

Company's coming!

Remember these three "friends" at your next party: foods you can make ahead, foods that taste more than they cost, and foods that are especially pretty! The first will keep you serene, the second will keep your budget at ease, and the third will say to guests, "You're welcome!" in a best of all way.

Here are just such "friends": two very pretty but practical main dishes . . . three dressings to make salads your specialty . . . plus a kitchen-full of make-ahead desserts, each one guaranteed to start the conversation with "oh's" and "ah's."

INDIVIDUAL BURGER PIE

- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 tablespoons shortening
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Dash pepper
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 can (2 cups) tomatoes
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 can (approximately 2 cups) pork and beans or substitute 1 cup diced cooked carrots and 1 cup diced cooked green beans

Brown onion and meat in shortening; blend in salt, pepper, flour. Add tomatoes, Worcestershire; cook until slightly thickened, stirring occasionally. Add beans.

Take two 10x12-inch sheets of aluminum foil; center them over an inverted custard cup. Mold the sheets of foil into a cup by forcing another custard cup over the first. Repeat to make six individual meat cups. Mold the foil edges into a rim or flute with scissors.

Fill each foil dish with meat mixture. Top with Cheese Puff. Bake 25-30 minutes at 350°. Makes 6.

Cheese Puff: Sift together 1 cup all purpose flour, 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard, 1/2 teaspoon salt. Cut in 2 tablespoons shortening; add 1/4 cup grated sharp cheese and 1/2 cup milk; blend to a soft dough. Spoon over meat mixture before baking.

BEST OF ALL KABOBS

- 4 to 5 lbs. boned lamb shoulder or tenderized beef
- 3/4 cup hot water
- 2 tablespoons salad oil
- 1/2 cup light molasses
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice or vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 jar (1 lb. 12 oz.) spiced crabapples, drained
- 1 can (16 oz.) pineapple chunks, drained (for beef, use fresh slices of tomato, green pepper, canned whole onions)

The night before, cut meat into 1 1/2-inch chunks; trim away gristle and most of fat. Put meat in large bowl; add water, oil, molasses, juice or vinegar and Worcestershire. Toss well; chill overnight.

Serving day, preheat broiler or grill. Arrange meat and fruit on skewers, alternating the meat, fruit or fresh vegetables; allow about 5 meat chunks per person. Broil 4 to 5 inches from coals or fire for 15 minutes, brushing occasionally with marinade.

Turn and cook about 15 minutes more, brushing with marinade. (Serve remaining marinade, hot, as a sauce for kabobs and rice, or mix part of marinade with two cans heated pork and beans. Top with kabobs. Keep warm until serving time. Serves 6 to 8.

LACY WAFERS

- 1/3 cup light molasses
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup sifted all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ginger

Place molasses, butter and sugar in heavy saucepan; stir over low heat until mixture is melted. Remove from heat. Sift flour with ginger; blend into molasses mixture. Drop from tip of teaspoon onto greased foil on top of cookie sheets. Drop at least 3 inches apart. Cookies will spread. Bake in 350° oven 8 to 10 minutes. While still hot, remove with spatula and curl around wooden spoon handle. Replace in oven for few minutes if cookies harden before they are curled. Cool on rack; store in air-tight container or foil. Fill with whipped cream, if desired, for dessert. Makes about 2 1/2 dozen cookies.

BLACK BOTTOM PIE

Dark Layer

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 1/4 tablespoons cornstarch
- 4 egg yolks, slightly beaten
- 2 cups scalded milk
- 1 6-oz. pkg. (1 cup) semi-sweet chocolate morsels
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Combine sugar and cornstarch in heavy saucepan; mix well. Blend in yolks; gradually stir in scalded milk. Cook over moderate heat, stirring constantly, until mixture will coat a spoon.

Remove 1 cup cooked mixture. Add semi-sweet chocolate morsels and vanilla. Stir until chocolate melts. Pour into baked 9-inch pie shell.

Light Layer

- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 1/4 cup cold water
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 4 egg whites
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/2 cup sugar

Combine gelatin, water and vanilla in small bowl. Let stand until gelatin dissolves. Cool.

Combine egg whites and cream of tartar; beat until foamy. Gradually beat in sugar; continue until stiff, glossy peaks form when beaters are raised. Fold egg-white mixture into gelatin mixture. Pour over chocolate mixture in pie shell.

Chill until set. Garnish with whipped cream, if desired, or with "dots" of chocolate morsels.

REGAL CHOCOLATE CAKE

Prize Winner in 13th Grand National Bake-Off

- 2/3 cup semi-sweet chocolate morsels
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 3/4 cups sifted all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 2 unbeaten eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 3/4 cup buttermilk or sour milk

Melt chocolate with water over low heat, stirring occasionally.

Sift flour with soda and salt. Cream butter. Gradually add sugar, creaming well, 7 to 10 minutes. Blend in eggs; beat well. Stir in vanilla and the melted chocolate. Add the dry ingredients alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with dry ingredients. Blend well after each addition. (With electric mixer, use a low speed.)

Turn into two 8-inch round layer pans, well greased and lightly floured on the bottom. Bake at 375° for 30 to 35 minutes. Place cake layer on serving plate. Top with meringue, then second layer. Frost top and sides. Chill, if desired.

Fluffy Meringue: Beat 3 egg whites with 1 teaspoon vanilla, 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar and 1/2 teaspoon salt until soft mounds form. Gradually add 1/2 cup sugar. Continue beating until stiff peaks form. Do not underbeat. Spread to a 7-inch circle on cookie sheet lined with brown paper. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Cool.

Chocolate Cream Frosting: Melt 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate morsels in small saucepan over lowest heat. Blend in 3 tablespoons honey and 2 tablespoons water. Cool. Combine chocolate mixture and 1/2 teaspoon instant coffee with 1 1/2 cups whipping cream. Beat until thick.



Individual Burger Pies — hearty fare dressed for a party in foil cups, baked under an unusual cheese topping.



Grill Kabobs while guests watch — or broil them just before guests arrive, keep 'em warm in the oven with pork and beans.