

CHOCOHOLICS UNITE

Professional shares simple steps to making delectable treats at home

BY TERESA J. FARNEY
teresa.farney@gazette.com

Do you love chocolate? Do you consider yourself a chocoholic? Then this event is for you: Kidpower's Chocoholic Frolic.

At least 13 pastry chefs and chocolate fiends will be preparing their signature chocolate dishes from 7-10 p.m. May 1 at the Garden of the Gods Club. You're guaranteed to leave with a sugar rush if you sample them all. And to help you with your chocolate issues, Julie Pech, The Chocolate Therapist, will be there, too. Her goal, as a psychologist with a strong interest in nutrition, is to prove that when you link the mind, the body and chocolate, something extraordinary happens.

She also has a line of chocolate bars and will be offering samples at the event.

Included in the mix of chocolate treats to sample at the frolic will be many types of truffles. Our favorite truffle maker is Andrew Darrigan, who co-owns The Food Designers with his wife, Heather. At this event a few years ago, he introduced truffle lollipops: small orbs of velvety chocolate on a short white stick. They were so much easier to eat than the traditional truffles, which are coated in cocoa that gets all over your fingers and face and, sometimes, sprin-

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kled down the front of your dress.

He has an easy, fail-proof way of making them.

"I make a filling that is more like a batter," he said.

We visited him at his catering kitchen, where he showed us, step by step, how to make truffle lollipops. To see a video of the process, visit gazette.com/food.

Step 1: Chocolate

Like Dede Wilson, author of "Truffles — 50 Deliciously Decadent Homemade Chocolate Treats," Darrigan recommends starting with a top-quality chocolate.

"I like Callebaut chocolate," he said, as he used a long-tined fork to lop off chunks of chocolate from a five-pound slab. "I recommend using a couverture chocolate, like this one, that contains at least 32 percent cocoa butter."

Why?

According to Wilson's cookbook, "The higher cocoa butter content makes the chocolate more fluid, so the shell around the truffle will be thinner and more elegant — and the chocolate will be easier to work with."

As with other pastry work, you will need to weigh the chocolate on a scale for an exact measurement. Once

weighed, the chocolate should be shaved into small pieces so it will melt evenly. Melt it in a double boiler so it won't scorch.

Step 2: Cream

Heat heavy cream slowly in a saucepan.

"You just want to see steam coming off the top of the cream and small bubbles forming around the edge of the pan," he said.

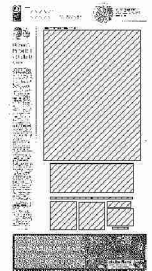
While the cream is steaming, add a flavoring to the chocolate in the double boiler. "I'm using Bailey's Mint Irish Cream today," he said, "but I make all sorts of flavors."

When the liqueur was added to the melted chocolate, the chocolate sort of clumped together. But when you slowly stir in the steamy cream, the chocolate quickly becomes very smooth and velvety. This is what he calls his batter.

Step 3: Chill

The chocolate batter is poured into a shallow bowl and allowed to come to room temperature. Then Darrigan covers the bowl and chills the batter in the refrigerator until completely cold.

"It can be frozen at this point, too," he said. "When



you're ready to make truffles, let the batter start thawing in the refrigerator overnight. The next morning, set the batter out for about half an hour. Then you are ready to start making balls of chocolate for the lollipops."

If you don't want to freeze the batter, once the batter has been chilled and allowed to set out for half an hour you can start making the truffle balls.

He uses a small ice cream scoop to dig up little balls of chocolate. He wears white plastic gloves to quickly roll the balls into perfect

spheres.

"See, there is very little chocolate melting on my hands," he said. "But when you put the stick into the lollipop, be sure your hands are perfectly clean. You don't want any chocolate smudges on the white stick."

That's it. Darrigan has made it easy to make truffles. How did he learn all his ways with chocolate?

"From Jacques Torres at the French Culinary Institute in New York," he said, where he got his culinary training.

"He's the dean of chocolate."

ble boiler to melt. Add liqueur and stir. Slowly add warm cream. Stir until chocolate is smooth. Pour into shallow pan to cool to room temperature. Chill in refrigerator until completely chilled.

3. When ready to make truffles, let chocolate mixture stand at room temperature about 30 minutes. Use a small ice cream scoop to make chocolate balls. Shape with hands if necessary. Roll in cocoa powder and place balls on parchment-covered pan and chill.

4. Carefully place a short white stick into each ball.

SOURCE: Andrew Darrigan, The Food Designers

CHOCOLATE TRUFFLE LOLLIPOPS

Yield: 50 pieces

11 ounces semisweet chocolate, finely shaved
3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons heavy cream
3 tablespoons Bailey's Irish Mint Cream
Cocoa powder

Procedure:

1. Heat cream gently in saucepan until just simmering. Remove from heat and let cool several minutes
2. Put shaved chocolate into dou-

THE CHEFS

These chefs will be preparing chocolate treats at the Kidpower's Chocoholic Frolic.

Alpine Chef Catering – Mechelle Bertollini
Art & Style Baking – Christine Yocum
Harvest Mountain Foods
Cravings Five Star Events – Kelly Dunavin
Creative Cakes by Carol – Carol Hildebrand
Edible Arrangements – Courtney Thornton
The Food Designers – Andrew Darrigan

Garden of the Gods Gourmet – Toni Williams
Little London Cake Shoppe – Jane Vasterling
Mya Bella Cupcakes – Alexandra Elliott
The Chocolate Therapist – Julie Pech
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory – Mazie Baalman
Sweet Celebrations – Mary Guthery
Walter's Bistro – Greg Champagne
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THE GAZETTE

DETAILS

What: Kidpower's Chocoholic Frolic

When: 7 to 10 p.m. May 1

Where: Garden of the Gods Club, 3320 Mesa Road

Cost: \$55 per person (RSVP by April 23)

Tickets: 520-1311 or kidpowerCS.org

MORE INSIDE

Only four main ingredients for Chocolate Truffle Lollipops. **Page 4**



BRYAN OLLER, THE GAZETTE

Andrew Darrigan, co-owner of Food Designers, presented a display of chocolate truffles created at the business in early April. He introduced truffle lollipops a few years ago at Kidpower's Chocoholic Frolic.

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