

# Christmas Cookery for Christmas Cheer



## The Legend Of The Christmas Stocking

Many, many years ago there lived in Europe a very wealthy man named St. Nicholas. He liked nothing better than to help poor people, but disliked very much being thanked for his gifts. One Christmas eve he wished to give a purse of gold to an old man and his little daughter, and in order to escape being seen, he climbed to their roof and dropped his precious gift down the

chimney. Instead of landing on the hearth, however, the pure fell right into a stocking which was hung up to dry, and the next morning it was discovered there! When other people heard of the strange happening they too hung up their stockings, and soon all over the land it became the custom on Christmas Eve to hang up one's stocking for St. Nicholas to fill.

### BY PROXY

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"I had forgot. He is blind as a mole," he said, as if to himself. "Bah!" he went on. "Tis ridiculous; 'tis merely play-acting," and he hit his lips.

I was much taken with this turn, and was more than delighted with the girl's behaviour. It was as rare as an actress, and savored of it. She kept her face, with that subtle smile under all, and yet I guessed there was something beneath which had dictated her conduct. This was now to be shown.

"Tis more than two years since," said she, her face darkling, "and you put me to shame, before Sir Edward and the friends he had assembled to celebrate our betrothal. You denied me, and now you have come like a scurril attorney lest your lands and heritages should slip through your clutches. What, think you, I can think of so gross a creature? On my faith, you are of no more value to me or anyone than the ass upon the common or the goat that butts for grass. This matter is closed without you. Get you gone!"

"Now by my life!" he cried, "there are plenty that will testify to me and shame you and your evil partner! Now by—"

She interrupted him like a queen of tragedy. "You were to have been back by eight," she said. "What o'clock is it now?"

He looked at the chamber clock, as did I, and we both saw that it registered past nine of the evening. "Your case is gone," she said, "and moreover I am wed," and, as I live, she put an arm in mine, the which I patted affectionately.

"Egad, my love, and so you be!" said I. "And now," said she, withdrawing her arm, but very gently, "tis time this farce was ended, now that



### A Christmas Turkey

He was an arrogant turkey. He was the farmyard king; Nothing could ever happen to him For he knew everything!

He was given the best of food While others ate the scraps, He would go to the Winter Fair. And win a prize—perhaps.

He grew fatter and fatter, They grew thinner and thinner. When lo! before he could wink an eye He was their jolly Christmas dinner.

—Leah Bake.

If you want to keep Christmas with me this year, you can have all the turkey, plum pudding, and mince pies you like, so long as you leave a little room for the extras I always introduce to the dinner table. To me, it's the little extras that make or mar a meal, no matter the meal. Here are the points we should consider when planning our menu:

1. How many courses shall we have?
2. What'll we start with?
3. The size of the party.
4. Shall we serve pudding, or mince pies, or both?
5. What we'd like to drink.
6. The colour scheme.

You can have as long a menu as you want, if you feel you haven't dined unless you've toyed with a full table d'hôte. If you don't like a long menu, you can still celebrate merrily over a goose or turkey, and plum pudding or mince pies, if you give them festive trimmings.

#### A CHOICE:

But what'll we start with? I'm going to give you a choice. Would you like oysters? If so, allow four per person, and serve each on its half shell, arranged on a plate, garnished with cut lemon.

Do you prefer grapefruit? Then for goodness sake prepare it properly, and either plant a tiny sprig of artificial holly in the centre of each half, or a maraschino cherry fringed with two frosted mint leaves.

If you'd rather have a fruit cocktail, either make it of sweetened grapefruit, or of equal quantity of the grapefruit, and diced pineapple. Sometimes I decorate a cocktail of this kind with a ring or cross of halved maraschino cherries, or of halved cherries, and halved black grapes, arranged alternately.

If to you, a Christmas dinner is not a Christmas dinner unless you start with soup, I'd make it a clear soup, and serve it in cups, allowing a gill and a half per person. You can garnish it as you please, but I think a teaspoon of green peas looks most attractive in each cup.

Add a teaspoon of sherry or Marsala also. Pass round a dish of piping hot cheese straws, made preferably from flaky pastry, in corkscrew shape, with the soup, unless you want to trifle with the "Stilton" at the end of the meal.

When you wish to serve only a two course dinner, but feel you would like to break the ice with an aperitif, and something tantalizing, while the turkey or goose is being dished up, offer a glass of dry sherry, mixed vermouth, or a cocktail, and some stuffed olives, mixed salted nuts, and either salted hot potato crisps, or unsweetened ice wafers, buttered, sprinkled with grated cheese, seasoned, and crisped under the grill. If you wish to lengthen a longer menu, start in this way, too.

**THE PERFECT DINNER:**  
The size of the party shouldn't affect your Christmas dinner unless you have a cook, and serve it yourself, when you'd be wise to limit the menu to two or three courses. I think three courses and dessert are enough, no matter the size of the staff. To me the perfect Christmas dinner consists of:

- CHRISTMAS DINNER 1932**
- Grapefruit, Caviare, or Oysters or Clear Soup
  - Roast Norfolk Turkey; Grilled bac on rolls; Chestnut and sausage meat; stuffing; Baked Potatoes; Braised Endive; Bread Sauce; Plum Pudding with Brandy Sauce
  - Dessert: Nuts, and Bonbons
- Should you dine with me this Christmas, there's just a chance that instead of a turkey, I may give

sparkled in the candlelight. "God give you good fortune, Mistress!" I said. "And you!" she said, and whispered, as I passed through the window. "He shall go from me as you must have gone! He shall go this night! Would God—" I do not know how it was, for I made no movement, but my lips touched hers. "Egad!" said I to myself as I tore myself away. "Tis a melting handsome madam, after all, and this Curwen should be in the stocks for carols."

I looked back at the house, but a shrubby soon intervened, and so I put heels to the mare, who was better of her lameness. You will think it odd, maybe, but of a sudden there came through me the thought, like a knife, "Rip me! I have missed that wedding feast!"

you a home-grown goose, with sage and onion stuffing, but don't expect too much sage from me. If so, I'll offer a red cabbage, stewed with 2 sliced onions, 2 apples, 2 or 3 tablespoons of butter, and a tablespoon of red currant jelly, and well seasoned along with it, as well as apple sauce, or chestnut gravy, which is ordinary but well made gravy, thickened to taste with sieved boiled chestnuts.

As I think it's all wrong to serve plum pudding and mince pies at one meal, because you simply cannot do justice to both, I usually serve mince pies at a lunch when I've dined in the evening, and at supper when I've dined mid-day.

#### NO FIRE:

If you dine with me on Christmas Day, you'll have a choice between pudding and cream caramel served with whipped sweetened cream, flavoured and cranberry fool made with equal quantity of sieved sweetened cranberries, and whipped cream, decorated with green pistachio nuts, and chopped white marshmallows. This year I'm not going to set fire to my pudding, because I mean to stab it all over as soon as it comes out of the basin, with blanched almonds, fried till evenly brown in batter. . . .

I've noticed at past Christmas dinners how few last out till dessert, but if you dine with me, I insist on your having a little fruit unless we start with grapefruit, for I haven't suggested serving any salad, and the meal would not be well balanced without some fruit or green salad. At the same time, I intend to have a dish of fringed celery, and a dish of large olives, rinsed in sherry on the table throughout the meal, for guests to help themselves to.

#### TASTEFUL TABLES:

I can't make up my mind whether to have a white and green table, or a red, white and green table, for this Christmas. If white and green, the mats or cloth, and the candles, for I'm dining at night, will be white, and the centre dessert, I'll have cream creme de menthe, white marshmallows, Turkish Delight, green liqueur gooseberries, and green crystallised fruits, in silver dishes on the table. I'll decorate the basket of fruit with mistletoe, and let the bonbons supply a note of colour.

If I have a red, white and green colour scheme, I'll have flame candles in crystal or silver sticks in place of the white, leave the centre the same or substitute a low jardiniere of Roman Hyacinths, and decorate each serviette with a sprig of holly. If my dwarf scarlet tulips come as early this year as last, I may substitute them for the white hyacinths.

If you prefer the red, white and green scheme, you could fill your bonbonnières with red marzipan sweets, pink Turkish Delight, white and pink marshmallows, and green creme de menthe, but try to have your crackers harmonize with your fruits and flowers. The effect would be more harmonious still if you choose for dessert green and black grapes, peaches or nectarines, and apples.

When it's impossible to obtain a scented flower to float in each finger bowl, substitute a slice of lemon, or a tiny sprig of berried holly and add a few drops of rose water.

If you wish to remove the smell of cooking and food immediately after dinner, burn a few amber pastilles as soon as you leave the dining-room. You don't want to meet with a whiff of plum pudding, turkey, or sage and onion stuffing, when you're dancing out the last hours of a merry Christmas day.

Merry Christmas!  
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#### Mushroom and Bacon Hors D'Oeuvres

Wrap mushrooms or stuffed olives in bacon. Secure with tooth pick and broil. Serve with toast fingers and garnish with cress.

**BEST WISHES**

#### BAKED STEAK DINNERS

With baked squash and baked potatoes

Place a sirloin steak cut 2 inches thick in a baking pan. Cover with a layer of thinly sliced Spanish onions. Add a layer of green pepper cut in rings. In the centre of each pepper ring place a teaspoon chili sauce and top each circle with a thin slice of lemon. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Mix 1-2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce with 1-2 cup catchup and pour over all. Bake in a 400 to 425F. oven 20 minutes to the pound. Serve on a hot platter garnished with parsley.

Bake potatoes with the dinner. Cut squash in suitable sized pieces for serving. Place in a baking dish and in each piece of squash put 1 teaspoon syrup and a little butter. Season with salt and pepper. Bake with steak.

#### CHRISTMAS MERINGUE CAKE

- 1/2 cup butter
- 4 tbs. milk
- 1-2 cup sugar
- 1 t. bak. baking powder
- 1-4 tsp. salt
- 4 egg yolks
- 1-2 cup cake flour
- 2 tbs. cake flour

Cream the butter and sugar. Separate the eggs. Add the yolks well beaten and mix well. Add the cake flour which has been sifted before measuring alternately with the milk. Sift the remaining two tablespoons flour with the baking powder and salt, and add last. Pour into two 8-inch layer pans and add:

- 4 egg whites
- 1-2 cup pistachio nuts chopped
- 3-4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 t. vanilla

Beat the whites to a froth, then begin adding the sugar gradually and continue beating until all the sugar has been added. The meringue should hold a point when the beater is drawn out. Add the vanilla. Spread the meringue on the top of the unbaked layer cakes. Sprinkle with the chopped nuts and bake in a 325 to 350F. oven 25 minutes. Allow to cool. Then remove from the pans. Fill with the following filling:

- 1 cup whipped cream
- 1-4 cup red cherries chopped
- 1-2 t. powdered sugar
- 1-2 cup drained crushed pineapple
- 1-4 cup green cherries chopped
- 1-4 t. vanilla.

Place one layer meringue side down on a cake plate. Spread with the filling. Cover with the other layer meringue side up.

#### ALMOND SHORTBREAD

- 1-3 cup short sugar
- 1-4 tsp salt
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup blanched almonds put through mincer
- 2 cups flour

Cream butter and sugar together. Dredge almonds in flour. Work flour, salt and nuts into sugar and butter. Knead until a compact dough is formed. Shape into a roll and chill 2 or 3 hours or over night. Slice and bake for 15 minutes in a 350F oven.

#### SULTANA CAKE OR CHRISTMAS WHITE FRUIT CAKE

- 1-2 cups butter
- 3-4 cups pastry flour
- 1-2 cups sugar
- 1 t. bak. powder
- 1-2 cup cherries
- 1-8 teaspoon salt
- 6 eggs
- 1-2 cup evaporated milk
- 4 cups bleached sultanas

Put raisins in cold water and bring to a boil. Drain and dry. Cream the butter, add the sugar gradually, then the beaten eggs. Add the milk and sifted dry ingredients alternately, then the floured raisins and cherries. Bake in a cream tin, lined with brown paper in a 350 F over 2 hours.

#### CHEESE PUFFS

- 2-3 cup grated nippy Kraft cheese
- Pinch of salt
- 1-3 t. bak. powder
- 2 or 3 drops tabasco
- 2 egg whites

Beat egg whites with salt until stiff, add baking powder and tabasco. Fold in cheese and place on slightly toasted rounds of bread. Place under broiler for about three minutes.

#### CARAMEL DATE PUDDING

- 1-4 cup Wheat Pearls
- 2 cups milk
- 1-4 cup sugar
- 1-8 t. salt
- 2 eggs
- 4 t. thick caramel syrup
- 1-2 t. vanilla
- 1-2 cup chopped dates.

Cook the Wheat Pearls in the top of a double boiler with the milk.

When thick, add egg yolks which have been beaten with the sugar and salt. Also the caramel syrup. Cook for two minutes longer. Remove from the range and cool. Then add the stiffly beaten egg whites, the vanilla and the dates. Fold all the ingredients lightly together. Chill and serve with cream.

To make the caramel syrup, place 1-3 sugar in a small saucepan and heat slowly, stirring constantly till sugar is melted. Add 1-2 cup boiling water. Continue cooking till syrup thickens.

#### CRANBERRY RECIPES

Cranberries can be cooked in any one of a number of ways and yet be the delicious and colorful dish that contributes so much to the Christmas dinner.

For cranberry sauce wash one quart of cranberries, add two cups of boiling water and cook until they cease "popping." Add two cups of sugar just before taking them from the fire and stir until it is dissolved. If a sweeter sauce is desired double the amount of sugar. This does not give a stiff enough mixture to mold. Since it is at the Christmas season that cranberries are at their best, they may very well be stored for future use.

#### Celestial Music

(Continued from Page 1)  
the Welsh to bitter resistance against the invading English.

#### AN OLD HARPISIT'S CUSTOM:

Before the harp grew into a dulcimer and the dulcimer into a harpsichord, an instrument which at first "made a scratch with a sound at the end of it" (as an old wit said), every knight could perform upon it. At feasts it would be passed from hand to hand and each guest would chant of his many strange adventures. (This custom was later supplanted by the habit of telling fishing stories). Where the sword went, there went the harp. One can well guess how the first trial sweep of the strings obviated the need of that ritual which Shakespeare described later. "Shall we clap into 't roundly, without hawking, or spitting, or saying we are hoarse, which are the only preludes to a bad voice?"

What has happened to the harp to-day? It is still an effective instrument. It has not lapsed into the backwaters of the connoisseur's collections, like the shawn, the serpent, the clavichord and the recorder. Every first class orchestra has one or two harpists, an modern composers are not sparing in their use of them. Debussy proved how brilliantly the harp can be used as a Stimmungsbilder, for creating "effects." I call to mind particularly his "Danses Sacrees et Profanes" in which the harp gives a wonderful, fairylike atmosphere. My only grumble is that modern composers do not understand that the harp is as suited to the stag party as to the boudoir. Given an opportunity it has an urgent, masculine note. It can, indeed, be one of the most stimulating and exciting of instruments.

Harp of other patterns, the Celtic harp, the Welsh harp, the Scottish harp and the rest are still given full scope as instruments, but only in limited spheres, as at Eisteddfods, or at concerts with a "curiosity" interest.

#### CAUSES DECLINE:

The decline of the harp or rather, its failure to continue as one of the two or three most popular instruments, is due to many causes. One of them is that a new harp is a costly affair. (But I am given to understand now that second-hand instruments can be bought at a comparatively low price). Another is a harpist, however well-trained, has but limited opportunities. Yet there is no reason for this unpopularity. Properly played, a harp makes an even better accompaniment for a singer than a piano, so its champions declare, and I should hesitate to deny them.

The Victorian girl could give a

#### Apt Replies

"How are you?" is a very common question. These are some very likely replies—

- "Corking," said the bottle.
- "Rotten," said the apple.
- "Fine," said the magistrate.
- "Grand," said the piano.
- "Keen," said the knife.
- "Ripping," said the scissors.
- "Well," said the water.
- "All done up," said the dress.

Make a sauce as above, pour it into sterilized canning jars and seal.

For a cranberry dish that has the berries left in it, but is stiff enough to mold, use the same proportions as in the above recipe, with the large amount of sugar, and cook the mixture until the "sheeting-off" test for jelly is obtained. Pour it into a mold and chill.

Cranberries chilled in a large ring mold, unmolded, then filled with Waldorf salad mixture and garnished with holly as illustrated, are a very festive salad for luncheon or supper at Christmas time.

Cranberries are excellent for making jelly. To one quart of cranberries, add two cups of boiling water and cook until the berries are very tender. If you are fond of spices, add two one-inch pieces of stick cinnamon, two dozen whole cloves and six allspice berries during cooking.

When the cranberries are tender, drain thoroughly through a jelly bag, but without any squeezing. Measure the juice and let it boil two minutes, then add sugar, allowing one cupful for every cupful of juice. Boil rapidly until the sheeting-off test is obtained, and pour at once into one large or several individual molds.

#### A Christmas Custom

The natives of Magila, a settlement in Central Africa, believe that unless they have a clean-shaven head on Christmas Day they are not treating the anniversary with proper respect. So they share their heads all over.

Unfortunately razors are scarce in that country, and so one may see a native sitting on the ground and being operated upon by a friend with a piece of broken bottle or a knife fashioned from a sardine tin!

modern miss points on the display of a beautiful wrist. Nothing develops the feminine hand and arm to such a pitch of gracefulness as harp-playing. Many of us, doubtless, owe our being to the fact that some helpless male was given to rapture by some white wrist plucking the trembling strings. Playing a cello, a woman needs to be a Juggia not to look all wrong. A neat seat at a piano is as rare as one on a horse. A violin beneath a woman's chin does not add to her impressiveness. All wind instruments should be left to the natural wind bags of creation, men. But a woman at a harp . . . however clumsy she is, she can never fail to look sweet, pliable and altogether graceful. So thoroughly was this realized fifty or seventy years ago, that if one daughter was planted at the piano, another was set to a harp.

Undoubtedly, the harp should come back. It gives the music of heaven, of war and of love. And how much more heavenly and less warlike the world would be if the first tinklings at the harp replaced the ineffectual thumpings at the piano or the raw shrieks from the violin in suburban homes.

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#### Christmas Cautions

It is the usual thing to decorate your rooms at home and your club-room for Christmas. These hints should help you in your work.

If you have a Christmas tree illuminated with fairy lamps, or candles, see that nothing hangs immediately above them.

To prevent fire, don't hang decorations near fireplaces. Also beware of cotton wool decoration. It easily catches fire.

When actually hanging up the decorations it is best not to drive nails into the wall, as this disfigures and spoils the appearance of the room. To get over this difficulty drive small tacks into the woodwork doors or into the picture rail.

When you have to use a pair of steps, be careful not to scratch the walls; and be sure that the rope between the supports of the steps is taut, or you may have a serious fall.

And then bang goes all the joy of Christmas!