

Homemade Good News

Vol. IV

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM DIXIE CRYSTALS

No. 2



VALENTINE'S DINNER
for two

MENU OF THE MONTH

It's a shame that Valentine's Day doesn't come around more often. The flowers go to our heads, we eat bon bons with abandon, and after a Romantic Dinner For Two we're too entranced to consider anything as mundane as calories or dirty dishes. To make this day so splendid that it will last us at least a whole year, we've put an extraordinary amount of T.L.C. into this Valentine's Menu: a voluptuous Shrimp and Avocado Salad with Lemon Garlic Mayonnaise; a main course of Chicken Breasts cooked in Marsala Wine with Ham and Mushrooms; our Rataouille made with a bouquet of fresh herbs; and a fabulous heart-shaped Red Velvet Cake cloaked in a Cream Cheese Icing. So bon appetit, ya'll and VIVE L'AMOUR!

Shrimp and Avocado Salad with Lemon Garlic Mayonnaise

- 1 medium, ripe avocado
- 2 TBSP lemon juice
- 12 medium size cold boiled shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2-3 TBSP Lemon Garlic Mayonnaise (recipe follows)

Cut avocado in half lengthwise and remove pit. Slice each half, from end to end, into 6 thin wedges, and carefully scoop them out of the skin. Drench the wedges in lemon juice to prevent discoloration, and arrange them on two salad plates, making a slightly overlapping line on each. Arrange the shrimp (in equal portions) in a line down the center of the avocado. Spoon Lemon Garlic Mayonnaise over each salad and serve.

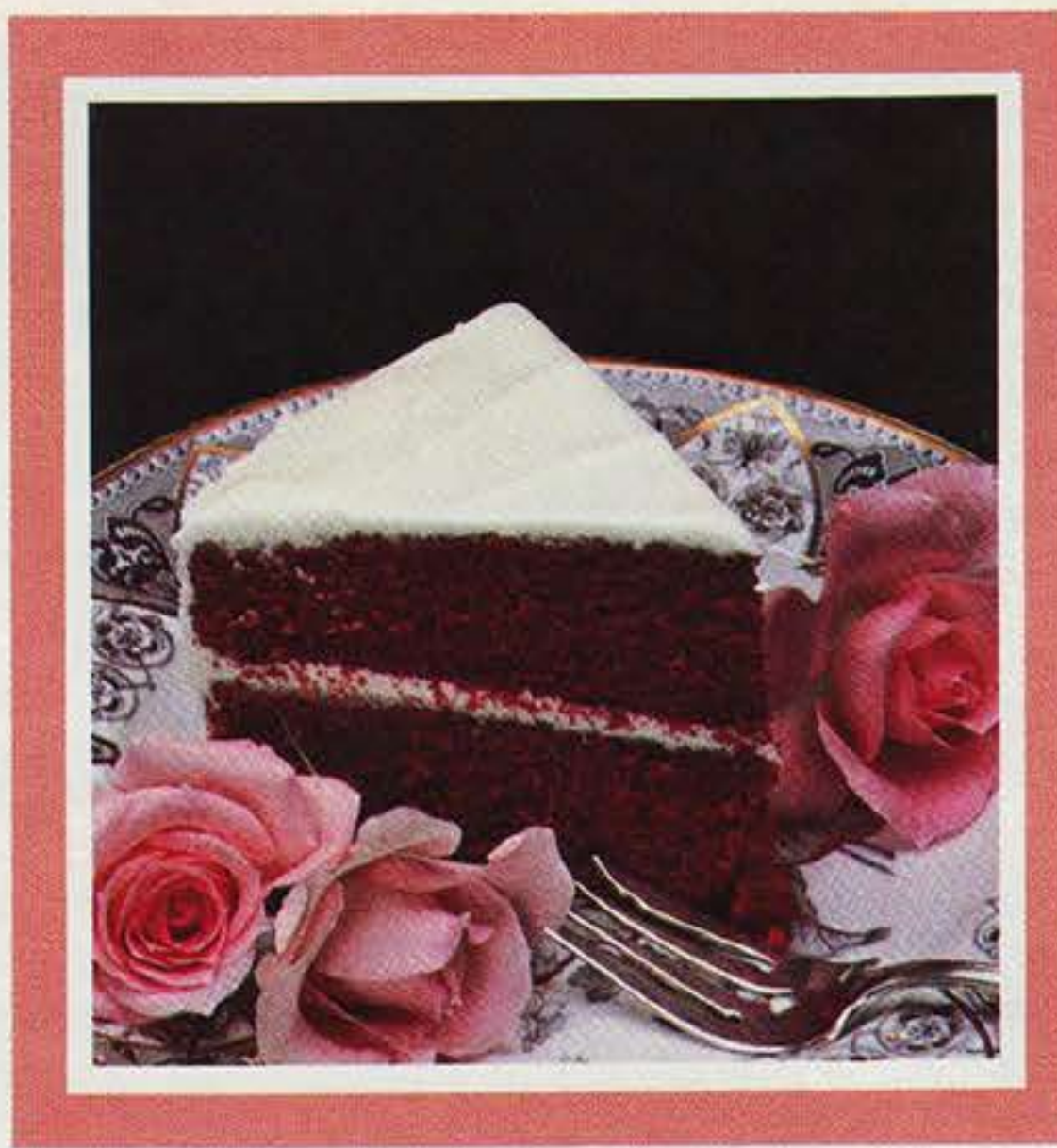
Lemon Garlic Mayonnaise

- 2 egg yolks
- 1 whole egg
- 1 TBSP dijon mustard
- ½ cup fresh lemon juice
- salt, freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 6 cloves garlic
- 2 cups fine olive oil

Combine egg yolks, whole egg, mustard, salt and pepper to taste, and half of the lemon juice in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade. (If you don't have a food processor, a blender will do nicely.) Process one minute. Leave the motor running and drop the garlic cloves in through the feed tube, then slowly pour in the olive oil, keeping it to a thin trickle. When all of the oil is incorporated, turn off the motor and taste the mayonnaise. Adjust seasonings, if you wish, and if you would like a more tart sauce, add the remaining lemon juice. Keep the mayonnaise covered and in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Suprema Di Pollo Alla Zurla (Chicken Breast with Marsala Wine)

- 3 TSBP butter
- ¼ lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced thinly



VALENTINE'S DINNER *for two*



Shrimp and Avocado Salad with Lemon Garlic Mayonnaise

Suprema Di Pollo Alla Zurla (Chicken Breast with Marsala Wine)

Rataouille

Red Velvet Cake with Cream Cheese Icing



- 2 large, boneless chicken breasts (filets) flour, seasoned with salt and pepper
- 1½ oz. Marsala wine (sweet)
- 2 slices cooked ham
- 2 TBSP grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 TBSP condensed chicken stock or broth

Melt one tablespoon of butter in a skillet and saute the mushrooms in it until soft, about 5 minutes. Transfer them to a plate and set aside for later. Flatten the chicken breasts by pressing them with the bottom of a heavy skillet. Dredge them lightly in flour, shaking off any excess. Melt the rest of the butter in the same skillet, and cook the chicken for about 4 minutes per side, or until light brown in color. Pour the Marsala over. When it begins to bubble and combine with the butter, cover each filet with a slice of ham, then a layer of the cooked mushrooms, and finally a TSBP of grated Parmesan. Pour a TBSP of condensed chicken stock (or broth) over each filet, then cover and cook over low heat for about 5 minutes, or until the chicken is just done and the cheese has melted and combined with the pan juices to form a sauce. Serve at once, with rataouille.

Rataouille

- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large onion, chopped coarsely
- 1 medium to large eggplant, cut into cubes
- 4 medium zucchini, trimmed, quarter lengthwise, then cut into 2 inch slices
- 1 green pepper, seeded and cut into thin strips
- 4 large ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 1 16 oz. can Italian plum tomatoes
- 2 TBSP fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 TBSP fresh dill, chopped
- 2 TBSP fresh basil, chopped (or 1 TBSP dried)
- 2 TBSP fresh oregano, chopped (or 1 TBSP dried)
- 1½ tsp. salt
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Heat the olive oil in a very large saucepan (with a lid.) Add the garlic and onion and saute just until the onion is transparent. Add the eggplant, zucchini and green pepper, stir and cook covered, over low heat until the eggplant begins to soften, about 7 minutes. Add the fresh and canned tomatoes and the herbs, cover again, and simmer another 10 minutes. Remove the lid and continue to cook at a low simmer, stirring occasionally, for 20 to 25 more minutes, or until the vegetables are tender and the rataouille is well blended. Season with the salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Serve hot, or at room temperature.

Did you know . . . that you can boil an egg that is cracked if you will first rub the crack with salt before boiling? The egg will not run out in the water.

Did you know . . . that fitted sheets that have become loose at the corners will fit nicely again if you sew a piece of elastic across each corner a few inches down from the corner.

*Nella Walters
Knoxville, TN*

Did you know . . . that baked sweet potatoes are better for pies and souffles? To boil them makes the potatoes soggy; baking crystalizes the sugar in the potato.

Did you know . . . when envelopes or stamps won't stick use evaporated milk, egg white or small amount of Dixie Crystals sugar dissolved in a drop of water.

*Evelyn C. James
Clarksville, GA*

Credits:

Roses: Grown and donated by Don & Patty Thigpen, Harbour Creek, Savannah, Georgia

China: Arthur Smith Antiques, Savannah, Georgia, 19th Century, "The Mourning," Wedgewood.

Valentines: Mary Bryant Antiques, Savannah, Georgia.

CHERRIES BY GEORGE!

Honor St. Valentine, Lincoln and George Washington this February with an array of cherry treats that will charm family and friends alike. We can thank George Washington for our long-standing custom of serving delightful cherry recipes. The following include tart cherries, sweet ones, and when available, fresh cherries can be substituted with only slight changes to the recipes.

Cherry Roll-Ups

- 2 cups (16 oz. carton) ricotta cheese
- 1 TBSP grated lemon rind
- 3 TBSP *Dixie Crystals* granulated sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup sifted all-purpose flour
- 3 TBSP *Dixie Crystals* 10X conf. sugar
- dash of salt
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk
- butter or margarine for frying
- 1 can (21 ozs.) cherry pie filling

- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. almond extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup toasted slivered almonds

Combine cheese, lemon rind, granulated sugar, salt, and vanilla in a medium bowl. Sift flour, powdered sugar and a dash of salt into a medium bowl. Add eggs all at once and beat to make a smooth paste. Add milk gradually; beat until batter is smooth and free of lumps. The batter should be the consistency of heavy cream. A little milk can be added if needed to get the right consistency. Heat a 6-inch skillet slowly; grease lightly with butter. You may want to experiment with the first couple of crepes by first trying 2 TBSP. of batter. Your aim is to make the crepes as thin as possible. Hold pan in the air while pouring a very small amount of batter, never more than 3 TBSP., in the middle of pan. Immediately tip the pan in all directions to cover the entire bottom surface. Set pan over medium heat; cook on one side about 1 minute or until the top of the crepe is dry and the bottom side turns lightly brown. Cook on the second side for about 20 seconds. Repeat with rest of batter, lightly buttering skillet between bak-

ings. As crepes are baked, spread 2 TBSP of the cheese mixture over each; roll up tightly. Place seam side down in a 9x13 baking dish. (If you prefer, you may like to add a few cherries inside the crepe as well as the sauce spooned on top. Combine cherry pie filling and almond extract in a small saucepan; heat until bubbly. Spoon over crepes. Sprinkle almonds on top. Serve warm. Yield: 6 servings.

Cherry Cheese Tarts

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 TBSP *Dixie Crystals* granulated sugar
- 2 TBSP melted butter or margarine
- 1 pkg. (8 ozs.) cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup *Dixie Crystals* granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. grated lemon rind
- 1 can (21 ozs.) cherry pie filling
- 1 tsp. grated orange rind

Combine graham cracker crumbs with sugar and melted butter in a small bowl; blend well; spoon approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. crumbs in the bottoms of 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch muffin-



pan cups. Preheat oven to 350°. Beat cream cheese until fluffy-light in a medium bowl; beat in granulated sugar, egg, vanilla, and lemon rind until mixture is fluffy again. Spoon cheese mixture into muffin-pan cups to fill each half full. Bake 12-15 minutes; remove from oven and allow to cool before adding topping. Combine cherry pie filling and orange rind in a small bowl; spoon over cheese tarts; chill until serving time. Yield: 24 miniature tarts.

Cherry Dessert Waffles

- 6 frozen waffles, baked
- 6 TBSP butter or margarine
- ½ cup Dixie Crystals light brown sugar, firmly packed
- ½ cup flaked coconut
- 1 cup cherry pie filling
- ⅛ tsp. almond extract
- ½ cup whipping cream
- 2 TBSP Dixie Crystals 10x conf. sugar
- ½ tsp. vanilla

Melt butter in a small saucepan; stir in light brown sugar and coconut; cook until bubbly. Spread evenly over baked waffles. Place waffles on a baking sheet; broil until browned and bubbly. Remove from broiler; place on individual serving plates. Combine cherry pie filling and almond extract in a small bowl; stir until well blended. Spoon filling over each waffle. Beat cream with confectioners sugar and vanilla in a small bowl until stiff; place a spoonful of whipped cream over pie filling. Yield: 6 servings.

Cherry-Pineapple Upside Down Cake

- ½ cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup Dixie Crystals dark brown sugar, firmly packed
- ¼ cup broken pecans
- 1 can (16 oz.) dark sweet pitted cherries, drained
- 1 can (15¼ oz.) sliced pineapple, drained (reserve juice)
- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 cup Dixie Crystals granulated sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder

Preheat oven to 350°. Melt butter in a 10" heavy skillet with ovenproof handle; stir in brown sugar. Heat slowly, over low heat, until sugar dissolves; remove from heat. Arrange pineapple slices in a pretty pattern in sugar mixture; sprinkle cherries and pecans over top. Beat egg whites in a small bowl; set aside. Beat egg yolks with granulated sugar in a medium bowl until creamy; add ½ cup of reserved pineapple juice; beat until well blended. Add flour and baking powder; beat until smooth and creamy; fold in egg whites; pour over pineapple-cherry mixture in skillet. Bake 30-35 minutes, or until golden and wooden pick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool cake in skillet 20 minutes. Loosen around edges with a knife; invert onto a large serving plate; lift off skillet. Serve warm. Yield: 8 servings.

Black Forest Cherry Cups

- 1 square (1 oz.) semi-sweet chocolate, grated
- 1 cup whipping cream
- ⅓ cup Dixie Crystals 10X conf. sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 pkg. dessert shells
- 1 can (21 oz.) cherry pie filling
- ¼ tsp. almond extract

Beat cream, confectioners sugar, and vanilla in a medium bowl until stiff. Combine cherry pie filling and almond extract in a small bowl; stir until well blended. Frost individual dessert shells with a scant ¼ cup whipped cream; sprinkle sides and tops with grated chocolate. Spoon a heaping TBSP. of cherry pie filling into center of each shell. Chill before serving. Yield: 12 servings.

Down-Home Cherry Cobbler

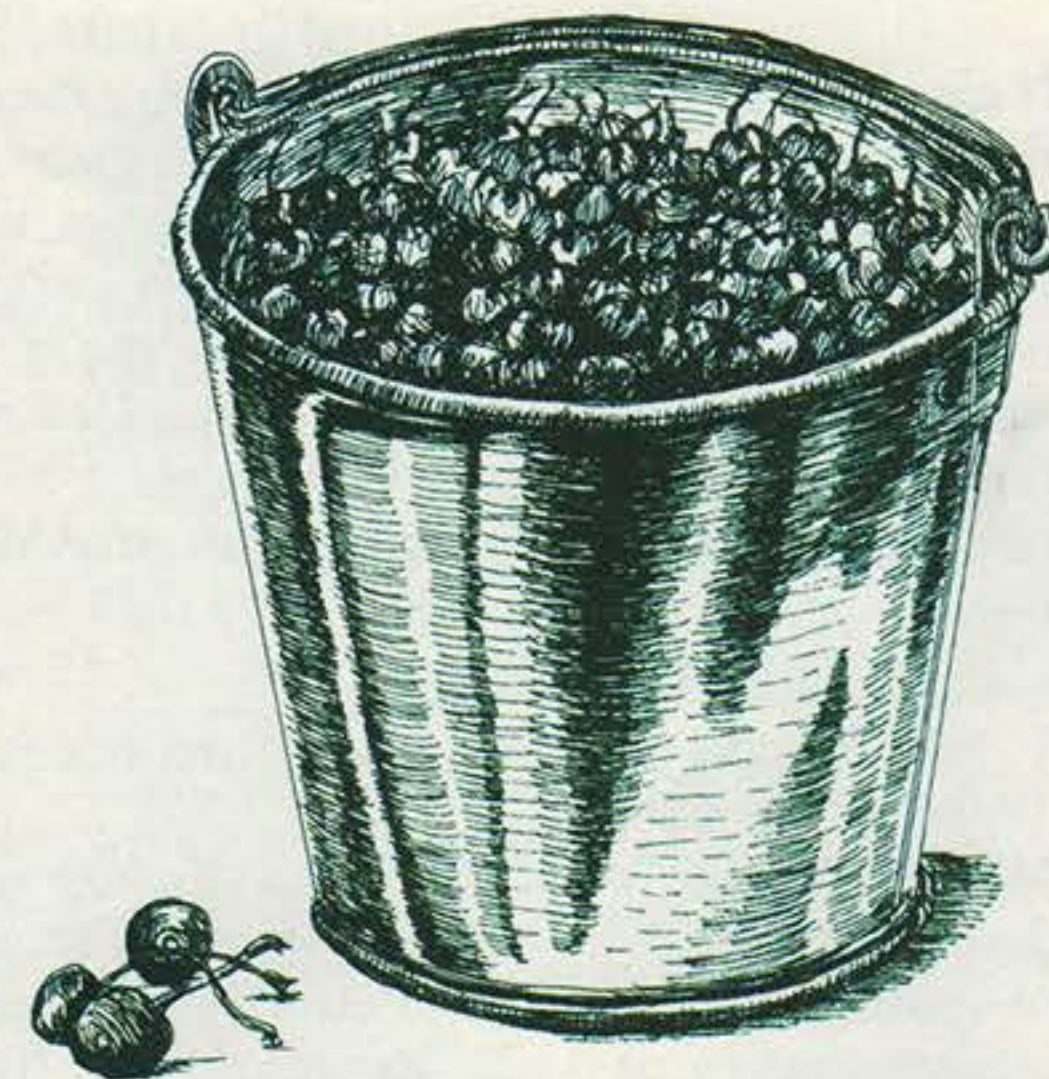
- 1 can (1 lb. 4 oz.) pitted tart red cherries
- ½ cup Dixie Crystals light brown sugar, firmly packed
- 2 TBSP cornstarch
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- Red food coloring
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup Dixie Crystals granulated sugar
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- ¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- 4 TBSP butter or margarine
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- ⅓ cup milk

Preheat oven to 350°. Drain juice from cherries into a small saucepan; stir in brown sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice, and a few drops red food coloring; stir until well blended. Place on heat and cook, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens and boils 1 minute. Fold in cherries; spoon into a 1-quart shallow baking dish. Combine flour, granulated sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt in a medium bowl; cut in butter until mixture forms fine crumbs; stir in egg and milk; spoon dough in heaping spoonfuls over fruit in dish. Bake 30-35 minutes, or until puffed and golden and a wooden pick inserted in center of topping comes out clean. Cool; serve warm with ice cream or whipped cream if you like. Yield: 6 servings.

Cinnamon-Cherry Crisp

- 1 can (21 oz.) cherry pie filling
- ⅔ cup Dixie Crystals light brown sugar, firmly packed
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup quick-cooking rolled oats
- ¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ⅓ cup butter or margarine, melted

Preheat oven to 350°. Spread cherry pie filling in bottom of an 8-inch square baking pan. Combine brown sugar, flour, rolled oats, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a medium bowl; stir until mixed; add melted butter; stir until well blended; sprinkle over cherry mixture in pan. Bake 35 minutes, or until juices bubble up and topping is toasted. Serve warm or cold with cream. Yield: 6 servings.



HINTS FOR CANDY MAKING

Chocolate Coating for Candies

Recipes for chocolate candy all begin pretty much the same way — with warnings that chocolate is a tricky substance, and that anyone attempting to work with it had better have plenty of patience and a reliable candy thermometer. Though this isn't exactly music to a chocoholic's ears, it is valid, so be prepared to follow directions closely, and pay attention to such important details as the following:

1. Don't bother trying to make chocolates on a warm, humid day, you'll only become frustrated when it doesn't work.
2. Be very careful not to let any moisture into your chocolate. Even a drop of water will ruin its texture and color, so don't cover while it is melting, or condensation from the lid will drip into it.
3. Melt chocolate over hot — not boiling — water. Fine chocolate scorches easily and must be melted very, very slowly.
4. Once your chocolate is smooth and melted to a temperature of 110° you must "temper" it to give it the perfect consistency for dipping (or molding.) This means stirring the chocolate to prevent the cocoa butter in it from separating out as it cools-down to an ideal dipping temperature of 88°. If chocolate is tempered properly, it will harden with a beautiful gloss; if not, the cocoa butter in it will rise to the surface in unattractive grey streaks.

Recipes for Valentine's Candies appear on next page.



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VALENTINE'S CANDIES

If candy sales on February 13 are any indication, the way to a lover's heart is a great big chocolate freeway that stretches over mile after mile of fondant, caramel and peppermint cream! To keep you on course in indulging this great passion, we offer the following Valentine's favorites.

Read Hints for Candy Making on preceding page.

Chocolate Coating

1 lb. chocolate (semi-sweet, bittersweet, or milk), grated

Melt chocolate very slowly in the top of a double boiler, over—not in—hot water. Stir to smooth out lumps until chocolate reaches a temperature of 110°. Remove from heat, and continue to stir to temper chocolate until it cools down to 88°. Sit back over hot water, also brought to about 88°. Be sure that any candies (or centers) to be coated are at room temp. before you dip them. Dip them, one at a time, in the chocolate, using a candy fork. (This will take a while, so be careful to maintain the chocolate's temperature throughout.) Lift out and place on a wire rack, over a tray. Any excess chocolate that drips down onto the tray can be remelted and used again.

Solid Bittersweet Chocolates (Molded)

½ lb. bittersweet chocolate, grated
(This much chocolate should fill about 16 1-ounce metal or plastic candy molds.)

Follow directions for melting and tempering chocolate (above.) When the chocolate is ready, prepare the molds — which should be the same temp. as the chocolate — by

briefly brushing them with hot air from a hair dryer just before pouring chocolate into them. Fill each mold to the top, rapping it gently on a counter to dislodge any air bubbles in the chocolate. Place the molds on a cookie sheet (or in a pan) and put in the refrig. for an hour or until the chocolate sets. To unmold, let stand at room temp. for a few minutes then rap firmly on counter and invert. Store tightly covered in the refrigerator.

Fondants (uncooked)

1 box (16 oz.) *Dixie Crystals* 10X confectioner's sugar
⅓ cup sweet butter, softened at room temp.
⅓ cup light corn syrup
1 tsp. vanilla extract
dash of salt
red & green food coloring

Combine all ingredients and blend together well, either by hand, or in a food processor with a steel blade. Turn mixture onto a flat work surface and knead until smooth and shiny. Divide the fondant into 3 equal parts. Leave one part white, add a couple of drops of red food coloring to another for pink fondant, and add a couple of drops of green to the third part. Roll out each color between sheets of waxed paper. Cut large and small rounds from each and large and small heart shapes from the pink and white (large pink, small white for the center.) Leave some of the large rounds plain; press small rounds of a contrasting color into the center of the others. Let the candies sit uncovered for several hours, or until dry, then store in air-tight containers. If you wish, dip some of the dried candies in chocolate coating (see recipe above.)

French Caramels

1 cup *Dixie Crystals* sugar
¾ cup light corn syrup
3½ oz. bittersweet chocolate
¼ tsp. salt
½ cups cream

Combine the sugar, corn syrup, chocolate, salt and ½ cup of the cream in a heavy saucepan. Cook over fairly high heat, stirring constantly, until sugar is dissolved. Reduce heat to medium, and stirring occasionally, cook to soft-ball stage - 238°. Add another ½ cup of cream and bring to 238°

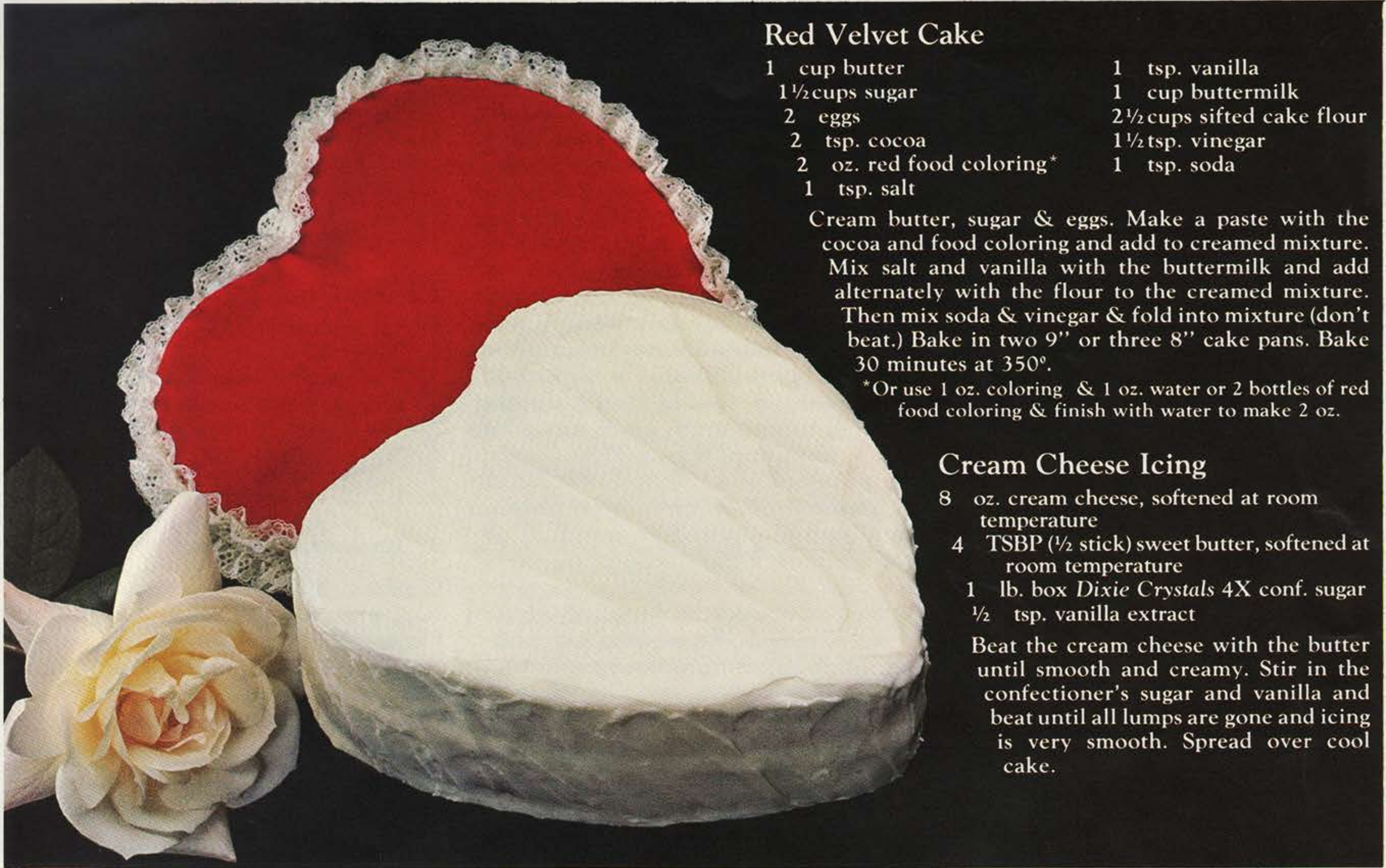
again, this time stirring only a little. Add the remaining ½ cup of cream and cook to 248° without stirring. Remove from heat at once and pour into a buttered 8x4 inch pan. Do not scrape sides of saucepan as you pour, or you will get sugar crystals in your candy. When the caramel is firm, turn it out onto waxed paper and cut into squares. Leave plain or dip in chocolate coating (see recipe above.) Make sure caramels are room temp. before you dip them. Wrap individually or keep in an air-tight container.

Peppermint Cream Patties

2 cups *Dixie Crystals* sugar
¼ cup light corn syrup
¼ cup milk
¼ tsp. cream of tartar
oil of peppermint

Combine all ingredients in a large, heavy saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until sugar is dissolved and the mixture comes to a boil. Cover and cook for 3 mins. so that any sugar crystals on sides of pan will be washed down by condensation. Uncover and cook to the soft-ball — 238° — without stirring. Remove from heat and let stand for 3 minutes to cool slightly. Flavor with about 10 drops of oil of peppermint, then beat until creamy without scraping sides of pan. Drop candy by the teaspoon onto foil to make patties. Allow to dry, then dip in chocolate coating (see recipe above.) Store, tightly covered, in the refrigerator.





Red Velvet Cake

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 cup butter | 1 tsp. vanilla |
| 1½ cups sugar | 1 cup buttermilk |
| 2 eggs | 2½ cups sifted cake flour |
| 2 tsp. cocoa | 1½ tsp. vinegar |
| 2 oz. red food coloring* | 1 tsp. soda |
| 1 tsp. salt | |

Cream butter, sugar & eggs. Make a paste with the cocoa and food coloring and add to creamed mixture. Mix salt and vanilla with the buttermilk and add alternately with the flour to the creamed mixture. Then mix soda & vinegar & fold into mixture (don't beat.) Bake in two 9" or three 8" cake pans. Bake 30 minutes at 350°.

*Or use 1 oz. coloring & 1 oz. water or 2 bottles of red food coloring & finish with water to make 2 oz.

Cream Cheese Icing

- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened at room temperature
- 4 TSBP (½ stick) sweet butter, softened at room temperature
- 1 lb. box Dixie Crystals 4X conf. sugar
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract

Beat the cream cheese with the butter until smooth and creamy. Stir in the confectioner's sugar and vanilla and beat until all lumps are gone and icing is very smooth. Spread over cool cake.

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