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SUMMIT *life*

Treats inspired by inspiring films

Create your own film festival after-party with one of these recipes

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Special to the Daily

Film is a powerful medium that can make us laugh, make us cry, allow us to be lost in a moment, educate us, amuse us and inspire us. In a location that is often viewed as a one-trick pony (ahem, skiing), the Breckenridge Film Festival offers a boost to our cultural repertoire. This celebration of cinematography gives the community a dose of artistic indulgence. Now in its 34th year, the festival will screen more than 60 films over the course of four days, Thursday, Sept. 18, through Sunday, Sept. 21. From quirky independent films to compelling documentaries and the gripping Adventure Reel, the options abound.

To gear up for the entertaining weekend that lies ahead, we selected three of our favorite films and used them as inspiration for some fun recipes. Try these traditional treats or create your own feasts to pair with your favorite films from the festival.

'DUGUN DERNEK'

Film: Set in Eastern Turkey, this comedy from director Selcuk Aydemir follows an amusing group of friends as they are tasked with the chore of coordinating a large and lavish traditional Turkish wedding in just 10 days' time.

Pairing: While crafting a three-tiered Turkish wedding cake may be a bit too ambitious, we've found an equally tempting traditional dessert for you to bake this weekend, Tahini & Walnut Cookies, or "Tahinli & Cevizli Kurabiye," as they are called in Turkish. We turned to the blog myturkishkitchen.blogspot.com for the recipe for this popular Turkish dessert. The star of this treat is tahini, which is a paste made from ground sesame seeds. Essentially, it's sesame butter. Most commonly used in Middle Eastern, North African, Greek and Turkish cuisine, you are probably familiar with the taste, the main flavor in hummus. These quick and easy cookies will be the perfect snack to have waiting for you when you return home from the screening.

Cookie

1 cup tahini
1 cup sugar
1 ½ sticks butter (at room temperature)
1 egg yolk
½ teaspoon real vanilla extract
½ teaspoon baking soda
3 ½ cups all-purpose flour

Topping

1 cup crushed walnuts
1 egg white

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix tahini, sugar, butter, egg yolk, vanilla and baking soda with whisk until well blended. Slowly knead in the flour, ½ cup at a time, until the dough becomes thick enough to hold its shape. Using a tablespoon, scoop dough one spoonful at a time into the palms of your hands, rolling it into a round ball and then slightly flattening. Dip one side of the ball into the egg white, and then coat with crushed walnuts and place onto a greased baking pan. Repeat until you have used all of the dough. Bake 15 to 20 minutes.



'Pie Lady of Pie Town' profiles Kathy Knapp, owner of the Pie-O-Neer Café in the small New Mexico burg of Pie Town. The film will be shown at the 2014 Breckenridge Film Festival on Friday, Sept. 19.

'RIOS GUATEMALA — THE PRESERVATION OF WILD RIVERS'

Film: This incredibly gorgeous and compelling documentary takes us on an inspiring mission to save the endangered rivers of remote areas of Guatemala. The gripping tale of an educational adventure gone awry will leave you inspired and humbled. This piece from director, producer and Summit County local Paul Heesaker leaves viewers yearning to learn more about the culture, the people and how they can help save this magnificent stretch of land.

Pairing: Guatemala is located just south of Mexico and shares many of the same flavor profiles. Similar spices and ingredients are commonly used: beans, rice, corn, tortillas, caldos (stews) and sopas (soups). A signature Guatemalan dish is "Pepian de Pollo," a spicy chicken with tomatillos and pumpkin seeds. We found a recipe for this traditional meal at www.whatscookingin-yourworld.blogspot.com. This thick and hearty stew can be served over rice or with warm tortillas for dipping.

6 cups water
1 pound tomatillos, husked and rinsed
8 skinless chicken thighs
1 to 2 jalapeños, stemmed and halved lengthwise
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
½ cup roughly chopped cilantro
6 green onions, trimmed and roughly chopped
3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
1 green bell pepper, cored, seeded and roughly chopped
1 cup pumpkin seeds (pepitas), toasted
¼ cup sesame seeds, toasted
2, 8-inch corn tortillas, torn into pieces

In a large pot, bring water, tomatillos, chicken thighs, jalapeños and salt to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low, and simmer until tomatillos and jalapeños are tender and chicken is cooked through, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat. Drain, reserving 3 cups of the broth, and set aside the chicken, tomatillos

and jalapeños. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add cilantro, green onions, garlic and bell peppers, and cook until softened and golden brown, about 10 minutes; transfer to a blender. Add pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, tortillas, 3 cups of the reserved broth, tomatillos and jalapeños (seeded first, if you like), and carefully puree until smooth; work in batches, if needed.

Transfer contents of blender and the chicken to a large pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low, and simmer until thickened, about 10 minutes more. Ladle into bowls, garnish with cilantro and serve with rice or tortillas.

'PIE LADY OF PIE TOWN'

Film: Just reading the title of this film will have you drooling. This intimate look at a woman who created a slice of Americana out of passion, dedication and a deep love of pies is one to watch. Director Jane Rosemont tells the tale of Kathy Knapp, an entrepreneur who set up shop in an unlikely town in Texas. The vast array of pies that she creates will have your sweet tooth aching.

Pairing: While we may be a bit too far away from Pie Town to trek for a slice of Kathy's pie, a homemade pie is just a recipe away. I scrolled through my recipe box to find this jewel of goodness — my Aunt Karen Kuhn's pumpkin chiffon pie. The classic pumpkin pie is elevated to an elegant delight when turned into whipped chiffon. Begin with your favorite crust recipe, or keep things simple and purchase a premade piecrust.

Crust

1 ⅓ cups baking flour
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup chilled vegetable shortening, cut into ½-inch cubes
3 - 6 Tbsp ice cold water

Filling

1 envelope unflavored gelatin
¼ cup cold water
1 ¼ cups pumpkin
½ cup milk
¼ teaspoon ground ginger

½ teaspoon nutmeg
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup sugar, separated
3 eggs, separated
Whipping cream
1 cup chopped walnuts, separated

Make the crust: In a medium mixing bowl, blend flour and salt. Cut chilled shortening cubes into the flour mixture, using the back of a fork or pastry blender until lightly blended and crumbly. Sprinkle cold water, 1 teaspoon at a time, onto the top of the mixture, using a fork to blend and pull the dough away from the bottom of the bowl. Add more water as needed, until the mixture is moist enough to form a ball a solid ball.

Wrap the ball of dough in plastic wrap, and place into refrigerator to chill for 30 minutes. Once chilled, place the unwrapped ball of dough onto a floured surface. Using a rolling pin, roll dough from the center outward with steady pressure, creating a circle that's 2 inches wider than the bottom of your pie plate. Gently transfer the dough to the pie plate, pressing dough around the sides of the pie plate and over the edge. Trim excess, and flute as desired. Thoroughly prick the bottom and sides of the crust with a fork to prevent blistering during baking. Bake crust at 450 degrees for 10 minutes until bottom and edges are golden brown. Set aside to cool while you create filling.

Make the filling: In a medium bowl, beat egg yolks. Add ½ cup sugar, pumpkin, milk and spices, and transfer to small pot. Cook over medium heat until thick. Transfer back into mixing bowl. In separate small bowl, dissolve gelatin envelope in the ¼ cup cold water. Pour gelatin into hot pumpkin mixture, and stir until well blended. Place bowl in refrigerator to cool completely. In another bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Add remaining ½ cup sugar; stir to combine. Once pumpkin mixture has cooled completely, fold in the egg white mixture and ¾ cup of walnuts. Scoop into pie shell. Chill completely. Before serving, top with whipped cream and remaining ¼ cup walnuts.

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