



Holiday Treats



From our kitchen to yours:
A selection of cherished recipes from
around the world for the holiday season

Welcome to our EPI-USE Labs 2023 Holiday Season Recipe Book!

We asked our colleagues around the world for their cherished holiday dessert, cake and pastry recipes, which mean something special to them at this time of year – and this amazing collection of delicious treats is the result!

The concept behind this recipe book is simple: To connect the different cultures in our wonderfully diverse group, creating a sense of togetherness. And what better way to achieve this than through the universal language of food?

Dip in and get cooking... you won't be disappointed.

Please note: The images provided are solely for illustrative purposes.

Allergens:



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Mousse au Chocolat

by Stefan C | Germany

Why is it special?

"We only have it for Christmas with my family"

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 1 carton of cream (200 or 250ml – depending on the size of the chocolate)
- 1 bar of chocolate (200 or 250 grams)
 - we love using bittersweet chocolate, but it is up to you – you can also use other flavours, like milk chocolate.

Method

1. Separate the egg (yolk/white) and whip the egg white
2. Whip the cream, and mix it with the whipped egg white
3. Heat up the chocolate (this is easiest in the microwave oven or in hot water) until it is melted
4. Now you have to be fast!
 - a. Mix the egg yolk with the chocolate – very quickly!
 - b. Mix this with the whipped cream/whipped egg white (don't whip it too long – so you keep small bits of chocolate)
5. Leave it to set in the refrigerator – best for 24 hours (minimum 4 hours).

That's it – enjoy!

This quantity serves four people.





From grandmother to mother to daughter... MY MOM



Malva pudding

by Marieta M | South Africa

Why is it special?

"From grandmother to mother to daughter..."

Pudding ingredients

- 250ml flour
- 5ml of baking soda (bicarbonate of soda)
- 5ml baking powder
- 15ml apricot jam
- 15ml butter/margarine
- 250ml milk
- 1 egg
- 250ml sugar
- 5ml lemon juice

Pudding method

1. Mix butter and sugar.
2. Add egg.
3. Add lemon juice, baking soda, baking powder and apricot jam.
4. Add flour and milk alternately.
5. Bake for one hour in an ovenproof dish at 180 degrees (C).

Caramel sauce ingredients

- 250ml cream or evaporated milk
- 125ml margarine/butter
- 250ml sugar
- 125ml of boiling water

Caramel sauce method

1. Boil all the ingredients together for two minutes and pour hot over the pudding when it comes out of the oven.
2. Continue baking until caramelised (about 5 min).
3. Serve warm with cream and/or vanilla ice-cream.





Sweet Crepes

by Danielle L | USA

Why is it special?

"It's a family tradition to make Sweet Crepes for breakfast at every family gathering. The decadent part is that we prepare a variety of items to go in the crepes, all with one element in common: SUGAR! The toppings to choose from include melted dark chocolate, caramel and strawberry sauce, and sweet fruits like strawberries, bananas, cinnamon roasted apples etc. We serve this "make your own crepe" style on a counter so that each person learns how to make a crepe with the crepe maker, and to customize the delicious treat to their liking. My favorite is always dark chocolate sauce with strawberries and bananas with a side of bacon. I call this the breakfast of champions – although it does induce a sugar-crashing nap about an hour later."

This recipe requires a Crepe Maker, Blender and 9-inch Glass Pie Dish. Makes 18 to 20 crepes.

Ingredients for batter

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ¼ tablespoon vanilla essence
- Dash of salt
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted

Method

Place the eggs in the blender and beat, pour in milk, add sugar, vanilla and salt, and blend. Then add flour and butter, blend on low speed just until smooth, scraping down the sides if necessary. Store the batter overnight in the fridge.

In the morning, give the batter a quick blend and then pour it into the glass pie dish. Preheat the crepe maker for five minutes. Dip the crepe maker into the batter and quickly turn it right side up and let sit until bubbles start to disappear and the edges turn slightly brown. Next use a soft edge plastic spatula to flip it over, wait 45 seconds and then flip it on to a plate. Then fill each as you see fit which could be SAVORY (eggs, sausage and cheese) or as my family does it SWEET I recommend chocolate and strawberries at a minimum with a dollop of whipped cream on top.

That's it – enjoy!





Ouma Irene se Soet Koekies

Sumare M | South Africa

Why is it special?

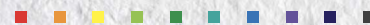
"Ouma (Grandma) Irene always baked these koekies for us when we went on holidays, a staple breakfast while camping with your morning coffee and tea. She now has arthritis in her hands, so as her grandkids we bake these koekies over the holidays, while she sits and watches."

Ingredients

- 1kg Stork butter
- 14 cups baking flour
- 14 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 tablespoon baking soda (mix in 1 cup of hot water before putting it into the mix)
- 6 cups of sugar (white)
- 2 tablespoons cinnamon powder
- 1 tablespoon ginger powder
- 1.5 teaspoons nutmeg powder
- A pinch of salt

Method

1. Heat the oven to 180 degrees (C).
2. Mix the butter and sugar in a bowl until it is creamy.
3. Add all the dry ingredients in.
4. Gently mix all the ingredients by hand.
5. Slowly add a cup of boiled water and baking soda (bit by bit).
6. Keep kneading the dough and add room temperature water into the mix until the dough is rollable.
TIP: Place some flour on your table space when rolling it out so it does not stick to the surface.
7. Roll the dough out until about 1 ½ cm thick (or the thickness you prefer) and use your cookie cutter to cut out your dough.
8. Place the cookies on an oven proof baking sheet/pan (remember to spray the pan with a non-stick spray first).
9. Keep an eye on them until they are golden brown. Take them out and place on a rack or cloth to cool down before eating.





Carrot Cake

by Susan S | South Africa

Why is it special?

"Carrot cake counts as a vegetable, doesn't it?"

Ingredients

Cake:

- 500ml cake flour (all-purpose flour)
- 250ml sugar
- 5ml baking powder
- 5ml baking soda (bicarbonate of soda)
- 5ml salt
- 5ml cinnamon
- 125ml pecan nuts
- 250ml cooking oil
- 4 eggs
- 750 – 1000ml grated carrots (250ml of carrots can be replaced with 250ml smooth banana)

Method

Cake:

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees (C).
2. Mix all the dry ingredients and pecan nuts.
3. Add the oil and eggs to the dry ingredients and mix well.
4. Add the carrots and mix well. If you want to add the banana, add it as well and mix well.
5. Prepare three x 20cm cake pans with butter.
6. Divide the mixture equally between the three pans and bake it for ± 25minutes until done.
7. Remove from oven and let it cool down.

Cream cheese frosting:

- 250g cream cheese
- 100g soft butter
- 5ml vanilla extract
- 500ml icing sugar – sifted
- Crushed pecan nuts

Frosting:

1. Mix the cream cheese and butter well.
2. Add the vanilla extract.
3. Add the icing sugar and mix well, ensure that there are no lumps.
4. Spread the frosting in between the layers and on top of the cake once the cake cools down.
5. Sprinkle the pecan nuts over the cake as decoration.





Soetpotbrood

by Beudene O | South Africa

Why is it special?

"This 'sweet pot bread' was my mother's go-to when we had lots of people around. And it is so easy to make."

Ingredients

- 1kg store-bought bread dough
- 2 tablespoons butter
- A lot of Muscovado sugar
- 1 cup cream

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees (C).
2. Shape the dough into little golf-balls.
3. Sprinkle some Muscovado sugar on a flat surface and roll the golf-balls in the Muscovado sugar.
4. Grease the pot generously with butter.
5. Sprinkle Muscovado sugar (as much as you want) at the bottom of the pot.
6. Place the golf-balls in the pot.
7. Pour over the cup of cream and bake for + 45 minutes.





Christmas Cookie Cakes

Vicky B | United Kingdom

Why is it special?

"We make these cookie cakes every year as part of our Xmas Eve buffet. They are loved by everyone, from the teenagers to the great grandparents."

Ingredients

- Choc chip cookies (2 packets)
- Pale cream sherry (200ml)
- Double cream (350ml)
- Instant coffee granules / powder (2 teaspoons)
- Chocolate flake (or any decoration)

Method

1. Mix the coffee and the sherry together
2. Whisk the cream until it forms a peak (don't overwhip it)
3. Take a cookie and dip it in the coffee mixture briefly (make sure it's covered with the mixture on both sides though)
4. Then add a small blob of cream to the top (keeping the flat of the cookie on the bottom)
5. Continue to dip and sandwich the cookies with the cream until you have as many cookies stacked for your individual dessert as you would like (we use 3 or 4)
6. Add a blob, or pipe cream to the top, and top with the flake or decoration
7. If you prefer, you can make one big cake by layering a full packet of cookies x 3 times, and covering the whole cake with cream and decoration.
8. Leave the dessert for a few hours so the cookies soften up.

Simple but very nice





Linda's Lemon Drizzle Cake

by Stephen O | Australia

Why is it special?

"This is a Lemon Drizzle cake from Mary McCartney's cookbook, 'Food'. My helper is Toby. I've made this cake a few times with lemons from my garden. It's an excellent light summer festive cake (since Australia has a summer Christmas)."

Ingredients

- 125g butter, softened, plus more for greasing the tin
- Flour, for dusting the tin
- 150g caster sugar
- 2 large free-range eggs, beaten
- Finely grated zest and juice of 3 lemons
- 180g plain or spelt flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 4 tablespoons milk
- 50g icing sugar, sifted

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C/gas mark 4. Butter and flour a 23cm non-stick loaf tin.
2. In a medium to large mixing bowl, cream the butter and caster sugar together with a wooden spoon (or use an electric mixer).
3. Gradually beat in the eggs and mix until light and fluffy. Stir in the lemon zest, flour and baking powder, and mix well.
4. Add 2 tablespoons of the lemon juice and mix well again.
5. Then beat in the milk.
6. Pour the cake mix evenly into the prepared loaf tin and bake for 45 minutes.
7. In the meantime, mix the remaining lemon juice and the icing sugar together in a small bowl to make a syrup.
8. When it's ready, take the cake out of the oven and leave it to cool in its tin for 5 minutes. Then turn it out onto a plate. Pierce the top of the cake all over with a thin skewer. Spoon the lemon syrup carefully and evenly over the cake until all of it is absorbed.
9. Ready to enjoy!





Pilipit!

by Mariel C | Philippines

What is it?

Pilipit, a Filipino twisted doughnut made with glutinous rice flour, all-purpose flour, and sugar, is a sweet and chewy snack best paired with your favourite hot beverage. Unlike the usual doughnut, the flour gives it a sticky and chewy texture rather than fluffy and airy. What makes it more special is the caramelised sugar coating. Doesn't that sound appetising?

Ingredients

Dough:

- 2 cups glutinous rice flour
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup water

Coating:

- 1 ½ cups sugar

Method

1. Add the all-purpose flour and glutinous rice flour to a large bowl. Mix thoroughly. As you mix, gradually add a cup of water until the desired consistency is reached. Knead until the dough is smooth.
2. Take some dough and shape it depending on what you like, using a tablespoon. To make the number 8 shape in this recipe, roll the dough into a log, join the ends, and then twist.
3. Prepare oil for deep-frying. Use low heat to fry the twisted doughnuts. Large batches of doughnuts can be fried, but make sure to leave some space between each batch to keep the doughnuts from clinging to one another. Use a stick to pry them apart if stuck. To fry the other side, flip the doughnuts. When the pilipit turns a pale brown tint, it has finished cooking. To drain the extra oil, move them to a strainer or paper towel.
4. Add the sugar to a pan at a low heat. Allow the sugar to melt and caramelize. The hue we want to achieve is amber.
5. Add caramelised sugar to each pilipit that has been fried. To prevent the sugar from solidifying, keep the heat on (at a very low temperature).
6. Let the caramel coating harden by placing the finished pilipit on a banana leaf or in a greased tray. Enjoy!



Why is it special?

"My first taste of this snack was at my late grandparents' house, a place that always felt special. Growing up in the city, we'd eagerly anticipate summer – a time to play with our cousins, rain or shine in the countryside where we were surrounded by (what seemed to be) endless acres of trees. This snack always transports me back to those happy, carefree days!!"





Notes:

- Working time approx. 30 minutes
- Resting time approx. 2 hours
- Cooking/baking time approx. 15 minutes
- Total time approx. 2 hours 45 minutes
- Difficulty - simple
- Kcal p. p. approx. 843



Christmas baked apple tiramisu

by Nicole S | Germany

Without alcohol and without espresso, therefore ideal for children.

Why is it special?

"Honestly, I love this recipe so much that I eat it not only at Christmas, but all year long. That's why I have a large stock of speculoos, because you can only buy them in winter."

Ingredients for 6 servings

- 200g whipped cream
- 6 tablespoons of sugar
- 1 vanilla pod pulp
- 1 stick of cinnamon
- 250g mascarpone
- 300ml apple juice
- 1 tablespoon lemon peel, untreated, grated
- 5 apples, tart (e.g. Boskoop)
- 1 teaspoon gingerbread spice or speculoos spice
- 50g almond flakes, roasted
- 50g raisins or cranberries, if desired
- Cinnamon-sugar for sprinkling
- 400g speculoos biscuits (spiced speculoos)

Method

1. First prepare the apple compote, as it needs to cool down again. Peel the apples and cut them into small pieces. Heat in a pot with the apple juice and add the raisins (cranberries) - if you don't like raisins and cranberries, you can leave them out.
2. Season with half the sugar, the cinnamon stick and the gingerbread or speculoos spice. Cut the vanilla bean in half and scrape out the pulp. Add the pith to the stewed apples and simmer until the apple pieces are soft but not yet falling apart. This takes about 10 min, depending on the type of apple.
3. Now add the roasted almond flakes and remove the cinnamon stick, let everything cool down in a bowl. There should be soft apple pieces with raisins (cranberries) in a spicy broth.
4. For the cream, whisk the mascarpone with the remaining sugar and lemon zest until smooth. Carefully fold in the whipped cream.
5. In a mould, first lay out a layer of speculoos. Spread about half of the baked apple compote on top, soaking the speculoos with the broth. Now add a layer of mascarpone cream on top. Spread a layer of speculoos on top of the cream, top with baked apple compote with broth and finally cover everything with a layer of cream.
6. Cover everything with foil and leave in the refrigerator for about 2 - 4 hours.
7. At Christmas, I decorate the cream. I cut out small stars, bells or angels (use cookie shapes as a template) from paper and put them on the cream. Then I dust everything with cinnamon-sugar and carefully lift off the paper shapes with tweezers.





Sheera

by Prathmesh D | USA (India)

Why is it special?

"I love celebrating festivals and we generally make this at festivals or when there's some occasion."

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup ghee
- 3/4 cup semolina
- 1/4 cup wheat flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2.5 cups water
- ½ cup dried fruits
- 1 teaspoon cardamom powder

Method

(Note: Please follow the quantity instructions above)

1. Set a deep pan on medium heat, add ghee, semolina, and wheat flour. Stir them well.
2. Keep stirring until the colour changes.
3. Add sugar and water, and stir continuously.
4. Add dry fruits of your choice and mix well.
5. Add cardamom powder, mix well, and cook and stir until the ghee is released.
6. Your Sheera is ready to be served. Garnish it with chopped dry fruits of your choice.

Enjoy your Sheera!





Coffee-Chocolate-Ice Cake

by Erik K | The Netherlands

Why is it special?

"During the pandemic, we were forced to have our Christmas dinner at home, the first time in over 25 years together."

Ingredients

- 150g milk chocolate
- 3 teaspoons of instant espresso
- 1 can of condensed milk
- 250ml of cream
- 250g mascarpone
- Cocoa powder

You will need a cake pan/cake mould and clingfilm.

Method

1. Melt the chocolate with a bain-marie to a paste. Take off the heat and whip the chocolate until it has no more lumps and is smooth.
2. Dissolve the instant espresso in 1 tablespoon of water.
3. Whip the condensed milk, the cream and mascarpone together until it is a full rich mixture.
4. Pour ½ of this mixture in a bowl and add the dissolved coffee, mix thoroughly.
5. Wrap the inside of the cake pan with the clingfilm and leave hanging over the edge.
6. Start filling the cake pan with a layer of the white cream mixture.
7. Drizzle with a few tablespoons of melted chocolate on top.
8. Fill with a layer of coffee mixture.
9. Again, drizzle with a few tablespoons of melted chocolate.
10. Repeat step 6,7,8 and 9, and end with a layer of white cream mixture.
11. Fold the clingfilm over the top and put in a fridge for a minimum of 8 hours.
12. Shortly before you serve, get the ice cake out of the fridge, put on a plate, sprinkle with cocoa powder and serve in slices.





Waffle Berry Pudding

by Sarah H | United Kingdom

Why is it special?

"Special Christmas memories, as we always get asked to make it again!"

Ingredients

- 2 packets McVities waffles or cheaper alternative (usually near the fresh crumpets and muffins in supermarket)
- 200g white cooking chocolate
- 300g fresh or frozen raspberries
- 2oz caster sugar
- 1 tablespoon plain flour
- 500ml crème fraîche
- 3 eggs
- ½ teaspoon vanilla essence

(Serve with vanilla ice-cream)

Method

(Note: Please follow the quantity instructions above)

1. Heat oven to 190 degrees (C).
2. Cut one and a half packets of waffles into small squares. Line a deep baking dish with half the waffles.
3. Break half the chocolate and scatter over the waffles. Scatter half the raspberries on top.
4. Repeat using the remaining waffles, chocolate and raspberries.
5. Mix all the other ingredients together, pour over the dish and bake for 25 to 30 minutes.





Notes:

A fun fact about Bolo-rei: Traditionally, baked into the cake is a fava bean (or broad bean) and a small toy. If you get the fava bean inside your slice, it means you have to supply the Bolo-Rei at Christmas the next year! This is similar to the English tradition of hiding silver coins in Christmas pudding.



Bolo-rei (King cake)

by Maria Inês P | Portugal

Why is it special?

"This is the most symbolic Christmas sweet in Portugal, despite the huge variety of sweets that exist during this Christmas season, such as sonhos, rabanadas, lampreia de ovos, filhoses, coscorões, etc."

Ingredients

- 750g flour
- 30g baker's yeast
- 150g butter or margarine
- 150g sugar
- 150g candied fruits
- 150g dried fruit (pine nuts, walnuts, raisins, etc.)
- 4 eggs
- 1 lemon
- 1 orange
- 100 ml of Port wine
- 1 dessert spoon (flat) of coarse salt
- 1 fava bean
- 1 miniature toy

Method

1. Chop the candied fruits and put them to soak in Port wine along with the dried fruits.
2. Dissolve the yeast in 100 ml of warm water and add a cup of flour (removed from the total weight). Mix and leave to rise in a warm environment for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, beat the butter or margarine, sugar and zest from the lemon and orange peel. Add the eggs, one by one, beating between each addition, and then the yeast dough. When everything is well combined, add the remaining flour sifted with salt. Knead or beat the dough very well. This dough should be soft and elastic. If it is too stiff, add a little warm milk.
4. The macerated fruits are mixed with Port wine. Knead again and shape into a ball.
5. Sprinkle the dough with a little flour, cover with a cloth and wrap the bowl in a blanket. Leave to ferment in a warm environment for around 5 hours.
6. When the dough is well leavened - in principle it should double in volume - stir and shape again into a ball (or several balls) and make a hole in the middle on a greased tray. Add the fava beans and miniature toy, wrapped in parchment paper. Leave to ferment for another hour. (To prevent the hole from closing, a bowl can be inserted.)
7. Brush the cake with egg yolk and decorate with whole candied fruits, lumps of sugar, whole pine nuts, half walnuts, etc.
8. Bake at 180 degrees for 25 mins.
9. Once cooked, brush the king cake with jelly diluted in a little hot water.





Decadent Fudge Cake

by Patti F | USA

Why is it special?

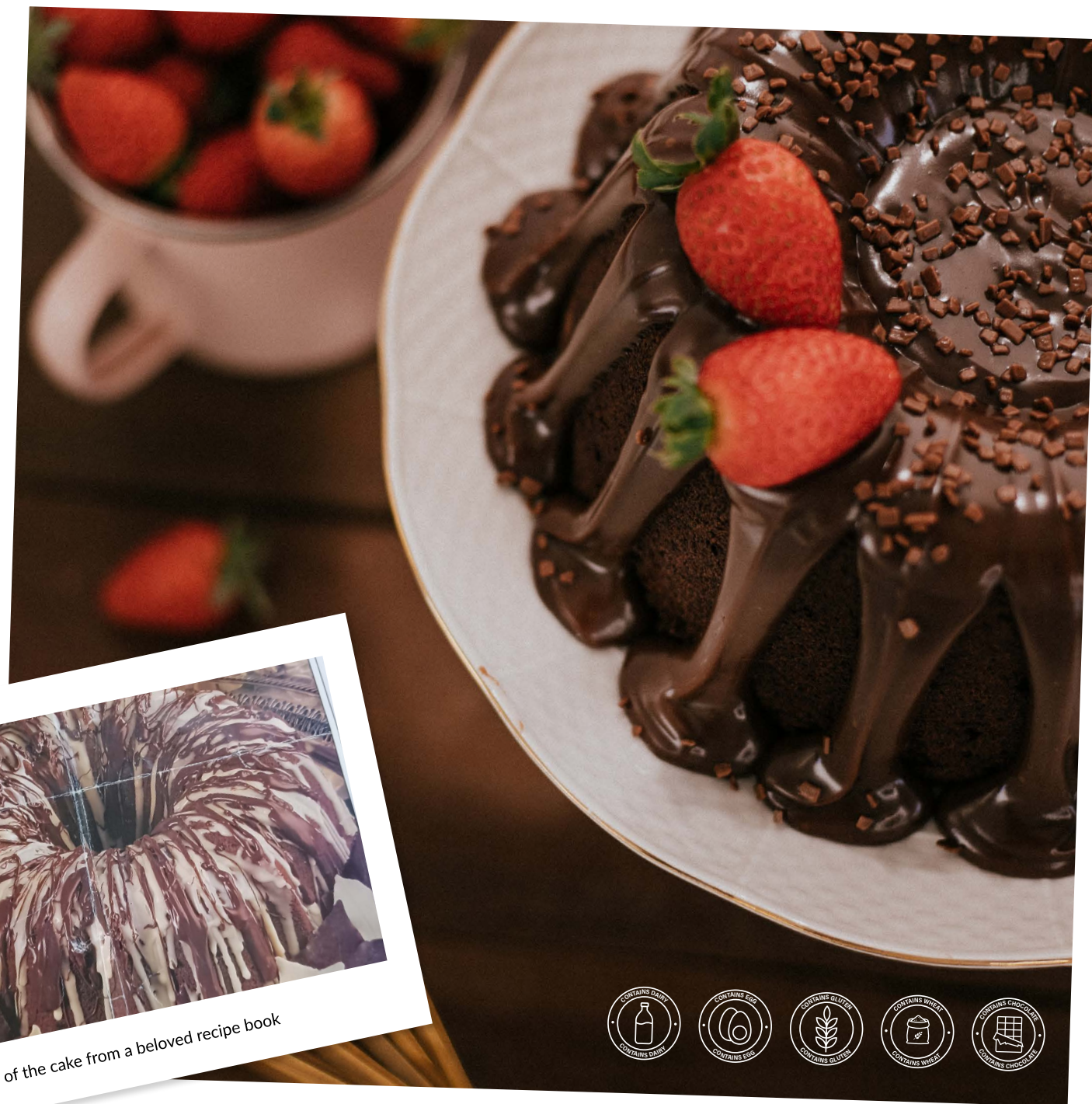
"For over twenty years, this has been my favorite cake to make for any gathering with colleagues, friends, and family."

Ingredients

- 1 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1½ cups white sugar
- 4 eggs
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups semisweet chocolate mini-morsels, divided
- 8 ounces sweet baking chocolate, melted and cooled
- 1/3 cup chocolate syrup
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 ounces white chocolate, chopped
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons shortening, divided
- Chocolate and white chocolate leaves (optional)

Method

1. Cream butter in a large mixing bowl; gradually add sugar, beating well at medium speed. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition.
2. Dissolve baking soda in buttermilk, stirring well. Add to creamed mixture alternately with flour, beginning and ending with flour. Add 1 cup mini-morsels, melted chocolate, chocolate syrup, and vanilla, stirring just until blended. (Do not overbeat.)
3. Spoon batter into a heavily greased and floured 10-inch Bundt pan. Bake at 300 degrees (F) for 1 hour and 25 to 35 minutes or until cake springs back when touched. Invert cake immediately onto a serving plate, and let cool completely.
4. Combine 4 ounces chopped white chocolate and 2 tablespoons shortening in top of a double boiler; bring water to a boil. Reduce heat to low; cook until mixture is melted and smooth. Remove from heat. Drizzle melted white chocolate mixture over cooled cake. Melt remaining ½ cup mini-morsels and 2 teaspoons shortening in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring until smooth. Remove from heat, and let cool; drizzle over white chocolate. If desired, garnish with chocolate and white chocolate leaves.
5. Yields: one 10-inch cake.



A photo of the cake from a beloved recipe book





Summer Christmas pudding

by Jacquie du P | South Africa

Why is it special?

"I've always loved the traditional steamed Christmas pudding with its fruit and nuts, served with brandy sauce, but on a summer's evening in South Africa after Christmas dinner, most people prefer a chilled dessert.

This ice cream-based dessert is also festive and echoes some of the brandied fruit tastes, and is a favourite of our family."

Ingredients

- 1 litre chocolate ice-cream, slightly softened
- 2 litres vanilla ice-cream, slightly softened
- 1/2 cup of dried fruit mix, such as raisins, sultanas, dried currants
- 1/2 cup of nuts, such as almonds, cashews, walnuts, and/or pecans
- 1/2 cup of glacé cherries, mixed red and green
- 1/3 cup chocolate chips
- 100 ml brandy (or fruit juice)

Method

1. Place the raisins, sultanas, currants and any other dried fruit in a cup or small bowl, add 2 Tablespoons of the brandy (or fruit juice) and leave to soak.
2. Find a mixing bowl (preferably glass) of about 3 litre capacity.
3. Spoon the slightly softened chocolate ice-cream into the bowl and spread it to completely cover the bottom and sides in a thick layer. (This forms a shell to give the effect of a steamed Christmas pudding.) Place in the freezer to harden.
4. Chop the nuts and cherries.
5. Add the vanilla ice-cream to another big mixing bowl, then gently fold in the soaked dried fruit plus the brandy or juice, chopped nuts and cherries, and chocolate chips.
6. Gently stir in more brandy or juice, to taste.
7. Remove the bowl with chocolate ice-cream from the freezer, and fill the well in the centre with the vanilla ice-cream mix. Return to the freezer to harden.
8. To serve, remove the bowl from the freezer and place upside down on a plate. Place a hot wet towel over the bowl to warm it and release the pudding.
9. Decorate as desired, and serve immediately.

Notes:

- Serves 8 to 12.
- Feel free to mix and match the ingredients to taste, depending on what you have on hand.
- Quantities are guidelines only, so add more or less according to taste.
- Take care not to mix the vanilla ice-cream too vigorously, else it will melt too much and the nuts and so on will sink to the bottom.
- Ideas for decoration include glacé cherries, chocolate curls, or caramelised nuts.





Christmas Fruit Biscuits

by Magdalen K | United Kingdom (South Africa)

Why is it special?

"This is a recipe my mom made for Christmas time. It just brings a lot of happy Christmas-time memories to mind. Be warned though: They are extremely addictive!"

Ingredients

- 250g butter or margarine
- 200ml (3/4 cup) sugar
- 2 extra-large eggs, beaten
- 500g dried fruit mix
- 125ml (1/2 cup) chopped nuts
- 15ml (1 tablespoon) brandy
- 5ml vanilla flavouring
- 2 x 200g packets of Tennis Biscuits (replace with shortbread or Coconut Biscuits if you live outside South Africa and you don't know Tennis Biscuits)

Method

1. Melt the butter and sugar together in a pot on the stove. Remove from the heat and let it cool down, before gradually adding the eggs.
2. Beat well, and then add the dried fruit mix to the pot. Put it back on the heat and boil for roughly 5 mins. Stir repeatedly until is honey-coloured. Remove from the heat again, and add the nuts, brandy and vanilla.
3. Crush 16 to 20 Tennis biscuits (or alternative) and add to the mix.
4. Place a layer of the uncrushed biscuits in a medium sized, greased pan. (When I replace it with shortbread, I also crush the layer that goes in the bottom to make it a thinner layer, and I add a bit of melted butter to bind the crumbs.)
5. Pour the hot fruit mixture over the biscuits, and place in the fridge until it has set.
6. Cut it into squares and store it in an airtight container in the fridge ready for any occasion.

(Makes roughly 40 squares)





Photo courtesy of Scottish Scrان
<https://scottishscrان.com>



Malteser Traybake

by Evan J | United Kingdom

Why is it special?

"I love making this with my children... it's super tasty and everyone raves about it!"

Ingredients for 6 servings

- 400g crushed digestive biscuits
- 200g butter
- 4 tablespoons golden syrup
- 3 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 200g Maltesers
- 100g milk or dark chocolate
- 50g white chocolate (or more dark/milk chocolate if you prefer!)

Method

1. Line a 7-inch (18cm) square baking tin.
2. Melt the butter and syrup, stir in the cocoa powder, then thoroughly stir in the biscuit crumbs and Maltesers, spoon into the tin and press down firmly.
3. Melt the milk chocolate and pour over the top of the biscuit base and spread evenly.
4. Melt the white chocolate and blob on top of the milk chocolate, using a skewer to make a swirly pattern.
5. Chill for a couple of hours until the chocolate has completely set, remove from tin, cut into 1-inch squares.
6. These will keep for a week in the fridge, but they're not likely to last that long!





Teurgoule Normandy dessert

by Tony P | France

Why is it special?

"It was at the end of the 18th century that a French naval officer brought rice from abroad to Normandy. No one had ever heard of this cereal and as a result, no one knew how to prepare it. One of the recipes tested at this time was 'La teurgoule'. The name of this sweet recipe comes from the Norman dialect and means 'the twisted mouth'.

In the past, Teurgoule was cooked in a wood-fired bread oven, in the embers that remained at the end of the cooking day. Traditionally, this creamy rice pudding is served with a 'La Faulte' brioche (another Norman specialty) and a glass of Norman cider."

You will need:

- An earthenware terrine
- A spatula
- A kitchen scale

Notes:

- Level: Easy
- Serves: 8
- Prep: 10 minutes
- Cook time: 6 hours

Ingredients

- 1 litre of full-cream milk
- 200g rice (round/short-grain)
- 200g powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 pinch of salt

Method

1. Start preparing your Teurgoule by putting the rice into a large earthenware terrine. Add the powdered sugar, salt and cinnamon, and mix everything with a spatula.
2. Pour the milk in gently, so that the rice remains at the bottom of the container.
3. Place the terrine in an oven preheated to 150°C (thermostat 5) for 1 hour.
4. Then reduce the heat to 110°C (thermostat 3-4). Leave to cook for another 5 hours.
5. The final consistency should not be liquid, and the crust should be golden.



Why is it special?

"My husband is from Chile, an excellent cook! This was the first recipe he made for me when we were dating; today, 25 years later, it has become a Christmas tradition to make them for our family. They love our empanadas!!!"

Ingredients

Filling:

- Extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 3 apples
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice, ½ teaspoon lemon zest

For the dough:

- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 cup of warm water
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 kilo or 2 pounds of all-purpose flour
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons of melted shortening



Sweet empanadas

by Monica R | USA (Colombia)

Method

Apple Filling:

1. Start the apple filling. Peel, core, and dice three large apples. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large nonstick frying pan over medium-high heat. Once the oil is shimmering, but not smoking, test the temperature by adding one apple piece. The apple should sizzle audibly but gently when the pan is hot enough. Adjust the heat if necessary. Add the remaining apples along with 2 tablespoons of sugar and ½ teaspoon cinnamon. Spread the apples as close to a single layer as possible in the pan.
2. Caramelize the apples. Cook the apples over medium-high heat for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the apples begin to caramelize. Cooking the apples at a high temperature sears and caramelizes them while keeping them tender instead of soft. The apples retain their juices rather than releasing them into the pan and steaming the apple pieces.
3. Finish the filling. Take the pan off the heat. Add 2 teaspoons lemon juice, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, and ½ teaspoon lemon zest. Toss to coat the apples evenly. Set aside until cool enough to handle.

For the dough:

1. Make a brine with the milk, water, and salt, and stir to dissolve the salt.
2. Mix the flour and eggs in a large bowl or a stand mixer with the paddle attachment and mix for a minute to incorporate.
3. Add the melted shortening to the flour mixture and mix a little more. At this point, you will see only crumbs.
4. With the mixer running on low speed, add the brine until the dough is soft and flexible. If needed, keep adding water. Separate the dough into 12 or 20 portions and cover with a moist cloth.
5. Working each piece individually, roll until thin, cut into a circle about 7 inches across, and fill with two tablespoons of apple filling. Close by smearing the edge with water, folding over into a semi-circle, and pressing firmly.
6. Brush with an egg wash before baking.
7. Preheat the oven to 350 °F or 180 °C. Bake for 30–35 minutes until golden.
8. Serve hot.





Rosquillas de anís (Aniseed doughnuts)

by Esther F | United Kingdom (Spain)

Why is it special?

"This is a very typical Spanish recipe, and is something my grandma used to make a lot. Every time I have them, it brings me back to my childhood."

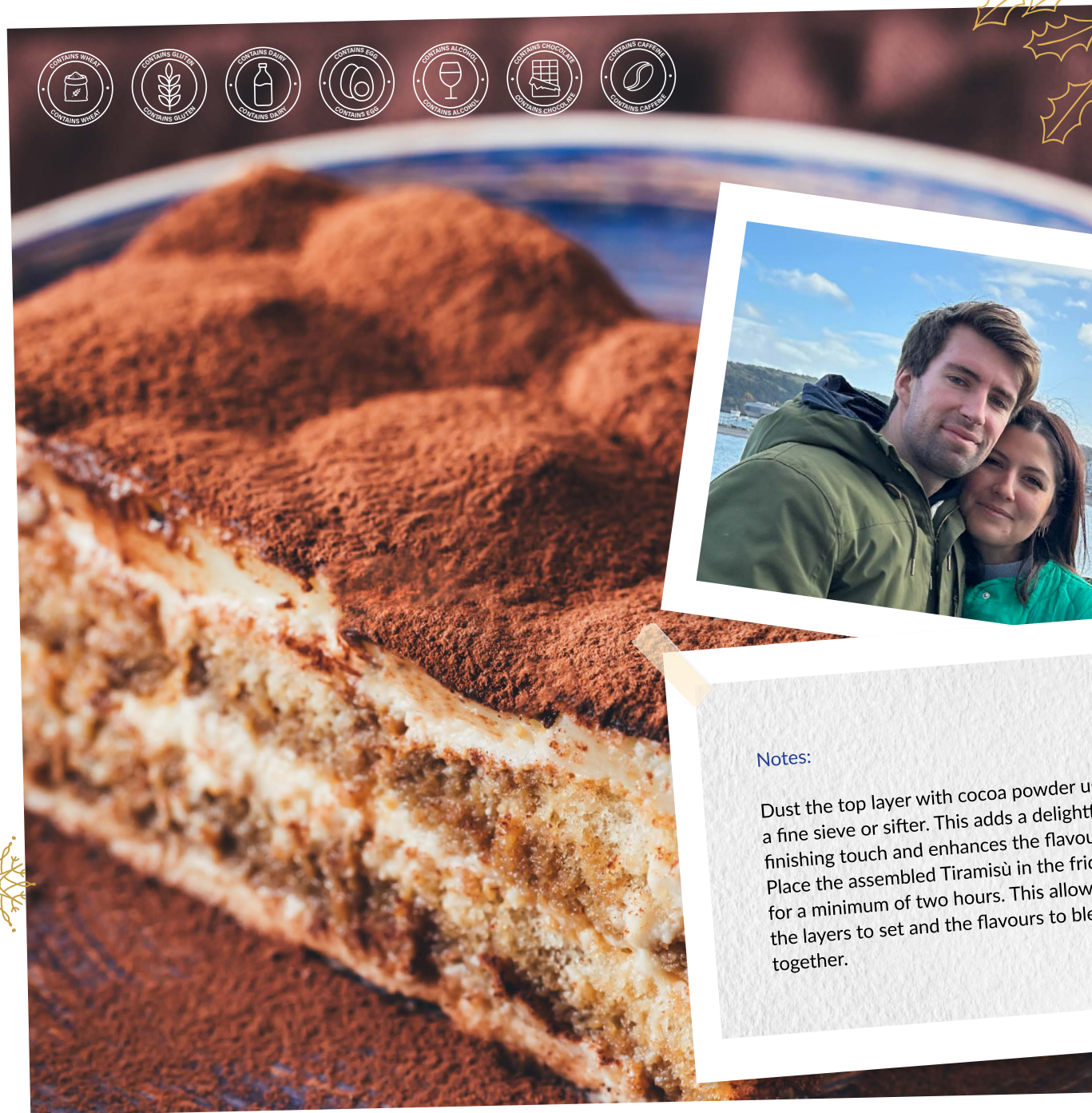
Ingredients

- 500g wheat flour (preferably pastry flour)
- 150g white sugar
- 3 eggs (medium)
- 100ml of mild extra virgin olive oil
- The zest of one orange and half a lemon
- 4 tablespoons of anise liqueur
- 1 sachet of baking powder (16g).
- Oil for frying (I use sunflower oil, which does not add flavour and makes them lighter)
- 1 pinch of salt (3 grams)
- More sugar mixed with a little ground cinnamon to coat them.

Method

1. Beat the egg whites until stiff with a little salt. Add the egg yolks and mix gently without flattening the egg whites.
2. Add the sugar, olive oil, aniseed liqueur (if it is for children, you can change it for orange juice), flour and baking powder.
3. Mix everything with the egg mixture, until you get a dough without lumps and that does not stick to the edges - add more oil if necessary.
4. Form the dough into a ball and wrap it in cling film. Leave to rest in the fridge for a couple of hours.
5. Once the time has passed, heat oil in a frying pan; a trick to flavour the oil is to fry two long strips of lemon peel (without any of the white of the fruit, just the peel) in the oil at a low temperature. Leave them in the oil for 10 minutes at low temperature, 2 over 10 induction temperature points is enough.
6. We spread oil on our hands and worktop so that they don't stick, and we make little balls the size of a golf ball, between 5 and 10 grams depending on the size we want.
7. Make a hole in the centre to make the doughnut shape. If you want them crunchier, they can be thinner.
8. Remove the lemon peel from the oil, and fry the doughnuts. So that they are not raw on the inside, put the oil over medium heat.
9. The thicker the "doughnuts" are, the juicier they will be on the inside and crispier on the outside. When they are golden brown on both sides, remove and place them on absorbent kitchen paper to remove excess oil.
10. Coat them in cinnamon sugar and leave to cool. Enjoy!





Notes:

Dust the top layer with cocoa powder using a fine sieve or sifter. This adds a delightful finishing touch and enhances the flavour. Place the assembled Tiramisu in the fridge for a minimum of two hours. This allows the layers to set and the flavours to blend together.



Tiramisù

by Maria R | United Kingdom (Italy)

Why is it special?

"This recipe is special to me because I made it for the first time for my husband and it's been his favourite dessert since. We always make it for special occasions."

Ingredients

- 500g mascarpone
- 1 tablespoon of rum (you can skip this step if you want it alcohol free)
- 200g sugar
- 5 eggs
- Digestive biscuits
- Coffee (decaf for child-friendly version)
- Cocoa powder

Method

Prepare the mascarpone mixture:

1. In a mixing bowl, combine the sugar and egg yolks.
2. Mix for about a minute until the sugar is well incorporated.
3. Add the rum to the sugar and yolks mixture.
4. Incorporate the mascarpone cheese into the mixture, ensuring a smooth consistency.
5. Keep mixing until the mascarpone is fully blended. Set aside.

Whip the egg whites:

6. In a separate clean, dry bowl, whisk the egg whites until they form stiff peaks.
7. Gently fold the whipped egg whites into the mascarpone mixture.
8. This will create a light and fluffy texture for the cream. Set aside.

Assemble the Tiramisù:

9. Dip the digestive biscuits into strong coffee (decaf if preferred) and create the first layer in your serving dish.
10. Spoon a layer of the mascarpone cream over the biscuits.
11. Repeat the process, alternating between layers of biscuits and mascarpone cream. Aim for 3 to 4 layers.
12. Ensure the top layer is mascarpone cream.





Kue Nastar

by Rahel E | United Kingdom (Indonesia)

Why is it special?

"Kue Nastar is a famous cookie for holiday seasons such as Christmas, Eid, or Chinese New Year in Indonesia. The recipe actually originates from the Dutch period of colonisation, and it (Nastar) stands for ananas & taartjes, while Kue means cookie. When the Dutch came to Indonesia, they wanted to make these cookies but since they couldn't find the normal fruits for it (blueberry, strawberry, or apple) with the same level of ripeness as the ones in the Netherlands, they used pineapple as an alternative, since it is local to Indonesia. You can always find this cookie in almost every house that you visit during Christmas/Eid!"

Ingredients

- 400g of all-purpose flour
- 300g butter
- Yolks of 4 boiled eggs (mashed until smooth)
- 100g fine sugar (caster sugar)
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons full cream milk powder
- Vanilla extract
- Pineapple jam for the filling
- Egg yolk to polish the cookie

Method

1. Mix the boiled egg yolks that have been mashed until smooth with butter and margarine. Use your hands only, until well mixed.
2. Add powdered sugar, milk powder, and vanilla. Mix well.
3. Add flour and cornflour. Stir again until smooth. If the dough is not smooth or still sticky in the hand, you can add a little flour until it can be shaped.
4. Take a small amount, fill with pineapple jam, and mould into a ball. Arrange in a buttered baking tray. Brush the top of the Nastar with egg yolk.
5. Place in a preheated oven at 150 degrees C for 35–40 minutes. Once cooked, remove from the oven. Let the Nastar cool down completely. Only then put it in a jar.





Very Easy Milk Tart

by Amy B | South Africa

Why is it special?

"This is my Mom's go-to recipe at Christmas time. It's really easy to make, as you simply pop it into the microwave and wait! It's the perfect dessert when you're entertaining friends and family; unwrapping Christmas gifts and spending time with one another."

Ingredients for base

- 1 packet of tennis biscuits, crushed
- 112g butter, melted

Method for base

Mix the above together and press into a large, greased pie dish.

Ingredients for filling

- 1 tin of condensed milk
- 1 egg
- 2½ tins of fresh milk (measured in the condensed milk tin)
- 4 tablespoons of cornflour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- Cinnamon

Method for filling

1. Beat the egg, and mix with the condensed milk, in a bowl suitable for the microwave.
2. Fill up the empty condensed milk tin with fresh milk, add to the bowl, and whisk it into the egg and condensed milk mixture.
3. Fill the same tin with milk again, add the cornflour, stir it thoroughly, then add to the main mixture.
4. Fill the same tin one third full of milk, and add to the main mixture. Stir well.
5. Cook in the microwave on high for 12 minutes until boiling and thick, stirring every three minutes.
6. Add the vanilla essence and beat in.
7. Pour over biscuits.
8. Sprinkle with cinnamon, and leave to cool.





Lemon Meringue Pie

by Phil Q | United Kingdom

Why is it special?

"When Karen and I were first dating, Karen discovered that I liked Lemon Meringue Pie and learned to make it. We've been married for 22 years... it is a good pie!"

Ingredients

Pastry

- 175g/6oz plain flour
- Pinch of salt
- 50g/2oz margarine
- 25g/1oz lard (alternatively, just use 3oz of margarine)

Filling

- Juice and grated rind of 2 medium lemons
- 40g/1.5oz of cornflour
- 115g/4oz of castor sugar
- 2 egg yolks

Topping

- 2 egg whites
- 115g/4oz of castor sugar

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190 °C/375 °F/Gas mark 5. Grease and line the base of a 20cm/8-inch fluted flan ring and place on a baking tray. Sift the flour and salt together. Rub in the fats until evenly distributed, then add enough cold water (about 150ml/ ¼ pint) to make a stiff dough. Knead lightly until smooth.
2. Roll out pastry to a circle of 5cm/2 inches larger than the flan ring. Carefully fit into the flan ring and ease the pastry over the base and up the sides. Trim off any excess.
3. Place a large piece of crumpled foil into the pastry case, then bake for 25 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for a further 10 minutes. Remove the flan ring. Increase the oven temperature to 200 °C/400 °F/Gas mark 6.
4. Meanwhile make the lemon juice up to 275ml/½ pint with water, then place in the pan with the rind, cornflour and castor sugar. Over a low heat, bring the mixture to a boil, stirring for 3–4 minutes.
5. Blend a little of the lemon mixture with the egg yolks. Then add to the rest of the mixture in the pan. Heat for 1 minute. Pour the filling into the flan case.
6. To make the topping, whisk the egg whites until stiff, add 2 tablespoon of the sugar, then whisk again until thick and glossy. (For best results keep the egg whites chilled after separating them from the egg yolks until ready for whisking. Also chill the bowl beforehand. Glass bowls work better than plastic). Fold in the remaining sugar lightly and quickly.
7. Pipe or spoon the meringue over the flan to cover the lemon filling and cook for 10 minutes or until the meringue is golden and set. Serve hot or cold. Serves 6.





Notes:

- It is very important to use warm (not hot) water in the recipe. Water should be warmer than room temperature.
- If no bubbles start popping when baking the Baghrir, it is most likely that the batter is too thick and/or that it hasn't proved long enough. In that case, add a couple of tablespoons of warm water and leave the batter to prove for an extra 15 minutes.



Moroccan Baghrir

by Hind M | United Kingdom (Morocco)

Why is it special?

"The Baghrir recipe holds a special place in my heart because it's a nostalgic connection to my past. My sister used to make it for me, and each bite carries the warmth of those cherished moments spent together. It's a recipe that transcends flavors, bringing back the sweet memories of family and shared experiences."

Ingredients

- 250g of fine semolina
- 40g of flour
- 2 tablespoons of sugar
- 1 teaspoon of dry yeast
- ½ teaspoon of salt
- 500ml of warm water
- 2 teaspoons of baking powder

Method

1. In a blender, add the semolina, flour, sugar, yeast and salt. Add the warm water and blend until the batter is smooth.
2. Add the baking powder and blend again for a few seconds. Leave the batter for 30 minutes to allow the yeast to prove and blend again for a few seconds.
3. Oil a non-stick pan and place it over medium-high heat. Wait for the pan to be hot to start baking the Baghrir (otherwise you won't get many holes).
4. Place a small amount of batter on the pan (as you would for pancakes). As soon as you place the batter on the pan, it should start bubbling and drying out. Once the Baghrir is no longer wet (it takes about a minute), it will mean that it is cooked.
5. Baghrir is only cooked on one side. Never flip them as you will lose the holes.
6. Repeat until you've used all the batter. Don't pile up your Baghrir while they are still hot, as they will stick to each other.
7. The traditional topping for Baghrir in Morocco is melted honey and butter syrup. To make the syrup, heat equal portions of honey and butter until melted.
8. You can also use any other sweet topping you like (such as jam, nutella).





Pisang Goreng (Banana Fritters)

by Joyee P | Malaysia

Why is it special?

"Banana Fritters, or Pisang Goreng (pronounced "pee-sung goh-reng"), hold a special place in my heart. A crispy-on-the-outside, sweet-on-the-inside delight, it evokes fond memories of my childhood, particularly those spent amidst lively family and friends' gatherings and exciting night market explorations. Sharing Pisang Goreng with loved ones at gatherings has become a symbol of togetherness."

Ingredients

- 120g rice flour
- 30g all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1.5 tablespoons white sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 180ml cold water
- 4 medium cooking bananas (or 2 large plantains)
- 500ml vegetable oil (enough oil to deep fry)

Method

1. Prepare the Pisang Goreng batter by mixing rice flour, all-purpose flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt in a medium bowl. Slowly add cold water and mix together until you get a smooth consistency with no lumps.
2. Peel and slice the bananas in half (or slice the plantains into 5-6 pieces diagonally). Drop the banana slices into the batter and set aside for about 5 minutes before frying.
3. Heat the oil in a deep-frying pan or a deep saucepan on medium-high heat. Ensure there is enough oil so that the bananas will not stick to the base; otherwise, your batter may pull away from the banana when you turn it over.
4. To check if the oil is hot enough, dip a dry wooden utensil in it, and if you see lots of tiny bubbles immediately hugging the utensil, it is hot enough.
5. Fry the bananas until they are a golden-brown colour, turning them over halfway, for about 1 – 1.5 minutes on each side. Deep fry in batches to avoid a drop in oil temperature.
6. Transfer the cooked banana fritters onto kitchen paper towels to absorb any excess oil. For the best flavour, serve warm.





Grandma's Malva Pudding

by Chante V | South Africa

Why is it special?

"My grandma made this twice a year, for my birthday and for Christmas. Nothing else tastes this special."

Pudding ingredients

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup apricot jam
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda (bicarbonate of soda)
- 1 tablespoon vinegar

Pudding method

1. Mix eggs, butter and jam together
2. Dissolve baking soda in vinegar, and add to egg mixture
3. Add flour and mix
4. Bake in greased ovenproof dish at 180 degrees (C) for 35 minutes with a lid on (if dish does not have a lid, use tin foil, shiny side down).

Syrup ingredients

- 2 cups cream
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 eggs

Syrup method

1. Mix everything together
2. Pour over baked pudding
3. Add lid and bake for 15 minutes; take the lid (or foil) off for the last 5 minutes.





4 Types of cookies - same dough

by Karin Ejstrup | Denmark

Why is it special?

"This is a very special recipe for me because it was passed on by my mother."

Ingredients

For the dough:

- 1000g flour
- 375g powdered sugar (icing sugar)
- 750g butter
- 2 eggs
- Some vanilla essence

For assembling:

- 25g cocoa
- 25g chopped almonds
- 25g chopped dark chocolate

Method

1. Mix all the dough ingredients in a bowl, and divide the dough into four portions.
2. **Portion 1:** Roll into a roll (around 5cm diameter) and refrigerate.
3. **Portion 2:** Mix the dough with 25g chopped almonds, roll into a roll (around 5cm diameter).
4. **Portion 3:** Mix the dough with 25g chopped dark chocolate, roll into a roll (around 5cm diameter).
5. Put all the rolls in the fridge for at least two hours, until they are completely hard.
6. **Portion 4:**
 - Divide the dough in half, and knead one half with 25g cocoa. Shape the two pieces of dough into squares. and wrap them in baking paper. Put the two dough squares in the fridge for 30 minutes, until they are firm but still pliable; they must not become too cold and hard, as they cannot then be rolled out.
 - Place the dark dough (the square with cocoa) on top of the light one, and roll out to make a larger square of around 20 x 30cm. Roll the dough up into a roulade (diameter 5cm). Put the roll back in the fridge for at least two hours, until it is completely hard.
7. Take all the rolls out of the fridge (after minimum of two hours). Slice into cookie slices, and then bake for approximately 8 minutes at 180 degrees (C).





Thank you

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