

Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival 2009 Amateur Date Recipe Contest

Salads

1st place

Beth Ann Davis, Indio

Slaw Medley

In a large bowl combine the following:

5 cups of shredded cabbage
1 large shredded carrot
½ cup chopped bell peppers
½ cup chopped celery
½ cup chopped dates
½ cup crushed pineapple (drained)
½ cup dried cranberries
¼ cup chopped onion

To prepare dressing, stir together:

1 cup mayonnaise
4 tablespoon sugar
1teaspoon celery salt
¼ teaspoon salt
4 tablespoon Ranch Dressing
Pinch thyme and chives

Pour dressing over cabbage mixture and toss. Sprinkle with pine nuts.

2nd place

Barbara Brown, Sky valley

Celery Date Salad

1 ¼ cups walnut
1 small shallot, minced
2 tablespoons champagne vinegar
2 tablespoons walnut oil
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and Pepper to taste
2 bunches or celery, thinly sliced on a bias
¾ cup Deglet Noor dates, quartered lengthwise
3 ounces pecorino cheese, shaved with a vegetable peeler

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread the walnuts in a pie plate and toast for about 8 minutes. Let cool then coarsely chop. In a small bowl, combine the shallot with the vinegar; whisk in both oils and season with salt and pepper. In a large bowl, toss the toasted walnuts, celery, dates, and pecorino. Add the dressing and toss. Serve immediately.

3rd place

Michaela Rosenthal, Indio California Sunshine Salad

Ingredients for salad:

2 navel oranges, sliced
3 kiwi fruit, peeled and sliced
½ red onion, thinly sliced

6 dates, sliced
½ basket or raspberries
1/3 cup toasted pine nuts
Thyme sprig-garnish
Lettuce leaf-garnish

Ingredients for Dressing

2 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon pumpkin seed oil
2 teaspoon date molasses

½ clove garlic, crushed
Salt and pepper to taste
½ teaspoon mustard
½ teaspoon honey

Place all in blender and whir until smooth.

Put salad together:

Slice Dates. Line plate with lettuce leaves. Arrange onion with dates, orange and kiwi. Place raspberries in center and sprinkle with pine nuts and dressing.

Entrées

1st place

Amanda McCormick, La Quinta Date Goat Cheese Ravioli with Brown Butter Sauce

¾ cup Date paste (local Farmers market)
¾ cup soft goat cheese
32 wonton wrappers
Salt
½ cup butter
Olive oil

In a small bowl combine the date paste with the goat cheese set aside. Take 2 wonton wrappers and cut out the circles with a 2.25 inch round biscuit cutter. Once cut, place a heaping teaspoon of date goat cheese mixture on one of the cut wrappers. Then take some water, place it around the mixture and place the second circle on top. Using a fork placed down around the ravioli. (The water will act like glue and the fork will seal it). Repeat until all the ravioli are done. Next take a pot of boiling salted water and place a couple ravioli and cook until tender; when finished cover the ravioli with a little olive oil, to prevent sticking. Sauce: Melt butter until brown. Plate raviolis with a little brown butter sauce.

2nd place

Barbara Brown, Sky Valley

BBQ Tri-tip with Date Dry Rub and Date BBQ Sauce

Basic Rub (Makes 3 cups)

1 cup date sugar

½ cup garlic salt

1/3 cup paprika ¼ cup season salt

2 tablespoon onion salt

2 tablespoon celery salt

2 tablespoon Chili powder

2 tablespoon Pepper

1 tablespoon ginger

2 tablespoon dry mustard

½ tablespoon Thyme

½ tablespoon cayenne peppers

BBQ Sauce

3 cups tomato puree

2/3 cup of date sugar

½ cup vinegar

1 tablespoon liquid smoke

2 caramelized onions

4 cloves roasted garlic

Juice of 1 lemon

½ cup of Basic Date Dry Rub

1 jalapeno

Mix ingredient and simmer for 2 hours.

Tri-Tip

Rub a generous amount of dry rub on 2 ½ pound tri-tip; marinate for 1 hour or over night. Preheat gas BBQ on high turn off side of grill and leave the remaining side on high heat. Place tri-tip on the turned off side of the grill. Close the lid and cook for 25 to 30 minutes. Depending on individual taste; remove from grill and let meat rest for ten minutes before slicing. Serve with warm date BBQ Sauce if desired. Serve 3 to 4.

3rd place

Lisa Gregg, La Quinta

Savory Jicama Date Spread

16 ounces softened cream cheese
4 ounces Gorgonzola cheese
2 tablespoon minced scallions
1 large jicama
2 cups sliced dates
Lettuce leaves, sorted vegetables, and crackers of choice

In a food processor, combine cheeses, and blend until well mixed. Turn into a small bowl and set aside. Peel and slice the jicama into ¼ inch slices. Take about 3 or 4 of the slices and dice, enough to measure one cup. Add diced jicama and scallions to cheese mixture. Stir until well blended. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours. Meanwhile, cut remaining jicama into small triangle-like wedges to serve with spread. When cheese is properly chilled, separate into 6 even portions; roll each portion into balls then roll in the diced dates. Serve cheese balls on bed of lettuce leaves. Serve with jicama wedges, veggies, or crackers. Note: Smaller portions make a great appetizer as well. Serve 6.

Breads

1st place

Dante Calderon, Sky Valley

Orange Date Cornmeal Muffins

Muffins
2 teaspoon backing powder
¼ teaspoon salt
1½ cup flour
½ cup yellow cornmeal
½ cup date crystals
¼ tsp salt
1½ cup flour
½ cup yellow cornmeal
¼ cup milk
¼ cup fresh orange juice
½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature
¾ cup sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 teaspoon finely chopped orange zest
1 cup chopped dates

Topping

½ cup date crystals

½ cup walnuts

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Generously butter cups of a 24 cup mini muffin tin. Sprinkle with cornmeal. Mix baking powder, salt, flour, and cornmeal in a bowl and set aside. Combine milk and orange juice in a measuring cup and set aside. In another bowl, using an electric mixer on medium speed beat butter until it is light and fluffy. Gradually add sugar and beat about 2 minutes or until very light, Add eggs one at a time. Beating each addition until completely incorporated. Add vanilla and orange zest and mix well. Using a spatula, fold in half of the flour mixture and then half of the milk mixture. Repeat with the remaining mixtures. Fold in dates. Scoop batter into prepared tin, making sure to get an equal amount of dates into each one; evenly sprinkle date topping mixture over top of each muffin. Bake muffins for 15 minutes or until done.

2nd place

Karlie Gonzalez, Mecca

Citrus Date Bread

1 cup milk (minus one tablespoon)

1 tablespoon orange juice concentrate

1 large egg

2 tablespoon salted butter

3 tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon finely grated orange peel

3 1/3 cups white bread flour

1 package dry yeast

4 chopped dates

Measure ingredients into bread machine baking pan. Insert backing pan securely into baking unit, close the lid. Select "light crust" bread setting. Push Start button. The machine will beep when bread is done (2 hours 40 minutes in our machine.) Remove bread from backing pan. Allow to cool before slicing.

Orange Date Marmalade spread

½ cup butter (½ stick).

2 tablespoon orange marmalade

2 dates chopped fine

Let butter soften. In a medium bowl mix the marmalade into the butter. When completely blended add the dates. Let harden in refrigerator if desired.

Desserts

1st place

Dee Fraticelli, La Quinta

Date Roll

30 Graham crackers
1 lb marshmallows cut fine
2 cups chopped nuts
1 lb chopped dates
1 can sweetened condensed milk.

Mix all together into a roll, and then roll in reserved crumbs of the four saved graham crackers. Chill 24 hours.

2nd place

Lisa Gregg, La Quinta

Date Nut Cheese Pie

1 ½ Pecan Halves
Pinch of salt
1 ½ cup pitted dates
2 teaspoon pure maple syrup
8 ounces softened cream cheese
½ pint whipping cream
¼ cup sugar
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 banana, sliced thin
Garnish as desired

In a food processor, coarsely chop pecans and salt. Add dates and pulse until dates are chopped, about 15-20 seconds. Add syrup and pulse until mixture sticks together. Press mixture evenly into a 9-inch pie plate. Set crust aside. In a medium bowl, beat cream cheese and lemon juice with a hand miter, until soft and blended. Slowly add whipping cream and beat until batter begins to thicken. Add sugar and beat until stiff. Cover bottom of pie crust with layer of batter. Then place an even layer of the sliced bananas, top banana with the remaining batter. Chill at least 3 hours before serving. Garnish as desired. Serve 8.

3rd place

R. Gene Wilson, Indio

Hungarian Date Cake

1 cup chopped dates
1¼ cup boiling water
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup sugar
¾ cup shortening (butter or margarine)
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
1½ cup flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup chopped pecan

Combine dates, water, and soda; let stand. Cream shortening, sugar, eggs, and vanilla; add to date mixture. Add rest of ingredients and mix well. Pour into greased and floured 9x13 inch pan. Sprinkle topping on batter and bake at 350 for 30 minutes.

Topping

¾ cup chocolate chips
½ cup sugar
½ cup chopped pecans

Confections

1st place

Barbara Brown, Sky Valley

Date Truffles (Serves 12)

1 cup Champagne
8 ounces semisweet chocolate
12 Medjool dates
7 ounces white chocolate
Finley chopped nuts

Heat champagne until just warm; using a microwave oven, melt semi sweet chocolate and pour champagne into the melted chocolate; whisk until chocolate and champagne are combined and mixture begins to thicken. Place in refrigerator for 2 hours until completely set. Divide chocolate mixture into 12 pieces, stuff dates with chocolate mixture. Melt white chocolate. Dip stuffed dates into white chocolate then into chopped nuts.

2nd place

Michaela Rosenthal, Indio

Chocolate Date and Cashew Turtles

¾ lb caramels
1 lb chopped salted cashews
½ lb chocolate
1 tablespoon date molasses
20 dates cut in half

Melt caramels in a double boiler. Mound 1 tablespoon nuts on a parchment lined baking sheet 2 inches apart. Spray spoons with non-stick spray. Using spoons drop 1 teaspoon caramel onto each nut mound. Meanwhile, melt chocolate in the microwave, and stir in molasses. When caramel has hardened dip each cluster halfway into the chocolate. Place onto a clean sheet of parchment paper and press a date half, cut side down, onto center of each turtle.

3rd place

Nicky Beerman, Indio

Gingerees

3 cups pitted dates
1 cup black walnut meats, chopped
1 tablespoon ginger syrup
1 tablespoon preserved ginger, chopped
Flaked coconut

Chop the dates; add the walnut meats, ginger syrup and chopped ginger, then run through a food chopper. Form into balls and roll in coconut

Ginger Syrup

¾ cup sliced ginger root, unpeeled
1 cup sugar
2 cups water

Combine ginger, sugar and water in a saucepan; bring to a boil over moderate heat. Lower the heat and simmer 10 minutes. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. Strain and keep refrigerated up to two weeks.