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**Edith's Cake That Thrilled the French**

**By Janette Blackwell**

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Twenty-three chefs who cooked for world royalty and heads of state (The Club des Chefs des Chefs) were, during their 1987 visit to the U.S., wined and dined with the best our finest chefs had to offer. What impressed them most? Lunch at an Amish farm in Pennsylvania, where they ate homegrown new potatoes, string beans with cream sauce and corn, charcoal-grilled chicken, and baked ham, washed down with homemade root beer and peppermint tea, served by the family in a barn lined with handmade quilts.

They were stunned. Happily so, it seems. The chef for the president of France said, "Cooking has evolved so much. Nobody presents the true product as it is, and all of a sudden we were presented that."

But the desserts impressed them most. Especially one they couldn't name. One they described as a light "pain d'epices" (spice cake) with a layer of chocolate filling. Gilles Brunner, chef to Prince Rainier of Monaco, was so taken with the cake, which he described as a chocolate gingerbread, that he tried to get the recipe. His request was refused.

The Amish family did not want their identity revealed, which refusal greatly hampered efforts to identify the cake as well. Research by Phyllis Richman, then food editor of the Washington Post, seemed to show that the mystery dessert was Amish applesauce cake with chocolate frosting, and the Post printed a version of it contributed by Betty Groff, a cookbook author from the Pennsylvania Dutch country.

Which applesauce cake turned out to be pretty much what our family had been enjoying since my father married Edith Kennedy in 1977, and which Edith's family had been enjoying long before that. Her daughter, Lorenelle Doll, who gave me the recipe, says that it was a favorite of my father and Lorenelle's husband Arnie. (So far as I know, Edith didn't actually feed any to a French chef.)

## Edith's Cake That Thrilled the French

I like to think Edith's version is better than Betty Groff's, because that recipe says to "frost with vanilla or chocolate frosting if desired." Whereas Edith's gives a recipe for chocolate frosting MADE WITH BUTTER. And in my view the humblest frosting made with butter is better than the fanciest frosting made without. I'm not implying that Edith's frosting is humble. It isn't. It's purely wonderful, as is her cake.

Edith Kennedy Glidewell went to be with her Lord in March 2002, but before that she gladdened many hearts in many ways, this applesauce cake not the least of them.

### EDITH'S APPLESAUCE CAKE

Cream together 1/2 cup room temperature butter or shortening and 1 cup sugar. Add 1 egg and beat together. Mix in 1-1/2 cups applesauce.

Sift together 2 cups flour, 1 tsp. baking powder, 1 tsp. soda, 1 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. cinnamon, 1/2 tsp. allspice, 1/2 tsp. nutmeg, and 1/4 tsp. cloves. Add to applesauce mixture, along with 1 cup raisins and 3/4 cup chopped walnuts.

Lightly oil a 9" x 12" pan and dust with flour. Add the cake mixture and bake at 350 degrees 50 to 60 minutes, until the top of the cake's center springs back when touched. Frost with chocolate frosting when cool.

Chocolate Frosting: Combine in a heavy saucepan or double boiler 1 square baker's unsweetened chocolate, 1 cup sugar, 1/4 cup butter, and 1/3 cup milk. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, and cook 1 minute. Cool and beat until the frosting has a satin finish.

Find Janette Blackwell's hilarious cookbook, "Steamin' Down the Tracks with Viola Hockenberry," at

## **Wedding Cake Toppers: Important Things To Know**

**By Melissa Burton**

Wedding cake toppers have long been the traditional symbol of married couples as they were symbolically placed above the wedding cake for everybody to see.

Wedding cake toppers are available in a wide array of designs, colors, and styles wherein couples can choose whatever they think would best portray their marriage.

So, for those who want to know some tips regarding the right way to choose wedding cake toppers, here are some tips that you may use:

1. Never use wedding cake toppers that are made of plastics, especially the cheap ones.

Even if you are tight on a budget, it is best not to choose wedding cake toppers that are made of

plastics. Usually, these are the ones that are readily available in the department stores.

Wedding cake toppers should be as exceptional as your wedding cake. Therefore, it is best to use wedding cake toppers that is out of ordinary and never before seen in any wedding. This may cost a little bit more than what you have intended to spend with but would definitely convert your wedding cake into something wonderful, one that would definitely make your wedding truly a memorable event.

## 2. Be creative.

It is best if the wedding along with your wedding cake and cake toppers are all personalized. This means that the designs and styles are creatively made by the couple. This will add more romance and glamour on the wedding itself.

Best of all, do not be constrained with the traditional and classical designs of wedding cake toppers. You may deviate from the customs and have your very own wedding cake toppers.

Today, there are many contemporary designs that the couple may use. In fact, they can even have their own ideas. All they have to do is to ask their baker to make the concept and use it as their wedding cake topper.

3. For the budget conscious couple, you can use your parent's wedding cake topper if it is still available. This will truly make your wedding cake very special because of the hand-down generation.

The point is, whatever designs or styles of cake toppers you choose to have on your wedding cake, the fact that it symbolizes your marriage is already a special concept that no other item can replace.

Wedding cake toppers are not just sheer embellishments in a cake but more of an emblem, one that best represents the love that is flowing in the hearts of the couple.

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