

Best **Chocolate** VINEYARDS **Lover's** **Weekend**

Candied Orange Peel

6 thick-skinned Valencia or Navel Oranges
4 ½ cups Sugar, plus extra for rolling
1 ½ cups Water

Score oranges into quarters, cutting down only into the peel (not the fruit). Peel the skin and pith into large pieces reserving the orange for another recipe. Cut the peel into ¼" wide strips. Put the orange peels in a large saucepan with cold water to cover & bring to a boil. Pour off water. Repeat a second time. Drain peels and set aside.

Whisk the sugar with 1½ cups of water. Bring to a simmer and cook for 8 to 9 minutes (230 to 234°F on candy thermometer). Add the hot peels and simmer, gently reducing heat to retain a simmer. Cook until the peels get translucent, about 45 minutes. Resist the urge to stir the peels or you may introduce sugar crystals into the syrup. If necessary, swirl the pan to move the peels around. Drain the peels. Save the syrup for ices tea. Roll the peels in sugar and dry on a rack for 4 to 5 hours. (Or skip rolling in sugar and dry peels on a rack. Once dry, dip in your favorite chocolate.) Store in an air-tight container. Yields about 2 cups of peels.



Red Velvet Brownies

2 tbs. Dutch Cocoa Powder	¾ cup Vegetable Oil
1 1/2 cups Sugar	2 Eggs
3 tbs. Chocolate Martini Mixer	2 tbs. Red Food Coloring
¾ cup Buttermilk	1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
1 teaspoon White Vinegar	½ teaspoon Salt
2 cups All Purpose Flour	1 teaspoon Baking Soda
1 teaspoon instant coffee or espresso crystals	

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line the bottom and sides of a 9-inch square pan with aluminum foil; lightly grease & set aside. In a large bowl, combine sugar, oil and cocoa. Whisk in the eggs, Martini Mixer, buttermilk, vanilla and red food coloring until combined. Add coffee crystals and vinegar. Combine flour, baking soda and salt in a bowl and add to the wet ingredients until just blended. Pour mixture into prepared pan. Bake 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out with a few moist crumbs. Do not over bake. Remove from pan and let cool on wire rack. Frost with cream cheese icing when cooled completely.

Cream Cheese Icing

1 pound Cream Cheese, softened	1 cup Unsalted Butter, softened
4 cups sifted Confectioner's Sugar	1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese and butter together. Gradually add the sugar until incorporated. Increase the speed to high and mix until light and fluffy (about 5 minutes). Add the vanilla and mix. Store in the refrigerator until somewhat stiff, before using.

Sweet Wine Reduction/Syrup

1 bottle of your favorite wine (fruit or grape variety) 750 ml
1 ½ cup Sugar



In a wok or large saucepan, mix wine and sugar. Bring to a rolling boil. Continue to boil mixture until volume is reduced by half, about 30 to 45 minutes. Occasionally stir or swirl mixture gently in pan to prevent scorching in sides of pan as mixture is reduced. Remove from heat and let cool completely before transferring to a plastic squeeze bottle.



Pound Cake Cupcakes

3 cups All Purpose Flour	1 cup Butter, softened
1 teaspoon Baking Powder	2 ½ cups Sugar
1 (8 oz.) container Mascarpone Cheese, softened	6 large Eggs
	½ teaspoon Salt
	2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract

Preheat oven to 350°F. Beat butter till light and fluffy; gradually add sugar, beating well. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating until just blended. In another bowl, sift together flour and baking powder. Add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with mascarpone cheese, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low speed until blended after each addition. Stir in vanilla. Using a ¼ cup cookie scoop, spoon batter into a standard cupcake pan lined with baking papers. Bake for 20-23 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Remove from pans and cool completely. Serve with Wine Reduction Sauce.

Chocolate Dessert Pizza Crust

1 ¾ to 2 ¼ cups All Purpose Flour	1 envelope Pizza Crust Yeast or RapidRise Yeast
2 tbs. Sugar	
¾ teaspoon salt	2 tbs. Dutch Cocoa Powder
2/3 cup very warm water	1 ½ tbs. butter, melted
Dessert toppings, as desired	

Preheat oven to 425°F. Combine 1 cup flour, undissolved yeast, sugar, salt and cocoa in a large bowl. Add very warm water and butter; mix until well blended, about 1 minute. Gradually add enough flour to make a soft dough. Dough should form a ball and will be slightly sticky. Knead on a floured surface, adding more flour, if necessary, until smooth and elastic, about 4 minutes. Pat dough with floured hand to fill greased pizza pan or baking sheet. Form rim by pinching the edge of the dough. Top as desired. Bake on lowest oven rack 12 to 15 minutes or until crust is lightly browned.

German Chocolate Brownies

2 (4 oz.) bars German's Sweet Chocolate, chopped	
1 ¼ cup Butter	1 cup granulated Sugar
½ cup firmly packed Brown Sugar	6 large eggs
1 tbs. Vanilla Extract	3 ½ cups All Purpose Flour
½ teaspoon baking soda	¼ cup Buttermilk



Preheat oven to 350°F. Line the bottom and sides of a 13x9-inch pan with aluminum foil; lightly grease & set aside. In a medium microwave bowl, combine butter and chocolate. Microwave on high, in 30 second intervals, stirring between each until melted. In a large bowl, beat sugars, eggs, vanilla, and buttermilk till creamy. In another bowl, combine flour and baking soda. Gradually add to sugar mixture, beating until combined. Stir in chocolate mixture till combined. Spoon into prepared pan. Bake 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out with a few moist crumbs. Do not over bake. Remove from pan and let cool on wire rack. Frost with Coconut Pecan Frosting when cooled completely.

Coconut Pecan Frosting

1 cup Sugar	1 cup Heavy Whipping Cream
3 Egg Yolks	¼ cup Butter
1 ½ cup Sweetened Flaked Coconut	1 cup chopped Pecans

In a medium saucepan, whisk together sugar, cream and egg yolks. Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring frequently until mixture coats the back of a spoon. Remove from heat and whisk in butter until melted. Stir in coconut and pecans. Spread on cooled German Chocolate Brownies.