

Christmas
got you
up a tree
?

Looking for
something
new, different?
Here are some
suggestions
to make planning
easier and
more enjoyable!

Go festive with mushrooms

The festive season deserves a fling into the exotic. Crab stuffed mushrooms provide that fling. Crab is expensive but a little goes a long way, so don't be discouraged by the price. The rich flavor of crab combines with the mellow mushroom to make a perfect hors d'oeuvre.

There are many other great ideas for stuffing mushrooms. Try filling raw or sauteed mushroom caps with whipped cream cheese seasoned with chives and tabasco. Add a shrimp, a spoonful of crab or an olive slice as garnish. Your favorite egg, fish or meat salad makes a delicious filling for mushrooms. Serve chilled and make plenty as they will disappear quickly.

The hustle and bustle of Christmas activity often interferes with regular eating habits and brings on some "stummy-aches" as kiddies nibble on the surplus supply of treats and goodies. It's a good idea to prepare a variety of tasty sandwiches and place them conveniently near the supply of sweets. Adding a variety of fruit is also a good idea.

CRAB STUFFED MUSHROOMS

1 pound medium mushroom caps
1 can (6 oz.) crab meat
1 egg, well beaten
1/4 cup bread crumbs
1/4 cup tomato juice
1 tsp. lemon juice
dash tabasco sauce
1 tsp. finely diced onion
2 tsp. finely diced celery
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 cup bread crumbs
1/4 cup butter

Early in the day, wash mushrooms and remove stems. Save for soup or stew.

Mix together crabmeat, egg, 1/4 cup bread crumbs, tomato juice, lemon juice, tabasco, onion, celery and salt. Stuff mushroom caps with about one tablespoon of this mixture.

Mix 1/2 cup bread crumbs and butter. Sprinkle on top. Chill until 15 minutes before serving. Broil 6 inches from heat for 5 to 8 minutes, or until bread crumbs are lightly browned.

Serve hot.
Yield: about 40 hors d'oeuvres.

Delicious holiday "goodies" make Christmas sweet

HOLIDAY "GOODIES"

"Eggnog French Toast" is a special holiday breakfast treat across Canada. Melt 1/4 cup butter or margarine in a skillet. Dip 3 slices of raisin bread into 3/4 cup dairy eggnog, turning to coat both sides. Brown both sides of bread in hot butter. Makes 4 servings.

Make gals party sandwiches, "Yule Tree Canapes", to serve during the holidays. Cut 12 Christmas tree shapes from 6 slices of bread with a tree-shaped cutter. Blend 1/4 cup Roquefort cheese spread, 2 teaspoons chopped chives, and 2 teaspoons chopped pimento. Spread canapes with mixture.

Holiday Sandwiches: "Spicy Yule Tree Canapes" will be a special attraction on the hospitality table in Canadian homes this year. Cut 12 Christmas tree shapes from 6 slices of bread with a tree-shaped cutter. Blend 1 can (2 1/2 ounces) deviled ham, 1/4 cup toasted chopped almonds, 1 tablespoon minced parsley, and 1/4 teaspoon curry powder. Spread each canape with mixture for an interesting flavor combination!

Holiday Canapes: Using a star-shaped cutter cut 4 canapes from each of 8 slices of bread. Combine 1/4 cup pineapple cheese spread, 2 tablespoons chopped parsley, 2 teaspoons grated lemon rind, and two teaspoons chopped manichino cherries and spread each star canape. Makes 32 Yule Star Canapes.

MOCK PETITS FOURS

1 white cake
1/3 cup soft butter
3/4 cup confectioners' sugar
2-1/3 tbsps. cream or milk
1/4 cup crushed hard peppermint candy

Cut cake into 2 inch squares. Place on a greased broiler pan or cookie sheet and toast under broiler, turning to brown all sides. Cream butter, add sugar and whip until blended. Add cream and continue whipping until light and fluffy. Spread frosting over top and sides of cake. Sprinkle crushed candy over soft frosting.

PINEAPPLE-EGGNOG CAKE

1 loaf pound cake
1 cup eggnog
1/2 cup pineapple juice
1 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Slice the thin crust off top of cake. Combine eggnog and pineapple juice. Gradually spoon or pour eggnog mixture evenly over cake until all of it soaks into cake. Refrigerate for two hours before serving. Whip cream, blend in sugar and vanilla. Serve over slices of chilled cake.

Makes 10 servings.

Tangy Topping for Pumpkin Pie: Your own creativity enhances a baker's pumpkin pie to make a holiday dessert. Combine 2 tablespoons grated orange peel and 3/4 cup sour cream. Arrange 6-8 orange sections around the outer edge of pie. Spread sour cream mixture over centre. Sprinkle cinnamon-sugar over sour cream and orange sections.

Terrific Topping for one-crust pie: Combine the convenience of a baker's one-crust pie with your own personal garnish for a holiday special dessert. Cover top of pie with 2 cups miniature marshmallows. Toast under broiler until marshmallows are brown. Chill. Cut a can (8 ounces) jellied cranberry sauce into half inch slices. With a star-shaped cutter make 7 cranberry stars. Garnish each wedge of pie with a cranberry star. Makes 7 servings.

An elegant cake to reflect the glamour and magic of the holiday season:

DELUXE FRUITED ANGEL CAKE

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese
1/4 cup sugar
1/3 cup milk
1/4 cup diced candied fruits
1/2 ounce sliced almonds
1/2 ounce semi-sweet chocolate, shaved
1 round angel food cake
3 tablespoons rum

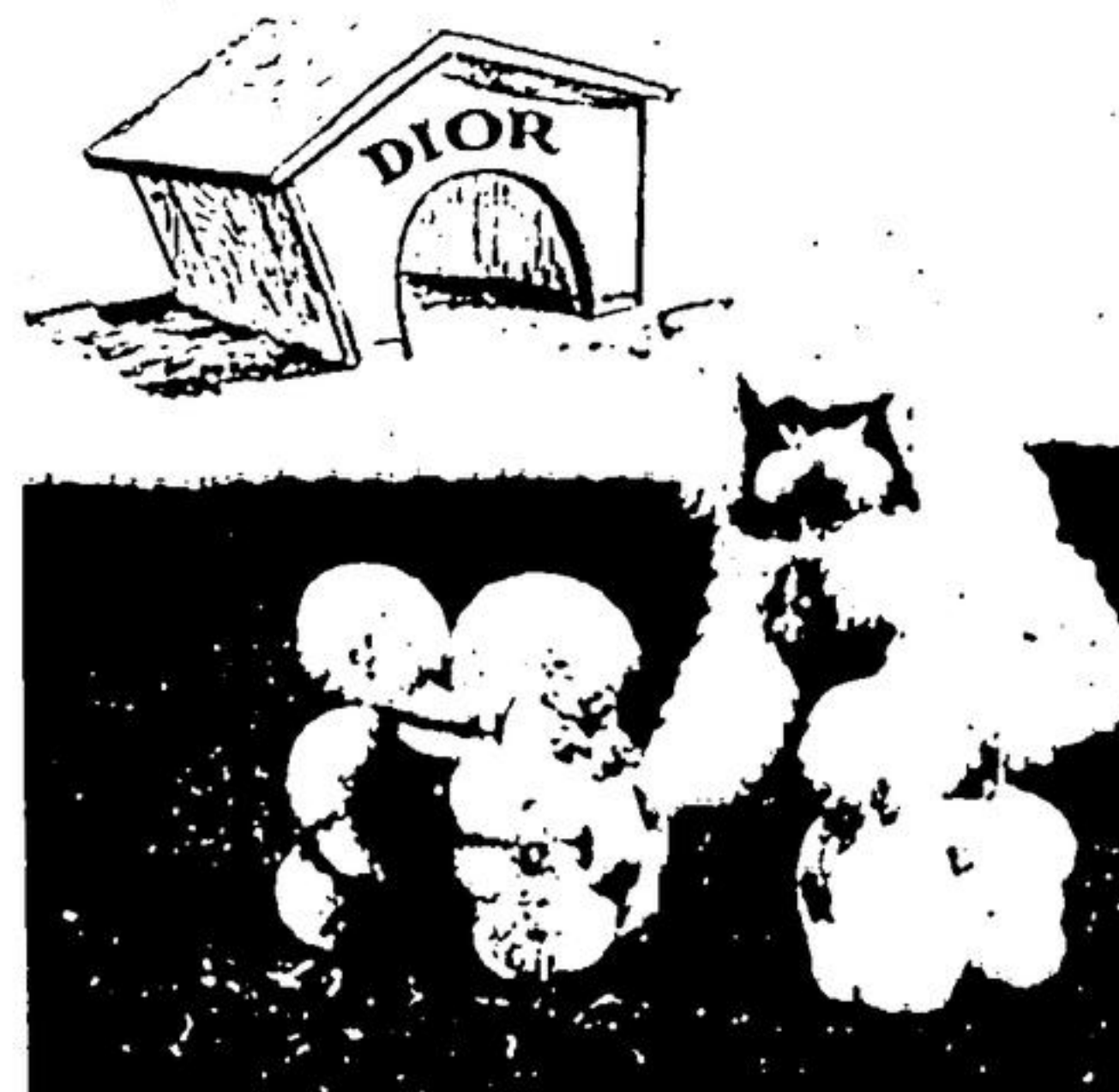
SEVEN-MINUTE ICING

1 egg white
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup water
1-1/2 teaspoons light corn syrup
few grains salt
1 teaspoon almond extract
3 drops red food coloring

Whip cream cheese, sugar, milk and almond extract together until smooth; stir in candied fruits, almonds and shaved chocolate. Chill. Slice cake into 3 equal-sized layers. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon rum over each layer. Reassemble cake, spreading cheese mixture between layers.

Icing - Combine egg white, corn syrup and salt in top of a double boiler. With electric mixer at high speed, beat till mixture forms peaks when beater is raised. (It may take longer than 7 minutes.) Remove from heat and add almond extract and coloring. Continue beating until thick enough to spread over top and sides of cake.

Makes 10-12 servings.



Glamorize your tree with skirt

It is easy to make a Christmas tree skirt that can be washed to look fresh and new year after year.

For a fabric with ready-made motifs choose one of the pretty holiday-printed cottons available in piece goods departments. The Canadian Cotton Council reports you can make a tree skirt with only one yard of 36-inch fabric.

To make the skirt, fold the fabric square in-half and then in quarters. Cut a piece of string about 16 inches long. Tie one end to a pencil and tack the other end to the folded corner of the square. Use the pencil to mark a curve from edge of the cloth. Then cut through all thicknesses along the penciled curve. Shorten the string to make a centre cut-out for the tree base.

Unfold the fabric circle and cut one slit from the centre to the outer edge. Hem the cut edges.

To trim the skirt, stitch bright cotton rick-rack or ball fringe around the outer and centre edges.

WILL THE REAL French poodle please stand up? Decorative poodles like these are easily made from plastic film bags from the cleaner. Simply cut the plastic film in one inch strips and make a series of pom poms. Fourteen pom poms are needed per poodle. Body is a hollow core, wrapped in polythene and each leg is made by threading a wire through the centre of three pom poms and securing it to the body. A cork becomes the face, map pins the eyes and a thumb tack the nose.

Declare holiday truce in Battle of the Bulge

Christmas is the time of year when we entertain friends in our homes—when the "door stands open at the feast" to welcome the stranger and the time to share with all who come the happy blessings of this wonderful season.

It is as hectic a time for the homemaker as it is a happy one. In addition to the usual household rounds, is added the task of having food on hand to serve at odd hours to people who come to call and stay to dine.

Here then, are some hints on how to keep your Christmas holiday entertaining easy and bright.

Remember salads. Either jellied or plain, they can fill a multitude of occasions in most satisfactory manner. Keep salad greens ready-washed and torn into serving pieces in a plastic bag in the fridge ready to meld with a rosy-red French dressing and serve. Jelly a salad and mould it in individual molds for instant serving.

Keep a few dips on hand. They can be prepared at a

moment of leisure and served as the need arises. And remember green pepper and pimento finely chopped add a special festive touch. Serve dips with celery sticks, with carrot sticks, with radishes and be a friend to those who declare no Christmas truce in The Battle of the Bulge.

Remember ham is a wonderful standby for holiday entertaining. Serve it a la King with salad



Easy entertaining - serve buffet style

Buffets make entertaining easy, if you plan carefully beforehand. Note these tricks of the trade from home economists, Macdonald Institute, University of Guelph.

Arrange the buffet-table for easy traffic and for the convenience of the guests. Have a definite traffic pattern and place foods in the order that guests should approach first. Place plates at one end, napkins and silverware at the other, group hot or cold dishes, condiments, bread or rolls. Dessert and beverages may be at one end of the table or, more graciously, served later by the hostess. The main dish or a salad may be served at the table by the host or hostess. Avoid

lineups: escort only three or four guests to the table at a time.

Arrange the serving dishes and spoons to avoid crowding, so that the guests can easily help themselves. Place flatware in rows, never piled one on top of another. Be sure the food is manageable: have a casserole that requires only a fork for eating, rather than steak, for which a knife is necessary.

Plan how the guests will sit. Use lap trays or tray tables or card tables. If you're using card tables, set these out beforehand with silver, glassware, salt and pepper.

Create a party atmosphere by using low lights, candles, centerpiece, and attractively colored and garnished foods.

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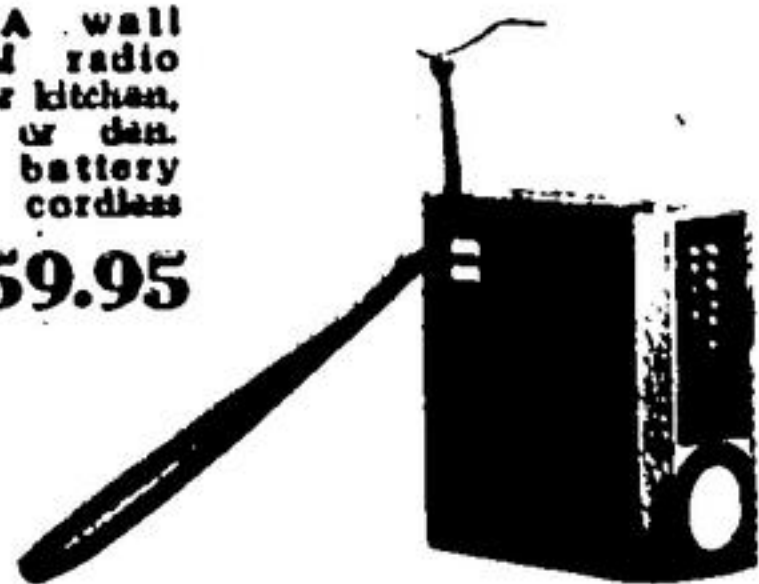
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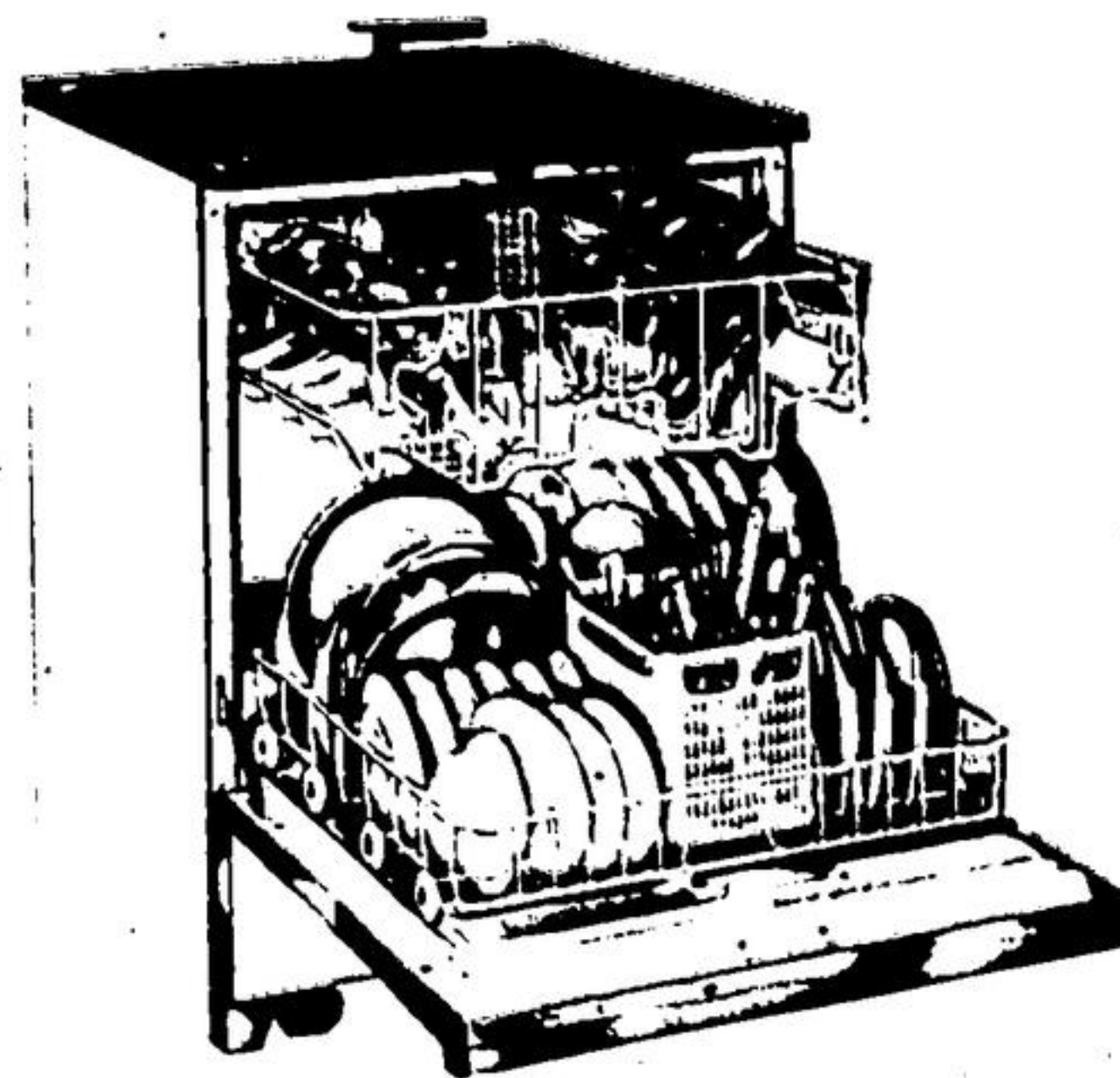
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Gift idea

When the Christmas gift list seems to grow and grow, then it becomes necessary to curtail the amount spent for each present. Where children are concerned, a small gift can be made more appealing by decorating the outside of the package with a variety of bright candies and other sweets. Grownups appreciate a package wrapped with special care. And, in the final analysis, it's the idea of being remembered, more than the cost of the gift that is important.

Holiday tip

Cranberries may be served in numerous ways in the holiday season advise Home Economists of Macdonald Institute, Guelph. Try a crisp, fresh cranberry relish; put one pound (4 cups) of clean fresh cranberries through a food chopper using the medium blade. Stir in 2 cups of sugar and refrigerate several hours or overnight. For variety, put 2 unpared, cored apples and 1 unpeeled lemon through the food chopper with the cranberries.

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