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July & August

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Visit the web at www.susannye.com

Contact Susan Nye at
susannye@tds.net or

603/526 7319

When the going gets tough, I make lists. I usually scribble them on the back of junk mail envelopes. I always feel a wonderful sense of satisfaction when I can cross an item off. These lists keep me out of trouble with bill and tax collectors, get me to appointments on time or nearly, keep the dust bunnies at bay and keep my garden blooming.

Warm weather means a mile long to-do list. You know the list, it includes gutters to clean, windows to wash and geraniums to plant. I am feeling terribly self-satisfied because for the first time in forever I am ahead of myself with that mile long list. The windows are washed and the planting is done. I only have one gutter and it's ok. I have been spreading mulch for what seems like days and days and days and can now put my rake away. The porch is clean and clear of winter clutter and vacuumed. The seat cushions and pillows are out of storage, plumped and artistically arranged. The Adirondack chairs are scrubbed and have a new coat of stain. Summer has arrived and I am ready. Yes, certain mundane chores will persist whether I like it or not. The weeding never ends and the lawn seems to need mowing every week, regardless of my level of interest or more likely disinterest.

Summer is a wonderful time in New Hampshire's lake region. The air is clean and clear, the sun is bright and at night you can see every star. The summer storms are even spectacular with booming thunder and fantastic flashes of lightening. Throughout the New Hampshire summer, there are art and antique shows, large and small. There are country fairs, stocked with homemade baked goods, white elephants and ancient paperbacks. The lakes and hills are an athlete's paradise and you can create your own personal triathlon every day. Mix and match swimming, biking, running, walking, hiking and kayaking. Or if you are looking for a break from a winter of nonstop hustle and bustle and running around, just find a spot in the shade, watch the lake and enjoy being lazy.

Summer is a busy time for the Nyes. Pleasant Lake is like a magnet and summer after summer our family has been drawn here. My brother and sister, their spouses, kids and dogs flock to the lake every summer. Even when I lived thousands of miles away from New Hampshire, I managed to spend at least a few days every summer in and on the lake.



In spite of finishing up all my spring chores, there are still many important things which I need to do during our short New Hampshire summer. These activities are much too important for a chicken-scratched note on the back of an envelope, so here goes. I want to swim to Blueberry Island and climb to the top of Mount Kearsarge. I want to swim to the raft with the girlies, not once but several times. I want to lie in a hammock and read a best selling mystery novel cover to cover. At least three, preferably more, times a week I want to kayak around Pleasant Lake and visit every inlet, nook and cranny. I want to run or walk around the lake early in the morning, listen to the loons and catch at least a glimpse of the heron. I've already spotted one of the neighborhood bears and once may be enough. Last summer he took down my bird feeder early in the spring and much later in the summer wandered around my yard and vegetable garden. I want to listen to Motown, opera and jazz and I want to dance. Throughout the summer, I want to celebrate long days and warm weather with family and friends and enjoy good food, good fun and lively conversation around the table.

Enjoy summer and have a wonderful time in and on your favorite lake,



Bon appétit! - Susan



Cooking Parties
Learn & Laugh

Private Chef Services

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Too busy to cook?
Let me do it for you.

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Flag Cake

Just in time for the 4th of July!

Serves 8-12

16 ounces mascarpone cheese
1/2 cup very cold heavy cream
2 tablespoons Grand Marnier (optional)
Lemon Curd, recipe follows
about 24 crisp ladyfinger cookies
1/4 cup crème de cassis liqueur (optional)
1/4 cup lemonade (double if not using crème de cassis)
Quart Strawberries, halved
Pint Blueberries
1 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice

1. Place the mascarpone cheese and Grand Marnier in a large bowl; beat with an electric mixer until fluffy and set aside.
2. Clean the beaters. With the electric mixer, beat the cream in a medium bowl until soft peaks form.
3. Fold the whipped cream into the mascarpone mixture.
4. Fold in the chilled Lemon Curd. Cover and refrigerate.
5. Combine the crème de cassis and lemonade. Brush both sides of each cookie with the crème de cassis-lemonade mixture and arrange in a single layer on the bottom of 9" x 13" pan.
6. Spoon the mascarpone mixture over the cookies and spread evenly to cover. Cover the cake with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 6 hours.
7. Toss the berries in the sugar and lemon juice to coat. To decorate the cake: in the top left corner of the cake line up the blueberries to create a 3"x3" square. Use the strawberries to create stripes. Spoon cake into small bowls to serve, pass the extra fruit.

Lemon Curd

Makes 1 1/2 cups

6 large egg yolks
Zest of 2 lemons
1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (about 4 lemons)
12 tablespoons sugar
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cold, cut into 8-10 pieces

1. Create an ice bath by filling an oversized bowl halfway with ice and water, set a medium bowl in the ice; set aside. Whisk together yolks, zest, juice, and sugar in a small saucepan. Set over medium heat, and stir constantly with a wooden spoon. Cook until mixture is thick enough to coat the back of the wooden spoon, 5 to 7 minutes.
2. Remove pan from heat. Add butter, 1 piece at a time, stirring until incorporated. Pass through a fine mesh sieve into the bowl set in the ice bath. Stirring frequently, let stand until cool.
3. Place a sheet of plastic wrap directly on surface of curd to prevent a skin from forming; wrap tightly. Refrigerate until firm and chilled, at least 1 hour. Store refrigerated tightly covered for up to 2 days.