2001
CHOCOLATE SOUFFLÉ CAKE WITH ORANGE CARAMEL SAUCE

SERVES 8 TO 10

ACTIVE TIME: 1 HR START TO FINISH: 2½ HR

You won't believe such a sophisticated dessert can result from just six ingredients. Citrusy caramel sauce teases out the deep flavors of the cake, which has a crisp crust and an unctuous chocolate center.

- **2 sticks (1 cup) unsalted butter, cut into pieces, plus additional for greasing pan**
- **9 oz fine-quality bittersweet chocolate (not more than 60% cacao if marked), chopped**
- **6 large eggs, separated**
- **⅔ cup plus ½ cup superfine granulated sugar**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **3 navel or Valencia oranges**

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: a 10-inch springform pan

MAKE SOUFFLÉ CAKE: Put a small roasting pan filled halfway with hot water in bottom third of oven (to provide moisture during baking). Position another oven rack in middle of oven, then preheat oven to 325°F. Butter springform pan and line bottom with a round of parchment or wax paper. Butter paper. ▸Melt butter (2 sticks) and chocolate together in a 2-quart heavy saucepan over low heat, stirring, then remove from heat. Beat together yolks, ⅓ cup sugar, and salt in a large bowl with an electric mixer at medium-high speed until thick enough to form a ribbon that takes 2 seconds to dissolve into mixture when beater is lifted, 6 to 8 minutes in a stand mixer or 10 to 14 minutes with a handheld. Stir warm chocolate mixture into yolk mixture until combined well.

▸Beat whites in another large bowl with cleaned beaters at medium speed until they just hold soft peaks. Gradually add ⅓ cup sugar, beating until whites just hold stiff peaks. Stir one fourth of whites into chocolate mixture to lighten, then fold in remaining whites gently but thoroughly.

▸Pour batter into springform pan and bake in middle of oven (do not place springform pan in hot water) until a wooden pick or skewer inserted in center comes out with crumbs adhering, about 1 hour (a crust will form and crack on top of cake as it bakes). Transfer to a rack and cool 10 minutes (cake will "deflate" as it cools).

▸Run a thin knife carefully around edge of cake, then remove side of pan. Cool cake on bottom of pan 30 minutes. Invert a rack over cake and invert cake onto rack, then remove bottom of pan and carefully peel off paper. Invert a serving plate over cake, then invert cake onto plate.

MAKE SAUCE WHILE CAKE BAKES: Remove zest from 2 oranges (see Tips, page 139) and trim any white pith from zest with a paring knife. Cut enough very thin strips of zest to measure ¼ cup. Squeeze juice from all 3 oranges and pour through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl. Measure out 1 cup juice and reserve remainder for another use. ▸Cook remaining ½ cup sugar in a dry 1- to 2-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat, undisturbed, until it begins to melt. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally with a fork, until sugar is melted into a deep golden caramel. Add zest and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 15 seconds. Tilt pan and carefully pour in juice (caramel will harden and steam vigorously). Cook over moderately low heat, stirring, until caramel is dissolved, then cool sauce.

▸Serve cake with orange caramel sauce.

COOKS' NOTE: We recommend making this cake, without sauce, 1 day ahead to allow flavors to develop. Cool completely, then chill, covered with plastic wrap. Bring to room temperature before serving.

2002
CAULIFLOWER CHEDDAR GRATIN WITH HORSERADISH CRUMBS

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 45 MIN START TO FINISH: 55 MIN

We think of this gratin as a vegetable-driven version of everyone's favorite, mac and cheese. The nutty, sweet undertones of cauliflower are particularly suited to meld with the tangy, salty Cheddar and the spicy horseradish.

- **3 lb cauliflower (1 large head), cut into 1½- to 2-inch florets**
- **½ stick (¼ cup) unsalted butter**
- **2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1½ cups whole milk**
- **6 oz sharp Cheddar, coarsely grated (2 cups)**
- **½ cup finely chopped scallion greens**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **½ teaspoon black pepper**
- **20 (2-inch) square saltine crackers**
- **2 tablespoons drained bottled horseradish ›**

▸Preheat oven to 450°F. Butter a 2-quart shallow baking dish.

▸Cook cauliflower in a 5- to 6-quart pot of boiling salted water (see Tips, page 139) until just tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Drain cauliflower well in a colander and transfer to baking dish. ▸While cauliflower cooks, melt 2 tablespoons butter in a 3- to 4-quart heavy saucepan over moderately low heat and whisk in flour. Cook roux, whisking, 3 minutes. Add milk in a slow stream, whisking, and bring to a boil, whisking frequently. Reduce heat and simmer sauce, whisking occasionally, 8 minutes. Remove from heat and add cheese, scallion greens, salt, and pepper, whisking until cheese is melted. Pour cheese sauce over cauliflower and stir gently to combine. ▸Coarsely crumble crackers into a bowl. Melt remaining 2 tablespoons butter in a small saucepan, then remove from heat and stir in horseradish. Pour over crumbs and toss to coat. ▸Sprinkle crumb topping evenly over cauliflower.

▸Bake gratin until topping is golden brown, about 10 minutes.

SHORT RIBS BRAISED IN COFFEE ANCHO CHILE SAUCE

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 40 MIN START TO FINISH: 4½ HR

Inspired by chef Robert Del Grande of Cafe Annie, in Houston, we combine the succulence of short ribs with the bitter undertones of coffee and the mellow heat of two kinds of chiles, along with maple syrup and lime juice to cut the spiciness. We recommend serving these meltingly tender ribs over soft polenta.

- **4 dried ancho chiles, stemmed, seeded, and ribs discarded**
- **2 cups boiling-hot water**
- **1 medium onion, quartered**
- **3 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped**
- **2 tablespoons finely chopped canned chipotle chiles in *adobo* plus 2 teaspoons *adobo* sauce**
- **2 tablespoons pure maple syrup**
- **1 tablespoon fresh lime juice**
- **1 tablespoon salt**
- **6 lb beef short ribs or flanken**
- **1 teaspoon black pepper**
- **1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- **½ cup brewed coffee**

▸Preheat oven to 350°F.

▸Soak ancho chiles in boiling-hot water until softened, about 20 minutes, then drain in a colander set over a bowl. Taste soaking liquid: It will be a little bitter, but if unpleasantly so, discard it; otherwise, reserve for braising. Transfer ancho chiles to a blender and purée with onion, garlic, chipotles with sauce, maple syrup, lime juice, and 1 teaspoon salt.

(Continued on page 138)

For MORE RECIPES, see page 139.

FOOD STYLING: MAGGIE RUGGIERO PROP STYLING: CHRISTINE RUDOLPH WAP[illegible] MIA MORGAN

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Even if you don't detect the unusual ingredients in the sauce for these tender ribs, you'll likely find yourself cleaning the plate.