

Summer berry fool

BY BRIAN MEDFORD

Last week, I became a small business owner in Astoria. After more than 20 years in the corporate world, I left it behind to work for myself. It's my second act, of what I hope will be at least three life acts.

When you read "more than 20 years in the corporate world," you know I'm not a spring chicken anymore either. Some friends think I'm a fool at this point of my life to start fresh. I let them believe what they will, because when I hear the word "fool," I think of dessert.

A fool is the simplest of treats. It's an English dessert that can be dated back to the 15th century. Modern fools are made by combining cooled stewed fruit and lightly sweetened whipped cream. A recipe isn't even needed, but that won't stop me from writing one anyway.

I'm a fan of recipes because I know what to expect in advance. Am I in for 30 minutes of kitchen work for a biscuit or three days of croissant fussiness? Will granulated sugar work, or do I need muscovado? Do I have to peel fava beans for this dish? If so, I'm automatically out. Fava bean preparation, in my humble opinion, is the pinnacle of kitchen insanity.

I'd also like a recipe for running a successful small business, although that might be like asking for a recipe for macaroni and cheese. What works for me may not work for you.

Personally, if I can't slice macaroni and cheese like a piece of cake, then it's



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Mixed berry desserts in a perfect size for snacking.

been made wrong. If you disagree, that doesn't mean we can't be friends, just that we probably shouldn't eat Southern side dishes together.

Make the most of the summer fruit harvest and a fool. You can think of dessert or think of me.

Mixed berry fool with ginger snaps

Yields six completed fools

Ingredients

Berry sauce

- 16 ounces mixed berries (strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries)
- 2 ounces granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Whipped cream

- 24 ounces heavy cream
- 2 ounces granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Combine mixed berries, sugar, water and lemon juice in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Cook until thick-

ened, about 6 to 8 minutes. Next, remove from the heat and place the mixture in a bowl. Cool the berry sauce to room temperature.

To make the whipped cream, beat the heavy cream until frothy. Add in sugar and vanilla and beat until soft peaks form.

To assemble the dish, dollop a base of whipped cream onto the bottom of a serving dish. Add a layer of berry sauce and repeat once more, ending with whipped cream. Garnish with homemade or store bought ginger snaps. Serve immediately or chill for up to three hours.

Brian Medford is a baker, teacher and the owner of The Rusty Cup in Astoria. He has lived in the Northwest for more than 20 years and delights in Southern cooking. Contact him at blmedford@gmail.com.

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