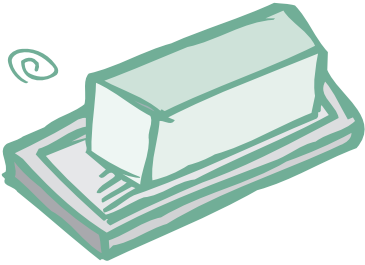


Butter



Role of Butter in Baking

Flavor is paramount to bakers, and butter delivers sumptuous flavor better than any other fat. Butter enriches baked goods by contributing tenderness and moistness, and is responsible for the flakiness in biscuits, pie crusts, and puff pastry. Because of its superior flavor, most bakers select unsalted butter over all other fats for use in baking.

What is Butter?

Butter is made from the milkfat in cream and contains at least 80 percent milkfat, 18 percent water and 2 percent solids (mainly protein and salt).

Did You Know?

- To soften butter quickly, cut it into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch slices and put the slices into a bowl. If the butter is very cold (or semi-frozen), grate it using the larger holes of a box grater, remembering to measure the butter before it's grated. For best results, do not soften butter in the microwave.
- To store butter in the freezer for up to six months, overwrap the original package with aluminum foil.
- To ensure that cakes release from intricately shaped Madeleine or Bundt tube pans, use melted butter. Brush it over the pan's surface and place pan in freezer for 5 minutes; apply a second coat and flour pan, tapping out any excess flour.

Variations

Sweet Cream Butter, produced from cream, is the most common type of butter in the U.S. Butter is available salted or unsalted. You have more control over the flavor of baked goods when using unsalted butter since the amount of salt in salted butter varies among brands. Butter comes in $\frac{1}{2}$ -pound and 1-pound packages containing two or four $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup sticks, respectively. It is also available, **Whipped**, in 8-ounce tubs. **Light Butter** contains 50 percent less fat than regular butter per serving and, while it's delicious for topping breads or muffins, it should not be substituted for regular butter in baking recipes. **Cultured Butter** is churned from cream that has been soured by a lactic acid-producing culture. It is more common in Europe than the U.S., but is available in California. Cultured butter has a stronger, riper flavor than sweet cream butter.

Easy Ideas for Butter

- *Browned Butter*: Before incorporating butter into a batter, dough or even frosting, you may change its flavor, texture and color by cooking melted butter to produce browned butter, which has a nutty flavor: Melt about 8 ounces unsalted butter in a $2\frac{1}{2}$ -quart, heavy saucepan, and bring to a boil. It will become foamy on top. Continue cooking. You will notice that the foam disappears and bubbles appear (large at first, then small). When a thin layer of miniscule bubbles forms, stir mixture briefly. The butter will brown and tiny particles of brown milk solids will settle on the bottom of the pan. Do not allow these particles to burn or the butter will taste bitter.
- *Clarified Butter* is prepared by melting regular butter and separating the milkfat from the watery liquid. Clarified butter contains more milkfat than regular butter and, as a result, can be heated to higher temperatures in cooking.

Butter

Lattice-Topped Apple-Apricot Cobbler for a Crowd

Makes 12 servings

Pastry

- 1½ cups unsifted bleached all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) cold unsalted butter
- 7 tablespoons cold whole or low-fat milk



Filling

- 3 pounds (7 to 8) medium Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored and each cut into 12 wedges (about 10 cups)
- 2 pounds (about 10) fresh apricots, pitted and each cut into 8 wedges (about 6 cups)*
- ⅓ cup granulated sugar (or to taste, depending on sweetness of fruit)
- ⅓ cup packed light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons finely grated orange zest
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter



Pastry: In a large bowl, mix the flour, sugar and salt to combine. Cut the butter into about 16 pieces and scatter over the flour mixture. With a pastry blender, cut in the butter until pieces range in size from cornmeal to small peas. Tossing the mixture with a fork, *add the milk 1 tablespoon at a time*, until dough sticks together. Less milk might be sufficient, or mix in a little additional milk, if needed. With your hands, gather the dough into a ball and divide it into 2 equal portions; shape each into a flat disc and wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate at least 2 hours before rolling.

Adjust rack to lower third of oven. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. **Filling:** In a large bowl, toss the fruits. Add the sugars; toss gently. Add the zest; toss gently to mix thoroughly. Spoon fruits into a 9 x 13 x 2-inch baking dish or pan. Dot with butter.

Lattice crust: On a lightly floured surface, roll half the dough into a 7½ x 13-inch rectangle, ⅛-inch thick. With a fluted pastry wheel or sharp knife, cut it into 6 (13 x 1¼-inch) strips. Roll the remaining dough into a 10 x 9-inch rectangle, ⅛-inch thick; cut it into 8 (9 x 1¼-inch) strips. Weave a lattice top over the fruit, spacing the strips evenly. If desired, sprinkle the crust with additional granulated sugar. Bake 35 to 45 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown and the fruit juices are bubbly. Serve warm or at room temperature with vanilla ice cream or lightly whipped heavy cream, the same day as baked.

*A variety of fruits such as pears, nectarines, plums, figs, peaches, pitted cherries, blackberries or raspberries can be substituted for the apricots.



Buttermilk



Role of Buttermilk in Baking

Buttermilk is essential for adding tang and tender crumb characteristics to Southern favorites such as buttermilk biscuits, buttermilk pie, and cornbread. The acid in buttermilk, when combined with baking soda, produces light baked goods. In addition, buttermilk adds extra tenderness, moistness and flavor.

What is Buttermilk?

Buttermilk is a cultured milk with a tangy flavor and creamy texture. It is not a byproduct of butter production. Commercial buttermilk is soured and thickened with known bacterial cultures to maintain consistency, but is as versatile as buttermilk produced on the farm. Although buttermilk's rich-sounding name and creamy texture suggest a high fat content, buttermilk is surprisingly low in fat and calories.

Did You Know?

- When baking soda mixes with the acid in buttermilk in a wet batter, a harmless gas (carbon dioxide) is released. The gas expands when heated in the oven, leavening the baked product to produce flavorful, light and tender results.
- Buttermilk can separate as it sits, so shake well before using.
- Buttermilk is an easy, low-fat tenderizing marinade for poultry and meat. It also adds low-fat creaminess and flavor to soups, salad dressings and sauces.

Variations

Buttermilk is available in nonfat and low-fat (1 percent to 2 percent) versions.

Buttermilk comes in pint, quart and half-gallon cartons and is also available in dried form in 12-ounce cans (equivalent to 3.75 quarts) in the baking section of most supermarkets.

Emergency Substitutions

- Add 1 tablespoon lemon juice or white or cider vinegar to a liquid measuring cup and add enough milk to yield 1 cup for each cup of buttermilk desired, and let stand for 5 minutes.
- Mix $\frac{2}{3}$ cup plain nonfat or low-fat yogurt with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup low-fat or whole milk for each cup of buttermilk desired.

Buttermilk



Buttermilk

Easy Ideas for Buttermilk

- You can substitute buttermilk for milk or water in a frosting: Sift the contents of a 1-pound box of powdered sugar and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder into a large bowl. Melt 4 ounces unsalted butter in a small saucepan with 6 tablespoons buttermilk; pour over sugar-cocoa mixture and stir to combine. Blend in 1 teaspoon vanilla. Pour through a sieve. Makes enough frosting to cover one 10 x 15-inch sheet cake or two 9 x 13-inch cakes. Allow time to set (4 hours to overnight).
- Use buttermilk instead of whole milk in vanilla ice cream recipes.
- To make a homemade version of crème fraîche, add 1 tablespoon buttermilk to 1 cup heavy cream (preferably 40 percent milkfat). Heat just to 100 degrees F. Pour into a jar, cover with a lid, and shake. Set aside at room temperature until mixture thickens slightly, from 8 to 12 hours. Refrigerate (it will thicken). Store in refrigerator for up to 10 days.

Buttermilk Cluster Rolls

Makes 16 rolls

- 1½ teaspoons active dry yeast
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup buttermilk, at 100 degrees F
- 1 cup buttermilk, at room temperature
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2¾ cups unsifted unbleached white bread flour
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda

In a medium bowl, sprinkle the yeast over $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (100-degrees F) buttermilk; set aside in a warm place 15 to 20 minutes or until bubbly. Mix in the remaining 1 cup buttermilk and the melted butter.

Into the large bowl of a heavy-duty mixer (preferably fitted with a paddle attachment), sift the flour, sugar, salt and baking soda. Add the yeast mixture; mix at low speed to form a soft dough. Turn the dough out onto a very lightly floured surface. The dough will be sticky, but try to resist adding more flour. (If needed, add no more than 1 to 2 tablespoons of flour.) Knead and slap the dough on the surface about 8 minutes or until smooth, resilient and no longer sticky. Place the dough in a large lightly oiled bowl; cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm, draft-free place until doubled in size, 1½ to 2 hours or more.

Butter a 10-inch round baking pan or 10-inch skillet with an ovenproof handle. Punch the dough down; divide it into 16 equal pieces. Shape pieces into neat balls and arrange them in the pan: Place 1 ball in the middle, 9 balls around the side and 6 balls between the middle and the side. Cover the pan with plastic wrap and let rolls rise in a warm, draft-free place until puffy and almost doubled in size, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

While rolls are rising, adjust rack to lower third of oven. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Remove plastic wrap and bake rolls 25 to 30 minutes or until tops are golden brown. Cool rolls in the pan 5 minutes on a wire rack. Invert pan onto the rack and then place rolls top-side-up on a platter. Serve warm or at room temperature, the same day as baked.

Cottage Cheese



Role of Cottage Cheese in Baking

Cottage cheese is another dairy product that adds flavor and the necessary fat for flakiness and tenderness to baked goods. Its unique curds can provide interesting texture to pastry dough, providing small bumps that brown beautifully in the oven.

What is Cottage Cheese?

Cottage cheese is a fresh, moist, mild cheese that features small, dense curds.



Variations

Commercial cottage cheese is available in nonfat, low-fat (1 percent milkfat), and whole (4 percent milkfat) varieties. It is usually made from nonfat milk to produce nonfat curds. However, manufacturers add some cream to nonfat curds to make “creamed cottage cheese,” which contains at least 4 percent milkfat. Cottage cheese is commonly available in 8-ounce, 16-ounce, and 32-ounce containers.

Emergency Substitutions

In baking, baker’s cheese, ricotta and farmer’s cheese will yield the closest results. The texture of these cheeses is grainy, without noticeable curds, but the water content is similar to cottage cheese. Sour cream, crème fraîche and yogurt can be substituted for cottage cheese in a recipe. Cream cheese can be substituted in a recipe where cottage cheese is processed until smooth.

Easy Ideas for Cottage Cheese

- Coeur à la Crème, an easy, classic French, no-bake dessert: Beat in a large bowl or process in a food processor 1 pound each cottage cheese and cream cheese until smooth. Add 2 cups heavy cream gradually, beating or processing until smooth. Line a heart-shaped, Coeur à la Crème mold (a special mold that features perforations in the bottom to allow draining), basket or large sieve with cheesecloth and pack cheese mixture in it. Set on plate or bowl larger than the mold and refrigerate overnight to allow whey to drain off. Unmold onto serving plate. Serve with sweet fresh strawberries, cherries, or grapes.
- To make a homemade version of Fromage Blanc with herbs, blend in a large bowl 1 pound small-curd cottage cheese, 1 cup sour cream, 1 teaspoon minced garlic, and 2 tablespoons *each* finely chopped chives, parsley, and chervil; add salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate. Great with crusty French or Italian bread.

Cheese



Cottage Cheese

Four-Star Rugalach

Makes about 5 dozen (1½-inch) cookies

Cottage Cheese Dough

- 1 pint small-curd cottage cheese (4 percent milkfat)
- 2 cups unsifted bleached all-purpose flour
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) cold unsalted butter, cut into ¼-inch slices

Filling

- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 4 tablespoons strained apricot jam
- 1 cup (4 ounces) finely chopped walnuts

Spoon the cottage cheese into a sieve over a bowl; drain for at least 2 hours, mixing occasionally with a rubber spatula. Remove 1 cup of the cottage cheese for the dough; reserve the rest for another use.

Dough: In a food processor, pulse the flour and salt just to combine. Scatter the butter over the flour; pulse on and off until the butter seems to disappear into the mixture. Scatter the cottage cheese, in bits, over the mixture; pulse on and off just until a cohesive ball is formed. Divide the dough into quarters; shape each into a flat disc and wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate at least 4 hours.

Adjust rack to lower third of oven. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a large baking sheet with aluminum foil. In a small bowl, mix the sugar and cinnamon.

Remove 1 dough disc from the refrigerator and set aside 10 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough into a 10- to 11-inch circle, ⅛ inch thick. **Filling:** Spread 1 tablespoon jam evenly over dough; sprinkle with 2 tablespoons cinnamon sugar and ¼ cup walnuts. With a rolling pin, lightly press filling into the dough.

With a sharp knife, cut the circle into 16 equal pie-shaped pieces. Starting with the wide end, roll up each piece; place 1 inch apart, point down, on the baking sheet. Bake 15 to 25 minutes, or until light golden brown. Toward the end of baking, if some of the jam oozes out and cookies begin to brown too much on the bottoms, move them to clean spots on the baking sheet. Continue to bake until done. Cool pan on a wire rack 5 minutes, then, with a metal spatula, transfer cookies to the rack to cool. Repeat with the remaining dough and filling, using fresh aluminum foil. Store cooled cookies in an airtight container.

Cream



Role of Cream in Baking

As the saying goes, cream rises to the top, and that is certainly true in baking. Cream's richness produces tender cakes and pastries with a luscious flavor. In dessert sauces and ice creams, cream acts not only as a liquid but also as a fat which adds richness and, not surprisingly, creaminess. Cream has a homogenizing effect on dessert sauces, unifying the flavors of all the component ingredients. Whipped cream, often a signature ingredient in desserts such as cream puffs, pumpkin pie, and strawberry shortcake, is indispensable for decorating and filling cakes and pastries. Folded into mousses, curds, and pastry cream, it lightens and creates a flawlessly smooth and creamy texture.

What is Cream?

Cream is the milkfat-enriched layer that rises to the surface of unhomogenized, whole milk after standing. To be called cream, a product must contain at least 18 percent milkfat. All cream produced in California is pasteurized.

Did You Know?

- "Mit schlag" in a Viennese pastry shop means "with whipped cream." Paradoxically, a dollop of whipped heavy cream that accompanies a dessert tempers its richness.
- Fluid whipping cream must contain at least 30 percent fat in order to whip properly. The cream, the bowl and the beaters should be well-chilled to promote successful whipping. For full volume and shorter whipping time, add sugar after most whipping is complete.
- Brushing heavy cream onto the surface of pastries or breads produces a rich golden crust.

Variations

Light Whipping Cream contains at least 30 percent, but no more than 36 percent milkfat. Cream must contain at least 30 percent milkfat to produce whipped cream. **Heavy Cream or Heavy Whipping Cream** contains at least 36 percent milkfat. **Half-and-Half** is a mixture of whole milk and cream that contains at least 10.5 percent milkfat. Cream is available in half-pint, pint and quart containers.

Emergency Substitutions

- Melt butter in whole milk for sauces (2 tablespoons butter to 1 cup milk). Unlike heavy cream, this mixture cannot be whipped.
- For sweet applications, melt vanilla ice cream, using 1 cup melted ice cream for 1 cup heavy cream; reduce sugar in recipe accordingly. This mixture cannot be whipped.

Easy Ideas for Cream

- To make a delicious butterscotch sauce, in a saucepan over low heat, combine equal parts of brown sugar and heavy cream; heat, stirring until sugar dissolves.
- To prepare whipped cream decorations ahead of time, line a sheet pan that will fit into the freezer with aluminum foil. Spoon or pipe small dollops of whipped cream onto the pan and place in freezer for 30 minutes. Remove pan from freezer and cover securely with plastic wrap, return to freezer. Place frozen dollops on dessert 30 minutes before serving (or, if dessert is hot, right before serving).



Cream

Bittersweet Chocolate Fondue

Makes $2\frac{3}{4}$ cups

- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick) unsalted butter, cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch slices



Place chocolate in a medium bowl. In a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -quart saucepan, over medium heat, bring the cream and corn syrup just to simmering; immediately pour over the chocolate. Whisk until smooth, then whisk in the butter to blend thoroughly. For fondue, use while warm. For sauce, serve warm or at room temperature. To store, cover and refrigerate up to 2 weeks. To serve, gently reheat in a heavy saucepan over low heat.

Caramel Fondue

Makes about 3 cups

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup light corn syrup
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups heavy cream, at room temperature
- 6 tablespoons ($\frac{3}{4}$ stick) unsalted butter, cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch slices
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt



In a $2\frac{1}{2}$ -quart saucepan, mix the sugar, water and corn syrup. Over low heat, warm the mixture, stirring occasionally, until the sugar is dissolved. Raise heat to medium-high and cook until the mixture is pale golden. *After heat is increased, do not stir, but gently swirl the pan to distribute heat evenly through the mixture.*

Remove the pan from heat and carefully add the cream (mixture will spatter and bubble vigorously). Stir until smooth. If necessary, place the pan over low heat for a minute or two, stirring until mixture is smooth. Off heat, add the butter; stir until thoroughly blended. Stir in the vanilla and salt. For fondue, use while warm. For sauce, serve warm or at room temperature. To store, refrigerate up to 2 weeks. To serve, gently reheat in a heavy saucepan over low heat.



Crème Fraîche



Role of Crème Fraîche in Baking

Crème fraîche provides the richness of heavy cream with a pleasant tang. It is similar in tang and ranges in texture from that of sour cream to almost as solid as softened butter. It has a slightly nutty flavor and a velvety nap that enriches without being heavy.

What is Crème Fraîche?

Crème fraîche is a matured cream in which lactic acids and natural ferments have been allowed to work until the cream has thickened.¹ To make crème fraîche, cream is pasteurized and then seeded with a starter culture, much the way yogurt or cheese is made.² It is found in the dairy cases of specialty food stores and many supermarkets.

Did You Know?

- Crème fraîche is highly valued by top chefs because it can be heated – even to the boiling point – without the fear of curdling.
- Crème fraîche, which is less acidic than buttermilk, yogurt and sour cream, is not as standardized as most other commercial dairy products. It will have the fat content of the cream from which it is made.

Emergency Substitutions

While homemade crème fraîche does not have the depth of flavor or silky, smooth texture of the commercially produced variety, a facsimile can be made at home in a pinch. Here are two methods:

- Add 1 tablespoon buttermilk to 1 cup heavy cream (preferably 40 percent milkfat). Heat just to 100 degrees F. Pour into a jar, cover with a lid, and shake mixture. Set aside at room temperature until it thickens slightly, from 8 to 12 hours. Refrigerate (it will thicken). Store in refrigerator for up to 10 days.
- In a small bowl, whisk sour cream with an equal amount of heavy cream; refrigerate until well chilled.

Easy Ideas for Crème Fraîche

- For an ultra-rich dessert topping, whip 1 cup crème fraîche with 2 tablespoons sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract until soft peaks form. If not using right away, cover and refrigerate. Makes 2 cups.
- For a lovely brunch or dessert, fill a bowl with diced fresh mango, pineapple and papaya. Drizzle fruit with a sauce of crème fraîche lightly sweetened with honey and flavored with finely grated lime zest.

¹ The Joy of Cooking

² The New York Times

Crème Fraîche

Crème Fraîche Custards with Faux Brûlée Topping

Makes 6 servings

- 3/4 cup crème fraîche
- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 6 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 4 large egg yolks
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract



Adjust rack to lower third of oven. Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Place 6 (2/3-cup capacity) ramekins or custard cups in a 9 x 13 x 2-inch baking pan or dish.

Place a strainer over a large bowl. In a medium saucepan, over low heat, mix the crème fraîche, cream, and sugar until smooth and the sugar is dissolved. Do not boil. In a large bowl, whisk the yolks and vanilla. Add the warm cream mixture, stirring with a whisk to blend. Pour mixture through the strainer. Divide the custard evenly among the ramekins.

Place the pan in the oven and pour in enough hot water to come almost halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, or until custards are just barely set (custards will firm as they cool). Do not overbake. Remove ramekins from the pan and set aside to cool, then cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving. Just before serving, set a Spicy Lace Wafer (recipe follows) atop each custard.



Spicy Lace Wafers

Makes about 5 dozen wafers

- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon finely grated orange zest
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 cup dark corn syrup
- 1/3 cup unsifted bleached all-purpose flour

Adjust rack to lower third of oven. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a small saucepan, melt the butter, then pour it into a small bowl. Stir in the sugar, zest and spices; cool slightly, about 10 minutes. Stir in the corn syrup and flour; mix until smooth.

Onto an ungreased *nonstick* baking sheet, drop the batter, 1/2 teaspoon at a time, spaced widely apart to allow for spreading. (Because wafers harden quickly after removing from the oven, prepare only 3 to 6 at a time.) Bake 4 to 5 minutes, or until golden brown and bubbling almost stops. Remove from the oven and cool on the pan 10 to 15 seconds. With a metal spatula, lift one wafer at a time onto a wire rack. Continue baking the remaining batter. Store cooled wafers at room temperature in an airtight container.



Milk



Role of Milk in Baking

Milk is used in many baking recipes, including custards, cookies, cakes and breads. Milk encourages the browning reactions characteristic of baked goods like pastry crusts, cookies, and biscuits. Milk contributes to the keeping quality of bread and gives it a soft crust. Additional protein and sugar (lactose) in milk adds more sweetness and a browner color to baked goods than water. Whole milk adds fat, which in turn, creates a richer taste and softer crumb.

What is Milk?

Milk is produced by all mammals to nourish their newborns, and cow's milk is also a nutritious food for humans. Most milk sold commercially in the U.S. comes from dairy cows.

Did You Know?

- Most of the time, milk can replace cream in baking to reduce fat in recipes. Cooking with milk is an easy and flavorful way to add calcium and other nutrients to foods.
- Stirring while heating milk gently will prevent burning. If a "skin" forms during heating, simply skim it from the top.
- All milk is not created equal. Fluid milk sold in the U.S. must meet minimum standards set by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration regarding fat and nonfat milk solids content, but California has its own, higher, nutrition standards for milk. Milk that meets California nutrition standards contains more protein, calcium, and other nutrients than milk that meets federal standards.

Variations

Most varieties of drinking milk (nonfat, low-fat or whole) may be used interchangeably in baking. If using nonfat or 1 percent milk, you sacrifice richness. If you want to cut some fat in your baking, it's best to use 2 percent. Drinking milk generally comes in half-pint, pint, quart, half-gallon, and gallon containers.

- **Whole Milk** produced under California standards contains at least 3.5 percent milkfat and 8.7 percent nonfat milk solids.
- **Reduced-Fat Milk** (2 percent) produced under California standards contains at least 2 percent milkfat and 10 percent nonfat milk solids.
- **Low-Fat Milk** (1 percent) produced under California standards contains at least 1 percent milkfat and 11 percent nonfat milk solids.
- **Nonfat Milk** produced under California standards contains no more than 0.2 percent milkfat and at least 9 percent nonfat milk solids.
- **Sweet Acidophilus Milk** contains a bacterial culture of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*. This culture may help people digest the lactose in milk.
- **Ultra High Temperature (UHT) Milk** is processed for a very short time at higher pasteurization temperatures than used for regular pasteurization, which sterilizes the milk. UHT milk is packaged aseptically (in sterile boxes) and can be stored without refrigeration for up to three months. Once opened, UHT milk should be refrigerated.

Milk

- **Evaporated Milk** is produced by removing 60 percent of the water. The concentrate is then homogenized, canned, and sterilized. Evaporated milk can be stored unrefrigerated until opened. It's available in fat-free, low-fat (2 percent milkfat), and whole (4 percent milkfat) varieties and comes in 5- and 12-ounce cans.
- **Sweetened Condensed Milk** is produced by adding sugar to homogenized milk and removing about 50 percent of the water. The sweetened concentrate is canned and the final product contains about 44 percent sugar, which helps preserve the condensed milk. Cans of sweetened condensed milk can be stored unrefrigerated until opened. It comes in 14-ounce cans.
- **Nonfat Dry Milk** is produced by removing about 97 percent of the water from pasteurized nonfat milk.

Emergency Substitutions

- To convert low-fat milk (1 percent) into whole milk, add 1 teaspoon cream to 1 cup of 1 percent milk.
- To make low-fat milk, mix equal proportions of whole milk and 1 percent milk.
- To make half-and-half light cream, mix equal proportions of cream and nonfat milk.
- To make 1 cup of whole milk, use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup evaporated milk and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water.

Easy Ideas for Milk

- To enhance the color of a pie crust or loaf of bread, brush it with milk before baking.
- **Milk Buttercream Frosting** is a favorite of home bakers of years past. Whisk to blend 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour with 1 cup whole milk. Cook mixture in a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -quart saucepan until thick over low heat. Remove from heat, and transfer to a large bowl; cover with plastic wrap to prevent formation of a skin. Set aside to cool completely. Using an electric mixer, beat 8 ounces (2 sticks) unsalted butter with 1 cup granulated sugar, and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract until light and fluffy. Beat in cooled "white sauce", a tablespoon at a time, and beat well to prevent separation and graininess. (You may chill in the middle of beating.) Enough to frost top and sides of an 8 or 9-inch two-layer cake.

Milk

Individual Bread Puddings with Seasonal Fruit

Makes 6 servings

2 large eggs
2 large egg yolks
1½ cups whole milk
6 tablespoons granulated sugar
½ teaspoon salt
½ vanilla bean
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons heavy cream
3 cups trimmed and cubed (³/₄-inch) day-old French or Italian bread
2 cups fresh berries or slices of other fresh fruit, such as apricots or peaches
Powdered sugar, for dusting



Adjust rack to lower third of oven. Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Generously butter 6 (²/₃-cup capacity) ramekins or custard cups

In a large bowl, whisk the whole eggs and yolks. In a medium saucepan, whisk the milk, sugar and salt to blend; add the ½ vanilla bean. Stir over low heat until hot and sugar is dissolved. Remove and split the vanilla bean lengthwise; scrape the seeds into the milk mixture. Discard the bean. Whisk half the hot milk mixture into the eggs, then whisk the egg mixture into the remaining milk. Without delay, pour the custard through a strainer into the large bowl; stir in the cream.

Set the ramekins on a baking sheet. Divide the bread equally among the ramekins. Pour the custard over the bread, dividing equally. Saturate the bread by gently pushing it down into the custard. Bake puddings on the baking sheet about 25 minutes, or until a knife blade inserted into the centers comes out clean. (Puddings will deflate as they cool.) Serve warm or at room temperature. Top each pudding with fruit and dust with powdered sugar just before serving.



Milk

Green Chile Bread Puddings

Makes 12 servings

5 large eggs
1 cup whole milk
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon chili powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cumin
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon dried oregano
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces) loosely packed coarsely shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces) loosely packed coarsely shredded Monterey Jack cheese
2 tablespoons canned diced green chiles
6 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups trimmed and cubed ($\frac{3}{4}$ -inch) day-old French or Italian bread

Adjust rack to lower third of oven. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Generously butter 12 (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch, scant $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup capacity) muffin tin cups.

In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, milk and cream to blend thoroughly. Mix in the chili powder, salt, cumin and oregano, then mix in the cheeses and chiles. Add the bread; mix thoroughly. Divide the mixture evenly among the muffin tin cups.

Bake 25 to 30 minutes, or until a knife blade inserted into the centers comes out clean. Cool 5 to 10 minutes. Slide a knife blade around puddings to loosen them; lift out of molds with a small spatula. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Sour Cream



Role of Sour Cream in Baking

Rich and acidic in nature, this semi-liquid acts as a fat to produce moist, tender textures in cakes and pastries. Acids tenderize baked goods by breaking down long, stringy protein molecules into smaller pieces. Gluten – a major ingredient in flour – is a protein, so acidic ingredients like sour cream are ideal for tender results.

What is Sour Cream?

Sour cream is cultured or acidified light cream. Cultured sour cream, which is the more common type, is soured and thickened by the lactic acid produced by a specific bacterial culture. Acidified sour cream is soured and thickened by the direct addition of an acid, such as vinegar.

Did You Know?

- You can prevent curdling when using sour cream in hot dishes by adding the sour cream as late as possible during preparation, heating gradually, and stirring gently.
- If separation occurs in sour cream while it's in its container, you can gently stir the liquid back into the cream.

Variations

The milkfat content of sour cream products depends on the milkfat content of the milk or cream from which they are made. Sour cream comes in 8-, 16-, and 32-ounce containers.

- **Regular Sour Cream** is made from light cream and contains no less than 18 percent milkfat.
- **Reduced-Fat Sour Cream** must contain at least 25 percent less milkfat than regular sour cream, though many on the market contain 40 percent less.
- **Nonfat Sour Cream** contains no more than 0.5 gram milkfat per serving and includes stabilizers as thickening agents.

Emergency Substitutions

- Reduced-fat sour cream is a fine substitute for the regular variety, however, the nonfat form is not suitable for excellent results in baking.
- Whole milk yogurt can be substituted for sour cream.
- Substituting buttermilk for sour cream may create a thinner batter or softer dough, but it should not affect the baked results.

Easy Ideas for Sour Cream

- For a fabulous filling and frosting, melt $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (18 ounces) chocolate chips in a double boiler, cool a bit, then stir in $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups room temperature sour cream, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup at a time, until the mixture is smooth. Use right away.
- For a simple dessert, dip fresh strawberries and grapes into sour cream, then brown sugar.
- Whisk sour cream with an equal amount of heavy cream to produce a substitute for crème fraîche; refrigerate until well chilled.

Sour Cream

Velvet Pound Cake

Makes 16 to 20 servings

3 cups unsifted unbleached all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon baking soda
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
3 cups granulated sugar
6 large eggs
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 cup sour cream



For best results, have all ingredients at room temperature. Adjust rack to lower third of oven. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Butter and flour a 10-inch tube or Bundt pan.

Sift the flour, salt, baking powder and baking soda onto a sheet of waxed paper. In a large bowl, with an electric mixer, beat the butter until soft and smooth. Gradually beat in the sugar, continuing to beat until mixture is light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the vanilla. Beat in the flour mixture alternately with the sour cream, beginning and ending with flour.

Spoon the batter into the pan; smooth top. Bake for about 1 hour and 20 minutes, or until a pick inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool in the pan on a wire rack about 15 minutes, then invert onto the rack and remove pan. Cool the cake completely, then place it on a serving plate and cover completely with plastic wrap. For best flavor and texture, serve the cake cut into thin slices, the day after it's baked.



Yogurt



Role of Yogurt in Baking

Yogurt tenderizes the protein in flour, resulting in soft-to-the-bite muffins, pastries or cakes. Its slightly acidic flavor adds a bit of tang.

What is Yogurt?

Yogurt is a cultured milk product that is soured and thickened by the action of adding specific lactic acid-producing cultures (*Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*) to pasteurized milk.

Did You Know?

- You can prevent curdling when using yogurt in hot dishes by adding the yogurt as late as possible during preparation, heating gradually and stirring gently.
- If separation occurs in yogurt while it's in its container, you can gently stir the liquid back into the yogurt.
- If yogurt is not heat-treated after it is produced, the bacterial cultures will remain active.

Yogurt Variations

Plain Yogurt is unflavored yogurt made from pasteurized nonfat, low-fat or whole milk. Regular yogurt contains no less than 3.25 percent milkfat, low-fat yogurt contains between 0.5 percent and 2 percent milkfat, and nonfat yogurt, contains no more than 0.5 gram milkfat per serving. Plain yogurt is available in 8-, 16-, 24-, and 32-ounce containers.

Flavored Yogurt is sweetened and flavored with fruit or other flavors. It is not generally used in baking.

Emergency Substitutions

- Buttermilk or sour cream, due to their high acid content, make the best substitutions for yogurt in baking. When substituting buttermilk for yogurt in a recipe, use a little less due to the higher water content.
- When substituting yogurt for milk in baking, don't add any of the baking soda called for in the recipe unless the recipe's list of ingredients includes brown sugar, molasses, or honey. In that case, use the amount called for in the recipe.

Easy Ideas for Yogurt

- **Yogurt Cheese:** To make yogurt cheese, a silky, creamy cheese that can cut fat in baked goods, simply drain nonfat plain yogurt through cheesecloth that's been placed over a bowl in the refrigerator for 24 hours. After one day, you'll have a deliciously creamy cheese that's much sweeter than original plain yogurt. Depending on how long it's drained, yogurt cheese can resemble sour cream or a lighter cream cheese. It can be used in place of cream cheese in most cheesecake recipes. It can also be used as a base for dips or as a spread for bagels and crackers.
- **Yogurt Crème Chantilly:** Whip $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream with 1 tablespoon sugar and 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract until soft peaks form. Fold into $\frac{2}{3}$ cup soft drained yogurt cheese (see above). Serve right away or cover and refrigerate a few hours. Serve with scones or fresh fruit such as strawberries or peaches, or use as a filling for cakes.
- **Yogurt Fruit Dip:** Softly whip $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cream and fold into $\frac{3}{4}$ cup whole milk yogurt. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{4}$ cup brown sugar over the surface, cover bowl and refrigerate until the sugar melts. To serve, swirl the sugary syrup through the yogurt-cream mixture. This is an ideal accompaniment to fresh berries, poached pears, apples or peaches, and even cakes.

Yogurt

Yogurt Muffins with Cinnamon Sugar Glaze

Makes 12 muffins

Batter

- 1½ cups plus 2 tablespoons unsifted bleached all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom (optional)
- 3 tablespoons whole natural (unblanched) almonds, finely ground
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons plain whole milk yogurt or low-fat yogurt
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (1¼ sticks) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons finely grated orange zest
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract



Glaze

- ⅓ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, melted

Adjust rack to middle of oven. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Butter and flour 12 (2¾-inch, scant ½-cup capacity) muffin tin cups, or place a paper cupcake liner in each cup.

Batter: Into a large bowl, sift the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cardamom. Stir in the almonds. In a medium bowl, mix the eggs, yogurt, melted butter, zest and vanilla; add to the dry ingredients and stir just until moistened. Do not overmix. Using an ice cream scoop or a spoon, divide the batter equally among the 12 cups. Bake 20 to 25 minutes, or until muffins are light golden brown and springy to the touch.

Glaze: In a small bowl, mix the sugar and cinnamon. Remove hot muffins from the pan and dip the tops into melted butter and then into cinnamon sugar. Serve warm or at room temperature.

