

Spice of Life

A newsletter published by The Peppermill

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Purim sure is early this year! While we know that it always comes not long after Chanukah, this year it seems to have been quicker than usual. Maybe it was just the fairly mild winter that didn't keep us indoors too often. Whatever the reason, we are happy to be on the way to spring.

With the growing popularity of new ingredients like nougat chips, we have taken this opportunity to familiarize you with one of the more unusual ones. You will learn all about **nougat** in our "did you know" column below.

You will want to try all of our delicious recipes this Purim--any will make a wonderful Shalach Manos treat. **Biscotti, chocolate chip hamantaschen, nougat and Pain au Chocolate** are on our plates this year. Plus, our **Pesach Carrot Cake** got rave reviews from the family!

For those who prefer to purchase, our **magnificent selection of Shalach Manos gift packages** are on display. Each features an attractive dish, bowl or platter that will keep the recipient happy long after the delicious treats are gone. We have Shalach Manos to fit every budget and style--stop by to see them today.

Sign up to attend our Spring classes; bring out your creative side! Read more on page 4.

See our **new additions like Tramontina Ceramica and All Clad D5**. Take advantage of our "**bonus buys**" and **promotions and specials before Pesach**. We've got all your basic Pesach needs from knives to peelers to stockpots in all price ranges. And as always we're here to hold your hand in the kitchen. For advice, recipes and culinary know-how--we are your destination!

Wishing all an enjoyable Purim and Peasach!

--Chayale & Rivky

did you know?

What is nougat? We've all been seeing the term thrown around in lots of new recipes and cooking publications but what is it actually? Let us help clear up the confusion.

Nougat essentially describes a type of sweet made with sugar or honey and some type of nut--usually almonds, pistachios, or hazelnuts. It can be soft and chewy like caramel or hard and brittle, but it's always sticky, according to a renowned professional French confectionary manufacturer.

There are two types of nougat: white and brown.

White nougat is a combination of egg whites, sugar and honey and

chopped nuts. It refers to a French candy made by whipping egg whites until they are light and frothy. Boiling hot sugar or honey syrup is added to stabilize the egg foam creating a fizzy, bubbly mixture. Roasted nuts are then added. A number of other flavoring ingredients can then be added to create nougat with different flavors.

Nougat is also known as *torrone* in Italy and *turrón* in Spain.

Most historians believe that nougat comes from ancient Rome where a sweet made from honey, almonds, and eggs was made and reserved for special functions. The first known documentation in Italy of "*torrone*" was in the year 1441 in Cremona, where at the wedding a new sweet was created in the couple's honor.

Other historians think that the nougat traces back to a Greek walnut confection known as "*nux gatum*" or nut cake.

Similar to marshmallows in that nougat is also made from whipped egg whites and a boiled sugar syrup. However, unlike marshmallow, nougat is pressed with weights during the drying process, resulting in a compact, dense and chewy candy rather than something airy. Nuts or dried fruit are often added to the candy before it is poured in a pan,



White nougat with almonds

covered in rice paper or wax paper, and pressed under heavy weights for an overnight finishing period.

The nougat found in many commercially manufactured candy bars these days is substantially different from traditional nougat recipes, being a mixture of sucrose and corn syrup beaten with a whipping agent such as hydrolyzed soy protein. Vegetable fats, milk powder and nuts may also be added.

Brown nougat is a denser version made using roasted hazelnuts, sugar, cocoa butter, chocolate, lecithin and vanilla. The ingredients are not cooked but rather ground and mixed. The different ratios of ingredients determine the texture of the finished candy which can vary from firm and hard to creamy and spreadable.

It is this type of nougat--brown nougat--that brings us **nougat powder and nougat chips** to add a rich nutty flavor to so many baked treats and candy confections.



Brown nougat

from our kitchen to yours

By now you know that you can get brown nougat in powder form and chips at The Peppermill. **White nougat** can also be purchased but is actually fun to make. We've got a simple recipe for you here. Use a candy thermometer to ensure it comes out perfect.

White Honey Nougat

cooking spray
2 cups sugar
1/4 cup water
1/4 cup honey
2 egg whites, at room temperature
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 cup almond, toasted and chopped



Spray a 9 by 13-inch pan with cooking spray. Line the bottom and sides of the pan with parchment paper, allowing the paper to overhang by 5-6 inches on each side. Lightly spray the paper inside

the pan.

In a medium saucepan, combine the sugar, water, and honey over low heat. Stir until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a simmer, and cook until the syrup turns amber-colored and reaches 315 degrees F on a candy thermometer, about 15 to 20 minutes.

While the syrup is cooking, in a mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the egg whites until they hold soft peaks, about 2 minutes.

With the mixer running on low, slowly pour the syrup into the egg whites. Increase the speed to high and beat until the mixture is very thick, about 7 minutes. Beat in the vanilla extract. Fold in 1/2 of the almonds. Using a spatula sprayed with cooking spray, scrape the mixture into the prepared pan. Sprinkle the remaining nuts on top. Fold the overhanging pieces of paper onto the surface of the mixture. allow to set 24 hours at room temp.

Remove the paper from the nougat and discard. Using a knife sprayed with cooking spray, cut the nougat in 1 inch squares or 1" by 1 1/2" bars. Wrap in parchment paper or waxed paper candy wrappers.

If you're ready to try something new this Purim, make it nougat powder and nougat chips! These tasty hazelnut-based treats packs tons of flavor into every bite!

Nougat Biscotti

This recipe uses oil instead of margarine; it's great for those who are watching their cholesterol levels.

1 1/2 cups canola oil
2 cups sugar
6 eggs
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
6 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
4 ounces nougat powder
1 1/2 cups hazelnuts (about 8 ounces), toasted and chopped
8 ounces nougat chips
1 pound white coating chocolate for dipping (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line two baking sheets with silpat mats or parchment paper; set aside.

Put oil, sugar, eggs, salt, and vanilla in the bowl of electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, and mix on medium speed until combined.

Stir together flour, baking powder, baking soda and nougat powder into a bowl.

Reduce mixer speed to low. Add flour mixture; mix until combined. Stir in hazelnuts and nougat chips.

Divide dough into six equal parts; shape each into a long log about 8-10" long by 3 inches wide. Place logs 4 inches apart on prepared baking sheets. Bake logs until golden, puffed, and just firm to the touch, about 35 minutes. Let cool slightly for about 5 minutes. Using a long serrated knife, slice biscotti diagonally, about 1" thick.



Lay biscotti back in the pan, cut side up and return to the oven. Bake 5 minutes longer until slightly crisped. Remove from oven and cool on a cooling rack.

If you like, chop the white chocolate and melt in a double boiler or microwave. Dip biscotti halfway into the melted chocolate; dipping on an angle is nicest. Place biscotti back on the rack to dry.

For a new twist on a traditional Purim treat we have added chocolate chips to our favorite hamantasch recipe. We got this recipe from a friend who bakes with girls of all ages and these hamantaschen were a huge hit!

Chocolate Chip Hamantaschen

For the chocolate chip dough:
4 ounces margarine (1 stick) at room temperature
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 eggs
1/4 cup canola oil
1 tablespoon baking powder
4 1/4 cups flour
1/2 cup orange juice
3/4 cup mini chocolate chips

cookie dip for filling hamantaschen
sugar crystals
egg white, lightly beaten

Beat margarine in the mixer at medium speed for 2-3 minutes or until softened. Add the sugar and vanilla. Add eggs one at a time. Add oil. Mix until combined. Add flour and baking powder alternating with the orange juice. Add the chocolate chips. Beat until combined, scraping the sides of the bowl if necessary. Refrigerate dough 30 minutes to make it easier to roll out.

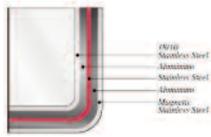
Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Remove one half of dough from refrigerator. On a lightly floured surface, roll out to 1/4" thickness. Cut out 2 1/2" rounds. Spoon one level teaspoon of cookie dip in the center of each round.

Reroll scraps and cut more 2 1/2" circles. Fill as directed. Repeat with the other half of the dough.

To form hamantasch, lift three edges of the circle toward the filling and pinch each corner tightly. Place 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Brush with beaten egg white and sprinkle sugar crystals. Bake for 18-20 minutes or until the edges are firm. Cool slightly and remove from cookie sheet to cool on a wire rack.

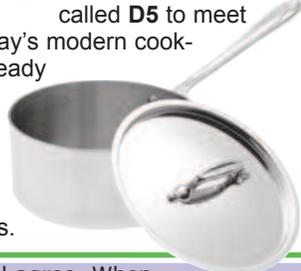
Yield: 48 hamantaschen

Gotta have it!



In keeping with their commitment to be the best, **All Clad** has come up with a new line of cookware called **D5** to meet

the needs of today's modern cook-tops. Induction ready and manufactured of 5 layers of metal, this cookware will fit the bill for discriminating cooks.



The experts all agree. When you want to use the best fondant choose **Satinice**. Its texture and quality cannot be matched. We now carry Satinice in 2 pound buckets in **white, baby pink, baby blue, chocolate and black**. Coming soon will be 4 ounce packets in all colors. Under the supervision of the OK. Also on the way--fondant under the B'datz hasngacha!



Oxo is synonymous with great quality. So when they manufacture a **Cookie Press** you know it's gonna work beautifully! The cookie press comes with a selection of pretty designs, easy to follow instructions and--like all Oxo products--a **lifetime warranty**. Send cookies for Shalach Manos this year.

Dress your food with the latest picks and skewers. We've got **beaded picks** in lots of colors, **knot skewers, gold and silver picks** and more. Food on a stick is appealing and attractive. It's easy to prepare and serve--all in all lots of reasons to pick up a package today.



Creating authentic oriental dishes is now easier than ever with all **new sauces from China Mehadrin**. Taste their sweet and sour sauce, sweet chili sauce, siriracha and others. Under the supervision of the CRC.



Just what you have been asking for! We now have a beautiful **variety of colored sugar crystals sprinkles and pearls** with a heimishe hechsher. Imani decorations are certified by the **Udvari Rav** and will enhance your cookies, miniatures, cupcakes and more.



Try top-rated **Anolon cookware** with this **super bonus set**. Dupont Autograph non-stick coating makes cooking and frying a breeze. The set includes a **10" saute pan with cover plus a fry pan for only \$49.99**. Available in grey or bronze.



Microfiber Dish Drying Mats ~~\$7.99~~

Now only \$4.99



Machine wash and dry. Lots of colors & patterns to choose from. Ends March 24 or while supplies last.

Pre-Pesach Gift with purchase!

Spend \$50 & get a free Silicone Pocket Mitt Pot Holder.



Begins Feb 25. While supplies last

You love their recipes every week--try them for Pesach!

Leah Schapira & Victoria Dweck share their favorites in this new cookbook

PASSOVER MADE Easy



Meet Leah and Victoria!
Book signing
Wednesday
March 6 @noon

You know this is the place for new ideas. Here is a tasty treat which may be new to our neighborhood but is a staple in France. Pain au chocolat is the most popular snack, breakfast treat and after dinner dessert throughout this country and it's making its way to American tables. Now you can make it too--and the best part is--it's really easy. Once you pick up a package of Chocolate Sticks at The Peppermill, of course.

Pain au Chocolate
6 3" puff pastry squares
12 chocolate sticks
Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
Line a sheet pan with a silicone pan liner.
Cut each pastry square in half. Place a chocolate stick at one long edge and roll up, completely enclosing the chocolate.
Place seam-side down on the pan. Repeat with the remaining squares. Bake 15 minutes or until golden. Remove from oven and dust with confectioners' sugar. Serve immediately.





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Dessert or side dish? When it comes to carrot cake that is always the question. Whether you serve it next to your favorite roast or after a festive meal, this recipe will be a well appreciated change of pace.

Pesach Carrot Cake

- 7 large eggs
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- zest of 1 lemon (optional)
- juice of 1 lemon
- 5 large carrots, peeled and grated, about 2 1/2 cups grated
- 1 1/2 cups finely ground hazelnuts (filberts) or almonds
- cottonseed oil, light olive oil or walnut oil for pan

Heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Generously brush

a 10-inch springform pan with oil.

Separate 5 of the eggs into yolks and whites. Set aside the whites.

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the 5 egg yolks with the 2 remaining whole eggs. Add 1 cup of the sugar, the cinnamon, vanilla and the lemon zest, if using, and juice and mix until combined. Stir in the carrots and hazelnuts or almonds.

In a clean bowl and using a clean whisk attachment, use an electric mixer to beat the 5 egg whites to soft peaks. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar and continue whipping until stiff peaks form. Working in batches, gently fold the whites into the carrot batter.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 50 minutes, or until a cake tester inserted at the center of the cake comes out clean. Allow to cool for at least 1 hour before removing from the pan.



decorating classes

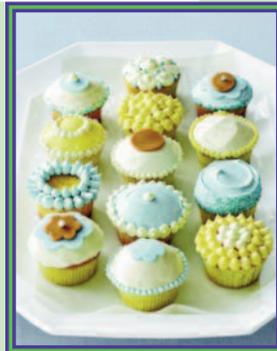
Hands on cookie and cupcakes decorating with **Esty Hirsch of Whimsical Confections**. Learn to pipe icing and frosting, use fondant and other decorating techniques in this fun, creative class.

Royal Icing Cookies

Apr 23 8pm \$65

Magnificent Cupcakes

April 29 8pm \$65



Advanced Icing May 7 8pm \$65

Nothing beats the taste of **real butter and cream!** Learn to make **mouthwatering milchig pies and tarts** for Shavuos.

Join **Lynn Kutner**, for the secrets of professional bakers.

Marvelous Milchigs April 30 12 noon \$65

