

**If your friend is living with a mental illness  
What would you do?**



**whatadifference.org**



Home Delivery

Weather: GREENWICH, CT | Now: 62°F | High: 76°F | Low: 47°F | 5-Day Forecast

Greenwich Time Web Search powered by YAHOO! SEARCH

Home News Opinion Obituaries Business Sports Living & Health Entertainment Community

del.icio.us 
 Digg 
 Reddit 
 YahooMyWeb 
 Google 
 Facebook 
 What's this?

Print Email

### Brazilian, with a twist

**Weston cook focuses on the dishes of her homeland**  
 By Beth Cooney  
 Staff Writer  
 Article Launched: 05/07/2008 01:00:00 AM EDT

Chef Leticia Schwartz has cooked in some of New York's best restaurants. Name the region and its cuisine, and she can cook it: French, American, Asian, Latin. "I like to make all those things and do," she says.

She also can whip up chocolates and desserts that make her dinner guests swoon. Yet the flavors of her Brazilian homeland were missing from her culinary stew or feijoada pot. She craved the salted cod, exotic fruits and shrimp stews steeped in coconut milk that were staples of her childhood in suburban Rio de Janeiro. And as a serious foodie, she was perplexed by what she was seeing on the restaurant scene and food TV programs. Why wasn't anyone who claimed to be proficient in Latin fusion serving a decadent Brigadeiro? In Brazil, the little fudge balls, named for a famous general who loved them, were as much a staple as chocolate chip cookies are in America.



Leticia Schwartz whips up a Brazilian feast at a cooking class hosted in her kitchen. (Contributed photo)

"Everywhere you go these days, the spotlight is on Latin cuisine. There is a food revolution that has made American dining even more international," says Schwartz. Yet, she laments, "At some Latin fusion restaurants, there is nothing that resembles Brazilian food on the menu. Brazilian cuisine is very unique and should stand on its own, but no one has been focusing on it. For years I was cooking French food and one day I said, 'Who is cooking Brazilian?' The answer is no one. So it's got to be me."

Brazilian food - rich in Spanish, Portuguese, African and indigenous Indian influences - was the main attraction when Schwartz gave a recent cooking class at the expansive center island of her Weston kitchen.

Advertisement

Schwartz, who teaches privately, caters, consults and writes about food, recently completed an extensive renovation that allows her to host as many 18 people at her counter. She shares the home with her husband, Dean; their children, Thomas and Bianca; and lots and lots of pots and pans. Together, the family likes to host large, food-centered gatherings.

"People are afraid to cook and my hope is to get them to try it. I like to cook and talk and show what I'm doing so it isn't so intimidating."

The menu for her recent class started with cocktails of Caipirinha, the Brazilian national drink made from distilled sugar cane and copious amounts of fresh lime juice, served with a snack of homemade, buttery cheese crackers. Rich croquettes of ground beef sauteed in a spiced b chamel sauce, then battered and fried, were served with dipping sauces as an appetizer. An entree of shredded salted cod folded into a sauce of bacon, onions, milk, herbs and eggs - a novel take on alfredo - was topped with crunchy fried potatoes. The potatoes, which Schwartz made in the morning in her kitchen fryer, are a Brazilian staple that resemble the crispy onions with which some Americans top a traditional green bean casserole. Freshly shredded and fried, "they are the Brazilian version of a crouton. We will make them in the morning and use them on everything, soup, salad, a stew."

Dessert was the beloved Brigadeiro baked into a chocolate pastry. Homemade chocolates filled with purees of nuts and fruits of the Amazon also were served.

It was all decadent, delicious and unusual. Especially provocative was the salted cod. The dish stimulated the most conversation (and a grimace or two) as Schwartz cooked it. An acquired taste for some diners, more salted cod is consumed in Brazil than Norway, from where much of it is imported. Schwartz attributes its prevalence in Brazilian diets to the influences of Spain and Portugal and its portability. "It was the Vikings who first salted cod so it would travel well." In Brazilian cuisine, it is prized for its rustic qualities and the way it can be transformed into homey meals such as the dish Schwartz adapted from the menu of Antiquarius, her favorite restaurant in Rio.

"Every time I go to Rio, we go there and that's what I eat."

Getting salted cod right is a process that involves soaking it in water for days to take most of the sodium out. "The water sort of brings it back to life." The desalted fish works better in some Brazilian dishes than fresh cod because of its rustic qualities and "it is less flaky."

Ginger-flavored ice cream balanced the sweet rich dark chocolate of the molten Brigadeiro cake and gave the dessert a Latin flair.

"I like to take classic recipes and do something interesting with them. It is Brazilian, but with a twist."

**Most Viewed** **Most Emailed** **RSS**

(From the last 12 hours)

1. Officer injured in scuffle with suspect
2. Brick oven pizzas keep teachers smiling
3. Livery backs Byram units
4. Former clothier launches listing
5. GOP looks to Frantz as Nickerson's replacement
6. Is the Avenue the Apple of Steve Jobs' eye?
7. Traffic lights plan fails again

**More News Articles**

- GOP looks to Frantz as Nickerson's replacement
- Livery backs Byram units
- Neophytes get introduction to blogging
- Officer injured in scuffle with suspect
- Traffic lights plan fails again
- Brick oven pizzas keep teachers smiling

**Top Classified**  
Jobs

[All Listings](#)

## RECIPES

## Croquette de Carne (Meat Croquette)

For the meat:

- 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, divided
- 2 Tbsp. + 1 tsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3/4 cup diced onion
- 2 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 3 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Salt, pepper and cayenne to taste

2 egg yolks

For the coating:

- 1 cup flour
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups bread crumbs
- 2 cups canola oil for frying

- \* Pour the milk into a medium saucepan, and bring to a boil over medium heat.
- \* In a different saucepan, over medium heat, melt 2 tablespoons butter.
- \* Add flour to the butter and mix for just about a minute with a wooden spoon, or until flour starts to cook.
- \* Add hot milk at once to the flour/butter pan, and boil everything together for 3 minutes, until milk thickens. Reserve.
- \* In another sauce pan, melt remaining 1 tablespoon butter and olive oil.
- \* Add onions and cook over medium low heat until translucent. Add garlic, cook for another minute.
- \* Add ground meat and stir with a wooden spoon until all meat is cooked. Add tomato paste and Worcestershire sauce.
- \* Pour the reserved thickened milk into the meat and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon for 5 minutes, letting the mixture get dryer. Season to taste with salt, pepper and cayenne pepper.
- \* Transfer mixture to a food processor and run the machine for 3 minutes, or until the meat becomes smooth and pasty.
- \* Transfer the meat paste back to the saucepan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, letting evaporate any excess moisture. You will see a skin forming at the bottom of the pan. You should be able to shake the pan and the whole batter will slide as one. You want the meat paste to be soft, but not too soft otherwise you won't be able to shape it with your hands.
- \* Scrape meat paste into a bowl and mix in the egg yolks. Let it cool at room temperature, then chill mixture for at least 3 hours.
- \* When batter is cold and able to hold its shape, form croquettes by first rolling in circular moves between the palms of your hands, then shaping into a oval (or rectangle) by moving your hands up and down. (Use an ice cream scoop to make equal portions.)
- \* Place all meat croquettes in the refrigerator for 1 hour.
- \* Prepare three different trays: one for the flour, one for eggs lightly beaten with a fork and one for the bread crumbs.
- \* Pass each croquette through flour, shaking off the excess, then eggs and finally coat them well with bread crumbs. Keep one hand dry and one hand wet for the eggs.
- \* Pour canola oil into a deep pot or casserole and heat the oil to 350, as measured on a deep-fat thermometer.
- \* Fry the croquettes in batches - don't crowd the pot - until they are golden brown. Carefully lift the croquettes out of the oil and onto a plate lined with a double thickness of paper towels. Serve immediately or re-heat them in a 325-degree oven for 5-7 minutes. Makes 12-14 croquettes.
- \*

## Bacalhau Antiquarius (Salted Cod Fish with Bacon, Onions, Eggs and Crunchy Potatoes)

- 1 lb. salted cod fish (measured after soaked), see note
- 2 1/2 cups milk
- 2 Idaho potatoes
- 1 qt. canola oil
- Salt and pepper
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 2 medium onions, sliced thin
- 4 Tbsp. bacon, cut into stripes (about two strips)
- 6 eggs
- 3 Tbsp. fresh chopped chives

- \* Rinse the fish in cold water, then place it inside a big container. Fill it with cold water and place it in the refrigerator soaking for 2-3 days. Change the water 6-8 times or 3 times per day. Each time you change the water, rinse the container as well. The volume of water should be 10-15 times greater than the size of cod, so use a very big container. It is very important to de-salt it properly, otherwise, the dish will still taste too salty.
- \* The day you are using the cod, poach it in milk: remove cod from cold water and measure 1 pound. Place in a medium-sized saucepan. Cover fish with cold milk and bring it to a boil over high heat. Turn heat to medium low and cook for 5-7 minutes or until fish is cooked.
- \* Using a slotted spoon, remove cod from the hot milk. Discard the milk. Trim away the nerves. Flake the meat with your hands into big chunks, then shred the fish by chopping it with a chef's knife or passing the fish through a food processor, using the pulse mode. You should have about 1/2 pound (1 1/2 cups) shredded fish. Reserve in a plastic container, covered with a tight lid until ready to use.
- \* Cut potatoes into julienne, using a Japanese or a French mandoline.
- \* Let potatoes soak in cold water for a few minutes, changing the water at least once to wash away the starch.
- \* Spread potatoes into a half sheet pan, covered with paper towel, let it air dry for 5 minutes.

- \* Pour canola oil into a deep pot or casserole and heat the oil to 350 degrees, as measured on a deep-fat thermometer.
- \* Fry the potatoes in batches - don't crowd the pot - until they are lightly golden brown. Carefully lift them out of the oil and onto a plate lined with a double thickness of paper towels.
- \* As soon as you take them out of the oil, salt them with regular (not kosher) salt. Reserve until ready to use. (Potatoes can be made up to 1 day ahead, covered in a tight plastic container.)
- \* In a large saut pan, or a wok stainless steel pan, start saut ing bacon over medium heat until lightly crisp.
- \* Add olive oil and onion; continue to cook over medium-low heat until translucent. If onions start to get color, add 1/4 cup of water. Add pulled cod.
- \* In a separate bowl, break all eggs together. Add them all at once to pan. Mix with a wooden spoon. At this point, you have to be very careful not to let the eggs dry out, just like when you make scrambled eggs. Add a handful of string potatoes (yes, those potatoes will get mushy). Carefully season - you might not need to add salt.
- \* Pour into a big food platter, sprinkle with fresh chives, drizzle olive oil on top, and finish with another handful of string potatoes on top. Makes 4-6 servings.

Note: When buying the salted cod, try to find a piece that has a thick flesh. Trim away any dark pieces of flesh or thin pieces with not much flesh.

\*

#### Ginger Ice Cream

- 2 2/3 cups milk
- 1 1/3 cups heavy cream
- 1 vanilla bean
- 3.5-oz. ginger, peeled and chopped
- 8 egg yolks
- 1 1/3 cups sugar (divided)

- \* Combine milk, cream, half the sugar, vanilla and ginger in a large pot.
- \* Remove from the heat and let it sit for 30 minutes. In a bowl, whisk together yolks and remaining sugar. Bring milk mixture back to a boil.
- \* Carefully pour a little milk into yolks. You want to pour a little at a time, to prevent from cooking the yolks.
- \* Once the yolks and milk are mixed together, return mixture to the pan, and cook at very low heat until it thickens and coats the back of the spoon.
- \* Strain through a fine strainer into an ice bath. Discard ginger and vanilla bean.
- \* Chill the refrigerator for at least 4 hours before running in an ice-cream machine. Pour the mixture into the machine and turn it into ice cream. Makes about 2 pints.

\*

#### Molten Brigadeiro Cake

For the Brigadeiro:

- 1 (14-oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tsp. cocoa powder (unsweetened)
- 2 oz. 70 percent dark chocolate, chopped

For the cake:

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter (more for the molds)
- 2 whole eggs
- 2 yolks
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 Tblsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour, sifted (more for the molds)

- \* In a heavy saucepan, place condensed milk, cocoa powder and chocolate; bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking constantly.
- \* Mixture will begin to bubble. Once it reaches the bubble point, continue whisking for another for 3-5 minutes until the moisture has evaporated and the condensed milk has thickened. (If you have a candy thermometer, it should read 195-200 degrees). The mixture should look like a chocolate fudge. You should be able to tilt the pan and the whole fudge should slide like a batter, leaving the sticky fudge on the bottom of the pan. (Use low heat, otherwise the sides of the pan will burn.)
- \* Slide the batter into a bowl. Don't scrape it. You don't want to incorporate any of the burned batter that stayed on the bottom of the pan. Reserve.
- \* Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Butter and flour 4-6 foil cups. Shake off the excess flour.
- \* In a medium saucepan, melt butter over low heat.
- \* Pour melted butter into brigadeiro and whisk vigorously until smooth. At first, the mixture will totally curdle and break. You will think this recipe cannot possibly work. But keep whisking constantly until the mixture comes together again emulsified.
- \* In a separate bowl, beat together eggs, yolks, salt, sugar and vanilla. Incorporate the brigadeiro and whisk until homogeneous. Add the flour and mix just until blended, using a spatula.
- \* Pour batter into foil cups filling almost to the top (leave about a 1/4 inch). You can prepare the recipe up to this point and refrigerate for 5 days.
- \* Bake for 7-9 minutes, or until the edges are firm but the center is still soft.
- \* Invert into a dessert plate. Serve with pistachio, ginger, coconut or vanilla ice cream. Makes 4-6 servings.

 [Print](#)  [Email](#)  [Return to Top](#)

#### POST YOUR COMMENTS:

[Read 1 comment »](#)

Type in your comments to post to the forum

Name  
(appears  
on your  
post)

Comments

Type the numbers you see in the image on the right:



Please note by clicking on "Post Comment" you acknowledge that you have read the [Terms of Service](#) and the comment you are posting is in compliance with such terms. **Be polite.** Inappropriate posts may be removed by the moderator. Send us your feedback.

**[Houston Home Furnishings](#)**

Looking for Home Furnishings in Houston?  
Find all of them near you.  
[www.YP.com](http://www.YP.com)

**[Napa or Sonoma, Limousine or Bus](#)**

**Tours**  
Private Napa & Sonoma wine-tasting tours  
via luxury limousine or bus.  
[www.californiawinetours.com](http://www.californiawinetours.com)

**[Bad Boy Mowers](#)**

Manufacturer and retailer of commercial  
zero-turn lawn mowers.  
[www.badboymowers.com](http://www.badboymowers.com)

Contact Us | [Copyright Notice](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Site Map](#) | [RSS](#)   [MY YAHOO!](#)  
[Advertise with Us](#) | [MNG Corporate Site Map](#) | [Weather data](#) Copyright © 2008 CustomWeather,  
Inc.  


Copyright © 2008  
MediaNews Group