

JUSTICE MILDRED L. LILLIE'S CHOCOLATE MOUSSE PIE

PRESIDING JUSTICE MILDRED L. LILLIE, FOR WHOM THE MAIN BUILDING OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY LAW LIBRARY IS NAMED, WAS A WOMAN OF MANY TALENTS. AMONG OTHERS A RENOWNED BAKER. WE REMEMBER HER EVERY YEAR BY SERVING HER DELICIOUS CHOCOLATE MOUSSE PIE AND INCLUDING HER RECIPE FOR OUR GUESTS TO TRY AT HOME.

Justice Lillie's recipe can easily be made the day before. The cherry cordials are simple to make and add an elegant touch.

Chocolate Crust

6 ounces dark chocolate cookie wafers
2 tablespoons butter, melted

Heat the oven to 325 degrees. Butter a 9-inch springform pan.

Grind the wafers in a food processor or blender until the crumbs are very fine. Combine the butter with the crumbs and pat onto the bottom and up 1 inch of the sides of the pan. Bake 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool completely.

Cherry Cordials

13 maraschino cherries with stems, drained
½ cup brandy
5 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped

Place the cherries and the brandy in a small bowl and set in the freezer.

Meanwhile, melt the chocolate in a double boiler set over, but not touching, simmering water.

When the cherries are firm, about 30 minutes, pat dry with paper towels. Dip them, one at a time, into the chocolate, swirling each around by the stem until completely covered. The chocolate will harden almost immediately. Place the cherries on a wax paper-lined tray and refrigerate until ready to use.



Mousse Filling

8 eggs, separated, at room temperature
1 ½ cups plus 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup brandy
10 ounces unsweetened chocolate, coarsely chopped
2 ounces semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
¾ cup (1 ½ sticks) butter, softened and cut into small pieces
½ cup brewed coffee, cooled
1 ½ cups whipping cream

Combine the egg yolks, 1 ½ cups sugar, vanilla, salt and brandy in the top of a double boiler set over, but not touching, simmering water. Beat until pale yellow and thickened, about 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from the water and set aside.

Melt both chocolates in the top of the double boiler, then remove from the heat and whisk in the butter, a little at a time. Gradually whisk the chocolate into the yolk mixture until smooth. The chocolate mixture will congeal and become very stiff. Stir in the coffee.

Beat the egg whites in the bowl of an electric mixer until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in the 3 tablespoons of sugar to form stiff peaks.

Fold 1 cup of the beaten egg whites into the chocolate mixture until combined, then carefully fold in the remaining beaten egg whites until thoroughly incorporated. In the same mixing bowl, whip the cream until stiff and gently fold into the chocolate mixture.

Pour the mousse into the crust and chill overnight in the refrigerator. Garnish with the cherry cordials before serving. To make slicing the cake easier, place in the freezer for 30 minutes.

Total time: 1 hour, 10 minutes, plus 8 hours chilling

Servings: 12

Each serving: 688 calories; 189 mg sodium; 219 mg cholesterol; 47 grams fat; 27 grams saturated fat; 60 grams carbohydrates; 9 grams protein; 5 grams fiber.