

October 29, 2008

No sweets on the table, star divorce lawyer says

*Steven Austin
Special to The Clarion-Ledger*

If you're a top celebrity or dignitary facing a messy divorce, you want Stacy Phillips on your side. As the founding partner of the law firm Phillips, Lerner, Lauzon & Jamra, LLP, in Century City, Calif., she has been involved in hundreds of divorce, custody and property cases involving names like Whitney Houston, Britney Spears, Tori Spelling and Bernie Taupin. She is also a best-selling author: *Divorce: It's All About Control - How to Win the Emotional, Psychological and Legal Wars*.

When not in the courtroom, Phillips still has time to appear as a legal expert on a variety of popular TV news and magazine shows, and is a lecturer at law schools around the country. For more information, visit www.plljlaw.com

Q: How often are food/dining issues part of a settlement?

A: Well, over the years I have had to help divide more than one set of china! Generally, one gets the fancy china while the other takes the everyday china.

Q: Cases are often highly charged. How do you fuel up for the energy you need in court or in negotiation?

A: I eat a banana every morning. I try to eat healthy throughout the day. I stay away from sweets and carbs, even though it is hard because very often the people hosting settlement conferences or meetings will have refreshments sitting out that include high-octane sweets. I typically opt for salads and anything with protein ... I rarely drink caffeine unless perhaps an iced tea midday, because otherwise I will be up all night.

Q: Any meals with your celebrity clients you can discuss?

A: Once, my client and I were escorted to a private room by a deputy during a break at a court hearing. I watched when my client grabbed all the sweet stuff delivered by the bailiff. She began to gobble up the sweets and sodas. I was thankful when I realized she had left the orange juice for the rest of us. I often coach my clients by telling them when it is time to go to court or a settlement conference not to eat foods that have sugar or caffeine in them because I do not want a hyper client on my hands. Usually, though, most of my clients are so nervous or distressed when they are in a hearing that eating anything is simply out of the question for most of them.

Q: What do you think about cities passing laws about what can be served at restaurants, as well as being forced to post calories, etc.?

A: Posting calories is a great idea. In fact, I like it when I pick up a menu and they have it all spelled out. I think it is a wonderful idea to have schools throughout the country post calories since obesity is such a widespread problem. I also think it is a very good idea to only offer foods that are nutritious in all respects at schools.

Stacy's Luscious Banana Bread

1 1/2 cups sugar

1/2 cup butter

2 eggs

1 teaspoon baking soda

4 heaping tablespoons sour cream

1 cup mashed bananas (about 3-5 overripe bananas)

1 1/2 cups flour

1 teaspoon vanilla

1/4 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs beaten slightly. Add dissolved baking soda in sour cream. Add bananas, flour, vanilla and salt, and beat well. Butter and flour a loaf pan. Pour batter into pan and bake about 1 hour. You can add "treats" to the banana bread such as chocolate chips, raisins or walnuts.



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