

Honey Is A Cook's Friend

BY JOYCE TOTTON

Mention the honey bee to the average person, the first thought usually is—"It stings!"

Poor honey bee She (all honey-gathering worker bees are female, of course) is one of the least understood and appreciated creatures in the world today.

Yet it would be difficult to find another that has worked so hard or contributed as much to man's development and well being through the centuries as the little honey bee.

The importance of the honey bee and her product to the world can hardly be overstated. Almost every civilization has valued honey as food, a medicine, a trading commodity and a social and spiritual force.

Even if the honey bee gave us no honey or beeswax at all, she is essential to the lives of all of us because she is the main source of pollination for over 50 vital agricultural crops.

Honey is a natural, unrefined food, unique because it is the only unmanufactured sweet available in commercial quantities. In addition to its sugar, honey contains a considerable number of minerals, seven members of the B vitamin complex, ascorbic acid (Vitamin C), dextrins, plant pigments, amino acids and other organic acids, traces of protein, esters and other aromatic compounds, and several enzymes.

Honey is fun to use, a delicately flavored, golden sweet that adds its own special appeal to all your cooking adventures. Use it as is, as a sauce or spread, in vegetables or meat dishes, in beverages and, of course in candies and baked goods.

To replace sugar with honey in cake or cookie recipes, a general rule is to reduce the amount of liquid called for by 1/4 cup for each cup of honey used to replace sugar. Cakes and cookies made with honey keep fresher much longer. Honey absorbs and retains moisture, retarding the drying out and staling of baked goods. This is especially important when you want to bake in advance or save baked goods for any length of time.

Follow the steps of chefs of old and put honey in your menus.

A honey sauce is scrumptious with baked chicken. One that's excellent is simply a mixture of 1/4 c. melted butter, 1/4 c. honey and 1/4 c. lemon juice. Use it for basting during the last half hour of baking.

HONEY HUMBERS

1 c. honey
6 egg yolks
1 1/4 c. sifted flour
1 c. baking powder
1/2 t. salt
1 c. chopped dates
1 c. chopped pecans
1 t. vanilla

TOPPING

2 c. sifted confectioners' sugar
2 t. grated lemon peel
1 egg yolk
1 T. lemon juice
3 T. soft butter

Blend shortening and honey together; beat in egg yolks, one at a time. Sift dry ingredients and blend into egg mixture. Stir in dates, pecans and vanilla. Spread into a greased 13x9x2 inch pan. Bake 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Cool. Combine remaining ingredients and spread over cooled cookies. Cut into bars. Makes about 3 dozen.

QUICK CREAMED FROSTING

1/2 c. honey
1/2 c. butter
1 t. vanilla
2 egg whites
1 c. sifted confectioners' sugar

1 egg, unsweetened chocolate, melted
Cream honey and butter. Stir in vanilla. Beat egg whites until they form soft peaks. Add sifted confectioners' sugar gradually, beating after each addition. Fold egg white mixture gradually into honey mixture. Add melted chocolate to 1/2 of frosting. Use the chocolate part between the layers. Spread the white frosting on top and sides of cake.



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