

Food

The Estherville Daily News is proud to bring you the Food page every Tuesday. If you know anyone who should be featured on this page, please send their names and why you think they should be featured to: Managing editor, 10 N. Seventh St., Estherville, 51334 or editor@esthervilledailynews.com

Beyond the LEMONADE STAND

By MARY ANN MENENDEZ

While the lemon is sunny in color, its taste is far from sunny sweet in its natural state. The sourness pretty much sums up the strongest characteristic of the lemon. A member of the citrus family, this fruit is packed with Vitamin "C. One-half cup of lemon juice meets the Recommended Daily Allowance for Vitamin C at 100 percent. Containing absolutely no fat or sugar, one lemon provides 12 grams of carbohydrates, 1 gram of protein and 3 grams of sodium.

So where does the unsweetened taste come from? The juice of a lemon contains about 5 percent acid. Couple that with a pH of 2-3, and that is what produces the taste that makes your mouth pucker up.

Lemon trees are prevalent in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world, particularly in Italy, Spain, Portugal and California. It is believed the lemon we enjoy today is a hybrid of lime and citron.

Here's some friendly advice from my childhood dentist who said, "Do not drink lemon juice like orange juice because undiluted juice squeezed from lemons will weaken tooth enamel." This juice must be powerful stuff because we all learned in school that tooth enamel is the strongest substance in the human body!

But once diluted with water and sweetened with sugar, no one I know can resist a tall glass of iced lemonade, whether yellow or pink!

Lemons have been used in many recipes from desserts especially and backed up to the appetizer offerings. And once you have seeded and squeezed the juice for your recipes, toss those lemons in the disposal to freshen up the kitchen sink.

Lemon Chicken, Mediterranean Style

3-4 chicken breasts
2 lemons
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
1 large sweet onion, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon lemon pepper
2 cups chicken broth or water
1 can garbanzos, drained
1 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced
1 tablespoon flour

Cut each lemons in half. Rub the chicken with one lemon half. In a large Dutch oven, saute onion in olive oil until soft and golden colored. Rub chicken with lemon pepper. Sear chicken on both sides in the onion and olive oil. Add garlic and saute for 1 more minute or until garlic is lightly colored. Add broth or water and drained garbanzos, the juice from the lemons and salt and pepper, to taste. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer until chicken is tender. If a thicker sauce is desired, stir flour into sauce during final 15 minutes of cooking. About 10 minutes before serving, stir in parsley (save a pinch for garnishing). To serve, top with sauce and a sprinkle of parsley.

Lemon Vinaigrette

Juice and zest of 1 lemon
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
3 cloves garlic, peeled
1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon fresh basil
One-third teaspoon oregano
Few dashes of Tabasco sauce
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Wash and remove zest from lemon using a micro-plane grater or zester. In a blender, put 1 tablespoon of the lemon zest with 2-3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice. Add garlic, Parmesan cheese, mustard and Worcestershire sauce. Process for 1 minute or until smooth. Drizzle oil through the top of blender opening in a thin, steady stream until the mixture thickens. Taste and adjust seasonings adding salt, pepper, hot red pepper flakes and additional lemon juice or a light wine vinegar, to your taste. Add fresh parsley to blender contents and process 1 or 2 seconds, are just until parsley is coarsely chopped. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Tropical Squares

Graham crackers
1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
1 egg, slightly beaten
1/2 cup milk



1 cup flaked coconut
2 tablespoons coconut rum
1 cup chopped nuts
1 cup Graham cracker crumbs
Lemon Butter Frosting:
2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons butter
Juice of 1 lemon

In a small cup or bowl, soak coconut flakes in coconut rum for 30 minutes, turning several times to coat. Line a 9 x 13 inch pan with graham cracker squares. In a saucepan or double boiler pan, melt butter. Add the egg beaten in the milk, and cook until slightly thickened, stirring constantly. Add coconut, nuts and crumbs. Pour over layer of crackers and add another layer of crackers frost with lemon butter icing. Chill 24 hours, then cut into bars. Refrigerate leftovers.

Lemon Pound Cake

1 1/2 cups butter, softened
3 cups sugar
8 eggs
3 cups flour, sifted
1 tablespoon plus 1 1/2 teaspoons lemon extract
1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons lemon juice

Cream butter, gradually add sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add eggs; one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add flour, mixing well. Stir in lemon juice and extract. Pour batter into a greased and flour Bundt pan. Bake 350 degrees for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until tooth pick inserted comes out clean. Cool 15 minutes in pan. Remove from pan and cool completely before slicing.

Lemon Layered Dessert

Crust:
1 1/2 cups flour
1 1/2 cups ground black walnuts
1 1/2 sticks of butter
Filling:
8 ounces cream cheese
1 cup powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup non-dairy whipped topping
Topping:
2 small packages instant lemon pudding
3 cups cold milk

To make crust, use a pastry cutter to combine ingredients for crust and pat into the bottom of a 9 x 13 pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes. Let cool. Place filling ingredients into bowl and mix well. Spread over baked cold crust and refrigerate. For the topping, mix packages of lemon pudding with 3 cups of cold milk. Once mixture has thickened, pour over filling. Top off with more whipped topping and nuts, if desired. Refrigerate until time to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

Broccoli and Lemon Sauce

1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/4 teaspoon salt
Pepper, to taste
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoon lemon juice

1 tablespoon chopped parsley
2 pounds broccoli spears, cooked tender crisp and drained

In quart saucepan, stir together cornstarch, salt and pepper. Gradually stir in milk until smooth. Add butter, stirring constantly, bring to boil over medium heat and boil 1 minute. Remove from heat. Stir in lemon juice and parsley. Arrange broccoli in shallow serving dish. Pour sauce over broccoli.

Pretty Puffs

1 egg
2 tablespoon sugar
Thin rind of 1 lemon
1 cup milk
2 cups biscuit mix
Topping:
1/3 cup melted butter
1/2 cup sugar

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Grease muffin tins well. Put egg, sugar, rind and milk into a blender container. Cover and process until rind is chopped fine. Remove feeder cap and add biscuit mix, continue processing

only until mixture is smooth. Use a rubber spatula to keep ingredients flowing to processing blades. Fill muffin tins 1/2 full. Bake 12 to 15 minutes, until lightly browned. While muffins are hot, dip into melted butter, then into sugar mixture. Makes 18 puffs.

Greek Egg-Lemon Soup

4 cups chicken broth
1 pound boneless chicken breast, skinned and cut in thin strips
2 large eggs
1 oregano
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1/3 cup orzo
3 tablespoon lemon juice

Cook broth on high until boiling. Add orzo. Cook covered for 7 minutes or until tender. Add chicken breast and cook until chicken is tender. In medium bowl beat eggs with lemon juice. Whisk in a soup ladleful of hot broth into egg/lemon mixture. Stir and then return to pot. Cook, covered for 3 more minutes. Stir in oregano and parsley. Garnish with lemon slices if desired. This soup does not reheat very well.

The scent of a lemon

The inability to identify the smell of lemons, lilac, leather and seven other odors predicts which patients with minimal to mild cognitive impairment (MMCI) will develop Alzheimer's disease, according to a study presented at an American College of Neuropsychopharmacology annual meeting.

For patients with memory impairment, the odor identification test was found to be a strong predictor of Alzheimer's disease during follow-up, and compared favorably with reduction in brain volumes on MRI scan and memory test performance as potential predictors.

"Early diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease is critical for patients and their families to receive the most beneficial treatment and medications," says lead researcher D.P. Devanand, MD, Professor of Clinical Psychiatry and Neurology at Columbia University. "While currently there is no cure for the disease, early diagnosis and treatment can help patients and their families to better plan their lives."

Small identification test results from Alzheimer's disease patients, MMCI patients and healthy elderly subjects were analyzed to select an optimal subset of fragrances that distinguished Alzheimer's and MMCI patients who developed the disease from healthy subjects and MMCI patients who did not develop Alzheimer's. Results of the 10-smell test, which can be administered in five to eight minutes, were analyzed in Devanand's study which evaluated 150 patients with MMCI every six months and 63 healthy elderly subjects annually, with average follow-up



duration of five years. Inability to identify 10 specific odors (derived from the broader study) proved to be the best predictors for Alzheimer's disease: strawberry, smoke, soap, menthol, clove, pineapple, natural gas, lilac, lemon and leather.

"Narrowing the list of odors can potentially expedite screening and help with early diagnosis," says Devanand, adding that pathological studies of brains of patients with Alzheimer's disease show that the nerve pathways involved in perceiving and recognizing odors are affected at a very early stage.

An estimated 4.5 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, a progressive brain disorder that gradually destroys a person's memory. The number of Americans with the disease has more than doubled since 1980.

Taken from <http://www.news-medical.net/news/2004/12/13/6833.aspx>

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