

CHEF MARIE'S PERSONAL RECIPES

DESSERTS

(Fruits, Cakes, Pies, Tarts, Mousses, Ice Cream, Cookies, etc...)



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Almond Lavender Honey Cake



1 ½ cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup almond flour
1 tsp. baking soda
3 large eggs, separated
¾ cup honey
1/2 cup low-fat Greek yogurt
2 Tbsp. lemon juice

2 Tbsp. lemon zest
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
4 oz. unsalted butter, soft (8 tablespoons)
Large pinch of salt

Syrup made with: 1/2 cup honey
1/2 cup lemon juice and
1 Tbsp. culinary lavender buds

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter and flour a loaf pan (4.5" x 12" x 2.5") and set aside. Sift the all-purpose flour, almond flour and baking soda through a sieve into a large bowl. Mix the egg yolks, honey, yogurt, lemon juice, lemon zest, vanilla, butter and salt in a bowl. Stir the mixture into the flour mixture until well-incorporated. Beat the egg whites until stiff in a separate bowl. Fold a third of the stiffed whites into the mixture. Add the remaining whites and carefully continue to incorporate them to the cake batter. Transfer to the prepared pan and bake for 50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the cake center comes out clean. Meanwhile, heat the honey, lemon juice and culinary lavender in a saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and continue to simmer for 5 minutes. Pass the liquid through a sieve to remove the culinary lavender buds and let cool. (If you like a stronger lavender flavor, you can let it cool first and then pass it through a sieve). Take the cake out of the oven and transfer it onto a wire rack. Let cool 15 minutes in the pan. Pierce the cake with a toothpick and brush ¾ of the flavored lavender honey over the top of the cake. Let set until the cake is completely cold. Remove from pan, slice, and transfer to a serving platter. Drizzle remaining syrup over the slices and serve immediately.

Makes approximately 14 servings.

Almond Pear Tart



*1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup cake flour
1 extra-large egg
Pinch salt
3 Tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. almond extract
7 Tbsp. unsalted butter
1 Tbsp. cold water
4.4 oz. sugar
4.4 oz. almond meal
1 teaspoon cardamom
3 extra-large eggs
4.4 oz. unsalted butter, chopped and soft
2 Tbsp. dark rum
2 Tbsp. cake flour
8 poached pear halves*

9" French tart shell pan. Please use the ingredients in the order listed.

Place all-purpose flour, cake flour, egg, salt, sugar and almond extract in a blender. Mix until barely incorporated. Add the butter and cold water, then mix until a ball forms. Wrap the dough in a plastic wrap and refrigerate for half an hour.

Spread some butter all over the tart pan. Roll out the dough to fit the tart pan and neatly set it. Refrigerate for half hour. Mix the sugar, almond meal and cardamom in a blender. Add the eggs and mix. Add the butter and rum, mix until barely incorporated. Add the cake flour and mix until smooth and light. Barely fill the tart shell with the prepared cream, keeping some to fill out later. Top with pear halves, laying the narrow end towards the center and slightly pushing them in the cream. Fill with more cream around the pears to even the top. Bake at 425° F for 30 minutes

Makes: 8 Servings.

Angel Food Cake with Raspberry Coulis



<i>1 ½ cup egg whites</i>	<i>1 tsp. vanilla extract</i>
<i>1 ½ cup sugar</i>	<i>1/4 tsp. salt</i>
<i>1 cup sifted cake flour</i>	<i>2 cups raspberries</i>
<i>1 ½ tsp. cream of tartar</i>	<i>1 tsp. lemon juice</i>
<i>1/4 cup powdered sugar</i>	

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Sift ½ cup of sugar and the flour together twice. Place the room temperature egg whites, cream of tartar, and salt in a large mixing bowl. On high speed, whip until soft peaks form. Lower the speed and continue mixing, while adding the remaining sugar, releasing the sugar in a constant stream. Gently, fold in the vanilla extract, and transferred to an ungreased angel food cake pan (preferably one that has a removable bottom which makes it easier to remove later on). Smooth the top, break any large air pockets, and bake for 30 to 35 minutes. The cake is done when the top springs back when touched lightly. Remove from the oven and immediately cool the cake upside down on an emptied wine bottle. Let the cake completely cool down before moving on. Place the raspberries, lemon juice and sugar in blender. Blend until smooth and transfer to a saucepan. Heat until warm, mixing occasionally. Remove from heat and let cold. Refrigerate until use. To remove the cake from the mold, first loosen the cake along the edges with a long cake spatula. Turn cake over a serving platter and carefully remove the bottom. Cut 12 slices with a serrated knife and transfer to serving plates. Drizzle raspberries coulis and serve immediately.

Comments: You can add raspberries or berries for decoration, sprinkle with chopped pistachios, or even add shredded dark chocolates pieces.

Makes 12 servings.

Apple Compote and Pecans



4 apples; peeled, cored and diced
2 Tbsp. maple syrup (optional)
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 pinches of ground cinnamon
1 tsp. minced lemon zest
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
2 oz. of water
4 tsp. chopped pecans
4 tsp. ground flaxseeds

Place the apples pieces in a saucepan. Add the maple syrup (optional), vanilla extract, cinnamon, lemon zest and water. Cook over medium heat, mixing occasionally, until the apple pieces are very tender and starting to fall apart, about 15 minutes. If you want thinner compote, almost apple sauce like, continue to cook for another 10 to 15 minutes. Time varies based on the size of your apples pieces.

Remove from heat and add the lemon juice. Slightly cool before transferring to four serving ramekins or glasses. Top with the pecans and flaxseeds.

Comments: This can be served either warm or cold.

Makes 4 servings.

Peach, Cantaloupe and Ice Cream



2 peaches, pit removed and sliced
2 thick slices cantaloupe, chopped
8 tablespoons coconut water
2 teaspoons honey
2 scoop vanilla ice cream
Honey
Mint leaves

Heat the coconut water and honey in a pan over medium heat. Reduce by half.
Divide the peaches and cantaloupe pieces among 2 martini glasses. Drizzle the prepared syrup and serve immediately.

Makes 2 servings.

Apricot and Raspberry Skewers



8 apricots, pitted and quartered
16 raspberries
2 Tbsp. olive oil
4 Tbsp. honey
1 tsp. freshly minced basil
2 Tbsp. lemon juice
16 Skewers

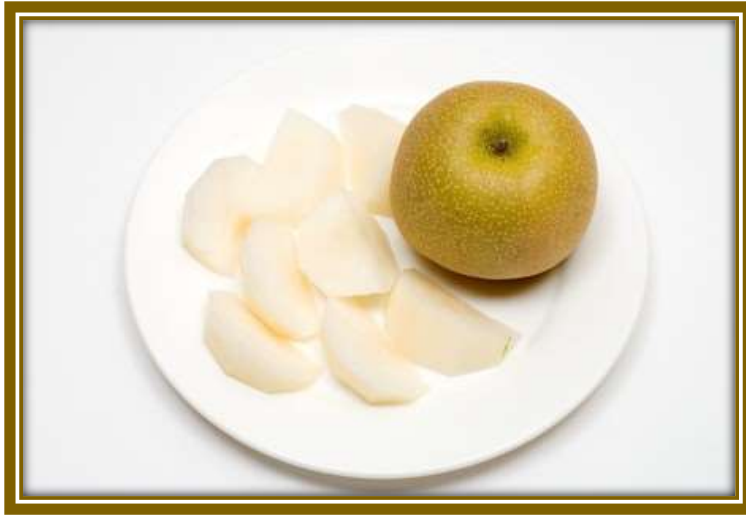
Slice 1 raspberry, 1 apricot 1 raspberry, 1 apricot on a skewer. Repeat until all used and transfer to a serving platter.

Heat the olive oil, honey, basil, and lemon juice in the microwave until melted. Drizzle the sauce over the skewers and serve immediately.

Option: Serve with Greek yogurt, low-fat ice cream, or your favorite frozen yogurt.

Makes 4 servings.

Asian Pear Salad



*8 oz. Asian pear
3 Tbsp. lime juice
1 Tbsp. ginger
1 Tbsp. cilantro*

Mix the lime juice, ginger and cilantro in a large bowl. Add the pears slices and mix well before serving.

Makes 4 servings.

Avocado and Chocolate Mousse



2 ripe large avocados, mashed with a fork
1/3 cup unsweetened cacao powder
1/2 cup almond milk
1/4 cup honey
2 tsp. vanilla extract
Pinch salt

Warm up the honey in the microwave, 10 seconds at a time until liquid.

Transfer the mashed avocado to a stand mixer. Add the cacao powder, half the milk, honey vanilla extract and salt. Whisk until smooth and creamy, adding more milk as needed to reach the desired thickness. Transfer to 4 serving dishes and refrigerate until use.

Décor with mint and berries, before serving.

Option: You can add flaxseeds to the mixture or sprinkle it on top. Feel free to change décor with seasonal fruits or with nuts.

Makes 4 servings.

Baked Apples



*6 golden delicious apples
6 tsp. apricot or orange jam
6 Tbsp. chardonnay wine
2 Tbsp. orange jam*

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Wash and core the apples, being careful not to break through the bottom of each apple.

Place them in a baking pan that is just the right size to keep the apples close to each other.

Put a tsp. jam in the cavity of each apple. Pour 1 Tbsp. wine over each apple. Add a little hot water in the pan (1/4 inch). Cover the pan with aluminum foil and bake for 20 minutes. Remove cover and baste with the liquid in the pan. Continue baking uncovered for 10 minutes or until tender.

Remove the apples and place in individual serving dishes. Blend the jam with the liquid left in the pan. Heat and cook until thickened a little bit. Before serving, reheat the apples slightly and spoon the warm sauce over each apple.

Option: You may use fresh squeezed orange juice (remove pulp) instead of wine.

This recipe is also delicious with red currant jelly and raspberry liquor or juice.

For less sugar: use sugar-free jam; you may replace the wine or juice with water.

Makes 6 servings.

Banana Snack



8 oz. banana
4 tsp. semi-sweet chocolate
2 tsp. low fat milk (or substitute)
2 pinches of cinnamon
2 Tbsp. flaxseeds meal

Place the milk and chocolate chips in a small bowl. Melt in the microwave for a minute or two.

Divide the banana slices among two small serving plates. When the chocolate is melted, mix, and drizzle over the bananas. Top with ground flaxseeds, cinnamon, and serve immediately.

Makes 2 servings.

Banana Snack for Kids



*2 small bananas, peeled and sliced
4 tsp. semi-sweet chocolate chips
2 tsp. low-fat milk (or alternative)*

Place the milk and chocolate chips in a small bowl and melt in the microwave for a minute or so.

Divide the banana slices among two small plates. When the chocolate is melted, mix, and drizzle over the bananas. Serve immediately.

Makes 2 servings.

Cantaloupe Soup



1 lb. cantaloupe; peeled, seeded and diced
2 oranges, juiced
1 lemon, juiced
3 cups water
2 oz. sugar
1/4 tsp. orange zest
1/4 tsp. lemon zest
2 Tbsp. cornstarch
4 Tbsp. crème fraiche or low-fat yogurt

Purée the cantaloupe in a blender with the orange and lemon juices. Refrigerate.

Place the water, sugar, zests and cornstarch in a saucepan. Mix well and bring to a boil over medium high heat. Reduce heat and simmer until thickened. Remove from heat and add the melon purée. Mix and let cool. Chill for a few hours. Before serving, add the crème fraiche or low-fat yogurt.

Option: You may décor with a melon ball skewers and mint, as seen on this picture!

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Chef Marie's Apple Filling for Crepe



*5 large apples
1/4 cup lemon juice
Cinnamon to taste
1/2 cup plus 2 Tbsp. apple butter
1/4 cup plus 1 Tbsp. nuts
1/4 cup plus 1 Tbsp. raisins
10 large crêpes*

Peel and slice the apples. Place them immediately in lemon juice to prevent browning. Poach the apples in the lemon juice plus enough water to cover them halfway (height wise) and add a little cinnamon. Cook until the apples are just barely tender. Remove from heat, drain, and set aside.

Spread 1Tbsp. apple butter on a warm crêpe. Add 2 oz. apples in the center and spread slightly. Sprinkle 1 ½ tsp. nuts, 1 ½ tsp. raisins and cinnamon. Fold each side over the center and continue to cook for another minute. Repeat with the remaining crêpes.

Makes filling for 10 large crêpes.

Chef Marie's Basic Healthy Crepe Recipe



1 cup flour
1 tsp. sugar (for sweet dessert crêpe use 1 Tbsp.)
3 extra-large eggs
A large pinch of salt
2 Tbsp. grapeseed oil
1 cup milk

Place the flour in a bowl. Blend in the eggs, sugar, salt and oil. Slowly whisk in the milk. Let the batter rest for 30 minutes. Before use, add a little water to thin out the batter.

Heat a nonstick pan or crêpe pan over medium heat. Soak a small piece of paper towel with 1 tsp. grapeseed oil and swirl quickly over the pan. Add enough batter to cover the entire bottom. Cook until golden brown and turnover. If adding a filling, do so now. Cook until slightly gold brown. Fold, if you used a filling or set aside for later use.

Comments: If making sweet dessert crêpes, add 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract or a liquor matching specifically the flavor of your filling.

Though, I recommend using vegetable fat rather than animal fat; if you prefer, you may substitute unsalted butter for the grapeseed oil in the same amount.

Makes approximately 10 large or 20 small crêpes.

Chef Marie's Chocolate and Nut Filling for Crepe



2 Tbsp. Belgium cacao powder
6 Tbsp. evaporated low-fat milk
2 Tbsp. honey
3-1/2 oz. unsalted almond butter

Mix the cacao powder with the evaporated milk. Blend in the honey and almond butter until smooth. If needed, microwave 5 seconds to help mixing.

Spread 1 ½ Tbsp. chocolate filling on a warm crêpe. Fold each side over the center and continue to cook for another minute. Repeat with remaining crêpes.

Comments: I have purposely limited the amount of honey in this recipe, as I want to keep it as low as possible in calories while still having a great taste. You can always add just a little more honey to make it sweeter or to your taste without affecting the recipe. Keep in mind though that it will increase the calories. You can also strengthen the flavor by adding a little bit of Hazelnut liquor or Amaretto.

Also feel free to add seasonal fruits and other ingredients to this already delicious crêpe filling. Here are a few examples: peach slices and hazelnuts - Strawberry slices and pistachios. Pineapple slices and shredded coconut - Kiwi and orange slices - Apricot and almond slices. You can top with whipped cream, frozen yogurt or ice cream, drizzle a little more sauce and sprinkle pieces of nuts for a fancier presentation. Variations are up to your imagination. Fun thing to do with your young kids. Just prepare a bunch of crêpes ahead of time. Have a bunch of various fruits, nuts (optional), sauces, ice cream and decorative items. Let them finish the crêpes to their likes!

Option: You can substitute peanut butter or hazelnut butter for the almond butter.

Makes filling for 10 large crêpes.

Chef Marie's Strawberry Filling for Crepe



*10 Tbsp. blackcurrant or boysenberry preserves
1-1/3 lb. strawberries, trimmed and thinly sliced
10 large crêpes*

Spread 1 Tbsp. preserves on a warm crêpe. Add 2 oz. strawberries in the center and slightly spread them. Fold each side over the center and continue to cook for another minute. Repeat with the remaining crêpes.

Option: Add 2 Tbsp. whipped mascarpone and whipped cream to the crêpe, as shown on the picture. You may sprinkle some coconut or a little chocolate sauce in it.

Makes filling for 10 crêpes.

Cherry Almond Tart



*1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup cake flour
1 extra-large egg
1 Tbsp. water
Pinch salt
3 Tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. almond extract
7 Tbsp. unsalted butter
1 cup sugar
1 cup almond flour
2 extra-large eggs
1/2 cup unsalted butter
A few vanilla drops
2 Tbsp. Kirsch
1/4 cup cake flour
1 lb. cherries*

9" French tart shell pan. Please use the ingredients in the order listed.

Place all-purpose flour, cake flour, egg, salt, sugar and almond extract in a blender. Mix until barely incorporated. Add the butter and cold water, then mix until a ball forms. Wrap the dough in a plastic wrap and refrigerate for half an hour.

Spread some butter all over the tart pan. Roll out the dough to fit the tart pan and neatly set it. Refrigerate for half hour. Mix the sugar and almond meal in a blender. Add the eggs and mix. Add the butter and Kirsch, mix until barely incorporated. Add the cake flour and mix until smooth and light. Fill the prepared tart shell with cherries. Fill the tart shell with the prepared almond cream. Bake at 425°F for 30 minutes or until set.

Makes 8 Servings.

Chocolate Pecan Pie



1 9-inch pie shell:

- 1 ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ½ cup (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, sliced
- 2 to 4 tablespoons ice cold water

Filling:

- 3 large eggs
- 2 tsp. cornstarch
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 1 cup light or dark corn syrup
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 to 2 tablespoons bourbon or rum
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 cup chocolate chips (Guittard is my favorite brand)

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

For the shell: Mix flour, salt and sugar together. Add butter and mix until coarse. Sprinkle water a little bit at a time, until the dough holds together. Roll out on a plastic wrap and transfer to the pie pan. Refrigerate for an hour. Pre-bake pie shell for 7 minutes.

For the filling: Beat eggs until frothy in a medium bowl. Add cornstarch, sugar, corn syrup, butter, vanilla, rum and salt. Mix until well incorporated. Place chocolate chips on bottom of pre-cooked pie shell. Top with the pecan and pour in the prepared filling. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes.

Option: Serve with vanilla or rum ice cream. Makes 8 servings.

Chocolate Sauce



6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate
6 tablespoons cream

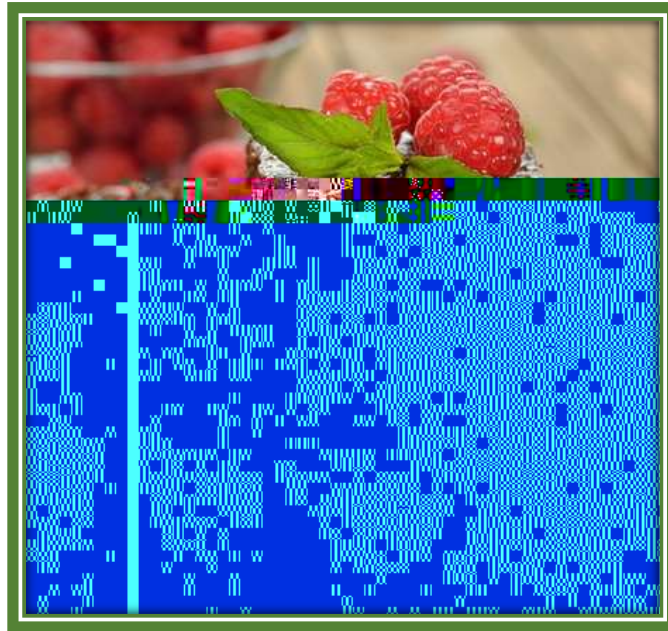
Place chocolate and cream in a double boiler. Melt over medium heat without touching. Once melted, mix thoroughly and remove from heat.

Comments: I recommend serving with fruits such as sliced apples, apricots, banana, kiwis, pears or strawberries. Don't forget the nuts too.

You may substitute the cream with low-fat milk or milk substitute such as almond milk, soy milk, or for an amazing other flavor such as coconut milk.

Makes 16 Tbsp. serving.

Chocolate Square with Raspberry Coulis



1/3 cup sugar
1/3 cup maple syrup
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/4 cup dry prunes, puréed in a blender (about 12 prunes)
1 Tbsp. vanilla extract
2 eggs
2/3 cup white whole wheat flour
2/3 cup quick old-fashioned oats, reduced to a flour in a blender
1/3 cup cacao powder
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
3 Tbsp. water
2 cups fresh raspberries
1 tsp. lemon juice
1/4 cup maple syrup, heated

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a pan (8 ½ x 9 ½ inch) with canola oil.

Beat the sugar, maple syrup, oil, prunes purée and vanilla extract. Add one egg at a time constantly mixing until well incorporated. Add the flour, oat flour, cacao powder, baking powder, salt, and mix until all incorporated. Mix in the water and transfer to the prepared baking dish. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes. The cake is cooked when a pin inserted in the center comes out dry. Remove from oven and let cool in the pan. Cut into square.

Place the raspberries in a blender. Add the lemon juice and maple syrup. Mix until smooth and thin out with a little water, if necessary. Pass through a sieve to remove seeds. Refrigerate and serve cold with the chocolate square. Makes 16 servings.

Chocolate Truffles



*8 oz. bittersweet chocolate
1/2 cup organic heavy cream
1/4 cup organic unsalted butter
2 Tbsp. Grand Marnier, Chambord or Coffee Liquor
Cocoa Powder*

In a saucepan; heat the cream, butter and bring to a boil.

Break the chocolate into small pieces and place into a heat resistance bowl. Pour the hot cream mixture over the chocolate pieces. Do not mix, until the chocolate is melted. Add the liquor of choice and mix quickly. Once cool, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for a few hours, so the mixture ends up firm.

Prepare a place covered with cocoa powder. Remove plastic wrap and using a small scooper, form small bowl. Transfer to the prepare cocoa place and roll over to evenly coat the truffle. Place into petit-four cups and refrigerate until use.

Option: You can freeze them up to a month. To defrost, best is to let stand at room temperature for about an hour before serving.

Coating option: To get a colorful array of truffles, make a few truffles with the cocoa powder. Then substitute the cocoa powder with coconut, small pieces of colorful different nuts, crushed cereals, chocolate sprinkles and so on...

Servings may vary based on sizes.

Dried Fruits Strudel



1/4 cup chopped pitted prunes
1/4 cup chopped dried apricots
1/4 cup raisins
2 Tbsp. dark rum or brandy
1/4 cup boiling water
4 golden delicious apples, peeled, cored and diced
2 pears, peeled, cored and diced
5 tsp. brown sugar
4 Tbsp. walnuts, toasted and chopped
1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
3/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
8 sheets Phyllo dough
4 tsp. unsalted butter, melted (or grapeseed oil)

Combine prunes, apricots, and raisins in a bowl. Add brandy or rum, boiling water, and set aside for 30 minutes. Combine apples, pears, sugar, nuts and spices in a large bowl. Add the dried fruits plus their liquid and mix well.

On a flat surface, stack two sheets of Phyllo dough and brush with butter or grapeseed oil. Repeat using all the Phyllo dough and finishing by brushing butter or grapeseed oil over the last layer. Place the fruit mixture on the dough, forming a log in the center of the dough. Roll the strudel over, fold both sides under the roll, and brush some butter or oil over the entire surface of the strudel. Score the top lightly with a sharp knife. Set the strudel over a cookie sheet covered with parchment paper, and bake at 425°F for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool before serving.

Serve with vanilla ice cream or low-fat/nonfat frozen yogurt or powdered sugar.

Substitution: Use dried berries, cranberries instead of prunes and apricots.

Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Fig Jam



*2 lbs. fresh figs
1 lb. sugar
4 medium sized orange peels, minced
1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
1 box of Sure-Jell Fruit pectin*

Place orange juice in a saucepan and reduce by half. Remove from heat and set aside for later use.

Mix half of the sugar with the pectin in a bowl and set aside. Washed and pat dry the figs. Quarter and place the figs in a large saucepan. Mix in the sugar pectin mixture, orange peel, reduced orange juice, and bring to a rolling boil over medium heat. Remove any foam forming to the top. Add remaining sugar and bring to a rolling boil again. Allow to boil for a couple of minutes, before transferring to sterilized jars. Finish according to your preferred method of making homemade jam.

Option: You can add a rosemary branch to flavor during the cooking process. Remove it before transferring to jars. For a variation, you may substitute lemon for the orange. You can also add sliced almonds at the end of the cooking.

Use with toast, crackers, cheese and over yogurt or ice cream.

Servings may vary based on figs sizes and final use.

Fruit Salad



3 ounces strawberries, chopped
3 ounces blackberries
3 ounces blueberries
3 ounces raspberries
A bunch of white grapes
1 mint tea sachet
1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Boil 3/4 cup of water. Add the lemon juice, tea sachet, honey, and infuse until desired strength. Remove sachet and cool completely.

Mix all the fruits in a large bowl. Add the cold tea and refrigerate for 30 minutes, mixing every 10 minutes. Best served cold.

Make 4 servings.

Ice Cream Cake



*5 eggs
4 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons cake flour
1 teaspoon powdered vanilla
1 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 pint of pistachio ice cream or your favorite ice cream*

Grease a cookie sheet and cover with greased waxed paper. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Separate the yolks from the whites. Place the yolks and sugar into a large bowl. Beat until you obtain a light creamy texture. Sift the flour and vanilla over the bowl and carefully mix. Place the egg whites and cream of tartar into a large bowl and mix until stiff. Carefully fold a third of the whites into the prepared cake base. Continue with the remaining whites and transfer to the prepared cookie sheet. Bake for 12 minutes or until you reach a light golden-brown color. Loosen the cake from the pan and sprinkle the cake top with a little sugar. Turn over a new wax paper sheet and quickly roll up. Place in the refrigerator to cool off. Remove from the refrigerator, carefully unroll the cake and spread the soften ice cream all over the cake. Roll up again and freeze. Slightly defrost the ice cream cake and sprinkle with powdered sugar. Slice, transfer to serving plates and serve immediately.

Comments: Folding the egg whites into the cake mixture without breaking them is extremely important, as the lightness of the cake depends on it.

Option: You may sponge the cake with liquor or flavored syrup. You may substitute the ice cream with your favorite jam. You can also cover the finished cake with chocolate and decorate. You can serve with a chocolate or fruit sauce. You can add spices to the cake base recipe. I like to add pumpkin pie spices when I use pumpkin ice cream around Thanksgiving. The solutions are endless, so be creative and have fun with this very versatile recipe! Makes 10 to 12 servings.

Iced Lemon and Lavender Tea



*2 cups hot water
2 tablespoons honey (option)
1 teaspoon dried lavender buds
2 lemon flavored tea bags
2 lemons, juiced*

Heat the water, honey, and lavender buds over medium heat. Bring to a boil and remove from heat. Add the tea bags and let infuse for three minutes. Remove bags and cool down for 15 minutes. Pass through a sieve, add the lemon juice to the liquid, and refrigerate. Serve cold with a slice of lemon and décor with a lavender branch.

Option: This recipe is just a guideline. Based on your likings, you can adjust the lemon and lavender flavors. There is also nothing wrong in doing it without tea, just using water. You may increase the lemon juice a bit to make up for the lack of flavoring from the lemon tea. Delicious and refreshing all around, once you make it to your liking!

Makes 4 servings.

Iced Orange and Lavender Tea



2 cups hot water
2 tablespoons honey (option)
1 teaspoon dried lavender buds
2 orange flavored tea bags
2 oranges, juiced

Heat the water, honey, and lavender buds over medium heat. Bring to a boil and remove from heat. Add the tea bags and let infuse for three minutes. Remove bags and cool down for 15 minutes. Pass through a sieve, add the orange juice to the liquid, and refrigerate. Serve cold with a slice of orange and décor with a lavender branch.

Option: This recipe is just a guideline. Based on your likings, you can adjust the orange and lavender flavors. There is also nothing wrong in doing it without tea, just using water. You may increase the orange juice a bit to make up for the lack of flavoring from the orange tea. Delicious and refreshing all around, once you make it to your liking!

Makes 4 servings.

Kiwi and Flaxseed Lollipops



*4 kiwis
6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate
2 oz. coarsely ground flaxseeds
16 small appetizers thin short wooden skewers*

Peel the kiwis. Remove each end of a kiwi. Cut into 4 thick slices per kiwi. Insert each slice of a kiwi on a skewer.

Chop the chocolate in small pieces. Place in a bain-marie pan and melt over low heat.

When completely melted, remove from heat. Wait a few minutes for the chocolate to slightly cool down.

Dip one half of each kiwi slice in the chocolate. Let set and repeat the process, just before dipping into the flaxseeds.

Comments: A fun thing to do with kids. You can substitute other fruits.

Makes 16 pieces.

Chef Marie's Almond and Oat Cookies



*7 oz. almond meal
3/4 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
3/4 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1 extra large egg
2 oz. apricot preserves
1 cup Old Fashioned Oats
2 oz. unsalted butter*

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Prepare a couple of cookie sheets covered with a Silpat or parchment paper. Mix the almond meal, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Blend in the egg and the preserves. Melt the butter and let cool for a minute. Add the quick oats to the almond mixture and mix well. Finish by incorporating the melted butter. Scoop out the dough with a #30 scoop (about 1 oz. cookie) onto the cookie sheet. Repeat placing 3 inches apart to allow for spreading. Refrigerate for 30 minutes. Flatten slightly the dough with your palm and bake for 12 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool before transferring to a cooling rack.

This type of cookie will be moist. Don't store for more than 2 days at room temperature. It absorbs moisture quickly and become very soggy. The best way to store them is to freeze them after they cool down. Defrost at room temperature or defrost in the microwave for 5 to 7 seconds.

Suggestions: You may add 1/2 cup of raisins, dry fruits, coconut, chocolate chips, chopped dates, nuts, or a combination of various ingredients. You may also add 1 tsp. cinnamon and/or 1/2 tsp. allspice.

Chef Marie's Chocolate Oatmeal Cookies: Reduce almond meal to 6 oz. and add 1/3 cup pure cocoa powder. Follow the same direction as recipe above. Add the cocoa powder with the oats.

Makes approximately 20 cookies.

Melon Soup



2 cantaloupes (about 4 cups net weight)
2 Tbsp. honey, warmed in the microwave, about 10 seconds
4 mint leaves
1 lemon, juiced

Cut the cantaloupes in half. Remove seeds. Spoon out the flesh and place in a blender. Add the honey, mint and lemon juice. Purée and refrigerate. Serve cold.

Makes 4 servings.

Orange Salad with Champagne



8 large oranges
3 tablespoons orange blossoms honey
1 1/2 cup water
1 teaspoon coriander seeds (optional)
1 cup dry Champagne
2 tablespoons Grand Marnier or Orange Liquor

Peel and slice the oranges. Do not leave any white membranes on the oranges, as they have a bitter taste.

Cook the honey, coriander seeds (optional), and water in a saucepan over high heat for approximately 10 minutes to end up with 1 cup. Strain, place in a large bowl, and set aside to cool. Mix in the Champagne and liquor. Add the orange slices and refrigerate at least an hour.

Makes 8 servings.

Pain d'Epices (Spiced Bread)



- 3/4 cup honey*
- 2/5 cup brown sugar*
- 3/4 cup low-fat milk (or milk substitute)*
- 2 cups all-purpose flour*
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder*
- 1 tsp. baking soda*
- 1 tsp. minced anise seeds*
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground allspice*
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon*
- 1 1/2 tsp. nutmeg*
- 3/4 tsp. ground cloves*
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground ginger*
- 1 tsp. vanilla powder*
- Pinch salt*
- 2 large eggs*
- 1 tsp. orange extract*

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter a loaf pan (4.5" x 12" x 2.5") and set aside. Sift the flour through a sieve set aside. Place the honey, brown sugar and milk in a saucepan. Bring to boil over medium heat. Once boiling; reduce heat and continue to simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes. Do mix once or twice, at most, during that time. Remove from heat and gradually mix in, with a whisk, 1 cup of sifted flour. Mix well until well incorporated and set aside. Place the remaining flour into a large bowl. Add the anise seeds, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, vanilla powder and salt. Mix until well incorporated and set aside.

In a bowl, mix the eggs until frothy. Add the orange extract and mix. Whisk in a little bit of the honey mixture to temper the eggs. Keep adding slowly the honey mixture until all used. Add the spiced flour and whisk until well incorporated. Pour the mixture into the loaf pan and bake for 45 minutes or until the spiced bread slightly pull away from the pan sides. Let cool in the pan on a wire rack. Sliced and serve with butter, apricot jam or honey.

Important Note: Use liquid measuring cup for honey and milk.

Option: Add 2 ounces diced candied orange peel. You may also add nuts such as almonds or walnuts. You may substitute all-purpose flour with 1/2 whole wheat and 1/2 rye flour.

Makes 14 servings.

Pineapple with Lime and Ginger



*1 pineapple
2 limes
1 tsp. freshly minced ginger
1 tsp. vanilla extract
Mint minced leaves (optional)*

Juice both limes and set aside in a large bowl. Trim, chop pineapple, and add the pieces to the bowl. Add ginger, and vanilla extract. Mix well and refrigerate. Sprinkle minced mint leaves (optional) and serve immediately. Best is to serve cold.

Option: You may use half a pineapple emptied for presentation purposes, as shown on the picture. If alcohol is not a problem, I add 1 Tbsp. dark or spiced rum which add a wonderful flavor. If so, I omit the mint and sprinkle a little coconut for a wonderful exotic look and taste. On occasion, I also grill the pineapple slices before marinating. I top each grilled pineapple slice with a tablespoon of rum raisin ice cream (you may use vanilla frozen yogurt). Then, top with a little rum (optional), a maraschino cherry, shredded coconut and chopped walnuts.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Strawberries with Spicy Red Wine



1 lb. strawberries
1 cup red wine (Chianti, Beaujolais, or Bergerac)
3 Tbsp. honey
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 orange peel
1 lemon peel
4 to 6 tsp. black peppercorns, crushed
1 cinnamon stick

In a saucepan combine the red wine, honey, vanilla, peels, peppercorns and cinnamon stick. Bring to boil over high heat. Continue to boil until the wine is reduced by half. Remove from heat and strain.

Trim, cut, and place the strawberries in a bowl. Pour over the hot wine. Gently mix and let cool. Refrigerate at least for two hours. Serve cold.

Makes 4 servings.

Strawberries and Dry Chili Pepper Salad



1-pint strawberries, cleaned and pat dry
1 Tbsp. sugar (optional)
1 Tbsp. grenadine
A pinch of dry chili pepper powder (or to your like)

Hull the strawberries, cut in half, and transfer to a large bowl. Add the sugar, grenadine, dry chili pepper, and mix. Refrigerate for an hour. Mix before serving cold.

Suggestions: You can serve it as is, with a dab of crème fraiche, low-fat Greek yogurt, ice cream or drizzle melted dark chocolate on it. You can add minced cilantro, basil or mint.

Makes 4 servings.

Strawberries and Raspberries Soup



1 lb. strawberries
4 oz. raspberries
1/4 cup almond milk
1/4 cup crème fraîche or low-fat Greek yogurt
1 to 2 Tbsp. maple syrup (option)
Pinch of salt
Peppermill to taste
70% dark chocolate shavings

Place the strawberries, raspberries, almond milk and maple syrup in a blender. Mix until smooth and pass through a sieve. Transfer to a bowl and mix in the crème fraîche or Greek yogurt. Add a small pinch of salt, pepper to taste, and refrigerate until cold.

For presentation: Transfer the soup to 4 small serving bowls. Sprinkle chocolate shavings on top and serve immediately.

Comments: You can substitute honey for the maple syrup. If the fruits are sweet, you may not even have to add maple syrup or honey. Sure, it contributes to the flavor of this cold soup, but the point is the less sugar in your diet the better for your health. And the fruits have plenty of natural sugar already!

Makes 4 servings.

Tarta de Santiago



My slight revised version of the delicious and famous "Tarta de Santiago - Galicia" cake recipe that I found on Epicurious - "Food of Spain" by Claudia Roden.

1-3/4 cups almond flour
1 tablespoon white sugar
6 extra-large eggs
1-1/4 cup white sugar
Zest of 2 mandarins
Zest of 1 lemon
1 drop almond extract
4 teaspoons Amaretto
1 teaspoon cream of tartar
Confectionery sugar for dusting

Have all the ingredients at room temperature, before beginning. Grease a 9 to 11" springform round pan and dust with flour. Remove extra flour by gently tapping the pan with your hand. Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Beat the egg yolks and sugar (minus 1 Tbsp. for later use) until the mixture is light and pale in color. Add the zests, almond extract, Amaretto, and mix well. Beat the egg whites and cream of tartar in a large bowl. Half way, add 1 Tbsp. sugar and continue to beat until stiff peaks. Start to carefully fold a third of the whites into the cake mixture. Repeat with another third. Fold the remaining egg whites. Transfer to the prepared pan. Bake for 40 minutes or until a thin metal pick comes out dry. Transfer to a cooling rack. Once cooled down, carefully remove from the pan, and transfer to a serving platter. Dust with confectioner's sugar and serve immediately.

Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Thin Apple Tart



3 oz. flour
2 oz. organic old-fashioned oats
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
Pinch of salt
3 Tbsp. grapeseed oil
1 Tbsp. vanilla
2 to 3 Tbsp. water
2 to 3 large apples
Apricot preserves or apple sauce

Preheat the oven to 475°F. Place the oats in a blender and reduce to a flour consistency. Place the flours in a bowl. Add the cinnamon, salt, oil, vanilla, and mix until crumbly. Add 1 Tbsp. water at a time and continue until the dough is smooth or all together as one ball. Divide the dough in four. Lay one dough on a wax paper and push down with your palm to flatten a bit. Roll out the dough to a thin oval form. Transfer the dough to a greased cookie sheet. Repeat with remaining three doughs.

Spread a thin layer of apricot preserves or apple sauce on each dough surface. Peel and cut in half the apples. Core, quarter, and thinly slice the apples. Starting at the edge of the dough and working inward toward the center, arrange the apple slices in overlapping circles. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until golden brown and the edges slightly darker.

Heat 1 Tbsp. apricot preserves with a little water to thin out in the microwave. Remove the tarts from the oven and brush them with the apricot preserves. Transfer to a cooling rack. You may serve warm or cold.

Comments: You may substitute the organic oats with more almond meal. You may substitute the apples with peaches or apricots. If so, substitute almond meal for the flour, omit cinnamon, replace the vanilla with almond extract, and use appropriate preserves.

Makes 4 thin tart or one large tart.

Walnut Tart



*1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup cake flour
1 extra-large egg
1 Tbsp. cold water
Pinch salt
3 Tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. almond extract
7 Tbsp. unsalted butter
4 extra-large eggs
8 oz. brown sugar
2 oz. melted unsalted butter
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
10 oz. whole walnuts*

Place the all-purpose flour, cake flour, egg, salt, sugar and almond extract in a blender. Mix until barely incorporated. Add the butter and cold water, then mix until a ball forms. Wrap the dough in a plastic wrap and refrigerate for half an hour. Spread some butter all over the tart pan. Roll out the dough to fit the tart pan and neatly set it. Refrigerate for half an hour.

Mix the 4 eggs, brown sugar, melted butter, vanilla and flour in a large bowl until well-incorporated. Chop half the walnuts and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Bake the tart shell for 10 minutes. Remove and let cool slightly for a minute or so. Bring the oven to 400°F. Evenly spread the chopped walnuts over the bottom of the shell. Add the eggs mixture and finish with spreading the remaining whole walnuts. Bake for 10 minutes and then reduce heat to 325°F. Continue to cook for 25 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool on a rack.

Suggestions: Serve with French Vanilla or Rum Raisin Ice Cream. You can also serve with creme fraiche on the side. Makes 8 servings.

Yogurt Apple Delight



1 cup low-fat plain yogurt
1/4 tsp. caramel extract
1 apple
2 Tbsp. crushed walnuts or pecans
2 Tbsp. ground golden flaxseeds
2 Tbsp. maple syrup or honey

Mix the caramel extract with the yogurt.

Peel, core, and dice the apple. In 2 narrow glasses, pour 1/4 cup of yogurt in each glass. Top with the apple, nuts, and flaxseeds. Add remaining yogurt and drizzle the maple syrup or honey. Refrigerate and serve cold.

Makes 4 servings.