sheets. Bake small cookies in preheated oven for about 10 minutes. Let cookies cool.

Read the At Home section every Thursday in the Observer.

2 Unique from page D1

ing process that aerates the chocolate and rids it of residual moisture and volatile acids, creating a satiny texture and smooth, rich harmonious flavor.

Pour it on

At this point, chocolate can travel in numerous directions. It can be poured into forms and cooked to make unsweetened bakers chocolate, or it may be mixed with sugar, lecithin, vanilla and additional cocoa butter to make bittersweet or semi-sweet chocolate.

It would seem there are so many unique products and flavors combined with chocolate, from Oreo cookies to dried cherries to Rice Krispies and its final

The world of chocolate is a playground in the culinary field with everything from savory ethnic chocolate dishes and sauces from Mexico and Central America to the great candy of Switzerland and devil's food cake of American suburbs.

destination of some form of chocolate varying in a multitude of flavors, shapes and quality.

White chocolate is made from the cocoa butter left from the processing of cocoa powder, milk, sugar and butter without the chocolate liquor. Generally speaking, sweetness and cocoa butter go hand in hand; the more cocoa butter a chocolate contains, the more sugar added as well.

The world of chocolate is a playground in the culinary field with everything from savory ethnic chocolate dishes and sauces from Mexico and Central America to the great candy of Switzerland and devil's food cake of American suburbs. I would guess chocolate in some form or flavor has found its way into most of our lives and kitchens. Diners still enjoy that certain sensuality in unwrapping a bar of exquisite fine chocolate or

consuming a special truffle with coffee after an exhilarating meal.

It is stunning to think that chocolate, now widely consumed in hundreds of forms available at the corner gas stations to the finest boutiques and a wide range of prices, was at one time only a luxury item for the rich. I would imagine that even St. Valentine would enjoy this intoxicating confection, given on the celebrated day of love.

Chef Kelli L. Lewton is owner of 2 Unique Caterers and Event Planners in Bloomfield Hills and Aunt Olive's Good Food 2 Go in Birmingham. Lewton is a graduate of Schoolcraft College's Culinary Arts program. See recipes inside Taste.

Desserts from page D1

der is a mixture of dry acid or acid salts and baking soda. Baking powder liberates the carbon dioxide in the batter to leaven the product.

Bruce Kane of Canton prefers to sift all of the dry ingredients together before adding the liquid ingredients. This helps to ensure

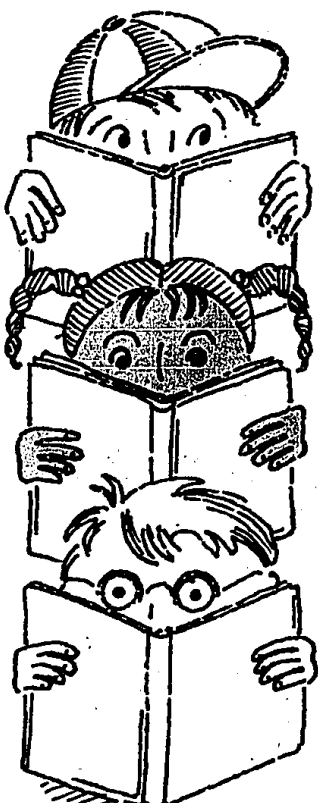
that the batter is mixed thoroughly and avoids having all of the salt ending up in one portion of the batter, creating an uneven taste throughout.

With a little practice and patience, you can create desserts that are baked to perfection. As long as you stick with moderate,

reasonable portions, you can have your cake and eat it, too. Enjoy all the wonderful flavors that desserts offer.

Peggy Martinelli-Everts, a Clarkston resident, is a registered dietitian and director of clinical operations for HDS Services, a 35-year-old Farmington

Hills-based food service and hospitality management and consulting company, specializing in food service management for hospitals, long-term care facilities, businesses, private clubs and private schools. HDS Services has approximately 250 management accounts throughout the United States and Japan.



Make Someone Smarter.

Give Books.

Bring them to the lower level information desk so we can donate them to the Detroit Public Library and other metro Detroit area resources. And we'll give you credit for every book and make a cash donation to the school of your choice. See information desk for complete details.

OAKLAND MALL

Hudson's, JCPenney, Sears and over 130 great stores and services. Monday - Saturday, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m., Sunday, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. 248.585.8000



Observer & Eccentric

4 days only. Take an additional \$500 off\* any item with an outlet price of \$500 or more. New shipments arrive every day. Plus 15-50% off\* all home appliances every day. Take home unheard of savings on brand name merchandise from Sears Outlet Stores. You'll find a large selection of refrigerators, washers, dryers, ranges, T.V.'s and more. And the difference you'll save at the cash register will feel great in your wallet. SEARS OUTLET STORE. Open 7 Days Mon.-Fri. 9:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Sat. 9:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Sunday 12:00 Noon to 5:00 p.m. PREVIOUSLY SELECTED MERCHANDISE NOT INCLUDED