

WHITE CHOCOLATE AND RASPBERRY CREME BRULEE

3 egg yolks
 ¼ cup sugar
 1 cup heavy cream
 ¼ cup white chocolate chips
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 2 tsp. sugar
 2 cups fresh or frozen raspberries, mashed
 2 Tbsp. sugar
 Fresh raspberries for garnish (optional)

Preheat oven to 275 degrees. Whisk together egg yolks and ¼ cup sugar. In saucepan, stir together heavy cream and white chocolate chips over medium heat until chocolate is melted. Slowly add cream mixture to egg mixture, whisking constantly. Stir in vanilla. Skim any foam off top of custard. Mix 2 tsp. sugar with raspberries in small bowl. Divide raspberries between ramekins. Pour custard over raspberries. With a spoon, gently swirl raspberries through custard. Place ramekins on a sheet pan with sides. Add enough hot water to pan to come half-way up sides of ramekins. Bake 1 hour or until custard is set in center. Refrigerate at least 1 hour or overnight. Sprinkle 1 Tbsp. sugar on top of each custard. Carmelize with torch or under broiler for 1-2 minutes. Garnish with raspberries, if desired.

Tristan MacDonald
 Allegheny-Clarion Valley High School

Editor's Note: The recipes featured in the 2009 Creative Cookbook are published as they were submitted to the newspaper. Readers are advised to pay close attention to all recipes to ensure canning and other food preparation efforts are adequate and safe.

WHOOPIE PIES

2 cups sugar
 1 Tbsp. baking powder
 2 Tbsp. baking soda
 ¼ tsp. salt
 4 cups flour
 ½ cup cocoa
 1 cup Crisco
 1 cup sour milk (add 1 tsp. cider vinegar to a cup of whole milk and stir for 30 seconds)
 1 cup hot water
 2 egg yolks (save egg whites for filling)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix dry ingredients together, then add remaining ingredients and beat with mixer or by hand until nice and smooth (like a cake mixture but only thicker). Drop by heaping teaspoon on an ungreased cookie sheet approximately 2 inches apart. Bake for 8-10 minutes. Line finished cakes onto waxed paper to cool and continue with remaining batter.

Filling:

2 egg whites
 4 Tbsp. flour
 4 Tbsp. milk
 2 tsp. vanilla
 2 tsp. powdered sugar
 1 cup Crisco
 ¼ tsp. salt

Beat all ingredients with mixer on medium setting until smooth then gradually add 4 cups of powdered sugar. Once you have all of the cakes cooled, take one cake, top with a heaping teaspoon of filling, then put another cake on top to make a "mini" cake. Continue with remaining cakes and filling. You can color the filling to suit the occasion (red and green for Christmas, etc.) This makes a large batch and they freeze very well.

Teresa Surratt
 Clarion

Ask a Cook: How long should you keep salad dressing after opening it?

By KATHLEEN PURVIS

Q. How long does bottled salad dressing stay good in the refrigerator once it's opened?

A. Most commercial bottled salad dressing will keep indefinitely in the refrigerator. Since salad dressings are so high in acidic ingredients, particularly vinegar, there isn't much that can make it spoil.

There is an exception, however. A few types, particularly the blue cheese

dressing that is sold in the produce department, doesn't keep as long. Usually, that kind will say on the bottle how long it should keep after opening.

(Kathleen Purvis answers Ask a Cook questions for the Charlotte Observer in Charlotte, N.C.)

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'Field Guide to Candy': a sweet primer worth preserving

CHICAGO (MCT) — Halloween marks the start of fall candy season. Whether bought or homemade, candied sweets are found in homes from the end of October through the December holidays. It's timely, then, that Anita Chu has just written her "Field Guide to Candy: How to Identify and Make Virtually Every Candy Imaginable" (Quirk, \$15.95). In it, you'll find all types of homemade treats, from the simplest candied nuts to the more complicated filled, molded chocolates.

The word candy, by the way, comes from the Arabic word qandi, meaning sugar, Chu writes. She adds that the first candies were made in Egypt, where fruits were coated in honey to preserve them.

The guide includes many tips on working with chocolate and sugar, as well as tools for successful candy making. Here is Chu's method for making

candied pecans, a simple sweet for fall entertaining. The same recipe can be used for walnuts, almonds or peanuts.

CANDIED NUTS

1. Heat the oven to 250 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Mix 2 egg whites with 1 tablespoon of water in a small bowl until frothy.
3. Combine in another bowl 1/2 cup granulated sugar, 1/4 cup light brown sugar, 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon and 1/2 teaspoon salt.
4. Add 2 cups of pecan halves to the egg whites; stir to coat. Toss the nuts in the sugar mixture to coat.
5. Place the nuts on a single layer on the baking sheet. Bake, stirring every 15 minutes, for 45 minutes. Makes about 2 cups of nuts. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 months.



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