

Home on the Range

Tasty Ways To Say 'Be My Valentine'

Valentine's Day may not be a major holiday, but it is a day of major celebration. Sweethearts send flowers and chocolates, cards are written, and romantic dinners for two are the order of the day.

Need some ideas to make the day special for your valentine? Lebanon County Dairy Princess Kristi Schoffstall writes that a candlelight dinner using these recipes have real dairy products in them and will surely make Cupid active.

She writes, "Begin the meal with a tasty delight of Strawberry Shakes. Cheese-Filled Jumbo Shells made with loving care is the main dish for dinner. For dessert, try Strawberry Bavarian for a sweet treat. One might think that the evening is over, but it's not. Curl up to a movie with your special someone and Parmesan-Curry Popcorn."

Her recipes and many more from our readers is sure to please your Valentine.

STRAWBERRY BAVARIAN

2 envelopes unflavored gelatin
1½ cups sugar
1½ cups boiling water
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 cups whipped cream
2 cups sour cream
Strawberry sauce topping
Combine gelatin and sugar. Add boiling water and stir until dissolved. Blend in sour cream and vanilla. Chill until slightly thickened. Blend in whipped cream. Top with fruit or pie filling. Chill and serve. Fill a large bowl.

Kristi Schoffstall
Lebanon Co. Dairy Princess

STRAWBERRY SHAKES

¾ cup milk
¾ cup strawberry topping (optional)
3 scoops strawberry ice cream
Whipped cream
Cinnamon hearts
Place ¾ cup milk and ¼ cup strawberry topping in blender container. Cover and blend on high for 2 seconds. Add 3 scoops ice cream. Cover and blend on low until smooth. Makes 2 servings 295 calories per serving.

Top with whipped cream and sprinkle with cinnamon hearts.

Kristi Schoffstall
Lebanon Co. Dairy Princess

SHORTBREAD HEARTS

1 cup butter, softened
½ cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 ounces white chocolate baking chips or white chocolate baking bar, broken into ¼-inch pieces
½ cup semisweet chocolate morsels
Seedless raspberry preserves, if desired

Confectioners' sugar, if desired
Sweetened softly whipped cream, if desired

Raspberries, if desired

In large mixing bowl, cream butter until light and fluffy. Beat in ½ cup sugar and vanilla. Gradually add flour; mix well. Divide dough in half. Wrap each half in plastic wrap. Refrigerate at least one hour or overnight for easier handling. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Roll out each half of cookie dough on lightly floured surface to ¼-inch thickness. Cut with floured, heart-shaped cutter; place on unbuttered cookie sheets. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or just until cookies begin to brown. Remove from oven; transfer to wire racks to cool completely. Meanwhile, to melt chocolate, place white chocolate and semisweet chocolate in separate, small resealable freezer bags. Close bags. Microwave one at a time approximately 2 to 3 minutes on medium, just until melted. Knead bag until chocolate is smooth. Cut off very small corner of bag; use bag to pipe or drizzle white and semisweet chocolate over cookies. Spoon raspberry preserves into small resealable freezer bag. Cut off very small corner; pipe preserves onto cookies as desired. Sprinkle lightly with sugar. Serve with whipped cream and raspberries.

MAMMA

PARMESAN CURRY POPCORN

½ cup butter, melted
½ cup grated parmesan cheese
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon curry powder
12 cups popcorn

Mix butter, cheese, salt and curry powder. Pour over popcorn; toss.

Makes 12 cups popcorn. 170 calories a cup.

Kristi Schoffstall
Lebanon Co. Dairy Princess



Make your sweetheart a romantic dessert of Shortbread Hearts, drizzled with chocolate and served with whipped cream and berries.

BUCKEYE CANDY

1 cup butter, melted
1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
1 pound confectioners' sugar
1½ cups peanut butter
18 ounces semisweet chocolate chips

Line two cookie sheets with wax paper; set aside.

Place butter in a 2-cup glass measure and microwave on high for two minutes, or until melted. Combine crumbs and sugar in food processor; blend. Add peanut butter; pulse to blend. Pour in melted butter; pulse until well blended. Shape into 85 1-inch balls; set aside.

Melt chocolate chips in a 4-cup glass measure. Microwave on medium for seven minutes; stir. If not melted, microwave on medium for one to two minutes or until chocolate is melted.

Use a bamboo skewer or a round wooden toothpick to pick up each peanut butter ball; dip in melted chocolate. Do not completely dunk but leave a ¼-inch diameter area of the peanut butter showing to resemble a buckeye, which is a nut from a buckeye tree. Place on prepared cookie sheets. Let dry and refrigerate until set. Store at room temperature in airtight containers.

Nutrient data per candy: 107 calories per candy, 2 grams protein, 6 grams fat, 11 grams carbohydrates, 1 gram dietary fiber, 1 milligram cholesterol, and 57 milligrams sodium.

Ann Crouse
Shade Gap

CHERRY DELIGHT

1 package Dream Whip
1 cup confectioners' sugar
4 ounces cream cheese, softened
Graham crackers
1 can cherry or blueberry pie filling

Make the Dream Whip according to instructions on box. Place crushed graham crackers crumbs

in bottom of dish. Add half the cream cheese and sugar mixture, then half the pie filling. Add the remaining cream cheese and pie filling. Top with Dream Whip.

Steph Buck
Lebanon Alternate
Dairy Princess

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Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date.

February

17- Cherry Month
24- Potato Lover's Month

March

2- National Nutrition Month
9- Peanuts and Other Nuts

Featured Recipe

The USDA Food Guide Pyramid has pushed fiber into the culinary forefront with its recommendation for increased consumption of grains. A resurgence of interest in cooking with whole grains has resulted.

To assist you with ideas for cooking and serving whole grains, free recipe brochures are available from several whole grain companies. Send a self-addressed stamped business size envelope to the following addresses if you would like recipe brochures.

• National Barley Foods Council, W. 905 Riverside, Suite 501, Spokane, WA 99201.

• Wheat Foods Council, 5500 S. Quebec, Ste. 111, Englewood, CO 80111.

• USA Rice Council, Dept. Budget, P.O. Box 740121, Houston, TX 77274.

Here is a recipe from the USA Rice Council.

PORK FRIED RICE

1½ tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
2 eggs, beaten
1 cup diced raw boneless pork
1 cup finely chopped fresh mushrooms
½ cup thinly sliced green onions, including tops
3 cups cooked brown rice, cooled
1 tablespoon soy sauce

In large skillet or wok, heat ½ tablespoon oil over medium heat. Add eggs and cook without stirring until set. Invert skillet over baking sheet to remove cooked eggs; cut into strips. In same skillet, heat remaining oil over medium-high heat. Stir fry pork, mushrooms, and green onions in oil three minutes or until mushrooms and onions are tender. Stir in cooked rice and egg strips; sprinkle with soy sauce. Toss lightly; heat thoroughly. Makes 4 servings.