

Make some goodies, and tea to share with friends

See related story, "Relax with Friends Over a Cup of Tea," on Taste front.

Bake at 450 degrees F. for 8 minutes, reduce heat to 350 degrees F., and bake 3 to 5 minutes more.
Recipe from Sylvia Thacker, "Sweet Afton Tea Room."

the cream cheese. Trim the ham to fit the slices of bread. Layer the ham and watercress on the bread. Using a serrated knife, cut the sandwich in half diagonally. Garnish the sandwiches with orange sections and sprinkle with red onion. Yield 12 small sandwiches.

In a large saucepan, bring the water to a full boil. Add the tea and sugar, cover, and let stand for 5 minutes. Strain the tea into a large pot or pan. Stir in the lemon juice, and let the tea cool to room temperature. Serve the tea over ice, garnished with the sliced strawberries. Yield 6 to 8 servings.

In a large saucepan, bring the water to a full boil. Add the tea, sugar, cinnamon, and star anise. Cover and let the tea stand for 5 minutes. Strain and cool to room temperature. Serve the tea over ice, garnished with the orange slices. Yield 6 to 8 servings.

Warm a teapot and teacups with hot water. Drain and dry them. Put the tea leaves in the teapot. Add the boiling water. Cover with a tea towel or tea cosy and steep for 5 minutes. Cut each orange slice in half, so that each piece is a semi-circle. Stud the skin side with several whole cloves. Put an orange slice in the bottom of each teacup. Stir and strain the tea into the hot cups and serve. Yield 4 servings.

BUTTER TARTS
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup light brown sugar
2 tablespoons heavy cream
1 egg, beaten
1 teaspoon vanilla
Pinch salt
1/4 cup pecans
1/4 cup currants
In electric mixer bowl, cream butter and brown sugar well. Continue beating while you add cream, egg (a little at a time), salt, and vanilla. Stir in nuts and currants. Place spoonfuls in chilled tart shells.

HAM-WATERCRESS SANDWICHES
2 thin slices white bread, crusts removed
2 tablespoons cream cheese with chives, softened
2 thin slices baked ham
1/2 cup small watercress sprigs, thick stems removed
12 orange sections
2 teaspoons minced red onion
Spread the slices of bread with

STRAWBERRY TEA
2 quarts water
8 teaspoons strawberry tea (available in specialty shops, natural-food stores)
1/2 cup sugar
Juice of 1 lemon
About 4 strawberries, sliced

ORANGE-SPICE TEA
2 quarts water
8 teaspoons loose orange-peel tea
1/2 cup sugar
1 stick cinnamon
1 pod star anise
6 to 8 quartered orange slices

ORANGE-CLOVE TEA
3 to 4 teaspoons orange-peel tea
1 quart boiling water
1 orange, rinsed, dried, and cut into slices about 1/2-inch thick
Whole cloves

Sandwich and tea recipes from "Victoria, The Charms of Tea, Reminiscences and Recipes," Hearst Books, \$16

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lot of people are lonely, tired and stressed out. They come here to relax, and enjoy good food. That's my joy, seeing people again and again."
Thacker, who grew up across the street from the Marigold Tea Room in Canada, said she's always adored making party food. "Creation is the fun part for me. I read cookbooks like some people read novels."
Thacker's daughter, romance novelist Shelly Thacker, and daughter-in-law, Kat Thacker, an illustrator, remember when Sylvia came home and told them she'd

signed a lease for the tea room. The family pitched in to help. "It's soothing and relaxing in here," said Kat Thacker. "You aren't stressed out. It's like a nuptial's parlor. People come here and stay here."
"It evokes the Victoria times when you had more leisure time. This is a place people come to escape and get away."
Sylvia proudly displays Kat's illustrations, and is anxiously awaiting the greeting cards and note cards that will carry her designs. Shelly's books are dis-

played next to the tins, tea cups and other British giftware for sale.
Thacker said running a tea room is like constantly getting ready for a big party.
"I feel like I was led to it," she said. "It's brought me a lot of joy. There's a woman who comes in here with her son. What beautiful memories they're making." See recipes inside.

In 1951, while working as a district home economist for Westinghouse Electric in Pitts-burgh, Cameron used one of the first microwave ovens. "It cost \$1,500, and we didn't know if it would take off," she said. "Irene has the ability to please every customer or client she works with, she gives them full service, and information," said Albright. "You can count on her. She's reliable, professional."
Cameron dabbled in television as host of the "Home Cooking" show in Youngstown, Ohio, early in her career, and has developed her talent as host of "In Good Taste."

In 1985 she was appointed to the cable commission in Livonia, and started "In Good Taste," in 1988. "She really goes with the flow," said Paul Pzyk Scott, municipal production coordinator for City Channel 8 who has worked with Cameron for four years. "We bring all of our equipment to her house to tape the show. She's very flexible. We're there from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. every other month. She's taken an interest in TV, even the production details. She's very encouraging to the staff." See recipe inside.

Tips for brewing tea

Sylvia Thacker of Sweet Afton Tea Room offers these tips for brewing a delicious cup of tea.
"At Sweet Afton, we brew tea in the British manner," said Thacker.
"First, we heat fresh, cold water in a kettle. When the water is hot, a small amount is swirled in the china teapot to heat it thoroughly. "Next, loosely pack a mesh tea infuser with the tea of your choice, and place it in the pot while waiting for the kettle to come to a rolling boil. Take the teapot to the kettle — never the kettle to the pot. "Pour the boiling water into the

pot, and allow the tea to steep three to five minutes. Stir the mixture and remove the infuser."
Julia Hoglen's secret is using loose tea. She wraps it in cheesecloth before putting it in the pot. "The looser the tea, the better the flavor," she said. "I prefer a china pot."
Celebrate Queen Victoria's Birthday, noon to 3 p.m. Monday, May 24, at Sweet Afton Tea Room. Enjoy a birthday luncheon fit for a queen, learn more about Queen Victoria and her reign. Tickets \$15 per person. For reservations, call 454-7777. Seating is limited.

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Food questions answered

For answers to questions about food safety, nutrition and preservation, call the Food and Nutrition Hot line, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, 858-0904 in Oakland County, 494-3013 in Wayne County.

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