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

June 2022

DARE TO INDULGE – A SIMPLE DESSERT, A FABULOUS FINISH:

Almond Yogurt Crème

Blueberry Crumble

Chocolate Sauce – Rich and Fudgy

Dried Apricots and Cherries in Syrup

Orange Ice Cream with Pizzelle

Spiced Apples and Raisins with Vanilla Custard Sauce

We all know that sprinkles will elevate an ice cream cone to something special. Even a small child knows “with or without sprinkles?” means something. OK, a dollop of whipped cream or a sprinkling of cookie crumbs or both atop a serving of pudding is a starter. How about topping that bowl of pudding with a layer of whipped cream, then a thin layer of shaved white chocolate, and then a thin layer of powdered peppermint candy canes? A simple dish of pudding becomes fabulous, perhaps even good enough for a holiday dessert.

Years back, while working on my tour of the world for *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*, I encountered a useful dessert, relevant I think to this month's project, in what is called Parson's Pudding, *pappilan hätavära*. [See volume I, pp. 129-30.] The minister's visit, a clerical ritual I actually remember from my childhood, required refreshments. The simple Finnish recipe required only a few ingredients that everybody had on hand—small cookies like Spanish Marias or British digestives, some fruit jam, and heavy whipping cream. I have upgraded the original as one of our emergency desserts by using canned fruit instead of jam. A bowl of cherries wouldn't be enough nor would a plate of digestives but combined . . . a dessert.

Desserts were a last thought when we first married and my teaching position brought me home with little time for meal prep. There was far less access to take-out and convenience items back then. We all have busy days when meals still must be prepared and during the many months of our Covid-19 pandemic isolation I thought of those early days, realizing how our meals were important to our attitude. As time passed and the food supply became thin and more expensive, meals became repetitive and less thought went into desserts; menus depended on what our local grocery store could supply in our monthly pickup and what we could forage online. In addition, we lost everything in our freezer and the use of our range due to a power surge. As a result, for more than fourteen months, menu ideas were often notes but not dinner possibilities. As the winter of 2020-2021 closed in and we knew that our isolation was to continue for many more months with our food supply unlikely to improve significantly, I decided to try this time-honored trick from World War II – make a simple dessert to end a meal sweetly and garnish that simple dessert to end a meal with a smile. The ideas below may help you elicit a smile or two. A bowl of blueberries, dried fruits, a single apple, puddings, and ice cream can be more.

ALMOND YOGURT *CRÈME*

TPT - 8 hours and 42 minutes;
8 hours = yogurt draining period;
30 minutes = refrigeration period

We often add protein to our menus by serving dairy desserts. A dish of naked, sweetened yogurt, albeit an excellent protein source, isn't exciting. A touch of rich heavy cream, a bit of fruit, and a sprinkling of almond meal does wonders.

1 1/2 cups plain yogurt

2 tablespoons sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons almond syrup

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 tablespoon heavy whipping cream

1/4 cup fresh berries or defrosted frozen berries

—blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, or strawberries—or peeled and chopped ripe, golden kiwifruit

1/2 teaspoon sugar

1/2 teaspoon almond meal or ground almonds



Set two automatic drip coffeemaker filters into a sieve over a medium-sized bowl or a yogurt filter over a 2-cup measuring cup. Pour the yogurt into the filters and set in the refrigerator. Allow to drain for about 8 hours, or until of the consistency appropriate for your use.* Turn yogurt into a mixing bowl.

Add 2 tablespoonfuls sugar, almond syrup, and vanilla extract. Mix well. Add heavy cream. Again, mix well. Divide between two dessert dishes. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, spread berries or kiwifruit out in a shallow bowl. Sprinkle with the remaining 1/2 teaspoonful sugar.

When ready to serve, divide fruit between two yogurt *crème* servings, arrange attractively beside the yogurt *crème*. Sprinkle 1/4 teaspoonful of almond meal over each serving.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 individual servings

Notes: *The resulting whey that separates from the curd will be considerable. DO NOT DISCARD IT, specifically avoid discarding any down the drain since it can adversely affect septic tanks and pipe seals. It is a nutritious by-product of cheese and yogurt making that is loaded with protein, minerals, and enzymes. I use it instead of water in my bread recipes and add it to the cooking water for rice, pasta, and potatoes. When I soak oatmeal overnight, I soak it in whey. Add it to soups, stews, and smoothies, and if you still have some left over, refrigerate or freeze it. It is inadvisable to pour whey down the drain but do pour any excess on your compost pile or feed your acid-loving crops. Chickens and pigs are said to love it.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 9.4 g.; FAT = 6.8 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 21.7 g.;
CALORIES = 192; CALORIES FROM FAT = 32%

BLUEBERRY CRUMBLE

TPT - about 1 hour and 55 minutes;
1 hour = chilling period

I often serve our favorite blueberry crumble for Christmas brunch using the blueberries frozen during the summer. When there are no more blueberries in the freezer, we wait for the new season's supply and anticipate this, our very most favorite crumble. A dear friend, who loved blueberry pie, always asked waitresses if the restaurant's pie was runny. Waitresses proudly responded, "Oh, no." Dot would then refuse their blueberry pie and order another dessert. Blueberry crumble is the route to go if you, like Dot, do not like stodgy, gelatinous, thick slabs of blueberry pie. In the past I have added soy flour to the crumble but almond flour adds an indescribably soft nuance that we have learned to prefer.

2 cups fresh or unsweetened, frozen blueberries
—sorted, washed, and stems removed
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest

1/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
3 tablespoons whole wheat flour
2 tablespoons unbleached white flour
1 tablespoon finely ground almond flour
1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon, or more to taste

2 1/2 tablespoons cold butter

Light cream or half and half*

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare a **6-inch fruit tart pan or an 8-inch ceramic quiche dish** by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating.

Put washed blueberries in prepared pie plate. Sprinkle with grated lemon zest.

Into a large mixing bowl, sift together brown sugar, whole wheat, white, and almond flours, and cinnamon.

Using a pastry blender, work cold butter into flour mixture until of the consistency of coarse corn meal. Sprinkle evenly over blueberries.

Bake in preheated 350-degree F. oven for 25 minutes, or until berries are bubbling and crumble topping is *lightly browned*. Cool completely on wire rack.

Chill in refrigerator for at least 1 hour before serving.** Pass cream separately.

Yields 4 servings

Notes: *Vanilla or coffee ice cream may be served with this dessert. Either is a delightful addition.

**This may be served warm or at room temperature, if preferred.

This recipe can be doubled, when required. Use a deep 9-inch pie plate or quiche dish, when doubling.



1/4 SERVING (exclusive of cream) –
PROTEIN = 2.1 g.; FAT = 8.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 32.4 g.;
CALORIES = 216; CALORIES FROM FAT = 36%

CHOCOLATE SAUCE – FUDGY AND RICH

TPT - 38 minutes;
30 minutes = cooling period

My mom loved hot fudge sundaes so much that she confessed, late in her life, to often indulging at a tea room or an ice cream shop in Rochester while shopping by herself. On reflection, when we were with her she insisted on a proper lunch!! The fact that this sauce, one from my mom's files, does not harden as it cools to room temperature has made this one of my favorite chocolate sauce recipes; I've opted for this one for decades. In addition, refrigerated leftovers reheat over low heat very successfully. The fudgy richness sure gets my vote too, especially over coffee, fresh peach, or orange ice cream. It is my special occasion, best choice chocolate sauce.

1/3 cup sugar

1/3 cup two percent milk

1/4 cup unsweetened dark cocoa powder

1/4 cup dark chocolate morsels (53% cacao)--chopped

2 tablespoons cold butter—chopped

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, combine sugar and milk. Cook until sugar is dissolved and milk begins to bubble.

Add cocoa powder. Using a wire whisk, incorporate cocoa thoroughly. *Remove from heat.*

Add chopped chocolate. Whisk until melted.

Add chopped *cold* butter. Whisk until melted.

Add vanilla extract. Whisk well. Press sauce through a fine sieve into a serving bowl. Allow to cool to room temperature before serving.

Refrigerate leftovers. Reheat over *LOW* heat.



Yields about 1 cupful

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/8 SERVING (2 tablespoonfuls) –
PROTEIN = 1.5 g.; FAT = 6.1 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 15.4 g.;
CALORIES = 121; CALORIES FROM FAT = 45%

DRIED APRICOTS AND CHERRIES IN SYRUP

TPT – 10 hours and 22 minutes;
8 hours = dried fruit rehydration period
2 hours = refrigeration period

Dried fruit is frequently reserved for snacking but with a little effort it can be a delicious dessert. The really crowning finish on this dessert is the addition of pure vanilla extract. Try the syrup with and without and you will see what a little vanilla can do. Granted, the price of pure vanilla extract has risen in the past decade but it is what it is, a fabulous taste that does fabulous things to desserts.

3/4 cup dried, preservative-free apricots
1/4 cup dried, preservative-free cherries
Boiling water

3/4 cup fruit soaking liquid
3 tablespoons sugar

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract



In a 2-cup Pyrex measuring cup, combine *dried* apricots, *dried* cherries, and *boiling* water to the 1 3/4-cup level. Cover with a small plate and allow to sit at room temperature overnight. In the morning, drain but reserve the soaking liquid.

In a saucepan set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, combine 3/4 cupful of the fruit soaking liquid and sugar. Cook, stirring frequently, until the sugar is dissolved.

Add fruits. Cook, stirring frequently, until the sauce thickens and becomes glossy. Remove from heat.

Add vanilla extract. Stir well. Turn into a serving dish. Refrigerate for 2 hours.

Serve chilled. Refrigerate leftovers.*

Yields 4 servings

Notes: *You can carry this one step further. Chop any leftovers and garnish a serving of vanilla pudding. Again, the finish is fabulous.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 0.8 g.; FAT = 0.075 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 27.3 g.;
CALORIES = 107; CALORIES FROM FAT = <1%

ORANGE ICE CREAM WITH *PIZZELLE*

TPT - 16 hours and 12 minutes;
8 hours = orange juice draining period;
8 hours = freezing period

On several occasions over the years I have referenced the use of orange pulp which I extract from “lots of pulp” orange juice. Here I use the orange pulp to make ice cream. It’s lovely as is but adding store-bought vanilla pizzelle, available in the bakery departments of most well-stocked groceries, does elevate this dessert giving the appearance of an ice cream sandwich. A simple dish of ice cream is transformed. Although you need only two tablespoonfuls of pulp for this recipe, the rest will be in your freezer when you want to experiment.



**1/2 gallon “lots of pulp” or “most pulp”
orange juice**

1 cup heavy whipping cream

2/3 cup fat-free sweetened condensed milk
**1/2 cup fat-free pasteurized eggs* (the equivalent
of 2 eggs)**

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Vanilla pizzelle

Set a large, fine sieve over a large mixing bowl. Pour orange juice into sieve. Refrigerate overnight until orange pulp fills sieve and juice fills bowl. Pour the juice back into the orange juice carton and refrigerate for family use. Separate 2 tablespoons of pulp out to make ice cream. Freeze the rest of the pulp for future use.

Prepare a **7 x 3 x 2-inch non-stick-coated loaf pan** by placing it in the freezer until required.

Using an electric mixer fitted with *chilled* beaters or by hand, using a *chilled* wire whisk, beat heavy cream in a *chilled* bowl until stiff. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine sweetened condensed milk, 2 tablespoons well-drained orange pulp, pasteurized eggs, and vanilla extract. Stir to blend thoroughly. *Whisk-fold* stiffly whipped cream *gently*, but *thoroughly*, into egg-milk mixture.

Pour mixture into chilled loaf pan. Spread evenly. Cover tightly with aluminum foil. Freeze overnight or until firm—about 8 hours.

Place a *pizzelle* in the bottom of a serving dish. Scoop 1/2 cupful of ice cream onto the *pizzelle*. Top the *pizzelle* with a second *pizzelle*.

Leftover ice cream should be returned to the freezer, tightly covered.

Yields about eight 1/2-cup servings

Notes: *Because raw eggs present the danger of *Salmonella* poisoning, commercially-available pasteurized eggs are recommended for use in preparing this dish.

This recipe is easily doubled, when required. Use a 9 x 5 x 3-inch non-stick-coated loaf pan.

1 SERVING – PROTEIN = 5.1 g.; FAT = 11.9 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 31.1 g.;
CALORIES = 254; CALORIES FROM FAT = 42%



SPICED APPLES AND RAISINS WITH VANILLA CUSTARD SAUCE

TPT - 1 hour and 23 minutes;
1 hour = refrigeration period

The humble mixture that fills my apple strudel is adorned here with a soft, luxurious custard. Suddenly these simple elements, and that storage apple, can become an indulgence not to mention a protein bonanza.

- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 1 large apple—peeled, cored, and diced**
- 1/4 cup *preservative-free* raisins**

- 2 teaspoons sugar**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg**

- 1 cup light cream *or* half and half**
- 1 cup *fat-free* pasteurized eggs (the equivalent of 4 eggs)**
- 1/2 cup sugar**

- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract**

In a large skillet set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, melt butter. Add diced apples and raisins. Sauté until apples soften.



Add the 2 teaspoonfuls sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Continue sautéing until a sauce forms. Turn into a **shallow, 7-inch quiche dish or other serving dish**. Set aside briefly.

In a saucepan set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, combine cream, pasteurized eggs, and 1/2 cupful sugar. Using a wire whisk, mix well. Cook, stirring frequently, until custard has thickened. Remove from heat. *Don't be tempted to raise the heat to try to hurry the process. The texture of the custard will suffer.*

Add vanilla extract. Whisk to integrate. Spoon custard over fruit mixture. Spread evenly to the edge of the dish. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yields 4 servings

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 4.0 g.; FAT = 11.2 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 49.6 g.;
CALORIES = 289; CALORIES FROM FAT = 35%

*A sweet or savory relish can decorate a dinner plate,
spice up an ordinary meal ingredient,
and introduce another flavor nuance.
Drop by next month and I'll share a few that are easy to make
and a good way to increase family interest in a simple meal.*

Judy

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

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