

Medieval Recipes for Potlucks

Evening of Lothian

Darkwood Arts & Sciences, September 20, 2003

The purpose of this class is to explore several dishes that are simple to make and enjoyed in the many potluck meals that we may find at medieval events. I have try to give a broad spectrum of recipes from appetizers, main dishes, side dishes and a sweet dish that could round out an enjoyable feasting environment.

The “þ” symbol represents the character called “thorn”, it is pronounced “th”. The “thorn” is a character used in Middle English that is no longer used today.

Adjust the quantity of the ingredients according to your own tastes.

The Recipes

Chickens in Broth

(From *Harleian Manuscript*, 15th Century English)

Original:

Chykonys in bruette. Take an Sethe Chykonys, & smyte hem to gobettys; þan take Pepi, Gyngere, an Brede y-ground, & temper it vppe wyth þe self brothe, an with Ale; an coloure it with Safroun, an sethe an serue forth.

Translation:

Chickens in broth. Take and Seethe Chickens, & smite them to gobbets; then take Pepper, Ginger, and Bread ground, & mix it up with the same broth, and with Ale; and color it with Saffron, and serve forth.

Interpretation:

1 chicken, cut-up
2-3 cups of water
1/4 – 1/2 tsp ground pepper
2-3 tsp powdered ginger

10-20 threads of Saffron
3-4 tbsp unseasoned breadcrumbs
1 can or bottle of ale

Place cut-up chicken into pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and let simmer until the chicken is cooked, approximately 30-40 minutes. Remove the chicken. Bring broth to a boil and add remaining ingredients, stir regularly until sauce is thickened to desired consistency. Place chicken back into sauce for an additional five minutes then serve.

Beef Stew

(From *Harleian Manuscript*, 15th Century English)

Original:

Beef y-Stywyd. Take fayre beef of þe rybbys of þe fore quarterys, an smyte in fayre pecys, an wasche þe beef in-to a fayre potte; þan take þe water þat þe beef was soþin yn, an strayne it þorw a straynowr, an sethe þe same water and beef in a potte, an let hem boyle to-gederys; þan take canel, clowes, maces, graynys of parise, quibibes, and oynons y-mynced, perceli, an sawge, an caste þer-to, an let hem boyle to-gederys; an þan draw it þorw a straynoure, and let it be styll; an whan it is nere y-now, caste þe lycour þer-to, but nowt to moche, and þan let boyle onys, an caste safroun þer-to a quantyte; þan take salt an venegre, and cast þer-to, an loke þat it be poynaunt y-now, & serue forth.

Translation:

Beef Stewed. Take fair beef of the ribs of the fore-quarters, and smite in fair pieces, and wash the beef into a fair pot; then take the water that the beef was seethed in, and strain it through a strainer, and seethe the same water and beef in a pot, and let them boil together; then take cinnamon, clovers, maces, grains of paradise, cubebs, and onions minced, parsley, and sage,

and cast thereto, and let them boil together; and then take a loaf of bread, and steep it with broth and vinegar, and then draw it through a strainer, and let it be still; and when it is near enough, cast the liquor thereto, but not too much, and then let boil once, and cast saffron thereto a quantity; then take salt and vinegar, and cast thereto, and look that it be poignant enough, and serve forth.

Interpretation:

3 lbs stew beef	1 large onion, minced
3-4 cups of water	3 tbsp parsley
1/2 tsp cinnamon	1.5 tsp dried sage
8 whole cloves	4-6 tbsp unseasoned bread crumbs
1/2 tsp mace	1/2 cup vinegar
10 grains of paradise	10-20 threads of saffron
10 cubebs	1 tsp salt

Place beef, water, parsley, onion and all spices into a pot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and let simmer until the beef is cooked and tender, approximately 1 – 1/2 hours. Remove meat from broth. Add breadcrumbs to broth and stir regularly until sauce is thickened to desired consistency. Add vinegar and cooked meat into pot. Let cook for 5 minutes, then serve.

Roast of Kings

(From *An Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook of the 13th Century*, translated by Charles Perry.)

Translation of Original Recipe:

Take half a lamb with its breast, sprinkle it with three dirham of pepper and as much of caraway, three spoonfuls of water and a stalk of fennel, two spoonfuls of oil and as much of murri, some Chinese cinnamon, some rubbed thyme, four beaten eggs and sufficient salt. Put the lid on the pot and send it to the oven, and when it is done and browned, present it and it has an extremely good aroma.

2 lbs. Boneless Leg of lamb	1 tsp. pepper
1 tsp. Caraway	1/3 stalk of fennel
1 Tbs. Water	2 tsp. oil
2 tsp. Murri	1/4 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. Thyme	1 egg

Combine all ingredients except for meat and baste meat with mixture. Roast in covered pan (350° F), basting every 15 minutes until the lamb is cooked .

A recipe for murri is provided in *Miscellany*, by Cariadoc and Elizabeth. I omitted the salt in the final recipe for murri is a sauce saturated with salt. If you are not inclined to make the murri, substitute 1 tsp. of salt for the murri.

Insalate – Salad of Several Greens

(From *De Honesta Voluptate*, 15th Century Italian)

Translation of Original Recipe:

On preparing a salad of several greens. A preparation of several greens is made with lettuce, bugloss, mint, catmint, fennel, parsley, sisymbrium, origan, chervil, circerbite which doctors call teraxicon, plantain, morella, and other fragrant greens, well washed and pressed and put in a large dish. Sprinkle them with a good deal of salt and blend with oil, then pour vinegar over it all when it has sat a little; it should be eaten and well chewed because wild greens are tough. This sort of salad needs a little more oil than vinegar. It is more suitable in winter than in summer, because it requires much digestion and this is stronger in winter.

Interpretation:

1 bag of mixed Italian salad greens	handful of mint leaves
1 sprig of oregano leaves	½ container edible flowers, if available
½ tsp. Salt	¼ cup Olive Oil
3 Tbsp. Vinegar	

Toss all ingredients, except vinegar together. Let stand for 10 minutes. Toss in vinegar and serve.

Minces

(From Menagier de Paris, 14th Century France)

Original Recipe:

... *Et des troncs [des choux Rommains], se ils sont replantés, yssent de petits choux que l'en appelle minces, que l'en mengue avec les herbes crues en vinaigre; et qui en a foison, ils sont bons esleus, lavés en eaue chaude, et tous entiers mis cuire avec un petit d'eaue; et puis quant ils sont cuis, mettre du sel et du l'uile, et dreciés bien espois sans eaue, et mettre de l'uile d'olive dessus en Karesme.*

Translation:

And from the stalks, [of Roman cabbages], if they are replanted, come little cabbages called sprouts which are eaten with raw herbs and vinegar; and if you have plenty, they should be well cleaned, washed in hot water, and put to cook whole with a little water: and then when they are cooked, add salt and oil, and stir it up thick without water, and put olive oil on in Lent.

Interpretation:

1 LB Fresh Brussels sprouts	3-4 Tbsp Olive Oil
1 tbsp wine vinegar	½ tsp salt
1 Tbsp herbs (Italian herb blend: Marjoram, thyme, rosemary, savory, sage, oregano, and basil)	

Trim Brussels sprouts, score on end with a X and place in pot with a steamer. Although the original recipe does not mention specifically to score the sprouts, I consider this part of the standard cleaning process of the sprouts, allowing for more even cooking. Steam the sprouts until tender. Toss the cooked sprouts with remaining ingredients, serve warm.

Gussell

(From *Harleian Manuscript*, 15th Century English)

Original:

Gussell. Take faire capon broth, or of beef. And sette hit ouer the fire, and caste þerto myced sauge, parcelly and saffron, And lete boile; And streyn the white and þe yolke of egges thorgh a streynour, and caste there-to faire grated brede, and medle hit togidre with thi honde, And caste the stuff to the broth into þe pan; And stirre it faire and softe til hit come togidre, and crudded; And þen serue it forth hote.

Translation:

Gussell. Take fair capon broth, or of beef, And set it over the fire, and cast thereto minced sage, parsley and saffron, And let boil; And strain the white and the yolk of eggs through a strainer, and cast therto fair grated bread, and mix it together

Interpretation:

1 box of Stove Top Stuffing	1 egg
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Alright, I'm sure you wondering about this Interpretation, but when I first read it, I couldn't believe my eyes and I turned to my husband and said. "This is Stove Top Stuffing!" So if you want a really quick and easy recipe to make, this is the one for you! The only difference from the recipe on the box is beating the egg and coating the breadcrumbs before adding it to the broth. You can always make it without the egg and enjoy it to.

Shrympes

(From *Harleian Manuscript*, 15th Century English)

Original Recipe:

Shrympes. Take Shrympes, and seth hem in water and a litull salt, and lete hem boile ones or a litull more. And serue hem forthe colde; And no maner sauce but vinegre.

Translation:

Shrimps. Take Shrimps and seethe them in water and a little salt, and let them boil once or a little more. And serve them forth cold; And no manner sauce but vinegar.

Interpretation:

1 lb shrimp peeled, cleaned and de-veined	1 gallon water
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1 tsp salt

2 Tbsp Balsamic Vinegar

Put water and salt into a large pot and bring to a boil. Add shrimp, cook until shrimp turns pink (3-5 minutes). Drain shrimp and let cool completely. Toss with vinegar and serve.

Stuffed Eggs

(From *An Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook of the 13th Century*, translated by Charles Perry.)

Translation of Original Recipe:

Take as many eggs as you like, and boil them whole in hot water; put them in cold water and split them in half with a thread. Take the yolks aside and pound cilantro and put in onion juice, pepper and coriander, and beat all this together with Murri, oil and salt and knead the yolks with this until it forms a dough. Then stuff the whites with this and fasten it together, insert a small stick into each egg, and sprinkle them with pepper, God Willing.

Interpretation:

8 eggs

1/4 tsp. cilantro

2 tsp. onion juice

1/8 tsp. pepper

1/4 tsp. Murri and pinch of salt or 1/4 tsp. Salt

2.5 Tbs. oil

Cook eggs, split and remove yolks. Combine yolks with remaining ingredients. Stuff egg white with yolk mixture. Place egg whites together, secure with toothpick, sprinkle with pepper.

Nucato – Spiced Honey Walnuts

(From *Libro della cucina del secolo XIV*, 14th Century Italian)

Original:

Dele mele bullito co le noci, detto nucato. Togli mele bullito e schiumato, con le noci unpoco peste e spezie cotte insieme: bagnati la palma de la mano coll'acqu et estendolo: lassa freddare a dà a mangiare. E puoi ponere mandole e avellane in luogo di noci.

Of honey boiled with walnuts, known as nucato. Take honey, boiled and skimmed, with slightly crushed walnuts and spices, boiled together: wet the palm of your hand with water and spread it out; let it cool, and serve. And you can use almonds of filberts in place of walnuts.

5 Cups honey

2 Tbsp ground cinnamon

2 Tbsp powdered ginger

32 oz whole walnuts

Placed honey in pot and heat until honey reaches a hard crack stage (Use a candy thermometer). Add spices and walnuts. Spoon out onto parchment to cool and harden.

Note: I found it easier to add the spice and especially the nuts after the honey reached the hard crack stage, thus avoiding scorching the nuts.

Suppa Dorata - Gilded Sippets

(From *Libro de arte coquinaria*, 15th Century Italian)

Original:

Suppa dorata. Habi de le fette di pane bianco mondato che non habia cortecchia, et fa' le ditte fette siano quadre, un pocho bruscolate tanto che da ogni parte siano colorite dal foco. Poi habi dell'ove battute in seme col succaro assai et un poca d'acqua rosata; et mettirali a mollare dentro le ditte fette di pane; et cvatile for a dextramente le mettirai a frigere un pochetto in una padella con un poco di butiro o de strutto, voltando molto spesso che non si ardino. Poi le conciarai in un piatello; et di sopra gli mettirai un poch a d'acqua rosata fatt gialla con un pocho zafrano, et del zuccaro habundantemente.

Translation:

Gilded sippets. Take slices of white bread, trimmed so that they have no crusts; make these slices square and slightly grilled so that they are colored all over by the fire. Then take eggs beaten together with plenty of sugar and a little rose water; and put the slices of bread in this to soak; carefully remove them, and fry them a little in a frying pan with a little butter and lard,

turning them very frequently so that they do not burn. Then arrange them on a plate, and top with a little rose water colored yellow with a little saffron, and with plenty of sugar.

8 slices of white bread, crusts removed
1 Tbsp. Sugar
6 Tbsp. Butter
1 Tbsp. Sugar

5 large eggs
3 Tbsp. Rosewater
10 Threads saffron heated in 2 Tbsp. Rosewater

Toast or grill bread very lightly (cut into shapes, if desired, prior to toasting. Beat eggs, sugar and rosewater together. Melt butter in frying pan. Dip bread into egg mixture for about 30 seconds and then place in frying pan. Cook bread until they are golden and spring back to the touch, turn the bread slices frequently to avoid burning. Arrange on plate and sprinkle with saffron colored rosewater and sugar.

Cameline Sauce

(From *Le Viander de Taillevent*, a 14th Century French)

Original:

Prenez gingenbre, canelle et grant foison, girofle, grainne de paradiz, mastic, poivre long qui veult; puis coulez pain trempé en vin aigre, et passez, et saluez bien a point.

Translation:

Take ginger, plenty of cassia, cloves, grains of paradise, mastic thyme and long pepper (if you wish). Sieve bread soaked in vinegar, strain [through cheesecloth], and salt to taste.

Interpretation:

¼ cup breadcrumbs
2 tsp ground ginger
2 tsp ground thyme

1 cups red wine vinegar
2 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp ground pepper

Soak bread crumbs in vinegar, add remaining ingredients. Adjust vinegar or add water until desired consistency is reached.

Mustard Sauce

(From *Le Viander de Taillevent*, a 14th Century French)

Original:

... et se vous la voulez faire bonne et à loisir, mettez le senevé tremper par une nuit en bon vinaigre, puis le faites bien broyer au moulin, et bien petit à petit destremper de vinaigre: et se vous aves des espices qui soient de remenant de gelée, de claré, d'ypocras ou de saulces, si soient broyées avec et après la laissier parer.

Translation:

Soak the mustard seed overnight in good vinegar, grind it in a mill, and then moisten it little by little with vinegar. If you have any spices left over from Hippocras or sauces, grind them with it.

Hippocras: Take four ounces of very fine cinnamon, two ounces of fine cassia flowers, an ounce of selected Mecca ginger, an ounce of grains of paradise, and a sixth [of an ounce] of nutmeg and galingale combined. Crush then all together. Take a good half ounce of this powder and eight ounces of sugar [(which thus makes Sweet Powder)], and mix it with a quart of wine.

Interpretation:

1 ½ cups mustard seeds
1 tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp pepper
pinch galingale

1 ¾ cups white wine vinegar
½ tsp ginger
pinch nutmeg
2 tsp sugar

Soak mustard seeds overnight. Place all ingredients in blender and process. Add more vinegar or water until desired consistency is reached.

Sources:

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