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A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul.

November 2020

LOVELY, UNUSUAL, FORGOTTEN DESSERT SAUCES:

Blackberry and Orange Sauce

Buttered Coffee–Brandy Sauce

Mexican Chocolate–Orange Sauce

Mock Devonshire Cream

Simple British Brown Sugar Sauce

Vanilla – Pear Syrup

When traveling in Italy, I am infinitely satisfied with fruit and nuts and a slice of Stilton cheese is the perfect dessert in an English pub. Portuguese restaurant servers could not understand why we refused the very sweet, egg-rich desserts and opted for fresh fruit. When we come home, like most Americans, we again seem to gravitate to a sweeter ending to a meal.

Next to the freezers filled with all kinds and brands of ice cream and frozen yogurt in my local grocery one can find a most unimaginative selection of commercial dessert sauces . . . jars of chocolate and caramel, filled with chemical additives. In the oldest cookbooks and family recipe collections, collections that have come from all over the world, you will always find dessert sauces because human beings do enjoy a sweet ending to a meal. Gilding that sweet has always been the fun part of dessert and the pride of the cook. I was amazed at how many cooks chose to share such sauces when I was reaching out across the globe to write my cookbooks.

During the deprivation of the Depression and the rationing during the years of World War II, sugar was limited. Rice cooked in milk could be topped with a simple lemon or orange sauce when a lemon or an orange was available. Chopped fruit or jam could become a sauce for a pudding or a cake. The sweet canning liquid from canned fruits could be thickened with corn starch and served as a sauce. A simple egg custard sauce still reminds me of my childhood and softly whipped topping cream, the cream from the top of the unhomogenized milk,

was also a special treat. Dessert sauces even appeared in government and utility company publications of the period. As we moved into a new era of prosperity after the war the cookbooks reveal an almost celebratory explosion of dessert sauces. We were a nation on the rise again and even our desserts reflected our confidence and upward mobility. Oh yes, upward mobility, reflected in the excess to which our desserts could be taken, the replacement of whole wheat flour with bleached white flour again, and our increased consumption of meat became three changes that many of us would work to reverse in the modern era.



BLACKBERRY AND ORANGE SAUCE

TPT - 38 minutes;
30 minutes = cooling period

We love to serve this sauce over blackberries or mixed berries but when our freezer supply of those wonderful, great big country berries runs out, this sauce brings back that fresh, fresh flavor over ice cream, cakes, dessert or breakfast crêpes, and, oh yes, lemon pudding. I remember a sauce very much like this that my grandmother made with her homemade blackberry jam.

1/2 teaspoon freshly grated organic orange zest
1/4 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
1 teaspoon corn starch

1/2 cup all-fruit blackberry preserves

In a saucepan, combine grated orange zest, orange juice, and corn starch. Using a wire whisk, combine thoroughly.



Place over *MEDIUM-LOW* heat and stir in blackberry preserves. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens and boils. Continue cooking and stirring for a minute or two. Remove from heat and allow to cool to room temperature—about 30 minutes.

Serve at room temperature. Leftovers should be refrigerated.

Yields about 3/4 cupful

Note: This recipe is easily doubled, when required.

1/6 SERVING (i. e., 2 tablespoonfuls) –
PROTEIN = 0.2 g.; FAT = 0.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 10.6 g.;
CALORIES = 43; CALORIES FROM FAT = 2%

BUTTERED COFFEE – BRANDY SAUCE

TPT – 13 minutes

This sauce elegantly gilds chocolate cake or chocolate ice cream eliciting the exclamation “Oh, this is really too much.” Generally, I serve it over a white cake such as a pound cake or over vanilla or coffee ice cream. Then, it is just enough but don’t get me wrong, “too much” is wonderful some times!! Remember, the better the brandy, the better the sauce.

1/2 cup light brown sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons freeze-dried coffee
1/2 cup boiling water

3 tablespoons light cream or half and half
1 tablespoon corn starch

1 1/2 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon brandy or cognac

In a small mixing bowl, combine brown sugar, coffee, and *boiling* water. Stir until sugar and coffee are dissolved. Set aside briefly.

In a saucepan, using a wire whisk, combine cream and corn starch. Combine thoroughly until corn starch is in suspension. Set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat. Add coffee mixture and cook, stirring constantly, until sauce thickens. *Remove from heat.*

Add butter and brandy. Stir until butter has melted. Turn into a warmed sauceboat.

Serve warm over cake or ice cream or, even, bread pudding.

Yields about 3/4 cupful

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.



1/4 SERVING (about 3 tablespoonfuls) –
PROTEIN = 0.03 g.; FAT = 5.3 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 30.0 g.;
CALORIES = 166; CALORIES FROM FAT = 29%

VANILLA – PEAR SYRUP

TPT - 35 minutes

A dessert sauce that depends for its sweetness on the natural sweetness of fruit is a treasure to the nutrition-minded cooks of today. Depending on the intended use, I choose either organic pear juice/nectar or organic apple juice bottled in glass. It is such a simple process to make this syrup and the rewards are enormous. Try it over sliced apples, or diced mangoes, or berries such as strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, or gooseberries, if you are so lucky to find them. I also use this sauce as an adornment for small, individual white cakes or a scoop of ice cream or ricotta cheese.

2 cups organic pear juice/nectar
Two 2-inch strips of organic lemon zest

1/2 vanilla bean*

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, combine fruit juice and lemon zest.

Split the vanilla bean in half and scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean into the saucepan. Add vanilla pod too. Allow to come to the boil. *Reduce heat to LOW-MEDIUM* and simmer for about 30 minutes, or until the juice has been reduced to about 1/3 cupful and is syrupy. Remove from heat.

Pour through a fine sieve into a small bowl or pitcher. Discard vanilla bean piece and lemon zest.

Yields about 5 tablespoonfuls

Notes: *If you make **HOMEMADE VANILLA EXTRACT** [see recipe archive, June, 2019], use a piece of the vanilla bean that was used to make the extract. It will still have plenty of flavor left.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/5 SERVING (i. e., about 1 tablespoonful) –
PROTEIN = 0.2 g.; FAT = 0.2 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 10.6 g.;
CALORIES = 42; CALORIES FROM FAT = 4%

MEXICAN CHOCOLATE – ORANGE SAUCE

Salsa de Chocolate y Naranja

TPT - 13 minutes

Even a mundane grocery store chocolate syrup tastes like you have made the classic Mexican sauce from scratch to serve over ice cream or cakes or in which to dip fresh fruit. Enhancing it with dark cocoa gives unexpected richness, without the addition of butter or cream.

2 tablespoons unsweetened dark cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon corn starch
1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
1 teaspoon freshly grated orange zest

1/2 cup chocolate syrup

In a saucepan, combine cocoa powder, corn starch, and ground cinnamon. Stir to mix thoroughly.

Add orange juice and orange zest. Using a wire whisk, combine thoroughly. Place over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat and cook, *stirring constantly*, until thickened.

Reduce heat to LOW. Add chocolate syrup and cook, stirring constantly, until heated through.

Serve warm. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yields 14 tablespoonfuls

Note: This recipe can be halved, when necessary.

1/7 SERVING (i. e., about 2 tablespoonfuls) –
PROTEIN = 0.5 g.; FAT = 0.4 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 16.8 g.;
CALORIES = 75; CALORIES FROM FAT = 5%



MOCK DEVONSHIRE CREAM

TPT - 2 minutes

Returning from the British Isles after a trip during which Devonshire cream was spread on toast and scones with abandon, I tried the jarred export. It in no way resembled the pure, rich spread I had come to expect at breakfast and tea. It too was “mock.” Granted, “mock” is an annoying adjective. I apologize for its use with this recipe but when I stumbled on a recipe that the author had the nerve to label as “Devonshire Cream” when it was a concoction such as this and clearly had no relationship to the true British clotted cream product, I accepted the fact that mock and ersatz can be useful adjectives on occasion.

My “English Cream,” made with whipped cream and yogurt crème, is reminiscent of the clotted cream we enjoyed in Great Britain but sometimes I am looking for a thicker and firmer version especially if I am using it as a pastry filling. This mock Devonshire cream is thicker, less tart, and does not tend to weep. It tastes rich but the fact that it is made with lower fat sour cream is a bonus that is very satisfying.



1/2 cup light dairy sour cream
1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

In a mixing bowl, combine the sour cream, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla extract. Using a wire whisk, beat until smooth.

Turn into a serving bowl and chill until required. Use as a filling for pastries or serve with scones, unfrosted tea cakes, muffins, sweet breads, or fruits.

Yields about 1 cupful

Note: This recipe may be doubled, when required.

1/16 SERVING (per tablespoonful) –
PROTEIN = 1.0 g.; FAT = 1.4 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 1.8 g.;
CALORIES = 23; CALORIES FROM FAT = 55%

SIMPLE BRITISH BROWN SUGAR SAUCE

TPT - 35 minutes;
30 minutes = chilling period

Few sauces served in Great Britain actually originated in the British Isles. Traditional British Christmas pudding does, however, demand a sauce; classic hard sauce, golden syrup sauce, brandy sauce, and this brown sugar sauce, are quite British and are served with Christmas puddings.

1 tablespoon hard butter
1/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
3 tablespoons light cream or half and half

In a small saucepan set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, melt butter. Stir in sugar and cook, stirring constantly, until sugar is *thoroughly* melted. *There should be no sugar granules in evidence. Remove from heat.*

Add cream, stir to mix well.

Refrigerate for 30 minutes, allowing the sauce to thicken slightly. Using a wire whisk, stir to mix well. Turn into a small pitcher.



Serve at room temperature over steamed puddings, cakes, fruits, and ice cream.

Yields about 1/2 cupful

Notes: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

Leftovers can be gently reheated for a second appearance.

1/4 SERVING (i. e., 2 tablespoonfuls) –
PROTEIN = 0.3 g.; FAT = 3.9 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 14.3 g.;
CALORIES = 91; CALORIES FROM FAT = 39%



*It is time, I fear, for someone to trot out
that infernal holiday green bean casserole with mushroom soup
or that baked sweetpotato casserole with marshmallows
that your aunt feels will make you, the vegetarian,
more comfortable at a family gathering.*

It always happens – like clockwork.

My mother was big on gelatin salads regardless of the origin of the gelatin . . .

If you are looking for something different to serve for the holidays,

I'd love to share some recipes that feature

holiday foods we've come to expect but with a different twist.

Do drop by . . . no marshmallows, no gelatin, I promise,

Judy

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.

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