

Get back to basics with homemade desserts

See related *Baking Basics* story on *Taste front*. Recipes compliments of *Land O'Lakes*.

BUTTERY SOUR CREAM SNACK CAKE

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Baking time: 60 minutes
Yield 12 servings.

- Ingredients:**
- 1 cup sugar
 - 3/4 cup butter, softened
 - 1 cup sour cream (regular, light or no-fat)
 - 3 eggs
 - 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - 1 teaspoon baking soda
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt

Glaze:
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1 tablespoon butter, softened
1 to 2 tablespoons milk

Cake: Heat oven to 350°F. In large mixer bowl combine sugar and butter. Beat at medium speed until creamy (1 minute). Add sour cream, eggs and vanilla; continue beating until well mixed (1 to 2 minutes).

Reduce speed to low; add all remaining ingredients. Beat at low speed, scraping bowl often, until smooth (1 to 2 minutes). Spoon batter into greased and floured 12-cup Bundt or 10-inch tube pan. (If using no-stick cooking spray do not flour pan). Bake for 50 to 60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes; invert onto serving plate. Cool completely.

Glaze: In small bowl stir together powdered sugar and butter. With wire whisk beat in enough milk to make desired glaze consistency. Drizzle over cooled cake. Yield 12 servings.

Cook's notes: You can substitute 1 teaspoon almond, lemon or orange extract for the vanilla. If desired omit glaze and sift powdered sugar over cooled cake.

Toasted Coconut Snack Cake: Gently stir in 1/2 cup toasted pecans, walnuts or almonds and 3/4 cup coconut. Bake as directed. For a special touch, sprinkle toasted coconut over glazed cake.

Cranberry Orange Snack Cake: Gently stir in 1 cup sweetened dried cranberries and 1 tablespoon dried orange peel. Bake as directed. For glaze, substitute orange juice for milk.

Nutrition facts per serving: 370 Calories; 5g Protein; 49g Carbohydrate; 18g Fat; 100mg Cholesterol; 390mg Sodium.

CHERRY COFFEE CAKE

Preparation time: 30 minutes
Baking time: 1 hour

- Ingredients:**
- 1 cup sugar
 - 1/2 cup butter, softened
 - 1 cup sour cream (regular, light, or no-fat)
 - 2 eggs
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Coffee Cake: Reduce speed to low; add all remaining ingredients. Beat at low speed, scraping bowl often, until smooth (1 to 2 minutes).

Spoon batter into greased and floured 12-cup Bundt or 10-inch tube pan. (If using no-stick cooking spray do not flour pan). Bake for 50 to 60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes; invert onto serving plate. Cool completely.

Glaze: In small bowl stir together powdered sugar and butter. With wire whisk beat in enough milk to make desired glaze consistency. Drizzle over cooled cake. Yield 12 servings.

1/2 teaspoon salt
1 (21-ounce) can cherry pie filling

TOPPING:
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup chopped pecans
1 teaspoon cinnamon
3 tablespoons butter

Heat oven to 325°F. In large mixer bowl combine 1 cup sugar and 1/2 cup butter. Beat at medium speed until creamy (1 to 2 minutes). Add sour cream, eggs and vanilla. Continue beating until well mixed. Reduce speed to low; add 2 cups flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Beat until well mixed (1 to 2 minutes).

Spread half of batter into greased and floured 9-inch square baking pan. Spoon cherry pie filling over batter. Spoon remaining batter over pie filling; spread carefully.

In medium bowl stir together 1/4 cup flour, 1/4 cup sugar, pecans and cinnamon. With pastry blender or two knives, cut in 3 tablespoons butter until mixture is crumbly. Sprinkle over batter. Bake for 60 to 75 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of cake portion comes out clean and topping is dark golden brown.

Serves 8.
Cook's notes: Filling variation, substitute 1 (21-ounce) can of your favorite flavor pie filling for cherry.

Nutrition information per serving:

ing: **Calories 520; Protein 6g; Carbohydrate 74g; Fat 23g; Cholesterol 100mg; Sodium 400mg.**
This recipe is from Chef Dan Rowison, pastry chef at the Franklin Hills Country Club, and chef instructor at Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills.

PECAN-DRIED CHERRY BISCOCCI

- Ingredients:**
- 4 ounces (1 stick) butter, room temperature
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1/2 cup brown sugar
 - 2 eggs
 - Zest from 1 lemon, minced
 - 2 1/2 cups flour
 - 2 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1 cup pecans, chopped
 - 2 teaspoons vanilla
 - 1/2 cup dried cherries, chopped

Preheat oven to 325°F. Grease and flour pie filling; spread carefully.

Use an electric mixer to cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time until absorbed. Add lemon zest and vanilla.

Sift flour, baking powder and salt together.

Add flour mixture to egg mixture. Mix until combined. Mix in pecans and dried cherries. Refrigerate 20-30 minutes.

Divide dough in half. Shape each half into a 2-inch wide, 3/4-inch thick log. Transfer log to prepared cookie sheet. Bake until logs



Fruited coffee cake: Make Cherry Coffee Cake your own by using your favorite flavor of pie filling.

are golden brown, firm to the touch, and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean - about 20 minutes.
Cool on cookie sheet for 15-20

minutes. Using serrated knife cut logs into 1/2-inch thick slices. Place slices on cookie sheet. Bake 10 minutes, or until golden brown. Yield 36 cookies.

Wines from page B1

are made by people who know how to grow ancient grape varieties using today's most modern methods.

Ciro Rosso, made from the legendary gaglioppo grape, is modern Calabria's most celebrated red wine. Nicodemò Librandi explained that local legend says

that Giro descended directly from "Krimian," the wine Calabrian athletes drank to celebrate victories in the early Olympic games. Gaglioppo is an ancient vine either indigenous to Calabria or brought there by the Greeks.

What is most amazing about

1995 Librandi *Ciro Rosso* Classico, about \$10, is that the wine was not aged in wood, but tastes like it was. All the fine cigar box and spicy, anise notes complementing bright red fruit come from gaglioppo. Way to go grape!

A notch above is 1991 Librandi *Rosso Riserva Duca Sanfelice*

\$15. Each year, it is made from the best fruit from 30-year-old gaglioppo vines, picked later than those for *Ciro Rosso*. For sure, you will think this wine was barrel aged. It wasn't. The wine with fabulously spicy perfume is smooth and elegant, finishing with oodles of juicy fruit.

The Super Calabrian in 1991 Librandi *Gravello* \$22. Cabernet sauvignon at 40 percent harmonizes sensationally with gaglioppo after aging in small French cooperage. This "super" with international flare will make you think again if you believe that the best come from northern Italy. Gravello beats the socks off many northern "supers" at one-third the price!

Librandi makes *Lo Passulo* from mantonio, an ancient Greek grape. This nectar of the gods from the 1991 vintage at \$27 is made from late-harvested, nearly raisined grapes that are dried in the sun on mats until fully raisined. Grapes are pressed and the precious juice is fermented in small French barrels. Perfume and flavors of apricots, apples, lemon and orange zest make it a liquid dessert.

Wine nights
Detroit Public Television Auction wine nights are Wednesday, April 29 and Thursday, April 30. Dennis Walsh, owner of Ye Olde Wine Shoppe in Rochester Hills, is coordinator.

He said there are priceless lots such as 3L 1993 Dom Perignon, a vertical of mature Beauville Vineyard Georges de Latour Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, three bottles of 1949 Johannsberger Unterholler Hochfohne Beerenauslese, a mixed case of premium South African wines, a bottle of 1970 Chateau Petrus and a day with brewmaster Dean Jones at Big Rock Chop and Brew House awaiting a high bidder. Donations can still be made. You can reach Walsh at (248) 852-5535.

Look for Focus on Wine on the first and third Sunday of the month in Taste. To leave a voice-mail message for the Healds, dial (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, mailbox 1864.

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Honest from page B1

every type of exotic ingredient you can think of. In the 1970s we had red and green peppers, now we have yellow, orange, purple and brown. And think about all the different fruits you can buy - Passion fruit, guava, carambola, Asian pears, lychee fruit, the list goes on and on. It's absolutely amazing to think about how much has changed in such a short time.

What should we expect in the next 20 years? I hope that we see more organic foods, natural foods, farm-raised meats, and the elimination of factory raised and chemically pumped chickens. It can only benefit future generations if the food growers of the world start paying more attention to sustainable types of agriculture, use fewer pesticides and less chemicals. We can't continue to poison our bodies, and

our sweet Mother Earth. The polls say that we are eating fewer and fewer meals at home, but I say that with the incredible foods that are available in our markets, maybe there are still some folks who still love to cook for their families, as much as I do. After all, somebody is buying all that great food.

Special dinner
Spring is the time for fresh young vegetables. To celebrate, Emily's is hosting its first vegetable-themed dinner 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 25. We will serve nine wonderful courses using vegetables as the focus on the dish. The dinner is not vegetarian, and each course will be matched with an appropriate wine. The cost is \$120 per person, inclusive of wine, taxes and

gratuities. We are very excited about this dinner, and the opportunity to focus on attention on a spring's treasure. Call soon for your reservation: (248) 349-0505.

We are still accepting members in the Slow Food Group. E-mail me at pigrick@aol.com with any food questions or comments. I'd love to hear from more of my readers.

Rick Halberg chef/owner of Emily's Restaurant in Northville lives in Farmington Hills with his family. He has established a reputation as one of Michigan's outstanding chefs. Rick is an extensive traveler, and is known for his fine French inspired Mediterranean and Italian cuisine. Look for his column on the third Sunday of the month in Taste.

Celebrate spring flavors

See related *For the Love of Food* column on *front*. Recipes compliments of *Rick Halberg of Emily's*.

SWEET CORN POLENTA WITH SPRING MORELS AND FAVA BEANS

- Serves about 6
- Basic Polenta**
1 cup corn meal
1 quart cold water
1/4 pound butter
2 ounces (1/2 cup) Parmesan Cheese
1 cup fresh sweet corn
1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, chopped

Bring water to a boil, stirring frequently. Season with salt and pepper and rosemary. Allow to cook over low heat for about 1/2 hour, still stirring regularly until thick

and very smooth. Add the sweet corn and continue cooking for another 3 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in butter and cheese until well incorporated.

Check seasoning and pour onto a 12-inch by 12-inch pan lined with parchment paper. Chill until ready to use or serve immediately while still hot and soft.

When thoroughly chilled, polenta can be cut into shapes and browned in hot butter.

SPRING MORELS AND FAVA BEANS

- 1 pound fresh morel mushrooms
About 3 pounds fresh fava beans in their pods
Butter for sautéing
Pinch of fresh chopped garlic
3/4 cup heavy cream

3 tablespoons chopped fresh herbs (parsley, chives, rosemary, oregano, basil)

Clean morels by trimming stem and checking for dirt or parasites. You can dip them in some cold salt water for a minute or two to purge any unwanted bugs.

Remove fava beans from the pods and blanch the beans in boiling water for 1 minute. Immediately, plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process, then drain, and by pinching the skin, squeeze the bean out and set aside.

Sauté the mushrooms with a bit of butter and the garlic just until they start giving off some of their juice. Add the fava beans, herbs, and cream bring to a quick boil. Season with a bit of salt and a generous grinding of black pepper. Serve alongside a serving of the polenta that you have previously warmed.