

Pleyn Delit

Medieval Cookery for Modern Cooks

Second Edition



Constance B. Heatt, Brenda Hosington,
and Sharon Butler

Pleyn Delit

Medieval Cookery for Modern Cooks

Second Edition

This is a completely revised edition of the classic cookbook that makes genuine medieval meals available to modern cooks. Using the best recipes from the first edition as a base, Constance B. Hieatt and Brenda M. Hosington have added many new recipes from more countries to add depth and flavour to our understanding of medieval cookery. All recipes have been carefully adapted for use in modern kitchens, thoroughly tested, and represent a wide range of foods, from appetizers and soups, to desserts and spiced wine.

The approach to cooking is entirely practical. The emphasis of the book is on making medieval cookery accessible by enabling today's cooks to produce authentic medieval dishes with as much fidelity as possible. All the ingredients are readily available; where some might prove difficult to find, suitable substitutes are suggested. While modern ingredients which did not exist in the Middle Ages have been excluded, modern time- and energy-saving appliances have not. Authenticity of composition, taste, and appearance are the book's main concern.

Unlike any other published book of medieval recipes, *Pleyn Delit* is based on manuscript readings verified by the authors. The introduction provides a clear explanation of the medieval menu and related matters to bring the latest medieval scholarship to the kitchen of any home.

CONSTANCE B. HIEATT is Professor Emeritus of English, University of Western Ontario, and has made medieval studies her profession for forty years. She initiated an annual medieval feast potluck among her colleagues from which this book developed.

BRENDA M. HOSINGTON is Professeur titulaire, Linguistique, Université de Montréal. She contributed to Constance Hieatt's first medieval feast and has maintained the Hieatt tradition of both teaching and cooking for her graduate students.

The late SHARON BUTLER co-authored the first edition of *Pleyn Delit* with Constance Hieatt. She was an editor of the *Dictionary of Old English*, and a talented artist whose illustrations grace the volume.

This page intentionally left blank

Pleyn Delit

Medieval Cookery for Modern Cooks

Second Edition

Constance B. Hieatt, Brenda Hosington,
and Sharon Butler



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS

Toronto Buffalo London

www.utppublishing.com

First edition

© University of Toronto Press 1976

First paperback edition 1979

Second edition

© University of Toronto Press Incorporated 1996

Toronto Buffalo London

Printed in Canada

Reprinted 1997, 2000, 2004

ISBN 0-8020-0678-7 (cloth)

ISBN 0-8020-7632-7 (paper)



Printed on acid-free paper

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Hieatt, Constance B., 1928-

Pleyn delit : medieval cookery for modern cooks

2nd ed.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-8020-0678-7 (bound) ISBN 0-8020-7632-7 (pbk.)

1. Cookery. I. Butler, Sharon, 1942-

II. Hosington, Brenda. III. Title.

TX652.H54 1996 641.5 C95-932306-6

University of Toronto Press acknowledges
the financial assistance to its publishing program
of the Canada Council and the
Ontario Arts Council.

University of Toronto Press acknowledges the
financial support for its publishing activities of
the Government of Canada through the Book
Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP).

In memoriam:

Sharon Butler, Allan Fleming, Prudence Tracy

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

Preface ix

Introduction xiii

Weights and Measures xxvii

RECIPES

Hors d'oeuvres, Eggs, and Cold Dishes numbers 1 to 21

Soups and Pottages numbers 22 to 47

Sauces numbers 48 to 60

**Bruets, Stews, and Other Boiled Fish, Poultry,
and Meat Dishes** numbers 61 to 88

Broiled, Baked, and Roasted Dishes numbers 89 to 111

Desserts numbers 112 to 136

Subtleties numbers 137 to 142

Bibliography 163

Index 167

This page intentionally left blank

Preface to the Revised Second Edition

When the late Sharon Butler and I published the first edition of *Pleyn Delit* in 1976, neither of us had had any opportunity to consult the manuscripts containing the recipes and we had to depend on what printed editions were then available. The expertise we brought to bear was more culinary than scholarly, as we had been adapting medieval recipes for our own tables, and for our friends and colleagues, for quite a few years. Among those friends and colleagues, one who was especially helpful in developing recipes was Brenda Hosington, then Thacon. It was, thus, eminently suitable that Professor Hosington be the scholar who published a French translation and adaptation of the book, *Pain, Vin et Veneison*, in 1977.

In the intervening year, Dr Butler and I had discovered several errors in the first edition; Professor Hosington was able to incorporate our corrections in her adaptation, which thus agrees with the 1979 reprinting of *Pleyn Delit*, not the original edition. But, by 1979, Dr Butler and I had started work on manuscripts for our edition *Curye on Inglysch: English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century (Including the 'Forme of Cury')*; this was published in 1985, not long before Dr Butler's untimely death. As we worked on it, we learned a great deal, and, predictably, found that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century editions on which we had based our original work were gravely flawed. We knew we should eventually do a complete revision of our first book; but Dr Butler was by then too seriously ill to work on this, let alone do further work on the edition of a fifteenth-century recipe collection we had originally planned to collaborate on. I was fully occupied in completing that edition by myself until it appeared as *An Ordinance of Pottage* in 1988.

It was, thus, a great relief to me when Professor Hosington agreed to collaborate in making a proper revision of *Pleyn Delit*. After twenty years, it was about time: not only has her knowledge

of the field of medieval cookery, and my own, increased vastly, but also an ever greater interest in this area has resulted in a tremendous amount of publication in the 1980s and early 1990s: there is now much more reliable information available. It would have been extremely embarrassing to let the original book go through more printings without this kind of fundamental revision. We feel complimented by the others who have borrowed from our recipes in more recent books, but they have sometimes borrowed our mistakes, and it appears to be up to us to correct this situation.

This second edition, then, represents the work of three collaborators. Dr Butler obviously had nothing to do with the revision, but she is represented by some of the original recipes and a few of the 'new' ones (for example, she wrote the earliest version of the 'ravioli' recipe, which is printed here for the first time), by her participation in producing the new texts of fourteenth-century recipes here printed in the versions published in *Curye on Inglysch*, and by her inimitable medieval-style artwork. Professor Hosington and I have shared the research involved, and have both revised, adapted, and tried out our own and each other's recipes; we take equal responsibility for whatever virtues or failings the new edition may be perceived as having.

Finally, of course, we owe a great debt to hundreds of people who have worked with us, cooked or tasted our food, or corresponded about the book over the years: there are far too many to make a list possible, although we must express our gratitude to Margaret Scanlon, who helped us with a recipe specifically for this edition. And perhaps we should say we owe special debts to the culinary historians Jean-Louis Flandrin and Karen Hess, both of whom have offered highly knowledgeable comments. But then, so did the great cooks (and fellow cookbook writers) Louis Szathmary and the late Jane Grigson – among dozens of others. Our husbands, A. Kent Hieatt and Howard Norland, have suffered through many a dubious culinary experiment, and applauded enthusiastically when we did better; we can hardly thank them sufficiently for both practical and editorial criticism and encouragement. Our sympathetic editor, Suzanne Rancourt, deserves warm appreciative mention, too.

But as this work goes to press, we survivors think of those who did so much for the first edition but who are no longer here to see the second: Sharon Butler, co-author; Allan Fleming, designer; and Prudence Tracy, editor. We therefore dedicate the revised book to their memory.

Constance B. Heatt, FRSC, with Brenda Hosington

February 1995

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

A FRANKELEYN was in his compaignye.
Whit was his berd as is the dayes eye;
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn;
To lyven in delit was ever his wone,
For he was Epicurus owene sone,
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit
Was verray felicitee parfit.

from the 'General Prologue' to *The Canterbury Tales*

The epicurean 'pleyn delit' found at Chaucer's Franklin's bounteous table was based on a varied, generally healthy menu of recipes from which modern cooks can learn all-but-forgotten tricks. For example, a standard method of thickening a medieval sauce was to blend in bread, a method that is easy, economical, and a lot healthier than modern 'roux' (butter plus flour) thickenings. And while most of us are familiar with soups thickened by puréeing some or all of the basic ingredients, few consider a purée of cooked dried peas to be a generally useful thickener. In fact, however, it can produce palatable results surprising to the modern cook (and diner).

Some readers may be taken aback to hear us call the medieval menu healthy. Earlier writers on the subject were almost unanimous in claiming that medieval people preferred rich, spicy foods drowned in outlandish sauces, and that they never ate simple fare, especially vegetables and salads, unless forced to by poverty. These and other commonplaces are simply false: much medieval cooking was so bland as to seem dull today. Spices, to judge by extant household records of a year's supply – not to mention cost – were no doubt used as sparingly as a modern cook uses pepper, although there were certainly some dishes (then as now) that were more spicy than others.¹ When a dish is meant to be

strongly flavoured with a particular spice, the directions call for a 'great deal of ...' Logically, then, unless 'a great deal' is called for, frugality was the rule.

In fact, the Franklin's standards should sound familiar to anyone who keeps up with the writing of current food experts. He demanded fresh, seasonal ingredients ('After the sondry sesons of the year, / So chaunged he his mete and his soper') and insisted on appetizing seasonings ('Wo was his cook but if his sauce were / Poynaunt and sharp') for what were often very simply cooked foods. We can get some idea of the kind of fare that 'snowed' upon his table by looking at the model menu given in John Russell's fifteenth-century *Boke of Nurture* for a 'Feast for a Franklin' – but only if the modern reader bears in mind that a 'feast' was held only on very special occasions. The feast table was more like a Scandinavian smorgasbord or a Chinese banquet than the more modest buffets familiar to most of us, but the humbler diners would have been lucky to be offered only the first few dishes in every course, and some may have been excluded from all but a few in the *first* course.

Russell's first course consists of brawn (boar's flesh or pork) served with mustard, pea soup with bacon, a beef or mutton stew, boiled chicken or capon, roast goose or pork, and either a capon pasty (baked in a pastry crust) or an open tart with an egg-thickened filling: a total of six dishes, mostly simple ones. The second course was to start with either 'mortrewes' – a bland, thick pudding of meat or fish – or 'jussell,' a pudding or dumpling made with bread crumbs and herbs; then came more roasts – veal or lamb, kid or rabbit, chicken or pigeon; and another tart or pasty.

The final course included fritters and other dishes considered to be special treats, followed by apples and spiced (stewed) pears, served with cheese. The meal would have been accompanied by bread throughout and washed down mostly with ale, although some wine may have been available to higher-ranking diners. A drink of mead or sweet spiced wine came after the meal along with candied nuts and other 'confits,' and 'wafers,' which resembled small, thin waffles.

Some people may be surprised at what appears to be a total absence of vegetables, aside from the dried peas used for soup. The recipe collections and treatises on gardening indicate that vegetables and salads were a very important part of the medieval diet: some list dozens of plants to be grown, differentiating between vegetables to be eaten cooked and those suitable for salads. It is no doubt *because* they were such commonplace, everyday foods that they were not likely to be mentioned on a 'feast' menu.

Others may wonder why Russell makes no mention of those elaborately spiced sauces that so shocked and disgusted earlier students of medieval food. In this case, we can be sure that it would have been taken for granted that boiled and roasted meats were accompanied by suitable (although not necessarily elaborate) sauces on the side, into which diners would dip their slices of meat. (Very carefully: Chaucer tells us that the Prioress demonstrated excellent table manners by never dropping any morsel into the sauce bowl, nor dipping her fingers in it.²) Directions for preparing roasts of meat and poultry in the recipe collections invariably specify what kind of sauce is suitable for the particular bird or joint, although sometimes they may remark, 'No sauce but salt.'

Note that the order in which dishes appear on the menu is not a strange one, even if the number of roast meats seems remarkable. The meal ranges, as we say, from soup to nuts, with the special 'treats' coming towards the end of the meal. Further, a look at recipes for the individual dishes shows that everything on this menu has a modern counterpart. 'Brawn' may mean something like a modern headcheese; a capon baked in pastry is what French cooks call *poularde en croûte*; the open tart is a predecessor of a modern quiche; and the medieval wafer is the basis of our ice cream cones (or wafers served with ice cream). The post-medieval revolution in tastes and cooking habits assumed by earlier writers on this subject is more a matter of emphases than of basic tastes and techniques, although, of course, many foods and flavourings in almost daily use today (such as tomatoes, coffee, and vanilla) had not yet been introduced into British and European kitchens.

But there has been much more continuity than has been realized. 'Green sauce,' for example, which appears in accounts of European food at least as early as the twelfth century and was a standard favourite, especially with fish, for many centuries, is still served in modern France, and probably elsewhere, with only slight modifications. Almost everything that may seem alien to traditional British and North American cooking has modern descendants somewhere in European cuisine. Even the practice of 'gilding' poultry (and, sometimes, replacing the feathered hide intact, as fifteenth-century cooks often did with a roast peacock) survives here and there.

The menu we have just inspected is not, of course, an aristocratic one. A feast at court would have included some rather more complex dishes, and on a really special occasion there would have been a 'subtlety' to provide the climax of every course. Most festive subtleties appear to have been the kind of confectionery art that survives in today's cake decorations, especially the bride and groom that traditionally stand at the top of a wedding cake. Our ancestors had different ideas of suitable motifs for a wedding feast: the high point of one such occasion was a subtlety showing 'a wyf lying in childe-bed,' an obvious hint to the bride. Many subtleties appear to have represented birds or animals, often bearing suitable mottoes, but they sometimes ran to miniature castles or cathedrals, or figures of saints. One is said to have depicted Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in Trinity, which sounds like a pretty tricky job for the pastry-cook.

It may well be asked what relation feast menus had to everyday eating. The main meal of the day, a midday or late morning 'dinner,' was often fairly lavish in aristocratic households, consisting of the equivalent of the first course of a feast menu with something added (such as fruit and cheese) to end the meal appropriately. But not always. Even royal households ranged from the extravagant to the austere and from the generously hospitable to the stingy. The bourgeoisie and country squires, such as Chaucer's Franklin, emulated the aristocratic model, but on a somewhat reduced scale. The prosperous bourgeois author of the *Ménagier de Paris* sometimes warns that certain dishes are too elaborate for a household like his own.

Other meals were considerably lighter than dinner. Breakfast, when taken at all, generally consisted of bread, a bit of cold meat or fish for those who could afford it (and wanted it), and something to drink – which sounds much like today's Continental breakfast, but with ale (or wine) instead of coffee. The last meal of the day, supper, was a lighter meal than dinner. It sometimes consisted of simpler foods such as eggs; sometimes it was a cold meal, perhaps featuring leftovers from dinner, although in a more sumptuous household special delicacies might be prepared. Two very elaborate meat pies in ms Harleian 279 are described as 'for soperys.'

Less prosperous people, of course, did not have a very wide choice. We may note that the poor widow of Chaucer's 'Nun's Priest's Tale' subsisted almost entirely on bread and milk, with bacon and a few eggs to add variety. Griselda, heroine of the 'Clerk's Tale,' apparently made do (in her poverty-stricken youth) with pottages made from whatever edible greens she could gather by the wayside. In a period of drought Piers Plowman complained that he did not even have any bacon – just some fresh cheese, the coarsest types of bread, and a supply of herbs and greens; but his equally poor neighbours responded by bringing gifts of peas, beans, fruits, and onions.

Since all the collections of culinary recipes are of upper class or courtly origin, we might expect these recipes to be very different from the common fare eaten by more humble folk. However, many collections begin with what the *Forme of Cury* calls 'common pottages,' including the cabbage soups and basic bean dishes well known to every level of medieval society. Some foods, including sausages, for which few recipes exist can be assumed to have been found on almost any medieval table. Smoked, dried, or pickled herring, favourite dishes today in northern Europe, were something that medieval people ate more of than they wished to, given the extraordinary number of days in the year (usually considerably more than half) when meat was forbidden.

In editing this collection for modern cooks, we have included a number of simple, 'common,' recipes, but we have also tried to give a good selection of more unusual dishes. We do not want to overwhelm people with one 'exotic' recipe after another: that

approach grossly misrepresents the nature of the medieval menu. But, on the other hand, few would find medieval cooking interesting if it did not hold some surprises, and in this revision we have tried to exclude what seemed routine and/or otherwise uninteresting in favour of recipes that even the most experienced cook may find intriguing. Some medievalists may be disappointed to find that we no longer include 'Pike in Galentine,' a dish dear to the hearts of Chaucerians, but it simply is not as palatable as other dishes we wished to have room to include.

And, while most of our recipes are from English and French sources, we have included some from Italy, Catalonia, and Arabia, areas that had a crucial influence on the cookery of the West in this period. 'Saracen' cookery was the ultimate source of all that was 'new' in the *haute cuisine* of the European Middle Ages, and the influence evidently moved westward through the area around the Mediterranean.

We can assure our readers that all these recipes have been thoroughly kitchen-tested. We did not include anything that turned out to be too difficult for an amateur cook to bother with, or that displeased those of our friends and families who acted as tasters. We trust that readers will scan the varied possibilities here, and put together their own menus according to their tastes and pocketbooks. The suggested menus below (xxiv-xxv) provide examples of combinations we found pleasing to various guests, but no two groups of diners are likely to share the same tastes and prejudices. The experienced host or hostess will realize the need to bear in mind what is likely to appeal to a particular group.

Note that the quantities given with each recipe should be sufficient to feed four to six people. In adjusting quantities for a meal with an assortment of dishes to be served to a large group, cooks should try to provide a taste of everything, not a full helping, for every guest; thus if you wish to offer four main dishes to twenty people, a double quantity of each recipe should be ample. But also, when you double or triple a recipe, you may not need to double or triple all ingredients: for a stew, for example, you may find it better to use a smaller amount of the liquid ingredients in proportion to the solids when you are making a significantly larger quantity.

Whatever menu you choose, it should be accompanied by bread, which was indeed the staff of life in the potatoless Middle Ages. Collections of culinary recipes contain no recipes for bread; bread baking and beer brewing were done in areas quite separate from the kitchen of a medieval manor house or palace, while smaller households bought their bread and beer from professional bakers and brewers. We know, however, from other sources (such as Platina), that bread was made with flour, salt, and water, with a sourdough leavening, much like modern 'French' bread.

Loaves were round, generally with a cross cut on the top. Those served to 'high table' and honoured guests were made with (unbleached) white flour and baked in small individual loaves about the size of a 'Kaiser' or bread roll. Lesser folk had to share loaves, often made of less expensive flours. More ordinary bread, including that used for the 'trencher' slices on which food was placed at the table (in lieu of plates, which did not come into common use until later), was much heavier and coarser and usually contained rye flour; it was, of course, baked in larger loaves. Many modern bakeries can supply you with perfectly suitable round, hard rolls or 'peasant' breads to go with medieval food, whether you wish to give your guests the fanciest grade or something more nearly approximating what most people actually ate.

Another essential for a medieval meal is wine (red or white), and/or beer (or ale), or – for the young or more abstemious – cider (or milk or water). A remarkable variety of wines was imported from various parts of continental Europe in large quantities in this period; among red wines, those of Bordeaux seem to have been especially favoured in England (Chaucer mentions them twice), and by the late fourteenth century white wines from the Rhine were highly prized. Sweetened spiced wine or mead (if you can find any that is drinkable) may be served after the meal, in much the same way that we offer port or liqueurs today.

Those who yearn for authenticity may use bread 'trenchers' instead of plates and deny their guests forks, but if they do so they should take care to follow medieval serving customs. This means that foods cooked in a sauce (stews, etc.) should be served in bowls, to be eaten with a spoon, while roasts and plainer boiled meat must be cut into pieces of a size that a diner can easily

pick up with two bare fingers. The carver had an important function at the medieval table. Sauces for such carved meat should be served in bowls placed between diners so they can dip their morsels of food conveniently.

But, since we do not have any servants to offer guests a basin, water ewer, and towel between courses, we usually prefer to use our customary plates and forks. We also see no reason to use medieval kitchen tools and methods when better ones have replaced the numerous servants of a large medieval household. There seems no point in straining eggs when we can reach for a whisk or egg-beater, and a blender or a food processor takes less time than a mortar to grind significant quantities of food. We assume that most cooks now own a blender and/or processor; those who do not will have to devise other methods when we direct them to blend or process. A mortar is, to be sure, still useful for certain small jobs, such as pulverizing saffron or caraway seeds, both difficult chores – unless you have an electric grinder (such as a coffee grinder reserved for the purpose).

The blender or processor provides the most convenient means to make breadcrumbs, which were widely used in medieval cooking – no doubt because this was a way to use up leftover crusts and broken pieces of bread. Alternatively, bread can be turned into crumbs with a grater or a rolling pin. In no case should you use the packaged toasted breadcrumbs available at the supermarket. The result would be terribly gritty. If the recipe calls for toast, use toast, broken into pieces; otherwise, the best breadcrumbs are made from fairly stale bread, grated or ground. But it is not really necessary to make the bread into crumbs in order to thicken a sauce: it can be simply torn up and soaked in some of the liquid, then blended. In any case, the sauce will be immeasurably smoother if it is mixed in a blender.

A crucial ingredient in a great many recipes is almond milk. One of the reasons it was widely used in Europe was that it provided a substitute for dairy products, which were forbidden during Lent; it also served both to thicken and to add a creamy texture to soups, stews, and desserts, and gives a quite different character to many dishes than would cow's milk or cream. It is of such importance that we have set instructions here, in a box,

that cooks can refer to when a recipe calls for almond milk. This is basic.

Almond milk is obtained by steeping ground almonds in hot water or other hot liquid, then straining out the almonds, so that the 'milk' is thick and smooth, not gritty. You can save the strained-out almonds for use in other recipes, such as 'Emeles' (129), or use them to draw up a second thinner almond milk. If ground almonds are not available in your area, soak whole or slivered blanched almonds in a blender jar in cold water to cover, then grind and blend with the water or broth your recipe calls for. Let this steep for a while, then blend again before straining.

Almond milk was either wrung through a clean cloth or forced through a fine strainer. If your almonds are very finely ground, a good choice is the kind of strainer sold for draining yoghurt, but if you line a fine-mesh strainer with a large double layer of cheesecloth you can both rub the mixture through with the back of a spoon and wring out the residue in the cheesecloth. If time allows, first leave the strainer and contents in the refrigerator to drain for several hours or overnight; but then you must rub through and/or wring: the thicker the milk is, the better. The more almonds you use in proportion to water, the smoother, tastier, creamier (and more expensive) your almond milk will be, but an ideal proportion is something like 2 ounces of ground almonds to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water.

If our recipes sometimes appear to depart from the original versions we print above them, this is because we have compared different versions of the same dish and when we found a more appealing aspect in another source may have chosen to incorporate it. We have consistently avoided adding or subtracting anything unless at least one medieval source justified the change. Substitutions, however, are another question. Many medieval recipes call for thickening with rice flour (/starch) or a wheat starch called 'amydon.' You won't find amydon in the supermarket, but

if you can't find rice flour, you can try making it by grinding uncooked rice in a blender, grinder, or mortar.³ We have therefore called for rice flour throughout. Cornstarch or arrowroot will work, too, but they are anachronistic choices and some people dislike the former.

Another important ingredient is bitter orange juice, which is always what is meant by 'orange juice' in a medieval recipe:

When a medieval recipe calls for **(bitter) orange juice**, Seville oranges are the best choice, but they are not always available. If you happen to have a decorative miniature orange tree as a house plant, that will probably keep you provided with (smaller) bitter oranges. However, if Seville oranges can't be found and you have no bitter oranges growing in the house, you can use a mixture of sweet orange juice and lemon juice, which will provide a bitter taste with enough orange flavour. It won't be as good, but it's close. Since oranges vary widely in size, as well as acidity, we have specified measurements such as '1/2 cup' rather than 'juice of 1 orange and 1/2 lemon,' but all such measurements are only approximate guidelines.

Spices are sometimes a vexed question. The 'grains of paradise' some recipes call for are maniguette (*Amomum malaguetta*), are very difficult to find, but may occasionally be offered on the Internet through dealers catering to those who want out-of-the-way spices or specifically medieval ingredients. Cubebs and galingale may be difficult to find today – but not impossible. We have found cubebs in health food stores, and galingale can be obtained from shops catering to Indonesian cooks (where you will find it stocked as 'Laos') and sometimes even in supermarkets.⁴ It is hard to see why either of these ever went out of style: they are delightfully aromatic. But if you can't find them, for cubebs and galingale, substitute pepper and ginger, respectively, and add a little allspice; the result will not be all that different.

The evidence as to the nature of the various mixed spice 'powders' called for in medieval recipes is more confusing. One recipe

calls for ginger and sugar as an alternative to 'powdor blanche,' while another suggests ginger, cinnamon, and nutmeg – a very different mixture. Further, the latter is very close to the formula suggested elsewhere for 'powdor fort,' of ginger, cinnamon, and mace. Surely a *fort* (strong) mixture must have been different from one that was *douce* (sweet) or *blanche* (white): some recipes call for a little of two different kinds. These mixtures must have varied with the individual cook, or commercial supplier, just as a modern curry powder does: and this is probably the most meaningful familiar parallel.

While the cook should judge which spices will best complement the particular dish, the 'mixed spices' sold for apple pies may be useful as a basic 'powdor douce,' and, if you can find it, you can use a French 'Quatre épices' mixture for a 'fort' powder. We have suggested specific combinations for each dish calling for unspecified 'powders,' but there is no reason why other cooks should not vary our suggestions, as long as they aim at a stronger mixture for a 'fort' powder as against a 'douce' one. We think, for example, that it would be inadvisable to add pepper to a *douce* (or *blanche*) powder.

Recipes selected for this volume are first given in their original form, although not necessarily with their original punctuation (or lack of same), but we have translated those written in another language into English. Readers interested in authenticity may thus judge for themselves the accuracy of the recipes below, given in standard modern kitchen terms. Cooks whose 'standard' kitchen measurements are not those usual in the United States should refer to our conversion charts, (xxvii–xxviii). Explanatory comments will be found in headnotes.

The sources from which we have drawn recipes are usually indicated by abbreviations at the end of each original (or translated) version, but sometimes simply by manuscript name, if the collection is not to be found in a reliable printed edition. All are from sources from the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries. The abbreviations are given in boldface after the full references in the bibliography (163–5); recipe numbers are given when these numbers appear in cited editions, but it seemed useless to number recipes taken from editions that do not number

the edited collections, much less those that come from CBH's unprinted manuscript readings, which are not numerous; most here can be easily checked by those who wish to do so.

Sample Menus

(Bread and wine are assumed; olives, radishes, and butter are recommended initial additions, but not essential. Ypocras, anise in confit, etc., are always appropriate at the end.)

1 Dinner for 4-6 (for 8-12, double quantities):

Savory Green Soup (23) *or* Shellfish in Pea Sauce (65)

Roast Pork with Coriander-Caraway Sauce (101) *or* Glazed Leg of Lamb (102)

Turnips with Chestnuts and Sage (37) *or* Turnips Baked with Cheese (38) *or* Parsnip Fritters (9)

Buttered Greens (32) *or* Brussels Sprouts (39)

Pears in Wine Syrup (113) *or* Cherry Bread Pudding (117)

2 A buffet for 20: (double most quantities)

Cold dishes: Sausage Hedgehogs (138); Boiled Shrimps or Crayfish with Sorrel and Bitter Orange Sauce (49); Mackerel in Mint Sauce (18); Cold Chicken Livers (19); Green Salad (21)

Hot dishes: Paris Pies (109); Trout in a Pasty (106); Saracen Stew (74); Ravioli (13); Herb Custard (14)

Dessert: Almond Cakes (129); fresh fruit, cheese, nuts

3 A Menu of Dishes Served to Henry IV at a June Supper:⁵

'Gely': Fish in Jelly (17); 'Pygge en Sage': Cold Pork in Sage Sauce (20); 'Brewys, Chykonys y-boylid': Chicken and Beef with 'Brewis' (67)

'Pescodde': Peasecods (43)

'Samaca': Elderflower Cheese Tart, 121; 'Strawberys'

4 A Feast of Dishes Chaucer's Franklin Might Have Served:⁶

A Bakemete: as appetizer, choose from Tart de Bry (1), Mushroom Pasties (2), Tart in Ymbre Day (3)

A Pottage of Wortes: choose from Cabbage Soup (22), Fennel Soup (25), Squash in Broth (27)

Fish: Luce [Pike] in Rosemary Sauce (91); Blancmanger (Rice with Shellfish, 64); *and/or* Mortreux (Fish Pudding, 63)

Meat, Poultry: Roast Partridge (if not available, use pheasant, Cornish hen, or other poultry) with a 'poynaunt and sharp' sauce, chosen from Cameline (48), Pepper Sauce (54), Black Sauce (57); Corned Beef with Chestnuts (75); a Bakemete, Pork Tart (110)

Vegetable side dishes: Creamed Leeks (34); Herb Fritters (8); *and/or* Fried Beans (41)

Another (sweeter) Bakemete: Apple Tarts (120); *and/or* 'Daryols,' Custard Tarts, (122) or 'Tardpolene,' Custard Tarts with Fruit (123)

NOTES

- 1 For some of this evidence, see Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, 12-15.
- 2 Those who think that medieval people ate messily because they used their fingers (in the absence of table forks) have not read medieval 'courtesy books,' and are probably misled by the Hollywood version of medieval (or early Renaissance) meals. Nobody in a medieval court could have thrown bones around as, for example, Charles Laughton did in his portrayal of Henry VIII, without earning the contempt of all present.
- 3 Or order it by mail from The Baker's Catalogue, P.O. Box 876, Norwich, Vermont 05055-0876; a recent catalogue lists a one-lb package for \$2.25.
- 4 Galingale is also available by mail order; one source is Penzey's Spice House, P.O. Box 1448, Waukesha, WI 53187. We have not found cubebs in Penzey's catalogues, however.
- 5 In Austin, *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books*, 59. This was a feast for Trinity Sunday; the way this menu is printed suggests it was part of the king's wedding feast, but it cannot have been: the wedding took place in February, and of course peas, elderflowers, and strawberries would have been available only in June.
- 6 Most of these dishes, or their ingredients, are mentioned in *The Canterbury Tales*, but we have emphasized those referred to in the descriptions of the Franklin and the Cook in the 'General Prologue.' A few others, such as Corned Beef, are simply commonplaces in the diet of all classes in medieval England.

This page intentionally left blank

Weights and Measures

Since our primary audience is North American, we give weights and measurements in the forms best understood in the United States; Canada uses metric measurements, but most Canadian cooks are familiar with American standards and many are more likely to use measuring spoons and cups than to measure by weight. The comparative standards here are only *approximate*; the British pint contains $\frac{1}{5}$ more than the U.S. pint, and it is almost impossible to convert to metric measures accurately: eg, 1 ounce = 28.35 grams! British cooks should note that U.S. measuring cups and spoons are of smaller capacity than those sold as 'standard measures' in Britain, but in both the U.S. and Britain, 3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon (4 U.S. tablespoons = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup). In any case, exact measurements are rarely crucial: feel free to adjust according to taste and/or instinct.

Weights

U.S. AND U.K.	METRIC
1 lb, 16 oz	= 450+ gr
1 oz	= 30- gr

Liquid Measurements

U.S.	U.K.	CANADA
2 cups, 16 fl oz	= <i>generous</i> $\frac{3}{4}$ pint	= $\frac{1}{2}$ litre
1 cup, 8 fl oz	= <i>scant</i> $\frac{1}{2}$ pint	= 250 ml <i>scant</i>
1 tablespoon	= <i>scant</i> tablespoon, $\frac{3}{4}$ fl oz	= 15 ml
1 teaspoon	= <i>scant</i> teaspoon, $\frac{1}{4}$ fl oz	= 5 ml

In recipes where U.S. measurements are given by weight or liquid measure, refer to the figures above for conversion: we therefore do not mention fish, fresh fruit, meats, olive oil, etc, in the brief chart below.

Approximate equivalents for some frequently used foods

U.S. AND U.K.

METRIC

Almonds, ground blanched $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, ca 2 oz	= 60 gr
Currants, raisins $\frac{1}{4}$ cup, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz	= 45 gr
Breadcrumbs, fresh $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, ca 1 oz	= 30 gr
Butter, cheese 2 tbsp, 1 oz	= 30 gr
Greens (spinach, etc) 2 cups, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb	= 250 gr

*Hors d'oeuvres, Eggs,
and Cold Dishes*



This page intentionally left blank

This section includes specialties suitable as hors d'oeuvres and those that were commonly served as lighter 'supper' foods, including egg dishes and various cold foods, which may be especially suited to a modern buffet table. It includes savoury fritters, which were considered special delicacies. Other recipes suitable for use as hors d'oeuvres will be found in section 7, 'Subtleties,' and among the pastries in section 5, 'Broiled, Baked, and Roasted Dishes.'

1 *Tart de Bry*

Take a crust ynche depe in a trap. Take 3olkes of ayren rawe & chese ruayn & medle it & þe 3olkes togyder. Do þerto powdour gynger, sugur, safroun, and salt. Do it in a trap; bake it & serve it forth. FC 174

Brie Tart

Pastry for one open tart or 2 dozen very small tarts

6 egg yolks or 3 whole eggs

5 oz. soft cheese, preferably Brie (rind pared off)

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground ginger, salt

optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar (if to be served as dessert); scant pinch saffron

Mix cheese, eggs, and seasonings in a blender or processor; if you must do it by hand, add beaten eggs to well-mashed cheese. Continue beating/blending until light and smooth. Bake in tart shell or shells in a 375° oven 15–20 minutes, only until lightly browned. Do not overfill the shells: about half-full is enough, as the mixture will puff during baking. This puffy effect may fall a bit when the tart is taken from the oven, but there should still be a slightly rounded look to the top.

2 *Champignons en pasté*

Mushrooms of one night are the best, if they are small, red inside, and closed at the top; and they should be peeled and then washed in hot water and parboiled, and if you wish to put them in a pasty add oil, cheese, and spice powder. MP 160

Perhaps it was necessary to peel mushrooms and wash them in hot water in 14th-century France, but we doubt that the kind of little button mushroom here described need be treated so today: a scrubbing in cold water should suffice. Medieval 'pasties' were made like turnovers: put the filling on top of a piece of thinly rolled pastry, then double the pastry over and pinch the edges together. The pastry must be *very* thin, or there will be too much in proportion to the filling. Or you can use open tart shells.

Mushroom Pasties

Pastry dough rolled thinly and cut into pieces a little over twice the size of the desired pasties; *or* 12 small tart cases

$\frac{3}{4}$ lb small button mushrooms

1-2 oz cheese (eg, 1 oz each of Cheddar and Parmesan)

2 tbs olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground ginger

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground pepper

Wash mushrooms and pare away the bottom of the stems, but leave whole. Parboil in salted water 3-4 minutes. Drain, and mix with oil and seasonings. Make turnovers or fill tart shells. If you are using turnovers, mix the cheese in with the mushrooms; if you prefer tart shells, reserve the cheese to sprinkle on top. Bake in a 425° oven for 12-15 minutes, or until lightly browned.

3 *Tart in Ymbre Day*

Take and perboile oynouns & erbis & presse out þe water & hewe hem smale. Take grene chese & bray it in a morter, and temper it up with ayren. Do þerto butter, safroun & salt, & raisouns corauns, & a litel sugur with powdour douce, & bake it in a trap, & serve it forth. FC 173

On 'Ember Days' (outside of Lent) meat was forbidden, but dairy products – like the cheese, eggs, and butter here – were permitted.

Tart for an Ember Day

2 large onions, peeled and sliced or chopped
1 tbsp chopped parsley
1 tsp chopped sage (less if dried)
3 oz cream cheese *or* $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cottage cheese
4 eggs
2 tbsp butter
pinch ground saffron
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
2 tbsp currants
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp sugar
pinch each ground cardamom, mace
unbaked pie shell

Parboil the onions and herbs; add butter to thoroughly drained onions. Blend the cheese with the eggs. Add butter, and remaining ingredients and stir in the onions and herbs. Bake in a 350° oven 30–40 minutes, until the filling is set and the pastry lightly browned.

4 *Pastéz Nourroys*

Take cooked meat chopped very finely, pine nuts, currants, and semi-soft cheese finely minced, and a little sugar and a little salt. VT 208

While no particular meat is specified, this must mean whatever was left over. And since no eggs or broth are called for, a significant amount of cheese must be needed as a binder. We have no idea whether the recipe actually came from Norway, but that is the way it is billed in several French collections. However, in some it seems to be made primarily with fish (without added cheese, pine nuts, or currants), which makes a Norwegian origin plausible. And note that other versions say the pasties should be fried in deep fat.

Norwegian Pasties

Thinly rolled pastry to make 12 turnovers *or* 12 small tart shells
2 cups boiled beef *or* other cooked meat or fish
1 cup semisoft cheese (optional if using fish)
2 oz pine nuts (optional if using fish)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup currants (optional if using fish)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt, $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp pepper, or season to taste
optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground ginger, if using fish; pinch sugar

Chop the meat and cheese together finely, preferably in a food processor; boiled fish can be simply mashed with a fork. Add seasonings and, if using meat, nuts and currants. Fill tart shells or make into turnovers; bake in a 400° oven for 15 minutes (or, if you have made turnovers, fry), until nicely browned.

5 *Maqlūa al-shiwā*

Take cold roast, and cut up fine with a knife, adding the usual seasonings, together with walnuts: then proceed as for *maqlūba*, with eggs. If desired sour, sprinkle with a little lemon juice. BCB V

A 'cold roast' in 12th-century Baghdad usually meant lamb or mutton, and the seasonings suggested below were among those considered 'usual.' While the original recipe suggests lemon juice is optional, we find it essential.

Arabian Lamb Cakes

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pieces of cold roast lamb
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
1/4 tsp ground coriander
1/8 tsp each ground cumin, cinnamon, pepper
1 tsp rubbed dried mint *or* 2 tsp chopped fresh mint
1 egg
1/2 tsp salt (or to taste)
oil (preferably olive) for frying
juice of 1/2 lemon

Mix first 7 ingredients in a food processor or blender and form into small cakes; fry in oil, turning over once. Sprinkle with lemon juice before serving (hot!).

6 *Sawge yfarcet*

Take pork and seep it wel, and grinde it smal, and medle it wip ayren & brede ygrated. Do þerto powdour fort and safroun wip pynes and salt. Take & close litull balles in foiles of sawge; wete it with a batour of ayren & fry it, & serve it forth. FC 168

This is a dish to be done *only* with fresh sage; if you have sage in your garden, this is no problem most of the year. As far north as southern Canada, sage stays green at least until mid-January.

Fried Pork Balls in Sage Leaves

2 cups ground cooked pork
2 eggs, beaten
2-4 tbsp breadcrumbs
1/2 tsp ground allspice
1/4 tsp each ground ginger, pepper
pinch each ground cloves, saffron
1 oz pine nuts
1 tsp salt

1 tbsp flour
20–30 large fresh sage leaves
oil or fat for frying

Mix pork, crumbs, pine nuts, and seasonings with one of the beaten eggs; form the mixture into *small* meatballs, $\frac{1}{2}$ –1 inch in diameter. Moisten sage leaves and wrap one or two – depending on the size of the leaves – around each ball. Beat remaining egg with flour to make a batter, and dip or roll the balls in this. Fry, turning to brown all over, and serve hot.

7 *Pipefarces*

Take egg yolks, flour, salt, and a little wine, and beat well, and take cheese cut in very thin slices, and dip them in the batter and fry in lard in an iron frying pan. MP 264

The recipe for this in VT calls for whole eggs, suggests that the pieces of cheese should be the size of a finger, and specifies rich cheese. Rich cheese means hard cheese: Cheddar is much fattier than, for example, Camembert. The success of this recipe depends very much on the cheese; if it is too moist or too mild, the pipefarces will be soggy and/or bland.

Cheese Pipes

1 whole egg *or* 2 yolks, beaten
1 tbsp white wine
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour
pinch salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb hard cheese (eg, well-aged Cheddar)
oil for frying

Mix egg yolks and wine, then sift in flour and salt to make a thick but still runny batter. Cut cheese into very thin slices roughly 2" long and $\frac{1}{2}$ " across. Dip into the batter and fry at medium heat 1 minute on each side. Drain on paper towels.

8 *Frytour of Erbes*

Take gode erbys; grynde hem and medle hem with flour and water, & a lytel zest, and salt, and frye hem in oyle. And ete hem with clere hony. FC 156

Platina gives two versions of this, made with whole sage leaves or fried bay leaves. However, we prefer the English version, especially when made with a variety of fresh herbs. If nothing is available fresh except parsley, use it plus small quantities of dried herbs: eg, 3 tbsp fresh parsley plus $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each dried thyme, savory, and marjoram.

Herb Fritters

1 package yeast
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups water
1 cup flour
3–4 tbsp mixed green herbs
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
optional: honey (as a sauce)

Dissolve yeast in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lukewarm water, stirring. Then mix in flour, rest of water, finely chopped herbs, and salt. Cover (a bit of plastic wrap is fine) and set in a warm place (eg, the back of the stove, if you are cooking something on the front burners at the time) for about an hour. Then drop by spoonfuls into fairly hot oil and fry, turning once if you are not using deep fat.

9 *Frytour of Pasternakes [of skirwittes, & of apples]*

Take skyrwittes and pasternakes and apples, & perboile hem. Make a batour of flour and ayren; cast þerto ale & zest, safroun & salt. Wete hem in þe batour and frye hem in oile or in grece; do þerto almaund mylke, & serve it forth. FC 154

'Skirwittes' were a type of root vegetable resembling parsnips. We advise parsnips here, but a similar recipe for apple fritters will be found under 'Desserts' (recipe 124).

Parsnip Fritters

2-4 parsnips (depending on size), peeled and sliced
1 package yeast, dissolved in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lukewarm ale or beer
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup lukewarm beer or ale (in addition to any used to dissolve yeast)
1 cup flour
2 beaten eggs
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
optional: 2 oz ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) ground almonds and $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 cup water (for sauce); pinch saffron

If a sauce is desired, draw up almond milk from almonds and water (see introduction, xxi), adding ground saffron if you wish to colour it. Dissolve the yeast; then stir in the rest of the beer or ale, flour, salt, and eggs. Leave in a warm place to rise for about an hour. Parboil parsnips in salted water; drain. Stir parsnip slices into the bowl of batter, to coat each piece. Fry the fritters and drain on paper.

10 Tansy Cake

Breke egges in bassyn and swyng hem sone,
Do powder of peper þerto anone;
þen grynde tansy, þo iuse owte wrynge,
To blynde with þo egges with owte lesyng.
In pan or skelet þou shalt hit frye,
In butter wele skymmet wyturly,
Or white grece þou make þer to,
Geder hit on a cake, þenne hase þou do,
With platere of tre, and frye hit browne.
On brode leches serve hit þou schalle,
With fraunche mele or other metes with alle. LCC

Other recipes for tansy cakes seem to call for smaller cakes, thickened with breadcrumbs (and in a later period, flour), with spice added. Since small pancakes seem more attractive than a cut-up green omelet, we have adapted the recipe to follow other examples. Tansy is a bitter herb not much in use today, but other recipes indicate almost any green, leafy vegetable may be substituted. One specifies 'spinage,' which may satisfy many, but sorrel or other more bitter greens will be closer in effect to tansy.

Green Pancakes

1 cup blanched tansy, sorrel, spinach, or other greens (parboiled
1–5 minutes, depending on the greens chosen)
1 cup light cream
3 eggs
1 cup fine breadcrumbs
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground nutmeg, ginger
butter for frying

Drain greens and squeeze out excess water with your hand. Blend or process with all other ingredients until smooth; if batter is too thick, thin with cream or milk. Cook as small, thin pancakes. As with other such crêpes, you can refrigerate (or freeze) the cakes and reheat in a medium oven.

11 *Makerouns*

Take and make a thynne foyle of dowh, and kerve it on peces, and cast hym on boillyng water & seep it wele. Take chese and grate it, and butter imelte, cast bynethen and aboven as losyns; and serve forth. FC 95

Macaroni and cheese has a long history in England, although medieval macaroni was not tubular, like today's. The etymology of the word denotes the original shape: a long, straight line (cf. 'macron').

Noodles with Cheese

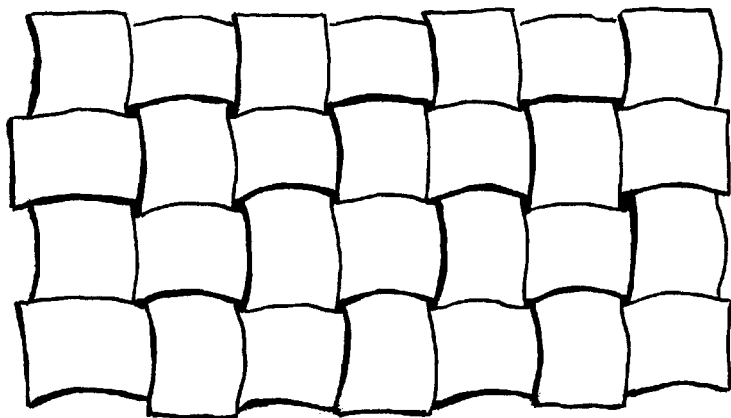
1 lb broad noodles; if you make them yourself, they will be more authentic if you omit eggs; or cut them from a sheet of fresh pasta of the sort pasta shops sell for making lasagna

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (or more) grated cheese (eg, Cheddar or Parmesan)

2 tbsp butter (or more)

If your noodles are long ones, cut or break them into pieces a few inches in length. Boil in salted water until cooked. In a serving dish or platter, put a layer of pieces of butter and half the cheese; put noodles on top of this; then add a second layer of butter and cheese, and serve hot.

NOTE: If you make your own pasta dough, you can, alternatively, produce Anglo-Norman 'Cressee' (A-N.A 5). Make the dough with eggs, flour, and a little sugar and ginger, and colour half of it with saffron; the medieval directions are not as clear as we could wish, but it appears we are to weave groups of noodles into criss-crossed lattice patterns; the manuscript's diagram of the desired effect is (approximately) as shown below. Boil and serve with grated cheese and butter or oil.



12 *Losyns*

Take good broth and do in an erthen pot. Take flour of payndemayne and make þerof past with water, and make þerof thynne foyles as paper with a roller; drye it harde and seep it in broth. Take chese ruayn grated and lay it in disshes with powdour douce, and lay þeron loseyns isode as hoole as þou myzt, and above powdour and chese; and so twyse or thryse, & serve it forth. FC 50

'Loseyns' were also named for their shape: in this case, that of a lozenge, ie, rhombus shape. Like modern lasagna, they were served layered, with filling between the layers – a simpler filling than we use, of course; remember that they had no tomatoes.

Lasagna

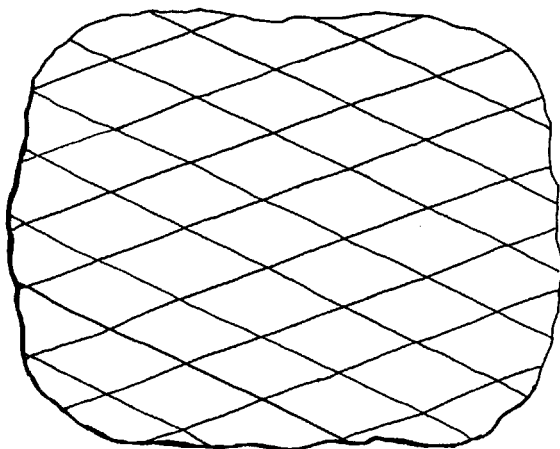
1 lb noodle dough, in a sheet, as for modern lasagna

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated rich cheese (eg, hard Cheddar)

1 tsp mixed mild ground spices (eg, mace, cinnamon, nutmeg)

2 quarts chicken (or meat) broth

Cut the rolled dough into diamond shapes (see diagram below) and boil in broth. Arrange the 'loseyns' on a serving dish in piles of three, with layers of grated cheese mixed with spices above and below each layer; pour a little of the broth over and serve.



13 *Ravieles*

Take fine flour and sugar and make pasta dough; take good cheese and butter and cream them together; then take parsley, sage, and shallots, chop them finely, and put them in the filling. Put the boiled ravieles on a bed of grated cheese and cover them with more grated cheese, and then reheat them. A-N.A 8

This Anglo-Norman recipe may be the earliest recorded ravioli recipe; the only others of about the same time are a few in the Latin *Liber de Coquina*, thought to be of Italian origin, some of which call for a pork filling and almost all of which also call for herbs and cheese, like this one. The FC recipe for 'Ravioles' specifies *wet* cheese for the filling, to which it adds eggs, and calls for melted butter and grated cheese for the sauce. Our adaptation draws on several of these early recipes.

Ravioli

pasta made from 2-3 cups flour (add 1 tsp of sugar if you are making your own) or 4-6 sheets fresh pasta from a pasta shop
12 oz ricotta or 16 oz cottage cheese, drained in a strainer
2 eggs, beaten
2 tbsp softened butter
1-2 chopped shallots
2 tbsp chopped parsley
2 tsp chopped fresh sage or 1 tsp dried
2-4 oz ground Romano or similar cheese
2 tbsp melted butter

Roll out dough (if not purchased in already rolled sheets) and cut into shapes twice as long as the desired ravioli shapes. Blend thoroughly the ricotta or drained cottage cheese, eggs, softened butter, and herbs. Put a small pile of this filling on one half of each piece of pasta, then fold over to make a more-or-less square ravioli shape; moisten the edges with water (or, better, lightly beaten egg white) and press or crimp edges together. Boil

in salted water for 5 minutes; serve with melted butter and grated cheese on top.

14 *Erbolat*

Take persel, myntes, saverey & sauge, tansey, vervayn, clarry, rewe, ditayn, fenel, southrenwode; hewe hem & grinde hem smale. Medle hem up with ayren. Do buttur in a trap, & do þe fars þerto, & bake it & messe forth. FC 180

Herb Custard

A small handful of whatever greens and fresh herbs you can get: preferably including parsley, mint, sage, savory, and fennel leaves; in lieu of some of the less common ones, use a bit of spinach or other leafy greens – in larger proportion than the more strongly flavoured herbs

6 eggs, well beaten

½ tsp salt

1-2 tbsp butter

Process greens and herbs until they are finely chopped, then add eggs and salt and blend thoroughly. Melt butter and pour it in a baking dish; tilt the dish around to coat it well with butter before adding the egg and herb mixture. Bake in a 325° oven 15-20 minutes, until well set but not dried out. (Test with a knife blade or toothpick.)

15 *Civés d'Oeufs*

Poach eggs in oil. Then take cooked sliced onions and fry them in the oil, then put them to boil in wine, verjuice, and vinegar, and boil it all together. Then put in every dish three or four eggs, and pour your sauce over; and it should not be thick. MP 131

Parboiling sliced or minced onions before frying them was apparently the rule in both France and England: one English manuscript states this as a general rule (GK 1), and the *Ménagier* (38) recommends cooking (dried) peas in the water in which onions have boiled.

Fried Eggs in Onion Sauce

6 eggs
2 large onions, peeled and sliced
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup olive oil
3 tbsp vinegar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dry white wine

Parboil onion rings for 2-3 minutes in salted water and drain. Heat oil in a large frying pan and fry onions gently until soft and golden; remove and reserve. Fry eggs in the same oil, then remove to a warm platter. Add wine and vinegar to the pan and bring to a boil; add onions and boil gently for a few minutes, but do not let the mixture boil down too far. Pour over the eggs and serve at once.

16 *Brouet Vert d'Oeufs et de Fromage*

Take parsley and a little cheese and some sage and a very little saffron, mixed with bread and moistened with purée of peas or boiling water; grind and strain [the mixture]: and take ground ginger moistened with wine, and put it to boil; then put some cheese in it, and eggs poached in water, and it should be bright green. MP 124

The optional peas were no doubt *dried*, and cooked split peas help to intensify the green colouring of this dish.

Eggs with Green Sauce and Cheese

1 cup cooked green split peas

2-3 tbsp parsley

$\frac{1}{4}$ lb grated cheese (eg, Cheddar, Parmesan)

2-3 leaves fresh sage or $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried sage

pinch saffron

1 slice white bread, crusts removed

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp powdered ginger, dissolved in 1 tbsp white wine

4-6 eggs

salt to taste

Purée cooked peas in a processor or blender with parsley, sage, saffron, bread, and half the cheese, using just enough of the water in which the peas were cooked to cover the mixture. Add ginger dissolved in wine. Simmer the purée gently, stirring from time to time, while you poach the eggs separately. Put the eggs on a serving dish or individual dishes; pour the purée over, then sprinkle on the remaining cheese. The visual effect will be particularly striking if the cheese is not too finely grated.

17 *Gele of Fyssh*

Take tenches, pykes, eelys, turbut, and plays; kerve hem to pecys. Scalde hem & waische hem clene; drye hem with a cloth. Do hem in a panne; do þerto half vyneger & half wyne, & seep it wel, & take the fysshe & pike it clene. Cole þe broth thurgh a cloth in to an erthen panne; do þerto powdour of peper and safroun ynowh. Lat it seep & skym it wel. Whan it is ysode, dof þe grees clene; cowche fisshe on chargours & cole the sewe thorow a cloth onoward, & serve it forth colde. FC 104

Other recipes tell us to add fish skins, etc, if the liquid will not 'catch'; modern cooks will find it easier and safer to use powdered gelatin. Later recipes often allowed for water, as well as wine and vinegar, in the cooking broth; a combination, with higher

proportions of the wine and vinegar than is apt to be found in a modern recipe, produces a satisfactory flavour.

The most attractive way to present this dish is to use one whole fish and cut other, smaller, fish into slices (through the spine); arrange in a oval dish a little longer than the whole fish. Since the jelly must cover the fish, measure the capacity of the serving dish and calculate the amount of liquid needed to exactly cover the fish before you start, adjusting the quantities accordingly.

Fish in Jelly

1 whole fish, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 lbs (eg, pike, bass, trout, pickerel; *or* flounder, plaice, or other flat fish, if you can get one with the skin)

1 lb smaller fish (eg, trout or, ideally, eel) cut into slices about an inch thick

2 cups each water, vinegar, and white wine (or enough to cover)

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt (or more, in proportion to liquid)

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground white pepper

pinch saffron

1 envelope unflavoured gelatin, soaked in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold water

Bring cooking broth (water, wine, vinegar, in equal proportions) to a boil; salt and turn down the heat. Poach the whole fish *gently* in this broth 15–20 minutes, adding the cut-up fish after 5–10 minutes. Be sure to remove fish before it begins to fall apart. Put it aside and allow to cool. Add pepper and saffron to the broth and leave it to steep.

Skin the fish carefully, removing any bones that can be removed at this point, and arrange in the serving dish with the smaller pieces around the whole fish. While the gelatin is soaking, strain the broth, then bring 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of it (or however much you need to cover your fish) to a boil. Off the heat, stir the measured hot broth into the soaked gelatin until gelatin is well dissolved. Pour this over the fish in its serving dish. To decorate further, use sprigs of parsley and/or slivered blanched almonds. When cool, refrigerate until well set.

18 *Makerel in Sawse*

Take makerels and smyte hem on pecys. Cast hem on water and verjous; seep hem with myntes and wip ooper erbes. Colour it grene or zelow and messe it forth. FC
109

Other recipes call for cooking the fish whole, which may be more attractive, if less convenient. This recipe has a subtly transforming effect on an inexpensive (and sometimes unjustly shunned) fish; those who cannot find mackerel in their local markets may substitute other 'oily' types of fish. Bluefish is excellent cooked this way, especially if served cold, and even if medieval directions do not suggest it, this is best as a cold dish.

Mackerel in Mint Sauce

2-3 mackerels *or* 2 lbs of other 'oily' fish

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt, dissolved in 1 cup water

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup white vinegar

4 large sprigs parsley and 3 or so of fresh mint (if you must use dried mint, 1 tbsp); a few sorrel leaves may be substituted for one parsley sprig

3-4 scallions (green or spring onions)

Fish should be cleaned, with head(s) removed unless you wish to cook it whole. If you cut it up, cut into pieces 2 inches long. Put it in a pot with the scallions, mint, and 3 of the parsley sprigs; pour salted water and vinegar over it and bring to a boil. Simmer for 15 minutes. Remove fish to a serving dish; sprinkle with remaining parsley (or sorrel), finely minced with a little salt, and pour over some of the cooking liquid.

19 *A Disshe mete for Somere*

Take garbage of capons, ande of hennes, and of chekyns, and of dowses, and make hom clene, ande sethe hem, and cut hom smal, and take persel and hew hit smal, and dresse

hit in platers, and poure vyneger theron, and caste theron poudor of gynger, and of canel, and serve hit forthe colde at nyght. ARUNDEL

'Garbage' here means odds and ends; you can use livers alone, or livers and gizzards. This is an English version of a dish known in France as 'Menus d'oies' ('tidbits of goose'), and goose livers are very good this way.

Cold Chicken Livers and Gizzards

1 lb chicken (or other poultry) livers and/or gizzards

1 cup chicken stock *or* mixture of water and red wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

2-3 tbsp minced fresh parsley

2 tbsp wine vinegar

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground cinnamon and ginger, mixed with $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

Put the livers and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt in a small saucepan and cover with stock or wine and water; bring to a boil and simmer for about 5 minutes. Drain livers and chill. Just before serving, mix with parsley and vinegar and sprinkle the spice powder over the top. This can be served with toothpicks or on pieces of toast or bread.

20 *Saugee*

Take good spices, that is, ginger, cloves, cinnamon, and galingale, and grind them in a mortar; then take a handful of sage and grind well in the same mortar with the spices; then take eggs and hardboil them; remove the yolk and grind with the sage; blend with wine vinegar, cider vinegar, or malt vinegar; take the egg white and chop finely and add to the sage mixture; put in pig's trotters or other cold meat and serve. A-N.A 3

The French versions of this popular cold dish usually specified chicken, but pork was favored in England. Most such recipes do not call for as many spices: all but the ginger can be safely omitted.

Cold Pork or Chicken in Sage Sauce

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs cold boiled (or roast) pork or chicken (to serve 4–6 people)
- 2 tbsp dried sage *or* 12 fresh leaves, minced; if dried sage used,
1–2 tsp minced parsley is optional
- 4 hard-boiled eggs
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar (white wine, cider, or malt)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ – $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground ginger
- optional: pepper, galingale, cloves, and/or cinnamon

Separate yolks and whites of boiled eggs. Blend or process the yolks, sage, parsley (if used), vinegar, and seasonings. Separately, chop the whites as finely as possible; stir into the yolk mixture, and if it seems too thick, add a little more vinegar. Arrange the sliced meat on a suitable serving dish and pour the sauce around or over it.

21 *Salat*

Take persel, sawge, grene garlec, chibolles, oynouns, leek, borage, myntes, porrettes, fenel, and toun cressis, rew, rosemarye, purslarye; lave and waische hem clene. Pike hem. Pluk hem small wip þyn honde, and myng hem wel with rawe oile; lay on vyneger and salt, and serve it forth. FC 78

The greens and herbs called for in this recipe were undoubtedly intended to be fresh from the garden (or field). It is inadvisable to substitute dried herbs, and nowadays most of us can find fresh ones in the supermarket if we do not grow any ourselves (or it is midwinter). The general intention is a green salad, but one with more savoury ingredients (herbs, no less than five members of the onion family) than those we eat today. While the only ingredients mentioned in the base manuscript that we would normally consider 'salad greens' are borage and garden cress, lettuce, primroses, and violets are added in one of the manuscripts and spinach in three others. For modern tastes, caution is advised

in choosing among 'grene garlec' (the shoots or bulbs of wild garlic, which are much milder than the usual kind), 'chibolles' (green or spring onions), onions, leeks, and 'porrettes' (scallions or the shoots of small leeks). Your choices in general will have to be governed by what is in the market or your garden: those listed below are usually easily found.

Green Salad

Salad greens: at least two handfuls each of leaf lettuce (*not* iceberg) and spinach, and a good handful each of borage (if available; radish leaves make a good substitute) and cress (eg, watercress)

1 small bulb fennel, thinly sliced (the feathery greens are in next item)

1-2 tbsp each chopped fresh parsley, garlic chives or chives, fennel green (or dill), sage, mint, and smaller quantities of other fresh herbs (eg, savory, tarragon)

1-2 bunches green (or spring) onions, scallions, sliced

optional: one sweet onion (eg, Vidalia or red), thinly sliced or diced; 2-3 *small* leeks, well washed and finely sliced

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil

3 tbsp vinegar

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

optional: freshly ground pepper

Wash and tear up greens. Drain well and put in a bowl with fennel, scallions, herbs, etc. Oil may be added now, with salt and vinegar reserved for the last minute, since they cause greens to wilt. Mix and toss in the usual way.

Soups and Pottages



This page intentionally left blank

In this section are the dishes most likely to be considered soups today, along with vegetable side dishes. Thicker meat and fish pottages are listed in the sections on stews, and salad is in the section on hors d'oeuvres. Most known vegetables – such as fava beans, mushrooms, and parsnips – were usually simply boiled in broth, with or without added leeks or onions or seasonings such as butter or vinegar, so do not hesitate to add more simply prepared vegetables to a 'medieval' menu, as long as you avoid corn, potatoes, string beans, bell peppers, and other New World products that were unknown in medieval Europe.

22 *Caboches in Potage*

Take caboches and quarter hem, and seeth hem in gode broth with oynouns ymynced and the whyte of lekes yslyt and ycorve smal. And do þerto safroun & salt, and force it with powdour douce. FC 6

After following these directions exactly, we concluded that the *Ménagier* is right in saying it is better to cut up cabbages before cooking them than to cook them in such large pieces.

Stewed Cabbage (or Cabbage Soup)

1 head cabbage, sliced or shredded
2 onions, thinly sliced or minced
2–3 leeks, washed and chopped
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt (or to taste)
2–4 cups beef broth or stock
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground cardamom and coriander
optional: 1 tsp sugar; pinch ground saffron

Bring all ingredients to a boil and simmer 5–20 minutes, depending on how finely the cabbage is shredded.

23 *Chebolace*

Take oynouns and erbes and hewe hem small, and do þerto gode broth; and aray it as þou didest caboches. ... and if it be not in Lent, alye it with zolkes of eyren; and dresse it forth, and cast þerto powdour douce. FC 9

The type of onions that gave this dish its name are 'chibols,' green onions, and 'herbs' here means 'greens,' though other savory herbs may be used, too. Spinach produces excellent results, but any greens other than cabbage can be used. We add a bit of starch dissolved in milk to supplement the egg thickening (and make it easier to produce without curdling). This recipe won first prize in a national contest a few years ago: CBH did not tell the sponsors it was a *medieval* recipe, however!

Savory Green Soup

2-3 bunches scallions (green or spring onions)
2 lbs spinach or other green, leafy vegetable
sprigs of parsley and other fresh herbs (optional)
2-3 cups chicken broth
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp sugar
pinch each ground cardamom and coriander
6 egg yolks *or* 3 eggs, well beaten
1 tbsp rice flour, dissolved in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk
salt to taste

Wash and trim green onions, greens, and optional herbs. Put in a kettle of boiling chicken broth and boil 3-4 minutes. Drain vegetables, reserving the broth, and purée in a blender, food processor, or food mill. Return to the kettle with reserved broth and bring to a slow simmer. Mix flour with milk to produce a smooth paste, and add to the beaten eggs. Stir this mixture into the soup over low heat, and continue to stir until soup is nicely thickened. Taste before adding seasonings: if broth was salted, you may not need more salt.

24 *Jowtes of Almaund Mylke*

Take erbes; boile hem, hewe hem, and grynde hem smale. Take almaundus iblaunchede; grynde hem and drawe hem up with water. Set hem on the fire and seep the jowtes with the mylke, and caste peron suger & salt, & serve it forth. FC 89

The *Ménagier's* version of this soup specifies watercress and chard for the 'herbs,' which seem to us excellent choices, but don't hesitate to use other fresh greens. It suggests, further, sautéeing the parboiled chard and cress in oil or butter before adding the almond milk, and adding some cheese: these variations will produce a richer soup, of course.

Greens in Almond Milk

2-4 oz ground almonds (at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup)

6 cups water

1 cup watercress leaves, packed, and 1 cup chopped chard (or use other leafy vegetables, such as spinach, sorrel)

3-4 scallions (green or spring onions), finely chopped

2-3 sprigs parsley

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt (or to taste)

1 tsp sugar

optional: oil or butter for frying; 4 tbsp grated mild cheese

Bring water to a boil and add salt, greens (except parsley), and scallions; boil 2 minutes. Add parsley; boil for a few more seconds, then remove from heat and drain, reserving the water. Draw up almond milk with the almonds and this cooking water (see introduction, xxi).

If the richer French version is desired, briefly fry the drained greens in oil and butter. In any case, mince the cooked greens and add to the almond milk and sugar; simmer gently for no more than 5 minutes (or microwave 2-3 minutes on high). Add cheese, if desired; taste for seasoning and add salt if needed.

25 *Fenkel in Soppes*

Take blades of fenkel; shrede hem not to smale. Do hem to seep in water and oile, and oynouns mynced þerwith; do þerto safroun and salt and powdour douce. Serve it forth. Take brede ytosted and lay the sewe onoward. FC 79

The slices of toasted bread, over which the soup is to be poured, are the 'sops' that gave 'soup' its name.

Fennel Soup

1 bunch fennel
2 medium onions, minced
4 cups water (more or less, depending on thickness desired and number to be served)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground ginger, pepper
1 tsp salt
pinch ground saffron (optional)
bread, toasted, for sops

Cut the white part of the fennel into shreds - about 1 inch by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. Save green, feathery tips for salad or other uses, eg, in Erbolat (14) or Crustardes of Eerbis (104). Heat oil in a heavy pot. Add onions and fennel and stir over low heat until they are slightly wilted, but not browned. Add water and seasonings and bring to a boil. Simmer 20 minutes, or until fennel is tender. Place a slice of toasted bread in each bowl, and pour the soup over the toast.

26 *Sowpys Dorry*

Nym onyons & mynce hem smale & fry hem in oyle dolyf. Nym wyn & boyle yt wyþ þe onyouns. Toste wyte bred & do yt in dischis, & god almande mylk also, & do þe wyne with onyons above & serve yt forth. DS 65

While this recipe does not tell us to parboil the onions before frying them, we learn elsewhere that this was the usual English practice, and the *Ménagier* (305) gives a similar onion soup calling for the water in which the onions were boiled as a base. This will give a more flavourful soup.

Onion Soup

2 oz ground almonds ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup), or more

1 bottle (750 ml) dry white wine *or* half wine, half water

3–4 large onions, minced or thinly sliced

salt to taste

bread, toasted, for sops

Parboil the onions in water for 5 minutes; drain, reserving the water. Draw up almond milk (see introduction, xxi), using the almonds, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the reserved cooking water, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the wine. Heat the oil in a large stew pot and stir in the onions; cook over low heat 5–10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the rest of the wine to the onions; cover pot and simmer 15 minutes. Add almond milk and cook a few more minutes. Salt to taste. Place a slice of toasted bread in each serving bowl and pour the soup over the toast.

27 *Gourdes in Potage*

Take yong gowrdes; pare hem and kerve hem on pecys.
Cast hem in gode broth, and do þerto a gode pertye of
oynouns mynced. Take pork soden; grynde it and alye it
þerwith and wiþ zolkes of ayren. Do þerto safroun and
salt, and messe it forth with powdour douce. FC 10

‘Gourd’ here does not mean the decorative (but inedible) type usual today; use any kind of winter squash or pumpkin.

Squash in Broth

2 lbs winter squash or pumpkin, peeled, seeded, and cut into chunks

3-4 minced onions

2-4 cups beef or pork broth

$\frac{1}{2}$ -1 cup ground cooked pork

pinch saffron

salt to taste

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground cinnamon and ginger

1 tsp sugar

2 egg yolks or one whole egg, beaten

Boil squash and onions in broth; mash or blend. Stir in ground pork and seasonings. Remove from heat; beat in egg or egg yolks and reheat gently.

28 *Bruet of Egges to Potage*

Take faire watur, and let hit boyle, then do therin butter and gobbettes of chese, and let hit seth togedur; take egges and wrynge hom thurgh a streynour, and bete hom well togedur, and medel hit wel with verjous, and do hit in the pot, but let hit not boyle, and do therto powder, and serve hit forthe. ARUNDEL

Cheese Egg-Lemon Soup

4 cups boiling water

6 tbsp butter

8 oz mild cheese (eg, Havarti), in shreds or chunks

4 eggs, well beaten

2 tbsp lemon juice (or more, if you like a sharper taste)

salt and pepper to taste

Add butter and cheese to boiling water and simmer, stirring, until cheese is melted. Remove from heat and stir in eggs and lemon juice. Stir mixture over very low heat until it is smooth and somewhat thickened (do *not* boil). Taste and season.

29 *Blank Desure*

Tak þe zolkys of egges sodyn & temper it wyþ mylk of a kow, & do þerto comyn & safroun & flowre of ris or wastel bred myed, & grynd in a mortar & temper it up wyþ þe milk; & mak it boyle & do þerto wit of egges corvyn smal, & tak fat chese & kerf þerto wan the licour is boylyd, & serve it forth. DS 78

This dish has clearly gone through changes: many of the recipes include (as this one does) saffron, so they are hardly '*blanc*.' Most call for chicken meat rather than eggs and cheese, but we prefer this 'fast day' version.

Soup of Eggs, Cheese, and Milk

6 eggs, hard-boiled

3 cups milk

$\frac{1}{2}$ –1 cup breadcrumbs *or* 3 tbsp rice flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground cumin, saffron

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup mild full-fat cheese (eg, Gruyère) cut into fairly small pieces

Blend together egg yolks, milk, and all other ingredients except egg whites and cheese. Cook, stirring constantly, over medium heat until thick. Then add egg whites, minced, and cheese, and stir for a few minutes more before serving.

30 *Cawdel of Muskels*

Take and seep muskels; pyke hem clene, and waisshe hem clene in wyne. Take almaundes & bray hem. Take somme of the muskels and grynde hem, & some hewe smale; drawe the muskels yground with the self broth. Wryng the almaundes with faire water. Do alle þise togider; do þerto verjous and vyneger. Take whyte of lekes & perboile hem wel; wryng oute the water and hewe hem smale. Cast

oile perto, with oynouns perboiled & mynced smale; do perto powdour fort, safroun & salt a lytel. Seep it, not to stondyng, & messe it forth. FC 127

Mussels have more flavour (and less sand) if they are washed *first*; we have thus taken this slight liberty with the directions given.

Mussels and Leeks in Almond Milk

2 oz (or more; at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) ground almonds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
2 qts mussels
2 medium onions, peeled and quartered
1 bottle (750 ml) dry white wine *or* half wine, half water
2 tbsp white wine (or cider) vinegar
1 tsp salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp saffron
1 bunch leeks, trimmed, washed, and thinly sliced
2 tbsp olive oil
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground ginger, cubebs or allspice, pepper

First, draw up a thick almond milk from the ground almonds and water (see introduction, xxi). Soak mussels in cold water; scrub well and rinse in fresh water to remove all traces of grit, discarding any that open prematurely. Put them in a large pot with leeks, onions, wine, vinegar, salt, and saffron. Bring to a boil, then turn down heat and simmer until shells open – about 5 minutes. Strain broth through cheesecloth and reserve; shell mussels and discard shells.

Chop onions and leeks and sauté them gently in oil for a few minutes. Meanwhile, grind (blend) half the cooked mussels with a small amount of the broth. Chop the remaining mussels more coarsely with a knife. Combine all of these ingredients with the almond milk, adding broth if more liquid seems needed. Simmer gently to reheat, stirring constantly; do not overcook. Season to taste.

31 *Oysters in Cyvee*

Take oysters; perboile hem in her own broth. Make a layour of crustes of brede, & draw it up wip the broth, and vyneger. Mynce oynouns & do perto, wip erbes, & cast the oysters perinne; boile it & do perto powdour fort & salt, & messe it forth. FC 126

The oysters' 'own broth' will have to be supplemented with more liquid or there won't be much broth to thicken: most parallel recipes call for water or wine. They also tell us to fry the onions lightly before adding them.

Oyster Stew

2 pints shelled oysters, in their liquor
2 slices white bread, crusts removed, roughly diced
1 cup white wine
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 onion, finely chopped
1-2 tbsp butter or oil
2-3 tbsp chopped parsley
pinch each thyme, rosemary (preferably fresh)
2-3 cups water
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground ginger, pepper
1-2 pinches each ground cinnamon, cloves
salt to taste

Put oysters in a saucepan with their own liquor and just enough water to cover; bring to a boil, then remove from heat at once and drain, reserving the broth. Put bread in blender or processor; add the broth, an equal quantity of white wine, and vinegar, and blend until smooth.

Sauté the onion until it is softened. Mix it with the blended soup base and the herbs in the saucepan, and cook, stirring. Add enough water to make the soup the consistency of a light cream soup. Season with spices and salt to taste. At the last moment, stir in the oysters and leave just long enough to heat them

through. If you prefer, you can reserve the parsley to strew on the soup when it is ready to be served.

32 *Buttered Wortes*

Take al maner of good herbes that thou may gete, and do bi ham as is forsaide; putte hem on þe fire with faire water; put þereto clarefied buttur a grete quantite. Whan thei ben boyled ynogh, salt hem; late none otemele come therein. Dise brede small in disshes, and powre on þe wortes, and serve hem forth. HARL 4016

The 'wortes' mentioned in the recipe just before this in the ms include beet greens, borage, parsley, nettles, and leeks; the thickener there is oatmeal. A nicer thickener (if you want to use one) for greens is a purée of cooked split peas.

Buttered Greens

2-3 lbs beet greens, spinach, or other greens, plus some parsley
2-3 leeks
2 tbs (or more) butter
4-6 slices bread, diced and lightly toasted

Blanch greens and leeks in a large pot of boiling, salted water 3-4 minutes - no more. Drain in a colander; squeeze out excess water with a potato masher or broad spoon, then chop roughly by running a knife through the mass in the colander. Combine with butter and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh water in a pan; stir, cover, and leave over very low heat for another five minutes. Salt to taste and serve, mixed with the toasted bread cubes.

33 *Isfānākh Mutajjan*

Take spinach, cut off the lower roots, and wash: then boil lightly in salt and water, and dry. Refine [cook] sesame oil, drop in the spinach, and stir until fragrant. Chop up

a little garlic, and add. Sprinkle with fine ground cumin, dry coriander and cinnamon: then remove. BCB VII.9

This recipe is the ancestor of FC 188, 'Spynoches yfried,' which (understandably) calls for olive rather than sesame oil, omits garlic, and does not specify which spices to use.

Fried Spinach

2 lbs fresh spinach, washed and trimmed

2-3 tbsp sesame oil

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

1-2 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 tsp)

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground cumin and coriander

pinch ground cinnamon

Parboil the spinach in a large pot of salted water 2-4 minutes. Press out excess water and chop the spinach (roughly - do not mince). Stir-fry as the original recipe directs, adding seasonings towards the end, or put in a heavy saucepan or casserole with oil and seasonings, stir, and leave to cook over very low heat another 10-15 minutes; or cook (covered) in a low oven 15-20 minutes (or in a microwave oven 3-4 minutes).

34 *Blaunchyd Porray*

Take thykke mylke of almondes dere

And leke hedes þou take with stalk in fere,

þat is in peses þou stryke;

Put alle in pot, alye hit ilyke

With a lytel floure, and serve hit þenne

Wele soþun, in sale, before gode menne. LCC

The *Ménagier* recommends using cow's milk instead of almond milk (on meat days) and thickening with bread; while almond milk may be more interesting, we here advise a compromise that is easier, quicker, and cheaper.

Creamed Leeks

1 oz (4 tbsp) finely ground almonds
2 cups light cream or whole milk
2 bunches of leeks, washed, trimmed, and sliced
1-2 slice(s) white bread, crusts removed, torn up
1 tsp salt

Mix almonds with cream or milk and allow to steep for at least an hour. Strain out the almonds and soak the bread in the liquid; blend until smooth. Bring this mixture to a boil, and stir over medium heat until it is very thick. Add salt and sliced leeks and simmer 5-10 minutes.

35 *Esparagat*

If you wish to eat asparagus, take them and wash them and parboil; and when they are parboiled, dredge them with flour and then put them in the frying pan and fry them until they are cooked. And put them on serving dishes, and if you wish, put a little vinegar on them. LSS 120.

Frozen asparagus spears can be used if fresh ones are out-of-season; the frozen ones are by definition already parboiled. A more usual way of cooking fresh asparagus was to boil it until tender, then dress it with oil and vinegar, or wine, with or without onions. It was served hot or cold.

Sautéed Asparagus

1 lb asparagus or 2 packages frozen asparagus spears
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup seasoned flour (ie, mix in some salt and pepper)
oil for frying
vinegar, preferably white wine vinegar

If using fresh asparagus, trim and parboil 3-4 in lightly salted water; drain and dry on paper towels. Frozen spears should simply be barely thawed. Heat oil in a frying pan over moderate heat.

Dip spears into flour to coat them well and fry over moderate heat, gently but quickly. Turn them to cook on all sides until lightly browned. Place in a serving dish and keep warm. When all spears are cooked, sprinkle a small amount of vinegar over the dish and serve at once.

36 *Mosserouns Florys*

In rost ysih hou gentiliche & sone. Veorst þou schalt maken riht wel passen, & soppen in water cold cast larde cold; make bringen & oneliche hewen; þenne nym sone þe musseruns, lardes coynteliche wiþ larduns. Make as were vor to swerden & soppen aske a god roste. Nou inoh is þe mes in rost, of ayren do away þe qwyte. Sone on þe gredil riht veyre floris spesces. Nym & caste gilofre & kanel; wiþinnen meddlen. DC 55

This recipe, in very early Middle English, presents a number of difficulties: how one can thread mushrooms with lardons is only one of the problems. But the general procedure for grilling and glazing the mushrooms is fairly clear.

Glazed Grilled Mushrooms

1 lb large mushrooms
2 oz fat salt pork or streaky bacon, thinly sliced
2 egg yolks, well beaten
salt to taste
1-2 pinches ground cloves, cinnamon (or pepper, nutmeg, allspice)

If using bacon, blanch it in boiling water for 5 minutes before proceeding. Wash mushrooms and remove the stems. Plunge the caps into a pot of boiling water and leave 1-2 minutes, then drain on paper towels. When cool, thread onto skewers, with thin slivers of salt pork or bacon between the mushrooms. Grill. When they are almost done - which will not take long - drizzle egg

yolk over the mushrooms to glaze with a golden finish. Sprinkle with a little salt and spices.

37 *Navés aux chateignes*

Young, small turnips should be cooked in water without wine for the first boiling. Then throw away the water and cook slowly in water and wine, with chestnuts therein, or, if one has no chestnuts, sage. MP 16

Even if one does have chestnuts, sage improves the dish. The *Ménagier* gives this as suitable with venison, but we have found it goes nicely with roast pork: especially 'Cormarye' (see recipe 101).

Turnips with Chestnuts and Sage

2 lbs small white turnips, peeled, or medium ones, peeled and quartered
5 cups water
1 cup white wine
 $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ lb shelled chestnuts
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried sage, or a sprig of fresh sage
salt to taste

To shell chestnuts, pare off a strip of skin from each with a small, sharp knife, then drop them a few at a time into boiling water. When they have boiled a few minutes, remove from the water and peel off the rest of the shell.

Parboil the turnips in 4 cups boiling, salted water for five minutes. Drain and recover with remaining cup of water and the wine. Add shelled chestnuts and sage and a little more salt, and bring back to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer gently for about 30 minutes.

38 *Rapum Armatum*

Cut up boiled or roasted turnips; do the same with rich cheese, not too ripe, but make the cheese in smaller pieces. In a pan greased with butter or other fat, make a layer of cheese first, then turnips; repeat, pouring in spice and butter. It should be quickly cooked. [condensed from a very long recipe.] PLATINA VIII

Platina explains that 'turnips are called "armoured" when they have been rolled in cheese, covered, as it were, with breastplate and cuirass, as if their descent into the lower regions would not seem safe without arms. But what good does this protection do the turnips, since it turns against them to their total ruin, since the very strong gluttons in the cookshops of athletes prefer their enemy armoured and eat them, defenseless as they are.' And he sounds a warning: 'it is ruinous.' Indeed, this is not for dieters.

Turnips Baked with Cheese

2 lbs white turnips

10-12 oz Swiss cheese (preferably Raclette or Gruyère) *or* a mixture of Swiss and mild Cheddar

$\frac{1}{4}$ lb butter, melted

spices to taste (eg, pinch each ground allspice, nutmeg)

salt and pepper to taste

Peel and boil turnips until barely tender, or if you are roasting meat (such as pork), parboil for five minutes, then roast them in the roasting pan 10-15 minutes. Allow them to cool while you mince the cheese, then slice the turnips. In a well-buttered casserole, alternate layers of cheese and turnips, starting and ending with cheese, and adding some butter, spice, and salt on top of each turnip layer. Cook in a medium oven just long enough to melt the cheese: or cover and microwave about 5 minutes.

39 *Minces*

Little cabbages called minces are eaten with raw herbs in vinegar; and if one has plenty, they are good trimmed, washed in hot water, and cooked whole with a little water; and when they are cooked, add some salt and oil and serve drained. MP 53

'Minces' are described as little cabbages produced after cutting the stalks of larger cabbages, so they may not have been identical to Brussels sprouts; but this recipe is an excellent one for our widely available sprouts, which are much more interesting this way than when simply boiled and buttered.

Brussels Sprouts

2 lbs Brussels sprouts

salt to taste

2 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp vinegar

2 tbsp chopped fresh herbs (dill, chives, and/or parsley)

Trim and wash the sprouts and cook in salted water until tender (about 10 minutes). Drain well and toss gently in olive oil. Add vinegar and herbs and stir, making sure the sprouts are well coated with herbs.

40 *Cariota*

Roast carrots in the coals, then peel them, cleaning off the ashes, and cut them up. Put in a dish with oil, vinegar, and a bit of wine; scatter a few mild herbs on the top. PLATINA V

Roasting root vegetables is a technique professional chefs have recently rediscovered. Since carrots are generally easier to peel *before* they are cooked (unless you cook them to an undesirable softness), we scrape them first, having no coat of ashes to cope

with. Choose small (but not 'baby') carrots of even size, not too sharply tapered, or the smaller end will be overdone before the larger end is cooked. (Or cut off pointed tips and save for another use.)

Roasted Carrots

1 lb carrots (8 medium-large)

2-3 tbsp olive oil

2-3 tsp each white wine vinegar, white wine

2-3 tbsp chopped fresh herbs: parsley, and a pinch each of any other *fresh*, mild green herbs (eg, dill, chives, tarragon, thyme, marjoram)

salt and pepper to taste

Scrub and scrape carrots, and brush lightly with oil. Either roast in a 400° oven or arrange in one layer in a suitable dish for microwaving and microwave at full power, uncovered, 15 minutes. Slice into a serving dish and dress with minced herbs, oil, vinegar, wine, and salt and pepper to taste.

41 *Benes Yfryed*

Take benes and seep hem almost til þey bersten. Take and wryng out þe water clene. Do therto oynouns ysode and ymynced, and garlec þerwith; frye hem in oile oþer in grece, & do þerto powdour douce, & serve it forth. FC
189

The beans available in the Middle Ages were fava beans (broad beans) and kidney beans. We assume the beans eaten fresh were of the former variety.

Fried Beans

2 lbs fresh fava beans, shelled and boiled until tender, *or* one can (19 oz) fava or kidney beans
2 onions
2 cloves garlic, minced
olive oil *or* other cooking fat

If you are using fresh beans, parboil the onions with the beans for a few minutes, then remove them and let them cool while the beans finish cooking. In any case, mince parboiled onions; drain the beans and mix with the onions and garlic. Sauté, stirring, about 5 minutes.

42 Grene Pesen

Take 3onge grene pesen, ande sethe hom wyth gode broth of beef, and take persell, sage, saveray, and ysope, and a lytel bred, and bray al this in a mortar, ande summe of tho pesen therwyth, and tempur hit wyth tho broth, and do hit in a pot to this other pesen, and let hit boyle togedur, and serve hit forth. ARUNDEL

Two closely related recipes advise only parsley and hyssop or parsley and mint, so we think these should be the preponderant herbs.

Green Peas

3 lbs shelled fresh peas, or about 20 oz frozen peas
1 cup beef (or chicken) broth
2 sprigs parsley
a few leaves of mint, or $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried mint
1-2 sage leaves and a bit of savory (or $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each dried)
1 slice bread, crusts removed

Boil peas in broth until almost done (about 12 minutes for fresh peas). Blend herbs and bread with some of the broth; add about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the cooked peas and continue to blend, adding more

broth, until you have a smooth, fairly thick sauce. Drain remaining peas and reheat (gently) in this sauce.

43 *Pois en cosse*

In cooking new peas to be eaten in the pod ... when they have been cooked, pour away the water and put under them salted butter to melt, and then stir. Modern sugar-snap peas are easier to eat, of course. MP 60

'Pescodde' are the only vegetable we have seen specified on a historical feast menu: they were part of the third course of a supper served to Henry IV in 1404 (see introduction, xxiv). The hucksters of 15th-century London sold them to humbler folk, offering, according to one poem, 'hot pescods,' and Jane Grigson informed us that in modern China street vendors still sell peas cooked in their pods. The pod is picked up in the fingers, the peas which have been steamed inside sucked out; the edible part of the pod is scraped out with the teeth, rather as we eat artichoke leaves, and the fibrous part discarded.

Peasecods

2 lbs young peas in the pod
2 tbs butter
water, salt

Leave the pods whole. If the stem is cut off, the pods break open during cooking. Boil the peapods 10-15 minutes, depending on size. Put into serving bowl or individual bowls, add butter, stir to coat.

44 *Ceci con ove*

Take fresh young chickpeas, boiled; and pour off the water, then cook them with spices, saffron, salt and oil and beaten eggs, cheese or meat, as you wish. LDC

While fresh chickpeas are unlikely to be easily available, dried and canned ones are to be found almost everywhere now, and are quite satisfactory.

Chickpeas with Eggs and Cheese (or Meat)

2 cans (18 oz) chickpeas, *or* 3–4 cups cooked dried chickpeas

1–2 tbsp olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each cumin and coriander or nutmeg

salt to taste

pinch ground saffron

2 eggs, beaten

2–4 tbsp soft cheese (preferably goat cheese or feta) *or* $\frac{1}{2}$ cup minced leftover cooked meat (eg, lamb or pork)

Drain chickpeas. Beat (or blend) eggs with cheese or meat, oil, and seasonings. Put peas and the egg mixture in a saucepan and stir over medium heat just long enough to reheat peas and thicken the sauce slightly.

45 *Millet*

Wash in two sets of water, put in cow's milk; do not stir until it has come to a boil. Cook until done. VT 65

Later manuscripts of the *Viandier* advise adding some saffron. The *Viandier* advises cooking rice exactly the same way, which is a simple and effective way to cook it as a side dish.

Millet

1 cup millet

3 cups milk

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

optional: pinch saffron

Cook as the original recipe directs, stirring and turning down the heat as soon as the mixture comes to a boil. It will take

about 30 minutes. Or cook it uncovered in the microwave 10 minutes at high power.

46 *Ryse of Flessh*

Take ryse and waisshe hem clene, and do hem in an erthen pot with gode broth and lat hem seep wel. Afterward take almaund mylke and do þerto, and colour it wiþ saffroun & salt, & messe forth. FC 11

Rice in Broth

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (1 oz) ground almonds
2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups chicken or meat broth
1 cup raw rice
pinch saffron
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt (less if broth is salty)

Draw up an almond milk (see introduction, xxi) with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the broth. Put the rice and saffron in a pot with a well-fitting lid, and add the remaining broth. Bring to a boil; cover and turn the heat down very low. When the rice has been cooking for about 15 minutes, add the almond milk, cover again, and continue to cook over very low heat for another five minutes, or until it has absorbed most of the moisture. Salt to taste.

47 *Frumenty*

Nym clene wete & bray it in a mortar wel, þat þe holys gon al of, & seyt yt til yt breste; & nym yt up & lat it kele. And nym fayre fresch broþ & swete mylk of almandys or swete mylk of kyne and temper yt al. & nym þe zolkys of eyryn & saffron & do þerto. Boyle it a lityl & set yt adoun, & messe yt forþe wyþ fat venysoun & fresch motoun. DS 1

Modern packagers of bulgur, a form of cracked wheat, relieve us of the tedious pre-processing here. Note also that while the name specifically implies wheat (< Latin *frumentum*), barley was also used in this dish, and is a very good side dish prepared this way. This is the traditional accompaniment to venison.

Wheat (or Barley) Pilaff

1 cup bulgur or pearl barley

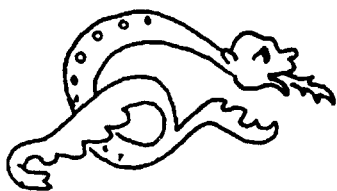
3 cups chicken or meat broth, or use half milk

pinch saffron

1 egg or two egg yolks

Stir bulgur or barley into boiling broth, along with saffron. Cover pan and cook over very low heat 30–50 minutes (barley will take longer than bulgur), or microwave, covered, 20–30 minutes. Stir in beaten egg or yolks; stir over very low heat for a few minutes before serving. If you are serving venison, serve the *frumenty* with it: medieval menus invariably pair the two.

Sauces



This page intentionally left blank

Sauces played an important role in medieval cookery, enhancing foods that were usually very simply cooked. Fish was poached, fried, or grilled, while meat and poultry were usually boiled or spit-roasted, sometimes grilled; and for these foods to be worthy of the aristocratic table, an appropriate sauce in which to dip the morsels was considered essential. Sauces were usually spiced, and often brightly coloured; some were served only with certain foods. The recipes here are annotated so that you can select an appropriate sauce to accompany whatever meat or fish you wish to cook.

48 *Sawse Camelyne*

Take raysouns of coraunce & kyrnels of notys & crustes of brede & powdour of gynger, clowes, flour of canel; bray it wel togyder and do þerto salt. Temper it up with vyneger, and serve it forth. FC 149

Cameline sauce is one of the most ancient and ubiquitous sauces of the Western Middle Ages. It is difficult to define it, except that it contains, perhaps 99 per cent of the time, cinnamon. Thus, any version that does *not* contain cinnamon may be suspected of being the result of careless copying – including the *Ménagier's* otherwise admirable recipe for a ‘camelins’ for fish, which contains ginger, garlic, bread, and vinegar (273; the basic ‘cameline’ recipe, 271, *does* include cinnamon.). We particularly like the version with currants and nuts as an accompaniment to roast lamb, but medieval people liked almost any version of this sauce with most meats: eg, veal, pork, rabbit. Currants and nuts are unusual options and may be omitted; with or without them, consider this as an appropriate sauce if you want to do something particularly festive, like a roast suckling pig.

Cameline Sauce

2 tbsp breadcrumbs

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup vinegar *or* $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt, or to taste

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground ginger

$\frac{1}{2}$ -1 tsp ground cinnamon

optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each currants and walnuts; $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp nutmeg and/
or $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cloves

Blend ingredients, preferably in a blender. May be served without cooking, but if you use wine rather than vinegar it should be simmered for a few minutes.

49 *Salse verjust de oyselle*

For fried soles, one should give a sauce of verjuice made with sorrel and orange. CHIQUART 29

Just as we usually serve fried fish with nothing but a wedge of lemon, medieval cooks often provided a simple dash of vinegar or verjuice to go with fried fish (or boiled shellfish, such as shrimps and crab - which were usually served with vinegar). This simple sauce combining a bitter herb with a citrus 'verjuice' is an interesting variation.

Sorrel and Bitter Orange Sauce

1 tsp finely minced fresh sorrel leaves

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup bitter orange juice (or sweet orange + lemon)

Mix; serve on the side with fried or grilled fish.

50 *Verde Sawse*

Take persel, mynt, garlek, a litul serpell and sawge; a litul canel, gynger, piper, wyne, brede, vyneger & salt; grynde it smal with safroun, & messe it forth. FC 144

Green sauce is the most common medieval (and later) accompaniment to fish. The recipes vary from very simple (parsley, ground with vinegar, bread, and salt) to infinite variations: be-

sides the ingredients named here, some call for other greens such as sorrel, pungent roots such as pellitory, and additional spices (eg, cloves). The *Forme of Cury* manuscripts themselves show various additions and subtractions: feel free to vary the recipe according to taste and/or availability of ingredients.

Green Sauce

2-3 tbsp fresh, finely minced parsley
2 tsp each fresh, finely minced thyme, sage, or savory
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground ginger, pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fine breadcrumbs *or* two slices diced dry bread (crusts removed)
1 tbsp each vinegar (preferably white wine vinegar), white wine
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
optional: 1 tsp each fresh rosemary and mint, finely minced; 1 clove garlic, peeled, crushed, and minced; pinch each of cinnamon, cloves, saffron; 1-2 tsp horseradish (as substitute for roots such as pellitory).

Blend the ingredients in a blender or mortar; if necessary, add more wine and/or vinegar to thin the sauce to a consistency something like mayonnaise. Serve with poached, grilled, or sautéed fish, or with frogs' legs or goose. The parsley sauce Chaucer's Cook served with 'stubbel goos' was probably green sauce, including garlic, and this is what Platina recommends as a sauce for sautéed frogs' legs.

51 *Pevre gresse*

Take a bunch of grapes and put them in a mortar with a little salt; crush the fruit well, then pour off the juice; put ginger and pepper and a little bread in a mortar and grind well, then mix with the juice. A-N.A 19

The grapes for this sauce ought to be sour: this is indicated by the Middle English translation, which calls the sauce 'egress' ('sharp') rather than 'gresse' ('rich'), and by the parallel French

recipes for 'Poivre aigret,' which call for vinegar. Since it may be impossible to find sour grapes nowadays, we recommend adding some lemon juice or vinegar. Grapes need not be seedless since the residue will be strained.

Sharp Pepper Sauce

1 cup white grapes

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

juice of one lemon *or* 1 tbsp white wine vinegar

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground ginger, pepper

2-3 slices of bread, crusts removed, diced

Crush grapes with salt and lemon juice or vinegar in a blender or mortar; strain and reserve the juice, discarding the pulp. Add bread and spices to the juice; when the bread has softened, blend. Best with cold smoked fish or sliced cold meats.

52 *Sauce d'un poucin rostis en été*

In summer, the sauce for a roast chicken is half vinegar, half rosewater ... orange juice is good added to this. MP
278

A 'poucin' (ModFr *poussin*) is a small spring chicken, of the size sold in North America as a 'broiler.' Quantities below are calculated for a bird under 3 lbs (or a Cornish hen, which is close to the size of a 'poussin'), but the sauce is suitable for any size roasting chicken. It is also good for a simply cooked piece of chicken breast: adjust the quantities to the amount of meat.

Orange-Rosewater Sauce

1 tbsp each wine vinegar and rosewater

2 tbsp bitter orange juice (or sweet orange + lemon)

salt to taste

Mix the sauce ingredients with the (degreased) juices from the roasting pan and pour over the chicken before serving.

53 *Lumbard Mustard*

Take mustard seed and waisshe it, & drye it in an oven. Grynde it drye; sarse it thurgh a sarse. Clarifie hony with wyne & vyneger, and stere it wel togedre and make it thikke ynow3; & whan þou wilt spende þerof make it thynne with wyne. FC 150

Among the foods for which mustard was often recommended as a sauce are many of the game birds; eg, Harl 4016 tells us that a roast pheasant's sauce is sugar and mustard. Sugar presumably would not be necessary with 'Lumbard' mustard, since it is already sweetened. The *Ménagier* advises adding to the mustard the spices steeped in wine that remain when Ypocras (spiced wine) has been filtered; if you have none, you may add a few pinches of the sorts of spices used in spiced wine (see recipe 136): eg, ginger and cinnamon.

Lumbard Mustard

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup clear honey
2 oz finely ground dried mustard
1 tbs wine vinegar
3 tbs red wine
optional: $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp mixed spices

Warm honey, then mix all ingredients together. Note that the sauce will be far more liquid when it is still warm than it will be when it cools to room temperature.

54 *Piper for Feel and for Venysoun*

Take brede, and frye it in grece, draw it up wip broþe and vinegre: caste þerto poudre piper, and salt, sette on þe fire, boile it, and melle it forþe. ASHMOLE 1439

This sauce, known almost universally in medieval Europe as 'pevorat,' was used with a great many meats: primarily game, such

as venison, but also goose and veal and that prime favourite for an aristocratic feast, peacock. If you are using it with something other than venison, you may wish to omit the cinnamon – which we have added (after consulting other recipes) as especially suitable for that particular meat.

Pepper Sauce

- 3 slices white bread, crusts removed
- 1 tbsp butter, lard, or other fat
- 2 cups beef broth (or other broth, depending on what you're serving)
- 1 tbsp wine vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each pepper, cinnamon (or increase pepper)

When your roast is about ready to be served, heat the butter or fat in a frying pan and lightly fry the slices of bread. Pour over it a little hot broth and allow to soak for a few minutes. Then add remaining broth and all other ingredients; blend until smooth. Boil the sauce, stirring, until thickened.

55 *Sauce Aliper*

To mak sauce aliper for rostid bef tak broun bred and stepe it in venygar and toiste it and streyne it and stampe garlik, and put therto poudre of pepper and salt, and boile it a litill and serve it. NBC

Garlic pepper sauce could be found all over Europe from an early period. It was used with roast beef, venison, and other meats. This particular version has the defect of reversing the order of toasting and steeping the bread, and it does not tell us to add any liquid except vinegar, although the sauce will have to be liquid enough to be boiled. But it is a wonderful sauce for a number of meats – for those not averse to strong flavours. Do not hesitate to increase both the garlic and the pepper, if that would appeal to you and your guests! Quantities in our recipe are on the

conservative side, bearing in mind the tastes of more cautious diners.

Garlic Pepper Sauce

2 slices whole wheat bread, crusts removed
2 tbsp wine vinegar
1 cup wine and/or meat broth (or whatever quantity produces desired consistency)
2-3 cloves garlic, crushed
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp freshly ground pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

When your roast is almost ready to serve, toast the bread and crumble it into a blender jar or small bowl; pour vinegar over it. After this has soaked for 5 minutes, blend. Add beef broth and/or red wine, to make a sauce of the consistency of gravy; add garlic and seasonings and boil, stirring. It should thicken somewhat more at this stage.

56 *Jance à aulx*

Grind ginger, garlic, almonds, and moisten with good verjuice, and then boil. And some put in a third part of white wine. MP 287

The *Ménagier* recommends this sauce with cod and some other fishes, as well as goose. Serve with steamed, fried, or broiled fish (eg, cod, turbot, halibut). The English 'Gaunceli for gees' (FC 146) is a version of the same (very ancient) sauce, but blander: it is simply white sauce (milk, flour) with garlic and saffron. We cannot recommend it.

Yellow Garlic Sauce

2-4 tbsp ground almonds
3 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each ginger, salt
juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon or 1 tbsp cider vinegar

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup white wine

optional: 2 tbsp breadcrumbs (if not used, double the almonds)

In a blender or mortar, grind the almonds and garlic into a paste; add other ingredients. When all are well blended, simmer, stirring or whisking well, until mixture thickens. Set it aside to mellow while you cook the fish; reheat if necessary.

57 *Black Sauce*

Take þe lyver of capouns, and roste hit wel; take anyse, and grynde parysgingere, and canel, and a litil cruste of brede, and grynde hit well all togedre; tempre hit up wip verjous, and þe grece of the capon, þanne boile it and serve forþe. ASHMOLE 1439

Black sauce was served with duck and capon, and it is good with roast chicken. The favorite medieval sauce for roast swan, Chawdon, was almost identical, except that it also made use of the neck and other giblets of the swan, cooked in broth, and added some (red) wine; since black sauce is very rich unless diluted with some broth, some may wish to incorporate elements of Chawdon here.

Black Sauce

1 liver (from whatever poultry you are roasting)

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground anise, ginger, and cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup breadcrumbs *or* 1 slice crumbled bread

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

2 tsp vinegar or lemon juice

1 cup drippings and/or broth

optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine

Roast the liver separately from the roasting poultry, or sauté it in a frying pan, until it is fairly well cooked but not dried out. Grind the liver (preferably in a blender) with the bread, vinegar, and other seasonings. Put in a saucepan with some of the drip-

pings and/or broth, and simmer, stirring, for a few minutes. Dilute with more broth, if it seems necessary.

58 *Freseyes*

Streberyen igrounden wyb milke of alemauns, flour of rys opur amydon, gret vlehs, poudre of kanele & sucre; þe colour red, & streberien istreyed abouen. DC 13

'Great flesh' usually meant boiled beef, mutton, or pork, but some of it was probably roasted rather than boiled. This is one of a series of recipes for sauces for such plainly cooked meat; the next, similar, one is for cherry sauce (which might be nice with pork or duck). These are not to be confused with the sweet sauces we use on desserts: they are more like the cranberry, gooseberry, etc, sauces we now use with various meats.

The quantity below is calculated to be enough to accompany (say) a 4-7 lb leg or shoulder of lamb; if you are using a smaller piece of 'great flesh,' decrease quantities. A good way of producing the broth is to steam the meat, closely covered, in a 350° oven, with the necessary amount of water in the pan. When the meat is done, drain off the broth and cover the meat with foil until you are ready to serve it.

Strawberry Sauce

1 cup (4 oz) ground almonds
2 cups meat broth (with or without drippings from a roast)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice flour
20 oz package frozen strawberries (without sugar syrup!) or 1
pint fresh strawberries, hulled, washed, and halved or sliced
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each ground cinnamon, salt
optional: red food colouring

Draw up an almond milk with the broth (see introduction, xxi). Combine rice flour with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water and add; stir over fairly low heat until sauce is thick. Then add strawberries, reserving a few for garnish, and seasonings, and whisk together over low

heat. If the sauce does not look sufficiently pink, add a little red food colouring. Garnish with a few halved or sliced berries.

59 *A Good Sauoce for a Rosted Capoun*

Take a pynte of good clared wyne & put þer yn a penyworth of suger & an halfe penyworth of small rasyns & sett them on þe fyre tyll they boyll; yn þe meand season cut soppys of whyte brede & lay them yn a platter, & lay þe rosted capoun on them. When your wyne is well boyled wt þe suger & small rasons, then take it from þe fyre & put þer to a halfe penyworth of boter, synamon, & as much beten gynger; & ster them well togethre, & powre it on your capoun & þe soppys. MS SLOANE 4

This sounds like the sort of sauce Falstaff would have enjoyed at the Boar's Head Tavern. (Even if in a Renaissance text, he is a medieval character, and Elizabethan food was often little changed from that popular a century earlier.) The meat of the capon was no doubt carved off the bones before it was arranged on the sops. This is an easy sauce to use with chicken (or, of course, capon), and a way to transform leftovers into an exciting new dish.

Spiced Wine Sauce for Roast Chicken (or Capon)

for each serving of sliced roasted chicken, use:

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp sugar

1–2 tsp currants

1 tsp butter

pinch each (or up to $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp) ground cinnamon, ginger

1–2 lightly toasted slices of white bread – preferably French or Italian

Mix wine, sugar, and currants, and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat at once and stir in butter and spices; pour over the

chicken on its 'sops' and serve at once. If making a larger quantity, decrease the proportion of wine a little: 1 cup of wine should make six such servings.

60 *Compost*

Take rote of persel, of pasternak, of rafens, scrape hem and waische hem clene. Take rapes & caboches, ypared and icorue. Take an erthen panne with clene water & set it on the fire; cast all þise þerinne. When þey both boiled cast þerto peeres, & perboile hem wel. Take alle þise thynges vp & lat it kele on a faire cloth. Do þerto salt; whan it is colde, do hit in a vessel; take vyneger & powdour & safroun & do þerto, & lat alle þise thynges lye þerin al nyzt, oþer al day. Take wyne greke & hony, clarified togider; take lumbarde mustard & raisouns coraunce, al hoole, & grynde powdour qf canel, powdour douce, anys hole, & fenell seed. Take alle þise thynges & cast togyder in a pot of erthe, & take þerof whan þou wilt & serue forth. FC 103

The complexity of this recipe may be explained by its extraordinary antiquity: this is the only recipe in *The Forme of Cury* we can confidently trace back to ancient Rome. The recipe given by Apicius is much simpler, calling for turnips preserved in honey and vinegar, with optional myrtle berries (a mystery ingredient as far as we are concerned), mustard, and salt; but recipes tended to get more complex as they were passed along. The *Ménagier's* recipe calls for even more ingredients, to be boiled in honey as well as vinegar (and other things).

The result is what we would call a chutney. Inventive cooks can throw in other ingredients called for elsewhere: egg, cabbage, apples, fennel, pumpkin ... In any case, this is obviously not a sauce to be made on the spur of the moment. It goes well with cold meat.

Vegetable-Fruit Chutney

- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb each parsnips, white turnips, radishes, hard (but fairly ripe) pears, shelled walnut halves, seedless raisins or currants
- 2 cups each wine vinegar, white wine (preferably wine on the sweet side)
- 8 oz clear honey
- 1–2 tbsp commercially prepared horseradish in vinegar (or smaller quantity freshly grated horseradish)
- 3 tbsp French mustard
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp each ground caraway, anise, fennel, coriander seeds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each ground ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground cloves

At least 3 days before you intend to make the chutney, put the walnut halves in a bowl and cover with cold water. Leave to soak, changing the water every day. When you are ready to proceed, scrub and pare the pears and vegetables: scrape parsnips, peel pears and turnips, core pears. Cut pears into quarters, turnips and parsnips into chunks. Parboil root vegetables (including trimmed radishes) 5–10 minutes, then drain and mix with all other ingredients. Bring to a simmer and cook *slowly*, covered, until all vegetables are very soft and can be mashed easily (2 $\frac{1}{2}$ –3 hours; 30 minutes in a microwave).

Mash the mixture in the pot with a potato masher or a heavy wooden spoon so that there are no very large chunks visible. Continue to simmer until the mixture is quite thick; then ladle it into clean jars, scalded in very hot water. Cover tightly when cool. This quantity will make about 2 quarts.

*Bruets, Stews, and
Other Boiled Fish, Poultry,
and Meat Dishes*



This page intentionally left blank

In English usage, a 'bruet' was usually a dish with somewhat more sauce than a 'stew,' and almost always thickened with bread-crumbs (not eggs). Some boiled fish, poultry, and meat dishes are given in the section on soups and pottages; those in this section are definitely main-course dishes.

61 *Salmon Fressh Boiled*

Take a fressh salmon, and drawe him in þe bely; and chyne him as a swyne, and leche him flatte with a knyfe; and kutte the chyne in ii. or in iii. peces, and roste him on a faire gredyrn; & make faire sauce of water, parcelly, and salt. And whan hit begynneth to boyle, skem it clene, and cast þe peces of salmon þereto, and lete hem sethe; and þen take hem uppe, and lete hem kele, and ley a pece or ii. in a dissh; and wete faire foiles of parcely in vinegre, and caste hem uppon þe salmon in the dissh; and þen ye shall serve hit forthe colde. HARL 4016

The principal difference here from modern practice is that the salmon is grilled before it is poached: cooks must be careful to do both steps briefly, or it will be overcooked.

Cold Poached Salmon

1 salmon, head and tail off, cleaned, split, but not filleted
water, salt, in quantities appropriate to the size of the fish
many small sprigs parsley, dipped in vinegar

Lay the salmon flat on a cutting board and cut it crosswise into two or three pieces, depending on size. Grill it in a broiler or on a grill for about 5 minutes – just enough to make it golden, not brown. Meanwhile, fill a shallow pan (large enough to hold the pieces of fish) with water, salt, and a few sprigs of parsley; bring this to a boil, and put in the salmon. Turn down the heat so that the liquid barely simmers. Remove the fish in five minutes and let it cool before arranging on a platter for serving. Cover and chill. When ready to serve, dip many small sprigs of parsley

- enough to look really impressive - in vinegar, and arrange them over the cold salmon.

62 *Cawdel of Samoun*

Take the guttes of samoun and make hem clene; perboile hem a lytell. Take hem up and dyce hem. Slyt the white of lekes and kerve hem smale; cole the broth and do the lekes þerinne with oile, and lat it boile togyder yfere. Do the samoun ycorve þerin. Make a lyour of almaund mylke & of brede, & caste þerto spices, safroun and salt; seep it wel, and loke þat it be not stondyng. FC 114

Salmon and Leeks in Almond Milk Sauce

1 tail piece of salmon (2 lbs)
2 oz ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) ground blanched almonds
3-4 leeks
2 tbsp olive oil
5 tbsp breadcrumbs
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ginger
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
optional: pinch ground saffron

Poach salmon 10-15 minutes in enough water to barely cover (about 2 cups); remove and allow to cool. Strain the broth and draw up a thick almond milk with one cup of it (see introduction, xxi), measuring another cup into a saucepan. Wash leeks and slice the white part thinly into the reserved cup of broth; stir in oil and bring to a simmer. When leeks have been cooking about 15 minutes, take the pan off the heat and add the salmon, skinned and cut into chunks 1-2 inches square. Pour the cooking broth into a blender with breadcrumbs and seasonings and blend until smooth; add almond milk and stir this mixture back into the pot. Allow to simmer over low heat a few more minutes before serving. The dish should be on the runny side, like creamed salmon.

63 *Blaunch mortruys of fisch*

Take haddok, codlyng, or thornebak, sodyn; pyke out the bonys, do away the skuyn. Grynd the fisch. Make a mylke of almondes yblaunchyd, & temper up the fisch therwith; take payndmayn gratyd & sigure therwithe. Set hit on the fyre. When hit boyleth, loke hit be stondyng. Messe hit forth & strew on blaunch poudyr. OP 80

Similar 'mortrews' (the more usual spelling), named for the mortar in which the meat or fish was ground, were made on 'flesh days' with (usually) a mixture of chicken and pork, sometimes spiced with cumin. The fish variety appears to be the ancestor of the famous Norwegian fish pudding ('Fiskefarse'), which differs mainly in grinding the fish raw and steaming the pudding gently for about an hour.

Other medieval fish mortrews call for using the broth as part or all of the liquid; adding fish liver and roe; and spices beyond 'blaunch poudyr.' Cod roe, available nowadays in large fish markets, is an option here. And since milk is cheaper than almonds, we suggest a variant type of almond milk based on cream. In the Middle Ages, cow's milk and cream were permissible on fish days except in Lent.

This rather bland dish is good served with boiled shrimps, with some lemon juice or vinegar (just as the modern Norwegian dish often has a shrimp sauce).

Fish Pudding

- 1 lb cod or haddock fillets
- 1 oz (4 tbsp) finely ground almonds
- 1 cup cream, preferably heavy
- 2 slices white bread, crusts removed, diced or ground
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground white pepper, ginger, sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- optional: 1 pair cod roe, $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground nutmeg

Stir together the ground almonds and cream and let stand for an hour or two, then strain. Poach the fish (and roe, if used)

about 5 minutes in water to cover or a mixture of white wine and water. Drain, straining and reserving broth. Pour 1 cup of the broth over the bread in a blender jar and leave to steep while you pick over the fish to be sure there are no bones or skin. Then add fish, almond milk, and seasonings to the broth and bread, and blend until mixture is smooth. Simmer very gently, stirring, 5-10 minutes, or microwave for about the same time, on medium power.

64 *Blamanger of Fysshe*

Take rys, an sethe hem tylle they brekyn, & late hem kele; þan caste þerto mylke of almaundys; nym perche or lopstere & do þerto, & melle it; þan nym sugre with pouder gyngere, & caste þerto, & make it chargeaunt, and þan serve it forth. HARL 279.1.98

The most common medieval 'blancmanger' was made with bits of chicken or capon, instead of fish – a useful way to use up odds and ends from a roast chicken – but the fish version is more interesting. If you use lobster and shrimps, this dish is very attractive unmoulded and decorated with some whole cooked shrimps – and lobster shells, if available.

Rice with Shellfish or Perch

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb each lobster meat (2-6 frozen lobster tails or 2 1-lb lobsters)
and raw medium shrimps or 1 lb perch
2-4 oz ($\frac{1}{2}$ -1 cup) ground blanched almonds
1 cup uncooked rice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white wine
1 tsp sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger
salt to taste

Cover seafood or fish with salted, boiling water and parboil 3-4 minutes. Strain cooking water into another container and measure 1 cup of it; draw up almond milk with this cup of broth

(see introduction, xxi). Steam rice about 15 minutes in enough water to cover amply. Drain off excess water. If using shellfish, shell them, reserving some of the shrimp and (carefully removed!) lobster shells for garnish. Cut the meat or fish into chunks and stir it into the rice with seasonings, wine, and almond milk; add salt, if necessary. Stir this mixture over low heat for a few minutes. It should be thick and well blended, but not dry. If it is on the dry side, add a little more of the cooking water. Pack into a casserole or ring mould and cover with foil (or non-melt plastic wrap, if reheating in a microwave).

Just before serving, reheat in a moderate oven or microwave. If using shellfish, unmould onto a suitable tray or plate and decorate with shrimps and any lobster shells; if you have used a ring mould and lobster tails, use the shells to form ribs from the middle to the outside with the reserved shrimps in between.

65 *Gravé d'escrevisses*

Put your crayfish to boil, and when they are cooked [shell them and] take the choice ones to eat and discard any that are bad. Then take some blanched and ground almonds, moistened with a purée of peas put through a strainer, and lightly toasted bread or crumbs soaked in the purée, ground and strained; and take ground ginger, cinnamon, grain of paradise, and cloves, and put all this in a pot with a little vinegar, and boil together. Serve in shallow bowls and put in each bowl the crayfish, fried in oil, and any other other fried fish. MP 76

This is a recipe in which almond solids, strained out of almond milk prepared for something else, could be used. The peas called for are no doubt dried; using distinctly *green* dried peas will produce a decorative dish of pink shellfish on a green background: an effect our medieval ancestors would have appreciated, although we don't know whether their peas retained the green color. Crayfish can often be found in the frozen food case of a large fish market, but shrimp, crab, or lobster can be substituted;

just be sure not to fry anything so long that it loses its pink appearance.

Shellfish in Pea Sauce

2 cups green split peas, *or* whole dried green peas
1-2 lb shellfish: more if fresh, less if pre-cooked and shelled
2 tbs oil or butter for frying
2 oz ground almonds
2 slices lightly toasted white bread, *or* $\frac{1}{4}$ cup breadcrumbs
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt (or to taste)
4 tsp vinegar (preferably white wine vinegar)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ginger, cardamom
pinch each cinnamon, ground cloves

Soak whole dried peas in plenty of water overnight; split peas need little or no soaking (see package directions). Drain them and cook in 4 cups water until quite soft, about 1 hour (longer for whole peas). Parboil fresh shellfish for a few minutes; drain, cool, shell, and clean. If using lobster tails, split into 2 or 3 strips each. Grind the almonds and bread or crumbs as finely as possible; then add, gradually, peas, salt, vinegar, and spices and blend into a purée in a blender or processor (or force the peas, almonds, and bread through a strainer before adding the seasonings, as the original recipe directs). Cook, stirring from time to time, over very low heat while you sauté the shellfish (lightly!). Put the pea purée in a dish – or individual serving bowls – and arrange the shellfish on top, preferably in a curly design.

66 *Suet Blanc*

Take chicken and hens and scald them; cut them into pieces, and cook them; when they are cooked, thicken with egg yolk and almond milk; then take elder flowers and add salt and grind them together in a mortar. On a fish day, make the mixture with a quantity of burbot or other fish. Gather the flowers in season, when they are in full

bloom, and keep them until they are dry; then grind them and keep them for the whole year. A-N.A 24

Dried elderflowers are most easily found at health food stores nowadays; if you can find fresh ones in season, usually June, they will be whiter and make a prettier sauce, but not necessarily a tastier one.

Chicken (or Fish) in Elderflower Sauce

1 chicken (3 lbs), cut up, or 2 lbs chicken breasts; *or* 2 lbs white fish fillets (eg, haddock, flounder, halibut)

2-4 oz ground almonds

5-6 clusters elderflowers *or* $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried elderflowers

1 tsp salt (or to taste)

4 egg yolks *or* 2-3 egg yolks plus 1 tbsp rice flour

optional: $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground ginger (not in original recipe, but advisable)

Poach chicken or fish in salted water, simmering until cooked (35 minutes for chicken, no more than 10 for fish). Strain the broth and use 2 cups to draw up almond milk (see introduction, xxi). If using fresh elderflowers, strip carefully from their green stems at the last minute (this is the most burdensome part of the whole procedure, but you *must* try to get out all bits of green!), and grind the elderflowers with the salt; add to the almond milk. If using rice flour (to supplement the smaller quantity of egg yolks), mix it with a little cold water and stir in. Beat the almond milk/elderflower mixture into the (beaten) egg yolks; stir this sauce over fairly low heat until it thickens, avoiding boiling - especially if not using rice flour.

Season with ginger, as desired. Skin the chicken pieces, or remove any skin and bones from fish, and cover with the sauce to serve. Reheat (gently) if necessary.

67 *Schyconys with þe Bruesse*

Take halfe a dosyn chykonys, & putte hem into a potte; þen putte þerto a gode gobet of freysshe beef, & lat hem boyle wel; putte þerto percely, sawge levys, saverye, noȝt to smal hakkyd; putte þerto safroun ynow; þen kytte þin brewes & skalde hem with þe same broþe; salt it wyl. HARL 279.1.144

Comparison of this recipe with the *Ménagier's* 'Trumel de Beuf au Jaunet' makes it evident that the beef to be used is the leg, and that this is, thus, chicken cooked with marrowbones – a dish for which Chaucer's Cook was known. (The French recipe emphasizes the beef, but it is otherwise the same.) Neither recipe mentions any spices, but Chaucer's Cook added 'poudre marchant tart and galyngale,' and it is inconceivable that any medieval cook would have sent it to table without something of the sort. 'Brewis' means toast used as a sop. The dish is clearly the ancestor of a modern *pot au feu*, or *Potée Normande*.

Chicken and Beef with 'Brewis'

- 1 roasting chicken, tied to keep its shape
- 2 lbs beef shin (cracked: ie, sliced by the butcher)
- 1 onion, peeled
- 2-3 sprigs parsley
- 2 sprigs each sage, savory or $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each dried
- pinch saffron
- 1 tsp salt
- pepper and/or galingale or ginger, or a 'fort' spice mixture (see introduction, xxiii)
- 1 baguette or small loaf of French bread, sliced and lightly toasted

Put chicken, beef, and all seasonings in a pot that will barely hold them, and add water to cover (or use a clay baker and 2 cups water); simmer for about two hours (or bake for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours). To serve, put slices of toast on a large serving platter, with the chicken in the middle and the beef around it. Strain the broth over the whole platter, being sure to soak the 'brewis' well.

68 *Chykens in Hocchee*

Take chykens and scald hem. Take persel and sawge, with opere erbes; take garlec and grapes, and stoppe the chickenus ful, and seep hem in gode broth, so þat þey may esely be boyled þerinne. Messe hem and cast þerto powdour douce. FC 36

The grapes called for in this recipe were *sour* grapes: an earlier Anglo-Norman version (DC 31) calls for lots of ginger to 'do away the bitterness of the grapes,' although it is difficult to see how ginger would do that. Our problem being quite the opposite (unless you happen to have some sour, unripe grapes), we must add some lemon juice or vinegar. And since ripe, sweet grapes can easily be overcooked in a stuffing, we recommend using small chickens, which will not take long to cook. (Or cook this in a microwave oven, since the grapes will not be overcooked that way; two stuffed Cornish hens in broth will cook in about 20 minutes, plus 5–10 minutes standing time).

Chickens Stuffed with Grapes

2 small roasting chickens *or* 2–3 Cornish hens

1 cup seedless or seeded white grapes

2 cloves garlic, mashed

2 tbsp each parsley, sage (less if dried), finely minced

$\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp thyme (and/or other herbs of your choice)

juice of 1 lemon *or* 1 tbsp white wine vinegar

1–4 cups chicken broth

pinch each cinnamon, ginger, sugar, mixed with $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

Mix together grapes, garlic, herbs, and lemon juice or vinegar, and stuff the chickens with this mixture. Skewer or tie the chickens so that they are tightly closed and will hold their shape. Put in a pot or casserole in which they will barely fit (or, and preferably, a clay baker), and pour boiling broth over them: if using a clay baker, 1 cup of broth is enough. Simmer or bake in 350° oven (or, if using a clay baker, cook as you usually do) about 45 minutes or until done. To serve, remove chickens from

broth, cut away string or remove skewers. You may wish to remove the skin. Sprinkle the spice powder over them and pour on a little of the broth as a sauce. A spoonful of stuffing should, of course, be served with every helping of the meat.

69 *Rosee*

Tak þe flowrys of rosys and wasch hem wel in water, and after bray hem wel in a morter; & þan tak almondys and temper hem, & seþ hem. & after tak flesch of capons or of hennys and hac yt smale, & þan bray hem wel in a morter, & þan do yt in þe rose so þat þe flesch acorde wyþ þe mylk, & so þat þe mete be charchaunt; & after do yt to þe fyre to boyle, & do þereto sugur & safroun þat yt be wel ycolowrd & rosy of levys of þe foreseyde flowrys, & serve yt forth. DS 41

Exotic as this dish may sound, it is simple and pleasant, and a good way to use roses that are beginning to fade or wilt. We think it unwise to include saffron: the flavour may overwhelm the delicate taste of the roses and the colour turn the 'rosy' to orange. If you want a more pronounced rose colour, add a drop or two of red food colouring.

Minced Chicken in Almond and Rose Petal Sauce

3 cups diced cooked chicken

1 1/2 cups hot chicken broth

1 1/2 cups rose petals, (ie, petals of 3-4 medium-size roses) preferably red, rinsed in cold water, dried gently, with the white bases cut off

2 oz chopped, slivered, or ground blanched almonds

1 tsp salt

optional: 1/2 tsp sugar, 1/4 tsp ginger

Reserving a few for garnish, grind rose petals with almonds. They are difficult to grind by themselves, and this is a case where a mortar may be helpful. Mix the resulting powder with the

chicken broth and allow to steep for about ten minutes, or bring to a boil and simmer for a minute or two. Chop the chicken and put it in a processor or blender with the broth mixture; blend thoroughly. Season and heat, stirring (or microwave), for no more than five minutes. If it is overcooked, flavour and colour will deteriorate.

To serve, mound on a platter. This goes well with rice cooked in chicken broth with saffron, which can form a border on the serving dish. Garnish with the reserved rose petals (which taste like a superior lettuce). The dish is also excellent cold.

70 *Cretonnée de Pois Nouveaux ou Feves Nouvelles*

Cook [the peas or beans] until they are soft, and drain them; then take good fresh cow's milk. Bring it to a boil, then first grind ginger, to make it appetizing, and saffron to colour it yellow. If you wish to thicken it with egg yolks, stir them in; egg yolks make it yellow enough and thicken it, but the milk is more likely to curdle with egg yolks than with a bread thickening and saffron to colour it. And for those wanting to use a bread thickening, the bread should be unleavened and white, and it is to be put in a dish to steep in milk or broth, then ground and put through a strainer. And when your bread has been strained but your spices have not, put all this to boil with your peas; and when everything is cooked, add your milk and some saffron. And if your pottage is too thick, dilute it with broth. This done, you should have quartered small chickens, veal, or a small goose, boiled, then fried; and on each dish put two or three pieces and the pottage over them. MP 95

We have had to omit some phrases and sentences in this long recipe, including one that says the thickener can be the peas or beans themselves, ground and strained. Of the alternatives given

in the recipe, we prefer chicken with peas: but some may like veal or goose this way, and beans are feasible.

Chicken Fricassee with Peas or Beans

- 1 frying chicken, quartered
- 2 lbs fresh young peas or fava beans, shelled (frozen peas are a poor substitute)
- lard, oil, and/or butter for frying
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup breadcrumbs *or* 1 slice bread, crusts removed
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ginger, sugar
- pinch saffron
- 1 egg *or* 2 egg yolks (if omitted, increase quantity of bread)

Parboil chicken pieces 15 minutes in salted water to barely cover (or microwave 5 minutes at high power). Meanwhile, parboil peas (or beans) in salted water for 5 minutes, then drain and set aside. Drain chicken, reserving the broth; remove the skin, if you wish, and let chicken pieces dry for at least a few minutes. Then brown them in fat or oil. While chicken is frying, steep bread in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of chicken broth and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk. Blend the bread with some of the milk, then heat this sauce over medium heat until it begins to thicken; add the rest of the milk and seasonings, and taste to see whether more salt is needed. Add the peas (or beans) and leave over very low heat until the chicken is well browned.

When the chicken is done, remove to a serving platter. Strain the peas out of the sauce and scatter them over the chicken. Beat the egg or egg yolks (if used) in a small bowl and gradually pour in the hot sauce, stirring constantly; return to low heat, stirring, until sufficiently thick: do not allow to boil. Pour over the chicken and peas and serve at once.

71 *Hennys in Bruet*

Hennys in bruet schullyn be schaldyd & sodyn wyþ porke;
& grynd pepyr & comyn, bred & ale, & temper it wyþ

þe selve broþ & boyle it, & colowre it wyþ safroun & salt it, & mes it forþe. DS 7

This is an English version of a dish popular everywhere in western Europe from a very early period; it is what was called a 'Cominée' in France, a name that indicates the characteristic cumin seasoning. It still has plenty of appeal today: CBH won two contests (one local, one international) with this recipe.

Chicken in Cumin Sauce

1 boiling fowl, about 3 lbs, cut up, *or* 6 chicken legs
2 strips bacon, blanched in boiling water for a few minutes
1 cup ale or beer (English 'bitter,' if available), *or* $\frac{1}{2}$ cup each ale or beer and chicken broth
1-2 slices bread (white or whole wheat)
1 tsp ground cumin
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground pepper
1 tsp salt, or to taste
optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ginger, pinch saffron

Chop bacon into small pieces and cook in a frying pan over medium heat until it has rendered a good deal of fat and is brown and crisp; remove and reserve bacon pieces, and brown the chicken in the fat. Meanwhile, steep spices and bread in ale or beer (and broth, if used). When chicken is sufficiently brown, arrange it in a flameproof or ovenproof pan and add the bacon. Blend sauce ingredients - adding a little more liquid if it looks too thick - and pour over chicken. Cover tightly, and simmer over low heat or in a 350° oven about 30 minutes, checking every 10 minutes to see whether more liquid is required, and to stir. Salt to taste.

72 *Gees in Hoggepot*

Take gees and smyte hem on pecys; cast hem in a pot. Do þerto half wyne and half water, and do þerto a gode quantite of oynouns and erbes. Set it overe the fyre and

covere it fast. Make a layour of brede and blode & lay it þerwith; do þerto powdour fort and serve it fort. FC
33

Some versions of this recipe call for the goose to be browned first; this and other departures from the base recipe have been borrowed for the version below. This makes a large quantity: but if you have half a leftover roast goose, halve the other ingredients and the cooking time. The goose will already be browned and will have rendered its fat, so that the recipe will be much simplified.

Hodgepodge of Goose

- 1 goose, cut into pieces
- 4 medium onions, minced
- 2 cups each beef stock and red wine
- 2 tbsp minced parsley
- 2 tsp each (less if dried) minced sage, thyme, and savory
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each pepper, ginger, cinnamon, ground or mixed with 1
tbsp lemon juice or vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- 4 slices bread, preferably whole wheat, lightly toasted

Reserving the liver for a later stage, brown goose pieces in a heavy frying pan (or under a broiler or in a hot oven), turning frequently. Fry onions in some of the drippings when goose is brown, but do not let onions brown. Put goose and onions in a Dutch oven or other suitable pot; add stock, wine, and herbs. Bring to a boil; turn down heat, cover, and simmer (or bake in 325° oven) about an hour. Toward the end of this time, put toasted bread, torn up, into a blender jar with the uncooked goose liver and a few spoonfuls of cooking sauce (after skimming off excess fat). Let it soak for a few minutes, then blend. Stir this paste back into the (degreased) sauce in the pot, along with the spice paste and salt; cook, stirring, for a few more minutes before serving.

73 *Stwed Beef*

Take faire ribbes of ffresh beef, and (if thou wilt) roste hit til hit be nygh ynowe; then put hit in a faire possenet; caste þerto parcely and oynons mynced, reysons of corauns, powder peper, canel, clowes, saundres, safferon, and salt; then caste thereto wyn and a litull vynegre; sette a lyd on þe potte and lete hit boile sokingly on a faire charcole til hit be ynogh; þen lay the fflessch in disshes, and the sirippe thereuppon, and serve it forth. HARL 4016

Braised Beef Ribs

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 lbs boneless ribs of beef for braising, *or* about 1 lb more of the meat with the bone in
- 2-3 onions, minced
- 2 tbsp parsley, minced
- 2 tbsp currants
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each pepper, allspice
- 1 tsp salt
- scant pinch saffron
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups red wine
- 2 tsp wine vinegar

Brown beef by roasting it in an open pan in a hot oven for about 30 minutes. Then put it in a stew pot, casserole, or clay baker with all other ingredients (if using a clay baker, use only $\frac{3}{4}$ cup wine). Cover and cook over low heat or in a 325° oven (follow usual procedures for a clay baker) 45 minutes.

74 *Bruet of Sarcynesse*

Tak þe lyre of þe fresch buf & ket it al in pecis, & bred, & fry yt in fresch gres. Tak it vp & drye it, & do yt in a vessel wyþ wyn & sugur & powdre of clowys. Boyl yt togedere tyl þe flesch have drong þe lycoure, & tak

almande mylk & quibibz, macis & clowys, and boyle hem
togedere. Tak þe flesch & do þerto & messe it forth. DS
55

This should be a pleasantly spicy dish: it is the sugar and spices that make it 'Saracen.' But since people's idea of pleasantly spicy may vary, and so may the strength of the spices on the kitchen shelf, it is advisable to taste the sauce and consider whether you wish to add to the spicing.

Saracen Stew

2-4 oz (at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) ground almonds
1 cup water
2 lbs boneless stewing beef, cut into chunks
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup breadcrumbs (4 slices bread, finely ground)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fat, oil, or butter for browning
1 tbsp sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cloves
1 cup red wine
1 tsp ground cubebs, or $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each ground allspice, pepper
1 tsp ground mace
1 tsp salt

First, draw up a thick almond milk with the almonds and water (see introduction, xxi). Roll beef chunks in breadcrumbs; brown in fat or oil over medium heat, turning. As pieces become brown, remove and drain on paper towels. When all pieces are brown, put them in a clean pot. Dissolve sugar and half the cloves ($\frac{1}{4}$ tsp) in wine; pour this over meat. Cover and simmer or bake about 40 minutes. If more than a spoonful or two of sauce still remains, uncover to allow excess moisture to evaporate. It should not be *completely* dried out, but the liquid should be well absorbed.

Just before serving, stir the almond milk and remaining seasonings with the meat over medium heat long enough for everything to be heated through.

75 *Sangler et Serfz Salez*

Soak your meat, then boil it and discard the first water; then wash it in fresh water and let it cool on a cloth, then cut it in slices and put it to boil in a very small amount of liquid, half water, half white wine. Then peel cooked chestnuts, and put them on the platter with your game and its broth; eat with mustard. VT 7

Salt boar and venison are probably impossible to find today, but salt beef is to be found everywhere – now as in the Middle Ages, when it was one of the most common staple dishes. Beef was often cooked in the same way as venison, and this is an interesting way to serve corned beef.

Corned Beef with Chestnuts

4–5 lb piece of corned beef

1–2 cups white wine

1½ lb chestnuts *or* a can of shelled chestnuts (*not* ‘water chestnuts’!)
mustard (preferably Lumbard mustard: see recipe 53) as a side dish

Cover beef with water and bring to a boil; simmer about 3 hours, then drain, rinse, and let cool. Slice thinly, and put back to cook for another ½ hour in a mixture of white wine and fresh water to barely cover. Meanwhile, roast chestnuts: after cutting a criss-cross gash on the bottom of each nut, place on an oiled baking sheet and bake 20 minutes in a 450° oven. When they are cool enough to handle, peel the nuts.

Just before serving, arrange slices of meat on a serving dish and scatter chestnuts on top. Strain cooking broth, bring to a boil, and pour over the dish.

76 *Brawn en Peverade*

Take myghty brothe of beef or of capoun, an þenne take clene freysshe brawn, an ... roste it, but not inow, and

þan leche it in pecys an caste it to þe brothe. An þanne take hoole oynonys, & pylle hem, and þanne take vynegre þerto, and canelle ... and draw yt þorw a straynoure, and caste þerto; þen take clowes, maces, an powder pepyr, and caste þerto, and a lytil saunderys, and sette it on þe fyre, an let boyle tylle þe oynonys an þe brawn ben evyne sothyn, an nowt to moche; þan take lykoure ymad of bred an vinegre an wyne, an sesyn it up an caste þerto saffroun to make þe coloure bryth, an salt, and serve it forth. HARL 279.1.32.

Pork in Pepper Sauce

3 lbs boneless pork tenderloin *or* 4-lb lean, tender pork roast (not small chunks)
24 very small onions (1 inch diameter) or fewer slightly larger ones, peeled
1 tsp salt, or to taste
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each mace, freshly ground black pepper
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp cinnamon
pinch ground cloves
3 tsp wine vinegar
2 cups beef broth
3 tbs red wine
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup breadcrumbs *or* 1–2 slices bread, soaked in the wine
optional: pinch saffron, sandalwood spice

Brown pork in a frying pan, then put it in a casserole with onions, salt, spices, and 1 tsp of the vinegar. Pour the beef broth over, cover tightly, and cook in a 350° oven about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, until meat is done. Remove it to a serving platter and slice neatly. Keep it warm in the turned-off oven while making sauce.

Strain cooking juices into a bowl, reserving onions. Blend breadcrumbs or soaked bread with wine and 2 tsp vinegar until very smooth; beat in cooking juices and stir in a saucepan with the reserved onions until sauce is hot, smooth, and thick; then pour sauce over the meat on its platter and serve.

77 *Tartlettes*

Take pork yside and grynde it small with safroun; medle it with ayren, and raisouns of coraunce, and powdour fort and salt, and make a foile of dowh³ and close the fars perinne. Cast þe tartletes in a panne with faire water boillyng and salt. Take of the clene flessch with oute ayren & boile it in gode broth. Cast þer powdour douce and salt, and messe the tartletes in disshes & helde the sewe þeronne. FC 51

Pork Dumplings in Broth

2 cups ground cooked pork

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup currants

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

pinch to $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp any or all of: ground cloves, ginger, pepper, cubebs, galingale (about 1 tsp powdour fort)

1 egg, beaten

2 cups meat or chicken broth

pinch to $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp any or all of: cinnamon, cardamom, coriander, mace (about 1 tsp powdour douce)

In a small bowl mix one cup of ground cooked pork, currants, salt, fort spices, and egg. Either make a noodle dough and roll it very thin or buy commercially made sheets of dough (those sold for egg rolls or wontons will do). Cut into 2-inch squares. Moisten the edge of the paste with beaten egg or water, place a spoonful of the meat mixture in the middle, and fold over so the edges meet, to make a triangular shape. Press edges together. Boil the tartlets in salted water until the paste is cooked. Add the other cup of ground cooked pork to the broth with douce spices and salt. Heat the mixture, add the tartlets, and serve.

78 *Būrān*

Take eggplant, and boil lightly in water and salt, then take out and dry for an hour. Fry this in fresh sesame

oil until cooked; peel, put into a dish or a large cup, and beat well with a ladle, until it becomes like *kabīs*. Add a little salt and dry coriander. Take some Persian milk, mix in garlic, pour over the eggplant, and mix together well. Take red meat, mince fine, make into small cabobs, and melting fresh tail, throw the meat into it, stirring until browned. Then cover with water, and stew until the water has evaporated and only the oils remain. Pour on top of this the eggplant, sprinkle with fine ground cumin and cinnamon, and serve. BCB III.7

We can't tell you what *kabīs* was like, but it was obviously a purée. We do know that 'Persian milk' means yoghurt, still a very common ingredient in modern Iran, as elsewhere in the Middle East. The melted 'tail' is the usual cooking fat of this collection: tallow. This dish may suggest the Greek classic, Moussaka, but it is more exotic – and more medieval. Lamb was the usual meat, but we find beef very good for this dish. Baking the eggplant in the more usual way (preferably in a microwave) will yield a more attractive, greener sauce: but it will also be more watery. If you wish to use this shortcut, drain the yoghurt thoroughly, making it into 'yoghurt cheese,' which is less bitter and a lot less liquid. In any case, we advise using some parsley to make the sauce more attractive.

Meatballs in Eggplant Sauce

- 1 large eggplant (1 ½–2 lbs)
- sesame oil
- 1 lb ground lean lamb or beef (unless you can re-grind it yourself, ask the butcher to grind it twice)
- ½ tsp salt (or a bit more)
- 1 tsp ground coriander seed
- ½ cup plain yoghurt plus a pinch of salt
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 tbsp finely minced (or ground) parsley (optional)
- ½ tsp ground cumin + ¼ tsp cinnamon, mixed

Parboil eggplant in salted water for 10 minutes, then remove and set aside to drain, cool, and dry for an hour or more. Cover the bottom of a frying pan (or, if possible, a fireproof dish you can take to the table) with sesame oil, and cook eggplant in this over low to medium heat, turning from time to time, until very soft. Remove from the pan, and allow to cool a little.

Meanwhile, put yoghurt into a yoghurt strainer or a fine strainer lined with coffee filter paper or two layers of paper towels, so that some of the liquid will drain out: it need not be completely drained, like *lebna*, or 'yoghurt cheese.' Re-grind the meat (unless you have already had it ground twice) and make it into meatballs about 1 1/2 inch in diameter; brown quickly in the previously used pan, then add enough salted water to cover, and simmer uncovered. When it is cool enough to handle, peel the eggplant and remove stem; purée it with the salt and coriander, mashing thoroughly with a fork or processing in a blender or processor; then blend in yoghurt, garlic, and optional parsley. When the water in which the meatballs are cooking has evaporated, leaving only a little syrup in the pan, pour the eggplant mixture over the meatballs and reheat gently. Sprinkle with cumin and cinnamon and serve (preferably in the pan in which it was cooked).

79 *Mounchelet*

Take veel oper motoun and smyte it to gobettes. Seep it in gode broth; cast perto erbes yhewe gode won, and a quantite of oynouns mynced, powdour fort and safroun, and alye it with ayren and verjous: but lat not seep after. FC 18

This dish bears some resemblance to a modern *blanquette de veau*, and veal is definitely the preferable meat for the dish.

Veal (or Lamb) Stew

- 1 1/2-2 lbs stewing veal
- 2 medium onions, minced
- 1 tbs minced parsley
- 1 tsp each fresh thyme, rosemary, savory or 1/2 tsp dried
- 1/4 tsp each ground ginger, coriander

salt to taste

1 ½-2 cups chicken broth

1 cup white wine

1 egg

juice of ½ lemon (or 1 tbsp white wine or cider vinegar)

optional: pinch saffron

Cut veal into pieces 2 inches square and put in an enamelled, pyrex, or non-stick cooking pot. Add onions, herbs, and spices; cover with wine and broth. Simmer for 45 minutes, covered. Beat egg with lemon juice or vinegar; pour a little of the hot (but not boiling) sauce into this mixture, stirring, then add this to the contents of the pot, off the heat. Stir over very low heat to thicken, taking care not to let it boil after the egg is added.

80 *Mishmishiya*

Cut fat meat small, put into the saucepan with a little salt, and cover with water. Boil, and remove the scum. Cut up onions, wash, and throw in on top of the meat. Add seasonings: coriander, cumin, mastic, cinnamon, pepper, and ginger, well ground. Take dry apricots, soak in hot water, then wash and put into a separate saucepan, and boil lightly; take out, wipe in the hands, and strain through a sieve. Take the juice, and add it to the saucepan to form a broth. Take sweet almonds, grind fine, moisten with a little apricot juice, and throw in. Some colour with a trifle of saffron. Spray the saucepan with a little rosewater, wipe its sides with a clean rag, and leave to settle over the fire; then remove. BCB I.19

Lamb Stewed in Apricot Sauce

2 lbs boneless lamb, in chunks

1 tsp salt

1-2 onions, finely chopped

1 tsp each ground coriander, cumin

½ tsp each ground pepper, cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground ginger

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb dried apricots, soaked in boiling water 15 minutes, boiled 5 minutes, and puréed in a blender

2 oz ground almonds

1 tsp rosewater

optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp pulverized mastic, pinch of saffron

As directed in the original translated recipe above, cook the lamb with onion and seasonings over a low heat, covered, until tender, at least 1 hour. Meanwhile, prepare apricot purée. Moisten ground almonds with a little of the purée, and add, with the rest of the apricot mixture, for the last few minutes of cooking. Sprinkle on rosewater. Remove from heat, cover, and let stand in a warm place at least 5 minutes before serving.

81 *Hericot de Mouton*

Cut it up in little pieces, then put it to parboil in a first water. Then fry it in fresh lard; fry it with onions minced small and cooked, and add beef boullion, and put with it maces, parsley, hyssop, and sage; boil it together. MP

64

'Hericot' or 'Haricot' (the title in later versions) has nothing to do with the French word meaning a bean. An alternate meaning of the word in French is a mutton stew, which is exactly what this dish is. Latter versions of this dish, in both France and England, invariably included turnips as well as onions, and you can add turnips, if you like, to this recipe.

Fricassee of Lamb or Mutton

3 lbs stewing lamb or mutton, cut up

4 onions, minced

1 tbsp lard, butter, or oil (for browning)

2 cups beef, or other meat, broth

1-2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

1 tsp salt, or to taste

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each minced sage, mint (we have not found dried hyssop satisfactory, but if you have the right kind in your garden, by all means use it)

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground mace

Remove bones and excess fat from meat. Brown over medium heat in a frying pan, using some of the excess fat if necessary, and adding minced onions when meat has begun to brown. When both meat and onions are browned enough, put in a pot or casserole with broth, herbs, salt, and mace; cover and simmer, or cook in a medium oven, about 1 hour. If the sauce seems too thin, a thickener may be used (eg, bread) but it should boil down to a good consistency.

82 *Madira*

Cut fat meat into middling pieces with the tail: if chickens are used, quarter them. Put into the saucepan with a little salt, and cover with water: boil, removing the scum. When almost cooked, take large onions and Nabatean leeks, peel, cut off the tails, wash in salt and water, dry and put into the pot. Add dry coriander, cumin, mastic and cinnamon, ground fine. When cooked, and the juices are dried up, so that only the oil remains, ladle out into a large bowl. Now take Persian milk as required, and put into the saucepan, adding salted lemon and fresh mint. Leave to boil: then take off the fire, stirring. When the boiling has subsided, put back the meat and herbs. Cover the saucepan, wipe its sides, and leave to settle over the fire: then remove. BCB I.23

This dish calls for lamb or chicken, and either is good this way. A dish very like this, for chicken or lamb in yoghurt sauce, although without spices and calling for preserved orange peel rather than salted lemon, appears in Nesta Ramazani's *Persian Cooking* (University Press of Virginia, 1982), 149.

Lamb or Chicken in Yoghurt Sauce

2 lbs boneless lamb chunks *or* 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb chicken, cut up

2 cups plain yoghurt plus $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

2 medium-large onions, thickly sliced

2–4 leeks, trimmed (with coarse dark green top removed), washed, thickly sliced (if large), and left to drain

1 tsp each ground coriander, cumin

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon

juice of 1 lemon *or* one pickled lemon, thinly sliced (see note below)

1 tbsp fresh mint, chopped

salt to taste

optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp pulverized mastic

Put lamb or chicken in a large saucepan, add salted water to cover and bring to a boil. Turn down heat and skim off foam or scum; then cover and simmer 20–30 minutes. Meanwhile, drain the yoghurt as in Recipe 78, but it need not be completely drained, like *lebna* 'yoghurt cheese.' When the meat is almost done, add onions, leeks, and spices; cook over low heat, uncovered, until the water has evaporated and the meat and vegetables are cooked. Remove meat to a bowl; you may prefer to skin the chicken (if used) at this point.

Put the partially drained yoghurt in the cooking pan with the lemon, mint, and, if not using pickled lemon, salt to taste. Bring to a simmer (not a full boil, or it may curdle), then remove from heat, stir in meat, cover, and let stand at least 5 minutes in a warm place.

NOTE ON PICKLED LEMON (adapting one ancient Arabic recipe): Slice lemon lengthwise into wedges, and rub with coarse salt; wrap up lemon and set aside for 2 days. Then cover salted lemon with lemon juice and (olive) oil and store in a suitable jar at least a week. Or follow the suggestion of Claudia Roden in *A New Book of Middle Eastern Food* (Harmonsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985), 396: freeze lemon wedges or slices, then salt them; they will

be softened in about an hour, and need be stored in oil only a few days. Also see Charles Perry's article in *PPC* 50 (1995): 22-4.

83 *Egurdouce*

Take connynge or kydde, and smyte hem on pecys rawe, and fry hem in white grece. Take raysouns of coraunce and fry hem. Take oynouns, perboile hem and hewe hem small and fry hem. Take rede wyne and a lytel vynegr, sugur with powdour of peper, of gynger, of canel, salt; and cast þerto, and lat it seep with a gode quantite of white grece, & serve it forth. FC 23

'Egurdouce' means sweet-and-sour; oddly, many recipes omit one or the other essential aspect. Most manuscripts of *The Forme of Cury* omit the sour part, and the only one which includes the vinegar forgets the sugar. We have added the breadcrumb thickener found in parallel recipes. Lamb is suggested as a reasonable substitute for kid.

Sweet and Sour Lamb (or Rabbit or Kid)

2-3 lbs stewing lamb, cut into 2 inch chunks (or rabbit, cut up)

2 tbsp butter or other cooking fat

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup currants

2-3 onions

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups red wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each ginger, cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp pepper

1 tsp salt, or to taste

2 tbsp breadcrumbs

optional: chopped parsley, sage, and/or other herbs

Melt butter or fat in a frying pan or Dutch oven and brown meat in it; when it is almost brown enough, add currants. Meanwhile, cover onions with cold water and bring to a boil, then

drain off water and chop onions; add them to meat and currants and fry a few minutes more. Then add wine, vinegar, sugar, and seasonings; cover and let simmer about 45 minutes. Thicken with breadcrumbs, mixed to a paste with some of the sauce.

84 *Coney or Malard in Cevy*

Take cony, henne, or malard and rost them til they be almost enoughe, or els chope them and fry them in freche grece; and fry onyons mynced and put them in a pot and cast ther to freche brothe and half wyne, clowes, maces, poulder of guinger and pepper, and draw it with venygar; and when it is boiled cast therto thy licour and poulder of guingere and venygar and session it, and serve it. NBC

Like the previous recipe, this one omits the bread thickening called for elsewhere.

Rabbit (or Duck or Chicken) in Onion Sauce

1 rabbit (or duck or chicken), whole or cut up
3–4 onions, sliced or chopped (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ –2 cups)
2 tbsp cooking fat
2 slices bread (preferably whole wheat), toasted
1 cup each chicken broth, red wine
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ginger, pepper (or increase the ginger)
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp mace
pinch ground cloves
salt to taste
1 tbsp wine vinegar
optional: chopped parsley (as a garnish)

Roast meat until brown, then cut up, *or* brown pieces of meat in the fat. When it is sufficiently brown, add onions to the pan and cook until soft. Meanwhile, soak toast in broth, and then blend into a smooth sauce. Combine wine, vinegar, and spices. Add the toast-thickened broth to the meat and onion mixture, along with wine and vinegar, and spices. Let the meat stew in

this sauce until done, or long enough for the flavours to blend (30 minutes for pieces browned in fat, and 10–15 minutes for roasted meat. But overcooking will not hurt this stew).

85 *Roo Broth*

Take the lire of the boor oper of the roo, perboile it. Smyte it on smale peces; seep it wel half in water and half in wyne. Take brede and bray it wip the self broth and drawe blode perto, and lat it seeth togydre with powdour fort: of gynger oper canell and macys, with a grete porcioun of vyneger, with raysouns of corauns. FC 16

This ‘broth’ is called a ‘bruet’ (thick stew) in later versions. We have used this only for venison, since wild boar has not been available in our market areas; if you can’t get either, you could use pork. A later version (*OP* 48) adds onions and herbs but omits currants and vinegar, which we retain: most venison stews of the period call for vinegar, and the currants are needed to balance a ‘grete porcioun’ of vinegar. Cinnamon and pepper are usually the predominant spices for venison. We prefer to brown the meat, as do other venison bruets, instead of parboiling; this improves the flavour, and venison, which is very lean, needs some fat. If your venison is likely to be tough, marinate it in the wine, vinegar, and seasonings. The stew will be further improved if you make it a day ahead of time and reheat it.

Venison Stew

- 2 ½ lbs venison stew meat, cut in chunks
- 1 ½–2 cups (375 ml, or half a bottle) red wine
- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- ½ cup olive oil, if you are first marinating the meat (optional)
- 2–3 onions, coarsely chopped
- ½ tsp dried thyme, or more if fresh
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ -1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground mace or 4 blades mace tied in cheesecloth
2-4 tbsp lard or other rendered fat (or olive oil)
2-3 slices whole wheat bread
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 cups water
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup currants
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped parsley

If venison has been frozen, thaw; save the meat juices that accumulate. To marinate meat, mix wine, vinegar, optional olive oil, onions, and seasonings (except parsley) and pour this mixture over meat. Cover and leave in the refrigerator for a day or two, then remove meat from marinade with a slotted spoon and dry it on paper towels.

Strain some marinade (or wine, if you didn't marinate) over the bread in a blender or processor jar; leave to soak while you brown the venison in fat or oil. As they brown, remove the pieces to a stew pot. When all are browned, blend the soaked bread and add it to the pot along with the water (with which you have rinsed the browning pan), the marinade (or remaining ingredients except currants and parsley), and any blood or meat juices left after thawing; bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer 1 hour. Then - or when reheating - add the currants and parsley, and cook for 30 minutes more. Taste for seasoning: you may wish to add salt, pepper, cinnamon, and/or vinegar.

86 *Garbage*

Take fayre garbagys of chykonys, as þe hed, þe fete, þe lyverys, an þe gysowrys; washe hem clene, an caste hem in a fayre potte, and caste þerto freysshe brothe of beef or ellys of moton, an let it boyle; an alye it wyth brede, an ley on pepir an safroun, maces, clowys, an a lytil verjous an salt, an serve forth in the maner as a sewe. HARL 279.1.17

Even the most enthusiastic of medievalists may feel qualms about serving or eating chicken heads, so be selective about which 'garbage' you use.

Giblets

1 lb chicken livers

1 lb giblets (hearts and gizzards)

1 cup beef broth

$\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup breadcrumbs, or 2–3 slices bread, crusts removed

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground pepper, mace

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground cloves

1 tsp cider or white wine vinegar, or lemon juice

salt to taste

optional: pinch of saffron, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground sage, 2 tbsp chopped parsley

Put gizzards and hearts in a saucepan with broth and bring to a boil; simmer 25–30 minutes, then add livers and cook another 5 minutes. Stir in spices, and saffron and sage, if desired. Blend the bread or breadcrumbs with the sauce and cook a few more minutes until it is well thickened. Add vinegar or lemon juice just before serving, and garnish with parsley (optional).

87 *Noumbles*

Take noumbles of deer ~~oper~~ of a ~~reper~~; perboile hem and kerf hem to dyce. Take the self broth or better, take brede and grynde with the broth, and temper it up with a gode quantite of vynegar and wyne. Take oynouns and perboyle hem, and mynce hem smale and do ~~perto~~. Colour it with blode, and do ~~perto~~ powder fort and salt, and boyle it wele, and serve it fort. FC 15

'Noumbles' could mean either loin meat or organ meat, but here the latter can reasonably be presumed, with kidneys as a preferable choice. A '~~reper~~' means an ox, and beef kidney is more likely to be available than deer kidney today.

Kidney Stew

2 beef kidneys (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 lbs)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup beef broth

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup breadcrumbs, or 1-2 slices bread, crusts removed

2 tbsp wine vinegar

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine

2-3 onions, peeled

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ginger, mace, pepper

salt to taste

Cover kidneys with cold salted water and bring to a boil; then pour off water and dice the kidneys. Blend bread or breadcrumbs with broth, and add wine and vinegar. Meanwhile, parboil onions in salted water 5 minutes, then drain and chop. Add them along with the seasonings and chopped kidneys to the sauce; cover and cook gently 25-30 minutes.

88 *A Tile of Meat*

Take cooked crayfish and remove the meat from the tails; the rest, shells and carcase, should be ground for a very long time. Then take unpeeled almonds and shell them and wash in hot water like peas, then grind with the shells mentioned above, and with them grind bread browned on the grill. Then take capons, chickens, and pullets, broken into quarters raw, or veal broken into portions, cooked; and with the broth in which they are cooked moisten and dilute what you have ground and then put it through a strainer. Then grind what is left in the strainer again and strain again. Add ginger, cinnamon, clove, and long pepper, moistened with verjuice without vinegar, and boil all this together. Now let your meat be cooked in lard in gobbets or quarters, and serve forth in bowls, and pour the sauce over it, and on the sauce, in each bowl, set four or five crayfish tails. MP 118

This dish, a real *pièce de résistance*, should not be attempted without a blender; even *with* one, it takes time and patience, but it is worth it. The quantity here will serve only four; it is inadvisable to cut up the chicken in smaller pieces because the quarters, plus the shellfish and sauce, make a remarkable pattern, rather like a decorative tile. We suspect that is why it is called 'a tile,' although it is also true that the shellfish form a 'tile' roof covering the rest of the dish.

Chicken and Shellfish in Shellfish Sauce

1 frying chicken, cut into quarters
2-3 tbsp cooking fat
4-8 crayfish, lobster tails, scampi, or *large* shrimps
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup blanched almonds
1-2 slices toasted white bread, crusts removed
2 cups chicken broth
1 tsp lemon juice, or cider vinegar
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground ginger
pinch each cinnamon, ground cloves, pepper
salt to taste

Cover the shellfish with white wine and water, salted, and cook about 5 minutes, depending on size. Drain, reserving broth (to add to the chicken broth), and shell, keeping the tails or shrimps whole; reserve shells but discard debris such as roe. Soak the toasted bread in a little of the broth. Dry the shells with paper towels and put through a meat grinder or grind in a food processor. Then put the ground shells in a blender with the almonds, bread, and enough broth to cover; blend until very finely pulverized and as smooth as possible. Rub through a strainer; return what is left in the strainer to the blender, add a bit more broth, and repeat the process. Put the strained mixture in a saucepan and stir in any remaining broth. Add the spices, mixed with the lemon juice or vinegar, and bring to a boil. Stir for about 5 minutes or until slightly thickened; then cover and set aside.

Sauté the chicken pieces in fat, turning to brown both sides (25-30 minutes). When you are ready to serve the dish, reheat

the shellfish in a little of the sauce, while also reheating the rest of the sauce. Arrange the chicken in a quartered circle on a fairly deep platter or tray; pour the sauce over it. Then arrange the shellfish between and over the pieces of chicken into a tile-like pattern and serve.

This page intentionally left blank

*Broiled, Baked, and
Roasted Dishes*



This page intentionally left blank

This section includes the pies, tarts, and pasties referred to as 'bakemetes' in Middle English collections, as well as recipes for broiled and/or braised dishes and a few very special roasts.

89 *Samon Roste in Sauce*

Take a salmond and cut him rounde, chyne and all, and roste the peces on a gredire; and take wyne and powder of canell, and drawe it þorgh a streynour; and take smale myced oynons, and caste þereto, and lete hem boyle, and þen take vynegre or vergeous, and powder ginger, and cast thereto. And þen ley the samon in a dissh, and cast þe sirip þeron al hote, & serve it forth. HARL 4016

Grilled Salmon Steaks in Sauce

6 salmon steaks (3 lbs)

1 cup white wine

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp cinnamon

1 onion, or 3-4 scallions (green or spring onions), finely minced

juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon, or 1 tbsp vinegar

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ginger

salt to taste

Brush the salmon steaks with cooking oil or melted butter and broil them. Meanwhile, put onions in a saucepan with the wine and cinnamon and bring to a boil; turn down heat and simmer gently. When salmon steaks are browned on both sides, add the lemon or vinegar and ginger to the sauce. Put salmon on a serving dish and pour the sauce over it.

90 *Turbot Roste Ensauce*

Take a turbut and kut of þe vynes in maner of a hastelette and broche him on a rounde broche, and roast him. And whan hit is half yrosted, cast thereon smale salt as he rosteth. And take also as he rosteth vergeous or vinegre, wyne, powder of gynger, and a litull canell, and cast

thereon as he rosteth; and hold a dissh underneth fore spilling of the licour. And whan hit is roasted ynowe, hete be same sauce over the fire and caste hit in a dissh to be fissh all hote, and serve it forth. HARL 4016

Roast Turbot in Sauce

1 large turbot, skinned, or 2 fillets
1 tsp salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ginger
pinch cinnamon
2 tbsp lemon juice or vinegar

Grill the turbot in a broiler, with a pan underneath to catch the juices. When it is about half done (5–10 minutes), mix together salt and spices and sprinkle over the fish; sprinkle with lemon juice or vinegar and continue broiling. When fish is done, remove to a serving platter; rewarm the pan drippings (if necessary) and pour them over the fish.

91 *Brochès au romarin*

Put them to roast well on the griddle so that they are well cooked. For the sauce to put on them: red wine, verjuice, a very little vinegar, and some ginger and some rosemary, and cook them all together in an earthenware pot; and when the pike are cooked, pour it over. MP App

Pike in Rosemary Sauce

1–2 whole pike (or pickerel), cleaned for roasting or split for broiling
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red wine
2 tsp wine or cider vinegar
1 tsp chopped fresh rosemary, or $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground ginger

Grill the pike in a broiler or over charcoal. While it cooks, mix the sauce ingredients and simmer over low heat for at least 10 minutes. If too much of the wine evaporates, add a little water:

but it should boil down a bit. When the fish is done, salt it and pour the sauce over it on a serving platter.

92 *Calamari*

The big ones are cut into pieces and boiled, and then fried a little, with finely chopped parsley and spices, and eaten with orange juice. PLATINA X

In his similar recipe for cuttlefish, Platina specifies that the seasonings to be used are pepper, cinnamon, coriander, and mint.

Fried Squid

2 lbs squid (preferably cleaned)

3 tbsp olive oil

2 tbsp finely chopped parsley

1 tsp ground coriander seed

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each cinnamon, finely chopped mint, pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup bitter orange juice (or sweet orange + lemon)

Wash squid and remove skin and ink bag if necessary. Cut into rings and chop tentacles. Boil gently in salted water 5–10 minutes and drain. Heat oil in a frying pan, add squid, then seasonings, and fry 5 minutes, stirring briskly. Remove to platter and squeeze combined orange and lemon juice over just before serving.

93 *L'orengue de pouchins, ou de perdris ou de pigeons*

Take the oranges and slice them in white verjuice and white wine, and put them to boil, and put in ginger; and put your poultry to cook in this. MP App

The series of recipes in which this appears is for sauces in which to finish roasted poultry and rabbits.

Small Chicken (or Partridge or Pigeon) in Orange Sauce

2-3 Cornish hens, broiling chickens, partridges, or pigeons

2 oranges, sliced but not peeled

1 cup white wine

juice of 1 lemon (if using sweet oranges)

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ginger

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt, or to taste

Roast or broil poultry; when it is almost done, put sauce ingredients in a pan and cook, gently, about 15 minutes. Cut poultry into serving pieces (if necessary); add to sauce and simmer another 15 minutes before serving.

94 *Chike Endored*

Take a chike, and drawe him, and roste him, and lete the fete be on, and take away the hede; then make batur of yolkes of eyron and floure, and caste therto poudre of ginger, and peper, saffron, and salt, and powder hit faire til hit be roasted ynogh. HARL 4016

The basic essential for gilding is yolk of egg, beaten. Any other ingredients are variable and optional; we find we prefer a plain egg-yolk gilding, as the taste of saffron, for example, can be a bit overwhelming.

Gilded Chicken

1 roasting chicken (about 3 lbs)

2 egg yolks, beaten (do not substitute a whole egg here)

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

optional: small pinch of saffron

Roast the chicken, basting with the pan drippings as it roasts. About half an hour before it is done, brush it with beaten egg yolk seasoned with salt (plus saffron, if desired); repeat the brushing once or twice until the chicken is done.

NOTE: Sir Kenelm Digby (d 1665) reported, on the subject of roast chicken, 'The Queen useth to baste such meat with yolks of fresh Eggs beaten thin': but we rather doubt that 17th-century royalty frequented the kitchen the way today's celebrities are said to do.

95 *Capons Stwed*

Take parcelly, sauge, isoppe, rosemary, and tyme, and breke hit bitwen thi hondes, and stoppe the capon therewith; colour hym with safferon, and couche him in a erthen potte, or of brasse, and ley splentes underneth and al abouȝt the sides, that the capon touche no thinge of the potte. Strawe good herbes in þe potte, and put thereto a pottel of the best wyn that thou may gete, and none other licour; hele the potte with a close led and stoppe hit abouȝte with dogh or bater, that no eier come oute, and set hit on þe faire charcole, and lete it seeth easly and longe till hit be ynowe. And if hit be an erthen potte, þen set hit on þe fire whan þou takest hit downe, and lete hit not touche þe grounde for breking. And whan þe hete is over past, take out the capon with a prik; then make a sirippe of wyne, reysons of corance, sugar and safferon, and boile hit a litull; medel powder of ginger with a litul of the same wyn and do þereto; then do awaye the fatte of the sewe of the capon, and do the siryppe to þe sewe, and powre hit on þe capon, and serve it forth. HARL 4016

This is, of course, not a stew, but a braised dish, and one best suited for a clay baker – if you have one large enough to hold a capon. An oval metal roasting pot or large oval casserole will do, if the top is firmly sealed, but it won't produce quite as good results. A roasting chicken may be substituted for the capon, but fresh herbs are very important here. Fortunately, the ones called for are apt to be easily available, except for hyssop, for which mint may be substituted.

Braised Capon or Chicken

1 capon or roasting chicken

handful parsley

3-4 sprigs each fresh sage, thyme, rosemary, and hyssop (or mint)

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground saffron

2 cups red or white wine

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup currants

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger

Crush the herbs in your hand and use about half of them to stuff the capon or chicken. Truss it to hold its shape, rub it with saffron, and put it on a rack in a soaked clay baker, with the rest of the herbs under the rack. Pour one cup of the wine around the bird; cover with a piece of wax paper large enough to come between the pot and the lid when the lid is put on, to help assure a tight fit. Bake for the usual amount of time. When it is almost done, mix the currants, sugar, and most of the remaining wine in a saucepan and simmer 5 minutes. Then mix the ginger in the last bit of wine and stir this into the syrup.

Remove the cooked bird to a serving platter. Strain and degrease the juices in the pot, and stir in the currants in syrup. Pour this sauce over the bird and serve.

96 *Gees with Sawse Madame*

Take sawge, persel, ysope and saveray, quinces and peeres, garlek and grapes, and fylle the gees þerwith; and sowe the hole þat no grece come out, and roost hem wel, and kepe the grece þat fallith þerof. Take galyntyne and grece and do in a possynet. Whan the gees both roasted ynowh, take hem of & smyte hem on pecys, and take þat þat is withinne and do it in a possynet and put þerinne wyne, if it be to thyk; do þerto powdour of galyngale, powdour douce, and salt and boyle the sawse, and dresse þe gees in disshes & lay þe sewe onoward. FC 32

Goose with Sauce Madame

1 goose

1-2 tbsp each fresh sage, parsley, hyssop (or mint), and savory,
or $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each if dried

1-2 hard pears, peeled, cored, and chopped

1-2 quinces, if available (or use sharp apples); pared, cored, and
chopped

2-3 cloves garlic, mashed or finely minced

1 cup seedless or seeded grapes

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup breadcrumbs

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp galingale or ginger

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt, or to taste

Stuff the goose with a mixture of herbs, fruits, and garlic; sew or skewer closed and roast on a rack in an open pan in a 325° oven for 30 minutes per pound. Pour off the fat as it accumulates, and set aside. When goose is almost done, make a sauce by blending the breadcrumbs, spices, vinegar, and wine, with up to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the accumulated fat. You can pour this sauce over the goose, serve it separately, or, most authentically, cut up the goose into serving portions, after removing the stuffing and mixing it with the breadcrumb-thickened sauce, and serve pieces of goose on a platter around or under the sauce.

97 *Stekys of Venson or Bef*

Tak venyson or bef, & leche, and gredyl it up broun; þen take vynegre & a lytil verjous, & a lytil wyne, and put pouder perpir þeron ynow, and pouder gyngere; & atte þe dressoure straw on pouder canelle ynow, þat þe stekys be al yhelid þerwyth, & but a litel sawse; & þan serve it forth. HARL 279.2.31

This recipe does more for venison than it does for good beef; but it is pleasant for beef, if you exercise restraint with the cinnamon.

Venison or Beef Steaks

2 lbs venison or beef steaks; a thick piece such as flank steak (London broil), which can be sliced on the bias before saucing, is ideal

1 tbsp vinegar

2 tbsp red wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp pepper

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ginger

$\frac{1}{8}$ -2 tsp cinnamon (less if using beef, more with venison)

optional: oil to brush onto the meat before grilling

It is almost imperative to brush venison with oil, as it is very lean meat, and beef may benefit from this treatment, too. Grill the steak on a grill pan or barbecue grill or under a broiler, according to size and thickness, removing to a serving platter as soon as it is brown. Mix together vinegar, wine, and seasonings, and spoon over the meat. (Or, if you are using the larger quantity of cinnamon, sprinkle directly on the meat, then pour the sauce over.)

98 *Alows de Beef or de Motoun*

Take fayre bef of þe quyschons, & motoun of þe bottles, & kytte in þe maner of stekys; þan take raw percely, & oynonys smal yscredde, & zolkys of eyroun soþe hard, & marow or swette, & hew alle þes togeder smal; þan caste þeron poudere of gyngere & saffroun, & tolle hem togederys with þin hond, & lay hem on þe stekys al abrode, & caste salt þerto; þen rolle togederys, & putte hem on a round spete, & roste hem til þey ben ynow. þan lay hem in a dysse and pore þeron vynegre & a lityl

**verjous, & powder pepir peron ynow, & gyngere, & canelle,
& a fewe zolkys of hard eyroun ykremyd peron; & serve
forth.** HARL 279.2.30

This dish is still popular in France, where it rejoices in the name 'alouettes sans tête.' 'Alows' is derived from the French word for a lark; the dish, sometimes made with veal, was well-known in France and Italy, too. If you make your rolls with protruding flaps on each side, to represent the wings of the bird, and glaze the 'birds' with beaten egg yolk or thin pancake batter – as some recipes suggest – you will have a sort of 'subtlety.'

Beef (or Veal or Lamb) Birds

4 thin slices of beef, lamb, or veal (1 lb)

1 tbsp finely minced parsley

1 medium onion, minced

yolks of 2 boiled eggs

1–2 tbsp bone marrow, suet, lard, or butter

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground ginger

either: dashes of pepper, ginger, and cinnamon dissolved in juice
of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon or 1 tbsp vinegar, *or* 2 beaten egg yolks or a thin
batter of flour and egg

optional: ca $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each fennel seed, marjoram; pinch ground
saffron

Beat the meat slices (carefully!) with a wooden mallet or the flat side of a large knife to flatten them as thinly as possible, as you would for veal scallopini. If using veal or lamb, you may wish to follow the advice of Platina at this point, and rub the slices with fennel seeds, ground with a little of the salt. Make the stuffing with the minced onion, parsley, optional marjoram (recommended by Platina for veal birds), egg yolks (may be omitted if you increase the fat otherwise), fat of your choice, and seasonings. Spread this mixture in the middle of each piece of meat, and roll the rest of the meat around, fastening the 'bird' with toothpicks and/or string. Paint with the glaze, if desired. Put on skewers and broil about 5 minutes: do *not* overcook! When it is browned and/or nicely cooked, put in a serving dish, and if you

have not glazed the 'birds,' crumble a boiled egg yolk or two over them, add a little salt, and pour over the optional sauce ingredients.

99 *Pulmentarium in Carbone*

Cut up lean meat from the haunch of veal into morsels that are not too thick, then sprinkle them with one part each of salt and well-ground fennel seed and press them between two boards for half an hour. Then over the grill cook them over the coals. Turn them often on both sides and add morsels of lard so that they do not dry out on the fire. This relish should not be cooked too much and should be served to the guests hot. PLATINA VI

Platina goes on to say that this should be served very hot 'so that it excites the appetite more and the desire to drink. Use this thirst-making thing to make people drink.'

Grilled Veal Cutlets

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs boneless veal cutlets

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each fennel seed and coarse salt, ground together

2 oz diced lard, butter, or other fat (you may prefer olive oil)

Rub the veal with the mixture of fennel and salt, then put between layers of wax paper and pound until very thin. Dot or smear with fat or oil. Place on a grill or greased pan; cook very quickly, adding more fat as you turn the pieces, only until they are decently browned; then serve at once. As Platina suggests, they will be very nasty if overcooked.

100 *Bourbelier de Sanglier*

First put the loin in boiling water, then take it out and stick it all over with cloves. Set it to roast, basting it with a sauce made from spices: that is, ginger, cinnamon,

clove, grains, long pepper, and nutmeg, moistened with verjuice, wine, and vinegar; and baste with this without first boiling it. And when the roast is done, boil together. MP 146.

This recipe calls for a loin of wild boar; but since wild boar will not be found in the average supermarket, we have substituted pork. Those who want something more closely approximating the flavour of wild boar can try marinating the pork for a few days in a marinade of wine, vinegar, oil, and herbs; however, the roast is a tasty one without such preliminaries.

Loin of Pork in Boar's Tail Sauce

4-6 lb loin roast of pork

whole cloves

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each ground ginger, cardamom, pepper, salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each cinnamon, ground cloves, nutmeg

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine

1 cup vinegar

optional: 2 tbsp breadcrumbs

Push whole cloves into the loin at 1-2 inch intervals; mix together all other ingredients and pour over the pork. Roast in the usual way, basting from time to time. When the roast is done, pour off pan juices, degrease, and boil to make the sauce. If you wish to thicken the sauce, stir in breadcrumbs as it boils: other recipes for this dish specify just that.

101 *Cormarye*

Take colyaundre, caraway smale grounden, powdour of peper and garlec ygrounde, in rede wyne; medle alle þise togyder and salt it. Take loynes of pork rawe and fle of the skyn, and pryk it wel with a knyf, and lay it in the sawse. Roost it whan þou wilt, & kepe þat þat fallith þerfro in the rostyng and seep it in a possynet with faire broth, & serve it forth wiþ þe roost anoon. FC 54

This recipe tells us to marinate the roast, then use that marinade to baste the roast, with the dripping to be used as a sauce.

Roast Pork with Coriander-Caraway Sauce

5-7 lb pork loin roast

1-2 tsp each coriander and caraway seed

2-3 cloves garlic, crushed

1 cup red wine (or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, if using a clay baker)

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp pepper

Ideally, use a grinder or mortar for grinding seeds: not all blenders do this well. When they are ground as finely as you can manage, add the remaining sauce ingredients and blend thoroughly. Prick the loin of pork, pour the sauce over it in a container in which it will barely fit, and set aside for at least an hour or two to marinate. Roast in the usual way, basting with the pan juice from time to time (unless you are using a clay baker). When the roast is done, pour off the (degreased) drippings into a saucepan and add a small amount of pork or chicken broth. Stir and bring to a boil; thicken with breadcrumbs if you wish, and serve as a sauce for the pork.

102 *Haedus in Alio*

Grease a kid or a quarter of one with lard and cleaned garlic cloves; put it on a spit and turn it by the fire. Baste it often with sprigs of bay or rosemary and the sauce I shall now describe. Take verjuice and the juice of the meat, the yolks of two eggs well beaten, two cloves of garlic well pounded, a pinch of saffron and a little pepper, and mix this and pour into a dish. With this (as I said) you baste what you are cooking. When it is done, put it in a dish and pour some of the sauce over it and sprinkle with finely chopped parsley. PLATINA VI

Since it is difficult to find kid in most market areas, we substitute leg of lamb. If you use a spit, you may have to bone the lamb; and if you have a large rosemary bush, you can use a sprig in place of a pastry brush, omitting the dried rosemary we have substituted.

Glazed Leg of Lamb (or Kid) with Garlic and Rosemary

1 leg of lamb (preferably under 10 lbs)

2-3 cloves garlic

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried rosemary leaves

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground pepper

pinch saffron

2 egg yolks

juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon

2-3 tbsp chopped parsley

Preheat oven to 450°. Rub the surface of the lamb thoroughly with a peeled, cut clove of garlic - plus, if you wish, some grease or olive oil. Put the lamb in the oven in a roasting pan; after ten minutes, turn down the heat to 325°. When the lamb has been cooking 35 minutes, grind rosemary and saffron with pepper in a mortar or suitable electric grinder. When it is reduced to powder, add remaining garlic, crushed, and mix all to a paste; then blend in egg yolks and lemon juice. Take the lamb out of the oven and pour off accumulated drippings, adding them to the egg mixture; blend again, and pour this basting sauce into a bowl. Using a pastry brush, coat the lamb with this sauce and return to the oven.

Continue to roast the lamb, pouring out the drippings, stirring them into the sauce, and re-coating the lamb every 10-15 minutes. Time your lamb or use a roasting thermometer as you usually do for lamb, but do *not* overcook: it is better on the rare side. (Beautiful results were observed when the oven was turned off when the thermometer reached 150° but the lamb left in the oven while a first course was served.) In serving, pour the remaining sauce (including pan juices) over the lamb and sprinkle with parsley.

NOTE: Platina adds, 'Caeculus should not eat this because it dulls the eyesight and arouses dormant passions.' We have not noticed any such dramatic effects.

103 *Longe de Buf*

Nym þe tonge of þe rether & schalde, & schawe yt wel & ryzt clene, & seth yt; & sepe nym a broche, & larde yt wyþ lardons and wyþ clowys gelofre, & do it rostyg, & drop yt, wel yrostyð, wyþ zolkys of eyrin, & dresse it forþe. DS 43

While the larding technique is probably a very good idea, this is an art many modern cooks do not bother with, so our recipe is somewhat adapted here. Adepts with the larding needle are, however, urged to lard properly.

Gilded Roast Tongue

1 tongue, fresh or canned

6 strips fresh fat pork, or bacon, parboiled and drained
cloves (whole)

2 egg yolks, beaten: 1 will be enough for a small canned tongue

Parboil fresh tongue in water for about 2 hours. Peel, stud with cloves, and wrap in the pork strips or parboiled bacon. Roast in a 350° oven for about an hour. After 45 minutes, remove the pork and brush with the egg yolk.

104 *Crustardes of Eerbis*

Take gode eerbys and grynde hem smale with wallenotes pyked clene, a grete porcioun. Lye it up almost wiþ as myche verjous as water; seep it wel with powdour and safroun withoute salt. Make a crust in a trap and do þe fyssh þerinne, unstewed, wiþ a litel oile & gode powdour. Whan it is half ybake, do þe sewe þerto & bake it up.

If þou wilt make it clere of fyssh, seep ayren harde & take out þe zolkes & grinde hem with gode powdours, and alye it up with þo sewe and serve it forth. FC 164

This recipe gives hard-boiled egg yolks, mixed with the sauce, as an alternative to fish under the sauce; we suggest using both.

Quiche of Fish with Green Topping

two handfuls of greens: a good combination is about $\frac{2}{3}$ spinach plus a few leafy tops of fennel (use the bulb separately, eg, in Salat, 21), a few sprigs of parsley, and a scallion (green or spring onion) or two

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup walnut meats

juice of 1 lemon

3 tbsp water

1 lb fish fillets (sole, flounder, cod, etc)

pastry to line a pie plate or baking dish

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ginger, cinnamon

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt, or to taste

1–2 tbsp olive oil or other cooking oil

2 yolks of hard-boiled eggs

Line a suitable baking dish or pan with pastry, fluting the top edge. Place the fish fillets in the bottom and sprinkle oil and spices over them. Bake in a 350° oven 10–15 minutes. Meanwhile, mince greens and walnuts as finely as possible: one way to do this is to put them in a blender with the lemon juice and water. Put them in a saucepan with only this amount of liquid (ie, the lemon juice and water) and simmer 4–5 minutes. Mash egg yolks and mix them into the green sauce, adding salt to taste. Spread this mixture over the fish in the tart and bake another 10–15 minutes.

105 *Tartes of Fysshe*

Take eelys and samoun and smyte hem on pecys, & stewe it in almaund mylke and verious. Drawe up an almaund

mylk wiþ þe sewe. Pyke out þe bones clene of þe fyssh,
and save þe myddell pece hoole of þe eelys, & grinde þat
ooper fissh smale; and do þerto powdour, sugur & salt
and grated bread, & fors þe eelys þerwith þere as þe bonys
were. Medle þat ooperdele of þe fars & þe mylke togider,
& colour it with saundres. Make a crust in a trap as bifore,
and bake it þerin, and serve it forth. FC 178

Since eel is not always available in fish markets, we offer here
an alternative version.

Fish Tart

1 lb eel, sliced, or fillets of sole, flounder, etc
1 lb salmon (whatever is the cheapest cut)
pastry to line a *large* pie plate or shallow baking dish
juice of one lemon
1 tsp salt
2-4 oz ground almonds
1 slice white bread or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup crumbs
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each cinnamon, ginger
pinch of nutmeg
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp sugar

Put the lemon juice and salt in a cooking pot in which the fish
will fit, and stir in a little water. Put the salmon and eel (if used,
fillets should not be poached at this point) in the pot and add
just enough more water to cover the fish. Bring to a simmer
and cook gently for about ten minutes, then remove fish. Strain
the broth and measure 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (add more water if necessary);
draw up an almond milk (see introduction, xxi) with this broth.
Line the baking dish with pastry and remove skin and bones
from the poached fish. Put bread (torn, or in crumbs) in a blender
container with the spices, the skinned and boned salmon, and
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the almond milk; blend into a smooth thick paste.

If you are using fish fillets, cut them lengthwise into strips
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 inches wide. Roll these strips into round rings 3-4 inches
in diameter (with a hole about an inch in diameter in the middle),
arranging these rings in the pastry crust. If you are using eel,

it is easier to stuff the centres of the pieces of eel before putting them in the pie shell. In either case, then, stuff centres with the salmon mixture. Then add the rest of the almond milk to what is left of the salmon mixture (which should be about half) and blend again. Pour this over the fish in the tart. Bake in a 325° oven 40–50 minutes. Serve hot.

106 *Truittes en pasté*

Their season is from March until September. The white are good in the winter and the red in the summer ... Trout are cooked in water and half red wine, should be eaten with cameline and should be cut into sections of about one inch thick. On a meat day, in a pasty, they should be covered with large strips of fat pork. MP

179

Everywhere in Europe, from at least the 12th century on, fish, poultry, and meats were wrapped in pastry sheets and cooked this way – usually with bacon. If you want to try a meat version, the (boned) meat should probably be parboiled, as at least one recipe for a venison pastry suggests – or partially roasted, like a modern Beef Wellington (one of a number of modern versions of the same basic idea).

Trout in a Pasty

1–2 fillets of salmon trout (3 lbs), skinned

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ginger, cinnamon

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb sliced bacon, parboiled

pastry, plain or puff (full recipe)

Roll out the pastry into one large piece a little more than twice the size of the fillet; if using two fillets, one will be on top of the other, so you need only allow for extra thickness. Place the trout on the pastry on top of a layer of parboiled bacon; sprinkle with wine and seasonings. If using a second fillet, put it on top

and sprinkle again. Cover with another layer of bacon. Bring the rest of the pastry over to cover, and pinch the edges together. Bake in a 350° oven 35 minutes (or, if using puff pastry, 425° 20 minutes).

107 *Pastés de poucins à la mode Lombarde*

In the Lombard manner, when the small chickens are plucked and prepared, take beaten eggs, both the yolks and the whites, with verjuice and spice powder, and dip your chickens in this; and set them in the pasty with strips of bacon. MP 159

As a whole chicken in pastry is a problem in carving – unless the chicken is boned, a chore few cooks are prepared to execute – we have limited ourselves to breasts of chicken for this dish. The pasties are much neater if the breasts are boned, but that is not difficult to do. (Save the bones as an ingredient for broth or stock.) If it seems desirable to serve small versions of these as appetizers, simply cut the breasts in two or more portions.

Chicken Pasties Lombard

4 boned chicken breast halves (for four main course portions)
1 egg, beaten
1 tbsp lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger
pinch each ground cinnamon, cloves, cardamom
2–4 slices bacon
pastry, plain or puff (full recipe)

If regular breakfast bacon is to be used, cook it partially to take out some of the fat; or use back bacon ('Canadian bacon'), which has little fat. Roll out pastry and divide into 4 equal parts before it is completely rolled out; then try to make each piece as round as possible as you finish rolling.

Mix beaten egg, lemon juice, and spices, and dip the pieces of chicken in this mixture. Lay each piece on one side of a round

of pastry with a slice of bacon on top; bring the other half of the pastry over to cover and pinch edges together. For a neatly finished effect, press a fork around the edges to flute. Bake in a 350° oven 30–40 minutes, depending on size; if you are using puff pastry, the oven should be hotter and the time not so long.

108 *Crustardes of Flessh*

Take pejouns, chykens, and smale briddes; smyte hem in gobettes, & sethe hem alle ifere in god broþ & in gres wip verjows. Do þerto safroun & poudur fort. Make a crust in a trap, and pynche it, & cowche þe flessh þerinne; & cast þerinne raisouns coraunce, powdour douce and salt. Breke ayren and wryng hem thurgh a cloth & swyng þe sewe of the stewe þerwith, and helde it uppon the flessh. Covere it & bake it wel, and serve hit forth. FC 161

Pigeon Pie

2 lbs pigeon, squab, or other poultry, cut in fairly small pieces
pastry to fit a large pie plate or shallow baking dish (a dish 3 inches deep with 10 inch diameter is ideal)

4 eggs

juice of one lemon

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup currants

1 tsp salt, or to taste

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ginger, sugar

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp cinnamon

Cover poultry pieces with salted water; bring to a boil and simmer 15–20 minutes. Meanwhile, line a large pie dish with pastry and flute the rim. Remove parboiled poultry from the broth and allow to cool a little; discard skin and bones and place meat in the pie shell. Bake uncovered in a 350° oven 5–10 minutes. Then beat the eggs with 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of the broth in which the poultry was boiled. Remove baking dish from oven and sprinkle lemon juice, currants, and seasonings over the meat. Pour the egg mixture

over to fill the shell; return to the oven and bake 35 minutes, or until filling is set.

109 *Pies of Parys*

Take and smyte faire buttes of porke and buttes of vele togidre, and put hit in a faire potte. And putte thereto faire broth and a quantite of wyne, and lete all boile togidre til hit be ynogh; and þen take hit fro the fire and lete kele a litel, and cast therto raw yolkes of eyren and poudre of gyngevere, sugre and salt, and mynced dates, reysyns of corence. Make then coffyns of feyre past, and do it therynne, and kevere it & lete bake ynogh. HARL 4016

Parallel recipes suggest that the meats were variable, so we think a standard 'meat-loaf' mix, if your market carries one, will be fine. If you wish to serve as small hors d'oeuvres, rather than as a main course, use small tart shells, preferably baked with a covering of aluminum foil to be removed before serving instead of a top crust. In any case, it is advisable to do the parboiling of the meats well in advance of the rest of the cooking; modern tastes will probably prefer a de-fatted version, and it is easier to remove fat from the cooking juices if they are cooled for a time (even in a freezer, if you're in a hurry).

Paris Pies

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs mixed ground meat, including at least two of pork, veal, beef

1 cup each meat broth, red wine

pastry for a 9-inch pie pan (top and bottom), or 24 tart shells

3 egg yolks, or 1 whole egg plus one yolk

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup each minced dates, currants

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each ginger, sugar, salt

optional: pinches of ground pepper or cubebs and/or mace, ground clove

In a saucepan cover ground raw meat with wine and broth; bring to a boil and simmer 10 minutes. Then drain all cooking juices into a heatproof container, setting meat aside. Let the cooking liquid cool (preferably in the refrigerator or freezer) until you can easily remove the fat.

When you are ready to assemble the pie (or tarts), line a dish or tart moulds with pastry. Then reheat the de-fatted liquid; beat the egg yolks (or egg and yolk) in a bowl, and beat in a little of the hot (but not quite boiling) broth. Beat in the rest of the broth, still off the heat; then mix together meat, dried fruits, spices, and sauce, and stir over low heat for a few minutes to thicken slightly. Put in the prepared pie shell and cover with a top crust (unless you are making small tarts). Bake in a pre-heated 350° oven about 1 hour (less for individual tarts). As the mixture may tend to be sloppy at first, slit the top crust to allow steam to escape; it may also be wise to put a cookie sheet or piece of foil under the pie pan.

110 *Malaches of Pork*

Hewe pork al to pecys and medle it with ayren & chese igrated. Do þerto powdour fort, safroun, & pynes with salt. Make a crust in a trap; bake it wel þerinne, and serve it forth. FC 162

Pork Tart

1/2 lb minced or ground pork

4 eggs, beaten

1/4 cup grated cheese (eg, Parmesan)

pinch each nutmeg, ginger, cardamom, pepper, saffron

1/2 tsp salt

1/4-1/2 cup pine nuts

pastry tart shell (uncooked)

Combine ingredients and put in the tart shell. Bake in a 375° oven 45 minutes. Tart may be served cold, but it is better hot.

111 *Pyes of Flesch, Capouns, and Fesauntez*

Take good befe & sethe therwith porke, wele, or venyson, hewyn small. Do therto poudyr of pepyr, cannell, poudyr of clovis, gynger, & mynsyd datys, yf thu wylte, & reysons of coraunce; & medyll hit with venygger, safron & salt, & take hit in thy mouth, yf hit be welle sesond. Than couch hit in large coffyns, & close yn capouns or fesauntez hole, or, yf thu wilt, cut hit in pecys. Colour hem well with safron, & put theryn othir wylde foule, what thu wylte; & plant hit with half yolkes of eyron, & stre on clovis, macys, & datys mynsyd, corans & quibibis. Close hem & bake hem longe & sokyngly, & serve hem forth with the fyrst course. OP 122

Elsewhere, such pies of mixed meat and poultry are called 'Grete Pyes,' and indeed they would have to be 'great' to hold all the assorted suggested contents. But a scaled-down version is perfectly appropriate: the recipe keeps turning up in cookbooks of later centuries in simplified form. The recipe below assumes you will be feeding at least 8 people and have a suitable shallow pan or dish at least 10 inches in diameter in which to bake your pie. Since modern diners may find it hard to cope with bones in such a pie, we suggest using boned poultry. We wouldn't dream of using whole spices (such as cloves), as the medieval recipes suggest.

Great Pies

pastry to make two crusts for an oversized pie pan

1-1 1/2 lb ground beef, *or* mixed ground meats sold for meat loaf

1/4 cup each red wine, wine vinegar

1/4 cup currants

1/2 tsp salt

1/4 tsp each cinnamon, ginger, mace

1/8 tsp each ground cloves, pepper and/or cubebs

4-8 boiled egg yolks

2-3 lbs boneless chicken breast, or other poultry, cut into pieces

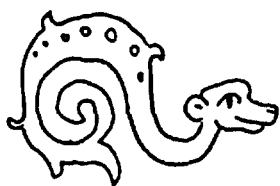
optional: 1/4 cup dates, chopped; pinch of saffron

Parboil the ground meat in water to cover about 5 minutes; drain and discard water (this will cut down the fat content). Meanwhile, roll out pastry and line the pan. In a bowl, mix the parboiled meat with all remaining ingredients except the poultry and egg yolks. Spread half of this mixture in the bottom of the pie shell, then arrange the poultry pieces over it. Top with another layer of the meat mixture, and, if desired, the egg yolks, whole or cut in halves. Cover with a crust, slit to let steam escape, and bake in a 325° oven 70 minutes; pastry should be nicely browned.

If you have leftover egg whites, brushing the crust with beaten egg white before baking produces a nice glazed effect. If you want to be sure you *will* have the whites to beat, you can separate the eggs and poach only the yolks until they are hard instead of boiling the eggs whole.

This page intentionally left blank

Desserts



This page intentionally left blank

Most – although by no means all – medieval feasts ended with a sweet course; though the word ‘dessert’ was not common, it originated in this period and the concept was commonplace enough. Most such last courses consisted of simple offerings such as fruits (some of which, however, were also eaten as a first course, as modern diners eat melons or fruit cup), nuts, cheeses, candied spices (such as preserved, candied ginger), wafers, and sweet spiced wines. But there are many other medieval dishes – especially in English collections – that we would think of as desserts today.

112 *Creme Bastard*

Take þe whyte of eyroun a grete hepe, & putte it on a panne ful of mylke, & let yt boyle; þen sesyn it so with salt and hony a lytel; þen lat hit kele, & draw it þorw a straynoure, an take fayre cove mylke an draw yt withall, & seson it with sugre; & loke þat it be poynant & doucet: serve it forth for a potage, or for a gode bakyn mete, wheder þat þou wolt. HARL 279.1.151

This is a recipe for custard sauce or baked custard, but it is very different from modern custard in that egg whites, not yolks, are used. It is a suitable accompaniment to many of the following fruit puddings: after all, medieval cooks couldn’t whip cream, so the kind of toppings we are used to were unknown.

White Custard Sauce

2 egg whites, slightly beaten
1 cup plus 2 tsp milk
2 tbsp honey
pinch salt
2 tsp sugar

Put egg whites in a sauce pan with 1 cup of the milk and stir over medium heat as it comes to a boil. Let it simmer for about 5 minutes, stirring; then add the honey and salt. After simmering

for another minute or two, remove from heat and strain or blend in a blender, adding remaining milk and sugar. Pour into a pitcher or serving dish and chill; it will thicken as it chills.

This is good with washed, hulled, slightly sweetened strawberries. It can also be baked, as the original recipe says.

113 *Wardonys in Syryp*

Take wardonys, an caste on a potte, and boyle hem till þey ben tender; þan take hem up and pare hem, and kytte hem in to pecys; take ynow of powder of canel, a good quantyte, an caste it on red wyne, an draw it þorw a straynour; caste sugre þerto, an put it in an erþen pot, an let it boyle: an þanne caste þe perys þerto, an let boyle togederys, an whan þey have boyle a whyle, take pouder of gyngere and caste þerto, an a lytil venegre, an a lytil safron: an loke þat it be poynaunt an dowcet. HARL 279.1.10

Other early recipes call for such spices as cloves, anise, and mace; some omit saffron. Long, slow cooking would have been difficult or impossible in most medieval kitchens, but since it is a safer method than boiling – which may cause pears to fall apart – we suggest it as an alternative.

Pears in Wine Syrup

2 lbs firm, ripe, unblemished pears

1 tsp cinnamon

2 cups red wine (or, if preferred, 1 cup wine and 1 cup water)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ginger

1 tbsp red wine vinegar

optional: pinch of saffron; 6–8 whole cloves

Parboil the pears in a large pot of water about 5 minutes; remove and peel. Pears will look most attractive if left whole, but if you cut them up, cut lengthwise into halves or quarters, retaining

stems, if possible, but removing stem lines and cores. Mix cinnamon and red wine (or wine and water) and strain the mixture into a non-reactive (eg, enamelled) pan. Add sugar and stir over heat until sugar is dissolved.

Finish by doing one of the following:

- 1) add pears to syrup and poach gently about 10 minutes, keeping the syrup just below the simmering point to prevent the pears' falling apart. Add ginger, vinegar, and saffron and/or cloves, if desired, toward the end of the cooking period. Let pears cool in the syrup, *or*
- 2) put pears in an enamelled or earthenware casserole, with remaining ingredients. Pour sugar syrup over them; cover casserole and bake in a 250° oven for about 3 hours for whole pears, and 1 hour for halved or quartered ones; or cook covered on the stove over very low heat; in either case, turn the pears from time to time, *or*
- 3) a small quantity can easily be cooked in a microwave. To do this, do not parboil the pears. Cook the syrup in a large container (such as an 8-cup Pyrex measure) for 2 minutes; stir, cover tightly, and cook another 5 minutes. Meanwhile, peel the pears, and cut them in halves or quarters if you wish. Arrange them in a suitable large dish, and pour the syrup over them. Cook, tightly covered, 12 minutes for two pears, 16 for four. Let cool in the syrup.

When pears have cooled, remove to a serving dish. If the quantity of syrup is excessive, boil it down a bit. Pour syrup over pears and store in a cool place, or in a refrigerator, where they will keep well for several days. Serve them in their syrup.

114 *Strawberye*

Take strawberys & waysshe hem in tyme of zere in gode red wyne; þan strayne þorwe a clope, & do hem in a potte with gode almaunde mylke. Alay it with amyndoun oper with þe flowre of rys, & make it chargeaunt, and lat it boyle; and do þerin roysonys of coraunce, safroun, pepir, sugre grete plente, poudre gyngere, canel, galyngale; poynte it with vynegre, & a lytil whyte grece put þerto; coloure it with alkenade, & droppe it abowte, plante it

with þe graynes of pomegarnad, & þan serve it forth. HARL 279.1.123

This recipe has been much maligned, beginning with Mead's expression (in his book published in 1931) of sheer horror at the idea of so treating strawberries. Nowadays we are more likely to use whipped cream as the basis for a strawberry dessert, but that was not an option in the 15th century, and in fact the base of thickened almond milk gives excellent results—as long as you don't overdo the spices.

Strawberry Pudding

2–4 oz ground almonds

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups water

1 pt fresh strawberries (if you must use frozen berries, thaw first, and use any juice to replace some of the water)

$\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red wine

2 tbs rice flour

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar

pinch each pepper, ginger, cinnamon, salt

1 tbsp butter (or lard)

2 tsp red wine vinegar

2 tbs dried currants

First, draw up an almond milk with the almonds and water (see introduction, xxi). Hull and pick over the strawberries. Put in a bowl and pour the wine over them. Mix gently with your hand or a wood or plastic spoon; then pour off and discard the wine. Blend or process the berries with the rice flour, sugar, spices, and almond milk. Bring mixture to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly; let it boil about 2 minutes to thicken, then remove from heat and stir in first the butter, then the vinegar and currants. Pour into a large serving bowl or individual dishes and allow to cool. Chill before serving.

If you are as much of a perfectionist as apparently was the 15th-century cook from whom this recipe comes, you may beef up the colouring with red food dye and/or garnish with pomegranate seeds, but it really is not necessary. And one doubts

whether the latter were ever actually used anyway: pomegranates are not usually available in strawberry season.

115 *Erbowle*

**Take bolas and scald hem with wyne, and drawe hem
porow a straynor; do hem in a pot. Clarify hony, and do
perto with powdour fort and flour of rys. Salt it & florissch
it with whyte aneys, & serve it forth. FC 98**

This fresh fruit pudding is like the modern Scandinavian berry and rhubarb puddings, and not to be confused with the traditional Christmas plum pudding. The 'white anise' with which we are directed to decorate it is candied anise seed; if you have any, by all means use it.

Fresh Plum Pudding

1 lb ripe fresh plums
1 cup each red wine, water
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup clear honey
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each salt, cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each galingale or ginger, mace
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice flour, stirred into $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold water

Put plums in a saucepan and cover with wine and water; bring to a boil and simmer 5 minutes. Remove plums; peel them and discard pits. Blend them with honey and spices; stir this puréed mixture back into the cooking liquid in the pan. Carefully stir in rice flour mixture and blend thoroughly, stirring over medium heat about 7 to 8 minutes, until the pudding is quite thick. If there are any lumps, reblend (or strain). Pour into a serving bowl, and when it is cool, chill. If you have any candied anise seed, scatter it over the top when the pudding has set.

116 *Pomesmoille*

Nym rys & bray hem in a morter; tempre hem up with almande milke, boille hem. Nym appellis & kerve hem as small as douste; cast hem in after þe boillyng, & sugur; colour hit with safron, cast therto goud poudre, & ȝif hit forth. LAUD 553

Apple Pudding

1 lb cooking apples, peeled, cored, and processed or finely diced

2–4 oz ground almonds

2 cups water, milk, or a combination

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar (less if apples are sweet)

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ginger

pinch each ground cloves, salt, nutmeg

optional: pinch of saffron

Draw up an almond milk with the water and/or milk (see introduction, xxi). Mix sugar, rice flour, and almond milk in a saucepan; stir in apples and bring to a boil over medium heat. Stir and boil about 5 minutes, or until quite thick. Combine in a small dish or cup a spoonful of the pudding and all seasonings except nutmeg; then stir mixture into the pot of pudding. When thoroughly blended, pour into a serving dish. Sprinkle nutmeg on top, cool, and/or chill.

117 *Chireseye*

Tak chiryes at þe fest of Seynt John þe Baptist, & do away þe stonys. Grynd hem in a morter, & after frot hem wel in a seve so þat þe jus be wel comyn owt; & do þan in a pot & do þerein feyre gres or boter & bred of wastel ymyd, & of sugur a god perty, & a porcioun of wyn. & wan it is wel ysodyn & ydressyd in dyschis, stik þerin clowis of gilofre and strew þeron sugur. DS 77

Both sweet and sour cherries grew wild in medieval England and elsewhere in Europe, and were also extensively cultivated. However, the most popular cherries must have been sweet, since they were eaten raw and considered a treat: for example, one of the shepherds in the Wakefield Second Shepherd's Play offers the Christ Child a 'bob of cherries,' and a wedding feast menu given by the *Ménagier* calls for cherries as a snack at the beginning of the feast. But since some use must also have been made of sour cherries, we cannot be sure which kind were intended for this recipe. Use the best ones you can find, and increase the sugar by at least half if using sour cherries.

Cherry Bread Pudding

2 cups stoned fresh or frozen cherries, *or* 20 oz (2 cans) canned cherries, drained

juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon (optional, but especially desirable if using sweet or canned cherries)

2 cups breadcrumbs (use a good quality white bread, crusts removed)

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup wine (preferably red), *or* $\frac{1}{2}$ cup wine plus $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water, *or* $\frac{3}{4}$ cup juice from frozen or canned cherries)

2 tbsp butter

Blend or process all ingredients together. *Either* cook over medium heat about 5 minutes, stirring constantly, or until pudding is well thickened, then pour into a serving dish; *or* put the mixture in a greased baking dish and bake in a 350° oven 20 minutes (or microwave for 5 minutes). May be served warm, chilled, or at room temperature.

Take a porcyoun of rys, & pyke hem clene, & sethe hem welle, & late hem kele; þen take gode mylke of almaundys & do þerto, & seþe & stere hem wyl; & do þerto sugre an hony, & serve forth. HARL 279.1.86

The use of almond milk instead of cow's milk, and honey as part of the sweetening, makes this early version of a familiar pudding noticeably different from a 20th-century version. But it is just as easy to make.

Rice Pudding

3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups water, milk, or a combination
 4 oz (at least) ground almonds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rice, preferably short grain
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
 2 tbsp clear honey

Draw up a thick almond milk with the almonds and one cup of the water (see introduction, xxi). Cover rice with the remaining liquid and bring to a simmer; cook gently over very low heat at least 30 minutes, stirring occasionally and adding more water if the rice shows signs of drying out. It must be cooked until quite soft. Remove from heat and allow to cool, so that any remaining cooking liquid is absorbed. When it has cooled, stir in the almond milk, sugar, and honey and cook, stirring constantly, over low heat about 5 minutes, or until pudding is quite thick. Pour into a serving dish; cool and chill.

While the recipe doesn't mention any spices, we assume the medieval cook would have automatically reached for the powder douce (or something), and suggest sprinkling the pudding with a little cinnamon or nutmeg, mixed with sugar if you like.

119 *Figey*

Take almaundes blaunched; grynde hem and drawe hem up with water and wyne, quarter fyges, hole raisouns. Cast þerto powdour gynger and hony clarified; seep it wel & salt it, & serve forth. FC 91

This is an ancestor of the modern boiled fig (or 'plum') pudding, but less rich and far simpler to make.

Fig Pudding

4 oz ground almonds

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup each water, white wine, or Madeira

1 cup dried figs, cut into quarters, stems removed

1 cup seedless (or seeded) raisins, whole

2 tbs clear honey

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

In a saucepan mix the ground almonds into a paste with some of the wine and/or water; over medium heat, add rest of liquid. Allow to steep over low heat while you cut up the figs. Stir in fruits and all seasonings and bring to a boil; cook, stirring, about 5 minutes, or until the mixture is thick and well blended. Serve warm.

120 *Tartys in Applis*

Tak gode applys & gode spycis & figys & reysons & perys, & wan þey arn wel ybrayd colour wyþ safroun wel & do yt in a cofyn, & do yt forth to bake wel. DS 82

A similar recipe calls for prunes in place of figs, and directs that the fruits be minced rather than ground. The quantity here is calculated for a fairly large tart (9–10 inches).

Apple Tarts

2 lbs tart apples; 1–2 firm, ripe pears (not Bartlett pears) may be substituted for some of the apples

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried figs or prunes, stoned and chopped

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup raisins

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar (brown, white, or a combination)

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, salt

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground cloves

pinch saffron

pastry for one tart shell

Peel and core apples (and pears, if used) and chop, together with the dried fruits, preferably in a food processor: pieces should be much smaller than the slices used in an apple pie today. Put the fruits in a prepared pastry shell; mix sugar with spices and spread over fruits. Cover the tart with a sheet of aluminum foil; bake in a 375° oven about 45 minutes, removing the foil cover toward the end of the cooking time.

121 *Sambocade*

Take and make a crust in a trap & take cruddes and wryng out þe wheyze and draw hem þurgh a straynour and put hit in þe crust. Do þerto sugur the þridde part, & somdel whyte of ayren, & shake þerin blomes of elren; and bake it up with eurose, & messe it forth. FC 179

Elders are generally in bloom in late June and/or early July; their blossoms make a very nice flavouring for this simple cheese tart. Dried elderflowers, available at some health food stores, can also be used: some medieval recipes note this possibility.

Elderflower Cheese Tart

pastry to line a pie dish

12 oz cottage cheese, drained of any watery whey

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

4 egg whites

3-4 clusters elder blossoms (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried elderflowers

1 tsp rose water

Leave elder sprays in a glass of water until the crust is prepared: the blossoms discolour slightly if prepared too far in advance. When you are ready to make the filling, carefully strip off the white blossoms, trying not to include any little green stems. Blend together all remaining ingredients; when the mixture is smooth, stir in the blossoms and pour filling into the prepared shell. Bake about 45 minutes in a 350° oven; serve either hot or cold.

122 *Daryols*

Take creme of cowe mylke, oþer of almaundes; do þerto ayren with sugur, safroun and salt. Medle it yfere. Do it in a coffyn of ii ynche depe; bake it wel and serue it forth. FC 191

Other manuscripts make it clear that these were usually very small tarts: one recipe specifies one quart of cream and forty egg yolks to make twenty tarts. Medieval eggs were no doubt small by our standards, but still, even forty yolks of modern 'large' eggs would not go very far in twenty tarts unless they were tiny ones. The directions below reflect the proportions and more detailed instructions given elsewhere, especially those of Platina.

Custard Tarts

pastry to make 10-20 (depending on size) tart shells

10 egg yolks (or, if you prefer, 5 eggs)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

2 cups light cream, milk, or a combination

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cinnamon

optional: pinch ground saffron

Beat eggs and sugar together, then beat in cream (and/or milk), cinnamon, and saffron (if used). Stir over low heat, being careful

not to let the mixture boil, until it begins to thicken; then pour into prepared pastry shells. Bake in a 400° oven about 20 minutes.

123 *Tardpolene*

Take and combine flour and sugar, and mix into pastry with almond milk; make cases of this pastry two fingers in height; then take pears, dates, almonds, figs, and raisins, and put in liquid and spices and grind together; add egg yolk and a piece of good, soft cheese, not too old, and plenty of whole eggs; then put them [i.e., the filled tarts] to cook; brush the tops with egg yolk; then serve. A-N.A 11

This is not an 'easy' recipe, but if you are looking for 'something completely different,' you may find it worth the effort.

Custard Tarts with Fruit

Sweet pastry for 12 tart shells made with 1 cup flour, 1 tbsp sugar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup thick almond milk (see introduction, xxi) or cream (plus, if you wish, a few drops of almond extract); the exact amount of almond milk or cream will depend on your method of mixing the dough

2-3 Seckel pears (or 1-2, depending on size, Bosc or Anjou), peeled, pared, cut in quarters, and cored

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup each pitted dates; blanched almonds, preferably slivered; raisins; white wine; sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ginger, nutmeg

3-4 oz cream cheese or a soft cheese such as Camembert or quark

2 eggs + 2 egg yolks

Roll out pastry dough and fill tart forms. Put fruits and all remaining ingredients except 1 egg yolk in a blender or processor and process until well blended. Pour this filling into the tart cases and bake at 400° until well set and slightly browned on top; paint

with remaining egg yolk (beaten) and leave in the turned-off oven for a few minutes before removing and allowing to cool.

124 *Fretoure*

Take whete floure, ale, zest, safroun, & salt, & bete alle togederys as pikke as þou schuldyst make oþer bature in fleyssche tyme, & þan take fayre applys, & kut hem in maner of fretourys, & wete hem in þe bature up on downne, & frye hem in fayre oyle, & caste hem in a dyssche, & caste sugre þeron & serve forth. HARL 279.2.54

Some recipes for this favourite medieval delicacy call for eggs rather than yeast batter, but the ale/yeast version has a particularly interesting flavour.

Apple Fritters

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ale or beer
1 tbsp dry yeast
1 cup flour
3–4 apples (eg, Macintosh)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
oil or shortening for frying
optional: 1 egg or 2 egg yolks

Heat the beer to lukewarm. Put the yeast in a medium-sized bowl and add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the beer; stir and let it sit about 10 minutes. Mix in flour; egg yolks or egg, if desired; salt; and remaining beer. Beat the mixture, then cover the bowl and leave it in a warm place (such as the back of the stove, while you use the front burners to prepare the rest of the meal) for about an hour. It should at least double in bulk.

Peel the apples, core them, and cut into wedges. Put apple slices in the bowl of batter and stir to coat apples well. Fry quickly in oil or deep fat; drain the browned fritters on paper as you

remove them from the pan. When all have been cooked, sprinkle with sugar and serve.

125 *Frytour of Mylke*

Take cruddes and presse out þe wheyze clene; do þerto sum whyte of ayren. Fry hem as to fore, & lay on sugur, and messe forth. FC 155

A variant in another manuscript calls for flour, which is really almost indispensable: the batter is very difficult to handle without it unless you beat the egg whites stiff, and it is unlikely that a medieval cook could have done that.

Cheese Fritters

2 cups fresh curd cheese or ricotta, or 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups large-curd cottage cheese

4–5 egg whites

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

oil for frying

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

If you are using cottage cheese, drain it and press out the whey. Beat cheese, egg whites, flour, and salt together, using enough flour to make a thick batter. Drop this mixture by spoonfuls into the hot oil or fat and cook long enough to brown slightly. Drain on paper; sprinkle with sugar before serving.

126 *Rapeye*

Tak dow, & mak þerof a þinne kake; þanne take fygyss & raysonys smal ygrounde, & temper hem with almaunde milke; take pouder of pepir, & of galyngale, clowes, & menge togederys, & ley on þin kake along as bene koddys;

& overcaste þin kake togederys, & dewte on þe eggys,
an frye in oyle, & serve forth. HARL 279.2.47

Dumplings of Dried Fruit in Paste

1 tbsp ground almonds

1 tbsp water

4 dried figs

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup raisins

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground pepper, galingale (or ginger), cloves

fresh noodles, rolled very thin and cut in pieces 3–4 inches long
and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide; *or* ready-made egg roll paste, cut in two
lengthwise

1 egg, beaten

Draw up an almond milk with the almonds and water (see introduction, xxi). Mince the figs and raisins finely; add almond milk and spices and blend thoroughly. Put a thin line of the fruit mixture down the centre of each piece of dough. Moisten the edges with egg. Fold over lengthwise, so the paste encloses the fruit mixture in a long, narrow case, similar in shape to a bean pod. Brush with egg, deep fry, and serve.

127 *Blaunche Escrepes*

Take best white flour and egg white and make batter, not too thick, and put in some wine; then take a bowl and make a hole in it; and then take butter, or oil, or grease; then put your four fingers in the batter to stir (?) it; take the batter and put it in the bowl [the improvised funnel] and pour it through the hole into the (hot) grease; make one pancake and then another, putting your finger in the opening of the bowl [to stop the flow of batter when enough has been poured for one pancake]; then sprinkle the pancakes with sugar, and serve. A-N.A 2

The pancakes are 'white' because they are made with egg whites rather than whole eggs. Since they are fried in fat or oil, they are more like fritters than like modern griddle cakes or crêpes.

White Pancakes

1 cup flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white wine
2 egg whites, lightly beaten
2 tbsp sugar
optional: dash salt

Beat the flour and wine into the egg whites; add a pinch of salt if you wish. Dribble through a funnel, or from your fingers or a spoon (as other similar recipes suggest), into hot oil or fat; turn when cake is browned on the bottom. Remove with a skimmer or slotted spatula and drain on absorbent paper. Sprinkle with sugar and serve.

128 *Gingerbrede*

Take goode honye & clarefie it on þe fere, & take fayre paynemayn or wastel brede & grate it, & caste it into þe boylenge hony, & stere it well togyder faste with a sklyse þat it bren not to þe vessell. & þanne take it doun and put þerin ginger, long pepere & saundres, & tempere it vp with þin handes; & than put hem to a flatt boyste & strawe þeron suger, & pick þerin clowes rounde aboute by þe egge and in þe mydes, yf it plece you. GK 19

While it is difficult to find the food colouring 'saundres,' it is virtually impossible to get 'long pepper' anywhere in the Western world today. Since we don't have any of either, we recommend using cinnamon and ordinary pepper, both called for in another medieval gingerbread recipe.

Gingerbread

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup clear honey
1 loaf bread (1 lb), at least 4 days old, grated or ground into fine crumbs; if bread is too fresh it will not make sufficiently fine crumbs

1 tsp each ginger, cinnamon

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground white pepper, cloves

Bring the honey to a boil and skim off any scum. Keeping the pan over very low heat, stir in breadcrumbs and spices. When it is a thick, well-blended mass, press firmly into a small layer cake pan (8" is ideal for this quantity) lined with Teflon or parchment paper. Cover and leave in a cool place several hours or overnight before turning out on a cake plate; sprinkle with sugar. Cut into small slices to serve.

129 *Emeles*

Take sugar, salt, almonds, and white bread, and grind them together; then add eggs; then grease or oil or butter, and take a spoon and brush them [i.e., the frying almond cakes] and then remove them and sprinkle them with dry sugar. A-N.A 27

Here is a recipe that will use up some of the ground almonds strained out of the almond milk made for another recipe.

Almond Cakes

1 cup breadcrumbs (or more depending on freshness of bread)

4 oz ground almonds

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus 2 tbsp sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

2 eggs

oil and/or fat for frying

Blend dry ingredients with eggs (reserving the extra 2 tbsp sugar). Heat the oil or fat in a frying pan and drop in the batter in small spoonfuls, flattening with the spoon if necessary. Turn over once if not using deep fat. Drain on paper and sprinkle with the reserved sugar before serving – preferably warm.

Alternatively, chill batter for about 1 hour, then divide it into 20 balls, and flatten into cakes. This way, most of the work can

be done ahead of time and the cakes will be more uniform in size and shape.

130 *Payn Purdew*

Take fayre zolkes of eyroun & trye hem fro the whyte, & draw hem þorw a straynoure, & take salt and caste þerto; þan take fayre brede & kutte it as troundeȝ rounde; þan take fayre boter þat is claryfied, or elles fayre freysshe grece, & putte it on a potte, and make it hote; þan take & wete wyl þin troundeȝ in þe zolkys, & putte hem in þe panne, and so frye hem uppe; but ware of clevyng to the panne; & whan it is fryid, ley hem on a dysse, & ley sugre ynowe þeron, & þanne serve it forth. HARL 279.2.44

This is a medieval version of what we call French toast, but it is richer – and if made with good French bread, of a more interesting texture. Those who hesitate to use all those yolks can substitute whole eggs (half as many) for some or all of the yolks. *Not* a recipe for larger ‘feasts’: the bread must be served at once, and hot.

Smothered Bread

8 slices ($\frac{3}{4}$ –1 inch thick) French bread, crusts removed

12 egg yolks, beaten

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar (light brown will do, if you wish)

3 tbsp butter, for frying

Dip the bread slices in the beaten egg yolks, or put them in a single layer in a flat dish in which they will barely fit and pour the egg yolks over them. Turn them, allow the egg to soak in, while you heat the butter in a frying pan, taking care not to let it burn. Fry until golden brown on each side, turning carefully and adding more butter as needed. Put on a serving platter and sprinkle sugar over the slices. Serve hot.

Take hony and sugur cipre and clarifie it togydre, and boile it with esy fyre, and kepe it wel fro brennyng. And whan it hath yboiled a while, take up a drope perof wip by fyngur and do it in a litel water, and loke if it hong togydre; and take it fro the fyre and do þerto pynes the thriddendele & powdour gyngever, and stere it togyder til it bygynne to thik, and cast it on a wete table; lesh it and serve forth with fryed mete, on flessch dayes or on fysshe dayes. FC 68

This recipe makes a fudge-type candy, complete with soft-ball test. Its name may suggest its appearance: just as 'urchins' (see 138, *Hirchones*) are sausages made to look like hedgehogs, this is a sweet to be sliced like bread. However, the names of 'marzipan' in various European languages also suggest a relation to bread (Fr *pain*), and this recipe may be derived from a marzipan recipe (see below, recipe 142) with pine nuts taking the place of the more usual almonds. That we are not directed to grind the nuts may be a scribal error; but the confection is also good if, unlike a marzipan, it uses whole nuts.

Candy Loaves

2 cups sugar

3 tbsps honey

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup water

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup pine nuts

$\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger

Cook sugar, honey, and water together, stirring frequently, over fairly low heat, until the syrup reaches the soft-ball stage (approximately 235°). Cool it a little, then beat it until it begins to stiffen. Add pine nuts and ginger, stir together, and pour out in a mound on waxed paper. When hardened, slice and serve.

132 *Gauffres*

Wafers are made in four ways. One is to beat eggs in a bowl, then add salt and wine and throw in flour and mix them; then put [the batter], a little at a time, between two irons, each time as much as the size of a slice or strip of cheese, and press between the two irons and cook on both sides. MP 343

A krumcake iron is necessary to produce anything resembling a medieval wafer; these are available at many specialty kitchen shops, especially in areas where there are Scandinavian cooks. A modern waffle iron is too large to produce a thin wafer, but may be resorted to if you have no other recourse. Cheese is added in two of the *Ménagier's* four ways.

Wafers

2 eggs
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour
3 tbsps grated cheese (eg, Parmesan)
1 tbsp sherry
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

Mix all ingredients together (but do not try to beat until light). Put by teaspoons onto a krumcake iron, close, and cook on both sides. They will come out rather limp, and need to dry: it is advisable to put them into a low oven to crisp them.

133 *Orengat*

Cut the peel of an orange into five pieces and scrape away the skin inside with a knife; then set them to soak in pure fresh water for nine days, and change the water every day. Then boil them in pure water, but only until they come to a boil, and when this is done spread them on a cloth and let them dry out well. Then put them in a pot with enough honey to cover them and boil over a slow

fire, skimming. And when you think that the honey is cooked (to test whether it is cooked, take some water in a spoon and pour into this water a bit of honey, and if it spreads it is not cooked: and if the honey stays in the water without spreading, it is cooked), then take out your orange peels and arrange them in a layer, and sprinkle powder of ginger over, then another layer, and sprinkle, etc., until finished; and leave a month or more before eating. MP 352

Modern diners are likely to prefer smaller pieces of orange peel – although medieval oranges were probably smaller than ours – and cooks may be rather more impatient; the recipe really need not take quite so much time as is suggested. Other citrus peels were apparently candied in the same way, so use this method for lemon peel, too.

Candied Orange Peel

6 oranges – preferably the bitter ‘Seville’ type

1–2 cups clear honey

1/2–1 tsp powdered ginger

Remove the outer peel (‘zest’) of the oranges in thin strips, preferably with a citrus zest peeler (available at better kitchen shops). Put the peel in a bowl and cover with cold water (unless using sweet oranges, which will not require this step) and leave to soak for 24 hours. Then drain, put in a saucepan, cover with fresh cold water, and simmer 10–15 minutes. Drain and spread on paper towels to dry. Put the parboiled peel in a saucepan and cover with honey; bring to a boil and boil until the soft-ball stage (235°); remove from the honey and spread on a plate to dry for a few minutes. Then arrange in a layer on wax paper and sprinkle with ginger. When the peel is cool and reasonably dry (it may still be a bit sticky), store in a covered container and leave to mellow for a week or two before using.

134 *Suger Plate*

Take a lb. of fayr clarefyde suger and put it in a panne and sette it on a furney, & gar it sethe ... þe mountynance of a Ave Maria, whill evermore steryng wyth þe spatour, and sette it of ageyne, but lat it noght wax over styfe for cause of powrynge. And loke þou have redy beforne a fair litel marbill stone and a litell flour of ryse in a bagge, shakyng over þe marbill stone till it be overhilled, and þan powre þi suger þeron as þin as it may renne, for þebinner þe platen þe fairer it is. If þou wilt, put þerin any diverse flours, þat is to say roses leves, violet leves, gilofre leves, or any oþer flour leves, kut þem small and put þem in whan þe suger comes first fro þe fyre. And if þou wilt mak fyne suger plate, put þerto att þe first sethyng ii unces of rose water, and if 3e will make rede plate, put þerto i unce of fyne tournesole clene waschen at þe fyrst sethyng. GK 13

We have omitted a long section on further 'clarifying' the sugar: this is simply not necessary with modern sugar. The *Ménagier* has a similar recipe, but it calls for a pint and a half of rose water for a pound of sugar, which would make a considerable difference! But we found the proportions indicated below worked well: it isn't complicated to do and is very pleasant stuff (if pernicious for your teeth).

Sugar Candy

2 cups (12 oz) granulated sugar

2 oz rose water

rice flour

optional: red food colouring, or petals (not both: dye discolours petals) of roses, violets, or carnations

Dust a marble stone or oiled cookie sheet with rice flour. Mix sugar and rose water, adding two or three drops of colour if desired. Bring to a boil. If crystals form on the sides of the pan, brush down with a pastry brush dipped in cold water. Boil the

mixture without stirring to the hard-crack stage (300°). Immerse the pan in cold water so that the mixture will not continue to cook. Stir in flower petals if desired, and pour onto prepared sheet or stone. Wait five minutes, then mark into lozenge shapes (see diagram for recipe 12) with a knife dipped in ice water. Leave another few minutes until hard, then remove from sheet or stone and break into individual lozenges.

135 *Dragée and Spices in Confit*

The basic medieval recipes for the sugar coating of these confections are much too long to give here, involving a long series of alternate boilings and coolings, with constant stirring: those who wish to see such recipes should look at *CI* V:11 and 12, 'To clarifie suger,' and 'To mak anneys in counfite,' which directs us to make caraway, coriander, fennel, and ginger in confit the same way. Those with enough patience to follow the directions given there can achieve just as perfect results as do the professionals, but it is probably not worthwhile to make your own almond dragées when they are to be found in most supermarkets (candied anise is also sometimes commercially available, but you'd probably have to look further to find any). For those who just want an approximation, a simplified version is suggested here.

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup water

6 oz anise seeds

Boil the sugar and water in a heavy frying pan for 5 minutes. Add the seeds and continue to cook, stirring, until the syrup begins to look white; set aside for 10 minutes. Then put back over low heat, preferably over a protective mat or heat diffuser, and stir until the sugar coating softens enough to be poured. Pour onto a cookie sheet or (preferably) a piece of clean screening over a cake rack. Spread the seeds out with a paring knife to separate them as much as possible; as they harden, you can divide them further, but you do have to work quickly. Ideally, each should be completely separate.

136 Ypocras

Pur fait ypocras. Troys unces de canell & iii unces de gyngever; spykenard de Spayn, le pays dun denerer; garyngale, clowes gylofre, poevre long, noiez mugadez, maziozame, cardemonii, de chescun i quarter donc; grayne de paradys, flour de queynel, de chescun dm. unce; de toutes soit fait powdour &c. FC 199

This Anglo-Norman recipe does not mention wine or sugar – elsewhere called for in large quantities – and doesn't explain the 'etc.' There are many other recipes that supply further information, but they show a very, very wide range of ingredients and relative proportions. The most we can say is that cinnamon is usually the dominant spice, and that ginger is the only other spice invariably called for, with spikenard (hard to find today) ranking third. Thus you should feel free to adjust the spicing and sugar to your own taste, and the availability of ingredients. Whole spices are easier to use than ground ones, but the latter were usually used in the Middle Ages.

Spiced Wine

2 litres (or $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon) red table wine

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar

1 oz cinnamon ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup ground or 2–4 cinnamon sticks)

$\frac{1}{2}$ oz ginger (2 tbsp ground)

$\frac{1}{2}$ –1 tsp each cardamom, cloves, mace, nutmeg

optional and as available: spikenard, white pepper, caraway seed, galingale, marjoram

Mix the spices together in a bowl, and if using ground spices, add a little of the wine and stir the spices in. Put the sugar in a large pot and stir in remaining wine; heat gently, stirring, until the sugar is dissolved. Do not boil, or the alcohol will evaporate. Remove from the heat and stir in the spices. (*Never* do this over the heat: with some wines, a peculiar viscosity results, which no amount of filtering will completely cure.) Allow to settle for at least 20 minutes before filtering; any sludge that has settled

at the bottom of the container ought to be left there, not put into the filter.

To filter, line a strainer with clean, new cloth – the kind sold for household cleaning purposes is ideal – or two layers of paper towels, or a large paper coffee filter; set this over a large container and pour in about half the wine mixture. When it has dripped through, put the filtered wine in another container, rinse out the cloth or replace paper or filter, and filter the rest of the wine. Repeat the entire filtering process at least once before you bottle the wine: there should be no dregs left to settle. If you are in doubt as to whether it is sufficiently filtered, leave it overnight to see if there is further sediment.

Serve Ypocras at room temperature as an after-dinner drink: it is *not* a table wine. Medieval diners sipped it with wafers, candied nuts, etc after a festive meal, as modern diners take coffee and/or liqueurs with candies and nuts. If you used ground spices, you may wish to save the filtered-out spices to re-use (for example, in Lumbard Mustard, recipe 53); some medieval recipes suggest doing just that.

This page intentionally left blank

Subtleties



This page intentionally left blank

While the term 'subtlety' was applied to virtually any ingenious device or contrivance, in cookery it usually referred to an elaborate edible construction. A notable exception occurs at the beginning of the *Liber Cure Cocorum*, where the ingenuity is directed towards practical jokes in the kitchen: we are given directions for making cooked meat appear to be raw, for making a pot boil over uncontrollably (by adding soap), and for making meat appear to be full of worms. These are, of course, very different in intention from the subtleties presented to entertain guests at important feasts, but they do share with more decorative subtleties the characteristic of a deceptive appearance, seeming to be other than what they are. That is the essence of a subtlety, and remained so even in the case of some of the enormously elaborate, wholly or partially inedible, subtleties that were presented as centre-pieces and the like towards the end of the period.

The subtleties most familiar to us in the art of the period are the roasted peacocks and swans presented in their own flayed skins and feathers, as if still alive. More common – at least, in England, to judge by the feast menus – seem to have been the representations of persons and/or objects and beasts made to fit a particular occasion, such as the representations of a woman in childbed and the Holy Trinity mentioned above in the introduction. It is generally thought that these were usually made of sugar paste and/or marzipan, but there is little evidence for this.¹ Almost all actual recipes entail moulding such creations out of ground meat (one French cookbook giving an alternative paste made of dried peas and beans) or pastry. A fourteenth-century Italian collection gives directions for assembling a tree or an entire garden made of pastry, to be decorated with fruits, eggs, etc, also made of appropriately coloured pastry.

Any of these substances, including sugar paste (or the kind of frosting used for decorating cakes) and marzipan, can be used

1 The earliest relevant reference in the *OED* sub 'marchpane' is from Fabyan's Chronicle (1494): 'A march payne garnysshed with dyuerse fygures of aungelys.' But similar figures are described in much earlier feast menus, and some, at least, may have been made of marzipan.

to make creations custom-designed for a particular occasion. Our colleague Sharon Butler was especially adept at sculpting figures out of frosting, and in the first edition of this book she explained how to produce such spectacular effects as the subtlety she made for a feast held on St Juliana's Day. The present writers have confined themselves to simpler creations, but have managed, working with pastry, frosting, and/or marzipan, to create, among other things, a saint in a rudderless boat for the feast of one of the Anglo-Saxon saints and a tree decked with pastry hearts and marzipan birds for St Valentine's Day.

However, we will here confine ourselves to giving recipes from our medieval sources for making relatively simple subtleties, starting with some English ground-meat recipes. Among the many possibilities for such creations were 'urchins,' hedgehogs (recipe below). Other recipes using a meat 'farce' range from meat flower pots planted with pastry flowers (FC 185, 'Potte Wys') to a stuffing for a roast representing the mythical monster called a cockatrice (FC 183, 'Cokagrys'), made from the hindquarters of a small pig sewn to the head, wings, and breast of a cock. We find it easier – and more fun – to make our 'farce' into a boar's head (recipe below) when we aren't making it into 'apples' or 'hedgehogs.'

Comparison with many parallel recipes makes it clear that other meats could be used – veal, mutton, or beef, as well as the pork here specified, or a combination; and, of course, the seasonings are variable.

137 *Pomme dorryse*

Farsur to make pomme dorryse and opere pynges. Take þe lire of pork rawe, and grynde it smale. Medle it up with eyren & powdre fort, safroun and salt; and do þerto raisouns of coraunce. Make balles þerof, and wete it wele in white of ayren, & do it to seeþ in boillyng water. Take hem up and put hem on a spyt. Rost hem wel, and take

**persel ygrounde and wryng it up with ayren & a perty
of flour, and lat erne aboute þe spyt. And if þou wilt,
take for persel, safroun; and serve it forth. FC 182**

'Pomme dorryse' means 'golden apples,' although the parsley given as first alternative here would result in green, rather than golden, apples. But as the opening line suggests, other things besides green or golden apples could be made of this 'farsur,' the 'farce' still basic in Scandinavian cooking (and elsewhere, if not always so-named).

Meatballs

2 lbs ground meat (pork, veal, lamb, beef, or a combination)

2 eggs, slightly beaten, plus 1 separated

1 tsp salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp each ground ginger, allspice

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground cardamom, cinnamon

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp each ground cloves, pepper

1-2 tbsp flour

either finely minced parsley *or* ground saffron

optional: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup currants

Moisten meat and seasonings with beaten eggs, mixing thoroughly. The mixture will be easier to mould by hand if chilled in the refrigerator. Shape into balls ca 2 inches in diameter; roll in lightly beaten egg white and parboil in salted water ca. 10 minutes. Put on skewers and grill, turning regularly. When the balls are almost done, make a batter of the egg yolk, flour, and either parsley or saffron; paint this over the balls and cook just long enough to set the glaze. If you want the meatballs to *really* look like little apples, complete each one with a small bay leaf stuck in with a fairly large clove, giving the effect of leaf and stem.

Take the mawe of þe grete swyne, and fyfe oþer sex of pigges mawes. Fyll hem full of þe self fars & sowe hem fast. Perboile hem; take hem up, & make smale prikkes of gode past, and frye hem. Take þese pricke yfryed & set hem þicke in þe mawes on þe fars, made after an urchoun withoute legges. Put hem on a spyt & roost hem, and colour hem with safroun, and messe hem forth. FC

184

This recipe directs us to make a giant sausage surrounded by a group of slightly smaller ones, apparently representing a mother hedgehog and her litter. The sausages are to be filled with the spiced 'farsure' given above and decorated with fried pastry slivers representing the hedgehogs' spines. Giant sausages are difficult to make (as the *Ménagier* remarks: 'Hedgehogs can be made out of mutton tripe, and it is a great expense and a great labour and little honour and profit'); we prefer to make them much smaller and serve them as appetizers. For these smaller hedgehogs, we use almond slivers, suggested in some other recipes, rather than pastry prickles. Pork alone is more suitable than a mixture of meats, but you can vary ingredients as you wish: you might even add cheese, as suggested in the *Viandier*. Colouring is not really necessary – hedgehogs are not especially golden – but can easily be managed with the use of a flour paste and food colouring.

Sausage Hedgehogs

2 lbs ground pork

2 tsp ginger

1 tsp each salt, sugar

2 oz almonds, blanched and slivered (not sliced)

Mix pork and seasonings and form into balls about 1 1/2–2 inches in diameter; then elongate the balls a little, into ovals shaped like large walnuts (and about the same size). It is not absolutely

necessary to fry the slivered almonds before using them – and may be dangerous, since they have a tendency to get overdone and turn black in the later baking – but a few minutes of sautéing over low heat, with a sprinkling of sugar, can help to make them less brittle and thus easier to handle. Insert them into the ‘hedge-hogs’ in a pattern suggesting quills; you will need at least eight small spines for each ball to achieve the proper effect. Bake on a cookie sheet in a 350° oven 20 minutes, or until a good shade of medium brown. If you want to serve them hot, you can reheat in a hot oven for a few minutes (or use a microwave). Drain on paper towels for a minute or two before serving.

If you wish to add a colouring decoration, this should be done just before the last few minutes of cooking; if done earlier, it will, of course, discolour.

139 *‘Farsure’ Boar’s Head*

Since most of us can no longer get the real thing, it seems in the spirit of this series of recipes to make a boar’s head out of a meat ‘fars.’

2 lbs ground pork

1 lb ground beef

3 eggs, beaten

2 tsp salt

1 tsp each ground ginger, mace

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cardamom

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each ground cloves, pepper

2 large yellow turnips (rutabagas) or parsnips

2 round red radishes

a bunch of parsley

optional: 2 apples of approximately equal size; the slightly smaller one should be red

Mix the meat, eggs, and seasonings and chill thoroughly. Mold the head out of the well-chilled meat mix, putting aside enough to mould the ears separately. When the snout is a satisfactory

shape, make a slit and open the 'mouth,' forcing in the larger of the two apples to hold it open (or, if you do not wish to bother with the apples, a pair of kitchen spoons or something else suitable to pry apart the 'jaws'). Cover loosely with aluminum foil. Make the ears a little on the large side: small pieces shrink more than large ones do. Wrap loosely in foil. Put all this on a baking pan and bake in a 350° oven 1 1/2 hours, removing the 'ears' halfway through. Cool.

To assemble, remove foil from cooled pieces. Insert toothpicks in the bases of the ears and attach them in the proper positions. Carve tusks out of the turnips or parsnips (you can whittle a curlier tusk out of a turnip), and insert them with toothpicks at the base. Add radish eyes, pushed slightly into the meat, and place 'head' on a platter, surrounded with a wreath of parsley. If using apples, replace the baked apple with the fresh red one. Serve cold, with Lumbard Mustard or Compost (recipes 53 and 60).

The following subtleties are intended for service in the final course of the meal, although they can, of course, be on exhibit throughout.

140 *Chastletes*

Take and make a foyle of gode past with a rollere of a foot brode, & lynger by cumpas. Make iiij coffyns of þe self past uppon þe rollere þe gretnesse of þe smale of þyn arme of vi ynche dep; make þe gretust in þe myddell. Fasten þe foile in þe mouth upwarde, & fasten þe opere foure in every syde. Kerve out keyntlich kyrnels above, in þe manere of bataillyng, and drye hem harde in an ovene oper in þe sunne ... FC 197

This castle has a huge pork pie for the central tower and the four smaller towers filled with almond cream, custard, ground fruit, etc; however, we feel that it is more practical to make a

smaller unfilled version. The most satisfactory we have tried uses a cheese pastry, four round towers, and a square central section.

Pastry Castle

2 cups flour

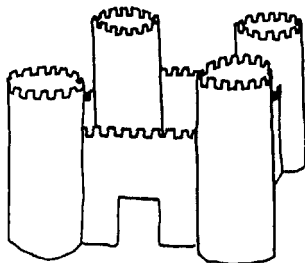
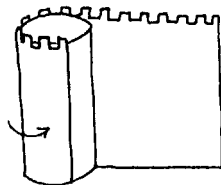
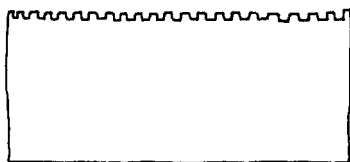
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup shortening

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter

$\frac{1}{2}$ oz each grated Parmesan, Cheddar cheese

water

Blend shortening and butter with flour; add grated cheese, mix thoroughly, and add water to make a pastry the consistency of pie crust. Divide the dough into five roughly equal portions. Roll each portion into a thin rectangle, approximately 6" \times 8". Trim four of them evenly to fit the forms described below, and cut crenellations into one long side. They are now ready to mould into the shape of the four towers. To make these towers, we used the cardboard tube around which wrapping paper, aluminum foil, etc. is wrapped. Ours were 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter and 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long. You can also make a cylinder from lightweight cardboard. Cover each tube in aluminum foil, butter it lightly, and wrap the pastry around, overlapping and sealing the edges with egg white or water.



Prick the pastry with a fork so that it will not puff too much. Stand the towers upright on a cookie sheet, and bake in a 350°–400° oven until lightly browned. Then carefully remove the cardboard center and allow the towers to cool. The fifth portion of pastry is cut into four equal pieces to form the walls between the towers, each approximately 3" high and 2–4" long. Cut crenellations and a doorway, prick with a fork, and cook flat on a cookie sheet until the pastry is lightly browned. When all the pieces are cooled, join them together, using egg white, flour and water paste, or a soft cheese like Brie as glue. The castle makes an attractive centerpiece for a medieval table and (if you can induce your guests to break it up at the end of the feast) it serves as a delicious conclusion to the meal.

141 *Rampaunt Perre*

Peoren ysoden in water, ypikked wip ayren & wip amidon, ystreyed abouen of þe leues; mak of dowe þe colour zoelu of þree lyouns rampauns in þe dysches. DC 24

This is another 'dessert' subtlety, one that is simple to make – except for getting those rampant lions cut out; we have yet to see a cookie cutter made in this shape.

Pear Purée with Rampant Lions

3 lbs firm ripe pears (Bosc or Anjou; or red pears, which make the purée an attractive pink colour)

2–4 tbsp sugar, as needed (most pears are pretty sweet)

1 tbsp rice flour

1–2 eggs, beaten

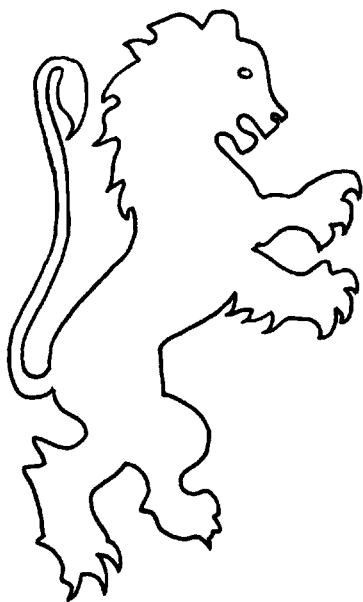
1 recipe sweet pastry dough, made with egg yolks and a pinch of ground saffron

optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ginger, pinches of cinnamon, cloves, cardamom;

2 tbsp lemon juice; egg yolk beaten with saffron as a glaze; currants for the eyes of the lions

Peel, quarter, and core the pears; put in a pan with just enough water to cover, adding sugar and any spices you fancy. Poach until soft enough to mash. Drain the pears and blend or process into a smooth purée. Blend rice flour with a little water and stir in. Stir over low heat until mixture begins to thicken, then stir in the beaten eggs, and continue to stir over very low heat a few minutes more; pour into a wide, or long, shallow dish and chill.

Roll out your dough and either cut out lions freehand or trace a suitable picture – the one we supply here may not be the size you want, and the tail is bound to be tricky. Add currant ‘eyes,’ if desired. Bake the lions until they are crisp and lightly browned; brush with egg yolk-saffron glaze, if you wish, and cool them on a rack. To serve, prop the lions up around the edge of the dish of pear purée, using any means that may occur to you: we have tried fastening them to the dish with flour-and-water paste, and have been known to resort to Scotch tape. If you use a long dish instead of a round one, you can line them up in a row; but note that if you stick them into the pear purée, their feet will get pretty soggy.



142 *Ymages in suger*

And if 3e will make any ymages or any oþer þing in suger þat is casten in moldys, sethe þem in þe same manere þat þe plate is, and poure it into þe moldes in þe same manere þat þe plate is pouryde, but loketh 3oure mold be anoyntyd before wyth a litell oyle of almaundes. GK 15

The recipe for 'Suger plate' is given above (134), in the section on desserts and sweets. Suitable moulds can be contrived from cookie cutters, placed upside down on a wire rack, or even hollow plastic toys (carefully lined with aluminum foil); whatever you use, oil the mould, as the directions say.

We remind those who wish to contrive 'images,' however, that marzipan is easier to shape into any image you may desire. We have made marzipan birds, fish, and people. Ready-prepared almond paste or marzipan is widely available, and many standard cookbooks give directions for making it. Those who want to make it according to an authentic *medieval* recipe might like to try a recipe from *BCB*; we give it here in a modified version of C. Anne Wilson's adaptation:²

4 oz sugar

4 oz ground almonds

4 oz honey

2 tbsp rose water

2 tbsp sesame oil (more if needed)

optional: a little saffron mixed with the rose water

Mix sugar and ground almonds with the rose water, preferably in a blender. Heat the honey in the top of a double boiler (or any container over a pot of boiling water) and stir in the oil. Add the almond mixture gradually to the honey, stirring constantly, and keeping the water below simmering. If the mixture is too stiff, add a little more oil. Turn out, knead on a marble surface (or a lightly floured board), and shape into desired forms; paint with food colouring.

2 'The Saracen Connection: Arab Cuisine and the Medieval West, Part 1,' *PPC* 7 (March 1981), 21.

Bibliography

Apicius. *The Roman Cookery of Apicius*, ed and trans John Edwards (London 1984). An edition with adapted recipes of the only extant cookbook from ancient Rome, one still in circulation in the Middle Ages. Those who find medieval cooking strange should note the stranger preceding cuisine.

*Arberry, A.J. trans. 'A Baghdad Cookery Book,' in *Medieval Arab Cookery* (Prospect Books, 2001), pp. 19–89. The fullest available collection to date of the Arabic recipes that influenced medieval *haute cuisine*. **BCB**

*Austin, Thomas, ed. *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books* EETS OS91 (London 1888; repr 1964). The two 'cookery-books' are mss Harl 279 and 4016, but Austin also includes parts of Ashmole 1439, Laud 553, and Douce 55. Feast menus are included – as they are in most of the editions of medieval recipes cited in this bibliography. **Harl 279, Harl 4016, Ashmole 1439, Laud 553.**

*Chiquart, 'Maistre.' *Du fait de cuisine*, ed Terence Scully in *Vallesia* 40 (1985), 101–231; trans Scully, *Chiquart's 'On Cookery'* (New York and Bern 1986). A lengthy 15th-century collection from the court of Savoy. **Chiquart**

Furnivall, Frederick J., ed. *The Babees Book* EETS OS 32 (London 1868, repr 1969). Contains several books on manners, with emphasis on table manners, and other matters relating to medieval food, including the *Modus Cenandi* ('The Way of Dining'), the *Bokes of Nurture* of Hugh Rhodes and John Russell, Wynkyn de Worde's *Boke of Kervinge*, and a number of Latin graces. Almost all the material here is 15th-century, but the editor did not always indicate dates.

Hammond, P. W. *Food and Feast in Medieval England* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1993). An up-to-date scholarly book on many aspects of medieval English food and cooking, handsomely illustrated and highly readable.

Harvey, John. *Mediaeval Gardens* (London 1981). Reliable information about plants (including, of course, fruits and vegetables) grown in England and on the Continent.

Henisch, Bridget Ann. *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society* (University Park 1976). A wide-ranging study with chapters on 'Cook and

- Kitchen' and 'Methods and Menus,' among others. Some questionable judgments, but nevertheless highly recommended reading.
- *Hieatt, Constance B., ed. *An Ordinance of Pottage* (London 1988). An edition of a 15th-century English culinary collection, plus a section of commentary and adapted recipes. **OP**
- *- , and Sharon Butler, eds. *Curie on Inglysch* EETS SS 8 (London 1985). This edition of 14th-century English culinary recipes includes 'The Forme of Cury'; three other (earlier) complete collections, here entitled 'Diversa Cibaria,' 'Diversa Servisia,' and 'Utilis Coquinario'; and a group of recipes drawn from various manuscripts entitled 'God Kokery.' **DC, DS, UT, FC, GK.**
- *- , and Brenda Hosington, 'From *Espinee* to *Sambocade*: Flowers in the Recipes of Medieval England,' *PPC* 59: 1998, 28-36.
- *- , and R.F. Jones, eds. 'Two Anglo-Norman Culinary Collections' *Speculum* 61 (1986), 859-82. The earliest 'English' recipes (in French), from mss Add 32085 (**A-N.A**) and Royal 12.C.xii.
- Lambert, Carole, ed. *Le Recueil de Riom ...* (Montreal 1988). A 15th-century culinary collection from southern France, together with a treatise on grafting fruit trees from the same manuscript.
- , ed. *Du manuscrit à la table* (Montreal 1992). An important collection of scholarly essays on medieval food; the volume also contains a catalogue of mss containing medieval recipes.
- Laurioux, Bruno, ed. 'Le "Registre de Cuisine" de Jean de Bockenheim' *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome* 100 (1988), 709-60. Recipes from a 15th-century papal kitchen with notes on what to serve various groups - ranging from prostitutes to Lollards.
- **Libre de sent sovi*, ed Rudolf Grewe (Barcelona 1979). Fourteenth-century Catalan recipes. **LSS**
- **Il libro della cucina*, ed Francesco Zambrini (Bologna 1863, repr. 1968); ed Emilio Faccioli (Milan 1966, vol 1). A 14th-century Tuscan collection, containing many recipes from an earlier Latin collection. **LDC**
- Lodge, Barton, ed. *Palladius on Husbandrie* EETS OS 52 (London 1873). A 15th-century English ms translated from a Latin one written in Italy, this lists many vegetables that do not appear in English menus of the period, such as asparagus, but that must have been known in England since their names appear in distinctly English forms.
- **Le Ménagier de Paris*, ed Jérôme Pichon (Paris 1896, vol. 2); ed Georgine E. Brereton and Janet Ferrier (Oxford 1981). The most engaging and readable culinary work from medieval France; late 14th century. **MP** (n.b.: section numbers do not appear in the older edition)
- Mennell, Stephen. *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Oxford 1985). Less strong on the ear-

lier centuries than on later ones, but an excellent survey of food preferences in England and France from the Middle Ages on.

*Morris, Richard, ed. *Liber Cure Cocorum* (London 1862). An early 15th-century English collection of recipes in doggerel verse. LCC

*Napier, Mrs Alexander [Robina], ed. *A Noble Boke of Cookry* (London 1882). A carelessly edited edition of a 15th-century collection used by Pynson for the first printed edition (1501) of an English cookbook. NBC

*Platina (Bartolomeo Sacchi). *On Right Pleasure and Good Health*, ed and trans Mary Ella Milham (Tempe, Arizona, 1998). An influential 15th-century Italian work; the early French translation was one of the most popular cookbooks in Europe for more than a century. Platina

Power, Eileen, trans. *The Goodman of Paris* (London 1928). An abridged translation of *Le Ménagier de Paris*; unfortunately, it omits most of the recipes.

Spencer, Judith, trans. *The Four Seasons of the House of Cerruti* (New York 1983). Colour reproductions of the 200 illustrations of daily life (mostly involving foodstuffs) from a Latin ms written in 14th-century Italy, with its commentary on the 'medical' aspects of each scene. Just the place to see, eg, what medieval lettuce looked like (57).

**Le Viandier de Taillevent* ed Jérôme Pichon and Georges Vicaire (Paris 1892, repr Luzarches n.d.); ed Terence Scully (Ottawa 1988). A standard 14th-century work attributed to the cook of Charles VII of France, but actually of earlier origin. The source of much of the *Ménagier's* material. The Pichon/Vicaire ed. also includes another (related) early 'Traité de cuisine.' VT

Wheaton, Barbara Ketchum. *Savoring the Past* (University Park 1983). A study of food in France from the 14th century to the late 18th, with a few adapted recipes.

Wilson, C. Anne. *Food and Drink in Britain* (London 1973). A well-documented, informative survey.

NOTE: * = a work from which some of the recipes we print and adapt are drawn.

This page intentionally left blank

Index

The original recipe titles (in Middle English or other medieval languages) are indicated by bold type. Sub-entries are indicated by *italic*. Numbers are *recipe* numbers.

- ALMOND: cakes 129; milk, *see*
introduction xxi; and rose petal
sauce 69
Alows de Beef or de Motoun 98
ANISE: *see* Dragée and spices in
confit 135
APPLE: fritters 124; pudding 116;
tarts 120
APRICOT sauce for lamb 80
ARABIAN LAMB cakes 5
ASPARAGUS 35
- BARLEY pilaff 47
BEANS: in chicken fricassee 70;
fried 41
BEEF: birds 98; braised ribs 73;
with chicken and 'brewis' 67;
corned, with chestnuts 75; in
Saracen stew 74; kidney stew
87; meatballs in eggplant sauce
78; steaks 97; tongue 103. *See*
also Boar's head; Meatballs.
Benes Yfryed 42
Black Sauce 58
Blamanger of Fysshe 64
BLANCMANGER 64
Blank Desure 29
Blaunch mortruys of fisch 63
Blaunche Escrepes 127
Blaunchyd Porray 34
- BOAR'S HEAD, made of 'Farsure' 139
Bourbelier de Sanglier 100
Brawn en Peverade 76
BREAD, smothered 130. *See also*
Cherry bread pudding 117.
BRIE tart 1
Brochès au romarin 91
Brouet Vert d'Oeufs et de
Fromage 16
Bruet of Egges to Potage 28
Bruet of Sarcynesse 74
BRUSSELS SPROUTS 39
BULGUR: *see* Wheat pilaff
Būrān 78
Buttered Wortes 32
- CABBAGE soup 22
Caboches in Potage 22
CAKES: almond 129; Arabian lamb
5. *See also* Fritters; Gingerbread;
Pancakes; Wafers.
Calamari 92
CAMELINE sauce 48
CANDY loaves 131. *See also* Orange
peel, candied; Dragée and
spices in confit; Sugar candy.
CAPON, braised 95
Capons Stwed 95
Cariota 40
CARROTS, roasted 40

- CASTLE**, pastry 140
Cawdel of Muskels 30
Cawdel of Samoun 62
Ceci con ove 44
Champignons en pasté 2
CHARD in almond milk 24
Chastletes 140
Chebolace 23
CHEESE: in Brie tart 1; with chickpeas 44; in egg-lemon soup 28; with eggs and milk in soup 29; with eggs in green sauce 16; in elderflower cheese tart 121; fritters 125; on lasagna 12; in mushroom pasties 2; on noodles 11; pipes 7; with turnips 38; in wafers 132. *See also* headnote to Section 6, Desserts.
CHERRY bread pudding 117
CHESTNUTS: in sauce for corned beef 75; with turnips 37
CHICKEN: and beef with 'brewis' 67; braised 95; cold, in sage sauce 20; fricassee with peas or beans 70; gilded roast 94; minced in almond and rose petal sauce 69; pasties Lombard 107; in cumin sauce 71; in elderflower sauce 66; in onion sauce 84; in orange sauce 93; and shellfish in shellfish sauce 88; in yogurt sauce 82; stuffed with grapes 68; *livers*: in black sauce 57; and giblets 86; and gizzards, cold 19
CHICKPEAS with eggs and cheese (or meat) 44
Chike Endored 94
Chireseye 117
CHUTNEY 60
Chyken in Hocchee 68
Civés d'Oeufs 15
Compost 60
Coney or Malard in Cevy 84
Cormarye 101
CORNED BEEF with chestnuts 75
CORNISH HENS: *see* CHICKEN
CRAYFISH: *see* Shellfish
Creme Bastard 112
Cressee 11
Cretonnée de Pois Nouveaux ou Feves Nouvelles 70
Crustardes of Eerbis 104
Crustardes of Flessch 108
CUSTARD: herb 14; sauce, white 112; tarts 122; tarts with fruit 123
Daryols 122
A Disshe mete for Somere 19
DRAGÉE and Spices in Confit 135
DUCK in onion sauce 84
DUMPLINGS of dried fruit in paste 126
EGGPLANT sauce for meatballs 78
EGGS: with cheese and chickpeas 44; with cheese in egg-lemon soup 28; in white custard sauce 11; in custard tarts 122; in custard tarts with fruit 123; in elderflower cheese tart 121; fried in onion sauce 15; in green sauce with cheese 16; in herb custard 14; in soup with cheese and milk 29
Egurdouce 83
ELDERFLOWER cheese tart 121
Emeles 129
Erbolat 14
Erbowle 115

Esparagat 35

Fenkel in Soppes 25

FENNEL: in salad 21; soup 25; in a tart 104

FIG pudding 119

Figey 119

FISH: in elderflower sauce 66; in jelly 17; pudding 63; quiche with green topping 104; tart 105; *mackerel* in mint sauce 18; *perch* with rice 64; *pike* in rosemary sauce 91; *salmon:* cold poached 61; and leeks in almond milk sauce 62; steaks grilled in sauce 89; *squid*, fried 92; *trout* in a pasty 106; *turbot*, roast in sauce 90. *See also* Shellfish.

Freseyes 58

Fretoure 124

FRITTERS: apple 124; cheese 125; herb 8; parsnip 9

Frumenty 47

Frytour of Erbes 8

Frytour of Mylke 125

Frytour of Pasternakes [of skirwittes, & of apples] 9

Garbage 86

GARLIC: pepper sauce 55; yellow sauce 56

Gauffres 132

Gees in Hoggepot 72

Gees with Sawse Madame 96

Gele of Fyssh 17

GIBLETS 86

GINGERBREAD 128

Gingerbrede 128

A Good Sauoce for a Rosted Capoun 59

GOOSE: in hodgepodge 72; roast, with Sauce Madame 96

Gourdes in Potage 27

Gravé d'escrevisses 65

Green pancakes 10

Green peas 42

Green salad 21

Green sauce 50

GREENS: buttered 32; in almond milk 24; in savory green soup 23

Grene Pesen 42

Haedus in Alio 102

Hedgehogs 138

Hennys in Bruet 71

Herb custard 14

Herb fritters 8

Hericot de Mouton 81

Hirchones 138

HODGEPODGE of goose 72

Isfānākh Mutajjan 33

Jance à aulx 56

Jowtes of Almaund Mylke 24

KID: glazed leg with garlic and rosemary 102; sweet and sour 83

KIDNEY stew 87

LAMB: in Arabian cakes 5; birds 98; fricassee 81; glazed leg with garlic and rosemary 102; meatballs in eggplant sauce 78; stew 79; stewed in apricot sauce 80; sweet and sour 83; in yoghurt sauce 82

LASAGNA 12

LEEKs: creamed 34; with salmon in almond milk sauce 62; soup, with mussels in almond milk 30

LOBSTER: *see* Shellfish

Longe de Buf 103

Losyns 12

Lumbard Mustard 53

MACKEREL in mint sauce 18

Madīra 82

Makerel in Sawse 18

Makerouns 11

Malaches of Pork 110

Maqlūa al-shiwā 5

MARZIPAN 142

MEATBALLS 137; in eggplant sauce
78. *See also* Boar's Head.

Millet 45

Minces 39

Mishmishiya 80

Mosserouns Florys 36

Mounchelet 79

MUSHROOMS: glazed 36; grilled
36; pasties 2

MUSSELS and leeks in almond
milk 30

MUSTARD, Lumbard 53

MUTTON fricassee 81

Navés aux chateingnes 37

NOODLES with cheese 11

NORWEGIAN pasties 4

Noumbles 87

ONION soup 26

ORANGE peel, candied 133

Orengat 133

**L'orengue de pouchins, ou de
perdris ou de pigons** 93

OYSTER stew 31

Oysters in cyvee 31

PANCAKES: green 10; white 127

PARSNIP fritters 9

PARTRIDGE in orange sauce 93

Pastés de poucins à la mode

Lombarde 107

Pastéz Nourroys 4

PASTRIES (appetizers and main
course): Brie tart 1; cheese
pipes 7; chicken pasties
Lombard 107; fish quiche with
green topping 104; fish tart
105; great pies 111; mushroom
pasties 2; Norwegian pasties 4;
Paris pies 109; pigeon pie 108;
pork tart 110; tart for an Ember
Day 3; trout in a pasty 106

PASTRIES (sweet): apple tarts 120;
custard tarts 122; custard tarts
with fruit 123; dumplings of
dried fruit in paste 126;
elderflower cheese tart 121. *See
also* Almond cakes;
Gingerbread; Pancakes, white;
Wafers

Pastry Castle 140

Payn Purdew 130

Payn Ragoun 131

PEARS: Purée with rampant lions
141; in wine syrup 113

PEAS: in chicken fricassee 70;
green 42; in puréed sauce 42

PEASECODS 43

PEPPER sauce: garlic 55; sharp 51

PERCH with rice 64

Pevre gresse 51

Pies of Parys 109

PIGEON: in orange sauce 93; pie
108

PIKE in rosemary sauce 91

PILAFF: *see* Barley; Wheat

Pipefarces 7

Piper for Feel and for Venysoun 54

PLUM pudding, fresh 115

Pois en cosse 43
Pomesmoille 116
Pomme dorryse 137
Poreé noire 33
PORK: balls, fried in sage leaves 6;
 cold, in sage sauce 20;
 dumplings in broth 77; in
 pepper sauce 76; roast loin in
 boar's tail sauce 100; roast with
 coriander-caraway sauce 101; in
 squash or pumpkin soup 27;
 tart 110. *See also* Boar's Head;
 Meatballs; Sausage hedgehogs.
PUDDINGS (sweet): apple 116;
 cherry bread 117; fig 119; fresh
 plum 115; rice 118; strawberry
 114. *See also* Bread, smothered.
Pulmentarium in Carbone 99
PUMPKIN soup with pork 27
Pyes of Flesch, Capouns, and
Fesauntez 111

RABBIT: in onion sauce 84; sweet
 and sour 83
Rampaunt Perre 141
Rapeye 126
Rapum Armatum 38
Ravieles 13
RAVIOLI 13
RICE: in broth 46; pudding 118;
 with shellfish or perch 64
Roo Broth 85
Rosee 69
ROSE PETAL sauce, for chicken 69
Rys 118
Ryse of Flessh 46

SALAD, green 21
Salat 21
SALMON: and leeks in almond
 milk sauce 62; cold poached

61; steaks grilled in sauce
 89
Salmon Fressh Boiled 61
Salse verjust de oyselle 49
Sambocade 121
Samon Roste in Sauce 89
Sangler et Serfz Salez 75
SARACEN stew 74
Sauce Aliper 55
SAUCES: black 57; cameline 48;
 garlic pepper 55; green 50;
 Lumbard mustard 53; orange-
 rosewater 52; pepper 54; sharp
 pepper 51; sorrel and bitter
 orange 49; spiced wine 59;
 strawberry 58; vegetable-fruit
 chutney 60; yellow garlic 56.
See also individual fish and
 meats, eg, Beef, Goose, Pike
Sauge 20
Saulce d'un poucin rostis en esté
 52
Savory Green Soup 23
SAUSAGE Hedgehogs 138
Sawge yfarcet 6
Sawse Camelyne 48
Schyconys with pe Bruesse 67
SHELLFISH: and chicken in
 shellfish sauce 88; in pea sauce
 65; with rice 64; with sorrel
 and bitter orange sauce 49;
oysters 31
SHRIMPS: *see* Shellfish
SORREL and bitter orange sauce
 49
SOUPS: cabbage 22; cheese egg-
 lemon 28; of eggs, cheese, and
 milk 29; fennel 25; of greens in
 almond milk 24; of mussels and
 leeks in almond milk 30; onion
 26; oyster stew 31; pumpkin

27; savory green 23; squash 27

Sowpys Dorry 26

SPICED WINE 136; sauce 59

SPINACH, fried 33. *See also* Fish, quiche; Greens.

SQUASH soup with pork 27

SQUID, fried 92

Stekys of Venson or Bef 97

STRAWBERRY: pudding 114; sauce 58

Strawberye 114

Stwed Beef 73

Suet Blanc 66

SUGAR candy 134

Suger Plate 134

SWEET-AND-SOUR lamb, rabbit, or kid 83

Tansy Cake 10

Tardpolene 123

Tart de Bry 1

Tart in Ymbre Day 3

Tartes of Fysshe 105

Tartlettes 77

Tartys in Applis 120

A Tile of Meat 88

TONGUE, gilded roast 103

TROUT in a pasty 106

Truittes en pasté 106

TURBOT, roast in sauce 90

Turbot Roste Ensauce 90

TURNIPS: baked with cheese 38; with chestnuts and sage 37

VEAL: birds 98; cutlets, grilled 99; stew 79

VEGETABLES and other side dishes:

asparagus 35; beans 41; brussels sprouts 39; cabbage 22; carrots 40; chickpeas 44; leeks, creamed 34; millet 45; mushrooms 36; pilaff of wheat or barley 47; rice 46; salad 21; turnips baked with cheese 38, with chestnuts and sage 37. *See also* Fritters; Lasagna; Noodles; Ravioli; and headnote to section 2, Soups and Pottages.

VENISON: kidney stew 87; steaks 97; stew 85

Verde Sawse 50

WAFERS 132

Wardonys in Syryp 113

WATERCRESS: in almond milk 24, in salad 21

WHEAT pilaff 47

WHITE CUSTARD sauce 112

WINE: spiced 136; sauce 59

YELLOW garlic sauce 56

YOGHURT: in eggplant sauce for meatballs 78; in sauce for lamb or chicken 82

Ymages in suger 142

Ypocras 136