



Times-Mirror Staff Photo/Victoria Belorose

Violet LaBrecque cuts a Peanut Supreme pie.

Waterford's pie queen shares her secrets

By Michele Studebaker
Times-Mirror Lifestyles Editor

What does it take to be a prize-winning pie baker, two years in a row?

Well, lots of experimentation, for one thing, according to Waterford resident Violet LaBrecque.

And, she said, an encouraging, supportive husband who will sacrifice — time and again tasting and retasting pies until his wife gets it just right.

Violet's name may be on 70 ribbons for her pies and other baked goods, but she says the winning is really a team effort. If her husband, Bob, so much as raises an eyebrow over one of her creations, she'll bake it over until he gives the OK.

"He just has a way of knowing what's going to win," she said. "If it doesn't smell just right, or look just right, or taste just right, he says 'Do it over,' and I do."

The LaBrecques must be doing something right in their kitchen. Violet won the Crisco-sponsored Virginia State Fair pie competition two years running, and, in doing so, won two all-

expenses-paid trips to the Crisco Pie Celebration bakeoffs.

One was held in Atlanta, and last year, said Violet, the couple traveled all the way to New Orleans to bake.

"It was incredible," said Bob. "They really wined us and dined us. They really put us up in the best hotels and really showed us the town."

The LaBrecques also got to study under some world-famous chefs at cooking classes during the bakeoffs, and took a riverboat dinner cruise with Paul Prudhomme, the guru of Cajun cooking.

Violet's efforts also paid off in the kitchen-utensil department; pie bakers at both contests were greeted by a huge table of pots and pans and gadgets that were theirs to keep.

Although Violet's Crisco bakeoff pies — both variations of peanut pies — didn't win the national competition,

the recipes were included in the 1991 and 1992 issues of Crisco's "Pies for All Seasons" cookbook. Each book includes all the state-winning recipes.

The recipe for Violet's most recent winner, Peanut Supreme, follows. And, she said, don't expect her to try

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to convince you this pie's a low-cal dessert.

"I figure, if you're

going to make a dessert, make one," she said. "Go ahead and splurge."

Editor's note: In a fit of journalistic integrity, members of the Loudoun Times-Mirror editorial staff put aside their collective diet-consciousness and devoted an entire afternoon to pie-tasting research. A tough job, true, but real reporters know the value of sacrifice.

Reactions to the pie that Violet LaBrecque provided ranged from "omigoodness" to wordless groans of pleasure. But, judge for yourselves. The Loudoun Times-Mirror maintains high ethical standards and refrains from personal endorsements.

Pass me another slice, OK?