



Winedog Speaks

Cooking With Your Girlfriend

I realize that some might consider it downright shameless but I want to clear the air and admit that I've had a girlfriend since the early 1970's. It all went on right under my wonderful wife's nose and I'm sure she'll understand.

My special lady friend is Betty Crocker and she'd like to be your friend, too!

The Washburn Crosby Company of Minneapolis, one of the six big milling companies that merged into General Mills in 1928, received thousands of requests each year in the late 1910s and early 1920s for answers to baking questions. In 1921, managers decided that it would be more intimate to sign the responses personally; they combined the last name of a retired company executive, William Crocker, with the first name "Betty," which was thought of as "warm and friendly." The signature came from a secretary, who won a contest among female employees. (The same signature still appears on Betty Crocker products.)

In 1924, Betty Crocker acquired a voice with the radio debut of the nation's first cooking show, which featured thirteen different actresses working from radio stations across the country. Later it became a national broadcast, The Betty Crocker School of the Air, which ran for twenty-four years.

Finally, in 1936 Betty Crocker got a face. Artist Neysa McMein brought together all the women in the company's Home Service Department and "blended their features into an official likeness." The widely circulated portrait reinforced the popular belief that Betty Crocker was a real woman. One public opinion poll rated her as the second most famous woman in America after Eleanor Roosevelt.

Well the cat's out of the bag and I feel better about it, don't you. (By the way, Sara Lee is a real person and I like her a lot, too!)

One of the fine products produced and distributed under the Betty Crocker name is Bisquick® and if you are like many people, it has been a valuable item to keep in your cupboard. I've used the product all my life with great results and thought, what with the hectic schedules we all face with work and school, it might be a great time to share some fast, simple recipes that the whole family will enjoy.

Impossible Seafood Pie

(Makes 6 servings.)

1 package (6 ounces) frozen ready-to-serve crabmeat, thawed and drained

(I've also substituted similar quantities of fresh crabmeat, lobster meat, salad sized shrimp, red salmon and bay scallops.)



1 cup shredded Monterey Jack or Swiss cheese
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, cut into 1/4-inch cubes and softened
4 medium green onions, sliced
1 jar (2 ounces) diced pimientos, drained
1/2 cup Original or Reduced Fat Bisquick® mix
1 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 large eggs

- 1) Heat oven to 400° F and spray bottom and sides of a 9x1 1/4 inch pie plate with cooking spray. Mix crabmeat, cheeses, onions and pimientos in pie plate.**
- 2) Stir remaining ingredients until blended and then pour into the pie plate.**
- 3) Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until golden brown and knife inserted into center comes out clean (some cream cheese may stick to knife). Let stand five minutes before serving.**

This dish is terrific served with fruit and perhaps a lemon poppyseed muffin. The pie can be served reheated in the microwave at 50% power if you would like to make it the night before. Just cover it before nuking it and let it cook for about 4 to 5 minutes.

Betty has always been known for her outstanding cake and dessert recipes and here is one made again with Bisquick®. I like this one so much that I plan to use it for our next church dinner and you only bring out your very best for a bunch of hungry Christians.

Cherry-Chocolate Pudding Cake

(Makes 18 servings.)

1 cup packed brown sugar
1/3 cup baking cocoa
2 cups hot water
2 cups original Bisquick® mix
1 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup baking cocoa
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon almond extract
2 eggs
1 can (21 ounces) cherry pie filling

Ice cream or whipped cream, if desired

- 1) Heat oven to 350° F. Mix brown sugar, 1/3 cup cocoa and the hot water in ungreased rectangular pan, 13x9x2 inches in size, until sugar is dissolved.**
- 2) Stir Bisquick® mix, granulated sugar, 1/4 cup cocoa, the oil, almond extract and eggs in large bowl until well blended. Stir in the pie filling and then spoon the batter over the cocoa mixture in your pan.**
- 3) Bake 35 to 45 minutes or until top springs back when touched lightly. Serve warm with ice cream or whipped cream.**



The Gysler Weinheimer Riesling Kabinett from Germany's Rheinhessen region is back for the fall and I want to remind all that it is one of the finest German wines I've had the great pleasure to enjoy. Gernot Gysler is a master winemaker and he extracts flavors from Riesling grapes that are remarkable.

This one will fill your glass with honeyed peach, over-ripe apples, hints of pineapple and tropical fruits. It is perfectly balanced and finishes with a clean, crisp citrus element.

Well it has been a tough year for our farmers from the scuttlebutt and I want to urge all to pray for this often unappreciated group of gents and ladies. Do what you can to support your local producers and let them know you care about them. Have a great week; keep your calls and emails coming; and enjoy your meals as a family. We must preserve the power of family and prayer at the dinner table. Cheers.

Jerry Allison, a native of Warren County in Southwestern Ohio, has been in the fine wine and fine dining field for 30 years in the South Florida, Chicago and Southwestern Ohio markets. He writes a weekly syndicated column, manages a fine wine business and is the executive chef for Winedog Fine Wines and Catering Services. You can visit his column archive at www.winedog.com and take your comments and questions directly to him at 888-288-0668 or email him at winedog@winedog.com. He has resided with his wife and two sons since 1999 in the country outside of Morrow,

