

These desserts brighten Sunday brunch, quietly

Despite their name, sundaes aren't really for Sunday. There's something too dramatic, too splashy about the average ice cream sundae to suit the mellow mood of a lazy Sunday, spent alone with family, or with a few special guests invited over for brunch.

Rather, the day requires foods — and particularly desserts — that are gently called "comforting" — not spectacular by any means, but simple and luscious and redolent of childhood, of mother's kitchen with all its intoxicating fragrances, or of days in the country, eating freshly picked fruit off the bramble, tree or vine.

Foods that excite the palate with their novelty are the wrong choices on such a day. Rather what we eat should

reflect and reinforce the Sunday mood of gentleness, of calm, of pleasures taken "far from the madding world's ignominious strife."

IN SUMMER, appropriate dessert choices are rampant — plump red strawberries, perhaps set off by a single dollop of freshly whipped cream; a blueberry pie, hot from the oven; or the sweetly elusive raspberry, with its delightfully nectar, tartly sweet when crushed against the tongue.

In winter, however, we turn to baked goods laden with fragrant spices: nutmeg, cloves, ginger, cinnamon, allspice — to stimulate memory's tabernacles, to underline the calm of the day with the scents and flavors of tradition.

Fruits from faraway tropics are also winter favorites: Citrus fruits, pineapples, creamy bananas are available year-round, and are ideal starting points for winter brunch desserts that are sweet without being cloying, easy to make and pleasantly traditional.

The following recipes provide a counterpoint of flavors and dessert ideas to a Sunday brunch that are in perfect harmony with the day, and its quiet, reflective mood of peaceful good humor.

TWO FRUIT recipes, for Pineapple in Honey and Orange Fruit Salad, both simple and delicious, are reproduced from Diana Kennedy's latest cookbook, "Nothing Fancy" (Trio Dial Press).

Kennedy, well-known for her efforts at bringing the subtleties of Mexican cuisine to worldwide renown, in this volume selects recipes that are personal favorites, many of which reflect her English upbringing, as well as her prolonged residence south of the border.

ORANGE FRUIT SALAD

4 large oranges
3/4 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
Rind of 1 orange, thinly pared
5 tsp. granulated sugar
Butter to grease cookie sheet
2 heaped tbsp. blanched and slivered almonds
4 sprigs fresh mint
2 tsp. Calumet or Triple Sec (optional)

Peel the oranges, removing as much of the pith as possible. Cut into very thin rounds. Arrange the orange slices, no more than 3 deep, in a shallow dish. Pour the orange juice over them and set aside to macerate. Cut the orange rind into julienne strips. Put in a small saucepan with cold water to cover and bring to a boil. Drain, and add the strips to the oranges.

Put the sugar in an ungreased frying pan and dissolve over low heat. Lightly grease a cookie sheet and set aside. When the sugar has melted, raise the flame and cook, stirring, until the sugar turns a dark caramel color. Dip the oranges in the almonds. Pour onto the greased tray and allow to cool. As soon as it is cool and brittle, cover with an old cloth and crush roughly with a hammer — do not process or blend. Reserve until ready to serve the

oranges. Then sprinkle the almond brittle over the oranges and decorate with the mint sprigs. Add Calumet or Triple Sec to taste, if you wish.

Variation: Use half luscious juice and tangy orange peel. Instead of using the almond brittle and mint, just before serving, stir in 2 tablespoons sliced preserved or crystallized ginger and 2 tablespoons slivered and roasted almonds.

COMBINING FRESH fruit and baking magic, Banana Clafouti is one of two recipes reproduced from Lee Bailey's "City Food" (Clarkson N. Potter), a book which is as much a visual celebration of elegance, style and the joys of entertaining friends and family, as it is a compendium of recipes.

Also reproduced from Lee Bailey's "City Food" is the recipe for Warm Gingerbread with Vanilla Ice Cream, a dessert which is as simple, satisfying and traditional as they come, the ideal embodiment of a Sunday breakfast.

BANANA CLAFOUTI

5 tbsp. sugar
3 large firm but ripe bananas
2 cups half-and-half
3 eggs, beaten
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp. finely grated orange rind
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/4 tsp. salt
Confectioners' sugar

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Butter an 8 x 8-inch or 7 x 10-inch shallow baking dish. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of the sugar in the bottom. Cut each banana into 3 long strips and line the bottom of the dish with them. In a bowl beat together all the re-

Spice your diet with lo-cal treat

If you're concerned about calories or sugar, try this sensible recipe from low-calorie sweetener.

SPICED APPLESAUCE LOAF

Cake:
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 cup vegetable oil
2 eggs
1/2 cup skim milk
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. cloves
1 cup unsweetened applesauce
Glaze:
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
16 packets Equal
3 tbsp. boiling water

Cake: Stir together dry ingredients. Blend oil, eggs, skim milk and spices until smooth. Stir in applesauce. Add to dry ingredients and stir just until flour is thoroughly moistened. Pour batter into 8 1/2 x 4 1/2-inch loaf pan sprayed with non-stick cooking. Bake in preheated 350 degree oven 45-50 minutes or until cake tester inserted near center comes out clean. Glaze: Blend glaze ingredients. Using fork prick holes one inch apart on top of loaf. Let cool in pan 10 minutes. Remove from pan; prick holes one inch apart on bottom.

Cool completely and slice to serve. Makes one loaf of 16 servings. Calories per serving: 81.

PINEAPPLE IN HONEY

6 servings
2 1/2 lbs. cleaned pineapple, skin and core removed, cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 6 cups)
1 cup honey
2 tsp. lime or lemon juice (optional)
Rind of 1 lime or 1/2 lemon (optional)

Put the pineapple, honey, and juice and rind (if using) in a heavy saucepan and stir well. Cook over a fairly lively heat, stirring from time to time. It will become very juicy at first. Continue cooking rather quickly until the juice

This quiche has best

Here's a party dish that combines the best of two favorites... the quiche and the Reuben sandwich.

QUICK REUBEN QUICHE

1 9-inch frozen pie shell
1/2 cup chopped corned beef
1 cup (8 oz.) sauerkraut, rinsed, drained
1 cup grated Swiss cheese
2 eggs
1 cup evaporated milk
1 1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard

Preheat oven to 375 degrees and place a cookie sheet on middle rack. Spread the chopped corned beef on bottom of the pie shell. Top with sauerkraut and Swiss cheese. Beat eggs with milk and mustard. Pour into pie shell and place on cookie sheet. Bake for 30 minutes or until filling is nicely browned. Serves three or four.

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