STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKES (for 6)

SOURCE: SAVEUR (*Sally Schmitt bases these sconelike biscuits on her grandmother's recipe. She prefers their rough, crusty texture to that of shortcake.*)

INGREDIENTS:

FOR THE STRAWBERRIES:

6 C strawberries, hulled/halved Sugar (optional)

FOR THE SHORTCAKES:

1 C flour 3 TBS sugar
1 1/2 tsp baking powder Pinch salt
1/4 tsp freshly grated nutmeg 4 TBS softened butter, cut into pieces
1 egg, lightly beaten 4-5 TBS. milk or heavy cream

FOR THE CARAMEL SAUCE:

2 TBS butter 6 TBS light brown sugar 3/4 C heavy cream

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Strawberries:** Put strawberries in medium bowl, toss with sugar to taste (if using) - set aside till sugar has dissolved (about 30 minutes).

2. **Shortcakes:** Preheat oven to 400° F. Sift flour, sugar, baking powder, salt & nutmeg together in medium mixing bowl. Work butter into flour with a pastry cutter or 2 knives till mixture resembles coarse meal. Mix together egg & milk with a fork in small bowl, then stir into flour mixture till dough just holds together – drop by the forkful onto lightly greased baking sheet & bake till just golden on top (about 10 minutes).

3. Cool biscuits slightly, then split in half horizontally. Place bottom halves on plates - spoon strawberries & juice on top. Cover with top halves of biscuits.

4. **Caramel sauce:** Stir butter, brown sugar & 1 TBS of the cream together in medium saucepan over medium-high heat till combined. Bring to boil & remove from heat - spoon immediately over biscuits. Spoon additional cream over caramel, if you like, and serve.

Rhubarb variation: Preheat oven to 350° F. Combine 4 C chopped peeled rhubarb, 1 C sugar + a splash of raspberry wine (optional) in roasting pan. Cover & bake till rhubarb is tender (about 20 minutes), then cool slightly. Proceed from step 2 above, substituting rhubarb for strawberries.