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**SUBJECT:** Martha Stewart Living

**Martha Stewart, Host:**

Are you having friends and family over for Christmas Eve? Today's show is filled with great last minute ideas for this year's party. Renowned chef who's right here, Jeremiah Tower, has two wonderful party ideas. This Seafood Shooter...may I have one?

**Jeremiah Tower, Chef:**

Absolutely.

**Stewart:**

As soon as you put them in the ice, they leave the ice. They're absolutely delicious. Cheers.

**Tower:**

Great. Cheers.

**Stewart:**

And then we're going to make a magnificent peppered filet beef, Jeremiah's recipe, too. And we're going to create a stunning arrangement with greenery from the backyard. It looks beautiful on our green and gold buffet table. Plus, we have an amazing collection of nutcrackers. Those little soldier nutcrackers, they're really cute. Stay tuned for a lot of good holiday cheer. Again, cheers.

**Tower:**

Cheers.

*[Commercial break]*

**Stewart:**

Well, I've been waiting for quite a few years to have the legendary father of California cuisine here at the studio. His name is Jeremiah Tower. I'm sure you've heard of him. And he's now living in New York, of all places.

**Tower:**

Yes, Manhattan.

**Stewart:**

Do you like New York?

**Tower:**

I always felt I was a New Yorker.

**Stewart:**

Well, Jeremiah has done amazing, amazing work in his life. He started in California. Where?

**Tower:**

At Chez Panisse in the 70s. Then we did the Santa Fe Bar and Grill, and then Stars in San Francisco.

**Stewart:**

And now a glorious new cookbook called "Jeremiah Tower Cooks: 250 Recipes From an American Master." And I think you'll find that the recipes are delicious and it's simple enough for the home cook. So, right now, we're starting off with something that's really fun for entertaining. If you're having a brunch or a lunch or even just a Sunday dinner, what a great cocktail this would be. You call it what, a Seafood Shooter?

**Tower:**

A Seafood Shooter, and the point of this dish is that when your guests come in the kitchen, they don't ask you what's for dinner because this is already out on the counter.

**Stewart:**

Okay, and they can just start drinking.

**Tower:**

Right, exactly.

**Stewart:**

So is this kind of a Bloody Mary?

**Tower:**

It's a bloody Mary. It could also be a Virgin Mary, but that doesn't get the party going quite so fast.

**Stewart:**

No, exactly.

**Tower:**

So it's a Bloody Mary with seafood, and we're using shrimp that we've chopped up today.

**Stewart:**

Oh, very, very fine.

**Tower:**

You can use little oysters like the Kumamotos or something like that, or chopped up mussels.

**Stewart:**

Oh, good.

**Tower:**

So the recipe...

**Stewart:**

Homemade tomato juice? *[Laughter]* Simple drink.

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**Tower:**

Right.

**Stewart:**

So what kind of tomato juice do you like?

**Tower:**

I like just plain, not flavored, because we're going to flavor it.

**Stewart:**

Okay. So you have how much tomato juice, one cup?

**Tower:**

One cup.

**Stewart:**

Okay, and how many is this going to make?

**Tower:**

This is going to make the 12 shooters.

**Stewart:**

Look, Jeremiah was looking in our closets and he found the perfect shooter size glass. These are old Hi-C depression glasses. This is bigger than a shot glass, too.

**Tower:**

Yes, it is. We're going to fill them halfway up, so that...

**Stewart:**

Okay. Well, I'm anxious to see. We have a bowl. It's a beautiful silver Montise, kind of, a modern Montise, full of shaved ice so that these are going to sit in the shaved ice and stay nice and cold. Oh, wait a minute. You're putting stuff in there and I don't even know. What? How much lemon juice?

**Tower:**

A tablespoon.

**Stewart:**

...of fresh lemon juice.

**Tower:**

Fresh lemon juice, a teaspoon of the horseradish, a splash of the Worcestershire sauce. And this is up to you, depending on...I like it a lot.

**Stewart:**

Yeah, me, too.

**Tower:**

Balances out the vodka.

**Stewart:**

Right.

**Tower:**

Then a little bit of salt, pinch of salt, black pepper and, of course, the vodka.

**Stewart:**

Mm. Now, what do you like? In the way of vodka?

**Tower:**

Well, we use Stoli today, but I love the new ones, the sort of triple distilled. Chopin, things like that.

**Stewart:**

Oh, the Polish vodkas are wonderful. The Russian vodkas.

**Tower:**

Aren't they? Potato vodka, particularly.

**Stewart:**

And I go...when I go to Europe I try to, if I'm in Poland. I just was in Norway and I got some wonderful Russian vodkas there.

**Tower:**

Oh, really?

**Stewart:**

I always buy them. Yeah, the odd ones.

**Tower:**

And the Buffalo Grass, another favorite of mine. Very dangerous, that stuff. It goes down too easily.

**Stewart:**

Don't drink too much. So just...you just put some in. You didn't measure.

**Tower:**

The vodka, four ounces.

**Stewart:**

Oh, four ounces. Okay.

**Tower:**

And it's very important with these to put a little bit of a Bloody Mary mix in the beginning. Otherwise...

**Stewart:**

The shrimp will stick to the bottom?

**Tower:**

It sticks to the bottom and everyone's like this in the kitchen.

**Stewart:**

All over your tie.

**Tower:**

Just a little tiny bit.

**Stewart:**

So, how many shrimp? It looks like just a few.

**Tower:**

This was about six shrimp.

**Stewart:**

And just, what, steamed?

**Tower:**

Right. What I did was to put...because I did something different for the show today, was put a little bit of the shrimp stock.

**Stewart:**

Oh, lovely.

**Tower:**

So I'm going to add...so it becomes like a clam digger. You know, that amazing train out to Montauk used to have Bloody Marys with clam dips?

**Stewart:**

No, I did not know that. I have never taken the train out to Montauk.

**Tower:**

Well, it used to have a bar car in the back, and it was wonderful. This is a little bit of the stock, the fish stock, that the shrimp were cooked in.

**Stewart:**

When I commuted from Westport to New York, when I first bought my house up here in Connecticut, they had a bar car. I remember I only went in it once because it was so noisy and so crowded.

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**Tower:**

Filled with smoke, probably.

**Stewart:**

Very filled with smoke. Oh, this is beautiful.

**Tower:**

So we're just going to fill them about halfway up.

**Stewart:**

And then I can just fill the rest, right?

**Tower:**

Yes, fill her up.

**Stewart:**

So only halfway?

**Tower:**

Yeah, otherwise it's just too much for a shooter. Then we're going to put a little gremolata, which is chopped up garlic, lemon zest and chopped parsley.

**Stewart:**

Generally served with ossobuco.

**Tower:**

Yes, yes. Gives them just a bit of a kick.

**Stewart:**

Yum.

**Tower:**

And, of course, if you think you don't want to have garlic at your party, you don't have to have the garlic, but the lemon and the parsley really work. As soon as that's done, it's ready to go in the ice.





**Stewart:**

Just stick it in?

**Tower:**

Stick it in.

**Stewart:**

How pretty. So these seafood shooters, well, I think we're going to all enjoy them. And later, Jeremiah's going to share another excellent recipe. Peppered filet of beef, which really is a beautiful way to do a filet of beef, and we need a new recipe.

**Tower:**

Great.

**Stewart:**

We do. Thank you.

**Tower:**

Thank you.

*[Commercial break].*

**Stewart:**

I bet most of you crack your nuts with a nutcracker like this. It's the ordinary kind. But at holiday season, there's only one kind of nutcracker to use. And our special guest today, Betsy Bush, collects the nutcrackers that are so amazingly beautiful, and they really work.

**Betsy Bush, Nutcracker Collector:**

Right.

**Stewart:**

Thank you for coming today. I love to crack a nut with my little friend over here.

**Bush:**

Great. Let's do it.

**Stewart:**

Okay. So I actually have never cracked a nut in one of these beautiful German nutcrackers.

**Bush:**

You just put it in the mouth, okay? And then you just press down.

**Stewart:**

Good. And it's perfectly crushed. Where did the tradition of making these characters...where did it start?

**Bush:**

Well, nuts are a part of the Christmas tradition. They're a delicacy, and figural nutcrackers probably go back 250 years. The inspiration for these nutcrackers comes from a book from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century called "The Nutcracker King and Poor Reinhold."

**Stewart:**

These are the earliest ones that you have here on the table, right?

**Bush:**

These are the earliest ones and, in fact...

**Stewart:**

They're so beautiful. Look at that face. Isn't it expressive?

**Bush:**

And if you look in the mouth, you will see...

**Stewart:**

Oh, wow.

**Bush:**

It was really used for cracking nuts.

**Stewart:**

Definitely.

**Bush:**

The family that made that nutcracker made these. It's the Fuechtner family. They are considered the original nutcracker workshop. And we even have a picture of the man who first crafted these.

**Stewart:**

Oh, look at him. In 1844.

**Bush:**

He was born in 1844. This picture is from 1920. And he's about 80 years old.

**Stewart:**

And this one. Now, who is he?

**Bush:**

He is a policeman.

**Stewart:**

Oh, the round, red nose.

**Bush:**

With the round, red nose. He was made by a craftsman named Rickard Longer who crafted this signature jointed knee style. They're shorter and stockier. This one is by Julius Glaser. This is a Santa character, very usual. All the German nutcrackers have real rabbit fur or some other...

**Stewart:**

Now, who are these guys?

**Bush:**

These are wonderful. These are by a craftsman named Otto Ulbricht who was active in the '30s.

**Stewart:**

Very cute.

**Bush:**

Isn't it wonderful?

**Stewart:**

They're gnome-like, huh?

**Bush:**

They're gnomes with the walking stick. This one still has his walking stick, so these are really unique. I'm really happy to still have them.

**Stewart:**

Now, how long have you been collecting nutcrackers?

**Bush:**

I've been collecting nutcrackers for about six years now. These are all made in a region of Germany called the Erzgebirge which was behind the iron curtain for so many years. It's along the border with the Czech Republic, where there's a very strong wood-crafting tradition.

**Stewart:**

The costuming also is beautiful.

**Bush:**

Yeah. You know, people ask me all the time, "Why are they all men?" And the reason is these were satires of authority figures, male authority figures – kings, princes.

**Stewart:**

Is that a king over there?

**Bush:**

This is a king right here. You can see the Prussian soldier with his hat. In the '60s, there was a renaissance in nutcracker making. You can see they started using natural wood instead of paint.

**Stewart:**

They're nice, but I don't think they're as fun.

**Bush:**

Yeah, well, it was a way to do something different. You can see the craftsmanship in the inlaid wood there showing the pleats.

**Stewart:**

Beautiful. Beautifully done.

**Bush:**

This is an interesting one.

**Stewart:**

There's real fabric, real braid on him.

**Bush:**

Real braid, felt for mustaches and eyebrows. And also, you can see how the arms have been stylized.

**Stewart:**

Can you tell us how they're made?

**Bush:**

Oh, sure. Everything in the Erzgebirge generally is made on a lathe. So you'd have the piece of wood inserted in the lathe this way and it spins. And then the carver carves the various details into the body.

**Stewart:**

Then it's fitted with the cracker itself.

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**Bush:**

And then it's fitted with the cracker.

**Stewart:**

You have giant ones back there, too.

**Bush:**

Yes.

**Stewart:**

Those are beautiful.

**Bush:**

Yes. Now, what's interesting about these is they're not made of wood. They're made of a composite material. They're enormously heavy. They're about eight pounds apiece.

**Stewart:**

Look at that. And he does...oh, he can do a big nut. Can he do a brazil nut?

**Bush:**

Probably.

**Stewart:**

Looks like he can. So when you look for these and you're lucky enough to find...is this very rare to find?

**Bush:**

Yes.

**Stewart:**

Very rare.

**Bush:**

The pre-World War II nutcrackers you'll only find in Germany.

**Stewart:**

Oh, I see.

**Bush:**

What's interesting is the nutcracker as a collecting phenomenon only came about after World War Two because the ballet wasn't performed in the U.S. until 1944.

**Stewart:**

Oh, I didn't realize that.

**Bush:**

Yeah.

**Stewart:**

So late.

**Bush:**

So our idea of the nutcracker as a holiday item is a postwar phenomenon.

**Stewart:**

What are these valued at?

**Bush:**

Several hundred dollars apiece, and there are some rare models that go into the thousands.

**Stewart:**

And do you deal in these also?

**Bush:**

I sell new ones.

**Stewart:**

Oh, you do?



**Bush:**

On my website.

**Stewart:**

How do you get there?

**Bush:**

It's Germannutcrackers.com.

**Stewart:**

Oh, okay. Well, thanks very much, Betsy. And it is really easy to see why these fascinating nutcrackers are so loved. When you get up close, they make you smile, and they do crack nuts, best of all. Thank you.

**Bush:**

Thank you.

*[Commercial break]*

**Stewart:**

Now, based in New York, Jeremiah Tower has been busy working on his long-awaited new cookbook. Here it is. "Jeremiah Tower Cooks." And hosting the PBS series, "America's Best Chefs." They have finally convinced him to share a recipe that's in the book.

**Tower:**

Right.

**Stewart:**

The wonderful peppered filet of beef served with Montpelier butter.

**Tower:**

And with the oven roasted vegetables. The wonderful thing about this is it's all prepared in advance except for just roasting the filet. And that has to rest for 15 or 20 minutes anyway, so it gives you a lot of lead time. I'm going to make a little noise here because I'm just going to grind up the pepper.



**Stewart:**

Okay. White pepper?

**Tower:**

White and black together. And the thing that we have to do is sieve it out because we want the coarse pieces.

**Stewart:**

Yes, you don't want the dust.

**Tower:**

You don't want the dust.

**Stewart:**

A-ha. So here's tip number one. Okay, so that looks good.

**Tower:**

So into the pepper, we have the two tablespoons of chopped fresh thyme. And a quarter of a cup of olive oil, salt and you can pour in a tablespoon of...we're going to salt the beef again later. Some cognac. I'm just going to stir this up a bit. Also, put a little bit down and marinate it for four hours.

**Stewart:**

Room temperature or in the fridge?

**Tower:**

Or in the fridge. I mean, in my book, I talk about room temperature because I'm never quite sure what it means.

**Stewart:**

Sometimes it could be too hot. It might be...in the summertime, it might be too hot and in my house in the wintertime it's like an icebox anyway.

**Tower:**

Of course, you have steam heat. I have steam heat in Manhattan. I never knew there were apartments where you couldn't turn the heat off.

**Stewart:**

Oh, are you in one of those apartments? Oh, terrible.

**Tower:**

Yeah, so just finish that off.

**Stewart**

So even on the ends, you like to get it?

**Tower:**

Yes, absolutely. And then well just roll it up.

**Stewart:**

So here's another. Tip number two. Just roll it up and that way all that flavors are going to go right into the meat. It has nowhere else to go.

**Tower:**

Right, exactly. And marinate it for four hours.

**Stewart:**

Let's show because this is really interesting. Look how well it has coated that meat. All the olive oil sort of soaks in. The cognac gets right into the meat. The oven is preheated, right?

**Tower:**

Preheated.

**Stewart:**

To?

**Tower:**

450 because we want to get it seared and started. I noticed that yours have thermometers.

**Stewart:**

Yes, we always have that.

**Tower:**

The only way to do it.

**Stewart:**

Tip number three, always have a checking thermometer. There it is there. For how long?

**Tower:**

30 minutes.

**Stewart:**

30 minutes. Oh, good. Okay.

**Tower:**

And it could be a little bit less, depending on the size of the cross-section of the filet. And here's one that is ready to go.

**Stewart:**

Instant.

**Tower:**

And we cook this filet until it reached 125 degrees for about 30 to 40 minutes. Okay, now we're going to make the butter. This is one of my favorite sauces, and it needs to be made in advance, so it's perfect for that to do at the last minute. If you could put...dump all of that in there. We have watercress, Italian parsley, Trevil, tarragon, shallots. Not an herb, but thyme, and a little bit of spinach.

**Stewart:**

And you're not going to just throw it in the water. You're just going to blanch it in the sieve.

**Tower:**

In the sieve because that saves you from tipping everything out.

**Stewart:**

I'm losing track, but I think that's tip number four.

**Tower:**

They go in here. Great. And we're just wilting these.

**Stewart:**

Why?

**Tower:**

To bring out the flavors. And also, we're going to cook it like this. And then chop so it will maintain the beautiful green color. And do this as briefly as possible because you don't want to leach out any more flavor than is necessary. As soon as it is cool enough to ring out dry, you put them in the food processor. Chop it up a little bit. And then...

**Stewart:**

So tell us what those are.

**Tower:**

Those are little French pickles, large caper berries and a cream of garlic and the filleted anchovies. Next tip. If you hate anchovies, you buy the salted ones and then rinse them out and then take them off the bone and put them in water for ten minutes. Drain them, put them in olive oil and they'll hold in the refrigerator for a week. They are fantastic.

**Stewart:**

And they don't taste like those salty ones.

**Tower:**

They don't taste like that.

**Stewart:**

Okay, good.

**Tower:**

And in the beauty of a food processor, all these simple and compound butters. Just throw everything, instantaneous. A little bit of salt, but it has to be... I'm going to adjust the seasoning later because we have anchovy in there. A little bit of cayenne. And of course, we'll taste it after we make it. Now, when that butter starts to come together, could you do just two egg yolks for me?

**Stewart:**

Okay. Now, we're sure these are hardboiled?

**Tower:**

I've got the hardboiled ones here.

**Stewart:**

Oh, just egg yolks. Oh, excuse me. Oh, okay. So raw eggs and hardboiled eggs?

**Tower:**

And hardboiled eggs.

**Stewart:**

Oh, okay.

**Tower:**

Just put it right in there. Good.

**Stewart:**

Oh, you have one that's already...

**Tower:**

Here's the one. Let it sit for a few hours. You're just going to beat the half a cup of olive oil. If you just hold that for a second so you can see the texture of it. At the last minute, you do this part to just give it the most fluffed up texture so that it will melt.



**Stewart:**

A little bit of white wine vinegar?

**Tower:**

Just a drop of the white wine vinegar.

**Stewart:**

Okay. So tell me how big a drop.

**Tower:**

That's it. If you could put it in that little white bowl over there. And we'll get the vegetables out.

**Stewart:**

So beautiful. Now, you have to see this. We have quinces. What are these?

**Tower:**

Those are the quince, celery root, the carrots and the red onions. And this is a wonderful way to oven fry. You cut them in half, put them on a very thin layer of salt, cover them, put them in the oven, 350 for an hour. Take them out and I'd peel the quinces at that point. So I'll get the beef.

**Stewart:**

Yes, let's slice that up.

**Tower:**

And slice it. Slice it right here. Cutting towards you, be careful. If you pull that string. All right. The end bits are the cover, of course.

**Stewart:**

I'll take a little taste. Mm, wonderful.

**Tower:**

Sprinkle a little sea salt or something on the vegetables.



**Stewart:**

Okay.

**Tower:**

And then you serve it. Look at this. This is the texture of the butter, so it will melt very easily. I think on the vegetables, don't you? Yeah.

**Stewart:**

Make them glisten.

**Tower:**

Absolutely.

**Stewart:**

Well, that is a filet of beef, a new and different recipe that I think everybody is going to enjoy for their dinner. Well, thank you, Jeremiah. And this recipe and the vegetables right out of "Jeremiah Tower Cooks." It's a great book and it's wonderful for the holidays. And I can't think of a nicer holiday meal.

**Tower:**

Thank you.

**Stewart:**

Thanks for coming.

**Tower:**

My pleasure.

*[Commercial break]*

**Stewart:**

Have you been too busy to think about an arrangement for your holiday table? Well, we've got a really simple solution. With some evergreen clippings from your backyard like this beautiful pine or cedar or fir, you can actually grab it. Not like spruce. And a wonderful juniper, you can make just some very nice arrangements. And if you don't have a backyard with evergreens in it, you can also go down to the

corner florist and get some evergreen branches around holiday time. You can also embellish all your evergreens with just a little bit of glittery paint. So the easiest way to do that is find a big box like this. I'm sure you've gotten some stuff in the mail this Christmas and you've saved some of those boxes. And just take your pine. This is a long needled pine. It's long lasting in the house and choose a fast drying lacquer. "Instant Gold," this is called. And it's best to do this in the garage, in the basement, open windows, lots of ventilation and just spray right into the box. You can also wear a little paper mask if you're going to do a lot of branches, but doesn't that look glittery and beautiful? I think it looks great. And if you do this to the cedar, it's already yellowy. Look how pretty those berries just pick up the glitter. And then choose a container that's going to go with the rest of the table setting. We have a really pretty country theme in the kitchen on the old slate table. And we're going to use a lot of copper this year. Now, this is filled with room temperature water. And always, just to prolong the life of your evergreens, make a fresh cut before you use your branch in an arrangement. And if you want it to really slurp up the water, just bang the end, spinning it a little bit so that it can have more surface to draw the water up into the needles. And so just start arranging. Nothing complicated about this arrangement. And mix your fir with your pine, with your cedar, with your juniper. If you want to add some color, add some pepper berries. And if it's too big for the container, just take off some of those bottom branches. Very easy to do. And that bit of glitter, wow, does that help a lot. Oh, I love this. This is so beautiful, this cedar. It is extremely fragrant. And I have two of these containers. I'm going to fill two of them and use them because I think that it will just reiterate the whole country theme and make my table spectacular. Juniper has berries on it. Can you see those blue berries? Again, a fragrant evergreen. And a different texture from the fir and the pine. So this one's ready. See how easy? Takes about three minutes once you cut the greens or find them. I can't wait to see it on our buffet table.

*[Commercial break]*

**Stewart:**

We have Bill Yosses back again today. His Meyer Lemon Pound Cake was such a success that we've asked him to come back and do his wonderful Bittersweet Chocolate Dacquoise. Welcome back.

**Bill Yosses, Chef:**

Thank you. Nice to meet you again.

**Stewart:**

And I know this cake is very beautiful. My daughter made this, too. She keeps making all your cakes.



**Yosses:**

Terrific. I'm flattered.

**Stewart:**

But what was peculiar was the halvah.

**Yosses:**

That's right.

**Stewart:**

And it's a halvah cream.

**Yosses:**

Right, and dacquoise is typically, or classically, I should say, layers of meringue and either mocha butter cream or praline butter cream.

**Stewart:**

So what made you think of halvah?

**Yosses:**

Well, I love halvah, and I love even the chocolate halvah, so I thought it would make a great combination. A little twist on a classic.

**Stewart:**

Great. Well, let's go because this is a little bit complicated because it's done at least three parts.

**Yosses:**

Yes. There's three layers, but if you would sift that.

**Stewart:**

We're starting with the...?

**Yosses:**

We're going to start with the meringue, which is...here we have a cup-and-a-half of confectioner's sugar and one-third of a cup of cocoa powder.

**Stewart:**

Good cocoa powder. What kind do you like?

**Yosses:**

Valrhona is what I use. This is six egg whites and we're going to start out the meringue with just about one tablespoon of sugar.

**Stewart:**

Six egg whites.

**Yosses:**

Six egg whites. We're going to put in a tablespoon of sugar in the beginning. Not too much sugar. We want it to come up on its own. The secret to a good meringue is just to put a little bit of sugar in, to have a very clean bowl. If the bowl has any kind of grease on it at all...

**Stewart:**

No butter on it.

**Yosses:**

You won't have any volume, and a little bit of cream of tartar. Cream of tartar is an acid which breaks down the albumin of the whites. So I'll start with that. About an eighth of a teaspoon. You could put a little bit of sugar in. We like to put it in slowly as it builds up.

**Stewart:**

I think I neglected to say that Bill is the pastry chef at Citarella's. Great reviews?

**Yosses:**

Yes.



**Stewart:**

Oh, good.

**Yosses:**

We're doing just fine, thank you.

**Stewart:**

There, that looks good.

**Yosses:**

Yep. We're just giving a little boost here at the end to get the maximum volume. The cream of tartar really gives it that strength and body.

**Stewart:**

Right. Very beautiful.

**Yosses:**

So it holds together. Okay. How about if I put it in there and you go ahead and start to fold? We put in about a third to begin with because that first third tends to break down.

**Stewart:**

So is that okay?

**Yosses:**

That's just right. Start to fill this up.

**Stewart:**

Mm, gorgeous.

**Yosses:**

Okay.

**Stewart:**

Start in the center or start on the outside?

**Yosses:**

It's really up to the piper. I like to start in the center, but many people start on the outside. The important thing is, keep the tip a little bit above the paper so that the meringue actually falls. That way you have a much more rounded meringue disk rather than squishing it down. Now, only one of these disks is going to be elected to be the one on the top.

**Stewart:**

I hope it's mine.

**Yosses:**

Oh, I don't know.

**Stewart:**

Should I make a couple of little ones?

**Yosses:**

You can make some little ones that we'll use as a decoration on the side. This gets baked, then, at 250 degrees.

**Stewart:**

For how long?

**Yosses:**

For two hours. We can move onto the ganache. We chop up four ounces of bittersweet chocolate and we have one cup of heavy cream to a boil. And then we're going to pour it over the bittersweet chocolate. Just let it sit for approximately 30 seconds to a minute until the chocolate melts.

**Stewart:**

Now, the ganache is for the topping?

**Yosses:**

It's for...no, it's for a middle layer in this dacquoise.

**Stewart:**

Okay, so here we have it.

**Yosses:**

Okay. There we go. Go right ahead. Pour it right in.

**Stewart:**

So right in the middle?

**Yosses:**

Mm-hmm. Let that just sit. The secret to a good ganache is to be sure to start whisking in the center until you start to see the emulsion form. And what's happening is the chocolate and the cream are combining in a way where you have this very viscous but well-distributed chocolate versus cream. You see in the beginning, it just looks kind of like chocolate milk. But soon enough, we have that viscosity that we're looking for. Then I'm just going to cover it with plastic and refrigerate it for about two hours in the fridge. What we want to happen is for it to thicken up enough that we can spread it onto a layer of meringue.

**Stewart:**

I'll put it away for you.

**Yosses:**

Thank you.

**Stewart:**

So this stays in until it's really chilled. When we come back, we're going to assemble the dacquoise, but not until we make the halvah cream.

*[Commercial break]*

**Stewart:**

Well, now we're going to make the halvah cream that's going to be one layer of filling in the beautiful dacquoise.

**Yosses:**

That's right.

**Stewart:**

And it's so good. Now, I don't know if everybody knows what halvah is, so why don't you tell everybody?

**Yosses:**

Well, it's a Middle Eastern confection which is made of ground sesame seeds, honey and sugar.

**Stewart:**

And this one particularly has pistachios. Sometimes it's swirled with chocolate.

**Yosses:**

That's right.

**Stewart:**

Sometimes it's swirled with almonds. And this particular beautiful wedge came from Sahadi on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. Okay, so now the cream.

**Yosses:**

This is the halvah cream, which is really a pastry cream that we're going to lighten with a little whipped cream afterwards. But to start out with the pastry cream, we start out with two cups of whole milk, a half a cup of tahini, seven tablespoons of honey, a third of a cup of corn starch and two egg yolks.

**Stewart:**

And how much halvah?

**Yosses:**

And this is a cup-and-a-half of halvah.

**Stewart:**

I've eaten about a quarter of a cup.

**Yosses:**

Okay, a cup-and-a-quarter. So, Martha, can I ask you to mix all of these ingredients in here, except for the halvah? All right, there you go. And after you get that mixed, then I'm going to temper it with the milk, which means pour the milk in slowly so that the egg doesn't curdle. Okay. Just a little bit to start.

**Stewart:**

Looks like peanut butter.

**Yosses:**

That's right. Doesn't smell like it, though.

**Stewart:**

So here.

**Yosses:**

It will go back on the fire. We want to bring it fully back to the boil. Since we have the corn starch in here, it's not going to break.

**Stewart:**

Okay, right, and it will get thick very quickly, won't it?

**Yosses:**

Yes.

**Stewart:**

You don't want to burn it.

**Yosses:**

That's correct, so it has to be stirred constantly.

**Stewart:**

So look how quickly that is thickening. It's getting lumpy.



**Yosses:**

It will smooth out after we cook it for awhile.

**Stewart:**

So I'll get you a bowl.

**Yosses:**

Thank you. Okay, we've got the boil going here, so we know we've completed it. Thank you. It will go right in here. Nice, creamy look.

**Stewart:**

Oh, it's lovely.

**Yosses:**

Thank you.

**Stewart:**

And now it could be used just like that.

**Yosses:**

Oh, sure. Sure.

**Stewart:**

So half of this?

**Yosses:**

Half of that, and we'll mix it in. We'll save the other half until we have a nice, crunchy texture. And I'll cover it with that plastic wrap.

**Stewart:**

Do you put it down on the surface?



**Yosses:**

Yes, exactly. I'm glad you mentioned that. If we don't, it's still going to form a skin. Thank you. There we go. Here, I'll get that. If you leave it on the top, you're still going to have a skin on the pastry cream. Okay. Right down directly on the cream so no air gets to it. And I'll set it over here.

**Stewart:**

So you have other things in there already chilled.

**Yosses:**

Alrighty. So here's the next step. We're going to take the remaining halvah. We had a cup-and-a-half, and we used half of it, so now we have three-quarters of a cup. And we'll put it into the cold whipped cream. We'll loosen it up.

**Stewart:**

So we want this...

**Yosses:**

We want this very tight because we're adding all this whipped cream to it so in order for it to still have a smooth consistency and some body to it.

**Stewart:**

Okay. How's this?

**Yosses:**

There you go.

**Stewart:**

Yummy.

**Yosses:**

This will help when I put the cream in.

**Stewart:**

I'm very happy you're doing this one because I've never had halvah in anything. I only had it by itself.

**Yosses:**

Okay.

**Stewart:**

So does it get smoother?

**Yosses:**

It gets smooth, but it's always going to have a texture that has the pieces of halvah in it.

**Stewart:**

And I love how the layers turned out.

**Yosses:**

Aren't they nice?

**Stewart:**

Oh, they're beautiful.

**Yosses:**

All puffy.

**Stewart:**

Can I peel them off?

**Yosses:**

Yeah. Just set it on the cake rack over there.

**Stewart:**

That seems to be...is that our hero?

**Yosses:**

You win. That was yours.

**Stewart:**

That's our hero.

**Yosses:**

All right.

**Stewart:**

You should use a base, right?

**Yosses:**

Yeah, a base, or you can do it directly on a plate if you have the serving plate that you want.

**Stewart:**

We have this beauty. That's not exactly flat enough, right?

**Yosses:**

Yeah. I think maybe we're better off starting like this.

**Stewart:**

Like this?

**Yosses:**

Like that, that's great.

**Stewart:**

I'm just going to make little protecting things here.

**Yosses:**

So let me start out with a layer of the halvah cream. It still is very soft and moldable, and it will keep its shape. Okay. Number two goes here. Press it down so that it comes right out to the edge. We're going to even it off when we're finished. And next comes the layer of ganache. Then we're going to leave just a little bit in the bowl so that we can cover the edge fully. Okay.



**Stewart:**

And the top looks so pretty.

**Yosses:**

The hat, and we'll give it a little bit of pressure. Not too much.

**Stewart:**

Don't break it.

**Yosses:**

Okay. Now, the advantage of having the cake circle...although if you have it on a plate, you can do it as well...is that we can pick it up and do the edges. Don't worry if the meringue shows through. And then the pastry chef's best friend is powdered sugar.

**Stewart:**

That is so beautiful. So here you have your lovely dacquoise that's been in the freezer for a couple hours.

**Yosses:**

It's set up nice and firm, and now we're able to cut it. I like to use very hot water. Thank you. And a serrated knife. And we clean the knife each time so you have a nice, clean cut. And I'm just going to saw.

**Stewart:**

Look at that perfect slice. It looks so pretty.

**Yosses:**

This is as much about crunch as it is about smooth.

**Stewart:**

So I guess I have to get a little of that ganache too, right?

**Yosses:**

Mm-hmm.

**Stewart:**

Mm, really good. And I can taste the halvah.

**Yosses:**

Oh, yeah.

**Stewart:**

Thank you very much, Bill, and thanks very much for your lovely recipe.

**Yosses:**

Very nice to be here.

*[Commercial break]*

**Stewart:**

It's that very special time of year in New England. While families gather to share the joy of the season, the children can't stop thinking about that special citizen of the North Pole. And while many animals have retreated for the long winter's night, there's one kind of four legged creature that can't rest just yet. We decided this would be the perfect time to visit Polly Wilson and her son Benjamin at Wilson's Tree Farm in Putney, Vermont, because there's more that grows here than just the trees. Five years ago, Polly's late husband, Steven, thought it would be a fun idea if children could visit with some real life reindeer while picking out a Christmas tree.

**Polly Wilson, Wilson's Tree Farm:**

We started with two about five years ago. We have 19 reindeer on the farm right now and in the spring, we probably will have between five and six more calves. They all have names. They all have different personalities. Totally different from each other.

**Stewart:**

Reindeer have been used for many purposes for thousands of years. Domesticated reindeer were first introduced into Alaska from Siberia in the 1890s. In the wild, reindeer will eat an array of plant life, from lichen in the winter to willow trees in spring and summer. The reindeer at Wilson's Tree Farm are fed a very different diet.

**Wilson:**

We have a diet that's made up by the University of Alaska that we have specially milled for them.

**Stewart:**

The feed mixture is a nutritious blend of crushed corn, barley, oats, wheat, soybeans and molasses, topped off with a host of vitamins and minerals. Reindeer also require a great deal of fiber in their diet, so alfalfa is fed to the herd along with beet pulp that Polly has soaked in water overnight.

**Wilson:**

Good girl.

**Stewart:**

And, of course, apples are always a reindeer treat.

**Wilson:**

Come on, Felicia.

**Stewart:**

The oldest known species of reindeer is thought to be about 750,000 years old. Today's version has adapted from head to hoof for the rugged arctic life. The broad, flexible hooves can spread apart for extra support on winter snow or when they walk through swamps and over mosses in the summer. And, believe it or not, their feet aren't noise makers.

**Wilson:**

The clicking sound is made by a tendon that rolls over a little bone in their foot and it is used for warning that there's danger around or to help keeping the herd together in case there's a severe whiteout where they cannot see each other. When they're just babies, they don't have that clicking sound. Like, say a bear is hiding behind a bush, and the little reindeer comes up and tries to get some leaves because it's hungry, they can just sneak up there really quiet and eat all the leaves and go back to the herd.

**Stewart:**

Critical to their survival, reindeer have a multilayered coat, including down and fur that traps air, giving much needed buoyancy when they have to swim.

**Wilson:**

There's not a spot on a reindeer that is not covered with hair. The nose, unlike a cow, which has the leathery type, this has fur.

**Stewart:**

In addition to their furry noses, reindeer are the only deer in which both sexes grow antlers.

**Wilson:**

They're born with little nubs. You can feel them about a week after and then they just start growing. And they do shed them every single year. And sometimes they'll shed them within a few minutes of each other. Or other times, like I have one here that she lost hers about a week ago and she might hold onto hers for a month or two. But it falls off just like a tooth. That's it. That's the root.

**Stewart:**

These antlers are extremely heavy here. They seem a lot lighter than you think, but they weigh very heavy.

**Wilson:**

It's about 40 pounds for the male.

**Stewart:**

They have their antlers for protection. While the antlers are in their growing stage, they take on a much different look. It's late spring at the farm, and this is Fred, the bull reindeer. As they grow, Fred's antlers stay covered by a furry, protective hide called velvet. This fuzzy cover will remain until July. Helping him to shed his heavy winter coat, Polly and Benjamin pay their last visit before the mating season begins. As Fred's nature will change dramatically, no one would dare get this close as he might charge using his great antlers as a weapon. Due to the severe strain their bodies will encounter during mating season, males will live but 10 to 12 years, while females can live into their 20s. Spring is also a time to welcome the new arrivals. Born just a few days before this home video was taken, this baby reindeer was named Holstein because of her cow-like coloring. Holstein could already walk within one hour of her birth and even outran Benjamin when only three days old. So tonight, when you hear the sound of those eight tiny reindeer upon your rooftops, you'll know everything there is to know about these beloved Christmas creatures.

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[Commercial break]

**Stewart:**

Well, what do you think? A pretty nice buffet table. And this, the night before, pretty organized. That's what we really want. It's something simple, something organized, something that will allow us to enjoy our party. And being organized means getting the table arranged so that you know where the food's going to be, you know where your guests can serve themselves from. We're going to have a peppered filet of beef tonight, so this platter will hold that right here. I like to put the main course right near the stack of plates because I want them to make sure they don't miss the main course. And roasted vegetables. Jeremiah Tower's wonderful recipe. That can go over there. And this for one of the breads. And here we have just a stack of plates, napkins. And I might wrap the forks and knives and spoons in the napkins, but I haven't decided about that yet. The copper bucket will hold the wines and because it's a buffet, I like to serve festive wines. Champagnes, very nice white wine. And the ice can just be put in here at the last second, maybe an hour before the guests come so that everything is nicely chilled. Glasses for the wine, serve yourself. Lots of beautiful nuts and an old nutcracker. And, of course, cookies and there are other delightful surprises for dessert coming out later. But now everything has its place on the buffet table. Oh, the runner is made out of vintage fabric. It's almost like Thai fabric and it is beautiful. This wonderful ripped stripe. And a simple wreath on the mantle piece, lemons and limes that I can use tomorrow. And these...oh, the nicest thing of all. At the supermarket, we found these. I think they were 7.99 for these beautiful rosemary topiaries. And these will look absolutely great next spring on the terrace. Rosemary, don't over-water and keep in the bright sunlight. So here we are. I'm ready to have my party. I'm ready to enjoy myself and I think the guests will, too. That's what it's all about. Happy Holidays.

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