



# July 2009

## PERFECTLY PATRIOTIC

### RED, WHITE AND BLUE TRIFLE

#### Ingredients:

- 2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese
- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 8 ounces sour cream
- 1/4 teaspoon almond flavoring
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 pint whipping cream
- 1 angel food cake (store bought is fine)
- 1 quart strawberries
- 1 quart blueberries
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons almond flavoring



#### Directions:

Cream together cream cheese and confectioner's sugar. Add sour cream, vanilla and 1/4 tsp almond flavoring. Set this mixture aside. In separate bowl whip the whipping cream and add to cream cheese mixture. Tear prepared angel food cake into bite-sized pieces and add to mixture. In separate bowl (s) place strawberries and blueberries 3/4 cup sugar and 3 Tbsp almond flavoring. (You can mix the berries together or keep separate, for a pretty red, white and blue look, if separate divide sugar and almond flavoring between the two bowls).

In a clear glass bowl alternate layers of the cream cheese mixtures and the berries. Garnish the top with berries. Refrigerate for a couple of hours. This looks absolutely beautiful and tastes just as great! Peaches work really well with this as well.

-Recipe courtesy of Recipezaar.com

## Happy Fourth of July!

It was on this day in 1776 that America's founding fathers signed the Declaration of Independence marking the birth of the United States. Today, we celebrate Independence Day with picnics and potato salad, fireworks, flags, family and good ole' American fun. Here are a few great ideas on how to celebrate it!



Celebrate the nation's independence by hosting a festive Fourth of July bash right in your backyard. Here are some great ideas to create the perfect patriotic party for your friends and family!

- Invite friends, family and their kids – ask everyone to wear something red, white or blue. Throw a Fourth of July costume party and hold a contest for the person with the most patriotic flare.
- Decorate with a patriotic theme. Buy red, white and blue napkins, plates, balloons, cups and tablecloths – this is a really easy and inexpensive way to set the stage for a patriotic evening.
- Serve "All-American" food: Burgers, hotdogs, fried chicken, corn on the cob, watermelon, potato salad, bbq – the list of dishes goes on and on! Visit your favorite cooking website for free and easy recipes.
- Download patriotic music such as "Yankee Doodle Dandy," "America the Beautiful," "Our Country 'tis of thee," "The Stars and Stripes Forever," and "The National Anthem."
- Be ready to play a lot of American games: baseball, capture the flag, football and Frisbee are great for all party-goers.

## 5 Irrefutable Staging Strategies



Homes that are properly staged almost always sell faster regardless of market conditions. If your home is on the market, be sure you follow these guidelines to keep your humble abode looking showroom perfect. Remember, beauty is in the eye of the buyer!

1

**Cut the clutter.** This is one of the easiest ways to give your home a “ready to buy” feel. Start by removing anything that is wasting space: old magazines, random objects that don’t have a purpose, even your favorite family photographs should be kept to a minimum. Then, clean out closets, pick up anything on the floor, put away anything that isn’t immediately being used and if you have kids, organize their toys neatly in one spot; preferably in a closet. Your REALTOR® might even suggest removing bulky furniture to give rooms a larger appearance.

2

**Spic and span.** Now that you’ve removed any unnecessary objects, clean your home from top to bottom. Hire a maid if this task becomes too involved. Your home should sparkle like new after you’re done. By removing the clutter and cleaning your home, you show the buyer that you are a serious seller who is willing to put time and energy into a home they might buy.

3

**Curb appeal.** You know the drill; first impressions are the most important. So when buyers first pull up to your home with their REALTOR®, they should see an inviting home with a great looking yard. Remove any random objects from your yard, mow the lawn on a regular basis, plant colorful flowers, and paint your garage door if over the years it’s lost its luster. Be sure to keep the backyard looking nice as well. You want the potential buyer to picture themselves living in this house. They can’t do that if you’re stuff is lingering and looking cluttered.

4

**Touch-ups.** Over the years, your home may have received a little wear and tear. It’s the mark of a lived-in home. Touch up molding and seams around the house with a fresh coat of paint. Reapply wallpaper if it looks like its starting to peel away from the walls (this happens in bathrooms frequently from the steam of the shower). Your REALTOR® may suggest you repaint a room to give it a fresh feel or they might suggest a bigger project like replacing light fixtures throughout your home.

5

**Ready and waiting.** Often, buyers will show up with a REALTOR® at a moments notice. This means your home should appear showroom perfect as often as possible. Explain to your kids why they need to make an effort to keep the home as clean as possible. Avoid cooking harsh-smelling foods if you think buyers might take a tour. Also, keep animals at bay so they don’t annoy visitors to the home, put them in the garage or take them to a neighbor’s or family member’s home if necessary.



These five strategies are a great start to stellar staging. Always talk with your REALTOR® if you should have any questions or concerns when prepping your home for potential buyers. And keep in mind, any advice your REALTOR® gives you is helpful not hurtful. They know what buyers like to see, and are simply offering suggestions to improve the salability of your home.



If you are currently working with another Broker please do not consider this a solicitation.

