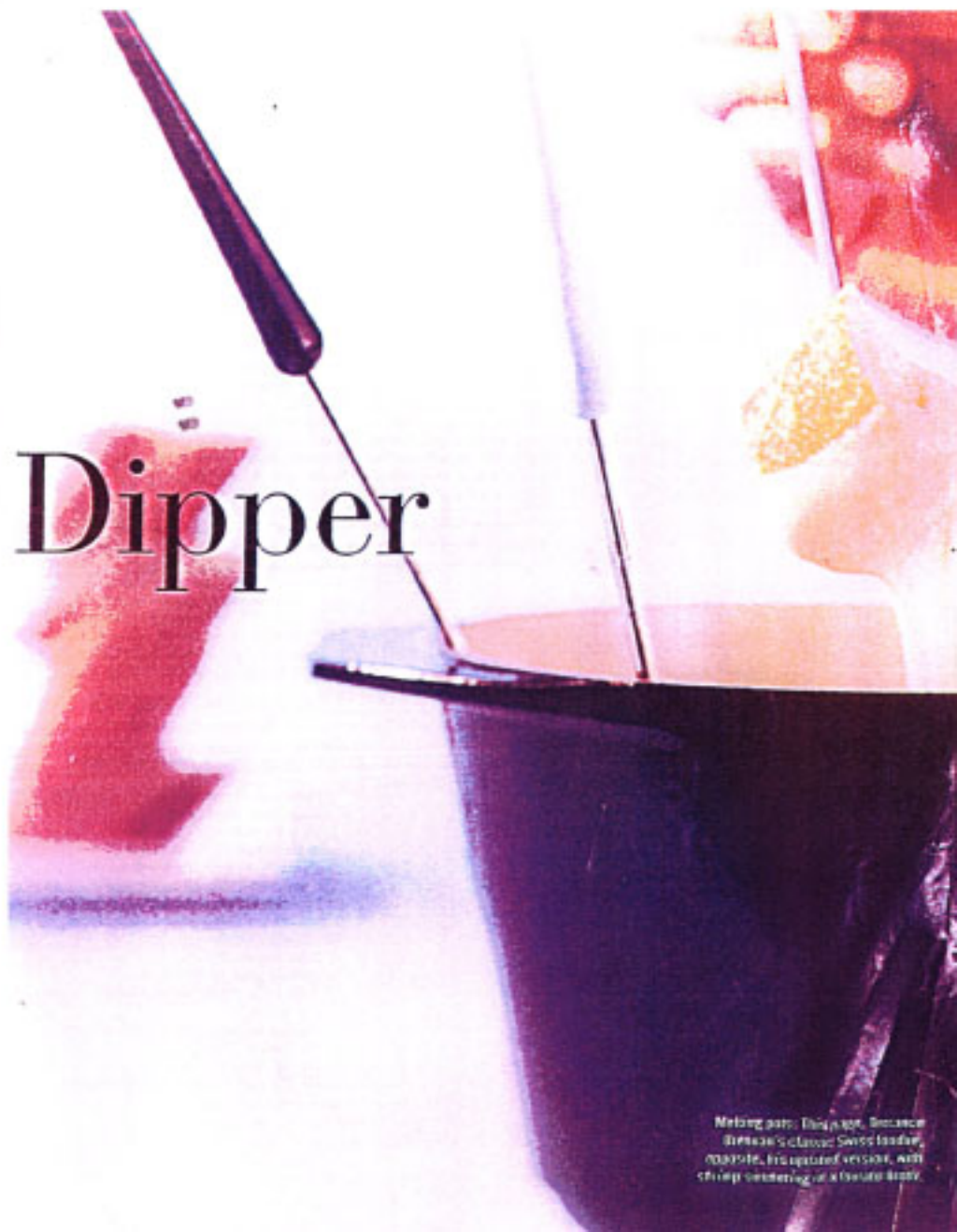


# NEW YORK



Fondue comes in from the cold, making the leap from Nixon-era kitsch to rehabilitated classic. Sometimes cheesy is a good thing. *By Gillian Duffy*

## The Big Dipper



WE'RE GOING TO ASSUME THAT YOU ALREADY HAVE A fondue pot. Everyone who got married in the Cheese Decade, 1967 to '77—or whose parents did—owns one. (Possibly three or four at least one of them in that ubiquitous burnt orange.) Fondue was the redoubtable suburban party fare of those looser times: *Everyone cooks his own! Eat as much as you want!* A can of Sierra, a pot of Wisconsin or Velveeta, some cut-up flank steak or bread, and you had a happening worthy of *Rabbit Redux*. Toni Tennille would've fit right in. • And so a meal became a punch line that belied its Alpine history. (Swiss shepherds apparently got in the habit of dunking their bread in melted cheese spiked with wine.) Emer Terrence Brennan, chef-owner of Picholine, known for the quality and breadth of its cheese selection, a man who knows a thing or two about the world of card. (His new restaurant, Artisanal Fromagerie & Bisero, will open in the spring, with a dozen fondues on the menu.) "Fondue is certainly retro, and it goes along with this whole cheese thing growing in popularity," Brennan says. "The fondue is part of the *hors d'oeuvre*, with more substantial food to follow, so it turns into a dinner. I did a fondue last night at the restaurant with white truffles," he

adds, "and the guests loved it." • *White stuffles!* Indeed, what might be called *rousselle fondue* owes little to its very Brady cousin. That deadly cauldron of oil has been replaced by healthier, tastier broths. Shrimp go into a fresh-serrano-and-white-wine *sitz bath*; strips of lamb, skewered like Thai satays, go into hot chicken stock. (Brennan serves a complementary dip alongside each.) The result, the chef notes, is a little like the Korean hot-pot dinner—and since the broth keeps getting richer as the meal goes on, the flavors keep improving. For the fat-fearless, the classic Swiss cheese fondue (Emmental, Gruyère, white wine) is along for the trip, joined by a new adaptation in which cheeses commingle with dark beer and apple butter for a smokier rendition. • And—because, let's face it, any meal involving color-coded cutlery is still a little goofy no matter how much you dress it up—dessert has a definite kids'-party quality. ("People have to go fishing," notes Brennan.) You get to dunk your fruit or pound cake or marshmallows in molten chocolate (admittedly tweaked with Grand Marnier) or butter-scotch. If your brother is poking you with his fork, that's your problem. Or you can call Mom—unless you're afraid she'll want her fondue pot back.

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FOOD STYLING BY WILLIAM L. SMITH • PROP STYLING BY ROBYN GLASS

Melting pots: This page, because Brennan's classic Swiss fondue, 100% milk, its updated version, with shrimp, centering of a fondue pot.



Great plenty Brennan's smoky cheese fondue.

the garlic and celery, and purée for 1 minute. Line a fine mesh sieve with cheesecloth, and place over a large bowl to catch the juices. Allow to drain overnight in the refrigerator.

The next day, gently press the pulp to extract any remaining juices, and put the juice in a medium-size stock pot with the white wine. Add the shrimp shells and the saffron, and allow to simmer over medium-low heat for 20 minutes. Strain the tomato broth into a fondue pot, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Set over fondue burners, and adjust heat to keep the broth at a simmer. Place each shrimp on a skewer, and poach for about 1 minute, or to desired doneness.

**Dip:** Place mayonnaise in a small bowl. Add the garlic, olives, anchovies, lemon juice, tomatoes, and saffron (if desired). Mix together well, and transfer to a serving bowl.

#### Chocolate, Hazelnut, and Grand Marnier Fondue

**1/2 cup heavy cream**  
**12 ounces semisweet Valrhona or other high-quality chocolate, finely chopped**  
**1/4 cup finely chopped toasted, skinned hazelnuts for almonds**

**1 tablespoon grated orange zest**  
**2 tablespoons Grand Marnier**

Heat the heavy cream in a medium-size heavy-bottomed saucepan to a simmer. Add the chopped chocolate, and remove the pan from the heat. Stir until the chocolate has completely melted. Add the nuts, orange zest, and Grand Marnier, and whisk until incorporated. Transfer to a ceramic fondue pot, and serve immediately with strawberries, chestnuts, pound cake, meringues, oranges, blood oranges, clementines, coconut bars, or marshmallows.

#### Butterscotch Fondue

**1/2 cup unsalted butter**  
**1/2 cup dark brown sugar**  
**1/4 cup light corn syrup**  
**1 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch**  
**1 1/2-ounce can evaporated milk**  
**2 tablespoons brandy (optional)**  
**1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**

Heat the butter, the sugar, and the corn syrup in a medium-size heavy-bottomed saucepan until the mixture starts to bubble and caramelize. It should reach 121 to 125 degrees on a candy thermometer.

Mix in a bowl the cornstarch with 1/4 cup of the evaporated milk until mixture is smooth. Add the remaining evaporated milk to the saucepan and bring to a simmer. Whisk in the cornstarch mixture and simmer for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat, and add the brandy and vanilla. Transfer to a ceramic fondue pot.

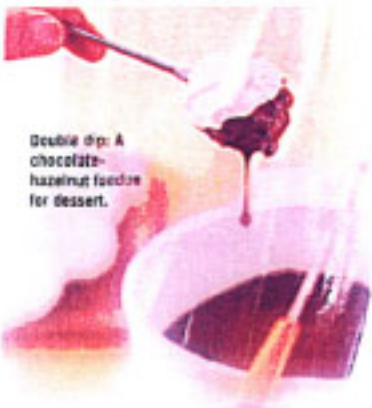
Serve with small chunks of angel-food cake, apple, banana, and pear.

## Swiss Accuracy

Tips to make your fondue party a slam dunk.

- For cheese and delicate fondues (such as chocolate), use a heavy ceramic fondue pot to prevent scorching. For a broth fondue, use a metal pot, so the stock will reheat quickly after each round of dipping.
- Don't omit the lemon juice or other acid from a cheese fondue—it's required to keep the melted cheese smooth.
- For accompaniments, let your imagination roam past bread cubes. Blanch your favorite vegetables, cut them into bite-size pieces, and arrange attractively on platters. Consider serving chunks of meat, fish, or shellfish.
- Figure on six to eight diners at most for each fondue pot.

- When serving a broth fondue, warn your guests that the forks get hot.
- Encourage diners to stir the fondue as they dip their forks and to scrape the bottom of the pot occasionally. The motion helps to keep the fondue from separating and burning.
- If a cheese fondue does separate, return the pot to the stove and whisk it hard over medium heat to bring mixture back together.
- At the end of a cheese fondue, leave a thin layer of the mixture in the pot over the flame and let it brown. Once it cools, peel it off and share with your guests.
- Make up your own penalty for anyone losing a piece of bread in the pot—perhaps kissing the cook. (In a Swiss restaurant, the offender would have to buy the next bottle of wine, usually Fendant.)



Double dip: A chocolate-hazelnut fondue for dessert.

## the recipes

PARTY FOR EIGHT TO TEN  
 Terence Brennan  
 PICHOLINE AND THE  
 ARTISANAL FROMAGERIE & BISTRO

#### Classic Swiss Fondue

**1 clove garlic**  
**1 cup dry white wine**  
**1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice**  
**2 tablespoons Kirschwasser**  
**1 tablespoon cornstarch**  
**2 cups shredded Emmentaler cheese**  
**2 cups shredded Gruyère cheese**  
**Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg**  
**Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Vigorously rub the garlic clove around the inside of a medium-size heavy-bottomed saucepan. Discard the garlic; add the wine and the lemon juice to the pan and bring to a simmer.

Mix in a small bowl the Kirschwasser and the cornstarch until smooth. Add to the saucepan, and simmer for 1 minute. Slowly stir in the cheeses until they have melted (the mixture can simmer but not boil). Remove from the heat, stir in the nutmeg, and season to taste with salt and

pepper. Transfer to a fondue pot.

Serve with assorted cubed breads and your choice of bite-size dippers.

#### Smoky Cheese Fondue

**1 1/2 cups (1 12-ounce bottle) dark beer** (such as Sierra Nevada; don't use stout)  
**1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice**  
**1 tablespoon cornstarch**  
**1 teaspoon dry English mustard**  
**3 cups shredded smoked Jarlsberg or smoked Gouda cheese, firm rinds removed**  
**1 1/4 cups shredded Emmentaler cheese**  
**1/2 cup apple butter**  
**1 teaspoon toasted caraway seeds**  
**Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper**

In a medium-size heavy-bottomed saucepan, bring 1 1/4 cups of the beer and the lemon juice to a simmer. Add the remaining beer to a mixing bowl with the cornstarch and dry mustard, stir until smooth, and add to the pan. Simmer the liquid for 1 minute before gradually whisking in the cheeses. Once the cheese has melted, remove from the heat (a few lumps of cheese will remain). Stir in the apple butter and caraway seeds, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to a fondue pot.



Stock option: Lamb satay, poached in broth, with yogurt sauce.

Serve with rye and pumpnickles, bread, sausages, cured meats, and cornichons.

#### Lamb Satay With Yogurt Sauce

**Satay:**  
**1 1/2 to 2 pounds boneless leg of lamb** (or chicken), sliced into thin strips  
**4 cups chicken broth**  
**Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**Yogurt sauce:**  
**1 medium English cucumber, peeled**  
**1 teaspoon salt**  
**1 1/2 cups plain yogurt, well drained through a cheesecloth**  
**1 clove garlic, finely chopped**  
**1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh dill**  
**1 tablespoon finely chopped dried oregano**  
**2 pinches cayenne pepper**  
**Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper**

**Satay:** Thread the strips of lamb onto skewers and arrange on a platter. Place the chicken broth in a fondue pot and season with salt and pepper. Set the pot over enough heat to keep the broth at a simmer. Poach the lamb in the broth to desired doneness, about 1 to 2 minutes.

**Sauce:** Split the cucumber in half lengthwise, and remove the seeds with a spoon. Place the cucumber in a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Pulse until finely chopped, about 6 to 8 times. Toss with 1 teaspoon salt and allow to drain at room temperature in a fine-mesh sieve for 1 hour. Press to remove excess liquid.

Place the chopped cucumber in a small bowl with the yogurt, garlic, dill, oregano, and cayenne, and mix well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Place in a serving bowl.

#### Shrimp in Tomato Broth With Mediterranean Dip

**Shrimp:**  
**4 1/2 pounds large red beefsteak tomatoes** (do not use canned)  
**1 teaspoon chopped garlic**  
**1/4 cup thinly sliced celery**  
**1 cup dry white wine**  
**36 fresh medium shrimp** (16 to 20 per pound), shells removed and reserved, deveined  
**2 pinches saffron (optional)**  
**Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**Mediterranean dip:**  
**1 cup mayonnaise**  
**2 cloves garlic, finely chopped**  
**1/4 cup pitted Niçoise olives, finely chopped**  
**3 salted anchovy fillets, rinsed and finely chopped**  
**2 heaped spoons freshly squeezed lemon juice**  
**1/2 cup peeled, seeded and finely chopped tomatoes**  
**1 pinch saffron (optional)**

**Shrimp:** Place the tomatoes in a food processor fitted with the metal blade. Add

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