

monthly deets



CUPCAKES: MY FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

By Lori Grossman

Although there is definitely a resurgence of the popularity of cupcakes these days, they always take me back to my childhood. My birthday comes at the end of May, which usually meant that school was out by that time, and my big day was celebrated with a party at our house. But when I was in third grade, my special day happened to coincide with the last day of school. Mrs. Jensen, my much-loved teacher, called my Mom and asked if she wanted to bring a cake so all the kids could celebrate with me. I'm sure Mom was delighted with the idea. Imagine – one birthday without kids running through the house! Mom said she'd be glad to bring something. How about cupcakes? That way, each child would have an equal portion, plus there wouldn't be knives or plates to clean up.

I loved helping in the kitchen when I was growing up, and baking was the biggest treat, especially when we made chocolate frosting and I got to lick the bowl and mixing spoon. Sometimes, Mom used mixes, like Betty Crocker or Duncan Hines, but nothing less than "from scratch" would do for my birthday cupcakes. I chose yellow cake with the aforementioned chocolate frosting – my favorite combination. My job was to read the recipe out loud while Mom assembled the ingredients. Later, I helped frost each cupcake. Only the excitement and anticipation of my school party stopped me from scarfing up a freshly baked cupcake right then and there.

It was a great day. I can close my eyes and picture myself and my classmates sitting at tables and enjoying those luscious cupcakes, washed down with my favorite raspberry Kool-Aid. Can you imagine how wired we were after all that sugar? It makes me smile just thinking about it.

And now, in case you haven't heard, cupcakes are trendy again. Sprinkles, which bills itself as the original cupcake bakery, has two locations in Texas, six more across the

Peanut Butter Cup Cupcakes

- * 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- * 1-1/4 cups firmly packed brown sugar
- * 3 teaspoons baking powder
- * 1 teaspoon salt
- * 1 cup milk
- * 1/3 cup shortening
- * 1/3 cup peanut butter
- * 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- * 2 eggs
- * 24 miniature Reece's peanut butter cups, unwrapped

Heat oven to 350°F. Line 24 muffin cups with paper baking cups.

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients except peanut butter cups using an electric mixer at low speed until moistened. Beat 2 minutes at medium speed. Fill the paper-lined muffin cups 2/3 full. Press an unwrapped peanut butter cup into the center of each batter-filled cup until the top edge is even with the batter.

Bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until tops spring back when touched lightly in the center. (You can use the toothpick test, too, if you're not sure.) Serve warm or cool. Makes 24 cupcakes.

country, plus 17 more bakeries coming soon. Cupcakes, thanks to Sprinkles, are going worldwide. I have several friends who are self-confessed Sprinkles addicts. One raves about the chocolate cupcakes, saying that they are "out-of-this-world!" Now that cupcakes are back in style, it's time to dig out those muffin pans and stock up on paper cupcake liners.

Do you have a favorite cake recipe that you'd like to use to make cupcakes? Here's how to do it. A one-layer cake recipe makes from 12 to 15 cupcakes, while a two-layer cake recipe will yield anywhere from 24 to 30 cupcakes. Because they are smaller than a cake, baking instructions have to be adjusted for cupcakes. Fill the cupcake liners 2/3 full and bake at 350°F for 15 to 20 minutes or until the tops spring back when lightly touched. Depending on the thickness of the frosting (if you're using frosting), some cupcakes can be frosted merely by dipping the top in the frosting, then turning slightly. Or, you can just use a knife. You'll have something to lick when you get through!



THE PIE FAMILY: PIES TARTS AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN OR ON TOP OF PIE CRUST

By Renee Shelton

A common question I am asked is ***"What is the difference between a pie and a tart?"***. To answer that and to better understand the differences and similarities between all the pie family members, here are definitions and explanations to many items seen on pastry menus in restaurants and hotels.

Also listed are several very old-fashioned recipes from historical cookbooks in my collection. Titles among my favorites old books: "Little Blue Book No. 1179 How to Make Desserts, Pies and Pastries," "The Complete Confectioner, Pastry-Cook, and Baker," "Desserts," and "The Epicurean."

Pie:

This pastry item is the one of the most popular and historical dessert menu items that can be found in the United States.

A typical pie consists either of one or two crusts with a sweet filling. Two crusts

are often dubbed "double crust" and bottom crust only a "single crust."

Pies can be

sweet or savory, and

cream, fruit, vegetable or meat

based. Often fruit pies

have a thickener

(flour,



cornstarch, tapioca, etc) for the resulting water and juices released during baking.

Deep Dish Pie:

This is usually a single crust pie made in a deep-dish pan (pie pan with higher sides). Baking the pie this way is great for Recipes can also be found where the filling is placed in a casserole or other baking dish and a layer of pastry is rolled and placed over the top. The edges are crimped and the top is vented, and the pie is baked. The resulting pie looks like a pie only it has no bottom, only the top. This style is generally served a la mode (with ice cream) or with whipped cream.

Tart:

This item is very similar to a pie in that it has a pastry dough bottom and a filling. It can be single- or double-crust. Often, tarts are thinner than pies, and can be found in fluted tart pans or made in flan rings. Tart rings come in many different shapes, including round and rectangular. On menus, it can be listed as "tart" or "tarte" depending on the pastry chef.

Flan:

This item can mean one of two things: an inverted rich egg-based custard with a caramel syrup and/or a caramelized top, or an open tart (one crust only on the bottom) baked in a flan ring. Flan rings

are metal circles with

rolled edges, and

the pastry crust is

made in them. The pastry dough is laid and pressed inside the ring directly over a sheet pan.

The shell can be baked by itself and used as a cooked ready-made base for cooked creams or filled with a filling and baked.



PASTRY OF THE MONTH

This month's "pastry of the month" is our delicious chocolate chip cookies!

All month you can receive this dessert for 1/2 off the original price! Come try one while they are hot!



Flan rings come in many different sizes from individual or very large sizes, and can be found in tin, stainless steel or aluminum. A flan (tart) can be savory or sweet.

Free Form Pie or Tart:

This is a pastry dough crust rolled out and instead of placing in a pie tin, it is transferred to a flat baking pan. The center is filled or spread with a filling and the edges are folded around it. The edges can be left as they are or crimped or cut decoratively. It is then baked until the crust is browned and the filling is cooked. Really watery or runny fillings are not good for this as the filling would run over the edges before folding them over. Fruit fillings are excellent for this kind of dessert.

Croustade:

This can be sweet or savory, and is basically anything in an edible container like bread crusts, hollowed rolls, empty pastry shells, cooked mashed potatoes, etc. For pastry, it generally means a free form pie or tart. Croustades can be individual or larger.

Galette:

Galettes are sweet or savory baked items. When prepared sweet, galettes can be defined in one of two ways: The first as a round and flat dessert made out of pastry dough, yeast-leavened doughs such as brioché and even puff pastry and are often filled with fruits, jams and creams. The second is a round, flat sometimes crimped cookie similar to shortbread.

Turnovers:

These are individual desserts made with pasty dough. Cut out from rounds (or squares or other shapes), turnovers are filled with spoonful or two of filling and folded over. The edges are crimped or pressed to seal. These are generally baked but can also be fried.



NOW PRESENTING

Last month construction finally wrapped upon our new headquarters!

This has been a long awaited project and we are so excited to begin moving into our new space.

Fried Pies:

These are similar to turnovers, and are generally fruit-filled. The pastry dough is usually always pie dough and after frying they are drained and can be found served with a dusting of confectioner's sugar.

Upside-Down Pies or Tarte Tatin:

Tarte Tatin is a caramelized apple dish baked with a pastry dough on top. It is then inverted on a serving platter with the fruit on top and pastry on bottom. Variations that can be found on pastry menus include peach, nectarine, pear and other slice-able fruits. The caramel and resulting syrup from the fruit that accumulates and thickens is served with the dish. An upside down pie is similar with less complexity: just a filling (usually fruit) placed on the bottom of a pan with straight sides for easy unmolding, pie crust is placed over the top and the whole thing is baked. It is served inverted on a plate.

Angel Pies:

Generally speaking, these pies have a meringue crust to them. Meringue is spread thickly in a pie pan and baked until it is crisp and dried. Fresh filling is spooned high in the center and served immediately. Cutting this pie is facilitated with a serrated knife. The filling that is often used is a sweetened fruit filling. Some of the popular flavors are raspberry and strawberry since these both contrast nicely with the white meringue crust.



CRAVING THE CONTRAST: SALTY AND SWEET TREATS

The salty and sweet flavor combo is trending big now for a reason: our palates crave the contrast! Think caramel with sea salt, chocolate with peanut butter, pretzels with vanilla ice cream.

The irresistible yin and yang of salty and sweet items can be found everywhere now. Chewy caramel morsels sprinkled with imported sea salt are offered in the trendiest candy boutiques, even as good old two-packs of peanut butter cups are waiting for you in the vending machine down the hall.



Incorporating sweet and salty flavors into your dessert menu makes an on-trend statement that satisfies customers' cravings, a delicious two-for-one deal.

All that and a bag of chips:

Potato chips and other salty snacks can play a delicious, sinfully salty part in many desserts, either as a coating or incorporated right into batter.

Just ask Chef Gary J. Rawson, CEC, MTC/ACF of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. He's crushing sea-salt potato chips into oatmeal cookie dough and grinding pretzels and corn chips into toppings for ice cream.

"We expect to keep playing with the salty and sweet concept," he predicts for the coming semester.

The strawberry shortcake, traditionally a pretty much "sweet-sweet" dessert, is going to get the salty-sweet treat-

ment at Vanderbilt soon, Rawson says. He plans to put salty crushed potato chips into the shortcake mixture, "with the really sweet strawberries on top, and instead of sweetened whipped cream, I'll use yogurt or creme fraiche (a matured, thickened cream with a tangy, nutty flavor)."

That way, Rawson says, the composition of the strawberry shortcake will be: salty base, sweet topping, and then a more neutral topping, creating "more balance and more contrast at the same time," he adds.

Salty and sweet treats that lean towards the savory side make for some nuanced flavors that will please a more adult contemporary crowd.

Complex flavors, such as figs and blue cheese, can be fairly simple to prepare, for an elegant dessert, or as a passed hors d'oeuvre in a catering setting.

Culinary history certainly points toward an enduring taste for savory sweets. Italian chef Iacopo Falai told The New York Times that he was inspired by a cookbook with recipes from Catherine de Medici.

"There I saw zuccotto (a Florentine confection made with vanilla semifreddo and chocolate chips) with candied fennel instead of chocolate chips," Falai told the Times. "It was interesting, so I tried it."

If this sounds a little too involved for everyday food service, remember that good old chocolate and peanut butter are just as much a part of this trend!

The Unexpected Compliment:

Come on in to Just Desserts for a tasty treat of bacon paired with chocolate and nine other super-new dessert trends, including big-city macarons (not to be confused with macaroons), and amped up ice cream sandwiches!

calendar of events

May 30	Opening of New Building Party	7 pm - midnight
June 18	Customer Care Workshop in Conference Room A	9 am - 1 pm
June 24	Cystic Fibrosis Walk-A-thon	10 am - 12pm
July 5	Fourth of July - Company Picnic at Blanchard Park	9 am - 1 pm
July 12	Planning Round-table	5 pm - 7 pm
July 20	Marketing Workshop	12 pm - 3 pm

SON OF A BUN