

For the holidays: a taste of Barrington 220

The holidays are a special time where we give and often gather to enjoy a memorable feast. How many of us have fond memories of aromas wafting from the kitchen as our families prepared for these celebrations? To me, the holidays have always been a beautiful time when we revisit traditions with family and friends such as cookie exchanges, gift giving, and storytelling, frequently around a sumptuous meal or treat.

This year, a new organization in our area is providing a way for families to share some of their own popular culinary traditions. Proceeds from the sale of a distinctive cookbook will benefit Barrington Area Special Voices (BASV), a recently formed group that provides support and advocacy to children ages 3 to 21 who have unique needs in the Barrington 220 School District. The goal of BASV is to provide a place where parents of these children can turn to for support, guidance, and advice.

While our staff superbly accommodates special needs students and their families, BASV will provide an additional resource for parents. The group offers counsel, speakers, and numerous informational tools, including a packet for parents letting them know what to expect when their child has identified needs. BASV also plans to establish a mentoring program where families with older special needs students can pair with families of younger students.

In the spirit of giving, I am contributing some of my best servings to this new cookbook, which is appropriately titled, *I Want that Recipe!* The first came from a former colleague at Highland Park High School. Its origin is unknown, but every year she would make her Warm Bittersweet Dream for our faculty holiday party. The dessert was so popular, it would inevitably disappear by the end of the first lunch period, leaving those unavailable until a later hour scheming to rearrange their schedules before the following

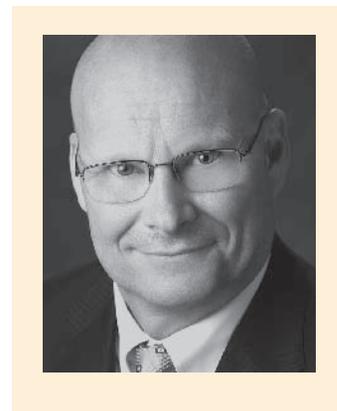


PHOTO: THOMAS BALSAMO

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year. This devilishly chocolate dish adds to the festive atmosphere of any occasion. The great thing about the recipe is that even someone like me who isn't exactly Wolfgang Puck in the

Warm Bittersweet Dream [PROVIDED BY DR. TOM LEONARD]

Bittersweet Crust:

- 2 ounces bittersweet chocolate, broken into pieces.
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 21 chocolate wafers, broken into pieces.
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, melted
- ¼ teaspoon of salt

Bittersweet Filling:

- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, broken into pieces.
- ½ cup of sugar
- 1 teaspoon instant espresso
- ¼ cup boiling water
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, soften
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons of vanilla
- 1/8 teaspoon of salt
- 1 cup of chilled whipped cream, lightly whipped with 2 teaspoons of sugar and 1 teaspoon of vanilla

Instructions:

- Heat oven 350 degrees. For crust, put chocolate and sugar in food processor fitted with metal blade. Process until chocolate is finely ground. Add wafer pieces. Process until wafers are finely ground. Add remaining ingredients. Pulse processor until mixed.
- Transfer crumbs to 9-inch tart pan with removable bottom; set on baking sheet. Press crumbs evenly on bottom and up sides of pan.
- Bake until moist and hot, about 8 minutes. Press crumbs back into place with back of spoon, if necessary. Let cool for 15 minutes.
- For filling, put chocolate, espresso, and sugar in food processor fitted with metal blade. Process until chocolate is finely minced. Add boiling water through feed tube with motor running. Process until chocolate is melted, about 10 seconds.
- Add butter, eggs, vanilla, and salt. Process until smooth, about 10 seconds. Transfer to baked crust. Set tart pan on baking sheet.
- Bake until set (350 degrees), about 20 minutes. Let cool completely on rack. Can be made up to 3 days ahead and refrigerated or frozen up to 1 month. Let come to room temperature before reheating.
- To serve, reheat 2 to 3 minutes in preheated 200-degree oven. Cut into wedges. Serve warm with a dollop of whipped cream. Optional ... serve on plate in pool of raspberry sauce.

Note: If using 12-inch pan, increase amounts by 1.5.