

Flavor your tiramisu with brandy, espresso

Master Chef Joe Decker, an instructor at Schoolcraft College and a judge in the Observer's "Taste of Tiramisu" contest, looks for "lightness and balance" in choosing a winning tiramisu. This is his special recipe.

(You will need to make two batches of the mascarpone cream recipe, one for the espresso-flavored layer and one for the brandy-flavored layer, so double the ingredients for mascarpone cream before you go to the store.)

CONTEMPORARY TIRAMISU

Ladyfingers

6 egg yolks 5 tablespoons granulated sugar 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
Pinch of salt
6 egg whites
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
5 tablespoons granulated sugar 1/2 cups sifted pastry flour
powdered sugar for sprinkling
In a large bowl, whisk together

first four ingredients just enough to mix them; set aside. In another bowl, beat the egg whites and cream of tartar until frothy. Slowly add the sugar and beat to a stiff meringue. Alternately fold the meringue and sift the flour into the yolk mixture, ending with the whites.

To create ladyfingers, shape 3-by-1-inch strips of mixture on lightly buttered parchment paper. Sift powdered sugar over their surface twice, waiting five minutes between. Bake 8-10 minutes at 400° F until lightly browned (not too much color) and firm to the touch.

MASCARPONE CREAM

3 egg yolks
1/2 cup sugar
2 tablespoons water
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons mascarpone (about 5 1/2 ounces)
Espresso to taste
Brandy to taste

1 tablespoon gelatin
4 teaspoons water
1 cup whipped cream, softly whipped

Start whipping yolks either by hand or with a hand mixer. In a sauce pan, bring the sugar and water to a boil and continue cooking until the solution reaches soft ball stage (242° F). Immediately pour the syrup into the yolks and continue whipping until the yolks are cooled.

In a large bowl, combine the whipped yolk mixture with the mascarpone cheese and mix first with a wooden spoon, then a whisk until smooth. Do not overmix or mixture will break down!

Flavor the mixture with the espresso, stirring until just smooth. Heat the gelatin and water briefly and add to the mixture. Fold the whipped cream into the mixture.

Make a second batch flavored with brandy.

To assemble the tiramisu, arrange ladyfingers in the bottom of a mold and sprinkle with Kahlua. Spread with the espresso-flavored cheese mixture. Place second layer of ladyfingers on top, sprinkle with Kahlua and cover with brandy-flavored mixture. Refrigerate and let set several hours. To serve, unmold, dust lightly with cocoa, and serve with berry compote and some Chantilly cream.

SUMMER BERRY COMPOTE

3 pounds blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, cranberries, lingonberries, red cherries and strawberries
10 ounces granulated sugar (approximately 1 1/4 cups)
1/2 cup water

Place water, sugar and approximately 1/2 of the fruit (excluding the strawberries) in a sauce pan and gently bring to a simmer. Remove from heat immediately and gently stir in the remaining fruit, including the strawberries.

(This recipe makes a big batch of compote. It can be cut in half or thirds.)

EMERIL'S TIRAMISU

Emeril Lagasse hosts the TV Food Network's "The Essence of Emeril." This is his recipe for basic tiramisu, including his hot sponge cake.

Hot milk sponge
1/4 cup milk
2 Teaspoons butter
1-1/4 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
3 eggs
1-1/4 cups sugar
3 egg yolks

Preheat oven to 350° F. Grease and lightly flour an 8-by-11-inch sheet tray. In a small saucepan, heat milk and butter until butter melts; set aside. In a bowl, stir together flour and baking powder,



Dishing it out: Taste editor Ken Abramczyk and features writer Renee Skoglund serve samples of a tasty entry in the Observer's Taste of Tiramisu contest.

set aside. Put the eggs, sugar and yolks in a bowl and set over a hot water bath, whisking until the egg mixture triples in size. Fold the flour mixture and the milk into the egg-sugar mixture. Pour into prepared pan and bake for 10 minutes.

Mascarpone cream

1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons espresso coffee
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons hot water
3 tablespoons Grand Marnier
1 cup mascarpone cheese
2 tablespoons rum (or Marsala wine)

3 eggs, separated
3-6 tablespoons sugar
1 cup heavy cream, whipped (can use up to 3 cups)
1/4 teaspoon vanilla
Salt, a pinch
Cocoa powder, enough to sprinkle
Powdered sugar, enough to garnish

Combine the espresso, water and Grand Marnier; set aside. Combine the mascarpone and rum in a large bowl; beat until smooth. In a medium bowl, beat together the egg yolks and 3 tablespoons of the sugar until smooth; set over a hot water bath and beat for 3 min-



Irresistible: Norma Marson and Louise Angelosanti of Livonia, judges in the Observer's Taste of Tiramisu contest, take one more bite...maybe two...of tiramisu.

utes until light and foamy. Remove from heat and immediately beat this mixture into the mascarpone mixture; set aside.

Whip the cream until it holds a firm shape; fold in vanilla. In two small additions, fold about 1/3 of the mascarpone mixture into the whipped cream; then fold the whipped cream into the remaining mascarpone mixture. Set aside. Beat the egg whites and salt on medium setting until foamy. Increase the speed and add the remaining 3 tablespoons sugar, beat until glossy, not dry. Fold the

egg whites all at once into the mascarpone.

To assemble, cut the sponge cake in half crosswise. Place one half in pan large enough to snugly hold it. Moisten the cake with half of the espresso mixture. Top with half of the mascarpone mixture, spreading it out evenly. Sprinkle powdered sugar with cocoa powder and generously sugar. Top with remaining cake half and repeat the procedure. Refrigerate uncovered for 2 hours.

Recipe compliments of www.pastrybiz.com

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