

FALLING FOR FLAVOR

A towering tiered confection tends to get top billing, but add an individual dessert to your menu and it may just, well, take the cake. Here we hit the season's best notes, from early autumn's berries to the spices that herald the coming holidays.

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THE BERRY BEST

The billowy meringue dessert known as pavlova is as airy and white as many a wedding dress—and these blackberries are the perfect accessory. They're used to make a tangy curd, which gets swirled into a whipped cream topping, and more plump berries are scattered onto every serving.





COLD FUSION

Ever-refreshing sorbet would like you to know it can be more than just a palate cleanser, thank you very much. Case in point: this trifecta of citrus, created by layering lemon, orange, and blood orange flavors, made from freshly squeezed juice, in a ring mold. Candied kumquats make for a tasty and vivid finishing touch.



TARTED UP

The cranberry brings cheer to many a Thanksgiving spread and Christmas garland—and it'll make your big day even brighter when served in a mini tart. Mixed with sugar, red-currant jelly, and cognac, the tangy berries are cooked until they're soft (but not bursting), then spooned into pastry shells, chilled, and topped with a sliver of candied orange peel.

HOT POCKETS

Some people always pick pie over cake—you know who you are, and this dessert is for you! Ripe, juicy plums are wrapped up in flaky pastry in these petite galettes, which are as scrumptious as their bigger cousins but less messy to serve and eat.

ROLL WITH IT

This pretty roulade has all the best flavors from a holiday dessert buffet rolled into one very special treat. A thin cake made with pumpkin, nutmeg, and cinnamon is filled with a mix of melted white chocolate and mascarpone and sprinkled with confectioners' sugar. Offer individual slices in bowls—set upright for the prettiest presentation—with dollops of whipped cream and candied pepitas.



WEDDING RINGS

These apple-cinnamon mini Bundts can be eaten as is, or—for extra buzz factor—soaked in bourbon (don't mind if we do). Finish with a confectioners' sugar glaze, then "plate" them on baked apple slices. Want to add something to sip? Hot toddies or mugs of warm cider will banish any chill.



SPICE IS RIGHT

This is one dessert for which double-dipping is encouraged: Guests can use the dunkable churros—crunchy deep-fried dough dusted with cinnamon and sugar—to soak up the rich Mexican hot chocolate flavored with cinnamon, almonds, and vanilla, plus just a pinch of cayenne for kick. A decorative red chile pepper adds some heat to the presentation.

See the recipes at marthastewartweddings.com/fall-desserts.

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