



Cindy Pawlcyn's Campfire Pie

One of Napa Valley's culinary giants, Cindy Pawlcyn has been cooking delectable American fare with worldly sophistication since she opened Mustards Grill in Yountville 20 years ago. Last year, Cindy opened Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen in St. Helena, where the menu also features distinctively American-style cuisine, but many of the dishes are inspired by favorites from the 50s and 60s.

This dessert recipe, from Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen, is a perfect example. It's essentially a chocolate-marshmallow pie with an Oreo-cookie crust. And although it's reminiscent of desserts many of us enjoyed as kids, it's infinitely more sophisticated and ridiculously delicious!

Be sure to read through the recipe once or twice before tackling it. Timing is of essence: When layering the two fillings, it's important to work as quickly as possible. If the Marshmallow Fluff is overwhipped, or held too long, the gelatin will begin to set and the texture will become grainy.

As well, if you want to simplify, Cindy suggests substituting a commercial toffee candy bar of your choice for the Almond Ding and a commercial chocolate fudge sauce of your choice for the Bitter Chocolate Sauce.

Crust:

2 cups

Oreo cookie crumbs (may be made in a food processor or by placing the cookies in a bag and crushing them with a rolling pin)

4 tbsp

melted unsalted butter

Chocolate-Almond Filling:

1 cup Bitter Chocolate Sauce (recipe follows), warmed, or chocolate fudge sauce of your choice, homemade or store-bought, warmed

2 cups broken pieces of Oreo cookies

1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips

1/2 cup Almond Ding (recipe follows) or chopped toffee candy bar of your choice

Marshmallow Fluff Filling:

1 envelope gelatin

2 tbsp cold water

2/3 cup egg whites

1/8 tsp cream of tartar

Pinch salt

1 cup granulated sugar

2 tbsp light corn syrup

1/4 cup water

1-1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract

Crust: Combine crushed cookies with melted butter. Press along bottom and up sides of 10-inch pie tin to form crust. Place in freezer for about 5 minutes to set.

Chocolate-Almond Filling: Spread 1/3 of warmed chocolate sauce over entire pie crust. Place Oreo pieces, chocolate chips and Almond Ding in separate bowls. Keep handy but set aside for the moment.

Marshmallow Fluff Filling: In small saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over 2 tablespoons of cold water and let soften for about 5 minutes. Gently warm over medium-low heat until gelatin is dissolved. Turn off heat.

Place egg whites, cream of tartar and salt in kitchen mixer with whip attachment or in mixing bowl with electric beater. Do not whip yet.

In a medium saucepan, combine sugar, corn syrup and 1/4 cup of water. Bring to boil. Using candy thermometer, cook syrup until it reaches 230F on a candy thermometer. At this point, start whipping egg whites, cream of tartar and salt at high speed, while continuing to cook sugar mixture until it reaches 240F. When sugar mixture reaches 240F, add in thin stream to egg whites and continue beating until all of

the syrup is incorporated. Add gelatin and vanilla and continue beating for 1 minute longer.

Assembly: Working quickly so gelatin doesn't set before you finish assembling pie, spread one-third of Marshmallow Fluff over pie crust. Then sprinkle with half the Oreo cookie pieces, half the chocolate chips and half the Almond Ding. Drizzle half of the remaining Chocolate Sauce on top. Spread with another third of the Marshmallow Fluff and sprinkle with remaining cookie pieces, chocolate chips and Almond Ding. Drizzle with remaining chocolate sauce. Top with remaining Marshmallow Fluff and, using metal spatula, shape top with dips and swirls. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.

To serve: Cut the chilled pie into pieces and place each slice on an ovenproof plate. Place in a 400F oven for 5 minutes or until golden brown. Or, for a little extra drama, use a kitchen torch to brown the top and sides. But **exercise caution** as the pie is very flammable and will burn just like a marshmallow being toasted over an open fire. Serve immediately.

Makes one 10-inch pie.

Almond Ding:

1 cup	whole blanched almonds
1/2 cup	granulated sugar
2 tbsp	unsalted butter
1/4 tsp	salt

In small saucepan or sauté pan, combine almonds, sugar, butter and salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until almonds are toasted and caramel is light brown. Makes about 1 cup.

Bitter Chocolate Sauce:

12 oz	unsweetened chocolate
4 oz	semisweet chocolate
1/4 cup	corn syrup
4 oz	unsalted butter
1-1/2 cups	heavy cream

Combine ingredients in heavy-bottomed saucepan and heat over low heat or in top of double boiler over simmering water until mixture is smooth and blended. Remove from heat. Makes about 2-1/2 cups.