

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1992

# TASTE

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## TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JONES

## Magical cookie dough works 8 different ways

Trying to squeeze your holiday baking somewhere between a major house cleaning and Christmas shopping? Sometimes there's just not enough hours in the day to accomplish all we need to.

If you're thinking about getting into the holiday spirit with some last minute ideas that will please everyone from the preschool teacher to the mailman, an afternoon in the kitchen preparing a no-nonsense assortment of holiday confections can be a rewarding and low cost way to tie up those last-minute-gift ideas.

### Magie dough

If you're frantic and searching for a holiday cookie recipe that is versatile enough to work eight different ways, we have the solution.

Our Basic Number One Cookie Dough that needs a little advanced preparation can transform itself from a spritz cookie to a walnut bar with the flick of a measuring cup.

Ah, but this magical confection can also whip up a multitude of santas, trees and stars and still be versatile enough to stuff with dates, raisins and nuts for a roll cookie that will surely have the mailman requesting the recipe.

### For kids only

Anyone with kids can appreciate the "for kids only" recipes that will please the palates of any kid from kindergarten to college. Better yet, these kid-tested recipes are simple enough to include junior in the process.

I think it's written somewhere in the educator's bible that each and every teacher receive their weight in holiday cookies. So why should you buck tradition?

This year, though, you're going to do something that will make little Johnny's teacher sit up and take notice.

Sure, there will be the proverbial Hudson's box filled with homemade cookies but in addition, the box will be decorated and tied together with a batch of unbacked cookie dough, a roll of kitchen parchment for baking, a favorite cookie cutter, and last but not least, a recipe for all of the above.

Do the cookie dough up in one of those burpable containers that can double later on in the year for a lunch transport.

If you're thinking about sending out a batch of holiday cookies, better get in gear real fast to insure delivery before the big day. Anyone who has ever mailed holiday treats always goes through a certain amount of trepidation wondering if the package will make it through without ending up a batch of crunch and munch.

### Cookies to mail

Sure, you pack cookies tightly in coffee cans and burpable containers but the least expensive way is to pack the holiday treats in popped popcorn! Not only will you save money on the postage, (those cans can be heavy) but the popcorn will act as a moisture inhibitor and a cushion that's as light as air!

There are few of us who can organize our lives in such order that the house is cleaned, the cookies baked, the shopping done, and the gifts are all wrapped, before December 1st.

If you happen to have made a batch of cookies ahead of schedule (tell me how you do it), and they are secure in the freezer, you can reheat the frozen baked cookies and confectionery treats by placing them unwrapped on a plain cookie sheet. Heat for 2-3 minutes at 350 degrees to restore crispness.

The microwave might be great for other goodies but heating and defrosting cookies requires a slower, drier heat. Since cookies contain a high amount of fat, microwaving will create a disaster.

### Doggie treats

Last but not least, let's not forget all creatures big and small. Last year, I baked a batch of homemade doggie biscuits for the family vet. I picked up one of those empty gallon jars from a local restaurant and spent about 20 minutes tossing a mixture of beef drippings, flour and cornmeal.

I had a ball rolling them out with the kids, and cutting them into fish-shaped biscuits. It was a great learning experience for my kids, and I think it helped them be a little more compassionate about animals, and their need to be treated extra special during this busy time of the year.

So if you're looking to spend a few hours or a few days in the kitchen preparing holiday sweet treats that everyone will enjoy, you'll really appreciate this year's selection of recipes.

See Jones family tested recipes inside. To leave a message for Chef Larry, call 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox number 1886.

## easy HORS D'OEUVRES

— a —  
welcome  
holiday  
guest



Come out from behind that stalk of stuffed celery and look at what's happening to appetizers. These treats are welcome guests when time is short.

BY JOAN BORAM  
SPECIAL WRITER

Ever notice how many people are intimidated by the mere mention of hors d'oeuvres? Maybe it's because they visualize pimento olives x-ed over cream cheese rosettes on Ritz crackers.

Which is why so many of us opt for nachos and spinach dip.

Come out from behind that stalk of stuffed celery and look at what's happening to hors d'oeuvres. For one thing, many food stores have an adventurous choice of foods in the deli counter that can be served as tasty, out-of-the-ordinary, easy appetizers.

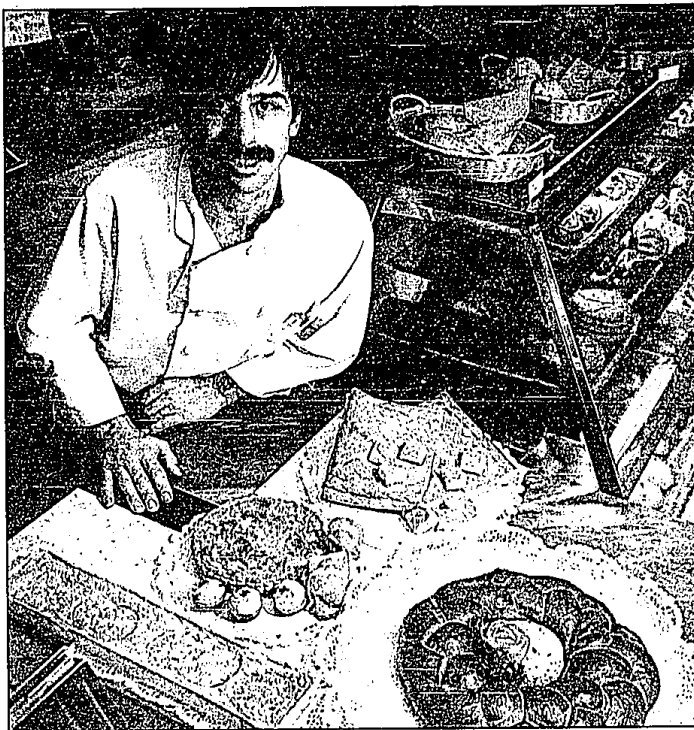
Hummus, stuffed grape leaves, tahini, pates, and myriad cheeses are ready to be transferred to an attractive dish and served with pita or sour-dough French bread.

Or, perhaps you want a more elaborate presentation than a deli counter can provide, but time and money are in short supply.

Relax. There are any number of specialty shops offering foods that you probably wouldn't make yourself, but that you can combine with your own efforts to amuse your friends and gratify your mother. She'll say you take after her.

A fine example of such a shop is Baking by the Auers in Southfield. Owner David Auer not only conjures up the most gorgeous pastries this side of the Seine, but also bakes heartier foods that will gratify the fustiest guest.

"We make quiches as a standard item every Saturday," said manager Penni Muldoon. "But they can be special ordered any time. Round quiches are available in 8- or 4 1/2-inch sizes, and we also make quiches in long strips so they can be cut wide-wise into small strips and served as appetizers."



DANIEL LIPPITT

Easy appetizers: David Auer of Baking by the Auers in Southfield makes large Brioche rings to serve with cream cheese, quiche and other elegant appetizers.

"The round ones, of course, are best cut into wedges. We make quiches with Jarlsburg cheese, onion and bacon or tomato, onion and fresh thyme."

Another Saturday treat, (it can also be special ordered) is feuilleté du fromage — puff pastry with Jarlsburg cheese and onion, handily served in bite-sized morsels.

"Brioche rings are perfect for appetizers," said Muldoon. "We make large rings to serve with our herb cream cheese spread. Or, the hostess can buy individual cocktail brioches and stuff them at home."

Almost anything goes well with this rich French-type bread. Try a combination of whipped cream, smoked salmon, and horseradish. Chicken salad, or a pate are also good.

For the calorie-conscious, Auer's has Italian flat bread with a pizzale crust with red and yellow peppers, fresh basil and rosemary.

If you're looking for a role model, consider Happy Begg. The West Bloomfield resident is the mother of two teenagers and works full time.

Undaunted, Begg throws an annual Christmas party that 80 of her friends look forward to all year.

"It looks a lot harder than it actually is," Begg insists. "I rely on Gordon Foods in Waterford, a restaurant supply store that also sells to the public. I order a sliced honey-baked ham, and a smoked turkey breast, also sliced. I serve them with party-sized bread, and a selection of really good mustards."

Begg makes her hot crab dip in advance, and freezes it. She also makes her own cheese and fruit trays.

"People will cut their own cheese if I give them generous chunks," she said. "When I served little cubes there were too many left over."

Begg buys frozen meatballs at Gordon's and makes a sweet-and-sour sauce to go with them. She makes ten tassies — miniature pecan pies — about "two bites each," from scratch, and buys miniature cheesecakes from Gordon's.

Gordon Food Service Marketplace in Westland, and Leone & Sons, Inc.,

a restaurant supply store in Livonia, also offer a variety of frozen hors d'oeuvres including meatballs, chicken wings, and pigs in a blanket.

Begg said her party "is really a hearty hors d'oeuvres buffet. We invite guests for 7:30 p.m. and some have eaten dinner, and some will eat dinner later, or some eat dinner here. They can snack or eat supper, as they prefer."

Begg uses paper plates and cups. She doesn't serve anything that requires forks. Convinced that "presentation is everything," She sets the buffet with her best crystal and silver serving pieces, as well as lots of candles and fresh flowers.

"It looks very impressive, but it's really quite inexpensive and requires a minimum of time and effort on my part," she said.

To those of you contemplating a festive gathering, Begg offers this advice — "Rely on your best friends. I borrow a large coffee pot from one friend, a serving trays from another friend. Just be sure you borrow from people who are invited!"

## Chef with French flair makes dining out an event



### Chef's Secrets

BY KEELY WYONIK  
STAFF WRITER



KEELY WYONIK

Featured in the December issue of "Victoria" magazine, Cafe Bon Homme in Plymouth is all decked out for the holidays. A replica of the four-foot edible Christmas tree featured in the magazine will be on display from Dec. 10 to Jan. 1.

Those who speak French know that Bon Homme means Goodman. It's an interesting play on words for the owner, Greg Goodman, who has been cooking since he was 14. He got his first cooking lessons from his uncle who is also chef. Goodman studied culinary arts at Schoolcraft College in Livonia, and trained under chef Douglas Grech. He was the executive chef at Clarkson Cafe, and co-founded MacKinnon's restaurant. Seven years ago he left to open Cafe Bon Homme.

The menu of this cozy restaurant tucked next to an antique store is classically French with an American flair. You'll feel as though you stepped back in time. There are sugar cubes in the sugar bowls, and lots of other little touches that make dining out an event. Lunch is served 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Dinner 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. For information, call 463-6260.

Goodman said his menu is "primarily very healthy. We don't add butter to cream sauces.

There's a fair amount of different game, seafood, poultry and veal. We put in a lot of effort. The amount of work that goes into making a meal is very unique. We don't take shortcuts. We think if you're going to go out to eat, it's our job to fuss."

When a meal is served, Goodman said it's not uncommon to hear customers say "Oh my, look at that! It's gorgeous." A lot of the day-to-day work has been delegated to sous chef Greg Murphy. "He's done a magnificent job," said Goodman.

Family Goodman and his wife Susan have two children, Todd, 16, and Jill 14. "Susan helps keep me organized," he said.

### Hobbies

Tennis, and skiing.

### Favorite herb or spice

Pepper. "It imparts pungency, gives every food additional flavor, and it's good for you."

### Cooking philosophy

"First order of business should be perfecting the fundamentals. Once you've addressed that, you can develop a more artistic presentation. Get the basics down to a science, then develop the art."

### Who does the cooking at your house?

"My wife does a splendid job. I cook when we entertain and for holidays."

### What's a normal dinner at your house?

"It depends on the ingredients we have on hand, and how much time we have to cook." Goodman said dinner at his house ranges from roasted leg of



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chef's choice: Greg Goodman prepares "Escallops of Veal with Lemon," table-side at Cafe Bon Homme in Plymouth.

lamb to bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches.

### Name five things in your refrigerator.

"Various mustards, plum tomatoes, pea pods, a wide assortment of cheese, lots of different kinds of peppers."

### Cooking tip

"Get organized before you start to cook. Have everything ready. Once you get the groundwork laid, it becomes quite simple to execute."

See recipe inside.