

Recipes from

# WEDDING CAKE

A CULINARY MYSTERY

JOSI S. KILPACK



## Rice Pudding

- 1½ cups milk
- 1 (12-ounce) can evaporated milk
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅔ cup sugar
- 2 cups cooked rice
- Dash of nutmeg
- Dash of cinnamon
- Dash of cloves
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup raisins (optional)

In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, combine milks and cook 10 minutes, stirring constantly until scalded. Be careful not to let milks boil. (You can also heat milks in a microwave-safe bowl for approximately 1½ minutes.)

Crack eggs into a small bowl and mix with a fork. Set aside.

In a 3-quart saucepan, whisk together cornstarch, salt, and sugar. Add hot milk mixture, whisking constantly until well blended. Reduce heat to medium and stir consistently until mixture thickens slightly. (It's okay if it comes to a boil, but reduce heat if mixture becomes frothy and risks boiling over.)

Trade whisk for a wooden spoon and add rice. Bring to a full boil, stirring consistently. Remove from heat.

Pour approximately ½ cup of the hot mixture into the eggs, stirring rapidly to combine. Return egg mixture to hot milk and rice mixture and stir until mixture thickens. If the mixture doesn't thicken within a minute or two, return to heat for another minute. Stir in spices and vanilla. Adjust spices to taste. Add raisins, if desired.

Pudding can be served warm or chilled. Store leftovers in the fridge.

Note: To plump raisins, either put them in a colander over a pan of boiling water or put them in a microwave-safe bowl, cover with water, and heat for 30 seconds; drain.

Note: This recipe works great with cold rice from the fridge.

Makes 6 servings.

## Annie's Savory Cheese Blintzes

- 1 cup flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon fresh cracked pepper
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup cottage cheese
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 4 eggs, well beaten

Heat griddle to medium-low (245 degrees F. on an electric griddle). In a large bowl, mix the first four ingredients together with a fork until combined. Add the remaining ingredients; use the fork to mix well. Batter will be lumpy.

Drop ¼ cup batter on hot griddle, using the back of a spoon or ladle to spread it out like a lumpy crepe. Cook 4 to 5 minutes on one side—watch for top to dry out—flip, and cook 3 to 4 minutes on the other side until the center is cooked through.

Note: You can cook blintzes in a preheated waffle iron. Use ¼ cup batter per well-greased square. Re-grease waffle iron between each batch to keep batter from sticking. Cook 5 to 6 minutes before removing blintzes from waffle iron.

Makes 10 blintzes.

Serve with savory or sweet garnishes, including:

- Parmesan cheese
- Salsa
- Fresh tomatoes
- Fresh basil, chopped
- Balsamic vinegar
- Olive oil

Salt and pepper

Salsa

Ranch dressing

Ham

Bacon

Syrup

Jam

Fresh fruit

Fruit pie filling

Whipping cream

## *Triple Chocolate Cake*

- 1 chocolate cake mix, any kind
- 1 (3.4-ounce) package instant chocolate pudding
- 1 cup sour cream
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup vegetable oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water
- 1 (12-ounce) bag semisweet chocolate chips
- 4 eggs

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.

Put all ingredients in a mixing bowl and mix for nine minutes. Pour into a very well-greased Bundt cake pan. Bake 1 hour. Let cool in pan for 1 hour before removing. Store in refrigerator.

Though this cake does not require frosting—it is very sweet and very rich—it can be dusted with powdered sugar or drizzled with ganache for presentation purposes.

Note: This recipe adapts well to two standard loaf pans or six mini-loaf pans.

Makes 12 to 18 servings, depending on pan used.

# Sadie's Yummy Cheesecake

## Crust

- 1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
- ⅓ cup white sugar
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup butter, softened

## Filling

- 4 (8-ounce) packages of cream cheese, room temperature
- ¾ cup whipping cream\*, room temperature
- 1⅔ cups white sugar
- 1½ teaspoon vanilla
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- ⅓ cup cornstarch

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.

Set out the ingredients for the filling to allow them to come to room temperature.

Grease the bottom of a 9- or 10-inch spring form pan and wrap the bottom of the pan in tinfoil, which will protect the crust from the water bath later on.

Crust: In a large bowl, mix graham cracker crumbs and sugars. Add butter. Mix to a consistency like thick Play-Doh.

Press the crust mixture evenly into bottom of pan only (traditionally cheesecake does not have crust on the sides).

Bake for five minutes, or until the crumb mixture looks shiny. **DO NOT OVERCOOK!** Remove from oven, let cool a few minutes, and gently re-press crust.

Set crust aside to cool while you make the filling.

Filling: In a large bowl, mix the cream cheese and whipping cream until smooth. Add remaining ingredients and mix until the batter is smooth and creamy. Pour filling over crust until about one inch from the top of the pan. The cake will rise when cooking. Place cake pan

in a water bath. (Use a jelly roll pan filled with about a half-inch of water. This helps to cook the cake evenly.)

Cook 1 to 1½ hours. Cheesecake is done when the top is golden brown and firm in center.

Let cool for 30 minutes, then refrigerate at least 3 hours; the longer the better. Serve plain or with your favorite toppings (nuts, cherries, apples, etc.).

Serves 16.

\*Can substitute ½ cup half-and-half for whipping cream.

Note: Do not be tempted by Neufchâtel, light, or fat-free varieties. Outcome cannot be guaranteed if anything other than original cream cheese is used.



## Danyelle's Sweet Basil Rub for Chicken

- 2 tablespoons salt
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon granulated garlic
- ½ teaspoon granulated onion
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons basil
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 whole chicken, rinsed, heart and neck removed

Move oven rack to the bottom third of the oven and preheat to 450 degrees F.

In a small bowl, mix salt, sugar, garlic, onion, paprika, and lemon juice. Add pepper, basil, and olive oil. Mix until well blended. Rub all over the outside and inside of chicken. Place chicken in 9x13-inch pan, breast side up. Bake uncovered for approximately 12 minutes per pound. Check doneness by pricking thighs to see if juices run clear.

Note: To use this rub for turkey, double the spices and cook turkey according to baking instructions.

Note: The drippings make excellent gravy.

## Basil Chicken Stock

After removing as much meat as desired, put the chicken carcass in a large stockpot. Add a couple ribs of celery, a carrot, and a small onion, if desired. Add water until chicken is covered. Add a teaspoon of garlic salt. Cover pan and boil overnight on low heat.

The next morning, remove pan from heat and allow to cool. Strain

out bones and vegetables. Stock can either be refrigerated for use within seven days, frozen (in zip-top bags or Tupperware) for up to two months, or home-bottled in a pressure canner according to processing directions.

## Lemon-Almond Shortbread

1½ cups butter, room temperature  
1 cup sugar, plus a little extra for sprinkling  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
¼ teaspoon almond extract  
Zest from ½ a lemon  
¼ teaspoon sea salt  
3½ cups all-purpose flour

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar together. Add the vanilla, almond extract, and lemon zest. Mix well. Add salt, then gradually add flour while mixing on medium-low speed. The dough mixture will be dry but should stick together when pressed. (If it's too dry, add a teaspoon of milk.) Continue to beat until ingredients are well combined. Form dough into a ball, flatten, and cover with plastic wrap. Chill for 20 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Remove chilled dough and roll out on a lightly floured surface until it's ½-inch thick. You can either cut it into fingers, circles, or use shaped cookie cutters. (A pizza cutter makes cutting dough a breeze.)

Place cookies on an ungreased baking sheet, 1-inch apart. Sprinkle cookies with sugar, then bake for 15 to 20 minutes until the edges just begin to brown. Let the cookies cool on baking sheet for 5 to 10 minutes before moving to cooling rack.

Makes about 30 finger shortbread cookies.

Note: Letting cookies overbake gives them a crispy texture and nutty flavor.

## Lemon Water

6 cups water

1 cup white sugar

1 teaspoon lemon extract

1 teaspoon citric acid\*

1½ to 2 cups ice (depending on the size of your pitcher)

Mix the first four ingredients until sugar is dissolved, about a minute. Before serving, add ice and stir.

Makes 2 quarts.

\*Citric acid can usually be found in the pharmacy section or canning section of your local supermarket. Specialty kitchen markets and online resources are your best bet if your local store doesn't carry it.

Note: If you leave out the citric acid, reduce sugar to ½ cup. It won't be as good, though. You've been warned.

## Rice Krispies Treats with Brown Butter

½ cup unsalted butter

1 (10-ounce) bag mini-marshmallows\*

¼ teaspoon coarse sea salt or kosher salt

6 cups Rice Krispies

In a large, non-dark bottomed pan, melt butter over medium to medium-high heat. (The hotter the pan, the faster it will brown and possibly scorch, so watch carefully if you choose the higher heat.) Stir frequently. Butter will foam, turn clear, and start to brown.

Once butter has browned, remove from heat and add marshmallows. Stir until marshmallows have melted. Add salt, mix. Add cereal, mix. Spread mixture into a buttered 9x13 pan. Coat hands in butter or nonstick cooking spray and press the treats firmly into pan. Let cool before serving.

Makes approximately 20 squares, depending on how you cut them.

\*Because you are using the residual heat to melt the marshmallows, you must use mini-marshmallows. Full-sized marshmallows take too long to melt and need continual heat, which might burn your butter.

Note: Can use a 7-ounce jar of marshmallow cream in place of the mini-marshmallows.

## Sadie's No-Fuss Sugar Cookies

1 cup butter, softened  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar  
1 egg  
 $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 cups all-purpose flour

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large bowl, beat butter for 30 seconds. Add sugar and beat until combined. Add egg and beat until combined. Stir in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cups flour until combined. Add additional flour slowly, a little at a time until a smooth dough forms; it should be soft but not sticky. Too much flour will result in a crumbly dough.

Divide dough in half and roll out on a lightly floured surface to  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick. Cut with cookie cutter. Add cut trimmings to the second half of dough. Reroll and cut additional cookies. Place on greased cookie sheet. Bake 6 to 8 minutes or until barely brown. Cool 2 minutes then transfer to wire rack to cool.

Makes approximately 30 two-inch cookies.

Note: Can use powdered sugar in place of flour when rolling out the dough.

### Glaze

4 cups sifted powdered sugar  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup milk\*  
Food coloring (optional)

In a large bowl, combine ingredients. Stir in additional milk 1 teaspoon at a time until preferred drizzling consistency is met. Tint as desired with food coloring.

To glaze, hold cookie over the bowl of glaze. Use a small metal spatula or knife to cover the cookie evenly with glaze and remove excess. Glaze will harden as it dries.

\*Evaporated milk makes for a smoother glaze than cold milk from the fridge.

Note: For more flavor, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon lemon, almond, or orange extract to the cookie dough and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of complementary extract to glaze.

## *Frikadeles with Ruskumsnuz*

### Frikadeles

1 egg

¼ cup diced onion

¼ cup diced green pepper

¼ cup oats, bread crumbs, crushed soda crackers, or flour

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon pepper

1 pound hamburger

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. (You can combine everything but the hamburger in a blender if you don't want chunks of onion and green pepper.) Mold into 4 to 6 patties.

Cook in a frying pan on medium-high heat until cooked through, about four minutes per side. Remove from pan and put on paper towel-lined plate to drain grease. (Patties can also be baked in the oven: 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until cooked through.)

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Note: If hamburger mixture seems too crumbly, add another egg. Crackers and bread crumbs help it stick together better than oats do.

### Ruskumsnuz

¼ cup butter

¼ cup flour

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon pepper

2 teaspoon dried basil

½ teaspoon oregano

2 to 4 cups milk

1 to 2 pounds small red potatoes, unpeeled, boiled whole, and cut into 1-inch cubes

1½ cups sweet peas (fresh are best, but frozen works too)



In medium-sized frying pan, melt butter. Add flour and stir well until a smooth paste is formed. Add spices, mix well. Add 2 cups of milk and stir consistently until smooth sauce is formed, adding more milk as needed to make a white sauce about the consistency of a pancake batter.

Add boiled and cubed potatoes, mashing them slightly if desired. Add peas. (If using fresh peas, add them at the very end, so that they warm, but don't cook through.) Salt and pepper to taste. Keep sauce warm until ready to serve.

When ready to serve, place frikadeles on a plate and top with ruskumsnuz sauce.

Note: The best way to time the preparation of these two recipes is as follow: (1) Boil potatoes. (2) While potatoes are boiling, form meatloaf patties while frying pan heats up. (3) While meatloaf is frying, make white sauce. (4) After patties are fried, cover to keep warm. (5) Finish potatoes. Cook until a knife inserted into the center of a potato meets no resistance. Drain potatoes on a dishcloth for an extra light and flaky texture. Dice, add to white sauce with peas. Serve.

## Chicken Soup with Homemade Noodles

- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ onion, diced
- 4 chicken breasts, cooked and diced
- 4 (14.5-ounce) cans chicken broth (approximately 8 cups)
- ½ cup water
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning (or Italian seasoning)
- ½ teaspoon basil
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 carrots peeled and sliced
- 2 ribs of celery, sliced
- 2 cups medium-sized egg noodles (or homemade noodles)

Melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion for 3 min. Add chicken and sauté 2 more minutes. Add broth, water, spices, carrots, and celery. Bring to a boil. Cover and simmer 30 minutes.

Add noodles and return to a boil, cooking 15 to 20 minutes or until noodles are cooked through. (Watch carefully to keep noodles from overcooking.) Salt and pepper to taste before serving.

For added flavor, top soup with grated Parmesan cheese.

Note: Adding a dash of nutmeg with the other spices gives great flavor.

### Homemade Noodles

- 2 cups flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup melted butter
- 2 eggs
- 3 tablespoons milk

In a large bowl, mix flour and salt. Add butter, eggs, and milk.

Mix together with a wooden spoon or rubber scraper until dough forms a ball. Turn dough out on a floured surface. Roll out dough very thin— $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch or so. Using a sharp knife or pizza cutter, cut dough into strips, the length and width desired (thinner is usually better).

Lift noodles with the blunt edge of a knife, one small section at a time, allowing pasta to drape over the edges of the knife without sticking together. Drop separated noodles into boiling soup one at a time so they don't stick together. Continue adding until all noodles are in the soup. (There will be a lot of noodles.)

Add additional broth if needed to accommodate the noodles, returning soup to a boil before adding additional noodles. Cook an additional two or three minutes to make sure the most recently added noodles are cooked. Remove from heat and serve.

Serves 10.

Note: Noodles can also be frozen. Cut as directed, then flash freeze on a cookie sheet. Store in an airtight container (a plastic zip-top bag works great) and freeze for up to six months. To use, add frozen noodles to soup as directed.