



Surprise your guests or family with strawberry tarts, a scrumptious way to top off a special evening.

Good things come in small tarts

The French call strawberries, "La petite reine des desserts," the little queen of desserts. And no wonder, for strawberries are luscious to eat, and the plump, red berries are a feast for the eye.

Strawberry tarts are perfect for brunches, buffets, or party service as they can be created in the quantity needed, and are convenient for guests to eat. The fruit is superb in combination with cream cheese or chocolate. The following recipe combines all three to make a true "queen of desserts." A wonderful idea for a Mother's Day brunch or any special occasion.

STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKE TARTS

- 1 package (3 oz.) cream cheese, softened
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, melted
- 1/2 oz. cup sour cream
- 1 cup prepared whipped topping
- 1 package (4 oz.) Ready-Crust Graham Cracker

- Tart crusts
- 1 pint fresh strawberries, washed, hulled and sliced
 - 1 teaspoon cornstarch
 - 2 tablespoons cold water
 - 1 or 2 drops red food coloring, if desired

Beat cream cheese, 3 tablespoons of the sugar and the vanilla in small mixer bowl at medium speed until smooth; beat in chocolate. Beat in sour cream until smooth. Fold in 1/2 cup of the whipped topping. Divide mixture between tart crusts, spreading evenly into each crust. Reserve 1/2 cup of the strawberries; arrange remaining slices over cream cheese mixture in each crust. Mash reserved strawberries in small saucepan. Dissolve cornstarch in the cold water; add to mashed strawberries with remaining 3 tablespoons sugar. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture boils. Boil and stir 1 minute; remove from heat. Stir in food coloring. Spoon evenly over tarts; garnish with remaining whipped topping. Refrigerate until needed.

Your will

It may be human nature to avoid thinking about unpleasant things. "Many North Carolinians, perhaps overwhelmed by the complexities of estate planning, simply ignore the problems and hope it will go away," says Nathan Garren, extension economist, North Carolina State University.

But unless an estate plan is developed, it is entirely possible that your property will be divided among surviving family members contrary to your wishes. This is because the state provides a "will" for you if you don't write one yourself.

"When a person dies without a will, any property is divided among surviving heirs according to the rigid specifications of the North Carolina Intestate Succession Laws. Only property such as insurance policies with designated beneficiaries and property owned jointly with survivorship rights are not affected by these laws," Garren says.

State law controls distribution of both real and personal property. All personal property, wherever it is located, is subject to the North Carolina laws of distribution if you live in this state. Only real property in the state is distributed according to state law. Real property outside the state is distributed according to the laws of that state.

"Division of property under state law varies depending upon which family members survive your death. No one is required to make a will, but each person should be aware of the provisions the state has made for the distribution of his property should he fail to make out a will," Garren says.

Along with determining the distribution of property, a will allows a person to name a guardian for any children and to select an executor, the person or institution which will carry out the will's provisions.

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