

TEAM WEIDER 2003

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CHOCOLATE BANANA CARAMEL CRUNCH

The theme of the 2003 National Team Pastry Championship was Broadway, and Team Weider used the show 42nd Street as the inspiration for their plated dessert. A dancing couple is depicted in a tuile that is perched on top of a cylinder of chocolate caramel mousse with a chocolate banana center. A sugar-dusted, red sugar heart and a baked feuille de bric ring surround the mousse, along with a creamy banana sauce and caramelized banana slices.

MAKES 12 SERVINGS

Chocolate Banana Centers

396 g (13.96 oz/1½ cups plus 2 Tbsp plus 2½ tsp) water**228 g (8 oz/1 cup plus 2 Tbsp plus ¾ tsp) granulated sugar****77 g (2.71 oz) bittersweet chocolate couverture, chopped****45 g (1.58 oz/½ cup plus 2 Tbsp plus 2¼ tsp) cocoa powder****11 g (0.38 oz/1½ tsp) Clearjel****30 g (1.05 oz/2 Tbsp) banana compound**

1. In a saucepan, combine 226 g (7.97 oz/¾ cup plus 3 Tbsp plus 1 tsp) of the water, the sugar, and the couverture and bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring to melt the chocolate. Remove from the heat.
2. In a bowl, combine the cocoa powder, Clearjel, banana compound, and remaining 170 g (6 oz/¾ cup plus 1 Tbsp plus 1½ tsp) water. Whisk in half of the hot chocolate mixture, then return the entire mixture to the saucepan, and return it to the heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture comes to a boil. Remove from the heat and strain through a fine-mesh sieve. Cool.
3. Pour the mixture into a bowl, cover, and freeze until firm.
4. Shape the chocolate mixture into ¾-in (2-cm) balls and freeze until ready to use.

Chocolate Mousse Caramel

225 g (8 oz/1 cup plus 2 Tbsp) granulated sugar

75 g (2.64 oz/½ stick plus 1½ Tbsp plus 1 tsp) unsalted butter, cut into tablespoons

712 g (25.11 oz/ 3 cups plus 1 Tbsp) heavy cream

187 g (6.6 oz) bittersweet chocolate, chopped

1. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium-high heat, cook the sugar dry to a deep caramel. Add the butter and stir until melted.
2. Place 150 g (5.3 oz/½ cup plus 1 tsp) of the cream in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment and whip slightly on high speed, just until thickened. Stir the cream into the caramel. Pour the hot caramel over the chopped chocolate and whisk until smooth. Cool to 97°F (35°C).
3. Meanwhile, whip the remaining 562 g (19.82 oz/2⅔ cups plus 2 tsp) cream on high speed to medium peaks. When the caramel mixture reaches 97°F, gently fold the cream into it. Pour the mousse into 12 parchment paper-lined 2-in (5-cm) ring molds, filling them to ½ in (1.25 cm) from the top. Press a Chocolate Banana Center into the center of each mousse-filled mold. Freeze until firm.

Florentine Almond Crunch

130 g (4.58 oz/1 stick plus 1 Tbsp plus ¾ tsp) unsalted butter, cut into tablespoons

215 g (7.58 oz/1 cup plus 1 Tbsp plus ¾ tsp) granulated sugar

185 g (6.52 oz/2 cups plus 3 Tbsp) chopped almonds

45 g (1.58 oz/½ cup plus 1 Tbsp) all-purpose flour

70 g (2.46 oz/3 Tbsp plus 1¼ tsp) light corn syrup

1. In a saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat, then add the sugar and cook until the sugar is dissolved. Remove from the heat.
2. In a bowl, combine the almonds and flour and add to the butter mixture. Stir in the corn syrup and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
3. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
4. Drop the dough by level teaspoons, about 3 in (7.6 cm) apart, onto silicone baking mat-lined sheet pans. Spread thinly with a rubber spatula. Bake for 6 to 8 minutes, or until golden brown. Cut each cookie with a 2-in (5-cm) round cutter. Cool completely.

Banana Sauce

150 g (5.3 oz/¾ cup) granulated sugar

150 g (5.3 oz/⅔ cup plus ½ tsp) water

300 g (10.58 oz/1¼ cups plus 2 tsp) heavy cream

200 g (7 oz/¾ cup plus 2 Tbsp) banana purée

1. In a saucepan, bring the sugar and water to a boil over high heat and cook to a deep caramel. Remove from the heat and add the cream and banana purée. Return to the heat and bring to a boil. Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl and chill in an ice bath.

Tuile Garnish

225 g (7.9 oz/2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened

225 g (7.9 oz/2 cups) confectioners' sugar

125 g (4.4 oz/about 4 large) egg whites

225 g (7.9 oz/1⅔ cups plus 1 Tbsp plus 1½ tsp) bread flour, sifted

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. In a bowl, mix together the butter and sugar by hand with a wooden spoon. Very gradually mix in the egg whites. Gradually mix in the sifted flour just until combined.
3. Spread the batter over a stencil of a dancing couple, placed on a silicone baking mat-lined sheet pan. Bake until golden brown around the edges. Repeat to make 12 dancing couple tuiles.

Sugar Heart Garnish

Granulated sugar, as needed

Isomalt, as needed

Red food coloring

1. Fill a half-sheet pan with granulated sugar and level it with a ruler so that it is even. Using a 5-in- (12.7-cm-) wide heart-shaped cutter, place the thick-edged side down and make an indentation in the sugar.
2. Ready a double-lined parchment paper cornet.
3. In a saucepan, cook the Isomalt over high heat until melted, then stir in the food coloring. Using gloves, pour the hot Isomalt into the cornet and pipe it directly into the heart-shaped indentation in the sugar. Let cool for several minutes until hardened. Turn it over so that the sugar crystals are on top. Repeat to make 12 hearts.

ASSEMBLY

Chocolate spray mixture (50% dark chocolate melted with 50% cocoa butter)

Apricot nappage, as needed

Twelve 4½-in (11½-cm) diameter x 1-in- (2½-cm-) thick baked *feuille de bric* rings

Chocolate ganache, as needed

Caramelized banana slices for garnish (see page 103)

1. Unmold each Chocolate Mousse Caramel dessert and spray with the chocolate-cocoa butter mixture. Allow to set.
2. Place a Florentine Almond Crunch round at each open end of the dessert.
3. Spread a small amount of nappage in the center of each plate and attach the *feuille de bric* ring as shown in the photo. Arrange a mousse dessert on its side inside the ring. Lay a sugar heart against the ring. Attach a Tuile Garnish onto the mousse dessert with some ganache.
4. Using a spoon, spread some Banana Sauce around each dessert. Top with some caramelized banana slices.

