

An oil painting of a still life. The composition is dominated by a large, textured mass of yellow and ochre paint on the left and center, suggesting a crumpled object or a large brush head. To the right, a dark wooden handle rises vertically, ending in a rounded, bulbous shape. Below the handle, a brush with light-colored bristles is visible. In the foreground, two white eggs are positioned on a dark, reflective surface. The background is a dark, almost black, textured wash. The overall style is expressive and painterly, with visible brushstrokes and a rich, warm color palette.

A Good Weekend

A Good Weekend Cookbook

Recipes for Various Sweets—and One Potent Cocktail—That Artists
Have Created, Utilized, or Simply Enjoyed Over the Past 100 Years

Compiled by Andrew Russeth

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An Introduction

Since coming across John Cage's recipe for almond cookies on Greg Allen's blog a few years ago, I've collected recipes associated with artists—dishes they invented, cooked, or just enjoyed—and, much to my surprise, the list has grown quite long. There's a treasure trove out there!

A few examples: Robert Motherwell made rich bittersweet chocolate mousse. Romare Bearden used an old recipe from St. Martin to cook up rum cake. "I don't do much cooking," Alice Neel said in 1977. "I'm an artist; I have privileges, you see, that only men had in the past." But she did have a choice recipe for hot-fudge sauce. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and a friend collected details on how to make everything from a strong rum punch to a mysterious snake-shaped cake called the Convent Serpent. Mary Cassatt served chocolate caramels when hosting in Paris.

The recipes here come from a few archives and many old cookbooks, particularly from the 1960s and '70s, when, it seems, a number of people decided to ask artists about cooking. (Just as the artist was becoming a brand and a lifestyle.) Can you learn about an artist by the recipes she favors, or the way she describes them? In the introduction for one book of artists' recipes, Alice B. Toklas made that argument, writing, "The writers write as they write, the painters write as they paint."

The focus here is on sweets only because I like them a lot. There also exist great recipes for, and tales about, savory dishes favored by artists. (Duchamp, I am happy to report, loved steak tartare, truly the assisted readymade of beef.) I've reproduced the recipes exactly as they originally appeared and included a brief note in italics before each.

Thank you for cracking this open! I hope that you enjoy baking some of these selections, and that you enjoy the fruits of your labors.

—Andrew Russeth, New York

Latifa Echakhch

From a recent book of artists' recipes, which range from the purely utilitarian to the baroque and bizarre.

Madeleines au miel

125 g melted butter
3 eggs
130 g caster sugar
1 tablespoon honey
150 g fine white flour
½ packet yeast
1 untreated lemon
1 pinch salt

1. Preheat oven to 220° C.
2. Whisk the eggs, sugar and honey together until the mixture turns white.
3. Add the flour, salt, yeast, melted butter and lemon zest.
4. Mix well until it become uniform and creamy.
5. Grease madeleine molds with butter and half-fill them with the mixture.
6. Bake for 5 to 10 minutes, until the madeleines are golden.

You must be a little patient and wait 5 minutes for a perfect temperature.

Serve on a porcelain plate, and eat it.

Have a nice souvenir!

FROM *ARTISTS' RECIPES*, EDITED BY ADMIR JAHIC AND COMENIUS
ROETHLISBERGER, PUBLISHED BY BOLO, 2016

Mimi Stone

Stone, a chef in the studio of Urs Fischer, writes, “It is not light on the olive oil and that is really the way it should be.” Agreed.

Olive Oil Cake

Serves 10–12

3 large eggs

1 ½ cups extra-virgin olive oil

1 ¼ cups granulated sugar, plus a tablespoon to sprinkle on top

1 ¼ cup milk

¼ cup cognac (optional)

¼ cup fresh orange juice

zest of 1 orange

2 cups of all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon baking powder

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

½ teaspoon ground cloves

1 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly oil a 10-inch round cake pan and dust it with flour.

Whisk the eggs with the olive oil in a bowl until combined. Add the sugar and whisk well to incorporate.

Add the milk, cognac (if using), orange juice, and orange zest and whisk again.

In a separate bowl, mix the other dry ingredients (flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, cloves, and salt), and make a well in the center.

Pour the olive oil mixture into the dry ingredients, and whisk, starting from the center and working outward, until the batter is smooth.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and sprinkle another tablespoon of sugar on top. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes. The cake is ready when the top is crusty and dark brown and a skewer or knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

Variations:

After the cake has cooled, dust the top with confectioners' sugar and cinnamon.

Add 1 cup toasted and chopped walnuts to the batter for a nutty taste and texture.

FROM *COOKING FOR ARTISTS*, BY MIMI STONE, PUBLISHED BY KIITO-SAN, 2015

Henri De Toulouse-Lautrec and Maurice Joyant

The two men were intense gourmets, and collected recipes during their travels. The three that follow below are representative of their interest in the deeply unusual and the deeply pleasurable.

Rum Punch (Punch au Rhum)

In a copper saucepan put a liter of water, four pounds of sugar, and the whole zests of two lemons. Let them boil well, take out the zests and let the liquid cool.

Throw the cold syrup into a vessel with two and a half liters of rum and half a liter of very strong tea.

Mix and put into a bottle to serve the punch hot or cold.

(Adapted ingredients | Syrup: 4 cups water, 4 lbs. sugar. Punch: 10 cups rum, 2 cups tea.)

Rum Tart (Tarte au Rhum)

In a well-buttered pie dish lay out a pastry that you dot generously with butter. Sprinkle it heavily with sugar and pour over it a glass of liquid made up of three quarters of good rum and one quarter of water.

Put in a hot oven and serve warm.

(Adapted ingredients | 3 tbs. butter, 5 tbs. sugar, 1/2 cup rum, 1/4 cup water. 500° oven till crust is golden. Let tart cool slightly.)

The Convent Serpent (Serpent du Couvent)

Beat six whole eggs; add a quarter of a pound of sugar, and as much butter; again flavor as you fancy with lemon, vanilla or orange-flower water. Incorporate enough flour to have a thick paste.

Fold and roll the paste into a round in the form of a snake. To simulate the eyes and the scales: use dried sultanas and cover the back with almonds, each cut in two, lengthwise. Let it cook in a gentle oven.

(Adapted ingredients | ½ cup sugar, ½ cup butter.)

FROM *THE ART OF CUISINE*, BY HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC AND MAURICE JOYANT, TRANSLATED BY MARGERY WEINER, PUBLISHED BY HOLT RINEHART AND WINSTON, 1966

Mary Cassatt

Cassatt's housekeeper, Mathilde Valet, was typically responsible for cooking up these beauties.

Caramels au Chocolat

Makes about 3 dozen candies (adapted)

½ cup (125 g) powdered sugar
5 tablespoons honey
6 tablespoons grated bittersweet or semisweet chocolate
3 tablespoons fresh unsalted butter
1 cup (240 ml) cream

Put all the ingredients in a saucepan.

Place the pan on a burner at medium, stirring until the ingredients are well blended. It is important to stir the mixture the entire time it is heating since the success of the entire recipe depends upon bringing the ingredients to the proper temperature without burning them. Cook for 10 minutes, while stirring constantly, until mixture is very thick. Once all ingredients have blended together and the consistency of the mix has thickened, pour about a spoonful of the chocolate into a bowl of cold water. If the chocolate forms into little balls, it has reached its proper consistency and can be removed from the heat. Pour into candy molds, or pour into a 9-inch (23-cm) square grease pan, allow to cool, and cut into squares.

Note: If desired, add a little vanilla extract to the mixture while it is heating.

FROM *THE ARTIST'S PALATE*, BY FRANK FEDELE, PUBLISHED BY DK, 2003

Norman Rockwell

“I love cookies,” Rockwell once wrote, “and Nellie Strodulski, who cooks for us, makes the best ever.” This is her recipe. The artist would break them over ice cream!

Oatmeal Cookies

Makes 3 dozen (adapted)

1 1/2 cups (175 g) all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
10 tablespoons butter
1 cup (150 g) light brown sugar
1/2 cup (100 g) granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 large eggs, at room temperature
1 cup (80 g) quick-cooking oatmeal

Preheat the oven to 375° (190°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside. In a bowl, sift together the flour, salt, and baking soda.

Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one by one; beat well after each addition. Add dry ingredients and mix until well combined. Stir in the oatmeal.

Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto the baking sheet. Bake for 8–10 minutes or until golden. Allow the cookies to cool on the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a rack.

FROM *THE ARTIST'S PALATE*, BY FRANK FEDELE, PUBLISHED BY DK, 2003

Grandma Moses

Have to have a Grandma Moses recipe in here. Fedele says that this was one of her favorite cookies. Note that she lived to be 101.

Old-Fashioned Macaroons

Makes 6 dozen (adapted)

1 lb. (450 g) blanched almonds
9 egg whites
1 cup (200 g) sugar
Nutmeg and mace to taste

Preheat the oven to 250°F (120°C).

Line 2 baking sheets with parchment.

Grind the almonds in a food processor until fine; set aside. In a large bowl, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until frothy. Gradually add the sugar in a slow stream while beating. Increase the mixer speed to high and beat until the whites hold a firm peak. Gently fold in the almonds and the spices. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto the lined baking sheets. Bake for 1 hour or until golden. Store in an airtight container.

FROM *THE ARTIST'S PALATE*, BY FRANK FEDELE, PUBLISHED BY DK, 2003

John Cage

It's worth noting that Mark Tobey actually created the culinary equivalent of 4'33", submitting this "Recipe for a Dish of Nothing" to The Artists' & Writers' Cookbook (whose sweets are included elsewhere here): "On a fireless stove and in a state of complete abstraction, place in a well-ungreased pan about two bales of Forest Silence. Remain motionless about 15 minutes. At the boiling point, remove and serve."

Almond Cookies

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a food processor, grind:

1 c. raw almonds

1 c. raw oats

Combine almonds and oats in a large bowl. Stir in:

1 c. whole wheat flour or brown rice flour (if you want a gluten free option, you may need to add slightly more than the 1 c. brown rice flour, so that you are later able to form balls with the dough)

Add ground cinnamon to the dry mixture.

To the dry mixture, add:

1/2 c. almond oil (other nut oils work as well)

1/2 c. real maple syrup (no Aunt Jemima!)

Stir mixture until you are able to form one-inch balls. Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Flatten slightly, and press a small dollop of your favorite jam or preserves (jelly is too thin) into the center of each cookie. Bake for 15–20 minutes, turning the pan once, halfway through the baking process. Cookies are done when light golden brown. They store well in the fridge.

FROM "LET THEM EAT CAGE COOKIES," BY ABIGAIL SEBALY, THE WALKER ART CENTER'S UNTITLED (BLOG),

[HTTP://BLOGS.WALKERART.ORG/VISUALARTS/2011/07/29/LET-THEM-EAT-CAGE-COOKIES/](http://blogs.walkerart.org/visualarts/2011/07/29/let-them-eat-cage-cookies/), JULY 29, 2011

Charles Sheeler

These recipes, found in a notebook belonging to Sheeler, are undoubtedly delicious but a touch confusing to execute. Head to the AAA's blog—the URL follows below—for details. (The “Yummy!” line is in his original notes.)

Shoo-Fly Cake

1 1/2 cups of flour
1 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup lard or butter
1/2 cup New Orleans molasses
1/2 cup hot water
1/2 teaspoon soda

Make crumbs by combining flour, sugar and shortening. Line pie pan with pastry. Dissolve soda in the hot water and combine with molasses. Pour into pastry lined pan. Top with crumbs and bake in moderate oven 350° until firm. Yummy!

Molasses Shoo-Fly

1/2 cup molasses
1 egg yolk, well beaten
1/ tablespoon soda dissolved in 3/4 cup boiling water.

Crumbs

3/4 cup flour
1/2 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoon shortening
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon ginger
1/8 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt

Combine the dry ingredients working in the shortening. Line a pie plate with pastry, make alternate layers of crumbs and liquid. Top with crumbs and bake until crust edges start to brown 450 degrees.

Then reduce to 350 and bake until firm (about 20 min)

FROM "A MODERNIST LIKES OLD-FASHIONED DESSERT," BY Q MICELI, THE ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN ART BLOG, JULY 12, 2012

Roger Nicholson

An obscure artist from an obscure book, but who could resist this cake's strange title? Nicholson writes, "An incredible recipe for a cake. Almost the best I have eaten. Very economical. A war time recipe. Icing & gunpowder optional according to taste."

Gunpowder Cake

SIEVE TOGETHER:

1 1/2 cup self-raising flour
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
2 tablespoons cocoa

MELT:

5 oz. margarine
2 tablespoons vinegar!
1 cup warm water
A splash of vanilla
essence

Mix everything together, put in a well-greased cake tin and cook at 190°C/375°F, gas mark 5, for 45 minutes

FROM *THE ARTISTS' COOKBOOK: COLORFUL RECIPES FROM THE STUDIOS OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART IN ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR*, BY JOCELYN STEVENS, INTRODUCTION BY HENRY MOORE, PUBLISHED BY TRANS-ATLANTIC PUBLICATIONS, 1987

Grant Wood

I'm just going to quote the superb cookbook that includes this recipe in full because the story is just too good:

Submitted by Edwin B. Green, Iowa City, from a 1953 cookbook published by the Ladies of St. Edward's Parish, Waterloo. In the introduction, Grant Wood's sister, Nan Wood Graham, says of her brother and this recipe: "On occasion he would go into the kitchen and show his prowess at cooking. In no time at all he could turn out the best potato salad I ever tasted. He was also noted for his Strawberry Shortcake. Once when mother and I were away and unexpected company arrived, Grant rose to the occasion and whipped up a Strawberry Shortcake that the guests later described as "out of this world." In telling mother and me about it, Grant said in a surprised tone of voice, "We could actually eat it." After hearing it described as "out of this world," Grant never dared try making the shortcake again for fear of ruining his reputation as a cook."

Strawberry Shortcake

1 qt. fresh ripe strawberries, washed and hulled

Place in a bowl and bruise and chop with a silver spoon. Cover with sugar to suit (1/2 to 1 cup) and let stand at room temperature to bring out the juices. Make a biscuit dough as follows:

2 cups sifted flour
3 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
6 Tbs. lard
3/4 cup milk

Sift dry ingredients together, cut in shortening. Add milk and mix lightly, the less the better. Spread out in a greased pie tin with a spoon. Bake in hot oven 425° until done (12–20 minutes).

Carefully break biscuit dough into 2 layers, using a fork to separate it. Lay top layer to one side (remove with a pancake turner if necessary). Butter the bottom layer with fresh homemade butter and cover with crushed strawberries. Butter the top layer and put back on the strawberries. Top the cake with more strawberries. Cut in huge slices and serve with loads of rich country cream. (This and coffee makes a complete meal.)

FROM *THE AMERICAN GOTHIC COOKBOOK*, EDITED BY JOAN LIFFRING-ZUG,
PUBLISHED BY PENFIELD PRESS, 1986

Karel Appel

A cake with bacon!

Cake Barber

Make ten layers of thin pancakes. Between the layers, alternately, place generous amounts of heated apple butter and crisp bacon. Slice like a layer cake and serve steaming hot.

FROM *THE ARTISTS' & WRITERS' COOKBOOK*, BY BERYL AND BARBARA TURNER SACHS BARR, PUBLISHED BY CONTACT EDITIONS, 1961

Sam Francis

Francis is really on brand here, splattering some juicy red strawberries across a white surface.

Schaum Torte

Make two layers of meringue, each to be baked in an 8-inch pan. Mix:

8 stiff-beaten egg whites
1/4 teaspoon of cream of tartar
1 1/2 cups of sugar, added gradually

Beat until the sugar is thoroughly dissolved. Pour half of the mixture into each pan, either greased with butter or lined with wax paper, and bake in a slow oven for about an hour.

Beat 1 1/2–2 cups of heavy cream until it is stiff. Wash and slice fresh strawberries or other available fresh fruit.

When the meringue has cooled, place a layer of strawberries on top of one layer of meringue, add about a third of the whipped cream and the second meringue. Top this with the rest of the strawberries and the remaining cream, heaped high and running over the sides of the torte. Serves 4–6.

FROM *THE ARTISTS' & WRITERS' COOKBOOK*, BY BERYL AND BARBARA TURNER SACHS BARR, PUBLISHED BY CONTACT EDITIONS, 1961

Jean Tinguely

Oh yes: this soufflé can be served after it has collapsed.

Omelette Soufflé Dégonflé, Flambé au Rhum

Mix 3 tablespoons of powdered sugar with the yolks of five eggs. Mix well. Add flavoring to taste—vanilla, lemon or orange peel, grated. Add a teaspoon of grated coconut. Beat the egg whites until stiff. Add 1/4 of the whites to the yolk, mix quickly, then add the remaining whites and fold in with the blade of a knife in as few strokes as possible. Place the mixture in a buttered baking dish and dust with powdered sugar. Cook for 20–22 minutes in a moderate oven.

If you wish the soufflé *dégonflé*, wait an hour and a quarter before serving. Otherwise, serve immediately. Add as much rum as desired and flambé. Serves 4.

3 tablespoons of powdered sugar
5 eggs (separate yolks from whites)
Vanilla
Lemon or orange peel (grated)
1 teaspoon coconut (grated)
Rum

FROM *THE ARTISTS' & WRITERS' COOKBOOK*, BY BERYL AND BARBARA TURNER SACHS BARR, PUBLISHED BY CONTACT EDITIONS, 1961

Rella Rudolph

A delightfully mysterious entry. There's very little information out there about Rudolph, an early modernist painter, but we do know that she made abstract paintings and these delicious cookies. She was from Alabama and purportedly died sometime after ice fell on her in Paris.

Sesame Cookies

Add water to ingredients to make a thick dough. Knead well, roll out, cut and cook in moderate oven. Makes four dozen small cookies.

- 1 cup millet flour
- 1 cup rye flour
- 1 cup wheat flour
- 1 cup chestnut flour
- 1 tablespoon (heaping) sesame seeds
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 4 tablespoons sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon (level) ground cinnamon

FROM *THE ARTISTS' & WRITERS' COOKBOOK*, BY BERYL AND BARBARA TURNER SACHS BARR, PUBLISHED BY CONTACT EDITIONS, 1961

Frida Kahlo

This recipe comes to us from Guadalupe Rivera, Kahlo's stepdaughter, who wrote a richly illustrated volume about foods the artist would serve at various points during the year.

Shortbread Cookies

1 pound/450 g flour, sifted
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons/300 g lard
1 cup/190 g superfine sugar
1/4 cup/60 ml rum
2 cups/160 g confectioners' sugar

Mound the flour on the counter or in a bowl and make a well in the center. Fill the well with the lard, sugar, and rum. Mix well to make a smooth dough. Roll out 1/2 in thick. Using a round cookie cutter of desired size, cut the dough into rounds and place on baking sheets. Bake in a preheated 350°F/175°C oven until golden, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove the cookies from the oven and toss with confectioners' sugar to coat well.

FROM *FRIDA'S FIESTAS: RECIPES AND REMINISCENCES OF LIFE WITH FRIDA KAHLO*, BY MARIE-PIERRE COLLE AND GUADALUPE RIVERA, PUBLISHED BY CLARKSON POTTER, 1994

Romare Bearden

I highly recommend tracking down the book that contains this recipe, as it includes not only fascinating interviews with artists (and, in many cases, their spouses), but also a photograph of a very jolly-looking Romare Bearden posing while holding his cat.

Bolo Di Rom (Rum Cake)

CAKE

1 1/2 sticks (6 ounces) sweet butter
2 cups sugar
6 large eggs
juice of 2 lemons and 2 limes
grated rind of 1 lemon
1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup yellow corn meal
2 1/4 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 cup dark rum
dash of Cointreau

ICING

4 ounces semisweet chocolate
2 1/2 tablespoons sweet butter
2 tablespoons water
3/4 teaspoons vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Sift flour and baking powder together. In large bowl of electric mixer cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs, then add lemon and lime juice and lemon rind. Add flour, baking powder, and corn meal. Bake in buttered rectangular cake pan for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Let cool.

To make icing, in a double boiler melt semisweet chocolate and butter in water, stirring constantly. When melted and blended, remove from heat

and add vegetable oil and mix thoroughly. Spread over cake. Let cool until icing sets.

Note: This is an ancient recipe from St. Martin. One-half cup of bitter orange juice is usually substituted for the lemon and lime juice. For corn bread lovers, this cake is also good without the frosting.

FROM *THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ARTISTS' COOKBOOK*, BY MADELEINE CONWAY AND NANCY KIRK, PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 1977

Richard Estes

Thank you, Aunt Fanny.

Aunt Fanny's English Toffee

1 cup sugar
1/2 pound butter
1 8-ounce milk-chocolate bar, in pieces
1 cup chopped almonds
3 teaspoons water
1 teaspoon vanilla

In a heavy skillet, cook the sugar, butter, water, and 4 ounces of the almonds sitting constantly until dark brown, about 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from fire. Quickly add vanilla and pour into buttered rectangular pan measuring 11 x 7 x 1 1/2 inches. Immediately place pieces of the chocolate bar on top so that the chocolate will melt. Sprinkle on the remaining almonds and press them into chocolate. Let harden. Cut or break into pieces.

Note: This confection keeps well when stored in a tight container.

FROM *THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ARTISTS' COOKBOOK*, BY MADELEINE CONWAY AND NANCY KIRK, PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 1977

Alex Katz

Only sandwiches involving sweets are listed here, but Katz's full list of sandwiches is truly something to behold, ranging from the delicious to the absurd. Banana, chocolate, bologna, and lettuce? Don't knock it until you try it!

Sandwich List

Peanut butter, molasses, and butter on French bread

Banana, bologna, and chocolate with lettuce on rye bread

Butter on toasted raisin bread

FROM *THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ARTISTS' COOKBOOK*, BY MADELEINE CONWAY AND NANCY KIRK, PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 1977

Robert Motherwell

A serious gourmand. Very serious. This cookbook also has an insane-sounding (in a good way) recipe for his duck. But we are here for the desserts.

Robert's Whiskey Cake

SERVES 8 TO 10

1/2 cup whipped sweet butter
8 ounces confectioners' 10-X sugar
6 tablespoons Jack Daniels bourbon whiskey
5 large eggs, separated
3/4 cup ground hazelnuts
3/4 cup ground pecan nuts
3 dozen lady fingers (2 to 3 3-ounce packages)
1 teaspoon whipped butter

Line a loaf pan measuring 9 x 5 x 3 inches with wax paper. Butter with teaspoon of whipped butter. In a mixing bowl cream together butter and sugar with electric mixer. In a separate bowl add whiskey to egg yolks and mix well so that the yolks are dissolved into the whiskey. Add egg mixture to butter and sugar mixture. Fold in nuts. Beat the egg whites until stiff and carefully fold in with a whisk or wooden spoon. Cover bottom of loaf pan with lady fingers, with top side of cake down. Cover with a layer of cream mixture about 1/2 inch thick. Cover with layer of lady fingers and repeat procedure until there are three layers of mixture and four of cake, ending with a layer of lady fingers. Cover with foil and wrap. Refrigerate a minimum of 24 hours, 2 days if possible, so that the flavors have time to blend into the cake. Untold onto a platter and serve in thin slices.

Note: You can use 1 1/2 cups of hazelnuts or pecans to vary the flavor. You can decorate with a whipped cream icing if desired. This is an original dessert that keeps well for several days.

Motherwell Bittersweet Chocolate Mousse

SERVES 8

6 large eggs, separated

3 3-ounce bars of Lindt extra bittersweet chocolate with vanilla, or any good quality bittersweet chocolate

5 tablespoons cold water

2 teaspoons dark rum (optional)

Break chocolate into small pieces and put in a heavy iron or enamel pan. Add water and stir constantly with a wooden spoon over very low heat until the chocolate melts. Remove pan from heat and carefully stir egg yolks into chocolate with spoon. Chocolate mixture should be warm, not hot, or the eggs will curdle. Stir briskly until yolks are well mixed. Beat egg whites until very stiff. Carefully add egg-white mixture to the chocolate, taking care to fold the eggs into the chocolate with a spoon or whisk. Pour into a large glass bowl or into 8 small dessert bowls.

Refrigerate for 6 hours before serving.

Note: This is a rich mousse that may not be sweet enough for some dessert lovers. It would be good to serve the mousse with 1/2 pint heavy cream, whipped, to which 4 tablespoons sugar and a dash of vanilla or rum have been added. The beauty of this elegant dish is that it can be prepared in under 20 minutes.

FROM *THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ARTISTS' COOKBOOK*, BY MADELEINE CONWAY AND NANCY KIRK, PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 1977

Alice Neel

“I never learned to make cakes and pies because after all I’m an artist and couldn’t concentrate on that,” Neel says in this book, noting also that, she preferred having men cook for her. And yet she offered up this forceful recipe for hot-fudge sauce.

Hot-Fudge Sauce

MAKES 6 TO 8 SUNDAES

- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/3 cup boiling water
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons corn syrup
- 2 tablespoons rum

Melt chocolate in a double boiler Add butter and stir. Add boiling water and stir until blended. Add sugar and corn syrup. Remove from double boiler and place over direct heat. Boil sauce gently for 8 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in rum. Pour over ice cream.

Note: Sauce can be reheated in double boiler when cool.

FROM *THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ARTISTS’ COOKBOOK*, BY MADELEINE CONWAY AND NANCY KIRK, PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 1977

George Segal

The sculptor adds in a note, "This is a light cake that is good with or without a glaze." Can't beat a cake like that.

Sponge Cake

SERVES 12 TO 14

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 cups sugar
6 large eggs, separated
1 teaspoon vanilla extract, or any flavoring
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a small saucepan heat milk until it starts to bubble. Add butter until it melts. Remove from heat. In a bowl add salt and baking powder to flour; mix well with wooden spoon. In large bowl of electric mixer beat the egg whites until very stiff. Slowly add sugar while beating, then add yolks one by one. Gradually pour in flour mixture, beating constantly; then add milk and butter all at once. Pour batter into a standard-size tube pan. Bake about 45 minutes or until cake springs back to the touch.

FROM *THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ARTISTS' COOKBOOK*, BY MADELEINE CONWAY AND NANCY KIRK, PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 1977

Tom Wesselmann

How wonderful is it that Tom Wesselmann, the court painter of middle-class consumption, and his wife seem to have been sugar fiends? Do not miss the kind and helpful note appended to the Chocolate Pie Supreme.

Banana-Pineapple Bread

4 ounces sweet butter
1 cup sugar
2 large eggs, beaten
1 1/3 cups ripe, mashed bananas (3 to 4 ripe bananas)
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
a 20-ounce can Dole pineapple chunks

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Drain half the pineapple chunks and press out some of the juice. Cut chunks into quarters. Set aside half the chunks and the juice for another use. In large bowl of electric mixer cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs and banana. Add dry ingredients, pineapple, and vanilla. Pour into a buttered and floured 9- x 5- x 2 3/4-inch loaf pan, or equivalent. Bake until the cake tests done, about 30 to 40 minutes.

Note: Do not overbake. This is a moist bread.

Fudge Brownies

3 ounces (3 squares) unsweetened chocolate
4 large eggs
1 1/2 cups sugar
1 cup flour
1 teaspoon vanilla

1 chopped walnuts
1/2 cup sweet butter

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Melt chocolate and butter in top of double broiler over simmering water. Let cool. Beat eggs until light and foamy and gradually beat in sugar to ribbon stage. Fold chocolate mixture into eggs. Fold in flour and then stir in vanilla and nuts. Spread batter in buttered 9- x 9- x 2-inch pan, or the equivalent. Bake 50 minutes to 1 hour. Let cool and cut into squares.

Note: Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes for more cake-like results
Claire notes that brownies should be “sticky and fudgy.”

Chocolate Pie Supreme

SERVES 6

3 tablespoons sweet butter
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup flour
1 1/4 cups whole milk
1 large egg, well beaten
2 squares (1 ounce each) unsweetened baking chocolate
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
an 8-inch baked pie shell (see Fresh Pineapple Pie Grandmother
Douglass)

Cream butter until soft in mixing bowl. Gradually beat in sugar, then flour. In another bowl, combine beaten egg and milk and add to butter mixture. Add chocolate squares and place mixture in the top of a double boiler over simmering water. Stir constantly until thickened and a few bubbles appear, about 5 to 10 minutes. Pour into a cooled baking shell and refrigerate until set, about 2 hours.

Note: The Wesselmanns recommend this as a special dessert for all ages. It is especially good when served with sweetened whipped cream or vanilla ice cream. Without the crust, it makes a fine chocolate pudding.

FROM *THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ARTISTS' COOKBOOK*, BY MADELEINE CONWAY AND NANCY KIRK, PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 1977

This book was published in an edition of 50 on the occasion of “A Good Weekend,” as part of “U:L:O:,” a group of exhibitions that ran at Interstate Projects in Brooklyn, New York, from June 17 to July 3, 2016. The title comes from Matta, who once said, while reminiscing about a few days he spent out in Queens visiting Joseph Cornell, a notorious sugar lover, “The first thing he showed me as a ‘promise’ of a *good* weekend was the ice-box—it was packed with cake, ice cream, and all sorts of sweets.” (The story is quoted in Deborah Solomon’s sterling Cornell biography, *Utopia Parkway*, 1997.)

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