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Local Features

Holiday Thoughts Turn To Eggnog Cake

Sue Owsley comment last week that she had a recipe for eggnog cake and frosting garnered a response from Bonnie Pendleton.

Bonnie writes, "I'm interested in getting the recipe for eggnog cake and frosting. My friend and I were discussing it today after we read Wednesday's paper. Please send the eggnog recipe, too, as we are interested in trying this for the holidays."

Sue was prompt. Here it is.

Eggnog Cake

2 cups flour
 1 1/2 cups sugar
 1 tablespoon baking powder
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
 3 eggs
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 1 cup eggnog
 1/2 cup soft oleo

Blend all well on low speed of mixer for 1 minute. Pour into two 9-inch greased and floured cake pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes.

Eggnog Frosting

1/4 cup flour
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1 cup eggnog
 2/3 cup margarine
 1 cup confectioners' sugar
 1 teaspoon vanilla

Combine flour, salt and eggnog in a pan and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Allow to cool. Cream margarine. Add sugar and cream well. Add vanilla. Blend into eggnog mixture and beat until fluffy.

Now, the way I take it, Bonnie also wants a homemade eggnog recipe. I hit the Web in search of the best nog recipe I could find, but found most included a hefty dose of rum, whiskey or both. Also, most tried-and-true recipes don't call for cooking. Because I'm not about to print a recipe with raw eggs, I opted for this one from the cdkitchen.com. I don't know how good it is, though.

Non-Alcoholic Eggnog

4 eggs
 1/2 cup sugar
 1/8 teaspoon salt

4 cups milk
2 teaspoons rum extract
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup whipping cream, beaten until stiff

Beat eggs, sugar and salt in top of double boiler or heavy pan. Add milk; mix and cook, stirring frequently, until mixture barely coats a metal spoon. Chill.
Stir in extract and nutmeg. Fold in stiffly beaten whipping cream. Pour immediately into glasses and serve. Sprinkle lightly with nutmeg, if desired.

Now, for those who like a kick in their holiday drinks, here is the consummate egg nog recipe, which was printed in the New York Times on Dec. 27, 1989.

The Very Best Eggnog, Ever

1 quart milk
2 cinnamon sticks
1 vanilla bean, split
5 cloves
10 blades of mace
12 egg yolks
1 1/2 cups sugar
1 1/2 cups dark rum
1 1/2 cups brandy
1 tablespoon vanilla

1 quart of half-and-half or 1 quart of light cream or 1 cup of heavy cream plus 3 more cups of milk
Freshly grated nutmeg to taste

Combine milk and spices including vanilla bean in a heavy saucepan and let them infuse over lowest possible heat for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, combine yolks and sugar in a large bowl and whisk until mixed.

Bring milk to a boil and gradually whisk it into the yolk mixture. Return the mixture to the saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring steadily with a wooden spoon, for 2 to 3 minutes, or until foam subsides and mixture thickens to consistency of heavy cream. (Mixture should thickly coat the back of a wooden spoon.) Do not boil or mixture will curdle.

Strain mixture into a large bowl and let cool to room temperature. Stir in rum, brandy, half-and-half, vanilla and nutmeg. Refrigerate eggnog for at least 2 hours, preferably overnight. Just before serving, dust top of eggnog with additional nutmeg.

Makes 12 servings.

In scanning Taste of Home's new "Holidays and Celebrations Cookbook 2004," I ran across these Eggnog Mini Loaves, similar to Sue's recipe, yet a little different. No frosting required.

Eggnog Mini Loaves

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 cup eggnog
1/2 cup butter, melted
2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 teaspoons rum extract

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. In another bowl, beat

eggs, sugar, eggnog, butter and extracts; stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Pour into three greased 5 3/4 x3x2-inch loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes or until toothpick inserted near center comes out clean.

Makes 3 loaves.

Further back on page 131, I found this Chunky Apple Pumpkin Bread with a picture that made my mouth water. A description reads, "This moist quick bread combines both apples and pumpkin, making it a must in autumn. Every slice is chock-full of nuts and spices."

Can you imagine the aroma in your kitchen?

Chunky Apple Pumpkin Bread

1 1/2 cups sugar
1 cup canned pumpkin
1/2 cup water
1/3 cup vegetable oil
2 eggs
1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 cup chopped peeled tart apples
3/4 cup chopped walnuts

In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar, pumpkin, water, oil and eggs; mix well. Combine flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking powder and cloves; add to pumpkin mixture. Beat on low speed just until moistened. Fold in apples and walnuts.

Pour into a greased 9x5x3-inch loaf pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 hours or until toothpick inserted near center comes out clean.

Makes 1 loaf.

If you've scanned the book shelves, you might have run across a copy of Southern Living's "Our Best Recipes" with the cover boasting an unbelievable Pecan Pie Cake. Oh, my, it's fabulous looking. And I'm just the person to raid it and share it. It's complicated, but if you want something special, here it is. The recipe includes some fancy pastry garnish that looks like leaves you can make to decorate it, but I don't think it needs it. If you want it, let me know or grab a copy of the book.

Pecan Pie Cake

3 cups finely chopped pecans, toasted and divided
1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
1/2 cup shortening
2 cups sugar
5 large eggs, separated
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup buttermilk
2/4 cup dark corn syrup

Pecan Pie Filling, recipe follows

Sprinkle 2 cups pecans evenly into 3 generously buttered 9-inch round cake pans; shake to coat bottoms and sides.

Beat butter and shortening at medium speed with electric mixer until fluffy. Gradually add sugar,

beating well. Add egg yolks, one at a time, beating until blended after each addition. Stir in vanilla. Combine flour and baking soda. Add to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk. Beat at low speed until blended. Stir in remaining pecans.

Beat egg whites at medium speed until stiff peaks form; fold 1/3 egg white into batter. Fold in remaining egg whites. Pour batter into prepared pans. Bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes or until done. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes. Invert layers onto wax paper-lined wire racks. Brush tops and sides with corn syrup. Cool completely.

Spread on half of Pecan Pie Filling on one layer, pecan side up. Place second layer, pecan side up, on filling and spread with remaining filling. Top with remaining layer, pecan side up. Arrange Pastry Garnish on and around cake, if desired.

Makes 1 three-layer cake.

Pecan Pie Filling

1/2 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar

3/4 cup dark corn syrup

1/3 cup cornstarch

4 egg yolks

1 1/2 cups half-and-half

1/8 teaspoon salt

3 tablespoons butter or margarine

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Whisk together first 6 ingredients in a heavy 3-quart saucepan until smooth. Bring mixture to a boil over medium heat, whisking constantly, and boil 1 minute or until thickened. Remove from heat; whisk in butter and vanilla. Place a sheet of wax paper directly on surface of mixture to prevent a film from forming, and chill 4 hours.

OK, I'll raid another one. I loved the picture of the Squash Puppies, which would make a wonderful appetizer. The picture is soooo tempting.

Squash Puppies

3/4 cup self-rising flour

1/4 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper

6 medium yellow squash, cooked and mashed

1/2 cup buttermilk

1 small onion, minced

1 large egg

Vegetable oil

1/2 teaspoon salt

Combine first 5 ingredients in a large bowl. Stir together squash and next 3 ingredients; add to cornmeal mixture, stirring until blended.

Pour oil to a depth of 1/2 inch into deep cast-iron skillet; heat to 350 degrees. Drop batter by tablespoonfuls, in batches, into oil; fry 3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels; sprinkle evenly with 1/2 teaspoon salt.

Makes 20 squash puppies.

I guess you can see I'm ready for autumn now. Cooler weather, heartier foods. Goodbye, capris. See you next year.

looking for a recipe? have one you'd like to share? write to potluck, times record, p.o. box 1359, fort smith, ar 72902. e-mail: jharshaw@swtimes.com

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