

## A scrumptiously simple concoction to top your favorite frozen dessert



Caramelized Pear Sundaes

Photo Susie Iventosch

### By Susie Iventosch

This recipe for caramelized pears is super simple, which is probably a good thing after the last two recipes we've featured. Serve it over your favorite vanilla frozen concoction, whether it's ice cream, frozen yogurt or some other variation, like coconut milk or soy "ice cream" and you have an easy, delicious dessert. You can make the caramelized pears ahead of

time and reheat them, or just start them as you serve dinner and they'll be ready to go by dessert time. Gather together a pear, butter, brown sugar, cinnamon, cardamom and pear or apple juice and you're ready to go. If you prefer apples, you can also make this very same dessert with apples, too. Honey Crisp is our apple choice for this recipe. Serve this over pancakes, too, for a fun breakfast treat.

### Caramelized Pear Sundaes

Serves 4 for dessert

#### INGREDIENTS

1 large red Anjou pear, (use a firm pear, not one that's too ripe)  
2 tablespoons butter  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon cardamom  
Dash of salt  
1 cup pear or apple juice  
\*Optional: 1 tablespoon brandy or calvados (add in with the last cup of juice)  
Garnish: 4 cinnamon sticks  
Vanilla Ice Cream

#### DIRECTIONS

Then slice each quarter into thin slices, approximately 5 slices per quarter, for a total of 20 slices. Heat butter in a skillet over medium-low heat. When melted stir in brown sugar, cinnamon, cardamom and a dash of salt.

Arrange pear slices on top of the butter brown sugar mixture, and cook over low heat for approximately 12-15 minutes per side, or until just beginning to turn golden-brown. Add 1 cup of juice and simmer over low heat for 30 minutes or so, until the pears begin to caramelize. The juice will reduce down and thicken to a syrup during this process.

Serve the warm pears over vanilla ice cream and spoon the syrup over all. Garnish with a cinnamon stick.

That's it! Enjoy!



Before caramelized



After caramelized

Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>



## 19 Lamorinda students named National Merit finalists

Officials from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) named finalists for the 66th Annual Scholarship Program. Nineteen of the nation's brightest students are right here in Lamorinda, all seniors at Acalanes, Bentley, Campolindo, Miramonte and in home school.

More than 1.5 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test which served as an initial screen of program entrants. Less than 1% of the students performed well enough from this nationwide pool to be-

come the highest-scoring entrants in each state. Contra Costa County in total had 96 Semi-Finalists.

National Merit Scholarship winners will be selected from this group of finalists. Merit Scholar designees are selected on the basis of their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies.

Acalanes lead the area with six students: Kai Feinberg, Jamie Lattin, Morgan Mason, Isaiah Orlando, Madison Payne and Jackson Steele. "We at Acalanes are so proud of these amazing Dons and their noteworthy accomplishment!" said Acalanes Principal Travis Bell.

Bentley boasts two students: Dora Kocs-Meyers and Nathaniel McManus. Campolindo finalists include Zoe Heidersbach, Joshua Liao, Noel Seo and Hari Stoyanov. Principal John Walker noted, "Campolindo High School is so proud of our National Merit Scholars. These students have demonstrated tremendous academic achievement. The entire Campo community celebrates their accomplishment."

Miramonte High School students include Jenna Foster, Joshua Morganstein, Preston Nibley, Sarah Svahn, and Edwin Yu. Two homeschool students include Jack Armstrong and Jerrae Schroff.

"At Miramonte, celebrating our National Merit Scholars is a tradition that we look forward to each year!" said Miramonte Principal Julie Parks. "We are so proud of these students for their accomplishment during this unusual time."

Three types of National Merit Scholarships will be offered in the spring of 2021. Every finalist will compete for one of 2,500 National Merit \$2,500 Scholarships that will be awarded on a state-representational basis. About 1,000 corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards will be provided by approximately 220 corporations and business organizations for finalists who

meet their specified criteria. In addition, about 180 colleges and universities are expected to finance some 4,100 college-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards for finalists who will attend the sponsor institution. In total, more than \$30 million is awarded in scholarship money.

NMSC is a not for profit organization that was established in 1955 to provide scholarships to recognize academic excellences. Prior National Merit Scholar recipients include Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke and Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates. - J. Wake

## GCCP presents 'Love Story' March 20



Photos provided

The Delphi Trio and Pamela Freund-Striplen. From left: Liana Berube, Allegra Chapman, Pamela Freund-Striplen and Tanya Tompkins

### Submitted by Pamela Freund-Striplen

Gold Coast Chamber Players continue their virtual concerts at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 20 with "Love Story" - the fourth of six Main Stage Virtual Concerts in 2021 that continues the season theme celebrating love and diversity.

Virtual links remain available for one week follow-

ing the concert date. "Love Story" explores romantic music by a 19th century power couple, Clara and Robert Schumann. "Love Story" pairs Clara's Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17 with Robert's Piano Quartet, op. 47, written in what is considered his "chamber music year" of 1842.

Clara Schumann's only Piano Trio was a direct influence on her husband's own trio, written the following

year. Though Robert was supportive of Clara, he was more focused on her performing his own compositions than in her work as a composer. Women's History Month is an ideal opportunity to highlight this story.

Bringing this program to life is the Bay Area Delphi Trio (violinist Liana Berube, cellist Tanya Tompkins, and pianist Allegra Chapman) and guest violist Pamela Freund-

Striplen. Delphi Trio is recognized for commanding, compelling performances that draw audiences into their musical world. The trio prioritizes unity, artistry, vulnerability, and musical risk-taking, creating performances that are infused with spontaneity, humor, and joy.

Founded on the principles of community, connection, and artistry, they believe firmly in art's ability to make

a difference in the world and are committed to using their musical platform to bring people together, regardless of background or beliefs. As three strong women, the trio prioritizes the presentation of works by female composers alongside the better-known classic repertoire. Musicologist Kai Christiansen provides insight and context during the performance.

A Zoom After Party with the musicians is available to those watching on March 20. The concert link is available for one week. Single ticket: \$30, Mini Series (three concerts): \$70. Concerts are streamed via YouTube. Purchase online at [www.GCCP-music.com](http://www.GCCP-music.com) or by calling (925) 283-3728.

Visit [gccpmusic.com](http://gccpmusic.com) to find regular updates about concert offerings, to make donations, and to purchase tickets.



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## Local youth find inventive, productive ways to spend time while sheltering at home

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Orinda's Myra Gakhar, 11, opened her own Etsy shop during the pandemic, selling her colorful, personalized, homemade resin ornaments and coasters ([etsy.com/shop/pinkstarcreations](https://etsy.com/shop/pinkstarcreations)). "This is not just a hobby or pastime but something I want to continue putting my time and effort into," she says. She donates a portion of her profits to the animal shelter where she found her puppy.

Wagner Ranch fifth-grader Finn Girdlestone says he "wanted to spend more time with my granddad and

make stuff with him." Deciding what to build was challenging until they saw a picture of a squirrel dining table (imagine a picnic table for squirrels). That was it! Made with scrap wood, close to 150 were made (with a little help from brother Lennon); all were sold. A portion of the proceeds were donated to the Monument Crisis Center. Girdlestone says he is working on improving the design and then he and his granddad will get back to building more.

Finally, Orinda's Toby Henstrand, 14, didn't sell anything but he did use his sheltering time to hone his writing

skills and expand his knowledge of politics and history. Writing for the Institute for Youth in Policy, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that highlights youth voices, Henstrand researches and writes about "issues that are kind of hot buttons but not necessarily talked about a lot." Recent articles include "The Case for More Congressional Members" and "Lowering the Voting Age." ([ypinstitute.com/author/toby.henstrand](http://ypinstitute.com/author/toby.henstrand))

These young people, along with hundreds of their peers, instill confidence that the future will, indeed, be bright.