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**Hearts and Flour**

**Pretty, practical dishes beg for Valentine treats**

**By CATHERINE KLASNE**  
 Food Editor

*Last update: February 09, 2005*

Irresistible cookware immediately inspires thoughts of what it ought to hold, heart-shaped food for those we love.

Manufacturers are responding to a longing we cooks have for the perfect dish to fit an occasion by creating and marketing more heart-shaped baking and serving dishes in time for Valentine's Day 2005. Casseroles, fondues, tarts, cakes and luscious creme brulees spring to mind.

For example, Chantal has introduced a SweetHeart Fun-Fondue set, a one-cup heart dish with lid and a new heart-shaped deep-dish pie plate and small fluted hearts. Le Creuset has added stoneware in sets of four 1-cup heart-shaped ramekins and silicone heart-shaped bakeware to its offerings. Suggested retail prices range from \$4 to \$30.

Today's stoneware comes in vivid colors but stands up to the freezer, refrigerator, microwave and conventional ovens and dishwasher and quick transitions among them all.

The pieces are pretty enough that your intended may want to eat the dishes. Since that's not possible, it's time to talk recipes.

Love does not live by cake alone; a search for suitable casseroles and side dishes yielded two great possibilities in "Cooking for Comfort: More Than 100 Wonderful Recipes That Are as Satisfying To Cook as They Are To Eat" by Marian Burros (Simon & Schuster, 2003, \$24).

She promises the Chicken Potpie recipe on this page will not yield a pale and gluey result, but will give a fresh-tasting filling with a crispy, flaky crust. Only heart-shaped macaroni-and-cheese casseroles could be more comforting and warming.

Or the Southern classic, Garlic Cheese Grits, could arrive in its little individual dish alongside a grilled salmon filet or shrimp skewers on a bed of greens -- pretty and at least partly pink.

Burros, who lives in New York and Washington, D.C., says all Southern cooks know this recipe. "However, as soon as they leave the South, they can't find the rolls of garlic-flavored cheese thought to be essential for this dish, so they improvise, substituting Cheddar and garlic." If you truly care, "please don't use instant grits," she pleads.

The garlic arouses disagreement among self-proclaimed experts on seductive cooking. Diane Brown, author of "The Seduction Cookbook: Culinary Creations for Lovers" (Innova, 2005, \$14.95), writes, "It's true what they say about garlic; if the two of you are eating it, you won't notice the effect in your breath." She suggests nibbling on a piece of fresh Italian parsley as a breath freshener and adds garlic with abandon to many of her recipes.

Robert Meyers-Lussier, author of "This Is Delicious! What Is It?" (iUniverse Inc., 2004, \$24.95), lists garlic among "libido boosters" but warns against going overboard.

**Love in a Dish**

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**CINNAMON RAISIN CAKE:** Spiced with cinnamon, allspice and nutmeg, it can be made in a tube pan or in smaller individual sizes. Glaze with a cinnamon topping or frost with a colorful icing and add Valentine candies.

**CHICKEN POTPIE WITH FILO CRUST:** Marian Burros, author of "Cooking for Comfort," says a friend told her everyone in New York is eating chicken potpies, "even the rail-thin women."

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