

Simple sauces best to bring out taste

See Larry Jones' column Taste Buds, Page 1B.

Because of their maze of honey-combed ridges, morel mushrooms are perfect partners for sauces, much of which they absorb.

The simpler the sauce the better. A simple warming of heavy cream with just a sprinkling of beef bouillon envelopes the sliced morels into ecstasy, especially when served over the thick, juicy steak.

If you are lucky enough to find some morels on a mushroom hunt, clean them just before cooking them, and never before. They can be stored in the refrigerator in a colander in the vegetable crisper for one or two days.

Remove the heavy tip of the base and slice in half from top to bottom. It's best not to soak them, but since they do grow from the ground, a good washing to remove sand and dirt is, unfortunately, a must. Immediately blot dry. Then cook immediately. Never eat raw morels as they can cause illness in many people.

ROAST CHICKEN WITH MOREL STUFFING

5 tablespoons butter
1 pound morels, cleaned, washed, trimmed and sliced
1 3/4 pound roasting chicken
Dash salt, cinnamon, pepper
1/2 cup bread cubes
1 cup chicken broth

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large skillet. Stir in morels and saute quickly over high heat until liquid evaporates, about 4 minutes. Chop chicken liver and heart, reserved from the roasting chicken and add to mushrooms. Cook, stirring for 1 minute. Add bread cubes, salt, cinnamon and pepper. Toss until well coated. Heat chicken broth and add 1 tablespoon butter. Pour over morel breadcrumb mixture and toss to coat. Stuff

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cavity with stuffing. Rub remaining butter over chicken. Place bird, breast side down, on a rack in an ovenproof pan. Roast for 45 minutes at 325 degrees. Turn breast side up, baste with pan drippings. Sprinkle lightly with salt and return to oven for 45 minutes at 325 degrees. Raise temperature to 400 degrees and roast chicken until golden brown for 10 minutes. Allow chicken to rest for 10 minutes before carving.

MOREL PIE

1 1/2 pounds morels, washed, trimmed and sliced
1/2 cup sliced sweet onion
4 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup flour
8 ounces cream-style cottage cheese
1/4 cup parmesan
1/4 cup dry sherry
Salt and pepper to taste
1 pastry for a 2 crust pie
1 egg yolk
2 tablespoons water

Saute morels and onions in butter for about 10 minutes over medium high heat. Stir in flour, add cottage cheese, parmesan, sherry, salt and pepper and mix well. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place 1 pastry in bottom of a 9-inch pie plate. Pour mushroom mixture into pie. Arrange top pastry on pie or for better results, make top pastry into lattice design. Beat egg yolk with water and brush over top crust. Bake for 40-45 minutes, covering edges of pie with foil if overbrowning occurs. Cool 5 minutes before slicing. Makes 8 servings as a luncheon entrée or 6 servings as an accompaniment with meat or fowl.

Natchez food beautifully shown

"Lee Bailey's Southern Food and Plantation Houses: Favorite Natchez Recipes." Lee Bailey and the Pilgrimage Garden Club, Clarkson Potter Inc., Crown Publishers, 1990, \$30.

It's not every day I run across a cookbook as beautiful as "Lee Bailey's Southern Food and Plantation Houses: Favorite Natchez Recipes," which was published this spring. When a colorful, "coffee table" cookbook is this spectacular, it's almost always published in October for holiday promotions.

Bailey's fascination with Natchez was sparked by his Aunt Freddie, a longtime resident of this historic settlement on the Mississippi River. Bailey himself grew up in Bunkie, La., which explains his down-home appeal that is infused in the other six books he has authored — "Country Desserts," "Soup Meals" and "Good Parties," to name a few.

In the introduction, Bailey says, "Natchez food is essentially unassuming, based not on sophisticated or complicated techniques but on great natural abundance." The book contains recipes which are traditional Southern fare such as Skillet Corn Bread, Peach and Meringue Shortcake and Spicy Milk Fried Chicken and Gravy. As you might expect, there are recipes using spirits, such as Butter-Rum Shrimp and Bourbon-Mint Ice Cream.

After writing the recipes of Natchez for the book, Bailey organized the recipes into menus and,

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— Lee Bailey

with the help of the Pilgrimage Garden Club, photographed the dishes in and around 19 of the city's majestic antebellum plantations. The photographs by Tom Eckerle are magnificent. Color photos of some of the desserts are so appetizing you may want to eat them right off the page. "Southern Food and Plantation Houses" is more than a cookbook. It is artistic, photographic testimony to the gracious architecture of the South.

CLARA NEIL ADAMS' WHITE CHOCOLATE CAKE

Cake:
1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
4 eggs separated
1/2 cup grated white chocolate
1/2 cup water
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup buttermilk
1 teaspoon vanilla



cook's books

Geri Rinschler

Icing:
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 cup evaporated milk
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups grated white chocolate

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease and lightly flour three 9-inch round cake pans.

To make the cake, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg yolks one at a time. Set aside.

Combine the white chocolate and water in a small saucepan over low heat. Carefully melt and beat into the butter mixture. Sift together the flour and baking soda. Add to creamed mixture, alternating with

the buttermilk. Stir in vanilla. Beat egg whites until stiff, then fold into the batter.

Divide batter equally among the three pans and bake for 20 minutes or until a cake tester comes out clean and layers are turning golden. Let rest a few minutes before loosening edges and inverting onto cooling racks. When cool, brush off crumbs.

To make icing, combine sugar, evaporated milk and butter in a saucepan over low heat. When the butter has melted, lightly boil for 1 minute. Stir in vanilla. Off the heat, beat in white chocolate until it is completely melted. Let cool to a spreadable consistency. Serves 10-12.

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To fight crime in Philly, people plant posies.

"The bad part of town." Abandoned cars. Sidewalks scattered with crack vials. Bombed-out buildings.

A neighborhood whose spirit is as broken as the bits of glass that dot the street. There are only two things to do if your neighborhood becomes a war zone: give up or take action.

The Philadelphia Story One day, in the "bad part" of Philadelphia, a neighbor complained to a neighbor. And then to another. And then to more. People didn't like their homes being "taken over." Feelings of helplessness and resentment turned to action.

They went to the police for help.

Soon a substation was established where folks could readily report crime. Weekly meetings began. Community watches started. Things started

getting fixed up. Vacant lots were cleaned up and fenced off. Abandoned cars were towed away. Painting and repairing programs began.

The neighborhood was cleaning itself up. The local 4-H Club even helped set up garden clubs where kids, teens and adults could work together on plants and flowers while talking over ways to raise awareness.

When people care and get involved, neighborhoods change. When a block doesn't look like a haven for crime and drugs, it won't be. And in this part of Philly, where once only apathy grew, seven gardens now bloom.

This is only one success story of many. To find out what can be done in your neighborhood, write: **The McGruff Files, 1 Prevention Way, Washington, D.C. 20589-0001.** And help...