

Chill out with chocolate desserts

In the old days chocolate hounds waited out the summer like hound dogs under a tree. Common wisdom was that people weren't about to buy much of something likely to melt before they could eat it. Chocolate was for cool weather, starting in the fall and ending with Easter.

The makers of Mint Andes Candies, have come up with a way to cool off with chocolaty treats. Here are some recipes to try.

ANDES LAYERED FROZEN MOUSSE PIE

2 packages (4.67 ounces or 28 pieces, each) Andes Candies, divided (any flavor)
2 cups vanilla ice cream, softened
1 ready-to-use chocolate water crumb crust (8 ounce or 9-inch)
1½ cups whipping cream, divided
2 egg yolks
Chop 14 Andes Candies; stir into ice cream. Spread onto bottom of

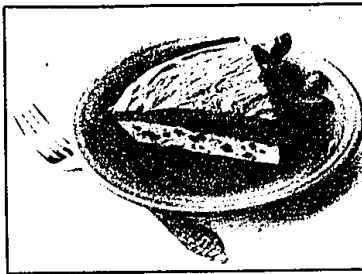
crust; freeze.

Place remaining Andes candies and ½ cup of whipping cream into medium size microwavable bowl. Microwave on high 1 minute. Stir until candies are completely melted and mixture is thoroughly combined.

Stir in egg yolks. Microwave on high 1½ minutes or until mixture begins to thicken, stirring every 30 seconds. Do not allow to boil. Cool to room temperature.

Whip remaining 1 cup whipping cream until stiff peaks form; fold into candy mixture. Spoon over ice cream in crust. Freeze 4 hours or overnight. Makes 6 servings. Allow pie to stand at room temperature 10 to 15 minutes before cutting.

Conventional: Melt remaining Andes Candies with ½ cup whipping cream in saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; stir in egg yolks. Continue heating over medium-low heat 3 to 5 minutes or until mixture begins to thicken. Do not allow to boil. Continue as directed.



ANDES

Fabulous pie: Andes Layered Frozen Mousse Pie is made with only five ingredients and goes together quick.

ANDES SUMMERTIME TORTONI

1 cup plain yogurt
½ cup cold milk
1 box (3.4 ounces) Instant vanilla pudding and pie filling mix
2½ cups frozen whipped topping, thawed
14 pieces Andes Candies, chopped (any flavor)
In medium bowl, mix yogurt and

milk until well blended. Sprinkle pudding mix over yogurt mixture; stir with wire whisk 1 minute.

Fold in whipped topping and Andes Candies. Spoon into paper-lined medium size muffin cups. Garnish with additional Andes Candies, if desired.

Freeze several hours or overnight. Let soften in refrigerator 15 minutes before serving. Makes 8 servings.

Get the most out of vegetables

As nutritious foods go, vegetables rank at the top, says the American Institute for Cancer Research. Vegetables are generally good sources of fiber and vitamins such as A, C and the B complex. Many provide iron, magnesium and potassium. Most are virtually fat-free. Yet how you select and store vegetables can make an important difference in the amount of nutrition you actually get from them.

The longer vegetables are exposed to air, heat and water, the more nutrients they lose. For the most nutrients and the best taste, your best bet is to eat vegetables raw or lightly steamed the same day you purchase or pick them.

Freshly picked produce from a farmers' market or roadside stand is generally superior to vegetables that have been shipped to a supermarket. Here are guidelines for selecting and storing some favorite vegetables.

Broccoli stalks should be tender and firm, not woody. The flower buds should be tightly closed and dark green. Plan to use soon after purchase and store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

With cucumbers, the darker the color, the better. Slim medium and small cucumbers are preferable to big fat ones. Avoid any that are puffy, soft, withered or shriveled. Cucumbers keep for a week in the refrigerator.

Identify tender green or wax beans by snapping them in half. If they don't snap, don't buy them. Beans should be colorful; avoid those that look or feel coarse and dried out or are discolored. Refrigerate beans after purchase.

Peppers come in many shapes and colors. Select firm, smooth, bright and colorful ones. Don't ac-

cept soft, withered, spotted or cracked peppers. Peppers require refrigeration and should be used within a week.

Force-ripened tomatoes in the supermarket can't compare to the vine-ripened tomatoes of a garden or produce stand. Choose tomatoes that have deep color, a firm texture and no blemishes. Tomatoes should ripen at room temperature and be refrigerated only if room temperature exceeds 75 degrees.

Corn should have green husks and plump, firm kernels. If the husk is brown or discolored, or if the kernels have dimples, the corn is too old and will be tough and dry. Corn should be refrigerated immediately after purchase.

Basil Green Beans steam to maintain fresh flavor, crisp texture, bright color and nutrients.

BASIL GREEN BEANS

1 pound fresh green beans
1 tablespoon minced onion
¼ teaspoon margarine
¼ cup fresh basil leaves, washed and minced; or 1 tsp. dried basil
1 teaspoon garlic powder
Dash of black pepper

Trim and snap green beans into thirds. Mince the onion. In a large pot with an inset steamer, in which a folding steamer will fit, bring a quart of water to a boil. Steam the beans, covered, 10 to 12 minutes until tender but still firm.

In a large skillet, melt the margarine over medium-high heat and sauté the onion until tender and translucent. Add the basil, garlic powder and pepper and stir for one minute. Toss the beans with the basil sauce to coat evenly. Serve.

Each of the four servings contains 25 calories and 1 gram of fat.

Three-cheese lasagna cooks in microwave

AP — Simple short cuts in the kitchen can get dinner on the table in less time without changing the flavor or the appeal of the dish. Three-cheese lasagna takes only 15 minutes to prepare and about 35 minutes to cook in the microwave oven.

In most lasagna recipes, noodles are cooked first in boiling water, then cooled, layered with other ingredients and finally baked in the oven. In this recipe, the noodles are not precooked. The lasagna is assembled in a baking dish and then cooked in the microwave oven.

The lasagna noodles cook in the liquid from the tomatoes, a

timesaving twist that eliminates one step from traditional lasagna recipes. Serve with a green salad and breadsticks.

THREE-CHEESE LASAGNA

18-ounce can whole peeled tomatoes and juice
26- to 30-ounce jar meatless spaghetti sauce
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
16-ounce carton cottage cheese
10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
½ cup chopped fresh basil or 2 tablespoons dried basil

leaves
Eight 2-inch wide uncooked lasagna noodles
3 cups (12 ounces) shredded mozzarella cheese
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

In a bowl, break up the whole peeled tomatoes into small bits; mix tomatoes and their juice from the can with spaghetti sauce, salt and pepper. In a separate bowl, stir together the cottage cheese, spinach and basil.

Spread one-third of the tomato sauce mixture on the bottom of a microwave-safe 2½-quart rectangular baking dish, about 8- by 12-

inches. Top with four noodles; half the cottage cheese mixture, half the mozzarella cheese and another third of the tomato sauce. Repeat layers, ending with the tomato sauce.

Cover dish with plastic wrap; vent corner. Cook on 100 percent power (high) for 10 minutes. Rotate dish. Cook on 50 percent power (medium) power 25 to 35 minutes or until pasta is tender, rotating the dish after 15 minutes. Uncover; top with freshly grated Parmesan cheese. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition facts per serving: 421 cal., 15.8 g fat, 46 mg chol., 1,088 mg sodium, 44.8 g carbs., 3.1 g dietary fiber, 25.8 g pro.

Betty Crocker offers tips

Here are some cooking tips from Betty Crocker.

■ Rinsing meat and poultry before cooking isn't necessary. In fact, rinsing raises the possibility of cross-contamination when meat or poultry comes in contact with utensils, cutting boards and towels.

Store meat in the coldest part of the refrigerator or freeze until ready to use. Transfer meat or poultry quickly from refrigerator to range-top pans or heated oven or grill.
■ Apples soften 10 times faster when stored at room temperature, rather than kept in the fridge.



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