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## FOOD

# PERFECTLY SIMPLE

Three chefs share their secrets to flawless results **BY ISABEL FORGANG**

**W**hy is it that a talented chef can make even the simplest dishes so delicious? And why can't you do the same at home? True, chefs have access to prime meats, fish and poultry that the average home cook does not. But when it comes to simple dishes, top chefs have some secrets up their sleeves that make the difference. Three of them were willing to share them with News readers so you, too, can turn out four-star dishes at home. Here's how to make the best baked or broiled fish and braised short ribs you ever had, as well as an icing that takes the cake.



**ROSE LEVY BERENBAUM**  
BUTTERCREAM ICING

Pastry expert Rose Levy Berenbaum, author of "The Cake Bible," among other books, says it's really easy to make a silky buttercream icing. If you know her two special tricks, that is. When preparing the icing, you need to cook the sugar syrup until it comes to a rolling boil (photo above). "There should be bubbles all over the surface before pouring the syrup into the eggs or else the icing won't thicken properly," she warns. You also must be sure that the egg-syrup mixture is completely cool before beating in the butter.

Most buttercream icings use light corn syrup. Berenbaum used it herself for years until she discovered Lyle's Golden Syrup. "Lyle's does more than sweeten," she says. "It adds a buttery flavor with hints of caramel, butterscotch and vanilla to the icing."

The syrup is available in supermarkets such as Food Emporium, Gristedes and D'Agostino. If you can't find it, substitute an equal amount of Karo's light corn syrup.

**tips**



**MELLOW YELLOW** Rose Levy Berenbaum shows off her finished "Golden" product.

DAVID HANDSCHUH DAILY NEWS

### GOLDEN NEOCLASSIC BUTTERCREAM

Makes 2 cups (enough for a one-layer cake; to generously ice a two-layer cake, double the recipe)

Be sure to have all ingredients at room temperature, says Rose Levy Berenbaum.

**3 large egg yolks**

**1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated white sugar**

**1/4 cup Lyle's Golden Syrup**

**1 teaspoon lemon juice, freshly squeezed**

**8 ounces (2 sticks) unsalted butter**

**1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract**

Grease 1-cup heatproof glass measuring cup.

In a medium bowl, beat the yolks with a hand-held electric mixer until light in

color. Meanwhile, combine the sugar, syrup and lemon juice in a small saucepan (preferably nonstick). Stir until the sugar is moistened. Turn heat to medium and stir constantly until the sugar dissolves and the syrup begins to boil around the edges. Stop stirring and continue cooking until syrup comes to a rolling boil and the entire surface is covered with large bubbles. Immediately transfer syrup to the greased cup to stop the cooking.

With an electric hand-held mixer, beat the syrup into the yolks, pouring the syrup in a steady stream. Don't allow syrup to fall directly on beaters as it will spin the

syrup around the sides of the bowl. Beat until mixture thickens and cools, at least 5 minutes.

Let stand until the bowl is cool as well, then beat in the butter by the tablespoon. The buttercream will not thicken until almost all of the butter has been added. Add the vanilla and beat on low speed until it is incorporated.

Place buttercream in an airtight bowl and keep it at room temperature if using within 4 hours later. Otherwise, refrigerate for up to a week or freeze for several months. Bring to room temperature before using and re-beat briefly to restore texture.