

Ready for the best dessert ever?

Nancy Lacy of Atlanta, Ind., sends a snowball or two to her fellow cooks along the Coast.

She e-mailed me saying how much she enjoyed the crawfish soup recipes, but said she couldn't get crawfish in Indiana. I suggested that she substitute shrimp, which she said she would.

Two other readers, Deborah Colby and Elizabeth Burch Jenkins, also e-mailed me a couple of their favorite recipes. Jenkins sent in what she calls the best dessert ever. It's a coconut macaroon cheesecake. Colby, a registered dietitian with Gulf Coast Health Educators in Pass Christian, sent in a low-sugar bread pudding complete with whiskey sauce.

This recipe is from [www. Recipe4Living.com/](http://www.Recipe4Living.com/), a new online epicurean community. Recipe4Living.com offers recipes from the home chef and professionals, coupons and tips.

Colby's recipe is particularly appropriate since February is American Heart Month. It is low in fat, as well as sugar.

COCONUT MACAROON CHEESECAKE

1 cup coconut, flaked, toasted

1/2 cup pecans, ground

2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted

24 ounces cream cheese, softened

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/4 teaspoon almond extract

3 eggs

1 egg white

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/3 cup sugar

2/3 cup coconut, flaked, toasted

In a small bowl, combine 1 cup toasted coconut, ground pecans and butter. Press onto bottom of 9-inch spring-form pan. Set aside. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese with electric mixer on low speed; gradually add 1/2 cup sugar, 1/2 teaspoon vanilla and almond extract. Beat until fluffy. Add 3 whole eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Pour into crust-lined pan.

Bake 350 degrees for 35 min. Meanwhile, in a small mixing bowl beat egg white and remaining vanilla with an electric mixer until soft peaks form (tips curl); gradually beat in the 1/3 cup sugar until stiff peaks form. Fold in 2/3 cup toasted coconut. Carefully spread atop partially baked cheesecake. Return to oven and bake 20 minutes more. Cool on wire rack for 15 minutes. Loosen side of cheesecake from pan. Cool 30 minutes more; remove side of pan. Cool completely. Cover and chill at least 4 hours before serving. To serve, garnish with strawberries and/or additional toasted coconut.

- Submitted by Elizabeth Burch Jenkins

BREAD PUDDING

WITH WHISKEY SAUCE

Serves 10

2 cups toasted bread cubes

1/2 cup raisins

1 quart skim milk

1 cup egg substitute

1/2 cup Splenda

1/2 teaspoon vanilla

3 tablespoons melted margarine

1/4 teaspoon salt

Place bread cubes and raisins in a buttered 3-quart. casserole. Scald milk. In a separate bowl, combine remaining ingredients. Add scalded milk. Mix well and pour over bread cubes and raisins. Set casserole in a pan and pour hot water in the pan to a depth of 1 inch. Bake at 325 degrees until a knife is inserted in center comes out clean.

Whiskey sauce:

1/4 cup Splenda

1/4 cup water

2 tablespoons margarine

1-2 jiggers bourbon whiskey.

Cook the first 3 ingredients until dissolved. Remove from heat and add whiskey. Serve over bread pudding. Best if served warm.

- *Submitted by Deborah Colby*