

Coming later in November is a newer event called the **Revel at the Cordial Stag Inn**, a celebration of music, dance, and libations. After seeing several of the awesome pieces of artwork being prepared for the event, I asked the main artisans to share their work to the Sylvan Signal.

Hunters Home Prepares for The Revel at the Cordial Stag Inn

The second annual Revel at the Cordial Stag Inn approaches and it is the time to shine for the Shire of Hunters Home's Arts and Sciences aficionados. Not only does the Cordial Stag celebrate various A&S avenues, from dancing to gaming, the locals' event prep also encompasses arts from ceramics to baking. The prize table is stocked by donations from our incredibly talented populace.



This year's event will feature tasting cups for the cordial competition that are handmade by members of the shire. We had two A&S get-togethers where Tara Bai led members of the populace in the construction of pinch pots and slab-built stoneware cups. Diana Chandler and Aniketos have also been working on wheel-thrown cups, so we will have a nice selection for revelers to choose from.



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We also wanted to improve the gaming tokens for this year, and Tara again took the reins for the project. Sir Tarl Shadowraven graciously 3D-printed stamps for the tokens (a very last-minute request) and Tara brought the rest of the materials that we needed to make clay tokens to hand out for the gaming activities at the revel. In one evening of A&S activity, Tara, Diana, Constance, and Tyra produced over 500 clay tokens!

Tara even made a wondrous clay Viking ship bowl to hold the tokens in the kiln. The ship will feature in the charcuterie display for the lunch sideboard.



Diana has also been working on crafting cordials for the Revel's tasting table and cordial contest. Her process mainly involves finding a recipe online as a starting point, tossing some stuff into a jar with clear brandy (super-hard to find), then shaking and sniffing it every day until it smells good. At that point, she adds simple syrup, tastes it, and adds/removes ingredients to try to get the flavor she wants.

A recipe for Spiced Apple Cordial, completely contrary to the process above:

4 small apples, sliced
4 ounces maple syrup
2 ounces water
4 cinnamon sticks (4 inch)
1 pinch grated nutmeg
6 whole cloves
½ of a vanilla bean, sliced lengthwise (or 2 tsp. Vanilla extract, added at the end)
8 ounces white brandy (or quality vodka)

Simmer apples, spices, maple syrup, and water for about an hour.

Pour cooled ingredients into a jar, then cover with alcohol of choice, cap the jar, and infuse for 1-4 weeks, shaking daily.

Taste daily and adjust to taste.

Strain into cordial bottles. I strain through fine mesh, then a coffee filter, because I need many lessons in patience.

NOTE: I added more cinnamon sticks, then it became too spicy and not appley enough, so I removed the cinnamon sticks and added more apple slices and a bit more brandy. Because I can't leave a good thing alone, I also added the juice of half a lemon and ¼ of a lemon's worth of zest, but now I think it's too lemony. Will probably strain and add more apples (tart this time) and a cinnamon stick. Come try it out at the revel!

The pottery bug has taken over Diana's waking thoughts, so she's also working on recreating a cheese mold for the revel's prize table. The design of this type of mold seems to stay pretty consistent from ancient Rome to the 15th century, so it would be a good fit for cheesemakers of virtually any period.

This year will once again feature a cookie table baking contest, participants are welcomed to bring their favorite sweets to share and be voted on. Last year's winner was Tara Bai with the following Linzer cookie recipe.

Linzer Cookies

2 1/4 cups All-purpose flour

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

1/2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp baking powder

3/4 cup almond meal

1/4 cup packed light-brown sugar

1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature

1/2 cup powdered sugar

1 large egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

1/4 tsp almond extract

Jam Ingredients: 1 cup frozen strawberries and raspberries, 1 cup white sugar, 1 tablespoon water

In a mixing bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, salt and baking powder, set aside. In another bowl, mix almond meal with brown sugar, set aside.

Using an electric mixer or stand mixer with whisk attachment, whip together butter and powdered sugar on low speed until combined, then increase to medium-high and whip until creamy, about 1 minute. Mix in egg, then blend in vanilla and almond extract.

Mix in almond mixture, then slowly add in flour mixture and mix until combined. Form mixture into a ball and drop onto a sheet of plastic wrap, then flatten into a 6-inch round disk, cover with plastic wrap and chill in refrigerator overnight.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and remove dough from refrigerator. Dust work surface with flour, cut disk in half and then evenly roll out each portion into 1/8 to 1/6-inch thickness.

Cut dough into heart shapes (or whatever your preferred cookie cutter shape is) using a cookie cutter, then using a smaller heart shape cookie cutter, cut smaller hearts into the centers of half of the hearts.

Carefully transfer to silicone baking mat or parchment paper lined baking sheets, spacing cookies 1-inch apart. Bake in preheated oven 10 - 12 minutes until edges are lightly golden. Cool on baking sheet several minutes then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

Fruit Jam: 1. Combine strawberries, raspberries, sugar, and water in a saucepan over medium heat; cook and stir until fruit breaks down, sugar dissolves, and sauce is heated through, 3 to 7 minutes. Remove from heat, let cool for a bit.

Assemble Linzer: 1. Assemble the Linzer cookie by spreading some of the cooled jam over the entire portion of the solid bottom cookie. Place the top portion on top of the spread jam, which will solidify and hold the two cookies together. Spread powdered sugar on a plate and dust the top of the cookie with the sugar. Yield 1-2 dozen.



Many thanks to all of the members of Hunters Home who were involved in these endeavors!