

Pussy Pleasures

*Slow Food for Fast Canines
and Flighty Cats*

Slightly revised

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Preparation Methods

Fortunately the following recipes require very little ability. But certain skills and tools are needed to accomplish them.

Dishes without meat are the easiest, needing only a few containers (such as 10 litre saucepans), tools and a newspaper or a TV.

Dogs find fruit and vegetables boring and will sulk in a corner while you cook. Cats usually find them uninteresting, but will lie on your chopping board and purr. Unless you want pussy blood in your salads some diversionary tactic is need.

A TV is best. Turn on the TV, making sure the chopping board is in a straight line between you and the picture. The cat will promptly move into a position where it obscures your vision and begin washing. You can now safely chop things.

Alternatively, place a newspaper beside the chopping board and commence reading. The cat will immediately sit on whatever part of the page you are looking at, and you can then chop. This is less satisfactory as you have to keep looking at the cat/paper while you chop, and it can be dangerous unless you have independent eyes which can look at both the cat and the knife at the same time.

Some cats like to be involved and can be useful. A playful cat is the fastest and cheapest way to shred lettuce or cabbage. But they slow down carrot chopping by knocking carrots onto the floor and “killing” them. Attempts to rescue such vegetables usually results in a visit to a blood bank and it is better to foster your moggy’s gardening skills by allowing it to make compost under the kitchen dresser¹.

Meat dishes offer interesting problems. The best solution is to prepare meals in a hot-air balloon about 100 metres above your house; predatory birds are less inconvenient than domestic animals. But lacking an aerial kitchen is not a major handicap.

For dogs develop the ability to do things single handed, holding things in place with your chin while you cut (it is useful for bearded men to be ambidextrous to avoid a rather lopsided appearance). Now you can tame your beast by feeding it dried liver with your free hand as you work (see recipe below).

For cats you will have to double all desirable ingredients and share them 50:50 as you work. Cats will eat the pieces you want for the dish (hooking them and your fingers with their claws) and ignore the bits you put in front of them. But cat hair adds to the texture of stews and their dribble seems harmless. Never *ever* make the mistake of trying to keep the best meat for yourself. While you are trying to coax pussy to eat scrag-ends your dog will gently push its head between your crutch and the table and scoff the good stuff. Although the sensation will be pleasurable you will end up hungry.

As indicated by the last sentence, all food preparation must be accomplished while standing up. This is to ensure that you have maximum reach when hitting, throwing and screaming.

Some ingredients require special techniques. For example, cats will lick butter on the side furthest away and you should regularly practice taking butter from under the cat’s neck without getting hairs on it. Similarly, while you are carrying butter to the table, dogs will trip you up. Frequent experience will enable you to scoop up the top part of the block from the floor while fending off the dog with your feet, huddling over your prize as the cat lands on your back. Always buy 500 gm blocks as the remaining “splat” on the floor is usually half of it.

All recipes have estimated preparation times. The expression *50 minutes* indicates that I haven’t the faintest idea how long it takes.

¹ You may view it as compost, but it is actually a fast-food diner for cats; as you will discover from the mouse-tails discarded in the sink.

Measurements

The basic unit of measurement is the *lot*.

A lot is a convenient, relativistic amount, which is another reason why preparation times are vague. Within the one recipe, a lot of something should be about the same as a lot of another ingredient. But this cannot be guaranteed and some lots may be larger than others.

Where two or more lots are definitely different I use the other main unit of measurement, the *qty*.

A qty is a lot of something that is visibly distinct from a lot of something else. Which one is the larger is, of course, entirely a matter of choice.

The third main unit is the *handful* which comes in three sizes; tiny, small and normal. Because many people are unfamiliar with it I have used it only once or twice. There are references to the obsolete *spoon*; teaspoons, tablespoons and dessertspoons. As spoons are made in quite arbitrary sizes they hold quite arbitrary amounts. Generally a teaspoon is equivalent to a *tiny handful* and any other spoon to *small handful*.

A few recipes give apparently precise quantities in French metric or English irrational units. I don't know why as the actual amounts used depend on the speed of preparation, animal theft and the blood-alcohol level of the cook. However, I have retained them as they may be of interest to historians.

Acknowledgements

Most of the recipes have been shamelessly stolen from unnamed sources. However, Rachel insists that I mention her or I will be castrated. She introduced me to Tom Yum and Laksa.

During the editing, Socks kept me supplied with dead baby rabbits and mice, and Emma slept under my chair and dreamt of raw lamb hearts until I trod on her tail.²

² Socks has since passed away. After spending a couple of weeks in the freezer (with lamb chops, ice cream and a stray placenta), and during which he was almost casseroleed by mistake, he was freeze dried and now lives on the kitchen dresser.

Garlic Bread

All the following recipes (except perhaps ice cream) must be accompanied by garlic bread. Not only does it taste nice, but it keeps cats at a distance.

<i>Time</i>	<i>10 minutes (excluding meal)</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Preventing cats from licking the butter.</i>
1 qty	Bread rolls
3 lots	Olive oil
1 lot	Garlic
1	Small bowl
1 lot	Butter (optional)
1	Meal of choice

Half fill small bowl with oil.

Crush garlic and put in bowl with oil.

Continue crushing and adding garlic until the bowl is about one-third full of garlic.³

Cook meal.

Warm rolls in oven.

Serve meal. Take a roll, cut in half and smear each half with a thick layer of oil and garlic. Add butter to taste.

Eat.

3 If you like garlic add more as the quantities are for the faint-hearted.

Andrew's Sticky Mess

If cooked correctly, this recipe produces something that is not in the least sticky. But just as God works in mysterious ways so does rice, and stickiness is a frequent outcome. Keep trying and you will get it right before you die: perhaps.

<i>Time</i>	<i>30 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Accurate measurement of depths</i>
1 qty	Jasmine rice
1	Saucepan
1 lot	Cold water ⁴
1	Finger (large)
1	Spirit level
1	Timer
	Salt

Hold cupped right hand over saucepan, with your left hand holding a packet of jasmine rice over your right hand⁵. Tip and fill right hand with rice and then empty into saucepan. Perform this step once for each person who intends to eat the sticky mess. Put down packet of rice.

Level the rice and then poke finger into it. If the depth of rice is less than one finger joint find a smaller saucepan, put rice in it and check again. Repeat until depth is OK.

Three-quarters fill the pot (the one with the rice in it) with cold water. Poke finger into it and swirl around as though mixing paint; the water should go white⁶. Carefully pour off most of the water and repeat until the water is clear⁷.

Rest tip of a large finger on top of the levelled rice and add cold water until it reaches the top of the finger nail, or a little higher.

Add salt to taste.

Place the pot on a stove and bring to a rapid boil, stirring occasionally⁸. Take pot off, put on a tight fitting lid⁹ and put aside. Start timer.¹⁰

After about 15 minutes remove lid, stir and loosen rice with a wooden spoon and replace the lid.

After a further 5 to 10 minutes, remove lid and serve¹¹.

4 Actually you need several lots, but this is explained in the directions.

5 It is useful to open one end of the packet first; preferably the end pointing up.

6 If it doesn't throw away the rice, go and buy some more and try again.

7 The aim is to leave the rice in the pot if at all possible.

8 Some people prefer to use a wooden spoon instead of the finger for this, unless it is someone else's finger.

9 If the pot you have chosen does not have a lid then throw the pot and its contents into a rubbish bin. Find a pot with a lid and start again.

10 I have never discovered the purpose of the timer and this step could be omitted.

11 By itself this dish is rather bland, so I suggest you make something else to go with it.

Dried Liver

See notes on preparation methods.

<i>Time</i>	<i>2 or 3 days</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Cutting thin strips off slabs of meat</i>
1	Ox or lamb liver
1	Very sharp knife
1	Combustion stove ¹²
1 or 2	Baking trays
	Glad wrap
	Ear plugs

Insert ear-plugs¹³.

Thinly slice the liver. Extract thin slices of thumb to avoid animals developing a taste for your flesh.

Line baking trays with Glad wrap and carefully arrange the strips of liver thereupon in a single layer.

Place in the warming oven.¹⁴

After one day remove the trays and turn over the liver strips. Return to oven for a second day.

Peel dried liver off the Glad wrap and put in a plastic bag. Store in safe or a bank vault until required.

This is also useful for grandchildren. Give them a bit, calling it liquorice, and you will never see them again.¹⁵

12 An electric stove will work provided that the temperature can be set low enough. I use a fan forced oven set at 85°C and cook for 2 or 3 hours.

13 An alternative to ear-plugs is to send your cats and dogs to another town, but preferably to another country.

14 Warm is the critical word. If not warm enough (as when you don't bother lighting the fire in the stove) the liver turns a pretty shade of green instead of dark brown. If too warm the Glad wrap melts and welds the liver to the baking tray; the result makes a decorative wall hanging, but that is not the aim.

15 A better method is to make a small fudge roll. Lock your dog outside, place the roll on a carpet and invite your grandchildren to play. Discover the roll, say "oh dear, the dog has done a poo" and eat it.

Yum Yum! Tom Yum

Tom Yum was an obnoxious child who used to go around yelling “Yum, yum! Yum, yum! Pig shit and gooley-gum make good chewing gum!”. His parents threw him into a vat, tossed in a dead cat that lived in their spice shop and cooked him. The soup was lovely, but it took another 20 years and 17 pregnancies before they worked out how to recreate the taste and establish the Tom Yum spice factory.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Choosing an appropriate breast</i>
1 pkt	Asian Home Gourmet Spice Paste for Tom Yum Soup
1	Onion
1	Breast ¹⁶
1 lot	Mushrooms ¹⁷
1 tablespoon	Fish sauce
1 lot	Sticky Mess
6 Cans	Beer
1 lot	Fresh coriander leaves.
1 lot	Garlic bread

Open a beer and drink. Dice onion, cube breast, cut mushrooms into quarters and carefully cut open the packet of spice paste.

Open a beer and drink. Cook diced onion in some olive oil¹⁸. Add half the packet of spice paste, stir a bit and add sufficient water¹⁹. Allow to simmer for a while.

Open a beer and drink. Add mushrooms and fish sauce²⁰ and allow to simmer for a while, adding more water²¹.

Open a beer and drink. Sing and attempt to make Sticky Mess. When the pot with the rice has been covered and is being timed, add chicken and a few chopped coriander leaves to the other pot (the one with the spices in it). Leave to simmer gently.

Open a beer and drink. Get someone else to lay the table, make a salad and garlic bread. When the rice has cooked, serve meal with more chopped coriander for garnishing.

Open a beer and drink. Go to bed.

Variations

This is just a basic recipe. It is quite mild and the amount of spice paste used should be varied to suit individual tastes. Any mixture of chicken or fish or vegetables could be included (flake, mussels, prawns and mushrooms is rather nice).

16 This is to be cut up and cooked rather than played with. As this limits the choice somewhat I suggest a chicken breast.

17 Optional. But if you like them I suggest about 10 caps.

18 In a pot.

19 Beer might be an interesting variation, but I haven't tried it. If you do, you will need 7 cans, not 6.

20 There are actually several options here. You can use lemon juice and soy sauce or a mixture of all three, depending on your taste.

21 The aim is to have the pot about 3/4 full rather than flood the kitchen floor.

Laksa

For or of two spaniels. In Asia it would contain spaniels, but in Australia it would be for spaniels; a subtle difference.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>The ability to call an ambulance and survive the heart attack that inevitably results from excessive fat intake</i>
1 pkt	Asian Home Gourmet Laksa Spice Paste for Coconut Curry Noodles
1	Onion
1 lot	Fish, chicken or vegetables
1 lot	Mushrooms
1 lot	Sticky Mess
1 can	Coconut cream (or block)²²
1 lot	Fresh coriander leaves.

The clever reader will have noticed a striking similarity between the above ingredients and those for Tom Yum. The clever reader is right!

Having mastered Sticky Mess and Tom Yum it is sufficient to give the slightest outline of the process of making Laksa.

Cook diced onion in olive oil, add half the packet of spice paste, sufficient water and simmer.

Add coconut cream, mushrooms and more water. Simmer.

Make Sticky Mess and add meat and a few chopped coriander leaves to the Laksa.

Serve with salad and chopped coriander for garnishing.

Variations

Again, this is just a basic recipe.

Instead of rice use cooked noodles or spaghetti.

Add fish sauce, lemon juice and/or soy as you desire.

Use green curry paste instead of Laksa paste.

²² Do not stint on quality because cheap cans just have lots more added water. If you shake the can and it sounds runny, don't buy it.

Difficult Soup

This is hard to make because of all the stuff to be cut up

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>None at all!</i>
4	Rashers of bacon ²³
3	Large onions
4	Cloves garlic
2	Carrots
1 lot	Pinkeye potatoes ²⁴
1 lot	Broccoli
2 tins	Tomatoes
1 tin	Mexican mixed beans ²⁵
	Sherry (optional)
	Oregano ²⁶

Cook onions, carrot rings, bacon pieces, potatoes, oregano, broccoli and crushed garlic in some olive oil (adding in the specified order). Add water or stock, and tins²⁷ and cook as required. Drink the sherry.

Serve with Garlic bread, parmesan cheese and unlimited wine.

There are two rules with this recipe.

Firstly, do not be smart and change the ingredients, thinking you know better than me. Nothing can be added to it or taken away from it.

Secondly, this dish has to be *grown*, the ultimate objective being about 10 litres of soup. Add some lots of stuff and, if you think it doesn't look right, add some more lots of selected stuff until the colour balance is right.

23 Very quickly remove the fat and rind, cut up and throw all over the kitchen. You will then have time to dice the meat and put it into the cooking pot in peace.

24 The original used cauliflower, but I prefer potatoes. Pinkeye potatoes are only available in Tasmania and are the primary reason for living on that blissful island. If you can't get them use a good boiling potato.

25 SPC Mexicana Chilli Beans are, sadly, no longer made; so make your own mix of beans, capsicum and chilli.

26 Recently I have been using a small handful of Basil instead.

27 For a variation, leave out the tins and add their contents instead.

Cullen Skink

This recipe explains why lean, underfed British soldiers have always decimated stout, happy Scotsmen. The Battle of Cullen (1623) was lost because half the Scots were collecting potatoes in Ireland and the other half were milking cows.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Elementary geometry</i>
1/2 to 3/4 litre	Milk
60 to 120 gm	Butter ²⁸
1/2 cup	Cream
2-3	Onions
1 lb	Pinkeye potatoes ²⁹
2 packs	Smoked haddock (Neptune brand, 340 gm) ³⁰
	Fish or chicken stock ³¹ , salt and pepper to taste

Place haddock in 750 ml warm water to defrost and gently cook to make removal of the skin possible.

Remove fish from water, remove skin and large bones and break up into pieces.

Return to water and simmer for 30 minutes with the onion, salt and pepper.

Cut the potato into 1 cm cubes³² and add to the pot. Simmer for 10 minutes.

Add milk, cream and butter, bring to a boil and then remove from heat.

This recipe is endorsed by the Royal College of Cardiologists.

28 The original recipe said “quarter to half block of butter” and it is *assumed* that this means a half pound block.

²⁹ See footnote 24.

30 A skink is a smooth, shiny lizard, but latterly haddock has been substituted.

31 Perhaps a teaspoon if the flavour needs enhancing.

32 Obsessive-compulsive people should skip this recipe.

Dog Beach Curry

A dog beach is a place where dogs are taken for exercise. In my case this involves throwing a tennis ball, running after it, picking it up and running back with it, while my dog sits on the sand and enjoys the sun.

Time *50 minutes*
Skills *Emptying the frig*

The sauce:

2	Onions ³³
2 tablespoon	Curry powder ³⁴
4	Cloves garlic
1 teaspoon	Turmeric

Cook the above in about 3 tablespoon oil and a little water.

The food:

1 kg	Diced meat of any sort (lamb is the best)
	Band-aids ³⁵
1 kg	Diced potatoes
500 g	Diced carrots
1	Cup water
250 g	French beans
	Coconut milk ³⁶

Add meat and cook a while. When getting dry or burning add water and stew.

Add diced potatoes and carrots when the meat is nearly done and simmer for as long as possible (adding more water if necessary to maintain a medium consistence gravy). At some stage taste and add salt if desired (but never add pepper; if it is too mild pour in chilli paste).

Add beans and coconut milk just before serving (but give time for beans to cook).

This is a basic recipe. The main points are:

- The mix of ingredients (coconut milk, potatoes and green vegetables are *essential*).
- The choice of spices.
- Cooking time which should not be too long but with rest periods for maturation³⁷.

Otherwise, the actual ingredients and quantities can be varied wildly to suit what you can find:

- Feed the meat to the cat and have a vegetarian version.
- Increase the curry powder and/or add chilli paste to brighten it.
- Create your own curry spice mix.
- Add other 'low-flavour' vegetables, such as peas (avoid strong flavours that will corrupt the basic taste) and/or vary the quantities.

33 My pedantic brother wanted me to include the word "cubed" and to tell you to crush the garlic. Firstly, I only cube meat and small integers. Secondly, if you have to be told everything in fine detail buy a frozen pizza.

34 I have always used a special brand of curry powder: "Red Prawn Brand Curry Powder For Meat" (Serbuk Kari Daging).

35 These are only required if there is a cat present when the meat is diced. An alternative to band-aids is 1 kg of fillet steak.

36 At least one tin (about 375 ml) or, preferably, a packet of solid coconut milk. Do *not* use desiccated coconut.

37 Cook for about 1 to 2 hours, turn off and leave for a day. Preferably re-heat and leave a couple of times as it matures well (pussies get impatient waiting, so knock up "Difficult Soup" and "Chocolate Mouse" to keep them going).

Rose's Easy Stew

*Rose is about the size of a carton of milk with legs. She has nice teeth.
Quick, easy but very tasty (the recipe, not Rose). It goes well with "Neil's
Salad".*

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>None at all!</i>
750 g	Diced beef ³⁸
750 g	Diced potatoes ³⁹
2 or 3	Large onions sliced
2 to 4	Bay leaves
2 teaspoon	Salt
1 handful	Parsley ⁴⁰
6	Peppercorns or equivalent ground pepper
65 g	Butter
1 cup	Boiling water.

Toss everything in a pot and bring to boil. Simmer for about 2 hours (adding a bit more water if necessary).

Eat.

38 Lamb is probably better. I have made this with:

- lamb
- beef
- steak and kidney mix
- veal and lamb

39 The original recipe said old potatoes because they are meant to mush up. I prefer lumpy food so I use sabagos or pinkeyes. The only use I have found for kennebecs (which are the rejects and leftovers from the Tasmanian chip industry) is to throw them at marauding cats; they are inedible and certainly not food. Never ever use them.

40 It doesn't really depend on how much you like parsley because it is actually the key ingredient. If you don't add enough it becomes boring slop.

Emma's Worms in Meat Sauce

Emma is a spoodle named after an Australian pole-vaulter. She is short, fat and can just jump into an arm chair (whereas Emma George is tall, slim and can leap 5 metres). Also, she is scared of dogs, cats and chicks, and her favourite pastimes are sleeping, gutting knitted toys and eating (Emma not George).

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Handling chilli without inflicting genital agony (although washing hands is not a skill one associates with cooks, in this instance it is desirable).</i>
1 qty	Worms ⁴¹
2	Onions
4 cloves	Garlic
2 rashers	Bacon
3 handfuls	Minced beef (best quality)
1 lot	Mushrooms
1 handful	Black pitted olives ⁴²
1 medium handful	Basil
1 small handful	Chilli sauce ⁴³
1 tin	Diced capsicums
1 large tin	Tomatoes
	Parmesan cheese
	Garlic bread

Chop onions and bacon and cook in a little olive oil. Add crushed garlic and mince and cook a while.

Add mushrooms (cut in bite-sized pieces), olives, oregano, ..., well just add everything else except the cheese and bread. And a cup or two of wine. Allow to simmer quietly.

Cook worms in plenty of salted water. Prepare garlic bread. Drain worms and put worms, sauce, cheese, garlic bread and wine on a table, preferably in containers.

Eat⁴⁴.

41 Well that is what Emma calls them. You might prefer to think of them as spaghetti.

42 Firstly, they must be black Spanish olives. There are things called Kalamata olives which look and taste like salted kangaroo poo and must be avoided. Olives should taste like olives, not rubberised sea water.

Secondly, if they are not pitted you will need a dentist, an unnecessary expense.

43 Come to think of it, a tablespoon would be useful here. The quantity depends on your taste, but a little adds a certain piquancy and a lot completely ruins the sauce.

44 Serving tools, plates, knives, forks and glasses can be used, but they are not necessary.

Annie's Instant Worms

Annie is an extremely quick puppy and Emma can't abide her. Annie wants everything done by yesterday and so this is a rapid feast.

<i>Time</i>	<i>60 seconds</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Cooking with a dog jumping on you and chewing everything it can reach.</i>
4 cloves	Crushed garlic
1 small lot	Butter
2 lots	Smoked salmon
1 small lot	Pesto
1 qty	Worms

Cook worms. Lightly fry the garlic in the butter. Add roughly chopped salmon and fry a bit. Mix everything together and serve.

Pork In Plum Sauce

This was passed on by a panda⁴⁵. It goes very well with rice and Chinese vegetables.

Time *50 minutes*
Skills *Playing with froth*

Pork:

1 tablespoon	Light soy sauce
1 tablespoon	Sherry
2 cloves	Garlic
2 teaspoon	Chilli sauce
1 teaspoon	Five spice powder
1 teaspoon	Bicarbonate of soda
500 g	Diced pork

Mix the above odds and ends together and marinate pork for an hour or more.

Vegetables:

1	Onion
1/2 cup	Red capsicum
1/2 cup	Green capsicum
1/2 cup	Spring onions
2 tablespoon	Oil

Dice and quickly cook vegetables. Remove from pan and cook pork (more oil may be needed).

Sauce:

2/3 cup	Spicy plum sauce ⁴⁶
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Return the cooked vegetables to the pan, add the plum sauce, stir and re-heat.

45 The British 'panda' is a tin box on wheels and the Australian 'bear', although alive, is not a bear at all. Thus it is obvious why neither country has ever produced a recipe worth considering, let alone eating. I believe the Americans have bears, but their penchants for cartoon animals, anal one-line humour and romance has led them to convert this inestimable source of ideas into hamburgers. The Anglo-Saxon race has achieved world domination for two reasons:

- (a) Their permanent indigestion and flatulence has produced a psychotic breed which blames the rest of the world for their self-inflicted agony.
- (b) Everyone else is too busy gormandising and imbibing to give a damn about what fairy-floss and tripe eaters do in their abundant spare time between antacid tablets and the toilet.

46 The best used to be "SPC" Spicy Plum Sauce.

Bavarian Cabbage

A European wolfhound gave me this recipe, but so far I haven't found a companion for either ⁴⁷. It is very nice but doesn't go with many other things in this collection.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Using cornflour</i>
1 1/2 lb	Red cabbage ⁴⁸
1 1/2 oz	Fat (not butter) ⁴⁹
1	Onion
4	Cloves
1	Bay leaf
2 tablespoon	Lemon juice or vinegar
1 tablespoon	Sugar
1/2 inch	Cinnamon bark
1/2 pint	Stock
1	Large apple ⁵⁰
1 teaspoon	Cornflour (heaped)

Shred and wash the cabbage. Melt the fat and stew the cabbage for about 4 minutes. Add the whole onion stuck with cloves⁵¹, bay leaf, lemon juice, sugar and cinnamon stick. Stew for a further 10 minutes. Add the stock and cubed apple. Cook for 30 minutes.

Remove the onion, bay leaf, cloves ⁵² and cinnamon stick. Add cornflour⁵³ and cook for 2 to 3 minutes.

47 But there are fond memories of Leon the Czech, kranske sausages, potatoes and cabbage swilled down with Becher (a wonderful clove-flavoured spirit), followed by trips to eat Jewish blintzes stuffed with cottage cheese, cream, sugar and dried fruit. All of these, other than Leon, are readily available and very digestible.

48 Actually green cabbage is just as good except the colour isn't as nice. It depends on the season and how rich you are.

49 Lard is recommended but I use olive oil. I use olive oil for everything except toast and erotic massages (for which "Chocolate Mouse" makes an interesting variation).

50 There is no need to skin or core it, although I always cut out the core myself.

51 Imagine the onion is an ovum and a clove is a sperm. Hold the ovum in your left hand and a sperm in your right hand by its head. Shout something appropriate and *thrust* the sperm by its tail into the ovum. Repeat for the other three.

52 I defy you to get all the cloves out! Rather than waste the onion I chop it up and fling it back in the pot.

53 No matter how hard you try, you will always end up with a glutinous blob containing a fine white powder. The secret is to mix the cornflour in a cup with a little cold water and make a thin, smooth paste. Add this while stirring.

Sabine's Simple Quiche

The Seven Year War ended in 1763. English spies injected truffles with gunpowder and the ensuing explosions on board French ships destroyed their navy.

Not satisfied, Lord Bute raided the Physic Garden in Chelsea and got John Wilkes to create "a dish to reduce the German swine to snivelling brats".

Unfortunately, when two million simple quiches were shipped across the North

Sea the Germans liked them so much they sent King George seven tons of

Bavarian Cabbage.

<i>Time</i>	<i>3-4 hours (simply because the instructions are so vague)</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Pretending to be a cement mixer</i>
1 1/2 cup	Plain flour
1 cup	Grated cheese
1/2 cup	Melted butter
1	Dust pan and brush

Mix the flour and cheese, adding the melted butter until crumbly and moist⁵⁴. Add more butter if necessary.

Line a glass baking dish with pastry (if you have any) leaving 1/2 cup for the top.

1 lot	Bok choi ⁵⁵ , spinach ⁵⁶ , leek ⁵⁷ , ... ⁵⁸
8-10	Eggs
1 1/2 cups	Milk (more or less, depending on the size of the dish)
1 teaspoon	nutmeg
	salt, pepper

Wash and finely cut the green stuff and put into the dish. Mix eggs, milk and seasoning and pour in. Top with remaining pastry and/or tomato and cheese.

Bake at 350°C for about 35-45 minutes.

54 This is best done by making noises like a 2-stroke petrol engine and flailing your hands around in a large bowl. After you have swept up the pastry you will find it completely lump free; any bits coagulated by butter will have been eaten by a dog, and a cat will have licked out the nearly empty bowl.

55 Broad-leafed weed from Asia; 4 bok chois are suggested.

56 A fabled plant, the subject of an epic Greek poem and very hard to get since 721 BC. If your taste buds cannot distinguish between vinegar and icing sugar you can substitute silver beet (a noxious weed).

57 The Welsh consider this a delicacy, which explains why even the English could subdue them.

58 ... is a symbolic representation of two heads of broccoli.

George's Macaroni Cheese

George was not named after an Australian pole-vaulter

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Making a white sauce, bricklaying</i>
500 gm ⁵⁹	Worm segments ⁶⁰
1	Onion, chopped
1 clove	Garlic
1 tablespoon	Water
1/2 litre	Milk
2 tablespoons	Cornflour
	Pepper to taste
400 gm	Strong cheddar cheese, grated
250 gm	Tomatoes, sliced
2 rashers	Bacon
2 small cans	Tomato paste

Cook worm segments in plenty of water. Place chopped onion, crushed garlic and water in a microwave and cook for 2 minutes.

Blend cornflour with milk and cook, stirring until it thickens⁶¹. Take off stove, mix in pepper and 3/4 of the cheese, and put aside.

Remove rind and fat from the bacon and cut up into small pieces.

Put drained noodles in a large baking dish and stir in the onion/garlic and cheese sauce. Trowel a layer of tomato paste over all. Cover with the rest of the cheese, the sliced tomatoes and the bacon in that order.

Cook.

Serve with salad and garlic bread.

Freeze the rest, if any, but moisten it with a little milk before re-heating in an oven.

59 George insisted on specifying quantities for all ingredients. However, I feel that there is a little scope for variation; certainly the bacon seems a bit light on for my taste.

60 Commonly called macaroni, but any sort and any colour of short pasta will do.

61 This is harder than it sounds. You are not allowed to remove, crush or whisk away any lumps. Instead you must throw the lot out and try again.

Approximation to a Conglomerate Cake

I found this recipe on my brand new computer. I have no idea how it got there or where it came from, but it seems to have been written by a structural engineer with a deep love of concrete.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Converting °F to °C</i>
1	Festive cake pack from Nature's Works (was Sanitarium before the Seventh-Day Adventists sold the business).
3/4 cup	self-raising flour, (I use wholemeal, but the other would do).
1/2 teaspoon	Salt.
3/4 cup	Sugar (icing sugar is more finely ground).
3	Eggs
1 teaspoon	Vanilla
1	Concrete mixer (or a wooden spoon)
1	Bricklayer's trowel

Grease bottom and sides of a cake tin which has a projected plan view area of about 40 square inches. I use margarine applied with greaseproof paper to grease the tin, but butter is supposed to be better⁶². Line the bottom and sides of the tin. Tradition says several layers of greased brown paper. Since in my household this is a bit difficult to come by, I use a single layer of greased aluminium foil⁶³.

Place the festive cake mix in a large bowl. Mix the flour, sugar and salt together, sifting the mixture several times. Add the sifted ingredients to the fruit mix gradually, stirring the mixture with a wooden spoon⁶⁴, so the fruit and nuts are evenly coated.

Combine the eggs and vanilla, mixing well and then adding to the mixture. Mix whole well, so that there are no white patches of dry mix, and the fruit and nuts are evenly coated.

Shovel the resulting concoction in the baking tin before it sets and press the mixture flat as you go. The sticky stuff left on the edges of the mixing pan is a nice aid in getting a reasonably flat top⁶⁵.

Place in a "very slow oven". Goodness knows what that means. My "Spices of the World Cookbook" says a "very slow oven" is 225°F - 275°F American. Presumably American degrees are the same as Tasmanian degrees (although academic opinion does seem to vary on this point). After consultations with relevant authorities (my Mum & my sister), I either cook at 300°F for 30 minutes, and the rest at 250°F, or leave it at 250°F all the time; it doesn't seem to make any difference.

The time taken to cook does seem to vary. After about two hours it is worth checking and it may take three or more⁶⁶. The traditional method of extracting a straw from a straw broom and plunging it into the body of the presumably unprotesting cake, withdrawing it and examining the straw for detritus does not seem to work for me. The straws bend. Faced with an array of largely useless detumescent straws, I tried using a steel skewer; this seems to work O.K. if one probes

62 This sentence indicates that the author has absolutely no understanding of butter. I have left it in to show that people exist who mention and even eat bleached, whipped sump oil.

63 If you use aluminium foil, make sure no ends or edges stick up, as they can later be mixed into the body of the cake, and the foil uses the mouth's saliva to set up a galvanic action with any fillings containing mercury amalgam in your teeth; not nice; sort of spoils the effect of the cake. (But I do know someone who got good reception of FM stereo classical radio in his mouth.)

64 A wooden spoon feels nice. Also it also doesn't bend, break or dissolve in the thick mixture. Wooden spoons are really nice for hitting cats.

65 Before you make this cake it is useful to watch an Italian make a concrete driveway; the technique for smoothing the top is the same. Sprinkling and smoothing dry cement over the top gets an excellent final finish.

66 Ambiguous. I don't know if it means hours or checks.

Pussy Pleasures

about in several places to find a way in. The cake is baked when no sticky bits appear on the shaft of the skewer.⁶⁷

When done, remove the cake from the oven, allow to cool and solidify a bit (say 10 to 15 minutes or so). Gently upend the tin so the cake lands upside down on a wire rack to cool. The foil may now be removed, taking care to get all of it out. When cold I wrap it in Glad wrap.

It is supposed to last about a season in the fridge⁶⁸, but in my household I never was able to test this. It always went too fast.

67 Another method is to use a concrete compression-testing hydraulic ram. Use a diamond drill to remove a 1 inch core and place it in the tester. The cake is cooked if core shatters at a force greater than 75 tons per square inch. Any unused cores can be employed for eradicating grandchildren (see footnote to Dried Liver).

68 This advice is not much use if your dog has been spayed.

Waldorf Salad

Time

1 minute if you can't be bothered cutting up everything; otherwise 20 minutes

Skills

None at all!

3 cup

Diced apple

1 cup

Diced celery

1/2 cup

Good walnut pieces

1/2 cup

Sultanas ⁶⁹

1 cup

Good Swiss cheese

Some lemon juice

“Tommy” dressing ⁷⁰

Mix all together and refrigerate.

69 My preference; the original used raisins.

70 A few shops stock this. It has an elegant flavour that most other dressings lack. The “Kraft” Coleslaw Dressing will do if subtlety is not your thing and you don't mind the walnuts being overpowered by mustard and condensed milk.

Neil's Salad

Neil is the only cat-hater I knew who could knock up a meal before you get hungry. His salad is a masterpiece of brevity and crudity, yet very tasteful.

<i>Time</i>	<i>5 minutes to 12 hours</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>A knowledge of current affairs</i>
1 tin	Mixed bean salad
1 tin	Zucchini salad
1 tin	Asparagus
1	Tin opener
1	Bowl
1	Kitchen sink
5	Glasses of wine
1	Newspaper
1	Rubbish container.

Find a bowl big enough to hold the contents of all three tins. Drink one glass of wine.

Use the tin opener to cut about 3/4 of the way around the top of one of the tins. Repeat with the other two tins. Drink one glass of wine.

Lie the tins on their side in the sink with the uncut part of the lids uppermost. Drink one glass of wine and read newspaper⁷¹.

Use the tin opener to cut the rest of the way around the top of one of the tins. Remove the lid and empty the contents into the bowl. Repeat with the other two tins. Drink one glass of wine.

Place the empty tins and lids in the rubbish container. Drink one glass of wine.

If you are panic-stricken about 'goodness' add a chopped tomato.

Eat.

71 This is the difficult step and the preparation time depends critically on whether you have the *Hobart Mercury* or *The Age* at hand. Of course, if you can't read you can't make the salad.

Sock's's Chocolate Mousse

There is only one thing that can gladden a fat cat's heart as much as a chocolate mousse made correctly; a cassata made correctly.

Time *50 minutes*
Skills *The ability to delay eating it until it has been in the refrigerator for at least a minute.*

8 oz (120 gm) Dark cooking chocolate ⁷²
3 tablespoon Black coffee
1/2 oz (15 gm) Butter
1 tablespoon Brandy
4 Eggs
1/2 pint (250 ml) Cream
Extra whipped (or runny) cream for dressing.

Melt chocolate over a double boiler. Remove and stir in coffee, brandy and butter. Separate the eggs and add the yolks to the chocolate mixture, one at a time, stirring gently.

Whisk egg whites until stiff ⁷³. Whip cream. Stir whipped egg whites and cream into the chocolate mixture ⁷⁴.

Pour into suitable individual serving bowls shaped like mice and cool in the refrigerator. Serve topped with extra cream ⁷⁵.

72 The original recipe used minced house-mice, but this is an acceptable substitute.

73 A hand beater is a must; electric beaters just don't work well enough and lack adequate control. Unfortunately, hand beaters are almost impossible to buy nowadays (presumably a "Macdonalds" and "Black & Decker" conspiracy to eliminate good food: 'attach a stale hamburger to your router and whisk at 23,000 revs').

74 The mixing must be very gentle; slow folding please. It can curdle and/or lose air from the whites. So take your time and use a wooden spoon; I doubt if a vibrator would work.

75 I personally think that to garnish with anything else ruins it. If you must, a bit of fruit could be added provided it complements the chocolate (most don't according to my taste buds). To garnish with nothing is simply too slimming.

Baqlawwa

*Almond and cardamom pastry*⁷⁶

Pastry:

3 cups	Ground almonds
1 cup	Finely chopped almonds
1 cup	Caster sugar
1 teaspoon	Ground cardamom
10 sheets	Fillo pastry
3/4 cup	Melted clarified butter or ghee

Syrup:

2 cups	Sugar
1 1/2 cups	Water
1 teaspoon	Lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon	Ground cardamom
1 tablespoon	Rose water

Combine ground and chopped almonds with sugar and cardamom. For the best flavour use freshly ground or pounded cardamom unless the quality of the ready ground product is good.

Brush a 25 x 33 cm (10 x 13 inch) baking dish with clarified butter or ghee. Place 3 sheets of fillo pastry in the dish brushing each with butter. Brush the top sheet with butter and sprinkle in one-third of the nut mixture. Top with two more buttered sheets of fillo buttering top of second sheet. Repeat with another two layers of nuts with two sheets of buttered fillo in between. Top last layer of nuts with three sheets fillo, buttering each as before including the top.

Trim the edges with a sharp knife and cut carefully through pastry and nut layers in diamond shapes⁷⁷. Pour the remaining butter over the top letting it run into the cuts and around sides of the baqlawa. Bake on the centre shelf in a moderate oven (180°C or 350°F) for 35-40 minutes, raising it one shelf above centre after 30 minutes.

While the baqlawa is cooking, prepare the syrup. In a heavy pan dissolve the sugar in water over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Bring to the boil, add the lemon juice and cardamom and boil rapidly for 15 to 18 minutes or until thick when a little is tested on a cold saucer. Add the rose water and remove from the heat. Leave aside until the pastry is cooked.

When baqlawa is a pale golden brown remove it from oven and pour the warm syrup evenly over the hot pastry. Leave for at least two hours before cutting again and removing from dish. The pastry may be left in the dish covered lightly with a fine cloth to protect it from dust, and will remain crisp for 3 or 4 days⁷⁸. It may be stored in a sealed container for several days although crispness will decrease. Do not refrigerate.

76 Adapted from Mallos, T: *The Complete Middle East Cookbook*, Ure Smith, 1979. This book is excellent; a must for all biters bored by 'meat and three veg'.

77 It will produce 40 pieces for animals of reasonable appetite.

78 This has been known to happen only once, when a certain bear was sick; otherwise it is unlikely that leftovers will be a problem.

Neil's and Richard's Crumbles

Neil's Crumble

For obvious reasons this cannot be made by a person lacking one or more hands.

Time *50 minutes*
Skills *Rubbing hands together*

1 lot	Wholemeal flour
1 lot	Coconut
1/2 lot	Brown sugar
	Butter ⁷⁹
3 lots	Fruit

Mix the flour, coconut and sugar together and rub in the butter. Place the fruit (cooked) in a baking dish and cover with topping. Cook for a while in the oven (just to cook the flour) and then place under a grill to brown.

Serve with a lot of cream.

Richard's Crumble

This recipe was developed to go with Neil's Salad. It can, in fact, be made contemporaneously using the same technique.

Time *30 seconds to 12 hours*
Skills *None*

3 lots ⁸⁰	Cerola toasted muesli ⁸¹
3 lots	Tinned fruit

Place the fruit in a dish and cover with muesli.

Serve with a lot of cream.

79 I have no idea how much; psychologists are very vague and imprecise. Certainly not a lot so try a little. The result should resemble sticky sand.

80 Or 1 large lot.

81 This is my favourite brand but you can substitute your own choice.

Quick Cassata

This is certainly not quick and it takes vastly more time to make than to eat.

Time

Simply ages

Skills

Practice in preparation for the next recipe

2 litres	Vanilla ice-cream
1 dessertspoon	Sugar
1	Juice of a lemon ⁸²
1	Banana
2 oz (50 gm)	Glacé cherries
2	Glacé apricots
1 slice	Glacé pineapple
2 oz (50 gm)	Dark chocolate
1/4 cup	Cocoa
1 tablespoon	Sugar
1 tablespoon	Water
2 oz (50 gm)	Blanched, slivered almonds
1 oz (25 gm)	Butter
a few drops	Almond essence

Divide ice-cream into 3 bowls and keep frozen until required.

Combine strained lemon juice with sugar, sliced banana and chopped glacé fruits. Stir into one bowl of slightly softened ice-cream, pour into foil lined cake tin and freeze until firm.

Melt chocolate over hot water. Blend cocoa and sugar with water, stir into chocolate and add rum. Stir into second bowl of ice-cream, pour over fruit layer and freeze.

Heat butter, add almonds and stir over a medium heat until golden brown. Drain and cool. Stir into third bowl of ice-cream with almond essence, pour over chocolate layer. Cover the tin with foil and freeze for 4 hours or overnight.

Turn onto a plate and cut into slices.

82 If you have trouble buying lemons assume it is a typing error and use lemons.

Proper Cassata

Some time ago an adventurous spoodle came across some small, square containers filled with interesting stuff in a neighbour's freezer. Assuming that they were unwanted, they were transferred from inside the freezer to inside the dog. This experience resulted in an unexpectedly sharp smack, tears and a long, meticulous (and eventually successful) search for the origins of the containers' contents.⁸³

Time *50 minutes*
Skills *Patience*

Layer 1:

2 Eggs, separated
1/2 cup Icing sugar
1/2 cup Cream
a few drops Almond essence

Beat the egg whites until firm peaks form. Gradually beat in the sifted icing sugar and fold in lightly beaten egg yolks. Whip the cream with the almond essence until soft peaks form and fold into the egg mixture. Pour into a deep, 20 cm (8 in) round cake tin⁸⁴, smooth the top and freeze until firm.

Layer 2:

2 Eggs, separated
1/2 cup Icing sugar
1/2 cup Cream
60 g Dark chocolate
2 tablespoons Cocoa
1 1/2 tablespoons Water

Beat the egg whites until firm peaks form and then gradually beat in the sifted icing sugar. Whip the cream until soft peaks form and fold into the egg mixture.

Combine the cocoa with the water. Melt chopped chocolate in a double boiler. Remove from the heat and stir in the egg yolks and the cocoa. Fold the chocolate mixture into the egg mixture. Spread over the frozen almond layer, smooth and re-freeze until firm.

Layer 3:

1 Egg white
1 cup Cream
1 teaspoon Vanilla essence
4 tablespoons Icing sugar
2 tablespoons Red glaze cherries
1 tablespoon Green glaze cherries
2 Glaze apricots
2 Glaze pineapple rings
60 g Flaked almonds⁸⁵

83 A tattered and ancient photocopy of an even more ancient manuscript about which nothing is known, except that it is inscribed with a mysterious text in an unknown tongue; viz 'page 118'.

84 This caused a small, honey-soaked brain considerable concern until it was realized that lots of little containers could be substituted.

85 The recipe only requires 30 g of almonds, but the quantity has been doubled to allow for 'snacks'.

Pussy Pleasures

Beat the egg white until firm peaks form and then gradually beat in the sifted icing sugar. Whip the cream with the vanilla until soft peaks form and fold into the egg mixture. Stir in chopped fruit and 30 g of toasted almond flakes ⁸⁶. Spread over the frozen chocolate layer, smooth and re-freeze until firm.

To Serve:

Whipped cream
Grated chocolate

Run a small spatula around the edge of the cassata. Rub a hot cloth over the bottom and sides of the tin and turn out onto a serving plate. Decorate with swirls of whipped cream and grated chocolate.

Serves 6-8 people or 2 dogs.

86 To toast the almonds, place on a tray in a moderate oven for 5 minutes.

Hector

This recipe came from an Elegant English Eeyore. It is one of the few things that a moggy cannot eat in one sitting.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Patience</i>
2	Eggs
4 oz (120 gm)	Castor sugar
4 oz (120 gm ⁸⁷)	Butter
1 pkt	“Boudoir” biscuits
	Sherry, brandy, orange juice or whatever for dunking biscuits
	Coffee, drinking chocolate, cocoa or other flavouring
	Whipped cream

Dunk biscuits in liquor of choice and use to line a pudding basin⁸⁸.

Cream butter and sugar. Add beaten eggs and flavouring. Fill the lined basin.

Cover with remaining biscuits and place in refrigerator to set.

Before serving, turn onto a plate and cover with whipped cream.

87 If you haven't worked that out from the previous ingredient then you had better go back to page 1 and start again.

88 Unless the basin is exceedingly small I recommend 2 packets of biscuits; one packet will undoubtedly be intercepted by a mouth before it gets to its proper destination.

Ice Cream

This recipe was given to me by a bulimic cook

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Using an electric drill</i>
4	Eggs, separated
1 cup	Caster Sugar (or blended sugar)
750 ml	Cream
1/2 teaspoon	Pure vanilla essence
2	Large bowls

Whisk the egg whites in a bowl until they are stiff and then whisk in the sugar slowly until glassy.

Whisk the cream in second bowl until it holds a soft peak. Mix the egg yolks and vanilla and blend slowly with the cream.

Gently fold the egg whites into the cream until no white is visible.

Turn into a rigid container and freeze.

Alternative flavourings are, for example:

- Coffee: Add 2 tablespoons of strong coffee and 1 rounded tablespoon of brandy to the egg yolks.
- Chocolate: Add 6 tablespoons of drinking chocolate to the egg yolks.