ALBERTA DUNBAR, San Diego, California First Place, San Diego County Fair, Del Mar, California, 2004

WHIMER'S CHROLE TO Chocolate-dipped pecan halves are tasty on their own or as a decoration on a pie. Just dip each pecan into dipped chocolate that has been warmed in the microwave. Set pecans on waxed paper until the chocolate hardens. Chill until set.

Fresh Strawberry-Rhubarb Pie

CRUST

2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling out dough 1 teaspoon salt 3/3 cup shortening 5 to 7 tablespoons ice water

FILLING

2 cups hulled strawberries

1 cup sugar

3 cups chopped rhubarb, or 1 package (16 oz.) frozen sliced rhubarb, thawed and well drained ¹/₄ cup cornstarch

- 1. Preheat oven to at 400°F.
- 2. To make crust: Whisk together flour and salt. Cut in shortening with a pastry blender or fork until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle ice water, 1 tablespoon at a time, over flour while tossing and mixing lightly with fork. Continue adding water just until dough is moist enough to form a ball when lightly pressed together.
- 3. Divide dough in half and shape into two balls. Flatten one ball to a 1/2-inch thickness, rounding and smoothing the edges. Roll out on a lightly floured surface into an 11-inch circle. Gently fold pastry in half. Place pastry in a 9-inch pie plate. Unfold and gently ease pastry into bottom and sides of pan. Do not stretche Trim pastry even with pan edge. Roll out remaining pastry; chill pastry and pie shell while making filling.
- 4. To make filling: Combine strawberries, sugar, rhubarb, and cornstarch. Mix lightly.
- 5. Spoon filling into pie shell. Layer remaining pastry on top. Trim, seal, and flute the edges. Cut several slits in top pastry. Bake for 45 to 60 minutes, or until golden brown. During final 15 minutes of baking time, set a baking sheet under pie plate to catch any oozing filling. Cool. Serve with cream and whole strawberries, if desired. Makes 1 double-crust pie.

MARJORIE WIMSATT, Valrico, Florida First Place, Crisco Competition, Florida State Fair, Tampa, Florida, 2005

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3 cups chopped rhubarb, or 1 package (16 oz.) frozen sliced rhubarb, thawed and well drained 1/4 cup cornstarch

- 1. Preheat oven to at 400°F.
- **2.** To make crust: Whisk together flour and salt. Cut in shortening with a pastry blender or fork until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle ice water, 1 tablespoon at a time, over flour while tossing and mixing lightly with fork. Continue adding water just until dough is moist enough to form a ball when lightly pressed together.
- 3. Divide dough in half and shape into two balls. Flatten one ball to a ½-inch thickness, rounding and smoothing the edges. Roll out on a lightly floured surface into an 11-inch circle. Gently fold pastry in half. Place pastry in a 9-inch pie plate. Unfold and gently ease pastry into bottom and sides of pan. Do not stretch Trim pastry even with pan edge. Roll out remaining pastry; chill pastry and pie shell while making filling.
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4. To make topping: In a small mixing bowl, combine heavy cream, confectioners' sugar, and liqueur. Beat until stiff. Spoon one third of topping into a pastry bag fitted with a large star tip. Spread remaining topping over pie filling. Pipe large rosettes around the outer edges and sprinkle nuts and toffee baking bits on top. Chill until ready to serve. Makes 1 single-crust pie.

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