Are you looking for a whimsical and delicious dessert to serve at your next party? I thought I would create a recipe that was not only quick and easy, but one that would certainly delight your guests at your next gathering and make you look like a pastry chef extraordinaire! I used store bought cake, and a quick and easy filling to be the base or the” dirt” in the parfait. Of course our gardens need some beautiful veggies growing in them, so I created adorable carrots made from strawberries and orange candy melts. I then topped this Garden Parfait with a buttery pecan topping to add some crunch to the creamy base. This would be perfect to serve at your next birthday party, picnic or family holiday celebration.

**Garden Parfaits**

Ingredients

2 cups of orange colored candy melts, found at any craft or baking store

24 washed and dried strawberries

1.7 ounce package of instant pudding, flavor of your choice

8 ounces of Challenge Original Cream Cheese, room temperature

1 ½ cups of milk

1 stick of Challenge butter

1 cup of brown sugar

1 cup of chopped pecans

1 premade pound cake or homemade prebaked cake, flavor of your choice

Directions

Place candy melts in a microwave safe bowl. Microwave at 30 minutes intervals, stirring often until melted. Dip strawberries in candy all the way up to the leaves so your strawberries will look like carrots. Place dipped strawberries on a piece of parchment or waxed paper to dry. If your “carrots” puddle while drying, trim off excess with kitchen shears to create the perfect carrot.

To create filling combine pudding, cream cheese and milk in a large mixing bowl. Beat with a mixer until smooth and creamy. Spoon pudding mixture into a large zipper bag and seal. Cut corner tip off of bag, reserve until needed.

To make your buttery pecan topping, place butter, brown sugar and pecans in a skillet over medium high heat. Heat until mixture begins to bubble, continue cooking for 3 minutes. Spread mixture onto a piece of parchment paper. Let cool, then crumble into small pieces to resemble garden rocks.

To assemble parfaits, begin by cutting cake into cubes. Press about 1/3 cup into the bottom of a parfait cup or small glass bowl. Squeeze a layer of pudding filling over cake. Next press in another 1/3 cup off cake. Place three candy covered carrots on top, slightly pushing them into the cake to look like they are growing in your garden. Next fill around carrots with buttery pecan topping to create rocks in your garden. Refrigerate until ready to serve, best served the day you make them!