

Our State eats

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Pepsi & Peanuts Fudge Cake

Yield: 16 servings.

Cake

- 2 cups Pepsi (not diet)
- 1 cup unsweetened dark cocoa powder
- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 1¼ cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup dark brown sugar, firmly packed
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1¼ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature

Icing

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¾ cup whole milk
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter (not all-natural)
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 (1-pound) box powdered sugar
- 1½ cups sweet-and-crunchy candied peanuts, coarsely chopped

For the cake: Preheat the oven to 350°. Grease a 9 x 13-inch baking pan with vegetable shortening.

In a large saucepan, whisk together the Pepsi, cocoa, and butter over moderate heat until smooth. Add the granulated sugar and brown sugar, and whisk until melted and smooth. Pour into a large mixing bowl and let stand until cooled to room temperature. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, and salt.



In a small bowl, whisk the eggs until beaten. Whisk into the Pepsi mixture. Add the flour mixture and stir with a rubber spatula until combined. The batter will be slightly lumpy.

Scrape the batter into the prepared pan. Bake in the center of the oven until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 30 minutes. Place the cake on a wire rack to cool slightly while you prepare the icing.

For the icing: In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over moderate heat. Whisk in the milk. Bring to a boil, whisking continuously. Add the peanut butter and whisk until smooth. Remove from the heat, and whisk in the vanilla.

Add the powdered sugar in thirds, whisking until smooth after each addition. Pour over the warm cake and spread to the edges. Sprinkle the peanuts over the top. Place on a wire rack to cool to room temperature.

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Cheerwine Poke Cake with Cream Cheese Glaze

Yield: 16 servings.

Cake

- 1½ cups Cheerwine (not diet), plus more for the cake mix (see below)
 - 1 (3-ounce) box cherry gelatin
 - 1 box white cake mix
- Ingredients for the cake mix, per package directions, substituting Cheerwine for water

Glaze

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 4 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 3 tablespoons milk
- ½ cup maraschino cherries, drained

For the cake: In a small saucepan, bring 1½ cups of Cheerwine to a boil. Remove from heat, add gelatin, and stir until dissolved. Pour into a bowl and refrigerate until needed.

Prepare the cake mix according to the package directions, substituting Cheerwine for the water. Bake in a 9 x 13-inch



baking pan. Cool the cake in the pan on a wire rack for 15 minutes.

Use a chopstick, straw, or handle of a wooden spoon to poke holes in the cake in 2-inch intervals. Spoon the gelatin mixture evenly over the cake, letting it run down into the holes. Cover and refrigerate until chilled, at least 3 hours.

For the glaze: In a medium bowl, beat the butter, cream cheese, and vanilla until smooth. Add the powdered sugar in thirds, beating after each addition until smooth. Beat in the milk. Spoon the glaze over the top of the cake, spreading it to the edges. Sprinkle the cherries over the top.

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Sun Drop Shortcake

Yield: 8 servings.

Shortcake

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup vegetable shortening
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Sun Drop (not diet)
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

Filling and Topping

- 1 cup whipping cream, chilled
- 1 (12-ounce) jar lemon curd
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- Zest of 1 lemon, finely grated
- 4 cups whole blackberries, blueberries, and/or halved strawberries

For the shortcake: Preheat the oven to 450°. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. Work in the shortening with your fingertips or a pastry blender until the mixture is crumbly.

Stir in the sour cream and then the Sun Drop. The dough will be soft and sticky.

Pour the melted butter into a 9-inch square baking pan. Pat the dough evenly into the pan. Bake in the center of the oven for 12 to 15 minutes, or until golden brown on top. Turn the cake out of the pan and place onto a wire rack. Let cool to room temperature.

For the filling and topping: Beat the cream to stiff peaks in a chilled bowl with chilled beaters. Fold in the lemon curd with



a rubber spatula. In a small bowl, mix the sugar and lemon zest. Rub with your fingertips until the sugar is moist and shiny.

To assemble: Using a long serrated knife, split the shortcake horizontally. Place the bottom piece on a serving plate. Spread half of the cream mixture over the cut side. Arrange half of the berries over the cream. Cover with the top piece of the shortcake. Spread the remaining cream over the shortcake; sprinkle with the rest of the berries. Sprinkle lemon sugar over the berries.

Serve soon or loosely cover and refrigerate for up to 4 hours.

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My Perfect Tar Heel Pound Cake

Yields: 10 to 15 servings.

- Crisco shortening for greasing pan, plus ½ cup, at room temperature**
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, plus 3 cups**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup whole milk, at room temperature**
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract**
- 1 teaspoon pure almond extract**
- 1 teaspoon pure lemon extract**
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, at room temperature**
- 3 cups sugar**
- 5 large eggs, at room temperature**

Preheat the oven to 325°.

Generously grease a 10-inch tube pan with shortening, add the 2 tablespoons of flour, turn the pan to coat evenly with flour, tap off the excess, and set aside. (Or spray the insides of the pan generously with a cooking spray.) In a bowl, combine the remaining flour, baking powder, and salt; stir until thoroughly blended; and set aside. Pour the milk into a large glass or small bowl, add the 3 extracts, stir till well blended, and set aside.

In a standing mixer, combine the butter, remaining shortening, and sugar, and cream the mixture at medium-low speed until very light and fluffy, about 5 minutes, scraping sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula. Add the eggs one at a time, beating about 15 seconds before adding another, and scrape sides of the bowl (do not overbeat).



In batches, alternately add the flour and milk and beat just till the batter is smooth and silky. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and firmly tap the pan on a counter to allow batter to settle evenly.

Bake in the center of the oven 1 hour and 15 minutes, never opening the oven door.

Carefully transfer the cake to a wire rack and let cool in the pan about 30 minutes. Invert the cake onto the rack and let cool completely before slicing. Store the cake in a tightly covered cake plate up to 5 days (never in the refrigerator).

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Moravian Sugar Cake

Yield: 12 to 16 servings.

- 1 medium-size russet potato (about 8 ounces), peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 (¼-ounce) envelope active dry yeast
- ½ teaspoon plus 1 cup sugar, divided
- ¼ cup warm potato cooking water (100° to 110°)
- ½ cup shortening
- ¼ cup butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, cut into ¼-inch cubes and chilled
- 1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Place the potato in a small saucepan, cover with water to a depth of 1 inch, and simmer, covered, for 15 minutes or until tender. Drain well, reserving the cooking water. Force the potato through a food mill or ricer into a small bowl, or mash as smooth as possible with a fork. Measure out 1 cup of potatoes into a small bowl and stir in 2 tablespoons of the potato cooking water. Cover and keep warm.

Dissolve the yeast and ½ teaspoon sugar in ¼ cup warm potato water; let stand 5 minutes, or until mixture bubbles. Discard any remaining potato cooking water.

Stir together the warm mashed potato, the remaining 1 cup sugar, the shortening, ¼ cup butter, and salt in a large mixing bowl; stir until the shortening melts. Stir in the yeast mixture. Cover and let rise in a warm place (85°) free from drafts, 1½ hours, or until spongy. Stir in the eggs and flour to make soft dough.

Shape the dough into a ball. Place in a greased bowl, turning to grease the top. Cover with a cloth or plastic wrap misted with nonstick spray and let rise in a warm place (85°) free from drafts, 2 hours, or until doubled in bulk.



Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface; knead 5 minutes or until smooth and elastic. (Hint: To keep yeast bread dough from sticking to your hands, begin kneading with a plastic dough scraper or metal bench knife. You can lift the dough and fold it over on a floured surface. When the dough becomes less sticky, complete the kneading by hand.) Pat the dough evenly in a greased 9×13-inch baking pan. Cover and let rise in a warm place (85°), free from drafts, 2 hours, or until doubled in bulk.

Preheat the oven to 375°. Deeply dimple the surface of the dough with your thumb or the end of a wooden spoon. Tuck a butter cube into each dimple. Stir together the brown sugar and cinnamon in small bowl; sprinkle evenly over the dough and down into the dimples.

Bake in center of oven for 20 minutes, or until browned and cooked through. Let cool 5 minutes before serving.

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Nancy's Pineapple Molasses Cake

Cake:

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 (small) box vanilla instant pudding
- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 1 cup Crisco oil
- 4 eggs
- 3 tablespoons molasses

Filling:

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup pineapple juice
- 1 stick margarine
- 2 tablespoons molasses

Note: Orange juice may be used instead of pineapple.

To make the cake: Preheat oven to 325. Mix all ingredients together and pour into greased and floured Bundt pan. Bake for 45-50 minutes. When cake is almost done, prepare the filling.

To make the filling: Bring to a boil for 3 minutes. When cake comes out of the oven, pour liquid over while still hot and let sit for 30 minutes before removing the cake from pan and transferring to cake plate.



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Prized Pineapple Pig Pickin' Cake

Cake:

- 1 box butter golden cake mix
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin oranges, chopped into smaller pieces (Do not drain)
- 4 large eggs
- ¼ cup vegetable oil

Frosting:

- 1 (16-ounce) can crushed pineapple, drained
- 1 (3.4-ounce) box instant vanilla pudding
- 2 (8-ounce) containers whipped topping, thawed

For the cake: Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and flour 3 8-inch cake pans with vegetable shortening.

In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, eggs, oil, and mandarin oranges with their juice.

Divide batter between pans. Bake 15 to 20 minutes, or until toothpick comes out clean.

Turn the cake out of the pan and place onto a wire rack. Let cool to room temperature.



For the frosting: In a large bowl, stir together the drained pineapple and pudding mix. Once combined, fold whipped topping into pineapple mixture.

Frost each layer and sides of the cake. Serve soon or loosely cover and refrigerate for up to 4 hours.

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The Pepsi 'n' Peanuts Cake

Yield: 8 (4-inch) cakes

Cake

- 8 (4-inch) ramekins (or 4 small springform pans)
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup applesauce, made with N.C. mountain apples*
- 1¼ cups peanut butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1¼ cups High Rock Farm Chestnut Flour
- 1¼ cups gluten-free all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 pinch salt
- 1½ cups milk

Reduction

- 1 (16-ounce) Pepsi

Filling 1

- 8 ounces Escazú chocolate 64% cocoa, chopped
- 6 tablespoons Pepsi reduction

Filling 2

- ¼ cup peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons Pepsi reduction

Whipped Topping

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon Yah's Best vanilla extract

Garnish

- ¼ cup chopped Baker's peanuts
- Pepsi reduction

For the cake: Preheat oven to 400°. Spray ramekins with nonstick baking spray. In large bowl, mix brown sugar, oil, applesauce, and peanut butter until fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time; stir in vanilla. Combine flours, baking soda, cream of tartar, and salt. Mix into peanut butter mixture, alternating with milk. Set aside.

For the Pepsi reduction: In heavy saucepan, on medium heat, reduce Pepsi until about half of original volume and thickened. Set aside.

For the first filling: In small, microwave-safe bowl, warm chocolate and Pepsi reduction in 20-30 second intervals, stirring after each, until melted together.

For the second filling: Combine all ingredients in small, microwave-safe bowl, and warm for about 15 seconds. Stir to combine, and cream.

For the whipped topping: Beat whipping cream until soft peaks form. While mixer is running, slowly add sugar and vanilla. Whip until hard peaks form.

To bake cakes: Fill each ramekin half



full with peanut butter cake mixture. Put 2 teaspoons of each filling on top of each cake mixture. Top with more batter until ramekin is almost full. Bake at 400° for 15-20 minutes. Tops will crack slightly. Remove from oven, and run a knife around cakes to loosen. Let cool for 5 minutes. Invert onto serving plates. (If using springform pans, slide onto serving plates.) Top with dollop of whipped topping and crumbled peanuts. Drizzle with Pepsi reduction. Best if served warm just after baking.

***Note:** For applesauce, use 4 cooking apples, 2 tablespoons water or apple juice, and 2 tablespoons sugar or honey. Peel, core, and chop apples. Place in microwave-safe bowl. Sprinkle with water. Cover tightly, and cook on high about 6 minutes or until apples are tender. (Cooking time will vary depending on type of apple used.) Add sugar, and mash with potato masher until desired consistency. (If the apples are naturally sweet, you can omit adding sugar.)

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