

Surprise your sweet with a festive treat

See related story on Pastimes front. These recipes use Equal® brand sweetener but other artificial sweeteners may also be acceptable.

CHOCOLATE FRUIT FONDUE

4 ounces unsweetened Baking Chocolate
5 ounces (10 tablespoons) skim milk
19 packets Equal® or 4 and three-quarter teaspoons Measure™
1/2 teaspoon Vanilla Extract

Cut squares of chocolate into small pieces. Heat chocolate and skim milk in a double boiler, or a small stainless steel bowl over hot water. Whip constantly until all chocolate is melted and combined with the milk. Remove from heat source, whip in Equal® and vanilla extract. Mixture will be shiny.

Pour chocolate mixture into fondue pot. Light candle to keep warm. Cut up fresh fruits for dipping such as apple or pear wedges, banana pieces, orange sections, whole strawberries, melon cubes or kiwi slices. Makes about 6 servings at 3 tablespoons each.

Nutrients per serving: Calories 123, Protein - 3 g, Fat - 10 g, Carbohydrates - 10 g

RASPBERRY ALMOND BARS

2 cups all purpose flour
12 packets Equal® or 3 teaspoons

Measure™

1/8 teaspoon salt
4 ounces margarine, cold, cut into half-inch pieces
1 egg, whole, slightly beaten
1 tablespoon water
2 teaspoons lemon peel, grated
6 ounces (12 tablespoons) raspberry jam, seedless, sugar-free
1 teaspoon cornstarch
4 ounces almonds, slivered, toasted

Combine flour, salt and Equal® in a large mixing bowl. Cut in cold margarine by hand or with a pastry blender. Mix in beaten egg, milk and lemon peel. Mixture will be crumbly.

Spray bottom of a 11 by 17-inch baking dish with pan coating. Press mixture evenly into the bottom leaving a one-half inch crust. Bake in a preheated 400°F oven for about 15 minutes until edges are browned.

In a small saucepan, mix the raspberry jam with the cornstarch and heat on low until the mixture is thickened. Remove from heat, let cool slightly and spread mixture evenly over baked crust. Sprinkle with toasted almonds. Bake in 400°F oven for 12-15 minutes until fruit is bubbly on top. Cool and cut into 4 by 6-inch squares. Makes about 12 servings.

Nutrients per serving: Calories 116, Protein - 2 g, Fat - 6 g, Carbohydrates - 16 g
Recipes courtesy of HDS Services.

Sweet by any name:

The following are different types of sweeteners, their properties and common uses.

■ **Sucrose:** Caloric sweetener commonly called table sugar. Is available as refined, raw, turbinado, brown, molasses or powdered. It is used in a wide variety of foods and beverages.

■ **Dextrose:** Caloric sweetener also called corn sugar. It is the naturally occurring form of glucose.

■ **Lactose:** Caloric sweetener also called milk sugar because it is found naturally in dairy products. Some adults have low or no lactase enzymes to digest lactose resulting in lactose fermentation in the gut.

■ **Fructose:** Caloric sweetener also called levulose or fruit sugar. It is the extremely sweet byproduct of fruits and honey.

■ **Maltose:** Caloric sweetener also called malt sugar. It is used in the fermentation of alcohol and helps make bread dough rise.

■ **Corn syrup:** Thick sweet syrup created from the action of enzymes or acids on cornstarch. It is often flavored with maple and used as for pancake syrup.

■ **Boritol, Mannitol, Xylitol:** Also called sugar alcohols, they occur naturally in fruits and are commercially produced from dextrose. Used in processed foods as a

thickening, stabilizing and sweetening agent. Can cause stomach cramps or diarrhea if you use too much.

■ **Saccharin:** Non-nutritive sweetener sold under various names including NutraSweet. Made from two amino acids, phenylalanine and aspartic acid. It is 180-200 times sweeter than sugar thus needed in much smaller quantities. Not as good for cooking or baking since it loses its sweetness when heated.

■ **Acesulfame K:** Non-nutritive sweetener from Sunette. Used in tabletop sweeteners such as Sweet One and DiabetiSweet. Acceptable for use in cooking and baking however when used in large amounts, it can become bitter.

■ **Sucralose:** Non-nutritive sweetener from Splenda. Acceptable for use in cooking and baking. Resources: The American Diabetes Association publishes many excellent cookbooks. Check them out by call 1.800.232.6733 or go to <http://store.diabetes.org>

Desserts from page B1

ries or less per serving and can usually fit into everyone's diet.

Eat with your eyes

Many of us "eat with our eyes." Serving desserts in jewel-like glass bowls or colorful, festive party dishes can make even the most humble dessert seem tastier. Be inventive. Layer contrasting flavors of sugar-free pudding or low fat yogurt in parfait or wine glasses. Use a graham cracker crust, rather than a pas-

try crust, for pies and tarts. Drizzle crumbled graham crackers on top on sugar-free chocolate pudding, or crumble ginger snaps on top of sugar free frozen yogurt, for a tasty upside-down pie. "Frost" a cake with jewel-colored bits of sugar-free candy. Add a light dusting of flaked coconut to almost any dessert for a rich sweet flavor.

Peggy Martinelli-Everts, R.D., a Clarkston resident, is a registered dietitian

and director of clinical operations for HDS Services, a 36-year-old Farmington Hills-based food service and hospitality management and consulting company, specializing in food and nutrition service management for hospitals, long-term care facilities, businesses, private clubs and private schools. HDS Services has approximately 250 management accounts throughout the United States.

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