

Comfort food from around the world

By **Jodi Schneider**
Correspondent

Comfort food encompasses more than just traditional American favorites like mashed potatoes and macaroni and cheese. It's a cultural thing, and comfort foods have been embraced by cuisines from around the world. Comfort food becomes a part of who each of us are. Many of us associate food from our childhood with warm feelings and good memories and it ties us

to our families, holding a special value for us. Immigrants bring the food of their countries with them wherever they go and cooking traditional food is a way of preserving their culture when they move into new places. Each country or community's traditional comfort cuisine reflects its unique history, lifestyle, values, and beliefs. In China, harmony is an important trait in almost every aspect of life. And this is reflected in Chinese cooking,

where almost every flavor (salty, spicy, sour, sweet, and bitter) is used in a balanced way creating delicious dishes with flavors that go well together. The cuisine of the United States also reflects its history. The European colonization of the Americas introduced European ingredients and cooking styles to the Americas. Later in the 20th century, the arrival of immigrants from many foreign nations

Pho Bo Vietnamese beef noodle soup

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| 4 pounds beef soup bones | 1-1/2 pounds beef top sirloin thinly sliced |
| 1 onion, unpeeled and cut in half. | 1/2 cup chopped cilantro |
| 5 slices fresh ginger | 1 T. chopped green onion |
| 1 T. salt | 1-1/2 cups bean sprouts |
| 2 pods star anise | 1 bunch Thai basil |
| 2-1/2 tablespoons fish sauce | 1 lime cut into 4 wedges |
| 4 quarts water | 1/4 cup hoisin sauce (optional) |
| 1 (8 oz.) package dried rice noodles | 1/4 cup chili-garlic sauce (such as Sriracha®) (optional) |

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C). Place beef bones on a baking sheet and roast in the preheated oven until browned, about 1 hour. Place onion on a baking sheet and roast in the preheated oven until blackened and soft, about 45 minutes. Place bones, onion, ginger, salt, star anise, and fish sauce in a large stockpot and cover with 4 quarts of water. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to low. Simmer on low for 6 to 10 hours. Strain the broth into a saucepan and set aside. Place rice noodles in large bowl filled with room temperature water and allow to soak for 1 hour. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and after the noodles have soaked, place them in the boiling water for 1 minute. Bring stock to a simmer. Divide noodles among 4 serving bowls; top with sirloin, cilantro, and green onion. Pour hot broth over the top. Stir and let sit until the beef is partially cooked and no longer pink, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve with bean sprouts, Thai basil, lime wedges, hoisin sauce, and chili-garlic sauce on the side.

Classic Tiramisu

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| 3 eggs separated | 1 pkg. ladyfinger cookies |
| 3/4 cup fine sugar | Powdered bittersweet cocoa or |
| 20 ounces mascarpone | grated chocolate |
| 1/2 cup strong black coffee | |

To make the mascarpone cream, separate the yolks and the whites into two medium to large bowls. Whip the yolks with the sugar until you have a dense, creamy and pale mixture. Add the mascarpone until combined. Whisk the egg whites (make sure you use a very clean bowl, glass or metal is best, and very clean beaters to quickly get beautifully stiff whites) until you have stiff peaks that hold their shape even when you turn the bowl upside down. Fold the whites into the mascarpone mixture. Set aside, and if not using straight away, store covered in the fridge. Make a fresh pot of strong, black coffee and pour into a wide bowl. Dip one side quickly and one side only of a lady finger biscuit into the coffee and layer, coffee side up in a prepared tin. Repeat with more biscuits until you have a nice, tight layer that covers the base of the tin. Cover the lady fingers with a thick layer of mascarpone cream. Repeat layering with lady fingers then cream again, finishing with a thick layer of cream. Leave in the fridge overnight, covered. Dust with plenty of bitter cocoa powder or grated chocolate. Serve.

developed a rich diversity in food preparation throughout the country. Comfort food varies from nation to nation and even city to city. Across Asia, comfort foods are as varied as the countries they come from and provide interesting insights into the cultures to which they belong. **Pho Bo Vietnamese beef noodle soup** is a bowl of hearty noodle soup that is enjoyed for breakfast, and sometimes lunch, in southern Vietnam, and at any time of day in the north.

This authentic pho isn't quick, but it's appetizing. The key is in the broth, which gets simmered for at least 6 hours. **Rumbledethumps** are a classic Scottish comfort food. A mixture of potatoes, cabbage, and chives may sound highly unappealing, but bake it and top it with cheese and you're left with a delicious dish. There is no word or phrase for "comfort food" in the Italian language. Perhaps that's because practically all

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