

Share these sweet treats on Valentine's Day

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the recipient. Those two-pound assorted boxes from the kindergarten fund-raiser you bought from the neighbor last fall are fine to pass around, but this is not the case here. Intimacy must prevail.

The classic Valentine's dessert, Coeur a la Creme, is a simple treat to prepare that consumes more time than talent. Sure, you can go out and purchase a \$25 Coeur a la Creme mold made exclusively for this rich treat, but equal results can be had by purchasing a 13 heart-shaped cake pan and drilling holes in the bottom.

LINE THE PAN with double layers of cheesecloth and add the

ingredients, consisting of a blend of cottage cheese, whipping cream, cream cheese, sugar and vanilla. The pan is then set on a rack in the refrigerator to allow the whey from the cheeses to drain, leaving a triple-cream-cheese dessert that melts in your mouth, especially when surrounded by strawberries and assorted fresh fruit.

Another famed but seldom-seen Valentine's treat is those wonderful round and crunchy Amaretti cookies. These are really Italian macaroons (and who knows more about amore than the Italians) that can be purchased in the nearest of confectioners at most Italian groceries. I like to just dip the Amaretti in melted chocolate

and chill them, but I've also made Amaretti crumbs and used them for a cheesecake crust and in the recipe to follow — an Amaretti Torte.

Chocolate has been known for ages as the "edible affection confection." Pastry and dessert chefs are concocting wild creations with tempered chocolate, everything from pianos and chocolate boxes to obscene, X-rated edible treats that say even more than "I love you." Major hotels in New York and Los Angeles place small chocolate envelopes, with messages for a restful night, on bed pillows. The secret to working with chocolate is to use only the tempered (previously heated and melted to just the right temperature)

variety. Once melted, it can be poured directly onto parchment paper and chilled, then cut out with cookie cutters to form everything from seashells to rose petals.

This month's issue of Gourmet magazine has an advertisement for a dozen long-stemmed chocolate roses in your choice of dark red or white, for \$39.95 a dozen.

MOST MAJOR malls sport assorted chocolate shops, where just about anything can be had in chocolate. If you're really into designer chocolate, however, search out a source for chocolate by Kron. You will pay dearly for it, but everyone who's anyone and supposedly knows all there is to know about chocolate will

surely appreciate something from this true chocolate connoisseur.

Last but not least, your conscience does appreciate the fact that you work in excess of 60 hours per week and still find time to get to Vic Tanny's. Conscience are known for their ability to understand that some folks must resort to a simple purchase of a decadent Valentine's treat. If that is the case, ask friends and associates for references on the many fancy pastry shops and dessert studios that open almost weekly in the area.

Flourless tortes (the flour being made from finely ground nuts) calorie laden with creams, chocolates and fruits abound, many in dual-

serving sizes. Of course, when dealing with these retailers, plenty of advance notice must be given to ensure the best choice and quality.

And, for the dieter and/or sugar-conscious lover in your life, check out the wide assortment of low-calorie products being offered by such trendy eateries like TCBY yogurt (its yogurt and fresh fruit pies are to die for) and the American bulk food warehouses that have "slimmy" ice creams and sugary treats, all at very reasonable prices.

So c'mon, no one ever believes the old wives' tale of "a moment on the lips, forever on the hips" anyway. That's why they invented Lean Cuisine and aerobics.

COEUR A LA CREME

Serves 8-8
 1/2 pound large curd premium cottage cheese
 1 cup whipping cream
 1/4 pound cream cheese, room temperature
 4 tablespoons powdered sugar
 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
 pinch salt
 1 pint fresh strawberries
 1 tablespoon Kirsch (cherry-flavored liqueur) optional or strawberry jelly
 16 small strawberries (as a garnish)

Dip a large piece of cheesecloth in water. Wring dry and line a one-quart Coeur a la Creme mold, allow-

ing a two-inch overhang on all sides. Rub the cottage cheese through a strainer or food mill. Whip cream until stiff. Beat cream cheese until fluffy. Add cottage cheese, sugar, vanilla and salt and beat until light and fluffy. Stir in whipped cream.

Pour into prepared mold, smoothing over the top. Cover with overhanging cheesecloth. Place mold on a wire rack set over a pie plate. Refrigerate at least six hours. (Whey will drain, leaving the triple cheese.)

To make sauce, puree the pint of strawberries with the Kirsch or jelly.

To serve, invert mold onto flat plate. Remove cheesecloth. Arrange strawberries around the mold and top with puree around the edge.

AMARETTI TORTE

1 teaspoon butter, softened
 1 tablespoon flour
 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, room temperature
 1 cup sugar
 5 egg yolks
 1/2 cup Amaretti crumbs
 1/2 cup flour, sifted
 4 ounces semisweet chocolate chips
 6 egg whites

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat

a 10-by-2-inch round cake pan with the butter. Dust with flour, shaking out the excess.

Cream butter with sugar until very fluffy and almost white in color. Beat in yolks, one at a time, blending well after each addition. Using a mixer set at lowest speed, gradually add Amaretti crumbs and flour. Fold in chocolate chips.

Beat egg whites in a separate bowl until stiff peaks form. Stir 1/2 of the whites into the batter to loosen. Gently fold in remaining whites.

Pour into prepared pan and bake at 350 degrees for 35-45 minutes or until cake tests done. Cool on a rack

for 30 minutes. To serve, invert onto a flat platter and dust generously with powdered sugar.

HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

10 ounces baking chocolate
 4 tablespoons heavy cream
 6 tablespoons softened sweet butter
 1 tablespoon Amaretto or Cointreau liqueur (optional)

Break chocolate into a bowl. Place bowl over slowly boiling water to melt chocolate, making sure no water gets into the chocolate. Stir in smooth, then stir in 4 tablespoons of heavy whipping cream and butter. Mix well. Add liqueurs, if desired. Chill. Remove from fridge. Using lightly greased hands, roll small balls of the mixture into cocoa, nuts or coconut. Chill and serve.

cooking calendar

CHEF'S SEMINAR

Schoolcraft College's first Chef's Seminar, which it plans to make an annual event, will be held Monday, March 6, on campus in Livonia. Schoolcraft is nationally known for its Culinary Arts School.

Heading the workshops are executive chef Duglass (Brasserie Duglass in Southfield), certified master chef Michael D. Russell (the Kingsley Inn in Bloomfield Hills), certified master chef Miles Chelka (the Golden Mushroom in Southfield), executive chef Ed Janos (Chez Raphael in

Novi) and executive chef Bryan Gawias (Jacques Restaurant in Birmingham Farms). Others include executive pastry chef Ronald Alan Jon Patch (Sweet Endings in Bloomfield Hills), executive chef Tom MacKinnon (MacKinnon's Restaurant in Northville).

For further information and a brochure describing the seminar call the Schoolcraft College Continuing Education Services at 624-4448. Seminar fee is \$150 for the entire day and includes luncheon.

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