

Strawberry sweet talk

By **SUSAN HALLETT**

Most people love strawberries, but how many know that the strawberry is a plant of the rose family? Strawberries have been cultivated since the 13th century. There are two types: June-bearers which produce fruit in summer—in Canada—and ever-bearers which produce a crop in early summer and another in autumn.

Some countries, such as Portugal and Spain have local strawberries in April. Madeira, that beautiful Portuguese island, had a wonderful crop this spring according to Ottavians Christina and Bruce Gillies. They crossed the Atlantic on one of Seabourn's three opulent ships en route to Lisbon and were in port for lunch at Funchal's fabulous Reid's Palace.

Luis Pestano, Executive Chef at Reid's, graciously sent along a recipe for Epoch Times readers.

Crispy sautéed strawberries with green peppercorn ice cream

Recipe courtesy of Luis Pestano, Executive Chef
Serves 4

Sautéed strawberries

500 g (approx. 750 ml or 3 cups) strawberries
50 g (approx. 50 ml or 4 tbsp) unsalted butter
50 g (approx. 75 ml or 1/3 cup) sugar
30 ml (2 tbsp) Madeira wine Malmsey (sweet)

Clean and wash strawberries, cut into quarters and sauté with butter and sugar, add Madeira wine, set aside until cold. (See editor's note).

Strawberry roll

4 Thai spring roll sheets 21.5-cm (8-inch) square
160 g (approx. 100 ml or 8 tbsp) custard cream
Egg yolk
Icing sugar for decoration



SENSATIONAL AND DELICIOUS: This sophisticated dessert can easily be prepared early in the day and takes only minutes to assemble and deep fry just before serving. **LUIS PESTANO**

On one quarter of each sheet, spread 40 g (approx. 30 ml or 2 tbsp) custard cream, place sautéed strawberries on top (approx. 75 ml or 1/3 cup each), brush the edges with egg yolk and roll, folding the edges inward making a thick cigar. Heat oil to 200° C (400° F) and deep fry roll a few seconds on each side until golden and crispy. Sprinkle with icing sugar.

Strawberry sauce

150 g (approx. 250 ml or 1 cup) strawberry purée
50 g (approx. 50 ml or 1/4 cup) icing sugar

Bring ingredients to a boil, set aside and cool

Peppercorn ice cream

200 g (approx. 300 ml or 1 1/4 cups) vanilla ice cream
30 g (approx. 5 ml or 1 1/2 tsp or to taste) green peppercorn

Crush peppercorn and mix into the ice cream and freeze.

Assemble

Spoon strawberry sauce in the centre of each plate. Cut the strawberry roll in half while still hot, place on top of the strawberry sauce and serve with a scoop of peppercorn ice cream.

Editor's note: Strain the sautéed strawberries before making the roll. Keep the liquid, which can be used in place of the strawberry sauce.

Strawberry Salsa

Serves 4 or 5 as a sauce
250 ml (1 cup) strawberries, sliced
1 mango, peeled and cubed
1 kiwi, peeled and sliced
15 ml (1 tbsp) honey
15 ml (1 tbsp) candied ginger, minced
10 ml (2 tsp) fresh lime juice
5 ml (1 tsp) fresh mint, finely cut

Mix fruit with honey, ginger and

lime juice and let stand for half an hour or so. Stir in the mint just before serving on ice cream or sorbet.

Strawberries dama bianca

(Strawberries with cream meringue)

Serves 4

25 ml (2 tbsp) almond paste
40 ml (3 tbsp) orange juice
55 ml (4 tbsp) sugar, divided
1 pint (2 cups) ripe strawberries, washed, hulled, and sliced
1 egg white, pasteurized
50 ml (1/4 cup) whipping cream
25 ml (2 tbsp) sour cream

In a bowl, mix almond paste, orange juice and 15 ml (1 tbsp) sugar. Add berries into this bowl and mix gently. Refrigerate, preferably for four hours. An hour or so before serving, beat egg white till foamy, gradually add 40 ml (3 tbsp) sugar and beat till meringue is thick and glossy. Whip the cream and fold it into the meringue, then add sour cream. Pour berries into a serving bowl and spoon meringue mixture over the top. Refrigerate.

Strawberries Czarina

Pineapple ice cream
Fresh large strawberries
15 ml (1 tbsp) orange flower water*
15 ml (1 tbsp) white sugar
Whipped cream

Chill a bowl in the refrigerator, then cover the bottom with pineapple ice cream. Wash strawberries carefully (leaving hulls on) and drizzle with orange flower water and sugar. Arrange on the ice cream. Decorate with whipped cream. Serve immediately.

*The original recipe calls for Kummel (a cumin-flavoured German liqueur) but I use orange flower water, which is available in most specialty food stores.

Susan Hallett is an award-winning writer and editor who has written for *The Beaver*, *The Globe & Mail*, *Wine Tidings* and *Doctor's Review* among many others. Email: hallett_susan@hotmail.com

Conference explores alternate affordable housing strategies

By **CHRISTINA FERRERO**

VANCOUVER—Professionals from as far afield as San Francisco and the United Kingdom gathered recently to share their incentives and insights on alternate policies and funding approaches for more affordable housing in Victoria and Vancouver.

At the "Inclusive City: Affordable Housing Strategies for the New Economy" conference, city councillors, developers, accountants, and architects discussed how to achieve the goal of affordable, sustainable, housing models in the two cities, both of which are sorely lacking in low-income housing.

Local experts also attended, including moderator Gregory Henriquez, of Henriquez Partners Architects, who coined the term "Inclusive Cities" and designed the Woodward's project, a mixed-income development complex in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

The event itself was spearheaded by Melissa Estable of Terra Housing Consultants, a company that supports environmentally friendly building practices and helps non-profit groups and government agencies realize their housing goals.

"Our objective is to learn from other places how they make housing more affordable, to help develop a policy that can be implemented all over B.C.," said Estable.

The conference, which took place at the WOSK Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver and at the Conference Centre in Victoria, focused on a realistic assessment of the present situation while exploring positive, forward-looking, outcomes.

Issues discussed include the affordability gap and how to bridge it; taxation and private corporate partnering in community housing; alternate ways to navigate a cost-driven market that leaves people

homeless due to multiple home-buying practices; development speculation and fluctuating markets; and construction costs.

The fickle nature of these elements, coupled with incomes that no longer match the high cost of homes in the current market, has pushed individuals, families, and governments to explore alternate affordable options. These include co-op housing, subsidized housing, stratas, condos, and multi-functional units like the Woodward's project.

Despite a 23-unit development on Jackson Avenue and Cordova Street in Vancouver that opened April 9, housing advocates say there has been an upsurge in evictions from the West End and Commercial Drive through rent hikes and renovations ahead of the 2010 Olympics. Games' organizers have been criticized for not delivering the 3,200 units of affordable housing they promised.

Sponsored by BC Housing, the Inclusive City conference garnered the attention of the Architecture Institute of British Columbia, the Planners Institute of British Columbia, and the Urban Development Institute.

Other speakers were Stuart Woodward and Simon Mitchell of Level, the UK's leading independent housing and planning consultancy. Tim Wake who works with BC and Alberta communities to establish affordable housing infrastructures and administration, and Abbie Conlee of Seifel Consulting, a woman-owned California firm that provides strategic real-estate and urban economic advisory theories.

"These speakers were deliberately chosen because their business practices are geared towards affordability in housing," Estable said.

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