



Tasty Treasures

Volume III

A COLLECTION OF FUN AND
FLAVORFUL RECIPES

LOPEZ
NEGRETE



Table of Contents

Main Dishes

Painted Sugar Cookies

Bienmesabe (Coconut Layer Cake)

Christmas Stollen

Buñuelos

Pastel de Tres Leches

Sopa de Elote y Rajas

Country Potatoes

Rompope (Guadalajara Style)

The Fuzzy Red Hooter

Chilaquiles con Chorizo y Pollo, Estilo Metepec

Papaya y Piña Diablo

Miniature Chocolate Eclairs

Milk Candy (Dulce de Leche)

Buñuelos de Viento

Roche's Chili Corn

Forgotten Cookies

Tequeños

Colombian "Arequipe"

Soupy Black Beans

Pechugas en Salsa de Poblano Grantinadas

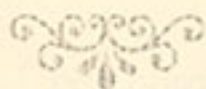
Glorias, Glorias, ¡Aleluya!

Cochinita Pibil

Vampiro



You can ask anyone
what the best food in the world is,
and they will surely tell you:
“The food from my country.” And in spite
of the fact that the food of the country
where we grew up goes in through our mouths,
it still remains deep within our hearts.
Food is history, a topic of conversation,
heritage, and memories.
All in all, food is not just food but rather
a meeting point between people
of different nationalities.
May this cookbook be your point of
entry into our culture and cuisine.
¡Buen Provecho!





Christmas has always been a time for me to do special things with my children in hopes of creating memories for them. One of the special activities we would do was making cookies—even though the final product would have been easier to get and less expensive to buy at the supermarket. It was a time to see flour on noses and drips on floors, and lots of the raw mix disappear into hungry mouths before it even got into the oven.

We would make cookies that were easy and that we could proudly share with family and friends. They could also be hung as ornaments. I recently came upon a recipe from those early days.

Adalis Arroyo (Puerto Rico)



Painted Sugar Cookies

Galletas Pintadas

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) margarine or butter, softened
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup Karo Corn Syrup (light)
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 egg
- 3 1/2 cups flour
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- Colored sugar, colorful candies (optional Karo Syrup Paint)
- Cookie cutters (optional)

Procedure:

In a large bowl, using a mixer at medium speed, beat margarine, sugar, corn syrup, lemon juice and egg until well blended. Gradually add flour and salt. Beat until well mixed. Cover, then refrigerate for at least an hour, until dough is less sticky and easier to handle.

Preheat oven to 350°. Cut cookie dough equally into 3 pieces. On a lightly floured surface with a lightly floured rolling pin, roll out dough, 1 piece at a time, to 1/8 inch thickness. Cut into desired shapes (using cookie cutters, or the top of a glass or an empty can.) Place on ungreased cookie sheet 1/2 inch apart. If you wish, decorate cookies with candies or colored sugar.

Bake 5 to 7 minutes or until lightly brown. Let stand on cookie sheet 1 minute, then remove and cool on wire racks. If you want to hang them as ornaments, use a toothpick or a straw to poke a hole in the cookies before they harden.

Now you can paint the cookies with the paint recipe (see above.) Let them dry thoroughly and store in tightly covered containers. Makes about 10 dozen cookies.

Cookie Paint

- 1/3 cup Karo Light Corn Syrup food coloring
- Fine bristle art brushes

In a small saucepan bring 1/3 cup syrup to boil. Boil 1 minute. Divide syrup into 4 small cups. Stir 2 drops of food coloring into each cup. Use fine bristle brushes to decorate cookies. Let dry.

In Venezuela, as in many other parts of the world, Christmas is a time for family and friends to get together and celebrate those popular traditions that from generation to generation lift the human spirit.

When December arrives, everybody gets ready. They decorate their homes with nativities and Christmas trees, cook and bake holiday dishes, buy those special presents while listening to happy Christmas songs and the traditional "gaitas" (songs typical of the Zulia region.) It is customary in my neighborhood, in Caracas, to visit our neighbors' homes to admire their "nacimiento" (nativity.) We exchange "hallacas" (the Venezuelan tamales) and other delicious goodies such as cookies and sweets, drink our traditional "ponche crema" (eggnog) and, of course, exchange best wishes. The idea of reproducing the nativity scene started in Naples at the end of the XV Century and the first nativity was made of clay figures. My family's "nacimiento" was one of the largest and most beautiful. Everybody in the family took part in its construction and decoration. As a child, I loved designing the small villages with rivers and lakes (we used real water instead of mirrors!) It was a lot of fun! Of all

the goodies we usually prepared for our guests, my favorite was "Bienmesabe", a scrumptious coconut layer cake. Here is the recipe.



Marialba Baez (Caracas, Venezuela)

Bienmesabe

Coconut layer cake

Ingredients:

- 2 cups milk
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 can Coco López (cream of coconut)
- 1 cup frozen shredded coconut
 - 1 lb Sara Lee pound cake
 - 2 tbsp. corn starch
 - 2 tbsp. sugar
 - 4 tbsp. brandy

Procedure:

Mix milk, sugar, yolks, and heat until starts to thicken. Add Coco López and corn starch and continue to cook until the cream is thick and smooth. Cool to room temperature. Cut the pound cake into slices 1/2 inch thick. Cover bottom of rectangular pyrex dish with some of the cream, layer slices of cake to cover. Put some of the brandy (mixed with water) over cake and sprinkle with the shredded coconut. Repeat in layers. Sprinkle with cinnamon and refrigerate overnight.



My grandma is a very beautiful, sweet, kind little German lady of 96 years. She remembers all her special Holidays with her family in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where they lived above her mother's candy store. There were



many special scents that went with her memories, including the candle lit tree, Christmas stews, special breads, butter cookies and scrumptious candies. She always kept these special traditions alive

with her family and then with ours as she sent us our Christmas package each

year. We always waited for her box filled with presents, cookies (about

6 kinds) and the Christmas Stollen! How pretty she decorated it with

cherries, nuts and frosting. We would slowly unwrap the saran wrap,

our mouths watering and "dam," every time Mom would catch our little

fingers going into the frosting and say, "Not until

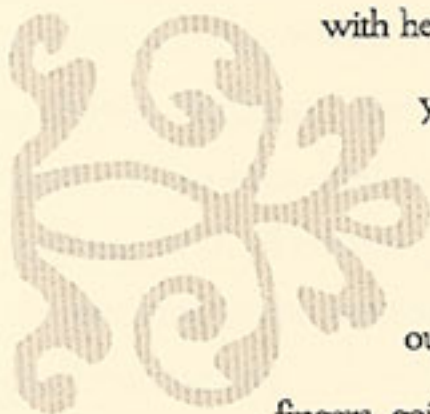
Christmas morning.."

Oh well, it was always worth the wait. This year, for the first time,

I'm going to try to make the Stollen for Grandma..I promised her

and I hope it's good. Here's her recipe, why don't you try it and start your

own tradition? **Cathy Lopez Negrete** (United States)



Christmas Stollen

Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 4 1/2 cups flour
- 1 large orange rind
- 1 package rapid yeast
- 1 1/4 cup lukewarm milk
- 2 tsp. salt

Frosting:

- 6 tbsp. butter
- 1 one-pound package confectioners sugar
- 1/4 cup light cream
- 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla

Nut Filling:

- 10 oz jar of maraschino cherries
- 1 ten-oz package of pecans
- 1 cup of butter
- 3/4 cup sugar

Procedure:

In mixing bowl combine flour, sugar, salt, dissolved yeast. In sauce pan heat butter, orange rind and milk. Make sure the mixture is warm not hot, heat kills yeast! Add to dry mixture. Mix on slow, add eggs (one at a time). When mixed, form into bowl and throw on floured board. Knead for 5-7 minutes. Let rest for 10 minutes. Roll out into large oblong. Melt 4 tablespoons butter, pour on dough, spread with nut filling. Fold in half and form into a rectangle with your hands-pinch edges. Let rise 3 hours. Bake at 350° for 30-40 minutes until brown all over. Frost and decorate with cherries and nuts.

For frosting: mix cream, butter, sugar and beat in cream and vanilla. Gradually add remaining sugar and add more cream until becomes like frosting.

For nut filling: grind cherries (without liquid). Add pecans and mix with melted butter and sugar. Add more orange rind if you like.





Christmas was a very special and happy time in my family. I come from a large family. I am the youngest of 10 sisters and 1 brother. We grew up in a very warm and loving home.

I would have to say that my favorite part of the Christmas Holidays was when my mother would make us our favorite holiday treat: "buñuelos" and hot chocolate. We would sit by the Christmas tree and quietly whisper to one another. I will never forget watching my mother stuff the turkey for Christmas dinner. This is a tradition that I now enjoy with my husband and 3 children. **Lillian Delgado** (Houston, TX).

Buñuelos

Mexican Sweet Bread

Ingredients:

- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. Calumet baking powder
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 tsp. of Crisco shortening
- 1 egg
- Water

Topping:

Hot water as needed. Mix 1/2 cup of sugar with 3 tsp. of cinnamon for topping.

Procedure:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, sugar and shortening. Add 1 egg and hot water as needed. After kneading all ingredients together, separate into regular size balls.

Roll each one and cut into

4 pieces. Then fry in a pan with a little oil.

Take out when lightly browned.

Place on paper towels to soak up oil. While still hot, sprinkle sugar and cinnamon all over.

Well,

Christmas is here

again, which means family gather-

ings and family traditions that everyone

looks forward to.

A very special tradition in my family is during

Christmas Eve. On that evening, we all gather

at my grandparents' house, where year after

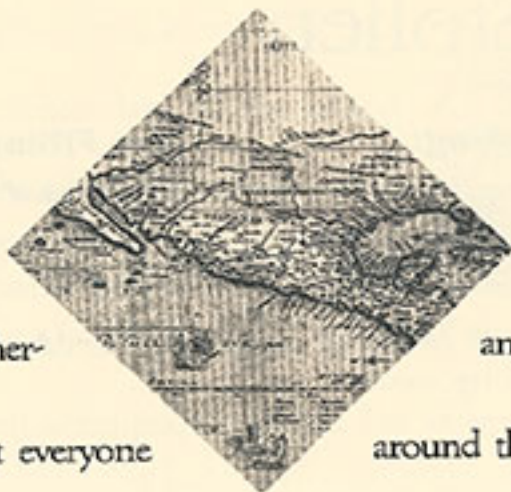
year my grandmother puts a little

Christmas tree up, and right

under the tree she creates

a big "nacimiento"

(nativity scene). All



of my aunts, uncles, cousins

and the rest of the gang gather

around the "nacimiento" to pray and sing

songs to baby Jesus. After all the singing,

my "abuelita" brings out this huge cake and

"chocolatito" (hot chocolate). We all eat and

drink hot chocolate during the rest of the

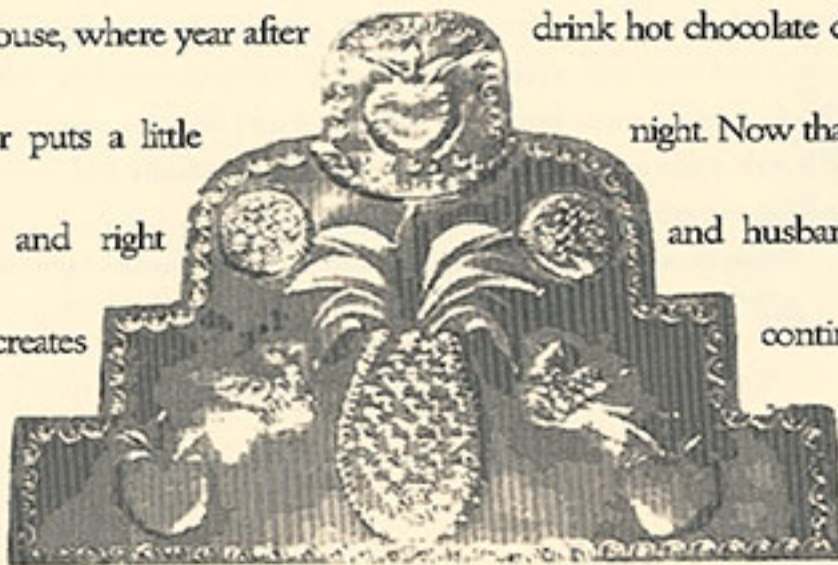
night. Now that I have my daughter

and husband, we are going to

continue the tradition at

our house.

Yvette Leon
(Mexico)



Pastel de Tres Leches

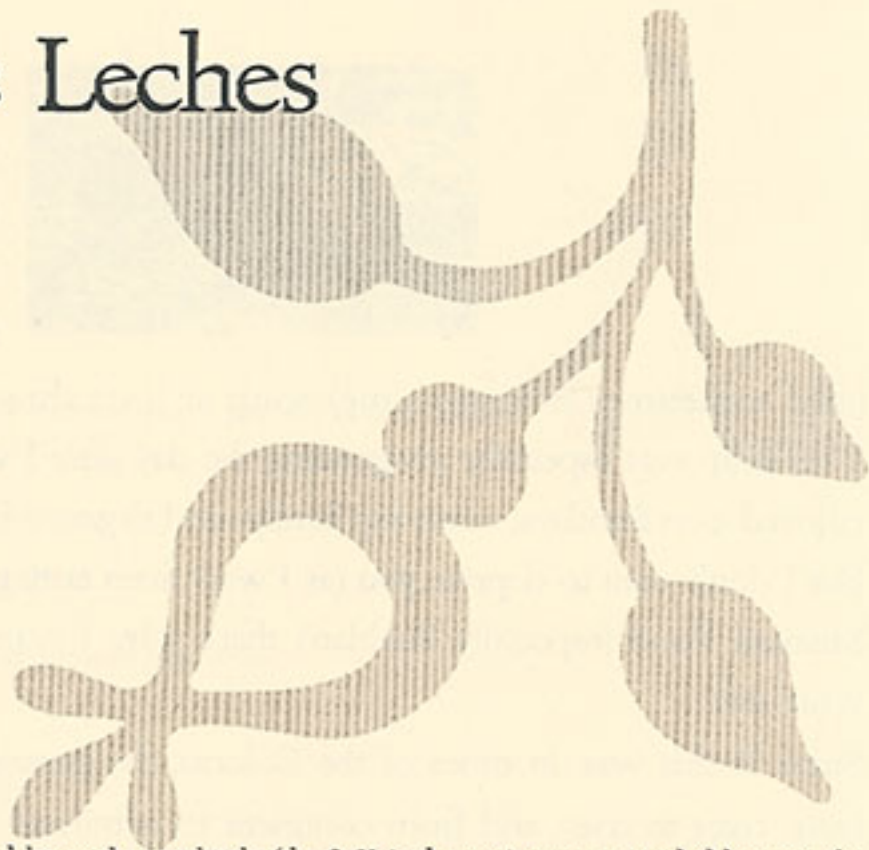
Three milks cake

Ingredients:

- 1 cake mix (white, vanilla or french vanilla)
- 3 egg whites
- 1 can condensed milk
- 1 can evaporated milk
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream (liquid form)
- 1/2 cup Karo light corn syrup
- 1 to 1 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon (optional)

Procedure:

Bake cake mix as directed in a 9x11 inch pan and let cool completely (the 9x11 inch pan is recommended because the cake will need to stay in pan to be saturated). Once cool, poke holes with a toothpick generously to let the milk saturate the cake. In a large mixing bowl, combine condensed milk, evaporated milk, heavy whipping cream and cinnamon with a whisk until well mixed. Once the cake is cool, add the mixture until it covers the sides of the cake. Let it stand for 5 to 10 minutes until cake has soaked in mixture. Repeat this until you have finished your mixture or until desired saturation. Once you have used last of mixture on cake, you may drain or let soak; you don't need to use all of mixture. Refrigerate until ready to top with icing. Whip 3 egg whites in a large mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Meanwhile, in a sauce pan, bring syrup and sugar to a boil, and slowly add water until consistency is somewhat thick. You may add more sugar or water until you reach the desired consistency. As your mixture becomes thickened and bubbly, lower heat and slowly add to egg whites. Remember to add slowly and keep whipping egg whites while you add in syrup and sugar mixture. This will be your frosting, and remember it will thicken as it stands, or it will be too runny. Whip until creamy and let stand in refrigerator until desired consistency. The frosting should come out white and gooey, like a marshmallow topping. Add frosting to cake. Total cooking time is 1 hour.





We all know that Mexican food is one of the most varied foods in the world. Well, it seems like my mother didn't know that. She used to cook this delicious

(and sometimes boring to me) soup at least three times a week.

This soup was especially invigorating the day after I went out to party with friends. I also enjoyed it on Sundays, when my family used to gather for an endless and tasty Mexican lunch. But I don't want to deprive you (as I was) from tasting more Mexican Food (especially Pueblan), that's why I wanted to write this.

Since Puebla was, in times of the Colonia, the passage way from coast to coast and from continent to continent, in the XIX century it received people from France, Germany and Italy, and they all influenced the dishes that we know today. The "mole de guajolote" comes from the Santa Rosa convent, the "gorditas" and the "rompo" from Santa Clara (Puebla, Mexico): this way, the Holy Sisters put all their taste and inventiveness to create exquisite recipes for every season of the year. **Eduardo Weinberg** (Mexico City).



Sopa de Elote y Rajas

Corn & poblano pepper soup

Ingredients:

- 10 tender ears of corn (remove the kernels)
- 1/4 medium onion
- 3 tomatoes blended with 1 clove of garlic, 3/4 medium onion and salt to taste. Strain.
- 50 grams of butter
- 1 qt. of milk
- 2 cups of broth from boiling corn. Strain.
- 1 dash of baking soda
- 4 broiled poblano peppers, peeled, seeded and cut into fine strips.
- Salt to taste
- 2 zucchini (calabacines)

Garnish:

200 grams of panela cheese cut in small cubes, thin tortilla strips, fried and drained on a napkin.

Procedure:

Boil corn kernels with 1/4 onion and a pinch of salt. Boil zucchini for 3 minutes and drain. Fry tomato in hot butter until it gets thick, add corn kernels. Add hot milk and 2 cups of broth where the corn was boiled, then add baking soda, salt to taste and pepper strips. Let all boil for 5 more minutes and serve with tortilla strips and cheese cubes. Yield: 8 portions.





*A*s a small child growing up in Vermont, my great-grandmother would prepare "Country Potatoes" for all special occasions. It's a nice change from regular mashed potatoes. Give it a try!

Debbie LaRoche (Baltimore, Maryland)



Country Potatoes

Ingredients:

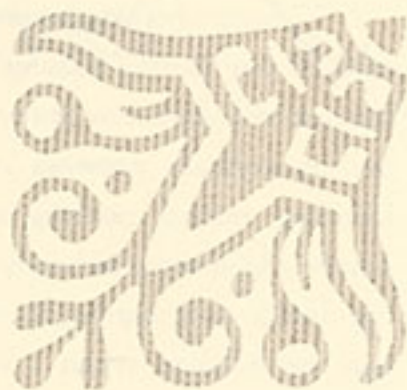
- 6 medium baking potatoes
- 1 stick of butter
- 1 bunch of green onions
- 1 cup sour cream
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese

Garnish:

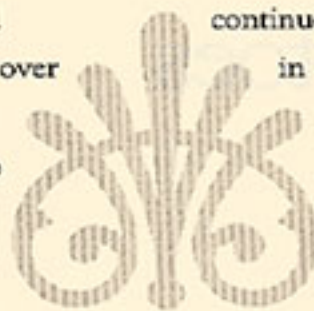
Add bacon, or anything you like in a baked potato.

Procedure:

Boil potatoes until tender. Mash potatoes (can leave lumps). Add butter, onions, sour cream and salt and pepper to taste. Place in greased casserole dish. Top with grated cheese. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes.



Those who have received, read and enjoyed our Tasty Treasures cookbooks over the past two years now know I can't cook (as my culinary prowess is limited to blending, mixing, pouring and grilling, which at least come in handy when mixing drinks or at bar-b-q's), and that the holidays when I was growing up were filled with wonderful traditions, tastes, colors and feelings that remain embedded in my mind and heart forever. You also know that my mother served up probably the most powerful, addicting and tasty eggnog in the land (refer to 1995's Tasty Treasures "Dorothy's Nuclear Eggnog".) As I became a teenager, another tradition came about: on Christmas Day, after the presents were opened, after we'd gone to Mass, after lunch was served, "la bola de cuates" (my bunch of friends) would get together and tour all our homes from early afternoon to late evening. It was wonderful. It was a chance to wish a Merry Christmas to all our friends' families (all of which we had known since we were babies), and, of course, a chance to



continue sampling some of the best food and drink in the world. It was almost like attending a city-wide Christmas buffet (and when you're talking about Mexico City -that's big!) I quickly discovered that while no other family had eggnog quite like the one

Mom mixed up at our home, there was another holiday drink that I really enjoyed: Rompope. This drink is Mexico's own super-rich version of eggnog and was prepared and served in many of my friends homes during the holidays - and, of course, it remains a tradition throughout Mexico today. Not unlike eggnog in the United States, Rompope recipes vary from region to region, and while its origin seems to be Poblano (from the city of Puebla in the outskirts of Mexico City,) there is a recipe

that comes from Guadalajara, which I would like to share with you. Pretty soon you won't be saying, "Got Milk?" You'll be saying, "Got Rompope?" - and wait 'til you see the mustache Rompope leaves on your face! ¡Salud!

Alex López Negrete (Mexico)

Rompopo (Guadalajara Style)

Guadalajara style drink

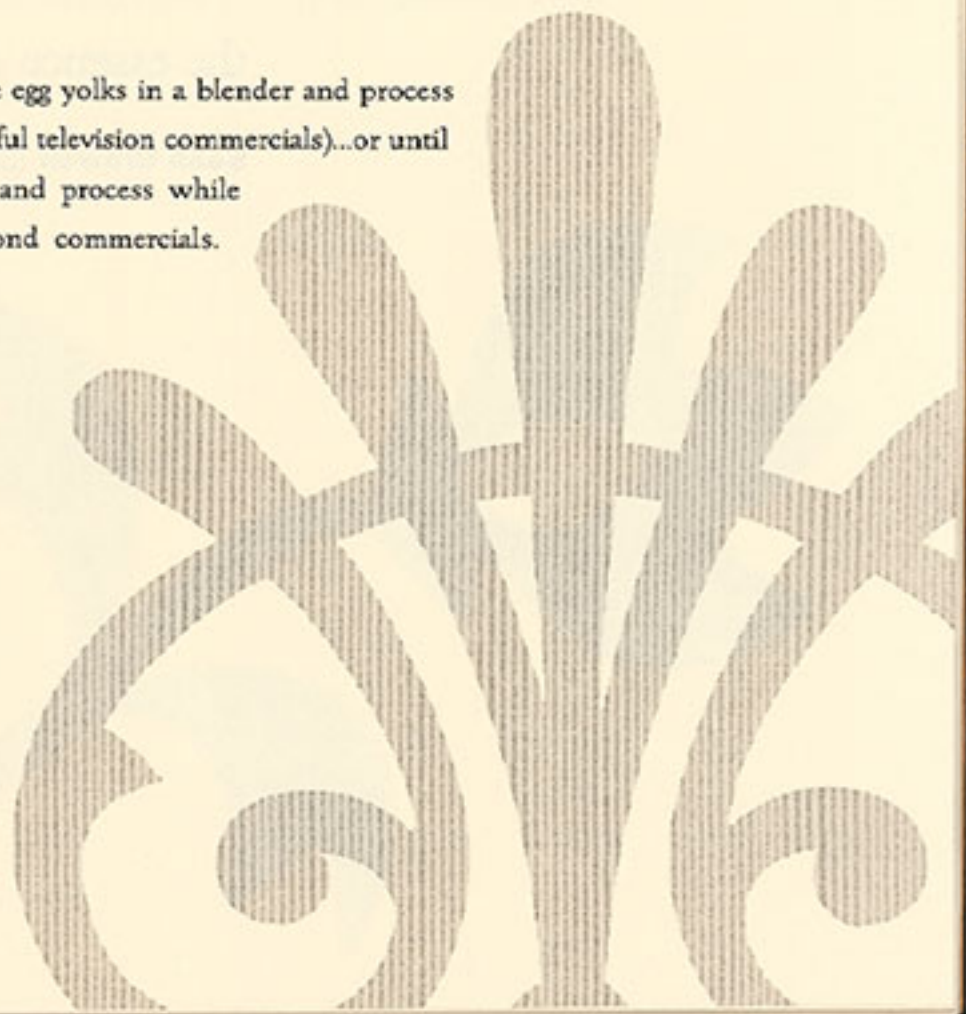
Ingredients:

- 1 can (14 oz.) of condensed milk
- 14 oz. of fresh milk (don't use the skim, low fat or that other watery stuff)
(do what I do, just use the condensed milk can to measure)
- 6 large egg yolks
- 6 oz. of dark rum

Procedure:

Place the condensed milk, the fresh milk and the egg yolks in a blender and process for 30 seconds (the average length of our wonderful television commercials)...or until it is all mixed but not frothy. Add the rum and process while watching another one of our beautiful 30 second commercials.

Chill. Cool? Cool! Yields 6 to 8 servings.



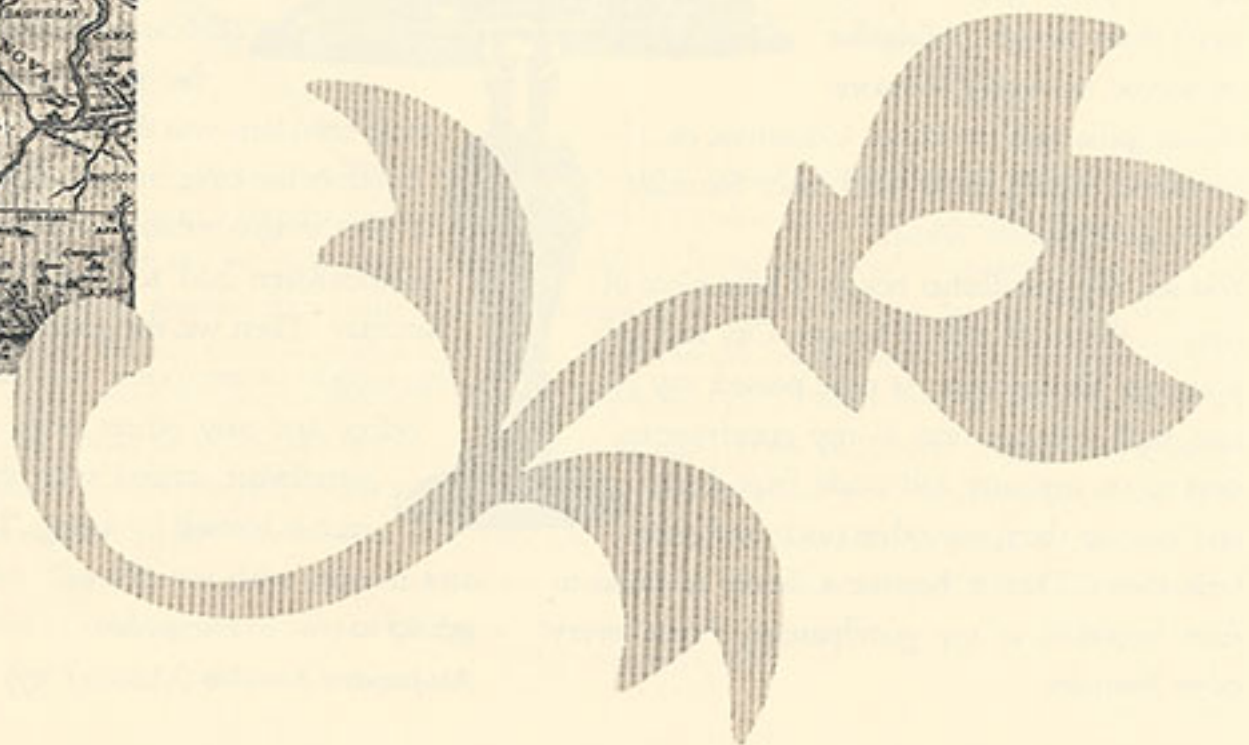
The Fuzzy Red Hooter

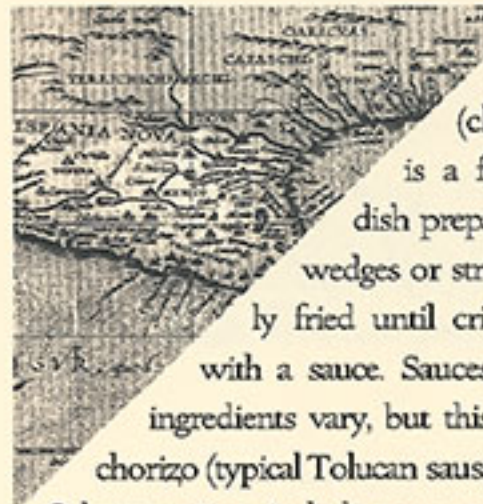
Ingredients:

- 1 oz. tequila
- 3/4 oz. Amaretto
- Pineapple juice
- 7-up
- Splash of orange juice
- 1 oz. grenadine

Mixing Procedure:

Pour tequila and Amaretto over ice into Collins type glass. Fill with pineapple juice, 7-up and add a splash of orange juice to taste. Top with grenadine. Garnish with a cherry and serve with a beer.





Chilaquiles (chee-la-KEE-lez) is a favorite Mexican dish prepared with tortilla wedges or strips that are lightly fried until crisp, then bathed with a sauce. Sauces and additional ingredients vary, but this recipe calls for chorizo (typical Toluca sausage) and chicken.

Other versions include eggs, cream, cheese or red sauce instead of green.

Chilaquiles are an excellent dish for breakfast, dinner or ending a long night of partying (the Mexican way.) Even though Chilaquiles are served on many occasions (family gatherings, weddings, Christmas, etc.) I remember having them every other Saturday at my grandparents' house.

You see, my grandfather bought a large piece of land on the south side of Mexico City and split it among his children. As time passed, my parents built a house next to my grandparents; next to us my aunt and uncle built theirs; and next to them my other uncle and aunt built theirs. Then it became a family tradition to have breakfast at my grandparents' home every other Saturday.



Since we all lived on the same side of the street, and in Mexico the front yard is enclosed by a tall "barda" (wall), we all walked across each other's yards in our pajamas and slippers to my grandparents' home. It was in the garden that the "family breakfast" started with the smell of "huevos con chorizo, bocoles, quesadillas con queso, frijoles" and, of course, the "chilaquiles," as we approached the house. By the time we got inside we had almost forgotten to greet

our grandparents. All we wanted to do was sit down and eat. The breakfast was always noisy with everyone talking and spoons

clinking as everyone tried to get more chilaquiles. Did I mention they were delicious? Besides the chilaquiles,

the most memorable part of these breakfasts was the end. Before anyone got up from the table, my grandfather would recite

a new tongue twister or poem which all the grandchildren had to memorize by the next Saturday. Then we, the grandchildren, all recited

the tongue twister/poem we learned the week before and any others from school. As my grandfather smiled with pride, he would

excuse himself by saying, "I have an important meeting with my pillow," and we would all get up to play in the garden.

Alejandro Amelio (Mexico City)

Chilaquiles con Chorizo y Pollo, Estilo Metepec

Chilaquiles with chicken, sausage and cheese

Ingredients:

- 3 cups vegetable oil
- 40 small tortillas, cut into wedges
- 3 chicken breasts, boiled for 20 minutes with onion, garlic, celery, carrots, bay leaf and oregano and salt, then shredded
- 1 cup sour cream
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 3 cups oaxaca, monterey jack or mozzarella or other mild cheese, grated
- 1 1/2 cups crème fraîche

Procedure:

To prepare the sauce, bring the water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add the tomatillos and onion, and boil for about 25 minutes. Then place in a blender or food processor with 1-2 tablespoons water and add tomatoes, chiles, and garlic. Purée, then strain and set aside. Heat the oil in a medium frying pan. Sauté the grated onion, then add the strained tomatillo sauce. Simmer the mixture for about 35 minutes or until it thickens. Season to taste with salt. Prepare the chilaquiles, heat the oil in a medium frying pan. Fry the tortilla wedges until crisp, then remove from oil and drain on paper towels. Preheat oven to 350°. Butter a deep baking dish. Place a layer of fried tortillas on the bottom. Cover with a layer of shredded chicken, fried chorizo sausage, cheese and cream. Repeat with a second layer of tortillas, sauce, chicken, chorizo, cheese and cream. Bake the dish for about 40-45 minutes or until hot. Serve immediately, accompanied with refried beans. You may also prepare as individual servings by layering into individual baking dishes. If you prefer, you may reserve some of the sauce and serve individually in molded casseroles on a bed of sauce, topped with melted cheese. Serves 8

For the sauce:

- 4 cups water
- 20 tomatillos, husked
- 1 1/2 medium white onions, peeled
- 6 large ripe tomatoes (2 1/2 pounds, approximately)
- 4 chiles chipotles, lightly roasted and soaked in hot water 5-10 minutes, or fresh serranos, washed and stemmed, whole
- 6 garlic cloves, peeled and puréed
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 medium white onion, grated
- Salt to taste

All traditions have to start somewhere. Right? So, no, this recipe is nothing I grew up with or some obscure recipe that has been handed down from generation to generation. I ran across this recipe, and, as a tequila lover, I thought, "Gee, cool, a

dessert recipe that uses tequila...it's gotta be great!" And it is. Plus, as you can tell, it's very easy to make, which is fine with me. So, hey, let's be daring and start a new tradition. **Alex López Negrete**
(Mexico)



Papaya Y Piña Diablo

Deviled Papaya and Pineapple



Ingredients:

- 2 papayas
- 1 small pineapple
- 1/4 cup of butter
- 1/4 cup of soft brown sugar
- The juice and grated peel of one lime (limón)
- 1/2 tsp. of ground cinnamon
- 4 tbsp. of tequila (the good stuff)

Procedure:

OK, now. Follow the steps. We're supposed to be good at this in advertising, right? Here goes:

1. Peel the papaya and scoop out the seeds. Cut the papaya flesh into slices. Peel the pineapple and cut into thin slices, remove the central core so that you are left with pineapple rings.
2. Melt the butter in a large, heavy-based skillet, and then stir in the sugar over a low heat. Stir it until it is thoroughly dissolved. Add the lime juice and grated peel.
3. Increase the heat slightly and let the sugary mixture bubble for a few minutes, until thickened. Be careful that it does not burn or turn to caramel. Add the papaya and the pineapple. Cook gently for 2 minutes. Sprinkle with cinnamon.
4. Add the tequila to the skillet. Then, stand back and set it alight. Yeah! Having fun yet? When the flames die down, divide the flambé papaya and pineapple between 4 dessert dishes...decorate with slivers of a lime peel...chow down!

As a child growing up in Ridgewood, N.Y., my parents lived in a 6-family apartment building. The other 5 apartments in the building were occupied by relatives. You would think it would be nice to all live together with aunts and uncles and grandparents, etc. Well, I have a different story to tell. Unfortunately, my relatives disliked each other and did not speak. So, Christmas was spent completely separate from each other. The only happy memory I have is exchanging desserts with my cousins. We did this without anyone knowing. I remember using what we called a dumb-waiter. This was a freight "box" that was fastened by a rope. I would put desserts into the freight box and lower the rope until my cousin received the dessert. My cousin would then send me up my favorite dessert my aunt made every Christmas Day, miniature chocolate eclairs. **Joe Genova** (Ridgewood, N.Y.)



Miniature Chocolate Eclairs

Ingredients: Filling and pastry

- 1 package (about 3 1/2 oz.) chocolate pudding and pie filling
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 medium eggs

Frosting:

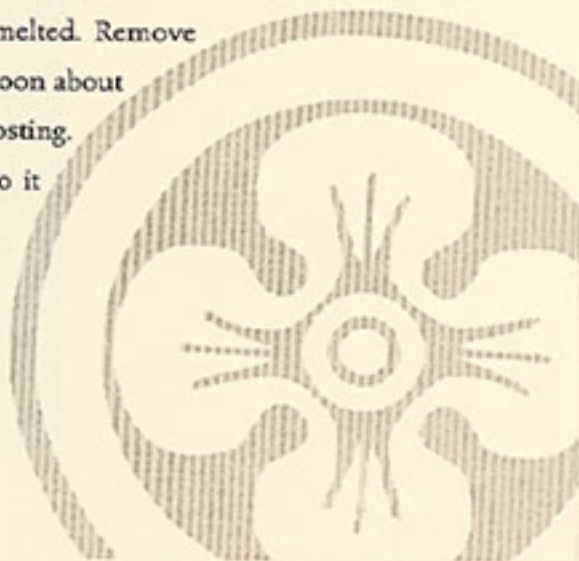
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 2 oz. (2 squares) semisweet chocolate
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 tbsp. milk
- 1 tbsp. vanilla extract

Procedure:

To prepare filling, cook pudding according to package directions. Chill for 1 hour. To prepare pastry, in a heavy saucepan, heat butter, water, and salt over medium-high heat until mixture boils and butter melts. Reduce heat to low. Vigorously stir in flour all at once until mixture forms a ball. Transfer pastry to a bowl; cool for 5 minutes. Stir in eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Preheat oven to 400°. Grease a baking sheet. Drop dough into 12 mounds, about 5 inches apart, on prepared baking sheet. Spread each mound into a 4x1/2 inch rectangle, piling dough on top and slightly rounding sides. Bake until golden, 35 minutes. Remove from oven; make a 1-inch-long slit on side of each eclair. Reduce oven temperature to 375°. Bake for 10 minutes. Transfer to wire rack to cool.

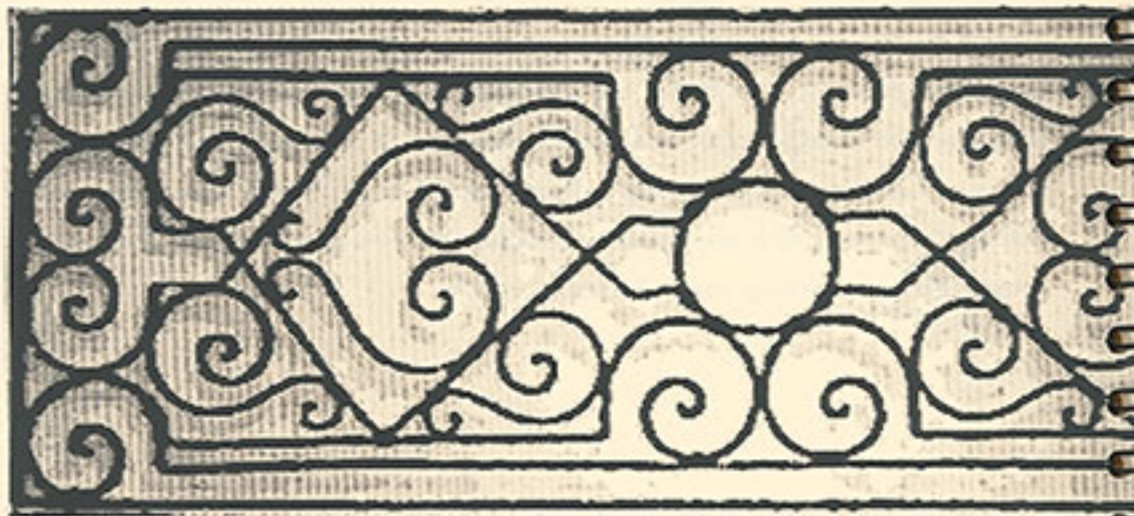
To prepare frosting, heat butter and chocolate over low heat, stirring until melted. Remove from heat. Stir in sugar, milk, and vanilla until smooth. Slice eclairs in half. Spoon about 1 tbsp. of filling onto each bottom half and replace tops. Spread tops with frosting.

Baking tip: A wire rack allows air to circulate below and around the food so it cools without becoming soggy. Makes 12 eclairs.



Dulce de leche is truly a test of patience for most children. The extended period of time that it actually takes to prepare combined with the sweet delicious taste once it is finished makes for a trying experience. Most children can smell the milk as it begins to boil, and therefore begin to migrate to the kitchen. They wait and watch as ingredient after ingredient is added to the pot. They suffer as milk slowly takes on a sweeter smell and begins to take shape of a gooey treat. After about two and a half hours the children are usually handed a big spoon to hold for the final half an hour stretch. Finally, after much watching, smelling and salivating, the children are allowed to scoop a spoonful of "Dulce de Leche" which has always proved to be worth the wait.

Steve Cabrera (Ecuador)



Milk Candy

Dulce de leche

Filling and pastry ingredients:

- 1 gal. whole milk
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 lb. sugar
- 1 cup coconut flakes
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 medium eggs

Procedure:

This takes 3 hours to make. Put one gallon of whole milk in a big Teflon pot. Put one cup of whole milk in a separate cup and mix with 2 tablespoons of cornstarch. Boil milk in big pot until about half evaporates and boils off, leaving 1/2 gallon in the pot. Add one pound of sugar

to pot of milk and stir until mixed. Add cup of whole milk with corn starch that was prepared earlier and stir until mixed. Continue to stir and boil milk until only 1/4 gallon remains. Add one cup of coconut flakes to pot and stir until mixed. Continue to stir and boil down until about 1/8 of a gallon remains and milk becomes a thick brown goo.

It can now be consumed in a multitude of fashions: eaten out of the pot with a spoon; spread on bread to make a sandwich; refrigerated and served as a dessert with cookies.





*T*his is a great cold weather treat from Spain. These airy fritters, traditionally available in pastry shops on holidays and during regional festivals, are served with a dusting of powdered sugar or sweet syrup. They are great with hot chocolate or coffee and should be served warm or can be reheated. **Hal Means** (Houston, TX)



Buñuelos de Viento

Light-as-the-wind fritters

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup milk
- 5 tbsp. pure olive oil plus additional oil for deep-frying
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. grated lemon zest
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 large eggs
- Powdered sugar

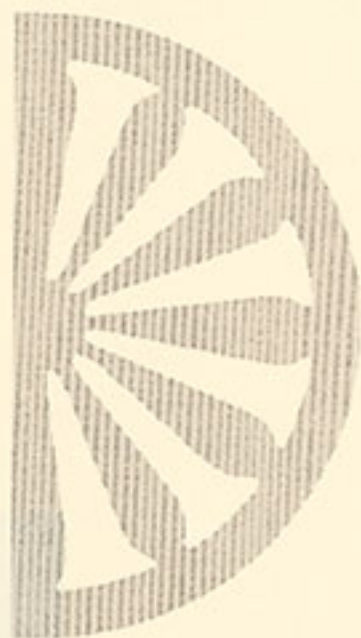
Syrup:

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- Cinnamon

Procedure:

In a sauce pan, bring the water, milk, 5 tablespoons olive oil, salt, and lemon zest to a boil. Add the flour all at once, lower the heat, and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon until dough leaves the sides of the pan and forms a smooth ball. Cook, turning the dough frequently for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat and cool slightly. In a food processor, process dough 20 seconds. Add eggs and process 30 seconds.

Heat about 1 inch oil in a large skillet or electric fryer to 370°. Drop dough by teaspoons into hot oil. The dough should puff, forming fritters and becoming golden and hollow inside. Using a slotted spoon, remove fritters to paper towels to drain and cool. Dust with powdered sugar. If you like, you can serve them with syrup. Spoon the syrup over the fritters, then sprinkle them with cinnamon.





*M*y best friend, and old roommate Eric, created this recipe one night when he was bored and hungry. It didn't sound so great at first, but it really is good. Sometimes I eat it when I miss him. Isn't it funny how silly little things can remind you of great friends? Recipe by Eric Casa, submitted by: **Sasa Najdanovic** (Serbia)



Roche's Chili Corn

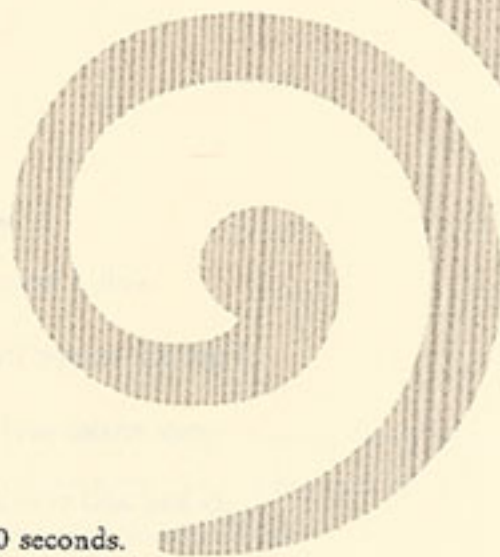
Ingredients:

- 1 cup corn
- 1 tbsp. chili powder
- 2 tbsp. butter (not margarine)
- 2 pinches salt
- 1/2 pinch black pepper
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. parsley
- 1 pinch real bacon bits (optional)

Procedure:

Combine ingredients in a bowl and microwave on high for 1 minute and 40 seconds.

Let cool for 37 seconds.





About the forgotten cookies,
well, I haven't forgotten them. They are too good to forget!
I got this recipe from high school in 1990. My cooking class teacher was
very artistic and fun. You see, this cookie isn't your ordinary dough
cookie, and you will see why. These cookies are called merengues and
they look like a big Hersheys kiss but white, with tiny melted
chocolate chips. OOOOH! Doesn't that sound good?
Obviously, I like to cook sweets. They're fun; try it!

Carolina Alucema (Santiago, Chile)



Forgotten Cookies

Las galletas olvidadas

Ingredients:

- 2 egg whites, at room temperature
- Pinch of salt (less than 1/8 tsp.)
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup mini-chocolate chips

Procedure:

Put egg whites in a small mixer bowl. Add a pinch of salt. Beat on high speed until egg whites are foamy. Slowly begin to sprinkle the sugar on the foam, while continuing to beat. Beat until soft peaks form. Add vanilla and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Do not overbeat. By hand, with a spatula, fold in mini-chocolate chips.

Preheat oven to 350°. You can use foil lined cookie sheet. Cut brown paper to fit a 15x10 cookie sheet. Drop meringue by heaping teaspoons onto paper lined cookie sheet. Cookies don't spread much, so they can be dropped close together. Put cookie sheet in oven. Turn oven off. Leave cookies in at least 3 hours (can be left overnight). Do not open the oven door until at least 3 hours have passed. They should be very dry, and break cleanly apart. They should not be browned. Yields: about 24



The Christmas season is upon us and with it the delicious smell of "Hallacas", Ham Bread, Fruit Crowns, Walnut Cake, and all the



dishes that are so traditional in our home which help create the spirit of unity that surrounds the Holiday Season. We have maintained these wonderful culinary traditions, from generation to generation, in the



warmth of my Venezuelan home. And like the saying goes, "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach." During the last 36 years, my mother has created the most delicious desserts that have gained her international fame. One of her traditional Christmas Fruit Cakes even reached the doors of the Vatican in Rome as a gift for the Pope. Since culinary art is something special that we all can learn, I have decided to share one of our secret family recipes so that you may delight in the wonderful cuisine of a traditional Venezuelan kitchen.

Carolina Clark (Caracas, Venezuela)

Tequeños

Cheese sticks

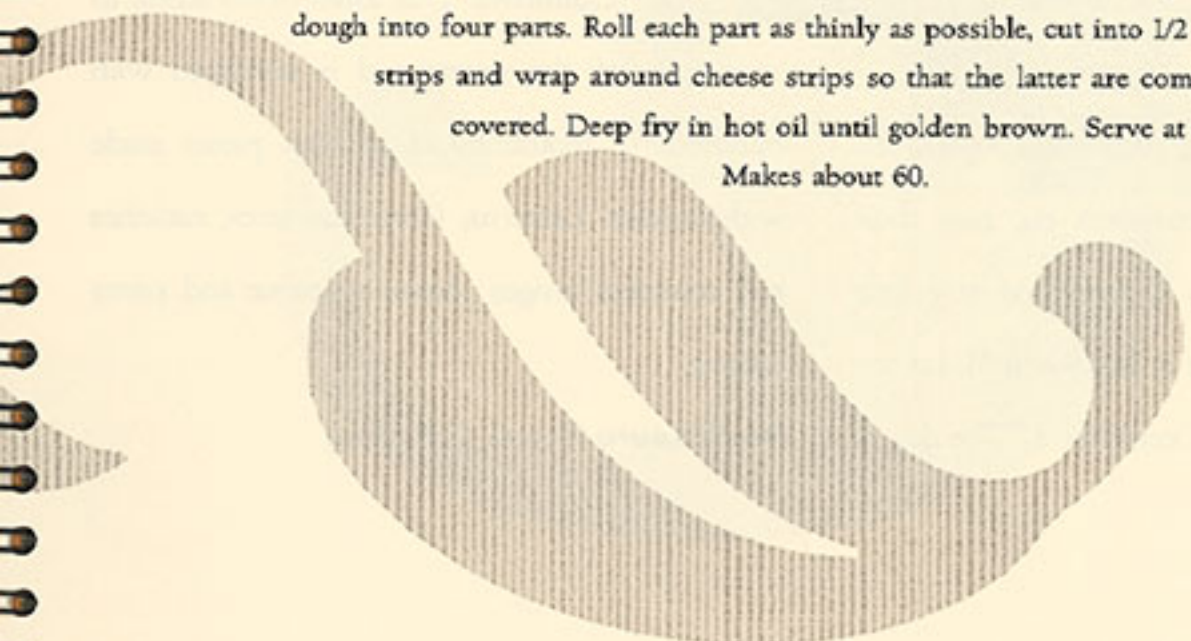
Ingredients:

- 4 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup water (approx.)
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 lb. Panela cheese
- 1 heaping tbsp. butter or vegetable oil

Procedure:

Combine all ingredients except cheese, using only enough water to make a rather soft dough. Set aside for a few minutes. Cut cheese into strips 1/2 inch wide by 2 1/2 inches long. Divide dough into four parts. Roll each part as thinly as possible, cut into 1/2 inch strips and wrap around cheese strips so that the latter are completely covered. Deep fry in hot oil until golden brown. Serve at once.

Makes about 60.



"Llegó diciembre con su alegría, mes de parranda y animación." Suddenly it looks like Christmas, the stores are majestically decorated, getting people excited for the holidays; children are happier, and while people in the northern countries are freezing, we in Colombia enjoy the eternal, tropical summer. Christmas is synonymous with great celebration and happiness. Colombia is, in reality, a gathering of peoples and cultures (as a group of small countries within the country.) Thus the different regions in Colombia, such as Bogotá, Antioquia, Boyaca, the two Coasts, Valle, the Santanders, etc. have their own culture and customs. Colombians have four special holidays: December 8, 24, 28 and 31. Let me tell you something about December 8, "The day of



the candles." On this day, we celebrate the Annunciation of the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, even though very few Colombians know this. In this celebration, all Colombian families light up hundreds of candles on the sidewalks around their homes, making the streets and the countryside a beautiful land lighted by thousands and thousands of little lights. The most spectacular light display is found in a small town called Quimbaya. This town closes access to all the streets and is swamped with hundreds of thousands of artwork pieces made with candles. Lanterns, Christmas trees, nativities and countless images create a unique and pretty display.

Rosie Leuro (Bogotá, Colombia)

Colombian "Arequipe"

Pronounced (Aree-kee-pae)

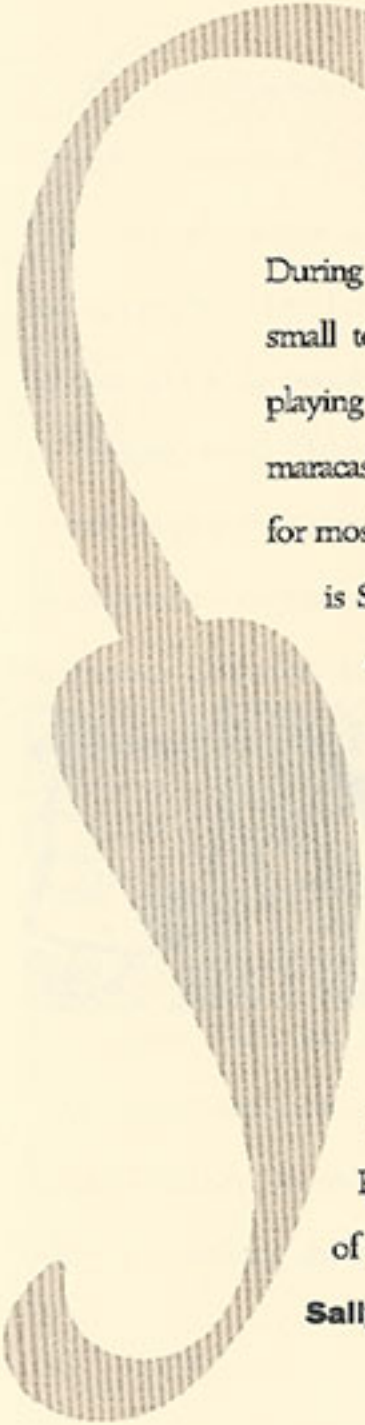
Ingredients:

- 3 quarts of fresh milk
- 1 1/2 lb. sugar
- 1 pinch of baking soda

Procedure:

Heat milk. When it is boiling, add the sugar and baking soda. Leave it boiling for a few minutes. When it thickens around the sides of the pan, strain it into a new dry pot and heat it again. Constantly stir it with a wooden spoon in the same direction until you can see the bottom of the pan. Pour the "Arequipe" into a small bowl. Serve it as a dessert with cheese, or use it as a jelly to spread on toast. It's delicious, enjoy!





Venezuela, like most Latin American countries influenced by the conquest of the Spaniards, celebrates the festivities of the saints with joy, music and dance. There is a mix of mysticism and reality surrounding the legends of the saints, and of how the celebrations developed.

During the Christmas season, the religious "Parrandas" liven the spirits of people in all the small towns, as chorus groups fill the streets singing traditional Christmas carols and playing native instruments, such as the "cuatro" (a four-string guitar-like instrument), drums, maracas, and more. Mention the word "Parranda" to any Venezuelan and for most its synonymous with partyin'. One of my favorite saints

is San Benito, a saint whom locals pour rum on as part of the song and dance for good luck!

No Hispanic meal is complete without beans. The recipe I listed last year, "Carne Mechada" (Shredded Meat), and for that matter, the typical Venezuelan meal, would not be complete without beans. I know it's a favorite dish for many of you, so here it is:

PS: I recommend using Goya beans!

PSS: Black beans taste extra good if you sprinkle a bit of sugar on them!

Sally Felsmann (Venezuela)



Soupy Black Beans


Ingredients:

- 1 lb. dried black beans, picked through and washed
- 1 small onion, cut in half
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled
- 2 tbsp. dry white wine
- 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 green bell pepper, cored and seeded
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp. sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Sofrito:

- 2 strips bacon, cut into small slivers
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 green bell pepper, cored, seeded and chopped
- 3 scallions, trimmed and chopped

Procedure:



In a large heavy pot, soak the beans in cold water (covering them by at least 3 inches) for no less than 4 hours, or overnight. (If omitting this step, add about 1 hour to the cooking time) Add the onion, garlic, bay leaves, bell pepper, cumin, and oregano to the pot of beans and soaking water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Skim off any foam that rises to the surface. Reduce the heat, cover and gently simmer the beans, stirring occasionally, for 1 hour. Add water as necessary to keep the beans submerged. Remove the onion, garlic, bay leaves, and bell pepper with a slotted spoon and discard. Meanwhile, prepare the "sofrito." If using bacon, brown it in a heavy frying pan over medium heat. Pour off the fat. Add the olive oil and the remaining sofrito ingredients. (If not using bacon, heat the olive oil in a frying pan, add the sofrito ingredients, and continue with the recipe) Cook over medium heat until just beginning to brown, about 3 minutes. Stir the sofrito into the beans along with the wine, vinegar, sugar, and salt and pepper. Cover and continue simmering the beans, until very soft, about 20 minutes. Just before serving, adjust the seasonings, adding salt, pepper, cumin, oregano, or vinegar. The mixture should be highly seasoned. Spoon the soupy black beans over rice.

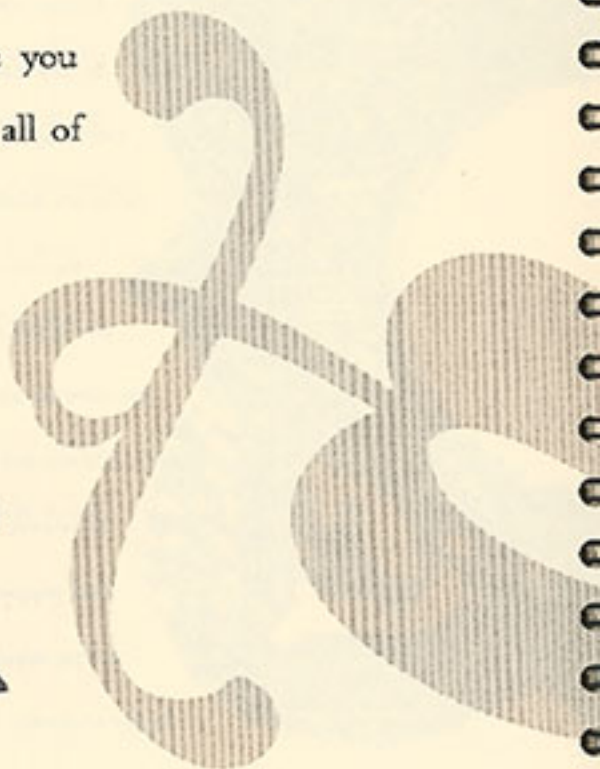
As a baby, my mother would put "chile" on my thumb so

I wouldn't stick it in my mouth. Little did she know, that would motivate me even more because I LOVE chile.

For most Mexicans, to remember the first time that we tried "chile" is as hard as it is for you to remember the first time you walked. I will teach my children to enjoy "chile" and I will make sure they eat it every day.

The following recipe will make you stick, not only your thumb, but all of your fingers in your mouth.

Fabiola Weinberg (Mexico)



Pechugas en Salsa de Poblano Gratinadas

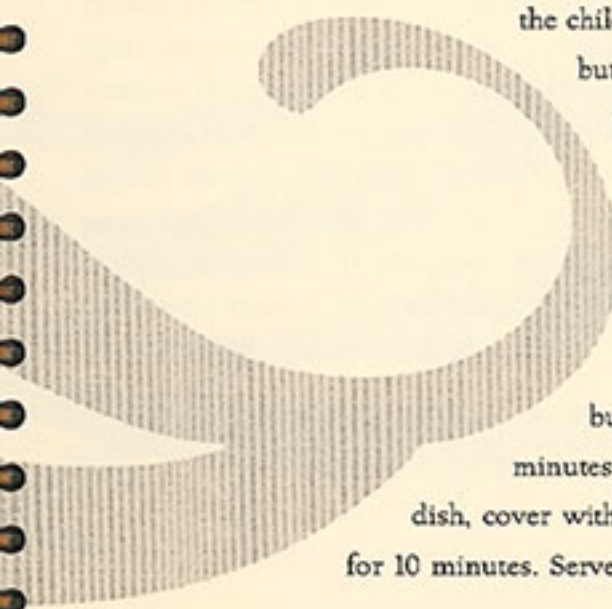
Chicken Breasts in Poblano Sauce au Gratin

Ingredients:

- 3 whole chicken breasts, about 12 oz. each
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 large chile poblano
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 cup thick cream
- 6 tbsp. grated cheddar cheese

Procedure:

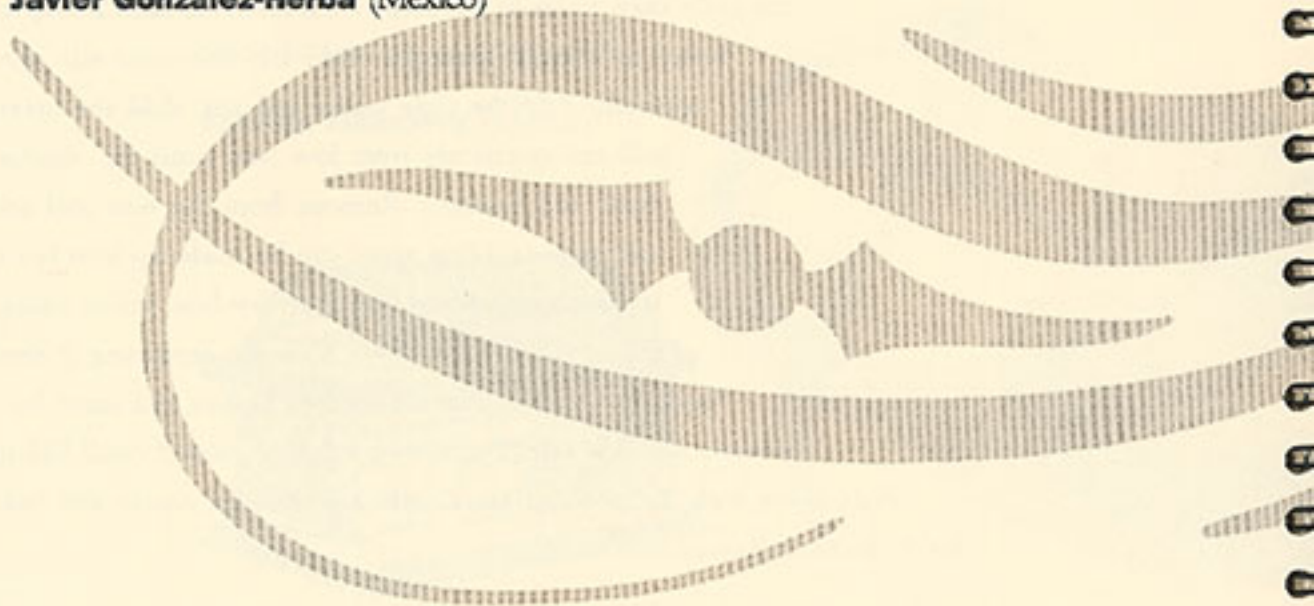
Remove the bones and skin and cut each chicken breast in half. Flatten each half slightly and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Refrigerate for 20 minutes. Remove the stem, seeds and membranes from the chile, then purée in a blender with the milk. Melt 2 tbsp. of butter in a small saucepan. Add the flour and stir until smooth. Add the chile purée and stir. Add the cream and stir constantly over low heat until the mixture boils and thickens. Remove from the heat and add salt to taste. (This sauce can be made up to 6 hours in advance and reheated over low heat before using.) Preheat the oven to 350°. Melt the remaining 2 tbsp. butter in a skillet, add the chicken breasts and sauté for 2 minutes on each side. Transfer to a lightly greased small baking dish, cover with the poblano sauce, sprinkle with the cheese and bake for 10 minutes. Serves 4-6.



I grew up in a small town in the state of Nuevo León, México. Every Sunday and other festive days, "Mamá" would take my sisters and me to church -no "buts" about it. So, we would go 15 minutes before Mass to pray and light candles to the Holy Child of Antocha, San Antonio (so my sisters could find nice, rich boyfriends) and, of course, to the Virgen of Guadalupe. Then, during Mass we would sing "Gloria, Gloria ¡Aleluya!" and every time it would happen...it would make me wish for a sweet Gloria candy from the "confitería" (Candy store.)

Glorias are a glorious sweet treat for all times and all occasions (except when you are on a diet.) You could give them away as Christmas presents, birthday presents, Day of the Dead presents and why not, Columbus Day presents, if you wish. Now, I must confess that I got the following recipe from a book, as I am not very good in the kitchen, you see. So if you decide to make them...send me some, OK?

Javier González-Herba (México)



Glorias, Glorias, ¡Aleluya!

Milk Candy

Ingredients:

(For 50 candies)

- 4 cups (1 liter) of milk
- 2 1/2 cups (625 grams) of sugar
- 3 tbsp. of vanilla extract
- 3 tbsp. of corn syrup
- 1 cup (129 grams) chopped walnuts
- 1 tsp. of sodium bicarbonate

Procedure:

In a big "cazo" (melting pan) mix the milk, sugar, vanilla and corn syrup. Place it on the stove on medium heat until it boils. Add the sodium bicarbonate and stir with a wooden spoon. Lower the flame and continue to stir until you see the bottom of the melting pan. Remove the pan from the stove. Add walnuts and beat vigorously until it gets cold enough to handle the mix with your hands. Put flour on your hands and make little balls, the size of a ping pong. (Fig. 1) and wrap them in red cellophane paper (Fig. 2) after you cut them in shapes of little "panchos." (Fig. 3) Enjoy!



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

*M*y eyes are fixed to the glass on my tray. It's fascinating. The glass is perfectly still, yet the Coke is alive. Shaking, sloshing, spilling over. It runs off the tray onto the cabin floor. Some lady screams – just a little. I hear another woman praying, "Ay Virgencita, ampárame." I guess this must be bad. But I really don't care. I'm only twelve, and this qualifies as fun. The pilot disagrees. Something about lightning hitting the plane. Forget Cozumel; we land in Mérida. We'll have to wait till morning to resume our trip.

But the night is warm and sticky and alive. And my Dad's not going to waste an opportunity to eat some "cochinita pibil." I have no idea what he's talking about. But my siblings and I agree, intrigued and excited nonetheless. We pile into a small taxicab and in 20 minutes are sitting at an outdoor table by the downtown

plaza. In no time at all, we're elbow deep in the sweet orange pork meat. No one speaks. It's a discovery that strikes us like the lightning that hit our plane, searing our central nervous system, causing emergency landings in our taste buds, postponing the flight of all other irrelevant senses. "Cochinita pibil." If I had known at the time how to put my thoughts into words, I would have asked: "Where did this come from? Who invented this?" But all I could do was eat, and hum softly in dumbfounded, blissful ecstasy. I don't hum much anymore – it's a little embarrassing.

Luis Gonzalez (Mexico)



Cochinita Pibil

Pork Baked in Banana Leaves

Ingredients:

- 3 lbs. boneless lean pork
- 3 oz. achiote paste. (If you can't find it at the store, see below to make it yourself)
- 1/2 cup lime juice
- 1 cup orange juice (fresh is best)
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 large banana leaves
- 1/2 cup melted lard

Onion Salsa:

- 2 cups chopped red onion
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 cup lime juice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 manzano or habanero chile peppers

Procedure:

Cut the meat into two inch pieces and place in a glass or ceramic dish. Place the achiote paste in a small glass bowl and add the juices to dissolve it, using your fingers to help break it up. Add the salt. Pour this liquid over the pork, cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours, preferably overnight. Preheat the oven to 325°. Hold the banana leaves directly over the flame on the stove for a few minutes, until they soften. Line a rectangular baking dish with the leaves, placing one the long way and the other the short way, with their ends overlapping the sides of the dish. Place the pork and marinade on the leaves and base with the lard. Fold the ends of the leaves over the pork, moistening slightly so they don't burn. Cover the dish with aluminum foil. Bake for two hours. Remove from the oven and uncover the meat. It should be tender, almost falling apart. If it isn't, cover and return to the oven for another 30 minutes. Four hours before serving, prepare the onion salsa. Place the onion in a bowl and add the juices and salt. Toast the whole manzano or habanero chile peppers and add them to the onions. Serve the pork hot with tortillas (makes great tacos) and pass the onion salsa separately. Serves 6-8.



The name Vampiro given to this drink comes from the deep red, bloody-like color of the mixture. Although it has tequila and is somewhat spicy, it's a drink that is really refreshing and not that strong. Some people like it stronger than others and change the amount of Tequila. But believe me: the more the Tequila, the more the fun. Usually it is served as an aperitif or cocktail, but it's so good that you want to have one after the other, during the meal, and after the meal. That's why I recommend preparing a whole pitcher.

Christmas time is a perfect season for this drink. Its Santa Claus Red color will surely combine with your decorations. If you do not celebrate Christmas, I'm sure it will combine with your New Year's party decorations. If you are not celebrating either, get a life! Get a Vampiro! **Jaime Belden** (Mexico)



Vampiro

A spicy drink to handle with care

Ingredients:

- 1 part of tequila
(White tequilas are most common for this drink, but you can use any kind)
- 2 parts of Sangrita
(Special ready-to-use red mixture produced in Mexico that you can find in liquor stores which carry good variety of tequilas or stores which carry Hispanic products. Recommended brand: Sangrita Viuda de Sánchez)
- 1/2 part of orange juice (Fresh oranges work better)
- Juice of one lime per glass
- Salt

Procedure:

Salt the rim of an Old Fashion glass (this size is recommended but you can use any size.) To salt the rim you pour salt on a small plate. Rub a lime half all around the glass rim and place the glass upside down on the salt.

You can prepare a glass or a whole pitcher with this recipe (I recommend you do a whole pitcher.) The number of glasses you are making the recipe for is the number of limes you are going to need. Mix the Tequila with the lime juice, orange juice and Sangrita. Stir and serve in salted rim glasses with lots of ice.

