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Export date: Thu May 23 1:56:26 2013 / +0000 GMT

Sweet, Savory and Winter!

Hi everyone, Again, its been a while...Its only been about 3 weeks but a lot has happened. Can't disclose much but most of you will find out in the coming weeks and its pretty exciting! I've been stocking up on more fun baking tools to play with in the kitchen so that's pretty exciting too. Winter has been nice to us in PA this year. Only a small amount of snowfall so far. At the end is a yummy wintery recipe I hope you'll enjoy!

In my last posts, I stated about pricing a wedding cake for someone. Her flowers are carnations, colors are red and black. Looking back, I realized I never used gumpaste to form carnations. Roses, lilies and a few others, yes, carnations, no. So I got to work. As of now, I've made about a dozen carnations and they're so pretty. They don't take very long to do and they're super easy. I'm working on coloring them. I don't have an airbrush to use and I wanted to keep the base color white, in case someone had asked for them in the coming weeks. Since I have the white ones finished, I'll work on coloring. Black carnations? Who knew...haha. I'll attempt to do a tutorial soon for those interested.

My mom and I visited a bakery in the area just last week and I normally find "something" good about every place, this time however, I couldn't. My mom got a "Vanilla Bean" Cupcake and I tried the "Boston Cream". We split them and thank goodness I had a drink, the cake in each were both so dry and the filling and icing were practically non-existent. When I got home, I was on a mission. I had some leftover butter-cream so I made a lemon curd butter-cream, peanut butter butter-cream and a blueberry butter-cream. I started on my cupcakes, just stuck to plain chocolate and vanilla then waited for them to cool. My momma got me a neat tool that "hollows" out cupcakes (regular sized and jumbo). I hollowed out a dozen of each and kept the little "tops" to the side. I filled my vanilla with the blueberry butter-cream, replaced the top and slathered on the lemon. I just stuck to chocolate and peanut butter since well, classic! My dad wasn't too impressed with either as he doesn't like sweets. My mom LOVED the lemon blueberry, and Art, he had no preference. I gave some away and then we had none so...Guess I have to get working in the kitchen soon! =]

If you're from Pennsyltucky like me, you'll probably know when I say Pot Pie, I don't mean those little meat pies filled with veggies, gravy and meat. I'm talking a large pot full of meat, potatoes, brothy gravy and dough squares. Most others know that as Chicken and Dumplings but then where do real chicken and dumplings go? A dumpling to me is a little dough ball simmered and "baked" on top of a broth. Back to pot pie...I know its not very sweet and dessert like to be a normal post but we had some last night and its perfect for chilly winter nights, which, we're still in for another month! Since we don't have a real recipe for it, its just been handed down, I'll post how its been made in our family for the past (at least) 6 generations. NOTE: This is NOT an exact cut recipe, double dough if needed, or use amounts better suited to your family so you aren't feeding armies! We use our leftovers for lunch or dinner again so we always make extra.

Dough:
2 C. Flour (I use a mix of AP and Whole Wheat)
2 T. Butter
1 Egg
Milk

Cut butter into flour until crumbly. Add egg to a 1 C. measuring cup and beat. Fill remainder of cup up to 3/4 line with milk. Mix into flour and butter. Roll out to 1/8" on a floured surface, cut into 2x2" squares.

Take a bag of bone in chicken, whole chicken or a ham shank/butt and place in a large stockpot. Cover 3/4 with water or broth or a mix of both. Boil until meat is fully cooked or falling off the bone. Take out and cool. Turn off broth and strain.
Pull meat off the bone and set both aside. Place broth back on heat, bring to a boil. Add about 3 medium potatoes, diced up.
Make dough, roll out and cut. When broth boils, add a few squares at a time, using a spoon to submerge them (they will float back up). Do this with remaining dough. Add as much ham or chicken as desired and let simmer for a while, stirring often to prevent

sticking. Pot pie is ready when potatoes and dough squares are tender and broth is thickened like a gravy.

When plated, sprinkle vinegar on top, along with diced onion, salt and pepper. Enjoy!

Hope my PA Dutch didn't show through too much! Feel free to ask questions if I got confusing or post your own variations! =]
Happy Eating!