

Meringue Dots for Dirk

2 egg whites
1/8 tsp. Cider vinegar
1/2 tsp. Vanilla
1/2 tsp almond ext

Beat whites, vinegar, extracts in a large bowl on medium speed until soft peaks form.

1/2 c. sugar

On high speed gradually beat in sugar until white and glossy

red/green etc food coloring

Separate half of meringue and die one half red, one half green

Spoon each color in a different pastry bag fitted with a medium size tip. Pipe small dots of meringue on baking sheets lined with foil. Bake at 200 for 3 hours until meringues are dry and crisp all the way through. Cool on sheet or wire rack. Peel off foil. Store in airtight container for up to 2 months (I put them in the freezer)

Oatmeal/Cranberry/White Chocolate Chip Cookies

Bake @ 375°

1 c. butter/margarine softened
1 c. brown sugar

Beat together butter and sugar until light and fluffy

2 eggs

Add eggs, mixing well

2 c. old fashioned rolled oats
2 c. flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking soda

Combine oats, flour, salt and baking soda.
Add to butter mixture, mixing well after each addition

1 1/2 c. dried cranberries
1 c. white chocolate chips

Stir in dried cranberries and white chocolate chips

Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° 10-12 minutes. Makes 2 1/2 dozen cookies.

Great Christmas "Chip" Cookies

Almond Crisp Cookies

Bake @ 375²

2 c. (or more) almonds, sliced, blanched

1-1/3 c. sugar

Gently stir together

6 large egg whites (unbeaten)

1 tsp. vanilla (or almond)

Blend in egg whites and vanilla

6 Tbs. sifted flour

Add in a thin stream

4 Tbs. unsalted butter, melted and cooled

Blend in mixture

Drop spoonfuls of mixture onto buttered (unsalted) cookie sheets, spacing 5" apart. With a wet fork spread each mound as thin as possible. Add more almonds to mixture if you want more on the cookie. Bake until centers are browned (about 10 min.). Carefully remove warm cookies to racks (rewarm to loosen if they start to stick.) These are difficult to remove from the cookie sheet in one piece -- but the crumbs are good too. Unbaked cookie dough will keep several days in the refrigerator. Sometimes I add the almonds last so the almond pieces don't break up so much. Baked cookies freeze well if you can get them there..

These cookies are sold commercially I liked them so much I experimented with lots of cookie recipe until I was able to duplicate the recipe to satisfy my taste. The baked cookies freeze well. At Halloween or for variety use pumpkin seed rather than almonds.

Banana Crunch Cake

Makes 10 servings

Bake @ 350°

1 c. coconut
1 c. pecans or almonds, cut up
1 c. rolled oats
½ c. brown sugar
5 T. butter, melted

Mix together to make a crumble.
Set aside.

1 c. sour cream
4 eggs
2 large bananas

Mix until smooth.

1 pkg yellow cake mix

Add and beat two minutes at medium speed.

Grease and flour 10" tube pan. Pour 1/3 batter (2 cups) into pan. Sprinkle with 1/3 of crumb mixture (1 cup). Repeat twice with batter and crumbs, ending with crumb mixture.

Bake @ 350° for 50-60 minutes until inserted toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan 15 minutes. Remove from pan and turn cake so crumb mixture is on top.

Nice cake for morning coffee or brunches.

Kurt's Peanut Butter Cookies

Bake @ 350°

½ c. butter
½ c. peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)
½ c. sugar
½ c. light brown sugar

Beat until creamy

1 egg
½ tsp. vanilla

Add to above and beat well

1 c. flour
½ tsp salt
½ tsp baking soda

Sift together; then mix with other ingredients.

Place spoonfuls of batter on cookie sheet. Dip fork in sugar (or flour). With fork mark ¶¶ and flatten cookie slightly. Bake about 10 min. @ 350°. Can put a candy kiss in the middle after baking but still warm. Or place fairly large spoonfuls of batter on cookie sheet but do not flatten -- after taking out of oven but still warm press a Reese's Peanut Butter Cup in the middle -- decadent!

Kurt made this recipe in grade school -- it has stood the test of time.

Peppermint Pinwheels

Makes about 5 doz

Bake at 350°

3/4 c. margarine or butter (1½ sticks)

3/4 c. sugar

Beat butter and sugar until light and fluff

1 egg yolk

1 tsp vanilla

Beat in egg yolk and vanilla

2 c. flour

1/2 tsp baking powder

1/2 tsp. salt

Sift flour baking powder and salt

Add flour mixture 1/3 at a time until well blended

Divide dough in half. Make one half pink and add about 1/2 tsp mint flavoring. Roll out each half on wax papers to 16 x 10". Set pink layer on top of plain layer; then roll together to make a long rolled cylinder. Wrap and chill several hours or freeze. Cut in 1/4" slices and bake @ 350° on ungreased cookie sheet for 10 min.

Nice for Christmas -- easy and makes a lot -- can be made ahead to freeze and bake later, or freeze baked cookies to eat later.

Thumbprint Cookies

Makes about 3 dozen

Bake @ 375°

1/2 c. soft fat (half Crisco/half butter)

1/4 c. brown sugar

1 egg yolk (save the egg white)

1/2 tsp vanilla

Mix thoroughly

1 c. sifted flour

1/4 tsp salt

Sift together and stir with above

3/4 c. chopped nuts (I use pecans)

Jelly or preserves

Roll into 1 inch balls. Dip in slightly beaten egg whites. Roll in finely chopped nuts . Place about 1 inch apart on an cookies sheet. Bake 5 min. @ 375°. Remove from oven. Quickly press thumb gently on top of each cookie. Return to oven and bake 10 min. more. Remove and cool.

Place in thumb prints -- jelly, melted chocolate, or confectioner sugar icing.

My favorite filling is raspberry or blackberry jam.

'K' Family Chocolate Chip Cookies

Bake @ 375°

<u>Single</u>	<u>Triple</u>	<u>Quadruple</u>		
2/3 c.	2 c.	2-2/3 c	soft shortening (part butter)	
1/2 c.	1 1/2 c.	2 c.	granulated sugar	
1/2 c.	1 1/2 c.	2 c.	brown sugar	Beat until light & fluffy
1	3	4-5	eggs	
1 tsp.	3 tsp.	4 tsp.	vanilla	
1 1/2 c.	4 1/2 c.	6 c.	unsifted flour	
1/2 tsp.	1 1/2 tsp.	2 tsp	baking soda	Mix together & add to above
1/2 tsp.	1 1/2 tsp	2 tsp.	salt	
6 oz.	18 oz.	24 oz.	chocolate chips	Add to above

Drop by spoonfuls on cookie sheet and bake for 8-10 min. @ 375°.

*Myke likes to melt the butter a bit in the microwave....it makes for a softer cookie
This recipe has been the "family" chocolate chip recipe for years and lots of cookies.*

Almond Crisp Cookies

Bake @ 375°

2 c. (or more) almonds, sliced, blanched	
1-1/3 c. sugar	Gently stir together
6 large egg whites (unbeaten)	Blend in egg whites and vanilla
1 tsp. vanilla	
6 Tbs. sifted flour	Add in a thin stream
4 Tbs. unsalted butter, melted and cooled	Blend in mixture

Drop spoonfuls of mixture onto buttered (unsalted) cookie sheets, spacing 5" apart. With a fork gently pat and spread each mound as thin as possible. Add more almonds to mixture anytime you want more on the cookie. Bake until centers are browned. Carefully remove warm cookies to racks (rewarm to loosen if they start to stick.) These are difficult to remove from the cookie sheet in one piece -- but the crumbs are good too.

Unbaked cookie dough will keep several days in the refrigerator. Sometimes I add the almonds last so the almond pieces don't break up so much.

These cookies are sold commercially. I liked them so much I experimented with lots of cookie recipes until I was able to duplicate the recipe to satisfy my taste. The baked cookies freeze well. At Halloween or for variety use pumpkin seeds rather than almonds. These are a cross between a fortune cookie and a Florentine.

Fruit Cobbler

Bake @ 350°

1 c. sugar (less for sweet fruit)
1 c. finely crushed graham cracker crumbs
½ c. flour (more for extra juicy berries)
½ c. chopped walnuts (pecans or almonds)
½ tsp. cinnamon

Blend together, then cut in butter
Or - blend in a food processor

½ c. butter (1 stick)

Place about 1½ inches of fruit (blueberries, blackberries, peaches, apples, or mix fruits that you have on hand) in pan. Top with 1/2 inch of topping. Bake @ 350° for about 35 minutes until fruit is bubbly. Apples or an extra large pan may take longer. Serve warm -- can top with whipped cream or ice cream.

I make the topping ahead and freeze it. This is great to have on hand to make a fast last minute dessert.

Frog Eye Salad

25 servings

1 c. sugar
2 Tbs. flour
½ tsp. salt

Combine sugar, flour, salt

1¾ c. pineapple juice
2 eggs

Add juice and eggs and cook stirring constantly until thick

1 tsp. lemon juice

Add to above; cool to room temperature

1 lb. box Acini De Pepe pasta
(frog eggs)

Prepare according to package directions. Drain. Combine well with egg mixture. Refrigerate overnight in airtight container.

3 - 11 oz. cans mandarin oranges, drained
2 - 20 oz. cans pineapple chunks, drained
1 - 9 oz. carton non-dairy whipped topping, thawed
1 c. miniature marshmallows (opt.)
1 c. flaked coconut (opt.)

Add all to above. Mix thoroughly.
Refrigerate in airtight container until
thoroughly chilled.
Refrigerate leftovers

This is a great recipe to make ahead and use as a salad or a dessert -- most people think the Acini De Pepe (frog eyes) are tapioca -- not pasta. It keeps very well. Can add cherries too but they might make it pink .

Best Ever Brownie

Bake @ 350°

1 c. water
2 sticks butter (½ lb.)
4 Tbs. Hershey's cocoa

Bring water/buttter, cocoa to a boil.
Let cool

2 c. all purpose flour
2 c. sugar
1 tsp. each soda, salt

Combine flour/sugar/soda/salt with cocoa mixture

2 eggs
½ c. buttermilk & 1 tsp. vanilla

Add eggs one at a time
Then add buttermilk and vanilla

Icing

1 stick (1/4 butter)
6 Tbs. milk
4 Tbs. cocoa
1 Tbs. vanilla
1 lb. box powdered sugar (sifted)

Melt butter; beat in milk,cocoa,vanilla and sugar.
This makes more than enough icing.

Grease and flour 17" x 11¾", or three 8" rounds. Bake @ 350° 30-40 min. or until a toothpick comes out clean.
Spread icing on hot brownies.

Individual Brownie Alaska

Bake 3-4 min. @ 500°

Cut brownies into 3" squares.

Top each with a small scoop of ice cream -- then put in the freezer for one hour.

4 eggs
1/2 c. sugar
Pinch of cream of tartar (opt.)

Gradually beat sugar into egg whites
Beat until stiff

Preheat oven to 500°. Just before baking cover brownies and ice cream with meringue, sealing it to the edge of the brownies. Quickly put in oven and bake 3-4 minutes or until light brown. Serve immediately.

When whipped egg whites are ready you can turn the bowl upside down and they stick to the top without falling out (for the dramatic!). Be careful not to whip much more or they will be too dry.

Caramel

1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk (not evaporated milk)

Place can in a pan; cover with water. Bring to a boil and simmer for 4-5 hours. **WARNING: Never** let the water level get below the top of the can -- this can cause the can to explode. **Do not take can out of water until it is completely cooled.** Caramel is ready whenever you open the can -- refrigerate only if the can is opened.

Eat the caramel straight from the can by the spoonful, or my mother used to mix ½ can caramelized milk, 1 cup cream, whipped, ½ lb. chopped dates, ½ c. chopped nuts. Fold together, refrigerate for 24 hours and serve atop angel food cake.

Less "Explosive" Methods

Stove top: Pour milk in top of a double boiler. Cover. Cook over simmering water 1½-2 hours -- until thick and slightly caramel colored. Beat until smooth.

Oven: Pour milk in a glass pie plate. Cover with aluminum foil. Place pie plate in a shallow pan of hot water and bake @ 425° for 1-1½ hours until thick and caramel colored.

Microwave: Pour milk in a 2 qt. glass measure. Cook @ 50% power 4 minutes, stirring briskly every 2 minutes until smooth. Cook on 30% power 12-18 minutes or until very thick and caramel colored, stirring briskly every 2 minutes until smooth.

The "in the can" recipe was from my grandmother, and then my mother, and I have made it many times. I have known people who let the water level get below the top of the can to have stalactites on their ceiling after the can blew up.

Snowballs

½ c. butter

Cream butter and sugar

½ c. sugar

1 egg yolk

Add egg yolk. Mix well

½ c. crushed pineapple, drained

Stir in pineapple and nuts

½ c. nuts

66 vanilla wafers

Spread mixture on wafers and stack 3 to a stack

1 c. cream, whipped and sweetened) Spread whipped cream on sides.

Flaked coconut

Roll in coconut. Then put whipped cream on tops and sprinkle with coconut.

Can be made ahead of time, frozen and then "iced" the day you want to use them.

This was a recipe my mother used to make for company that I loved to eat ahead of time.

Chocolate Zucchini Cake

Serves 10-12

Bake @ 350°

**2¼ c. sifted flour
½ c. cocoa
1 tsp each salt, cinnamon
2½ tsp. bak pwd.
1½ tsp. soda**

Combine dry ingredients and set aside

**¾ c. shortening/margarine
2 c. sugar**

Cream together sugar and shortening

3 eggs

Add eggs one at a time to creamed mixture

**2 tsp. vanilla
2 c. shredded zucchini**

Stir in vanilla and zucchini

**½ c. milk
½ c. nuts (opt.)**

Alternately stir in milk and dry ingredients

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Chocolate Zucchini Cake(Continued)

Chocolate Glaze

¼ c. shortening
½ c. cocoa

Melt shortening and stir in cocoa

2 c. powdered sugar (sifted)
3 Tbs. milk
1½ tsp. vanilla

Mix together pwd. sugar, milk, vanilla
Beat until smooth

Pour batter in greased and floured 10" tube pan. Bake 350° for 1 hour or when toothpick comes out clean. Cool 15 minutes. Turn out on rack to cool. Spread icing on cooled cake.

Marshmallow Treats

Makes 24 - 2" squares

6-10 ounces marshmallows (about 40) or 4 cups miniature marshmallows
¼ c. butter
5 c. Rice Krispies (I usually use 5-7 cups)
1 tsp vanilla (opt.)

Microwave method: Combine butter and marshmallows in a large plastic or glass bowl. Microwave about 2 minutes (stirring a couple of times) until marshmallows are syrupy: add vanilla. Then add Krispies as below.

Stove top method: Melt butter in a large pan. Add marshmallows and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until marshmallows are melted and mixture is syrupy. Remove from heat. Add vanilla.

Add Rice Krispies and stir until well-coated. Press warm mixture evenly and firmly into buttered 13"x9" pan. I usually wet my hands lightly before pressing the mixture into the pan -- it keeps it from sticking to my fingers. Cool. Cut into squares.

For lower fat cut back the butter by 1/3-1/2 --- they are still good.

Marshmallow Treats

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Apple Pastry

Bake @ 400°

Frozen puff pastry sheets
Tart apples (such as Granny Smith)
Cinnamon /sugar
Apricot jam

Thaw pastry sheets. Roll out thin. Cut in 10" round or a rectangle for any size cookie sheet. Place two sheets on top of each other. Place on cookie sheet or pizza pan. Slice apples thin and layer side by side, slightly overlapping on pastry. Sprinkle with lots of cinnamon/sugar. Dot with butter. Bake @ 400° for 10-15 min. Brush tops with melted apricot jam.

I make a mixture of cinnamon and sugar (about 3 Tbs. cinnamon to 1 c. sugar) and keep it in a big salt shaker to use whenever.

This is an easy-to-make dessert but disappears quickly .

Mom's Pie Crust

2 c. flour
1 tsp. each, salt and sugar
dash of cardamom (opt)

Mix flour, salt, sugar

1/3 c. unsalted butter
1/3 c. Crisco

Mix in butter to "pea" size
Then add shortening and mix to "pea" size

5 Tbs. water
(total moisture can include
1 T. vinegar and/or 1 egg yolk)

Drizzle water over mixture.
Use a fork to combine until all flour is moistened,
and dough clings together and almost cleans sides of bowl.

With hands gather dough into ball (2 balls for a double crust), flatten and refrigerated for 1 hour. Roll out between floured wax paper.

If made separate a top crust can be made with a little extra shortening . Try sprinkling a bit of flour/tapioca/cornstarch on the bottom shell of a fruit pie to thicken bottom juices.

Pie Crust for Cream Pies

Preheat oven to 350°

1 c. sifted flour
½ tsp salt

Mix flour and salt

1/3 c. shortening

Cut flour & shortening together to "pea" size

2½ Tbs. cold milk

Drizzle milk over mixture
Use fork to combine, mixing only until all dry crumbs
have been taken up.

Roll out between floured wax paper . Roll dough larger than the pan so it is not stretched when put in the pan. While dough is still on paper pierce it with a fork. Put dough in pie pan; flute edges making sure they are outside of pan rim (it helps keep the crust from shrinking as it bakes). Preheat oven to 350° -- put crust in oven -- then turn up to 425°. Bake 10 min. Cool before adding filling.

Best ever Coconut Cream Pie

Makes one 9" pie

One cooled, prebaked pie shell (see pie dough recipe for cream pies)

4 egg yolks

Beat yolks and set aside

¼ c. flour

2 Tbs. cornstarch

¾ c. sugar

¼ tsp salt

In heavy 3-qt pan stir together flour, cornstarch, sugar, salt

3 c. milk

Gradually whisk in milk, blending until smooth. Cook over medium heat, stir constantly until mixture thickens and comes to a full boil. Boil, stir for 1 min. Stir about ½ c. of hot filling into egg yolks. Then pour yolk mixture into pan. Cool, stirring for 2 minutes. Remove from heat.

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Best ever Coconut Cream Pie(Continued)

**3 Tbs. butter/margarine
1½ tsp. vanilla**

**Add butter and vanilla.
Stir until butter is melted.**

1 c. sweetened flaked coconut

Stir in filling. Pour filling into cooled pastry shell.

To serve pie with whipped cream, cover hot filling with plastic wrap after pouring in pie shell. Place on a rack and let cool to room temperature; serve, or refrigerate for up to 24 hours. To serve top with whipped cream.

Can use a meringue topping but our family preferred whipped cream topping. It adds a nice look to sprinkle ½ cup toasted coconut on top. This was always Kris' favorite.

Pumpkin Pie

Preheat oven to 450°

Make pie shell for 10" pan. Brush with slightly beaten egg white. Refrigerate for one hour or more

1½ to 2 c. pumpkin or squash (fresh or canned)

¾ c. brown sugar (can use ¼ c. dark brown sugar)

1¼ tsp. ginger

1 heaping Tbs. cinnamon Mix well together

½ tsp. cloves

¼ tsp. nutmeg

2 c. light cream Scald and add to above

4 eggs, lightly beaten Add to mixture

Pour in pastry shell and bake @ 450° for 15 min. Reduce to 350° and bake until set, about 25 min.

For a lower calorie/fat recipe I've used 3 eggs plus one egg white, and 1 cup cream and one cup skim milk.

Apple Pumpkin Pie

Bake @ 425°

1 10" pie shell
1 can (1 lb.) apple pie filling

1 can (1 lb.) pumpkin (not fresh pumpkin)

1 c. sugar

2 Tbs. molasses

Mix together pumpkin, sugars and spices

1½ Tbs. melted butter

½ tsp. each, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger

¼ tsp. pwd. cloves

pinch of salt

1 c. sugar

1¼ c. milk

2 slightly beaten eggs

Add to above mixture

Pour apple filling into pie shell. Top with pumpkin filling. Bake @ 425° for 40 min.

Apple Pie

Makes 10" pie

Preheat oven to 450°

Pastry for a double crust 9-10" pie

8 c. apples (can add some blueberries)

Peel, core apples and slice thinly

¾ c. sugar (mixture of brown and white sugars)

3 Tbs. tapioca or cornstarch

Combine sugar/tapioca, spices, juice and add to apple.

1 Tbs. cinnamon

¼ tsp. each, nutmeg and ginger

Let stand one hour or more

pinch of salt

1 Tb. lemon juice (opt)

1 Tbs. apple juice or cream (if apples are dry)

Pile in pie shell (can sprinkle a bit of flour/tapioca/corn starch on the bottom of the pie shell to thicken bottom juices.) Dot with butter. Top with crust. Can sprinkle crust with a bit of milk and cinnamon-sugar. Bake @ 450° for 10 minutes; then @ 350° for 45-60 minutes.

I have also made a pie with one side apple and the other blackberry (or whatever depending on the kind and amount of fruit on hand). Everyone ended up taking one small slice of each.

Almond Crunch Apple Pie

Bake @ 400°

1 8" unbaked pie shell
1 can (1 lb.) apple pie filling (or cherry or a mixture)

1/3 c. butter, softened
2/3 c. brown sugar

Cream butter and sugar

1 Tbs. flour

Blend in flour

2/3 c. chopped almonds (pecans/walnuts)
1/2 c. shredded coconut

Lightly toast nuts
Stir in almonds and coconut

Fill pie shell with apple pie filling. Spread topping over apples. Bake @ 400° for 25-30 minutes until golden.

Oatmeal Cake

Serves 12

1 c. oatmeal
1½ c. boiling water
½ c. shortening
1 c. each brown and white sugars
2 eggs, beaten
1½ c. flour
1 tsp. each cinnamon and soda
½ tsp. salt

Pour water over oatmeal and let stand 20 min.

Cream together shortening and sugars

Add eggs to creamed mixture with oatmeal mixture
Sift flour, cinnamon, soda, salt, and add to mixture

Topping

5 T. butter, melted
¼ c. cream (half/half)
½ c. brown sugar
½ tsp. vanilla
1 c. coconut
1 c. nutpieces (walnuts, almonds, or pecans)

Mix together. Spread on top of baked
cake. Place under boiler until browned.

Serve warm with ice cream or whipped cream on top.

Men love this cake and it is easy to make at the last minute.

Old-Fashioned NY-Style Cheese Cake

Makes about 20 servings Preheat oven to 400°

Butter Pastry

1½ c. flour
3 Tbs. sugar
½ tsp. lemon peel
2/3 c. cold butter/margarine
1 egg
¼ tsp. vanilla

Mix together flour, sugar, lemon peel
(or the pastry can be made in a food processor)
Cut in butter until small pea size crumbs form

Add egg and vanilla. Mix until mixture begins to clump together
Gather dough into a ball with your hands.

Press ½ of dough over bottom of a 10" spring form pan with sides removed. Bake @ 400° until pale golden (5-6 min.); cool on rack. Butter pan sides, attach to pan bottom, and press remaining dough against sides to within ¼" of rim. Set aside. Reduce oven to 325°.

Topping

1 ½ c. sour cream
3 Tbs. sugar
1 tsp. vanilla

Stir together sour cream, sugar, vanilla. Set aside.

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Old-Fashioned NY-Style Cheese Cake (continued)

Bake @ 325°

Filling

1½ lbs. fresh cream cheese or 40 oz. of packaged cream cheese, softened

1½ c. sugar

6 eggs

¼ c. flour

2 tsp. grated lemon peel

½ tsp. each salt, and nutmeg

3 tsp. vanilla

1/2 c. whipping cream

Beat cream cheese and sugar until soft and smooth.

Beat in eggs, one at a time.

Add flour, lemon peel, salt, nutmeg and vanilla.

Beat just until smooth (do not overbeat)

Stir in vanilla and whipping cream.

Set aside 1 cup of filling to bake in a custard dish (if all the filling is poured in the 10" pan it cracks over the top -- would fit a 12" pan). Pour remaining filling in prepared crust. Bake @ 325° until knife inserted halfway to center comes out clean, 1¼-1½ hours (check after 1 hour; if top is too brown cover loosely with foil).

As soon as cake is done, spread sour cream mixture over top. Return cake to oven. Turn off oven and leave door ajar several inches. Let cheesecake remain in cooling oven for 1 hour, then place on rack to cool for 15 minutes. Loosen crust from pan sides with a knife, then let cake cool to room temperature. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days, or freeze.

This is a real old fashioned New York style cheesecake.

Nanaimo Bars

8x8" pan

½ c. unsalted butter Melt butter, cocoa, sugar.
5 Tbs. cocoa
¼ c. granulated sugar
1 egg, slightly beaten Add egg and stir constantly until thickened (2-3 min.)
½ tsp vanilla Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla
1¾ c. of finely crushed graham crackers Add crackers, coconut and nuts to above
1 c. coconut
½ c. finely chopped walnuts or almonds Pack hard in ungreased 8x8" pan. Cool in refrigerator

Middle Layer

¼ c. unsalted butter melted Blend until soft. Don't cook too long
2 tsp. vanilla pudding mix Spread on cooled mixture.
2 Tbs. milk
2 c. sifted pwd. sugar

Top Layer

4 squares semi-sweet chocolate Melt chocolate and butter over low heat.
1 Tbs. unsalted butter, melted When cool but still liquid pour chocolate mixture over second layer.
Chill in refrigerator about 15 min. Cut into bars.

These can be made 3-4 days ahead and kept covered and refrigerated -- if no one eats them first.

Rum/Orange Decadence Cake

Serves 16

**1 pkg any yellow cake mix
1/3 c. orange juice
1/2 tsp orange rind**

Substitute 1/3 c. of the water with 1/3 c. orange juice.

Add orange rind. Bake as directed on cake box 9" pans. Cool and split.

3 Tbs. rum

Sprinkle rum over cake.

Filling

**2 tsp gelatin
2 Tbs. cold water
2 c. cream
1/2 c. sifted pwd sugar
1/3 c. rum**

Sprinkle gelatin over water, heat over hot water (until softened)

Beat cream and sugar until thick

Gradually add gelatin and rum to creamed mixture

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Rum/Orange Decadence Cake(Continued)

Chocolate Frosting

3-4 squares baker's chocolate	Melt chocolate over hot water
1 c. pwd sugar	Remove from heat and add sugar, water and eggs (one at a time)
2 eggs	
6 Tbs. soft butter	Beat butter in 2 Tbs. at a time. Beat until smooth and light in color.

Put filling between layers. Frost sides and top. Can decorate with nuts around side of cake. Refrigerate overnight.

Definitely worth the effort -- plus making ahead counts for a lot!

Almond-topped Toffee

Makes 3 doz. pieces

½ lb. (1 c.) butter (not margarine and not unsalted butter)
1 c. brown sugar
6 Hershey bars (1-3/8 oz.) milk chocolate
½ c. chopped almonds (filberts/pecans)

(Do Not double this recipe)

Butter a cookie sheet or 9x13 pan. In a heavy sauce pan combine butter and sugar. Cook over medium high heat stirring constantly until mixture reaches 300°-310°(hard crack stage -- takes about 10-12 min.) Pour into pan (sometimes it may not cover the whole pan but it doesn't matter -- just pour to the thickness you want--I pour it thin to make more pieces but if you pour it to thin the chocolate will separate from the toffee when it cools). Lay chocolate bars (smooth side down) evenly on hot candy; when melted spread evenly over toffee. Sprinkle nuts over chocolate and press in lightly with back of a spatula. Chill until chocolate is firm. Break apart (to be dramatic just drop the pan on the counter and the candy will break into pieces on its own) in small irregular pieces. Store in airtight container.

When cooking I keep a small bowl of ice cubes and water by the stove and keep testing for the "hard crack" stage. I put a few drops of the mixture in ice water. When cool, taste the drops -- if they are crunchy and do not stick in your teeth the toffee is ready to be poured in the pan. Sometimes there is charring on the bottom of the pan but it doesn't seem to affect the taste.

There are lots of variations on this -- some people put nuts on the bottom of the pan too, and some put nuts in it. Some recipes use white sugar -- I think brown sugar is the best . Warning -- this candy is addictive!

Candied Pecans

4 c. pecans	Place in jelly roll pan and toast @ 300° for about 30 min. Remove from pan
½ c. butter	Melt butter in a jelly roll pan
2 egg whites	Beat whites until stiff
1 c. sugar	Gradually add sugar and salt to egg whites and beat until thick.
1 tsp salt	Fold in pecans

Spread pecans carefully in pan with melted butter. Bake @ 250° about 45 min. stirring often. Break into large pieces and store in airtight container.

"Mercedes" Flan

Bake @ 300°

½ c. sugar
2 Tbs. hot water

In a heavy stainless pan melt sugar slowly; turn down heat
Carefully add hot water, stirring constantly until sugar turns golden brown.
Quickly pour into baking dish (I use a glass 10" pie pan)
This sugar turns crackly hard in the pie pan -- never fear it will be liquid
caramel after baking.
Can make caramel in micro in pie pan -- works great but watch carefully.

4 eggs
1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk
1 can (14 oz) filled with milk (I use skim)
1 tsp vanilla
8 oz. cream cheese

Mix in blender

Pour mixture over sugar in pie pan

Place pie pan in a pan with water half way up the sides. Place in 300° oven for 1 hour or carefully insert thin knife about halfway to middle -- if it comes out clean the center will continue to cook as it cools. Cool in pan. Keep in refrigerator. When ready to serve invert on a large plate. The caramel will coat the top and run over the sides. When I was given this recipe I was told I could substitute the milk with pineapple juice -- not sure that sounds so great but I think it might be good to add some pumpkin for a pumpkin-flan.

This recipe came from "Mercedes" -- she cleaned our house when Myke was a baby and also taught him some Spanish -- but he would speak Spanish only to her. This recipe makes the best flan I have ever had.

Appleless Apple Pie

Bake @ 400°

2 c. water
1½ c. sugar
2 tsp. cream of tartar

Boil two minutes

24 Ritz crackers

Drop in water mixture. Do Not Stir. Boil 2 more minutes

Remove from heat. Pour into unbaked pie shell. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Dot with butter.

Crumb Top

3 Tb. self rising flour
2 Tb. sugar
1 T. butter

Crumble together with fork
Sprinkle on pie.

Bake @ 400° for 30 minutes.

Unbelievable but true -- tastes just like an apple pie. This was the "rage" in our 20's. It was also cheap to make and fooled everyone.

Aunt Jean's Nut Torte Cake

Bake @ 325°

12-14 eggs, separate yolks/whites Mix yolks and sugar until light
1 lb. fine sugar

1 lb. ground walnuts Add nuts/crumbs and vanilla. Mix well
1 c. bread crumbs
2 tsp. vanilla

Whip egg whites stiff with a pinch of salt and gently fold into walnut mixture. Divide between 2-3 bake pans with removable sides. Bake @ 325° for 20 minutes or until toothpick inserted comes out clean.

Filling

1 lb. pwd sugar Mix sugar, almonds and cream together and spread between layers.
1 lb. ground almonds
1 c. sweet cream (whip cream)

Frost with chocolate frosting. Decorate with half walnut kernels. Always better on the second or third day.

Oleg and I were served this cake at Easter time in NY at his Aunt Jean's house. It was delicious but when I made it, it was not so great. I've included it for posterity and in hopes descendants will try it and have more success than I. We had a wonderful time with Aunt Jean and wish we had had more.

Cherries Jubilee

2 1 lb. cans pitted bing cherries Drain cherry juice and mix with cornstarch
2 tsp. cornstarch Cook over low heat to syrup consistency. Then add cherries.
Place in chafing dish and heat over direct flame.

4 oz. Kijafa cherry wine Add liqueurs. Stir well and let cook 2 minutes

2 oz. cherry flavored brandy

1 oz. Grand Mariner (or Contreau)

1 oz. fine cognac (or brandy)

2 oz. 151 proof Puerto Rico Rum (warmed) Add rum, ignite, stir slightly with long handled spoon.

Serve over ice cream.

Cherries Jubilee was always a favorite of mine. At one time it was popular in restaurants to prepare it dramatically at the table -- great entertainment. They added some lemon by placing half a lemon in a napkin and squeezing the juice through the napkin into the cherry mixture.

Turtles

Makes 60 cookies Bake @ 375°

¼ c. butter (margarine)
1 c. brown sugar Cream together butter and sugar

1 egg, beaten
½ tsp bak. soda
½ tsp cream of tartar Add to above and mix well
¼ tsp salt
1-2/3 c. flour

Roll dough into small balls and flatten between palms. Place on a greased cookie sheet and put 2-3 whole pecans or walnuts on top. Bake @ 375° for 10 minutes. Remove from cookie sheet immediately to avoid sticking.

Topping

Chocolate chips Melt chips and dip top of cookie in chocolate. Chill until set.

Fruitcake Cookies

Bake @ 250°

1 lb. candied fruit (can add cherries if you like)
½ c. whiskey Soak fruit overnight in whiskey; drain

½ c. margarine
2/3 c. brown sugar Combine.
1½ tsp bak. soda
1½ Tb. milk

1/3 c. whiskey
1½ c. flour
1 tsp cinnamon Add whiskey, flour, spices
1 tsp nutmeg
½ tsp allspice
½ tsp cloves

6-12 ozs. pecans Add with fruit to mixture

Drop by teaspoon on greased cookie sheet. Bake 1 hour @ 250°

Chocolate Dipped Strawberries

6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate pieces
½ c. sweetened condensed milk Melt together

1/3 c. Kahlua Add to chocolate
 Beat until cool.

Large fresh strawberries Dip small end and almost to top in chocolate.
 Place on wax paper or rack to harden.

Gives extra taste to the strawberries to use a syringe type needle (available at the drug store) to squirt a bit of Kirsh in the strawberry.

Quick-Fix Toffee Cookies

Bake @ 350°

Saltine crackers Put a single layer of crackers in the bottom of a 11x13" pan

1 c. brown sugar Bring sugar and butter to a boil and simmer for 3-5 minutes.
1 c. butter

Pour butter/sugar mixture over the saltines. Top with chocolate chips (or mix with Reeses' Peanut Butter chips). Bake @ 350° for about 5-10 minutes or until the chips melt a bit. Sprinkle on some chopped nuts. Cool and cut in pieces.

Almost as good as the almond toffee -- quick and easy to make.

Blackberry Mousse

1 Tbs. Knox gelatin
2 Tbs. water

Soak gelatin in water until soft.

Juice of one orange
Grated zest of one orange
2 pint blackberries (or 2-10 oz. frozen)

Add orange juice and zest and berries to gelatin mix.
Bring to a boil. Cool.

2 eggs yolks
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. sugar

Beat yolks and sugar together.
Simmer over double boiler until thickened and sugar melted.

2 Tbs. Cointreau

Add Cointreau to egg/sugar mixture. Cool.

2 c. whipping cream, whipped
Kiwi fruit sliced for topping

Add cooled yolks mixture to cooled berry mixture and fold in whipped cream. Pour in mold or serving dish. Chill for one hour or more. Top with slices of kiwi.

