

Just Keep the **Chocolate** Rolling

By Jan Napier

Be still my heart,
we have entered
the salon du chocolat.

I attended a Culinary Tourism World Summit dinner, a while back, at the World Trade and Convention Centre. After visiting divine Taste of Nova Scotia appetizer tables, followed by a lobster dinner, a lit-

great interest we all smelled, touched and tasted actual cocoa beans. We savoured two kinds of dense cocoa drinks, ate wrapped chocolates, and enjoyed American Heritage chocolate tasting squares. As if that wasn't enough, chocolate-filled crepes were then served to the by now semi-chocolatose diners, accompanied by a framboise liqueur. Two costumed time travelers from the Fortress of Louisbourg recounted their first experiences with the wonder of cocoa.

We were just about to depart when what chocolate from yonder server approached? Huge trays laden with truffles were set down before us: chocolate raspberry, dark chocolate lemon satine crème, chocolate hazelnut praline, dark chocolate with cream and spices, sea-salted caramel, chocolate peanut butter, almond butter crisp, and crazy as it seems, my personal favourite, milk chocolate sea salted maple bacon truffles. What were we few to do with our bellies already stretched to the breaking point? We opened our evening bags and took what we could, oh yes we did. Just try

and tell me you wouldn't do the same.

It's over a year later and I still grow misty-eyed reminiscing about that event. So if you want to totally amaze your dinner guests, just keep the chocolate rolling in. But for a more reasonable soiree, may I suggest a triple chocolate blast with individual chocolate cakes with chocolate molten interiors, ladled with chocolate mint sauce. Go quadruple with a scoop of your favourite chocolate ice cream.

Molten Chocolate Cakes with Chocolate Mint Sauce

(serves 6)

Sauce:

4.5 oz semisweet chocolate, chopped
2 oz unsweetened chocolate, chopped
1/3 cup hot water
1/4 cup corn syrup
3/4 tsp peppermint extract

Cakes:

5 oz semisweet chocolate, chopped
1 1/4 sticks unsalted butter
3 large eggs
3 large egg yolks
1 1/2 cups icing sugar
1/2 cup all-purpose flour

In a heat proof bowl, over an inch of simmering water, melt both chocolates together. Whisk in the water, corn syrup, and extract. If making ahead, store in refrigerator. Reheat before serving.

For the cakes, preheat oven to 450°F. Butter six custard cups (1/2 cup size). Melt chocolate and butter together in a saucepan over low heat. Cool slightly. Whisk eggs and yolks together in a large bowl. Whisk in sugar, chocolate mixture, and flour. Pour batter into dishes. If making ahead, cover and refrigerate. Place on a cookie sheet and bake for 13 minutes (17 if refrigerated) or until sides and top are set but center is still soft and runny. Let sit for 5 minutes, loosen edges with a knife, and turn out onto plates. Spoon sauce over and serve with ice cream.



tle sliver of something sweet would have just finished things off nicely. Elegant platters of cookies, cheese and fruit were brought to the tables. But what, there's more? Courtesy of MARS (the company not the planet) and the Fortress of Louisbourg, we were invited to travel through a hazy maze of chocolate tastings during an excellent presentation on all things chocolate. One person from each table was invited to break open a cocoa pod, and with



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