

Sweet Talk



Chatham chefs and bakers dish out their coveted holiday confections

By Stacey Marcus

The holiday season is fast approaching, followed swiftly by the usual barrage of sweet delights and festive desserts. It is the time to celebrate family, friends and all the goodies that go along with the holidays. Only Scrooge himself can deny the intoxicating aroma of cinnamon-laced confections baking in the oven. While many of our tables are adorned with favorite family sweets, we asked local experts to share their prized Yuletide desserts to help us collect even more traditions.

Here are five fabulous recipes to add some spice to your holidays!

Southern Apple Pecan Bread Pudding with Maker's Mark Bourbon Caramel

INGREDIENTS

- 8 slices brioche or thick-sliced bread
- 8 large eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 can (14-ounce) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 large apples (Honeycrisp or Fuji), finely chopped
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Bourbon Caramel Sauce

- 1 tablespoon honey
- ¼ cup Maker's Mark bourbon
- 1 cup sugar
- ¾ cup cream
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

BREAD PUDDING

1. In an extra large bowl, add eggs, milk, vanilla, condensed milk and whisk.
2. Add all other ingredients except the bread.
3. Mix together well.
4. Add bread to the mixture.
5. Wrap and let soak in refrigerator for anywhere from two hours to overnight.
6. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
7. Place in large greased baking dish or muffin tin
8. Bake for 30 to 40 min.

BOURBON CARAMEL SAUCE

1. Add sugar, honey and bourbon to a medium saucepan.
2. Cook on medium to high heat, stirring occasionally.
3. When the sugar turns a deep brown, pour cream into the center of the pan and whisk the sugar and cream together.
4. Remove the mixture from the heat and mix in the salt.
5. Let the sauce cool for 10 minutes; the sauce will thicken as it cools.
6. Pour the sauce into a container; keep for up to two weeks.
7. Serve and top with whipped cream or favorite ice cream.



Chatham Inn at 359 Main
359 Main St., Chatham
508-945-9232
359main.com

Pastry chef Brandi Babineau-Felt will be demonstrating preparation of some of her famous holiday pastries and desserts from 1-3 p.m., Nov. 12, \$75 per person. Limited to just 12 people, please email info@chathamwinebar.com to reserve your spot.

Brandi Babineau-Felt Pastry Chef, Chatham Inn at 359 Main

"This is one of my favorite dishes," says Babineau-Felt. "It reminds me of the giant pecan tree that was in my grandparents' yard in Louisiana and holidays spent with family. Every bite just makes me smile, thinking of all the good memories. I like to make this dish and sit by a big fire, inside or outside, and enjoy friends and family."



Rick Crean
Owner, Chatham Village
Café & Bakery

Crean uses many of his grandfather's recipes to bring the sweet joy of the holidays to his bakery and home. "My grandfather owned a bakery in Brockton where I worked since I was 12. Some of my sweetest childhood memories are creating and decorating sugar cookies. Once we start painting cookies with green icing and adding colorful sprinkles, I know that it is the holidays!" says Crean. "Every holiday, there was always a plate full of sugar cookies at my grandparents' house for dessert after dinner," says Crean. He shares what he says is "the best sugar cookie recipe on the planet."



Christmas Tree Cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup margarine, softened
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 6 cups flour

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix all ingredients and refrigerate dough for one hour.
2. Roll out chilled dough to ¼ to ½- inch thick on floured surface.
3. Cut out dough with cookie cutter and place on lightly greased cookie sheets.
4. Bake at 400 degrees for 5 to 6 minutes.

FROSTING

- 3 cups powdered sugar
- ½ cup butter, melted
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla
- 1 to 2 teaspoons milk

1. Sift the powdered sugar into a bowl.
2. Add melted butter, vanilla and milk and mix with electric mixer.
3. Let your creative side go and decorate!

Yield: about 4 dozen cookies

Chatham Village Café & Bakery
69 Crowell Road, Chatham, 508-945-3229
chathamvillagecafeandbakery.com



Oma's Boterkoek

INGREDIENTS

- ⅔ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons almond extract
- 1 egg, beaten (reserve 1 teaspoon)
- 1 ½ cups flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- Sliced almonds, for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a medium bowl, mix together butter, sugar and almond extract.
3. Add beaten egg, except for 1 teaspoon.
4. Sift flour and baking powder, and add to bowl, mixing with wet ingredients.
5. Put dough in greased 9-inch pie plate.
6. Mix reserved 1 teaspoon of beaten egg with 1 teaspoon of water, and brush over dough.
7. Sprinkle with sliced almonds, if desired (adds a nice decorative touch, but not necessary).
8. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until done (firm to the touch).

Jonathan Haffmans, Chef/Owner, Vers

"My parents and I used to visit my Oma in the country and she knew that my favorite dessert was, and still is, boterkoek," says Haffmans. "She would have it all ready for the oven, except for the almonds that went on top, and we used to decorate the cake together. My wife, Karen, and my children (Olivia, 9, and Maarten, 6) now make this dessert at Christmastime and the kids love decorating it as much as I did when I was their age," says Haffmans, who is actively looking for a new location for Vers, formerly located in the Orpheum Theater.







Holiday Gingerbread Tiramisu

INGREDIENTS

- 1 box gingerbread cake mix
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- 2 8-ounce packages cream cheese
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups whipped cream
- ½ cup strong coffee
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Prepare cake batter according to box directions and then pour into a nonstick 10x15-inch pan. Bake for 20-25 minutes.
3. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar, cream cheese and vanilla with electric mixer.
4. Fold in whipped cream.
5. Cut cake in half and then lengthwise into strips. On a baking dish, place half of the cake strips for the first layer. Sprinkle with half of the coffee. Spread half the mixture for the next layer.
6. Add remaining cake strips, sprinkle with remaining coffee and top with mixture. Dust with cinnamon, cover and refrigerate overnight.

Bob Signoriello
Executive Chef,
Wild Goose Tavern

Signoriello loves to enjoy holiday gingerbread tiramisu in front of a toasty fire. "I particularly like this recipe because it transforms a traditional Italian dessert into a holiday comfort dessert that you could enjoy with a sniffer of 150-year-old Grand Marnier," says Signoriello, who describes the dessert as a "slice of heaven."

Wild Goose Tavern, 512 Main St., Chatham,
508-945-5590, wildgoosetavern.com



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Pumpkin Brown Butter Cake

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups pumpkin puree
- 3 ⅔ cups sugar
- 2 cups whole milk
- 4 eggs
- 2 ½ cups cake flour
- 3 ⅔ teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 ¼ cups brown butter
- ⅔ teaspoon spice mix

DIRECTIONS

1. Blend the pumpkin puree with the sugar and add the eggs, followed by the milk.
2. Sift all the dry ingredients and add to the bowl of wet ingredients, mixing just to incorporate.
3. Add the warm, but not hot, browned butter and combine.
4. Let cake batter rest in fridge for four hours or overnight.
5. Bake in a cake frame on a half sheet pan at 350 degrees for 45 to 60 minutes.

Yield: ½ sheet



Brennan Froeschner Executive Pastry Chef, Chatham Bars Inn

Froeschner likes pumpkin brown butter cake because of its principal ingredient: pumpkin, which is harvested from the property's eight-acre farm in Brewster. The cake is served with a pumpkin gelato and sauce, both of which incorporate bourbon—the chef's drink of choice and another reason it is a favorite of the kitchen.



Chatham Bars Inn, 297 Shore Road, Chatham
508-945-0096, chathambarsinn.com



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