

International Best Seller!

# Pussy Pleasures

Slow Sustenance  
for  
Flighty Felines  
and  
Careful Canines

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# Acknowledgements

Over the years I have realised that the previous versions of *Pussy Pleasures* were wrong. Not that it mattered much as the recipes in it were arbitrary, but I have had to redefine the meanings of some measurements and update some recipes accordingly.

A few of the recipes have been shamelessly adapted from named and unnamed sources; however most of them have been significantly altered. And Rachel, who introduced me to Tom Yum and Laksa, insists that I mention her or I will be castrated.

During the editing of a previous edition *Socks*, a black and white cat, kept me supplied with dead baby rabbits and mice, and Emma, a spoodle, slept under my chair and dreamt of cooked lamb hearts until I trod on her tail.

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

Emma also has passed away and now lives on my desk.<sup>1</sup>

Twice we have moved to a new house and consequently to new kitchens. Thomas, also a black and white cat, joined us for a little while, but he was never interested in cooking and did not participate.<sup>2</sup> Gryphon, Emma's replacement, is a silky terrier cross who unfortunately doesn't clean the plates before they are put in the dish washer and refuses to eat raw meat and chew on bones (something she had in common with Emma and it presumably results from genetic defects in their owners).

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1 See [www.watkinsr.id.au/Emma.html](http://www.watkinsr.id.au/Emma.html)

2 Thomas only lived for eight years. He always was a backyard cat and never ventured out to the front of the house. So it was surprising that when he died he was hit by a car on his first and only foray out the front.

# Domestic Cookery

Some recipes are taken from:

*A New System of Domestic Cookery Formed Upon Principles of Economy and Adapted to the Use of Private Families*, A Lady [anonymous], 1824, John Murray, London, (Price Seven Shillings and Sixpence in Boards).

Houses and families were much larger in times past, certainly in the gentry to whom this book is directed. Which is not surprising as there was no contraception.<sup>3</sup> The houses included a kitchen and a scullery in the basement and servants' quarters in the attics. There was a back staircase for the use of the servants so that they wouldn't intrude into the lives of the families and their guests.

The first part of this book (30 pages and 5 plates) is titled *Miscellaneous observations for the use of the mistress of a family*. At the beginning, the author decries the education of young women:

*There is no opportunity of attaining a knowledge of family management at school; and during vacations, all subjects that might interfere with amusement are avoided ... Were a young woman brought to relish home society, and the calm delights of agreeable occupation, before she entered into the delusive scenes of pleasure, presented by the theatre and other dissipations, it is probable she would soon make a comparison much in favour of the former; especially if restraint did not give the latter additional relish.*

*Domestic Cookery* has quantities suitable for a large number of people, but some recipes are almost the size we would cook nowadays.

Surprisingly, there is no mention of the kitchen or the cooks or their assistants. Rees *Cyclopaedia*, (in 39 volumes of text and 6 volumes of plates) published about the time, defines a kitchen to be *a room appropriated to the dressing of meat, and furnished with suitable accommodations and utensils for that purpose, and cookery of meats denotes the application of heat to the several aliments taken both from vegetables and animals*. And there is a recipe for ice cream!

So it is not surprising that *Domestic Cookery* focuses on animals, fish and birds.

## References

*The Complete Middle East Cookbook*, Tess Mallos, 1979, Weldon Publishing, Willoughby, NSW.

*5-Minute Microwave Bottling*, Isabel Webb, 2009, The Five Mile Press, Victoria.

*frame>by>frame asian, a visual step-by-step cookbook*, 2011, Love Food, Bath.

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<sup>3</sup> There were condoms. I have a distant memory that they were made out of pig's intestines. Which is why the term "dip your wick" evolved; The intestines would harden and so, before use, the condom would softened by dunking it in water.

# Essential Skills

## *Haute Cuisine or Food?*

Recently I was invited to a restaurant which I expect had many stars, whatever they are. There was a set menu of about seven courses, and my seat faced the kitchen so that I could observe the process of creating meals.

All courses except one were cold and all, including the just warm course, were served on cold plates. And everything had been pre-cooked, presumably before the restaurant opened and probably the previous day. The only work done was “plating up”.

This process involved a small amount of food with the consistency of silicon sealer being pushed through a metal tube so that a 2 inch by 1½ inch neat cylinder of stuff was placed on the plate. Or a 2 inch by 2 inch cube of firmer food that had been pre-shaped by some sort of cutter. Then several squeeze bottles containing different colours of some thick fluid were used to create decorative lines, curves and circles around this lump, and sometimes delicate tweezers were used to place tiny bits of something on the central blob.

With two exceptions, everything tasted of nothing. I sampled the different colours of decoration and all tasted the same; that is, they had no taste. One dish was meant to have truffles (in a sauce I think) but a mass spectrometer would be needed to find it. And a waiter mentioned wasabi was in another dish, which presumably meant that the condiment was waved over the plate making sure it did not touch anything.

The first exception was the last “main” course, which consisted of a cube of pork belly; about 10% of it was skin, 75% was fat, and 15% was meat. This was served warm. Naturally I was still very hungry and so I ate the lot. Then I was no longer hungry because of the unpleasant, indigestible lump of congealed fat that settled in my stomach.

The second exception was the “dessert”. This consisted of five or six pieces, shaped like the large Lego blocks that young children play with, in different colours: green, yellow, blue and white. I have no idea of the ingredients, but the blocks were firm, a little harder than cold, unripened Brie, a little like a mixture of gelatine, some white powder (probably lime) and colouring. Most of the blocks adhered to the chef’s philosophy and were tasteless. But one had an indescribable, horrible flavour that cooks might use to play a joke on unsuspecting diners. It was ghastly!

Assuming each dish cost a patron \$40.00, then I can break up that amount into: \$1.00 cheap ingredients, \$0.02 expensive ingredients, \$3.98 cooking, \$10.00 plating up, and \$25 profit. And customer satisfaction was 0% if you like food, and 99% if you like pretending to be artistic, looking at things and being looked at. And the expensive wine was ordinary.

In contrast, I believe food is meant to be eaten, not signed and dated by the chef and then sold at an art auction.<sup>1</sup>

1 I have heard of a superior restaurant that served up covered glasses of air to be savoured during the meal.

## Essential Skills

In contrast to the one-plate courses of today, 200 years ago there were fewer courses comprising of many dishes, all brought to the table or sideboard (called *removes*) at once; hopefully a servant would bring the dishes to you. For example, a meal might have two courses of “Four and Five”, the component parts served separately. The first course consisted of soup, carrots, mashed turnips and Bouillie<sup>2</sup>; and the second course of fricassee of sweetbreads, stewed mushrooms, peas, lemon pudding and green goose.

## 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 needed.

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.<sup>3</sup>

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 and the 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 dresser.<sup>4</sup>

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.

With 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 the recipe below).

2 Bouillie is ambiguous, but in this context it means stew not porridge with fruit. Indeed, to some people macaroni cheese (page 43) is a bouillie. There is no recipe for a bouillie in *Domestic Cookery*.

3 If you are vertically challenged the cat will sit on the chopping board and smile.

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



## *Essential Skills*

With 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. Whilst 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 from them 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 slab from the floor while fending off the dog with your feet, and huddling over your prize as the cat lands on your back.

Always buy large, about 500 gm slabs as the remaining "splat" on the floor is usually half of it. (The meaning of gm and other strange symbols might be discussed later.)

## *The Chinese Whizzy-Thingy*

This modern tool can be useful. It consists of a base with a motor in it, one or more separate sets of blades, and one or more clear plastic cuppy-thingies that screw onto the blades. Fill a cuppy-thingy with something solid or liquid, screw on a set of blades to seal the cuppy-thingy,<sup>5</sup> turn upsidedown and push it into the base. Then the motor will start (very, very fast) the blades will turn and, hopefully, the something will be mashed.

The whizzy-thingy is not suitable for thick substances. The blades push the substance up in the cuppy-thingy and then rotate doing nothing. Either add liquid, and/or rearrange the contents of the cuppy-thing and continue, or give up and use something else.

One use is to turn left-over stale bread into bread crumbs (page 30), that can be stored to be used in recipes; although obvious, dice the bread first. This can suffer from the above problem, but it is easy to shake the bread and crumbs and continue.

Another use is to make fine sugar. Fine sugar, like icing sugar, is not used very often and buying a lot of it generally leads to some waste. So use the whizzy-thingy to turn ordinary white or raw sugar into fine sugar, for things like pavlovas.<sup>6</sup> It can also be used to make peanut butter (with a bit of oil), rice flour from rice, and other things.

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5 There must be a gasket, or liquid will be forced out into the motor and benchtop.

6 In Australia at least, the words *brown* and *raw* sugar are confusing. Raw sugar is white sugar which is of a pale brown colour, whereas brown sugar is sticky, raw sugar, probably raw sugar mixed with molasses. Neither of them, bought in a shop, are raw

## Glass Jars

If possible, buy sauces (for Dog Beach Lamb and other recipes) in glass jars with wide, screw-on metal lids that have gaskets. These should be opened carefully, washed and stored for use in Zucchini Pickle (page 51).

A small pointed knife can be used to release the vacuum and pop the center<sup>7</sup> of the lid out. Also, there is a clever plastic thing called a “Jarkey jar opener” that fits on lids and acts as a lever to release the vacuum. It is much better.

But buy three or four. You will get frustrated by some lids and use enough force to break the jarkeys, before you see the light and work around the lids gently until they pop.

## The Fridge and the Freezer

Fundamental to food preparation is that *there should be no left-over amounts of perishable ingredients*, which change colour to very pretty blues and reds. The refrigerator slows down the process of decay giving you a few more days to eat and drink the food.

*Fridges* are cleverly designed by manufacturers so that, whatever you do, some foods migrate to the back of shelves where they can decay happily without interference from humans. Also, some foods while decaying shed small pieces that are propelled around the shelves. This necessitates cleaning the fridge regularly, which is impossible to do because the manufacturers make fridges with lots of small crannies.

*Freezers* are made change water into ice with the objective of keeping food for a longer time. They have cooling elements and the water in the air migrates to them and forms ice. Manufacturers carefully design rigid and soft *freezer containers* with miniscule holes in them. The water in the food migrates to the air in the freezer containers, then to the air outside the freezer containers and forms ice around the cooling elements, thus freeze drying the food. (Which is what happened to Socks, but then it was deliberate.)

Also, most freezers have deep shelves or drawers and food at the back of them is allowed to freeze dry in peace.<sup>8</sup>

If you have something that has been in the freezer for a long time and it has dried out, do not despair. Before you throw it out, sit it in a bowl of water to rehydrate it. I have successfully rejuvenated prawns and beef in this way.

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7 In the 18th century both centre and center were used. I am old so I scorn the French spelling.

8 You might be clever and have a list of food in the freezer. But the human brain was designed by God before freezers existed and such lists are not stored in your memory. So you will forget where you put the list. And even if you find it accidentally, you will forget to update it when you put something in or get something out. So if you find it, it will represent the contents in the last century and not today.

## Measurements

The amounts of many ingredients are dictated by supermarket packaging.

The basic unit of measurement is the *supermarket lot*, abbreviated to the *lot*.

Most ingredients are pre-packaged by supermarket suppliers, and can only be bought in supermarket lots. These lots vary considerably in size. Some are carefully designed to ensure part of the contents is always wasted. And many ingredients are available in different lots, small, medium and large. So a *lot* is a convenient amount, enabling the cook to create very different meals with the same ingredients by varying the lots.

The most important consequence of the lot is that the amounts of *non-perishable* ingredients (such as onions, herbs and butter) must be adjusted to suit the lot sizes.<sup>9</sup>

Lots probably vary from country to country, but this will have no effect as the other ingredients and the containers will be varied to suit.

There is also the *not-supermarket lot*. Sometimes it is desirable to split up ingredients or finished food into convenient amounts during preparation to suit whatever utensils and containers you have. So the not-supermarket lot cannot be defined.

The second unit of measurement is the *relativistic quantity*, abbreviated to the *qty*.

A *relativistic quantity* is an amount of something that is chosen to suit the lots used in a recipe. It is completely arbitrary, and its size is entirely a matter of choice for the cook. Obviously two quantities in the same recipe can be very different.

It might be useful, while you are learning to cook, to replace the term *qty* by the term *sufficient* to help you understand how to measure it. But *sufficient* is ambiguous, because it can mean twice as much as you would normally use or, indeed, anything else.

Unlike *lots* and *qtys*, the third main unit is very precise. It is the *handful* which comes in three sizes; tiny, small and normal; large handfuls are *qtys*.

The fourth unit of measurement is the *bit*. A bit is smaller than a tiny handful, but otherwise it varies randomly.

In addition, some recipes refer to the obsolete teaspoon (*tsp*) and tablespoon (*tbsp*). There is also the useless dessert spoon. 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 is a *small handful*.

Likewise, *cups* may be mentioned when a recipe requires imprecise clarification.

Spoons and cups are useful, because measuring liquids by the handful is difficult, and because washing your hands wastes time that can be put to better use, such as holding glasses of alcohol.

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9 *Non-perishable ingredient shelf-life* is the time when you want to use it less one day, and the ingredient grows a beard, or changes colour, or soft things go hard, or hard things go soft, or you find weevils in it and you are a vegetarian, and you have to throw the ingredient out and buy some more.

## Essential Skills

Some recipes refer to the "...". This means "whatever you like, including zero".

Other measurements, such as the *slab*, are mentioned without explanation, because it is impossible to define them. Likewise the qualifier *abt* (about) cannot be explained.

The final unit of measurement is the *container*, not to be confused with the freezer container. Basically, the amount of food that is prepared depends on two factors:

- (a) The number of eaters. Obviously the amounts (and hence the lots, qtys, etc.) must be scaled to suit the people and animals who are to partake of the meal.<sup>10</sup>
- (b) If the food can be frozen, at least twice the necessary amount must be made so that at least two meals are prepared at the one time.

For these reasons, the process of cooking depends on first choosing a *container* to suit the amount required. Then all the ingredients are measured by volume so that they will fill the container completely. As a result, although *French pedantic* and *English irrational* units (such as the miniscule *gm* and the *oz*) are given in a few recipes they are irrelevant. I don't know why they were used as the actual amounts 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. Also, when people are learning this method of cooking, such measurements provide a guide to understanding the correct and arbitrary sizes of lots, etc.

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

Finally, several recipes use a device called an *oven*. Modern ovens have a control on them which displays meaningless numbers which represent either of two meaningless units of measurement, °C or °F. When in doubt use the random numbers 180 or 356 respectively. Also, some recipes mention a *moderate oven* or a *hot oven*. Use the random numbers 180 and 220 or 356 and 428 respectively.<sup>11</sup>

## Types of Food

Most food is *runny*, *thick* or *solid*.<sup>12</sup> Runny food is thick food with more liquid, and solid food is thick food with less liquid. You can measure the type of food by dropping some of it on a table top and timing how long it takes to spread.

There is, of course, a continuum from very liquid, with almost no food in it, to very solid, resembling concrete. So the divisions are arbitrary and some recipes can be varied to suit.

The choice between runny, thick and solid depends on the state of the dish washer; if it is electric then how full it is, and if it is manual then how full of alcohol it is. If all the plates are waiting in or for the dish washer, then make runny or thickish food to

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10 200 years ago there was no wastage because surplus foods were sent to the poor.

11 Old ovens did not have a temperature gauge, Instead cooks placed white paper in the oven and the temperature was gauged by how long it took to go brown.

12 Solid food is subdivided into savoury food and sweet food.

use bowls and spoons. Likewise, if all the bowls are waiting in or for the dish washer, make thick or solid food requiring plates, knives and forks.

If everything is dirty, scream at the dish washer and get take-away pizzas.<sup>13</sup>

## *Vegetarians and Vegans*

Unfortunately some people have strange dietary habits and eschew some foods. As they occur in several different varieties some definitions are appropriate:

*Plants:* Any chlorophyll-based organism excluding cyanobacteria.

*Dairy:* The secretions and derived food (such as milk, cheese, yogurt and butter) from mammary glands of mammals, as well as foods that contain these products.

*Meat:* Any part of a mammal, including the eyes.

*Fish:* Any part of an oviparous animal that lives under water.<sup>14</sup>

*Birds:* Any part of an oviparous animal that flies.

*Eggs:* The babies of an oviparous animal.

*Vegan* diets are the most extreme and only include plants, excluding dairy products, meat, fish, birds, and eggs.

*Lacto-vegetarian* diets are vegan diets that allow dairy products.

*Ovo-vegetarian* diets are vegan diets that allow eggs.

*Lacto-ovo-vegetarian* diets are vegan diets that allow dairy products and eggs.

*Pescatarian* diets are vegan diets that allow fish.<sup>15</sup>

*Flexitarian* diets are vegan diets that allow dairy, meat, fish, birds and eggs occasionally in small quantities.

*Carni-vegetarian* diets are vegan diets that allow dairy, meat, fish, birds and eggs.

*Strict carni-vegetarian* diets are vegan diets that allow steaks, battered fish and potato chips, and don't allow plants except hops.

*There very few recipes in this book that are not Carni-vegetarian.*

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13 Screaming at an electric or manual dish washer doesn't start it operating, but is satisfying.

14 Oviparous animals are those that lay eggs. This is the reproductive method of most fish, amphibians, reptiles, all birds, and includes the platypus and echidna.

15 Strict pescatarians do not allow caviar.

## *Garlic Bread*

All the following recipes (including ice cream) should be accompanied by garlic bread. Not only does it taste nice, but it prevents the plague and Covid, and keeps cats at a distance.

This can be made as a vegan dish by leaving out the butter, but it is much better as a lacto-vegetarian dish.

<i>Time</i>	<i>10 minutes (excluding meal)</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Preventing cats from licking the butter.</i>
1 lot	Bread rolls or slices of bread cut in half <sup>16</sup>
1 qty	Olive oil
sufficient	Garlic
1 tiny handful	Dried herbs
1	Small bowl
1/8 sm slab	Salted solid cream <sup>17</sup>
1	1 inch painter's brush
1	Meal of choice

3/4 fill a small bowl with oil, butter and herbs. Microwave until the butter is soft and mix all together.<sup>18</sup>

Crush sufficient garlic, put it in the bowl and stir.

Cut the rolls in half, thickly paint the mixture onto them. If there is some mixture left over, then add more to the rolls until all of it is used. If there is too much left over, then add it to whatever meal you are cooking.

Toast the rolls or bread in an oven or an air fryer.<sup>19</sup>

Eat.

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16 See page 14

17 Also known as salted butter. But butter can exist in solid, thick or runny states, depending on how warm it is. In Australia we have sm slabs (250 gm) and lg slabs (500 gm). Unsalted butter tastes horrible, but it is good to fry other stuff in.

18 This is actually impossible. Microwave the butter for a few seconds and it remains solid. Microwave for a few more seconds and it melts and starts to bubble. If you try again, using a time in between, then the butter either remains solid or becomes a thin, runny liquid.

19 An air fryer is a small, fan-forced oven.

## *A Vegan Sticky Mess*

If cooked correctly, this recipe produces something that is not very sticky. But just as God works in mysterious ways so does rice, and stickiness is the usual outcome. It is possible to cook rice so that the grains are separate, but the method is far too complicated to use at home.

<i>Time</i>	<i>30 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Accurate measurement of depths.</i>
1 qty	Jasmine or other rice (but not brown rice <sup>20</sup> )
1 qty	Cold water <sup>21</sup>
1	Finger (large)
1	Small spirit level
1	Timer
1 bit	Salt
1	Saucepan

Hold cupped right hand over saucepan, and with your left hand hold a packet of rice over your right hand.<sup>22</sup> 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. Reversing the hands is permitted.

Level the rice and then poke the 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 the depth is OK.

Three-quarters fill the pot (the one with the rice in it) with cold water. Poke the finger into it and swirl around as though mixing paint. If the water goes white carefully pour off most of the water and repeat until the water is fairly clear.<sup>23</sup>

Rest the tip of the 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 occasionally.<sup>24</sup> Take the pot off, put on the lid<sup>25</sup> and put aside. Start timer.<sup>26</sup>

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20 Ok, brown rice could be used, but it takes longer to cook

21 Actually you need several qtys, but this is explained in the directions.

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

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

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

25 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.

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

## Essential Skills

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

After a further 5 to 10 minutes, remove lid and serve.<sup>27</sup>

# A Colourful Sticky Mess

This simpler recipe is guaranteed to produce a sticky mess.

<i>Time</i>	<i>20 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>None</i>
1 cup	Rice
1 cup	Cold water
1 tiny handful	Turmeric <sup>28</sup>
1 bit	Salt
1	Microwave oven <sup>29</sup>

Put rice, salt and turmeric in a bowl with a loose or vented lid, which is suitable for a microwave oven. Stir. Add enough water to cover the rice by abt 10 mm, or use the finger from the previous recipe, and stir.

Put the bowl and lid in the microwave, the latter on top of the former, and cook on high for 15 minutes.

If you don't like a sticky mess, then cook the rice in far more water and drain it into a sieve under running, hot water.<sup>30</sup>

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

28 This is preferable to saffron, which is too expensive. Turmeric is a very good dye, so don't wear a white shirt.

29 Cooking rice is one of the two useful tasks that microwave ovens can perform. The other is cooking vegetables.

Microwave ovens heat unevenly, and food at the edge of the turntable is heated much more than food in the middle of the turntable. Which is why they will defrost frozen food so that the outside is over-cooked while the inside remains frozen.

If you enjoy explosions then, after making sure your insurance is up-to-date, put a sealed, rigid container of liquid in the microwave oven, set it to 20 minutes on high, run outside and call the fire brigade. Nothing will happen if the container does not have a perfect seal; see the recipe on page 51.

30 I lied when I wrote that the method is far too complicated to use at home.



## Arbitrary Meals

This is an example recipe to illustrate the basic principles. It assumes that you have a normal refrigerator and freezer containing long-forgotten, but edible substances. These are the result of imperfect measurement, which is inevitable, and so there are left-overs from previous meals.

Indeed, with practice you will develop the habit of over-estimating to ensure there is sufficient for arbitrary meals.

Time	50 minutes
Skills	Finding unused food.
1 qty	Vegetable flavouring
1 qty	Fat
1 qty	Protein
1 qty	Pre-cooked carbohydrate <sup>31</sup>
1 qty	Left-over vegetable matter (not pink or orange coloured)
1	Cooking container (also known as a pot or fry pan)

Chop whatever combination of vegetable flavourings are available (onions, garlic, chillies, herbs etc). Put some available fat in the container (usually oil or butter, but you may have something unusual like lard or left-over bacon fat), and cook the flavourings for a while while stirring.<sup>32</sup>

Prepare the protein. This is a complicated step as it depends on what form of protein you are using:

- (a) If it is solid then chop it up and put it in the container.<sup>33</sup>
- (b) If it is liquid (colloquially called eggs) use 4 and perhaps cook it before adding.<sup>34</sup> Alternatively break them open (preferably over a bowl), discard the shells and whisk them for a while. In this case they are added later.

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31 Usually rice, pasta, noodles or boiled potatoes. Mashed potatoes are not really suitable, but see Fried Liver on page 47.

32 The temperature and time in this and later steps is arbitrary, but the aim is not to incinerate anything.

33 First determine the temperature. If it is too cold to separate and/or cut up (from a freezer) then put it in a microwave oven and *defrost* it. Defrosting is finished when the outside of the lump is cooked and the inside is still frozen. Otherwise it does not matter what state the protein is in.

34 A supermarket lot of liquid protein varies, but it is generally 6, 10 or 12 servings and this recipe assumes you have a sufficient number available.

To cook them, put water in a pot, carefully puncture the egg-shells at the blunt end, put them in the pot and boil for a while. (Do not use a microwave oven unless you enjoy explosions.) Cool in cold water, aggressively scream, smash the shells, and peel the eggs.

## *Essential Skills*

If at this step you have added something to the pot, cook for a while.

Prepare the vegetable matter. Again, this is a complicated step, because some vegetables are eaten raw (lettuce, tomatoes, cabbage, broccoli, etc) and some are cooked (lettuce, tomatoes, cabbage, broccoli, etc):

- (a) If eaten raw, commonly called *salad*, then chop up enough in a bowl and set aside.<sup>35</sup>
- (b) If eaten cooked, then chop up sufficient and add to the cooking container. Put a lid on<sup>36</sup> and cook for a while.

Add the carbohydrate, and any liquid liquid protein, and stir. If the liquid protein is solid, dot the surface with it. Put on the lid and cook for a while.

Serve.

The result you achieve is satisfyingly variable and there is absolutely no chance that you will ever be able to repeat the meal.

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35 This should be accompanied by salad dressing (an arbitrary mixture of vinegar, sugar, garlic, oil and herbs, a vinaigrette, or mayonnaise, see page 49).

36 The purpose is to retain steam in the pot and not to test your sense of balance.

## Dried Liver

See notes on preparation methods. This is a vegan dish because people are not meant to eat it.

Time	<i>half a day</i>
Skills	<i>Cutting very thin strips off slabs of meat.</i>
1	Lamb liver
1	Very sharp knife
1	Butcher's steel-mesh glove <sup>37</sup>
1 or 2	Baking trays
	Non-stick surfaces <sup>38</sup>
	Rice paper
1	Oven
	Ear plugs

Insert ear-plugs.<sup>39</sup>

Hold the knife in one hand and wear the glove on the other. Thinly slice the liver. Extract thin slices of thumb to avoid animals developing a taste for your flesh.

Line baking trays with non-stick surfaces and cover with rice paper. Carefully arrange the strips of liver thereupon in a single layer.

Put in a fan forced electric oven set at 85° C or 185° F and cook for 2 hours. Re-arrange the baking trays and cook for a further 2 hours.<sup>40</sup>

The liver will have stuck to the rice paper like super glue, but it is edible and dogs seem not to mind. Separate the pieces of dried liver and throw away any excess rice paper.

Store the dried liver in a plastic bag or a tin until required, preferably in a safe or a bank vault.

**This is also very useful for grandchildren. Give them a bit, calling it liquorice, and you will never see them again.<sup>41</sup>**

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37 Alternatively, a lot of adhesive bandages.

38 Non-stick surfaces are surfaces to which all ingredients stick except rice paper.

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

40 Irrespective of brand and cost, ovens cannot produce uniform heat. So without this step some liver will be over-cooked and some will be raw.

41 A better method is to make or buy a small chocolate 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 pool!" and eat it.

## *Bread*

Bread is readily available in shops, but if you want to make it yourself the following recipe is from *Domestic Cookery*, page 333.

Let flour be kept four or five weeks before it is begun to bake with. Put half a bushel<sup>42</sup> of good flour into a trough, or kneading tub; mix with it between four and five quarts<sup>43</sup> of warm water, and a pint and a half of good yeast; put it into the flour, and stir it well with your hands till it becomes tough. Let it rise about an hour and twenty minutes, or less if rises fast; then, before it falls, add four quarts more of warm water, and half a pound of salt; work it well, and cover it with a cloth. Put the fire then into the oven; and by the time it is warm enough, the dough will be ready. Make loaves about 5 pounds each; sweep out the oven very clean and quick, and put in the bread; shut it close, and two hours and a half will bake it. In summer the water should be milk-warm, in winter a little more, and in frosty weather as hot as you can well bear your hand in, but not scalding, or the whole will be spoiled. If baked in tins, the crust will be very nice.

The oven should be round, not long; the roof from twenty to twenty-four inches high, the mouth small, and the door of iron to shut close. This construction will save firing and time, and bake better than a long and high-roofed ovens.

Rolls, muffins, or any sort of bread, may be made to taste new when two or three days old, by dipping them uncut in water, and baking afresh or toasting.<sup>44</sup>

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42 “A unit of measurement equal to approximately 36.4 litres in Britain. The old bushel is equal to 2 kennings (obsolete), 4 pecks, or 8 dry gallons,” which doesn’t mean anything me.

Also: “In Scotland, the peck was used as a dry measure until the introduction of imperial units as a result of the Weights and Measures Act of 1824. The peck was equal to about 9 litres (1.98 Imp gal) (in the case of certain crops, such as wheat, peas, beans and meal) and about 13 litres (2.86 Imp gal) (in the case of barley, oats and malt). A firloft was equal to 4 pecks.” Which only adds to the confusion!

43 A quart is a quarter of a gallon, or two pints. It doesn’t matter what country you live in because other measurements vary.

44 A more modern process is to hold the bread under the cold tap momentarily and put it in an air frier. (Turning on the cold tap helps.)

# Runny Food

## *Yum Yum! Tom Yum*

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Choosing an appropriate breast.</i>
1 qty	Spice Paste for Tom Yum Soup <sup>1</sup>
1	Onion
2	Breasts <sup>2</sup>
1 qty	Mushrooms <sup>3</sup>
abt 1 tbsp	Fish sauce
1 qty	Sticky Mess
6 cans	Beer
½ lot	Fresh coriander leaves. (See the next page for the other ½ lot.)
1 qty	Garlic bread

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

Cook diced onion in some olive oil.<sup>4</sup> Add sufficient of the packet of spice paste, stir a bit and add sufficient water.<sup>5</sup> Allow to simmer for a while. Open a beer and drink.

Add mushrooms and fish sauce<sup>6</sup> and allow to simmer for a while, adding more water.<sup>7</sup> Open a beer and drink.

Sing and attempt to make a Sticky Mess. When the pot with the rice has been covered and is not being timed, add the 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 the meal in bowls with more chopped coriander for garnishing. Open a beer and drink. Staggeer or crawl to bed.

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1 Some spice pastes come in suitable sized lots. If you have a larger lot then use a qty of it and put the rest in the fridge for arbitrary meals. If the lot has a screw or pressed on lid then remove it rather than cutting the container open with a hacksaw.

2 This is to be cut up and cooked rather than played with. As this limits the choice somewhat I suggest chicken breasts. The ingredients cause some confusion with male cooks, so the recipe is best prepared by a woman.

3 Optional but I think essential. I suggest about 10 caps, whatever they are.

4 In a pot. Add some sesame oil if you like the flavour.

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

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

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

## *Runny Food*

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 a rather nice combination), so its dietary classification varies.

In the olden days, when I was young, there was only one savoury spice available; tins of yellow curry powder. And the most adventurous dish was curried scallops. Make a white sauce, add curry powder to it and put in scallops. Serve with overcooked vegetables. The sauce masked the delicate flavour of the scallops and it was horrible!

However, now there are lots of lots of good pre-prepared curry pastes that you can buy and use.<sup>8</sup> So this and Laksa are just generic recipes that can be modified by using different spice mixtures.

More recently, Indian and Asian bases for meals have become available.<sup>9</sup> They consist of three packets, one of which held whole herbs and spices. The instructions, to use the whole herbs and spices are not satisfactory, so I use the Chinese whizzy thingy to make them all into a powder and add that.

If you can't cook, because of a lack of experience, then I strongly recommend *Frame>By>Frame Asian* (Love Food, 2011). It has some very good, more sophisticated recipes explained in a very simple way. But you might want to vary some quantities.

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8 In case clarification is needed, I am referring to lots of supermarket lots.

9 Called at the moment in Australia, "Spice Tailor" and "Street Kitchen". Curries were invented to mask the taste and colour of rancid meat which has a green hue.

## *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 read the miniscule printing on food containers.<sup>10</sup></i> <i>The ability to call an ambulance and survive the heart attack that inevitably results from excessive fat intake.</i>
1 qty	Laksa Spice Paste
1	Onion
1 qty	Fish, and/or shell-fish, and/or chicken, and/or vegetables
1 qty	Mushrooms
1 qty	Rice noodles <sup>11</sup>
1 can	Coconut cream (or block)
½ 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 sufficient spice paste, sufficient water and simmer. Add the protein and/or vegetable matter. Simmer.

Add coconut cream, mushrooms and more water if necessary. Simmer.

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

Serve with a salad, garlic bread and chopped coriander for garnishing.

*Again, this is just a basic recipe. Instead of noodles use rice or pasta. Add fish sauce, lemon juice and soy as you desire. Use green or red curry paste instead of Laksa paste.*

*Never ever buy “lite” or “low fat” food. For example, a can of “coconut cream” has one ingredient, coconut. However, a can of “coconut milk” or “low fat coconut cream” has*

---

10 Completely irrelevant to this recipe, but take some random containers of food and a magnifying glass and try to read the list of ingredients and other useful information. Useful when bored.

11 Throw sufficient rice noodles into a pot of boiling water and after 10 minutes you will have an Asian sticky mess (but see page 46). You might have to practice with a basket ball.

## *Runny Food*

two ingredients, coconut and water, but costs the same; you will be paying a lot of money for something that comes out of taps. Similarly, “full cream milk” has about 3.8% fat (a tiny amount) and “lite” milk (that costs the same) has about 1.5% fat, a tiny amount less. Considering the horrible flavour and amount of butter and oil imbibed from other sources, drinking “lite” milk is bizarre and pointless.



## *Difficult Soup*

This is hard to make because of all the stuff to be cut up. It's a good vegan dish if not cooked with bacon and not served with garlic bread or cheese.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Patience</i>
4	Rashers of bacon <sup>12</sup>
3	Large onions
4	Cloves garlic
2	Carrots
1 qty	Pinkeye potatoes <sup>13</sup>
1 qty	Broccoli
2 tins	Tomatoes
1 or 2 tins	Mixed beans
abt 1 tbsp	Hot chilli sauce
1 very large	Pot
	Sherry (optional)
1 small handful	Oregano <sup>14</sup>

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, chilli sauce and tins.<sup>15</sup> Cook as required. Drink the sherry.

Serve with Garlic Bread, parmesan cheese and unlimited wine.<sup>16</sup>

**There are two rules with this recipe.**

**Firstly, do not be smart and change the ingredients, thinking you know better than me, which you might, but suppress the urge.**

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

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12 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. Microwaving bacon rind or pork skin will produce a cruchy delight.

13 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 that will not fragment or go mushy; the soup should have lumps of food in a fairly thin broth.

14 Recently I have been using a medium handful of Basil instead, because it makes it easier to read the soup.

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

16 Some wines are manufactured using egg whites which are definitely ovo-vegetarian.

## *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>
2 to 3 cups	Milk
1/3 sm slab	Butter
1/2 cup	Cream
2-3	Onions
1 qty	Boiling potatoes <sup>17</sup>
2 lots	Skink or smoked haddock <sup>18</sup>
some	Water
	Fish or chicken stock <sup>19</sup>
	Salt and pepper to taste

If frozen, place haddock in warm water to defrost. Gently cook it in some water 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 cubes<sup>20</sup> about the size of a thumb-nail and add to the pot. Simmer for 10 minutes or until the potatoes are cooked.

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

*This recipe is endorsed by the Royal College of Cardiologists.*

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17 Originally "1 lb", whatever that means.

18 A skink is a smooth, shiny lizard about 4 inches long, but latterly smoked haddock has been substituted. Apparently a lot of haddock is about 350 gm, whatever that means.

19 The original stated "Perhaps a teaspoon if the flavour needs enhancing." I admit I have no idea why this instruction is included, but I am hopefully following the instructions of the Scotsman who made it. I think we can assume a much larger qty is intended.

20 If you don't remember any geometry, cut up the potatoes into any shape.

*Runny Food*  
**Chowder**

Scottish chefs told the Irish about Cullen Skink while they were foraging for potatoes. Subsequently, during the potato famine, Irish families emigrated to America with a vague idea of the recipe and met the Chinese who were rummaging about for gold. The Chinese misheard “*cow dung spuds*” and so chowder (pronounced “chow-duh” was born, obviously with wombok instead of cabbage.

<i>Time</i>	<i>2 hours</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Making sense of irrational measurements.</i>
1½ lb	Boiling potatoes cut into small chunks
2 tbsps	Butter
a bit	Oil
1 brown	Onion cut into ¼ inch slices <sup>21</sup>
¼	Chinese cabbage cut into 2 inch lengths <sup>22</sup>
⅓ lb	mushrooms
½ cup	Corn flour <sup>23</sup>
2 cups	Milk
abt 1 pint	Chicken stock <sup>24</sup>
1.32277 lb	Salmon <sup>25</sup>
abt ½ cup	Cream
	Pepper

In the largest saucepan you have <sup>26</sup> and over medium heat, fry the onion, cabbage and mushrooms in the butter and oil, until the vegetables have softened and released their liquid. <sup>27</sup>

Add the potatoes and chicken stock. Make a lumpless mixture of the corn flour with the milk, and pour into the soup stirring constantly. <sup>28</sup>

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21 Are these thick rings of onions? I have no idea so just cut it up any way you like.

22 Bizarre! Maybe 2 inch lengths of cabbage?

23 The original recipe used plain flour, which is a disaster!

24 Many recipes refer to *chicken stock*. It may be Asian and refer to water that hens have done the dropping in? Just substitute water.

25 The original recipe had grams, which is bizarre as all the other measurements are in English irrational units.

26 It is sensible to halve the recipe.

27 The original following directions were: “Add the flour and stir through. Fry for about three to four minutes until the mixture thickens.” The result of this step is akin to the ejecta of volcanoes, creating inedible lumps. But see the following page.

28 The secret is to mix the corn flour in a little cold milk and make a thick, smooth paste. Then slowly add the rest of the milk while stirring constantly.

## *Runny Food*

Add the salmon and cream and simmer until the fish is cooked through and the vegetables are soft.

All the ingredients except for salmon are the soup. So substitute for the salmon any fish that you like, or shellfish, or even chicken.

Roux, not to be confused with roué (you are the debauched person) or rou (you might be mourning), is a mixture of flour and fat (especially butter). It is difficult to make if you're impatient.

Melt fat in a pan, add the flour and stir, making sure it is lump free. Cook for a little while, but don't let it change colour, and then add the liquid (water or milk) *slowly!* Add more liquid until it the consistency you want.

Gravy is a roux. Melt fat in a pan, add the flour and stir, making sure it is lump free. Cook for a while until the flour turns brown and add water, pepper and salt.

It is easier to cheat and use corn flour for a white sauce and then add a qty of gravy stock to turn it brown.

## *Pumpkin Soup*

Pumpkin is, I think, the most disappointing of all vegetables, other than zucchini. However, this vegan recipe is very nice.

<i>Time</i>	<i>1 hour</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Spraying food around the kitchen because you forgot to put the lid on the blender.<sup>29</sup></i>
1	Onion diced
2 cloves	Garlic sliced
1 inch	Fresh ginger sliced <sup>30</sup>
sufficient	Thai green curry paste
1 lot	Pumpkin (abt 1 kg) <sup>31</sup>
1 qty	Stock or water
1 lot	Coconut cream
1	Lime
1 tiny handful	Grated palm sugar
½ lot	Fresh coriander leaves <sup>32</sup>

It is almost impossible to cut up pumpkin without a chainsaw and then peel it with a hacksaw. So somehow cut it up into a few large pieces, using a meat cleaver or a spade, put one piece in a plastic bag into a microwave oven and cook it until soft when jabbed by a finger. Repeat for the other pieces. Now it is easy to remove the skin.

In a sufficient pot, cook the onion, garlic, ginger and curry paste for a very little while. Add the pumpkin, coconut and stock to the pot and simmer a while, stirring occasionally. Put the contents of the pan in a blender or Chinese whizzy-thingy and whizz until smooth.<sup>33</sup>

Return the soup to the pot and add the lime juice and palm sugar. Adjust the thickness and add salt and pepper to taste.

Heat the soup until simmering.

Serve with the coriander leaves and Greek-style yoghurt floating on top, and garlic bread.

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29 A blender is a very large Chinese whizzy-thingy, but it has a container with a separate lid to add things to it while it is operating.

30 A lot of minced ginger in a jar is acceptable.

31 Preferably butternut pumpkin.

32 If you can use the other ½ in a day or two, otherwise add a whole lot.

33 This needs to be done in several not-supermarket lots.

## *Scotch Cockie Leekie Soup*

From *Domestic Cookery*, page 136.

1	Large, old fowl
1	Marrow bone
2 or 3 lb	Beef
2 or 3 dozen	Leeks
1/2 lb	Prunes

Stew the fowl, marrow bone and beef with two or three Scotch pints of water,<sup>34</sup> and add the white ends of the leeks, cut into pieces, until well flavoured. Just before serving, add the prunes, which, and the fowl, dish with the soup; but not the meat or the marrow bone. The latter, when put to boil, must be divided, and the marrow left uncovered.<sup>35</sup>

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34 A Scotch pint is a quart or two normal pints, so the soup requires  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a gallon.

35 I have no idea of what happens to the beef. Presumably the marrow bone, split in two, is served with the soup.

*Runny Food*  
***Turtle Soup***

*Domestic Cookery*, page 6. This more a solid food, but I suspect you won't be cooking it.

<i>Time</i>	<i>A day</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Not vomiting</i>
1	Live turtle (abt 50 lb) <sup>36</sup>
qty	Very rich veal broth <sup>37</sup>
1 lb	Butter
sufficient	Fine flour
qty	Green onions
some	Herbs
some	Cayenne pepper
1 or 2	Lemons
2 bottles	Madeira

The night before dressing the turtle, hang it up by the hinder legs, and without giving time for it to draw in its neck, cut off its head. Early next morning have ready a boiler of hot water. With a sharp knife take off the fins next to the head at the joint, which, if properly hit, will allow them to separate from the body without cutting. The hinder fins, when cut at the joint will, by a little twist, come off immediately.

Next divide the callspash, or back shell, from the calapee, the belly shell, at about two inches round the latter, which is some the prime of the turtle. Take out the entrails with particular care, lest the gall should be broken, and throw them into a tub of cold water: when well washed, open the guts from end to end with a small penknife, and draw them through a woollen cloth often, to cleanse them, then put them in fresh cold water. The belly shell must be cut in pieces the size of the palm of the hand,<sup>38</sup> and the lungs, kidneys, etc. cleared from the back shell: put the shells and fins into scalding water, until the scales can be scraped off with a knife, and all the meat can be taken clear off. Be sure to keep the different parts of the turtle separate, that they may be proportioned out afterwards.<sup>39</sup>

The green fat cut in pieces the size of an inch and half square; simmer the fins, only in as much water as will cover them, till tender; then add the water, strained, to a quantity

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36 This recipe makes a large quantity of stew. If you a few people for dinner, buy, from a pet shop, one tortoise for each person and make the above recipe, scaled down appropriately.

37 *Domestic Cookery*, page 141:

Put the scrag end of a neck of veal into a pot with three pints of water, two blades of mace, and a spoonful washed rice; a pound to a pint will make it pretty good. Let it boil up, skim it nicely twice, then stop the saucepan close, and simmer for three hours.

38 See page 40.

39 This may mean that each diner gets a fair share of the different parts.

### *Runny Food*

of very rich both of veal, to which a pound of butter rubbed down with as much fine flour as shall give due thickness; stir it over the fire ten minutes; having put in the entrails, cut into small pieces, six hours to stew before dinner; add to the soup green onions and all sorts of seasoning herbs, chopped small; pepper, salt, and Cayenne to your taste, not extremely hot, and the juice of one or two lemons, according the size of the turtle, which, if fifty pounds weight, will require two bottles of Madeira: let all this seasoning likewise be simmered for six hours, some of the coarse and white parts two hours, and a proportion of the green fat one hour.

Put round the back shell a paste of flour and water about two inches high, to keep in the meat, then fill it three parts with the remainder of the coarse, the part that resembles veal, the green fat, etc. and some of the thin soup and additional seasoning; bake it.

Prepare small eggs for serving in the soup and shell, unless there be any in the turtle.

If turtles and tortoises are not available, make the following dish:



## *Mock Turtle Soup*

*Domestic Cookery*, page 127.

Bespeak a calf's with the skin on, cut it in half, and clean it well; then half-boil it, take all the meat of in square bits, break the bones of the head, and boil them in some veal and beef broth to add to the richness.<sup>40</sup> Fry some shallot in butter, and dredge in flour enough to thicken the gravy; stir this into the browning, and give it one or two boils; skim it carefully, and put in the head; put in also a pint of Madeira wine, and simmer till the meat is quite tender. About ten minutes before you serve, put in some basil, tarragon, olives, parsley, Cayenne pepper, and salt, to your taste; also two spoonfuls of mushroom-ketchup, and one of soy. Squeeze the juice of a lemon into the tureen, and pour the soup upon it. Force-meat balls and small eggs.

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<sup>40</sup> Elsewhere the author notes: *Many like the eyes; which you must cut out with the point of your knife, and divide in two.*

## *Forcemeat Balls*

A pound of fine fresh suet, one ounce of ready dressed veal or chicken, salt, white pepper, nutmeg, mace, penny-royal, parsley, and lemon-thyme, finely shred: beat as many fresh eggs, yokes and whites separately, as will make the above ingredients into a moist paste; roll into small balls, and boil them in fresh lard, putting them in just as it boils up. When of a light brown, take them out, and drain them before the fire. Balls made this way are remarkably light; but being greasy, some people prefer them with less suet and eggs.

## *Little Eggs for Turtle*

Beat three hard yolks of eggs in a mortar, and make into a paste with the yolk of a raw one, roll into small balls, and throw them into boiling water for two minutes to harden.

# Thick Food

## *Dog Beach Lamb*

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.

Lamb is essential, because the alternatives (chicken and pork) are nowhere near as good.

*Time*                      2 hours 50 minutes

*Skills*                      Using a marinade.

*The food:*

1 qty	Lamb
	Adhesive bandages <sup>1</sup>
1	Egg
abt 2 tbsp	Soy sauce

At least 2 hours before you intend to eat, put the liquid part of the egg and the soy sauce into a sufficient bowl and whisk. Dice the meat into bite-sized pieces,<sup>2</sup> and put them in the bowl to marinate them. Stir occasionally during the next 2 hours, during which time most of the liquid will be absorbed by the meat.

*The sauce:*

1 lot	Sweet and sour sauce <sup>3</sup>
1 qty	Water
abt 1½ tsp	Chilli sauce
1 qty	Broccoli <sup>4</sup>

Open the sweet and sour sauce container and empty it into a saucepan. Add water to the container (until it is about 1/3 full), put the lid back on (or use a hand), shake vigorously and empty it into the saucepan. Add the broccoli, cut up into bite-sized pieces, and chilli sauce.

Heat gently to cook the broccoli and put aside to keep warm.

- 1 These are only required if there is a cat present when the meat is diced. An alternative to adhesive bandages is either 1 kg of fillet steak or butcher's steel-mesh gloves.
- 2 My pedantic brother wanted me to include "in ¾ inch or 18 mm cubes", but I can only cube small integers. Anyway, if you have to be told everything in fine detail put this book in the rubbish bin and buy a pizza that is delivered to your door.
- 3 In the past it was necessary to make the sauce from the individual ingredients, but now the available lots are very good.
- 4 The sauce needs a green vegetable, and the only one that I find works is broccoli. Perhaps use French beans?

## *Thick Food*

### *Preparation:*

1 large qty	Bread crumbs
1 qty	Corn flour
1	Sticky Mess

Put the bread crumbs and corn flour on a large plate or in a large bowl and mix. Take some meat, put it on the crumb mixture, coat it and set aside. Repeat this step until all the meat has been crumbed.

Heat a large fry pan with some oil in it, and heat an oven to about 120°C.

Put some meat pieces in the fry pan and cook. Transfer the cooked meat to a dish and put it in the oven.<sup>5</sup> Repeat this step until all the meat has been cooked.

Serve the meat, sauce and rice separately to allow the diners to artistically decorate their plates.

---

<sup>5</sup> The cooking time should be short, because the meat will cook some more in the oven. Aim for slightly rare meat. Perhaps put the meat on a paper towel to remove some of the oil on it.

## Rose's Easy Stew

Rose was a dog about the size of a 1 litre carton of milk with legs. She had very nice teeth.

Quick, easy but very tasty (the recipe, not Rose). It goes well with Neil's Salad.<sup>6</sup>

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>None at all.</i>
1 qty	Diced beef <sup>7</sup>
1 qty	Diced potatoes <sup>8</sup>
2 or 3	Large onions sliced
2 to 4	Bay leaves
2 tsps	Salt
over 1 handful	Parsley <sup>9</sup>
6	Peppercorns or equivalent ground pepper
small qty	Butter
1 cup	Boiling water.

Cut the onion in half and slice it into thin wedges.

Toss everything in a pot and bring to boil.<sup>10</sup> Simmer for about 2 hours (adding more water as necessary).

Eat.

---

6 There is no recipe for Neil's Salad and you will have to use your imagination aided by the type of recipes on page 61.

7 Lamb is probably better. I have made this with lamb, beef, steak and kidney mix, and veal and lamb.

8 The original recipe said 750 gm old potatoes because they are meant to mush up. I prefer lumpy food so I use boiling potatoes.

9 It doesn't really depend on how much you like parsley because it is actually the key ingredient, and you need *at least* a handful. If you don't add enough it will become boring slop.

10 This is not like caber tossing or basketball, both of which ruin the décor of the kitchen. You should move the food gently to the pot and drop it in.

## *Emma's Worms in Meat Sauce*

Emma was a spoodle named after an Australian pole-vaulter. She was short, fat and could just jump into an arm chair (whereas her namesake Emma George was tall, slim and could leap 5 metres). Also, she was scared of dogs, cats and chooks, and her favourite pastimes were 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 <sup>11</sup>
2	Onions
4 cloves	Garlic
3 rashers	Bacon
1 lot	Minced beef (best quality)
1 lot	Spaghetti sauce <sup>12</sup>
1 qty	Mushrooms
1 handful	Black pitted olives <sup>13</sup>
½ handful	Dried basil <sup>14</sup>
1	Hot red chilli <sup>15</sup>
2 lots	Tomatoes <sup>16</sup>
1 small lot	Tomato paste
	Parmesan cheese
	Garlic bread

Chop onions and bacon and cook in a little olive oil. Add crushed garlic and minced beef and cook for a while.

---

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

12 As with Dog Beach Lamb, this is an acceptable short-cut. Rinse the container in the same way.

13 If they are not pitted you will need a dentist, an unnecessary expense. 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.

14 This large amount is necessary. When in doubt add some more.

15 The aim is to add a piquancy to the dish, so only a small amount is needed. Small, hot red chillies are the best, but they will inevitably cause genital agony as a result of chopping them up finely. If you don't enjoy this experience, then use about 1½ tsp of hot chilli sauce.

16 Fresh or tinned. If tinned then you will need 1 large and 1 small tin.

### *Thick Food*

Add mushrooms (cut in bite-sized pieces), olives, basil, . . . ; well just add everything else except the cheese and bread. And a cup of wine if you have some. Allow to simmer quietly, adding more water as necessary.

Cook the worms in plenty of salted water until *al dente*.<sup>17</sup> Prepare garlic bread. Drain the worms and put the worms, sauce, cheese, garlic bread and wine on a table, preferably in containers.

Eat.<sup>18</sup>

The above recipe can also be made as a solid food, see page 44.

Chilli sauce lasts for ever, so it should be an essential part of your pantry. The lots that I buy are very thick and cannot be poured, so after I have removed some I add water and shake it to thin it. (I assume nothing can live in chilli sauce, so I don't bother with sterilised water.)

---

17 A common printing error for *al dente*. Cook the pasta until pushing a blunt object (such as the wrong end of a skewer) against it will make an indentation in it.

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

## *Annie's Instant Worms*

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

<i>Time</i>	<i>15 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Cooking with a dog jumping on you and chewing everything it can reach.</i>
4 cloves	Crushed garlic
1 qty	Butter
1 lot	Smoked salmon
1 small qty	Pesto (optional, if you already have it)
1 qty	Worm segments <sup>19</sup>
2	Saucepans
1	Sieve

Cook the worm segments in water for about 10.666 minutes.

While they are cooking, lightly fry the garlic in the butter. Add roughly chopped salmon and fry a bit. Drain and add worms, mix everything together and heat. Serve with parmesan cheese.

---

<sup>19</sup> Short worms (macaroni, spirals, etc.) are desirable. It doesn't matter what shape.



## Pork In Plum Sauce

This was passed on by a panda.<sup>20</sup> It goes very well with rice and Chinese vegetables.

*Time*                    50 minutes  
*Skills*                    Playing with froth.

*Pork:*

1 tbsp	Light soy sauce
1 tbsp	Sherry
2 cloves	Garlic
2 tsps	Chilli sauce
1 tsp	Five spice powder
1 tsp	Bicarbonate of soda
1 qty	Diced pork

Mix the above odds and ends together, admire the froth, add the pork and marinade it for an hour or more.

*Vegetables:*

1	Onion
½ cup	Red capsicum
½ cup	Green capsicum
½ cup	Spring onions
...	Other vegetables <sup>21</sup>
2 tbsps	Oil

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

*Sauce:*

⅔ cup	Spicy plum sauce <sup>22</sup>
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Return the cooked vegetables to the pan, add the plum sauce, stir and re-heat.

---

20 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.

The Anglo-Saxon race has achieved world domination for two reasons:

First, their permanent indigestion and flatulence has produced a psychotic breed which blames the rest of the world for their self-inflicted agony.

Second, 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.

21 See page 6.

22 A very good substitute for a supermarket lot is Tomato and Plum Sauce; see page 54.

## Difficult Meat

Like difficult soup, this recipe involves a lot of work. It was provided by an artist who taught students how to throw clay and plaster around arbitrarily, but rather surprisingly the recipe does not require a potter's wheel. Note that it makes a large amount of food, in line with *Domestic Cookery*, and so it should be scaled down to suit, perhaps to about one third or one half.

*Time*                      2 or 3 days  
*Skills*                      Peeling garlic and ginger. Moving food from one container to another and back again.

### Marinade 1:

1 tbsp	Ground coriander
2 tbsps	Garam masala
1 tsp	Ground nutmeg
1 tsp	Chilli <sup>23</sup>
3 inches	Fresh ginger <sup>24</sup>
10 cloves	Garlic <sup>25</sup>
½ cup	Oil

Peel the ginger and garlic and roughly chop.<sup>26</sup> Blend all ingredients in a Chinese Whizzy-thingy.

½ lot	Yoghurt (about 500 gm)
½ lot	Fresh coriander leaves chopped

Mix all ingredients together.

### Protein 1:

1 lot	Lamb with all fat and skin removed (about 1 kg)
1 or 2	Lemons juiced
	Salt

Cut up the meat into lumps and put into a container. Lightly salt the lumps, add the lemon juice and stir. After 30 minutes drain off the liquid.

Add the marinade and stir it through the meat. Put on a cover and place in the fridge for at least one day, preferably 2.

---

23 I prefer hot chilli sauce to save some effort.

24 A lot of minced ginger in a jar is acceptable, but you may need several lots.

25 There should be about an equal amount of ginger and garlic.

26 At this step an onlooker burst out into fits of laughter. I gather peeling ginger may be unnecessary.

## *Thick Food*

### *Marinade 2:*

Repeat the marinade 1 instructions.<sup>27</sup>

### *Protein 2:*

1 lot                      Chicken or turkey with (about 1 kg)

Repeat the protein 1 instructions.

### *Egg plant:*

abt 3                      Egg plants  
1                            Large onion sliced  
5 cloves                  Garlic (or 10 small)

Cut egg plants into 1 cm slices length-ways. Put them into a large, very hot fry pan and brown on both sides. Remove and put them into a sealed container to sweat for 15 minutes.<sup>28</sup>

Add the onion to the fry pan with a little oil, and cook and remove.

Cook the egg plant in the fry pan. Add the onion, cover and cook over a medium heat for about 10 minutes.<sup>29</sup>

Add the crushed garlic, cover and cook for a while.

### *Assembly:*

Cook the protein in an oven at 180°C for a while. Or put the protein on skewers with capsicum and cook on a BBQ.<sup>30</sup>

Serve the protein with reheated egg plant and rice.

---

27 Which is why ½ lots are used.

28 You may need an assistant to mop your brow.

29 You could go to a seance and put the fry pan on the medium, but it will not cook and using a stove is much better.

30 This is a device used by sadomasochists to cook outside. It is best used at a beach so that there is a thin sprinkling of sand over the food.



# Solid Savoury Food

## *Chanakopita*

Adapted from Tess Mallos, *The Complete Middle East Cookbook*. This book is excellent, a must for all bitsers bored by “meat and three veg”. The recipes for Baqlawa (page 58) and Volcanoes (kourabiethes, page 60)) are brilliant, and Arni psito (roast lamb) takes roasts to a new level.

With one exception, this recipe illustrates the *Pussy Pleasures* system of measurements. Fundamental to this system is that there should be no left-over amounts of perishable ingredients that cannot be used in *arbitrary meals* (see page 11). Consequently, the amounts of the main ingredients (and hence the size of the dish) are dictated by supermarket packaging. The quantities of non perishable and multi-use ingredients (such as onions, nutmeg and butter) are then adjusted to suit. It is lacto-vegetarian dish.

Sp-anakopita is spinach-pie (or spaniel-pie). So Ch-anakopita is cheese-pie (or chihuahua-pie). I found the original recipe a bit dull, so I left out the dog and significantly increased the some ingredients. It serves 7½ people.

*Time*                      50 minutes, but more realistically about 2½ hours  
*Skills*                      Navigating supermarket aisles.

### Step 1:

several qtys	Raw spinach and/or silver beet <sup>1</sup>
1	Steamer
several qtys	water

Chop some fresh spinach and/or silver beet into small pieces and steam for a while. Wring out most of the water and weigh the spinach and/or silver beet. Repeat until you have about 750 gm.

This can be prepared a long time in advance and frozen.

### Step 2:

¾ cup	Virgin olive oil ( <i>not</i> a typing error)
1	Large or 2 small onions chopped
1 lot	Spring onions chopped (optional)

---

1 The aim is to have about 750 g of cooked, drained spinach and/or silver beet. It is possible to buy lots of frozen spinach in supermarkets. However, about 50% of the contents is water and it is necessary to buy twice as many lots to have 750 g of the final product. If you use this then wring it out but don't bother cooking it.

## Solid Savoury Food

Put the oil and onion into a fry pan and cook for a while. Add the spring onion and cook a bit more. Put the pan to one side to cool.

### Step 3:

6	Eggs
1 or 1½	large lots cottage cheese <i>not creamed</i> (abt 3 cups) <sup>2</sup>
1 small handful	Chopped dill (probably abt 4 heaped tsp)
1 tiny handful	Ground nutmeg (probably abt 1½ tsp)
2 lots	Feta cheese <sup>3</sup>
1 flexible cup	Grated parmesan cheese <sup>4</sup>
1	Bowl large enough to hold everything

Put the eggs (without the shells) into the bowl and beat lightly. Add cottage cheese and stir into the eggs.<sup>5</sup> Add the dill and nutmeg and stir in. Add crumbed feta and parmesan and stir into the mixture.

When cool, add the cooked onion from step 2 and stir into the mixture.

Add the separated spinach and/or silver beet from step 1 and stir into the mixture.

### Step 4:

1 lot	Filo pastry (about 20 sheets)
1 qty	Butter <sup>6</sup>
1	Small saucepan
1 large	Baking dish <sup>7</sup>
1	Painter's brush
1	Ruler
1	Razor blade.

Melt the butter in the saucepan. Brush the baking dish with butter and put in 1 sheet of filo pastry. Butter the sheet of filo pastry in the baking dish and put 1 sheet of filo pastry on it. Repeat several times (about 5?).

Spoon in the chanakopita mixture from step 3.

Put a sheet of filo pastry over the mixture. Butter the sheet of filo pastry in the baking dish and put 1 sheet of filo pastry on it. Repeat until all the filo pastry has been used up.

If the dish is smaller than the sheets of filo pastry, trim the edges with a pair of scissors, fold over the remaining edges and brush them with butter.

---

2 It is easier to mix.

3 Each lot is the size of a hand with the thumb and the ends of the fingers chopped off.

4 I have no idea how much, except that it is probably at least a cup.

5 Depending on the size of the bowl, you might want to add another, smaller lot of cottage cheese.

6 Experience suggests that this is about a large handful. If not enough add more.

7 This is a dish that is the same size as or a little smaller than the filo pastry sheets, and about as deep as a thumb.

### *Solid Savoury Food*

Using a ruler, cut the pie into 15 rectangles (3 x 5) with a razor blade.<sup>8</sup> Pour over any remaining butter.

Pre-heat an oven to 180°C fan forced.

Cook in the pre-heated oven for about 45 minutes.

---

8 Obsessive-compulsive people should get a draughtsman's table and cut a hole in it to hold the filo pastry dish. Then the draughtsman's ruler can be used to accurately cut squares or triangles. (Also see the footnote on page 58).

Non-obsessive-compulsive people should leave the chanakopita uncut.

## *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 one million simple quiches were shipped across the North Sea the Germans liked them so much they sent King George seven tons of Bavarian Cabbage. It's a lacto-ovo-vegetarian dish.

<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 ½ cup	Plain flour
1 cup	Grated tasty cheese
½ cup	Melted butter
1	Dust pan and brush

Mix the flour and cheese, adding the melted butter until crumbly and moist.<sup>9</sup> Add more butter if necessary.

Line a baking dish with pastry (if you have any) leaving some for the top.

1 qty	Bok choi, <sup>10</sup> spinach, <sup>11</sup> leek, <sup>12</sup> ... <sup>13</sup>
8-10	Eggs
1 ½ cups	Milk (more or less, depending on the size of the dish)
1 tsp	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.<sup>14</sup>

- 
- 9 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 your dog, and your cat will have licked out the nearly empty bowl.
- 10 Broad-leafed noxious weed from Asia; 4 bok chois are suggested.
- 11 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 (another noxious weed).
- 12 The Welsh consider this a delicacy, which explains why even the English could subdue them.
- 13 ... is a symbolic representation of two heads of broccoli; not to be confused with the ....
- 14 This must surely be a typing error for 350°F, so I suggest 180°C.



## *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, counting to 20 and bricklaying.</i>
500 gm <sup>15</sup>	Worm segments <sup>16</sup>
1	Onion, chopped
1 clove	Garlic
1 tbsp	Water
½ litre	Milk
2 heaped tbsps	Corn flour
20 grinds	Pepper
400 gm	Strong cheddar cheese, grated
250 gm	Fresh tomatoes, sliced
2 rashers	Bacon
1 small lot	Tomato paste

Cook the worm segments in plenty of water. Place the chopped onion, crushed garlic and 1 tbsp of water in a microwave oven and cook for 2 minutes.<sup>17</sup>

In a saucepan, blend the corn flour with the milk and cook, stirring all the time until it thickens.<sup>18</sup> Take it off the stove, mix in the pepper and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the cheese, and put aside.

Remove rind and fat from the bacon and cut up into small pieces.<sup>19</sup>

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.<sup>20</sup> Cover with the sliced tomatoes, the rest of the cheese, and the bacon in that order.

Cook in an oven until cooked.

Serve with salad and garlic bread.

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

---

15 About  $\frac{1}{2}$  a lot, but George insisted on specifying quantities for all ingredients. However, I feel that there is plenty of scope for variation; certainly the bacon seems a bit light on for my taste.

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

17 A covered bowl would help.

18 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 corn flour in a little cold milk and make a thick, smooth paste. Then, before you heat it, slowly add the rest of the milk while stirring constantly.

19 My philosophy is “waste not, want not”, so cook the rind and fat in a microwave oven for a couple of minutes until they are crunchy, and eat.

20 This requires the top of the dish to be quite firm. If not, behave like an abstract painter and flick blobs of tomato paste randomly over it.

## *Emma's Solid Meat Sauce*

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Using a circular saw.</i>
1 qty	Worm sheets <sup>21</sup>
1	Meat sauce (see page 32)
1/3 qty	Cheese sauce (see previous recipe) <sup>22</sup>
1 small qty	Grated cheese

Put some meat sauce into a large oven dish.

Cut worm sheets into the correct size and put in the dish.

Repeat the above two steps as required, preferably two more times.

Top with cheese sauce and grated cheese.

Cook in an oven at 180°C for a while or until the worm sheets are cooked.<sup>23</sup>

---

21 Commonly called lasagna.

22 Perhaps add some nutmeg or other flavouring.

23 I have absolutely no idea how to test it. One recipe I have seen says 25 minutes and another says 40 minutes. Good luck.

## *Beef Strips And Noodles*

*Adapted from "Frame>By>Frame Asian" (Love Food, 2010).*

*Time*                      *abt 3 hours*  
*Skills*                      *Tossing, throwing, and washing up lots of bowls afterwards.*

*Step 1:*

1 qty	Beef or lamb (abt 400g)
2 tbsps	Soy sauce
2 tbsps	Sesame oil
1	Bowl
1	Very sharp knife
1	Wooden spoon

Slice the beef into thin strips about 50 mm long. Put the beef, soy sauce and oil into the bowl and stir.

Leave for 1 hour or more, stirring intermittently.

*Step 2:*

1	Onion sliced
2 cloves	Garlic
2 tbsps	Crushed ginger <sup>24</sup>
1½ tsp	Hot chilli sauce
1 qty	Broccoli
¼	Chinese cabbage <sup>25</sup>
4	Bowls

Crush or mince the garlic. Put the garlic, ginger and chilli in a small bowl and mix them.

Using the knife from step 1, cut the onion in half and slice it into thin wedges, cut the cabbage into 75 mm strips, and the broccoli into bite-sized chunks, putting each in a bowl.

*Step 3:*

Put a little bit of oil in a large frying pan that has a lid, and using the spoon from step 1, fry the onion and then add beef with any liquid.<sup>26</sup>

Cook for a little while and add the garlic, ginger and chilli.

Then add the broccoli and cabbage, stir and cover. After about ten minutes the cabbage will have released a not-supermarket lot of water, so take the lid off and cook some more to reduce the water.

<sup>24</sup> Instead of buying a lot of crushed ginger you can use about 30 mm of fresh ginger and chop it finely yourself.

<sup>25</sup> Alternatively you can use ordinary green cabbage.

<sup>26</sup> In the original recipe the meat was cooked by itself, presumably to fry it. But the liquid in the meat makes this impossible, so stew the meat.

## *Solid Savoury Food*

### *Step 4:*

packets	Fried noodles <sup>27</sup>
1 pair	scissors <sup>28</sup>
1	saucepan
1	sieve

During step 3, break up the fried noodles if they are too long. Boil a saucepan with enough water to cover the noodles and throw them into it, breaking them up with a fork. After three or four minutes, when the noodles are cooked, toss them into a sieve and let them drain for a few seconds.

Serve and eat.

---

27 An alternative to rice noodles which result in an Asian sticky mess. The fried noodles I use come in lots of five, single-serve packets. Use one packet per person.

28 I have no idea what the scissors are for.

## *Fried Liver*

Dogs love dried liver, so it must be good for humans as well. Because of the relative quantities, fried liver is usually made at the same time as dried liver.

Whereas Dried Liver is a vegan dish, this is carni-vegetarian dish.<sup>29</sup>

*Time*                      *1 day*  
*Skills*                      *Rearranging hot things in an oven without burning yourself.*<sup>30</sup>

*Step 1:*

*1 lot*                      *Lamb liver*  
*1*                          *Metric micrometer*

Cut off sufficient, 8 mm thick slices of liver to feed the humans and place it in a refrigerator. Make Dried Liver (page 13) with the remaining liver.

*Step 2:*

*1 qty*                      *Potatoes for mashing*<sup>31</sup>  
*1 smaller qty*              *Butter*  
*1 qty*                      *Milk*  
*20 grinds*                  *Pepper*

Peel and boil the potatoes, drain off the water, add sufficient butter and pepper, and mash.<sup>32</sup> Add milk until it is the consistency of wet cement. Keep warm.

*Step 3:*

*sufficient*                  *Bacon rashers*  
*1*                          *Onion*  
*1 qty*                      *Green and red vegetables*  
*Flour and pepper*

---

29 Veganism and vegetarianism are human traits and dogs don't care. Although I once met a vegan who made her cat eat salads; it was scrawny and depressed.

30 There is only one good cure for burns. Fill a large glass with brandy, whisky or something else alcoholic. Turn on the cold tap and hold the burnt part in the stream of water for as long as possible, preferably over an hour or at least until you have emptied the glass. If you have burnt both hands, drink through a straw and, when finished, never try to cook again.

31 This is the only use I have found for kennebec potatoes (which are the rejects and leftovers from the Tasmanian chip industry), other than to throw them at marauding cats.

32 Potatoes, like rice, are fillers to bulk out other, important food, in this case butter. So it is essential that enough butter is used.

### *Solid Savoury Food*

Dice the onion and fry it and the bacon in some oil. Coat the liver strips with flour and pepper, add to the fry-pan and cook.

Remove the liver and bacon, add water to the onions in the frying-pan to make a gravy. At the same time cook the vegetables somewhere, perhaps in a microwave oven.

Serve.

## *Mayonnaise*

She who must be obeyed (also known as George) has tried and catastrophically failed to make mayonnaise for most of her life. Hours have been spent slowly trickling oil into a blender, only to have the oil and other ingredients separate. But, with one caveat, the following is almost certain to work (hopefully).

<i>Time</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Using a paint stirrer.</i>
1	Large egg
1 clove	Garlic diced
1 tsp	French mustard
1 tbs	Lemon juice, lime juice or vinegar
1 cup	Oil
1 pinch	Salt
1	Stick blender (paint stirrer)

Put all the ingredients except the egg into a container slightly larger in diameter than the stick blender. Add the egg and wait until it has sunk to the bottom under the oil.

Insert the stick blender to the bottom of the container and switch on. After ten or twenty seconds slowly raise the stick blender to the top and move it up and down to blend in all the oil.

The ten or twenty seconds while the blender is at the bottom is very, very important.

The oil is also very important, because it must not have a strong flavour that will dominate; perhaps grape seed? In addition, at least one variety (perhaps rice bran oil?) doesn't work and the mayonnaise will not thicken and remains runny. If it doesn't thicken add a second egg and whisk it again. If it is still runny, don't throw it out as runny mayonnaise is OK.

## *Waldorf Salad*

<i>Time</i>	<i>1 minute if you can't be bothered cutting up everything; otherwise 5 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>None at all.</i>
abt 3 cups	Diced apple
abt 1 cup	Diced celery
abt ½ cup	Good walnut pieces
abt ½ cup	Sultanas <sup>33</sup>
abt 1 cup	Grated good Swiss cheese <sup>34</sup>
Some	Lemon juice
Sufficient	Mayonnaise

Mix the apple and mayonnaise together to stop the apple from browning. Mix the other ingredients into the apple and mayonnaise and then refrigerate.

The proportions of everything are arbitrary.

“Thomy” mayonnaise is a good substitute for the previous recipe; 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 condensed milk.

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33 Optionally, you can soak the sultanas a few hours before.

34 Why Swiss is not known. I use Jarlsberg cheese because I like the flavour. Tasty cheese is OK.



## *Zucchini Pickle*

This recipe is included to dispel a myth, that zucchinis are inedible. Zucchini pickle is excellent with cheese, butter and biscuits, and potatoes (cook some diced boiling potatoes, cool, and add mayonnaise and zucchini pickle and mix together carefully).

First, some metal can safely be put into a microwave oven. Apparently 30% metal and 70% other substances is OK, but as the round metal lids of glass jars are just a tiny fraction of this amount they are perfectly safe.

Second, to be sure nothing will happen, always allow at least 2 cm between the jars and 2 cm between the jars and the walls of the microwave oven; this limits you to about 4 or 5 jars.

Third, heated metal expands more than glass jars (and the gasket is flexible). So, as the air and liquid in the jars heats and expands it can, if necessary, flow out past the lid and the jars will not break. When the jars cool down, the gasket seals the jars, thus creating a vacuum in them.

For more information see Isabel Webb's book "5-minute microwave bottling".

<i>Time</i>	<i>About 3 months, depending on how much you make.</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Heating jars with metal lids in a microwave oven and coping with the panic and anxiety it causes.</i>

### *Making the pickle:*

abt 5	Tumescent zucchinis <sup>35</sup> (abt 1 kg)
2	Onions
1 tbsp	Salt
1 cup	Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar
1½ cups	Apple cider vinegar
2 tsp	Mustard seeds
2 tsp	Coriander seeds
1 tsp	Turmeric

Finely slice the zucchini and onions.<sup>36</sup> Mix them with the salt, place in a colander or sieve on a bowl, cover and leave overnight. Discard the water in the bowl.

Put the apple cider vinegar, sugar, mustard seeds, coriander seeds and tumeric into a saucepan. Cook for a while until the sugar dissolves.<sup>37</sup>

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35 About 3 cm (1.5 inches) by 15 cm (6 inches).

36 A Mandoline slicer is ideal, for both slicing thinly and removing the tips of four fingers simultaneously; the red colour of blood makes a useful addition.

37 Obviously you don't need to use the Chinese whizzy-thingy, and if you don't this step will just take a bit longer.

## *Solid Savoury Food*

### *Bottling the pickle:*

sufficient	Glass jars and screw-on metal lids with gaskets saved from other recipes <sup>38</sup>
1	Microwave oven
1	rigid ruler

Make sure the jars are sterilised; put them and the lids into a microwave oven with water in them, and heat on high until the water boils.

Empty the sterilised jars and lids. Put in the zucchini and onion mixture into the jars, and add the liquid until the jars are full. Screw on the lids tightly.

Put the jars in the microwave oven, with a bowl or plate under them to catch any drips, and cook on high for about 2 minutes per jar until the liquid starts boiling. Remove them and put on a rack or a wooden surface and listen for the click that shows the lids have popped in. If the lids do not visibly pop in (a straight edge can be used to check), repeat the process.

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<sup>38</sup> See page 4. The number of available jars sets the upper limit for the quantities. The recipe makes about 4 jars of pickle.

## *Zucchini Slice*

This recipe is included to dispel a myth, that zucchinis are edible only in pickles.

<i>Time:</i>	<i>90.5 minutes</i>
<i>Skills:</i>	<i>None</i>
abt 2	Zucchinis
1	Onion
3 rashers	Bacon
1 cup	Tasty cheese
1 cup	Self-raising flour
½ cup	Oil
5	Eggs

Beat the eggs and combine them with the flour and oil.

Grate zucchinis and cheese, chop onion and bacon, and add all of them to the batter. Add a bit of salt and pepper.

Pour into an appropriately sized baking dish<sup>39</sup> and bake in a moderate oven for 30 or 40 minutes until browned.

This is an apposite point to mention clothes pegs; the wooden ones consisting of two bits of identical grooved wood held together by a steel spring.<sup>40</sup> They have many uses in the kitchen and the pantry.

First, potato chips usually come in bags containing several snacks. Clothes pegs are important to seal the bags to prevent the chips becoming soft.

Second, supermarket lots are cleverly designed to be more than one meal's worth in the hope you will throw the rest out and buy more. Clothes pegs can be used to seal the bags so you don't have to go to the supermarket as frequently.

And third, as in this recipe, holding things together temporarily.

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39 Maybe 12 inches by 2½ inches by 2½ inches, whatever that means. As all baking dishes stick, line the dish with baking paper and hold it against the sides with clothes pegs.

40 A clothes peg is a small device which you use to fasten clothes to a washing line. The spelling "clothes' peg" is spurned.  
You can also use plastic or stainless-steel pegs.

## *Tomato and Plum Sauce*

Obviously, this recipe (from Isobel Webb's book) is not solid food. But it is an excellent addition to any food that needs a little piquancy, particularly rice dishes. It assumes that you or a friend has a plum tree.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes.</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Feeling around in thick liquid to find the solid bits.</i>
1 kg	Ripe tomatoes
1 kg	Ripe plums
500 g	Sugar or Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar
400 ml	Vinegar or apple cider vinegar
1 tsp	Salt
1 tsp	Mixed spices
1/2 tsp	Cayenne pepper
30 g	Crushed ginger
2 or 3	Bottles of whisky, brandy, vodka or gin

Cut up the tomatoes and plums, put them in a microwave-proof bowl with the other ingredients and cook on high in a microwave oven for about 10 minutes. Stir, check the sugar has dissolved and cook on high for 30 or 40 minutes until the sauce has thickened. Allow to cool and remove the plum stones.

Purée in a blender to a smooth sauce. Drink the contents of the bottles and, if you are capable, put the sauce into them using a funnel (they are already sterilised).

# Solid Sweet Food

There is no runny or thick sweet food, only runny or thick things to have with it, usually cream.

Most of these recipes require castor or icing sugar. Make this yourself using the Chinese whizzy-thingy described on page 3.

## *Crepes and Pancakes*

Recently we were given three lobster tails from Canada. The recipes we looked at were much the same, all being based on lemon juice and butter. We choose one at random and cooked it. It required cutting open the back with scissors, breaking the ribs and decoratively re-arranging it so that the meat was on top, necessitating spiking your thumbs on sharp bits of shell. Slaters or wood lice are related to lobsters, so you could use them if you have enough, but it requires a microscope to cut open the shells. As with weevils, cook them whole.

For a few hours afterwards I couldn't taste the lobster, it was just a filler, and only tasted butter and lemon. I immediately thought of crepes, far simpler to cook and much more versatile.

*Crepes are meant to be very thin.*

A recipe for crepes from a 1978 cookbook reads:

4/5 cup	Plain flour
1 tbsp	Icing sugar
1 1/3 cup	Milk
1	Egg <sup>1</sup>

Mix the flour and sugar together, make a well in the center and add the lightly beaten egg. Combine the flour and egg, adding the milk gradually to make a lump-free batter. Transfer the batter to a jug and leave to stand for 30 minutes.

And the advice given is to "Add a little more milk if necessary to give the consistency of double (heavy) cream."

This is *wrong, wrong, wrong!* It makes a batter for pikelets which are thicker and smaller. The batter for crepes must be very thin, almost as runny as pure milk. Also, savoury fillings can be used with crepes so cut out the sugar. What you are left with is a batter composed of flour, egg and milk.

So combine the egg and flour with enough milk to make it very, very thin.

1 The original recipe had 1 egg and 1 egg yoke, which is very wasteful of a white.

### *Solid Sweet Food*

Heat a frying pan until it is hot. Take a smear of soft butter of a paper towel and smear it all over the hot surface.<sup>2</sup> Quickly pour some batter into the frying pan and swirl it round so that there is a *thin* coating, making sure it doesn't stick. Shake the crepe, flip it over, wait a few seconds and put it on a warm plate.<sup>3</sup>

Sweet crepes should be smeared with more butter, lemon juice, sprinkled with sugar and eaten warm. No fancy fillings.

Savoury crepes should be a little thicker, so use a bit more batter. Make the filling before you make the crepes. It should thick and creamy, and it doesn't matter what you include in the sauce, but keep it simple.

Cook a crepe, fill it and roll it up, and serve it. Repeat.

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2 The aim is not to burn the butter, so that gives an indication of how hot to make the frying pan.

3 They must be eaten promptly, so there is never a pile.

## *Socks' Chocolate Mouse*

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.*

1 handful                Dark cooking chocolate<sup>4</sup>  
3 tbsps                    Black coffee  
1 small handful        Butter  
1 tbsp                    Brandy  
1 qty                     Brandy  
4                          Eggs  
1 cup                     Cream  
Extra whipped (or runny) cream for dressing.

Melt chocolate over a double boiler.<sup>5</sup> Remove and stir in coffee, 1 tbsp of brandy and butter. Separate the eggs and add the yolks to the chocolate mixture, one at a time, stirring gently. Add the rest of the brandy and mix gently.

Whisk egg whites until stiff.<sup>6</sup> Whip cream.<sup>7</sup> Stir whipped egg whites and cream into the chocolate mixture.<sup>8</sup>

Pour into suitable individual serving bowls shaped like mice, leaving ample room for cream, and cool in the refrigerator. Serve topped with extra cream.<sup>9</sup>

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

5 Not two old chooks (or fowls), but a saucepan with the chocolate inside a saucepan with boiling water in it.

6 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").

7 This can be done using a manual egg beater, a paint stirrer (like that for Mayonnaise) or a Chinese whizzy thingy. Cream has three states, runny, thick and solid (called butter). Try to stop whipping at the thick state.

8 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.

9 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.

## Baqława

### Filling:

3 lots	Ground nuts
1 lot	Finely chopped nuts
1 cup	Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar
1 tsp	Ground cardamom
1 lot	Fillo pastry
½ sm slab	Melted butter

### Syrup:

2 cups	Sugar
1 ½ cups	Water
1 tbsp	Lemon juice
½ tsp	Ground cardamom

Combine ground and chopped nuts with sugar and cardamom.<sup>10</sup> For the best flavour use freshly ground or pounded cardamom.

Brush a filo-sized baking dish (as used for chanakopita, page 39) with butter. Place 3 or 4 sheets of fillo pastry in the dish brushing each with butter. Brush the top sheet with butter and sprinkle in one-half of the nut mixture. Top with 3 more buttered sheets of fillo, buttering the top of last sheet. Put in the rest of the nut mixture. Cover with the remaining sheets of fillo, buttering each as before including the top.

Trim the edges with a pair of scissors and cut carefully through pastry and nut layers in diamond shapes.<sup>11</sup> Pour the remaining butter over the top letting it run into the cuts and around sides of the baqława. Bake on the center shelf in a moderate oven (180°C or 350°F) for 35-40 minutes.

While the baqława is cooking, prepare the syrup. In a saucepan 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. Leave aside until the pastry is cooked.

When the baqława 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.

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10 As with all recipes, the lots for the filling must be sufficient to fill the baking dish and the other ingredients measured to suit. The original recipe specified almonds, but a mixture of different nuts works well, and the ratio of ground to chopped nuts can be varied.

11 It will produce about 40 pieces for animals of reasonable appetite.  
When using a draughtsman's table: Let the width and length of the baking dish be  $w$  and  $l$ , and divide the width into  $n$  parts and the length into  $m$  parts. Cut the baqława into  $n$  by  $m$  rectangles. Then set the angle of the draughtsman's ruler to  $\arctan(ln/mw)$  and cut the rectangles into triangles.



### *Solid Sweet Food*

The pastry may be left in the dish, covered with an electric fence to protect it from attack, and it will remain crisp for 3 or 4 days.<sup>12</sup> It may be stored in a sealed container for several days although crispness will decrease.

Do not refrigerate.

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<sup>12</sup> This has been known to happen only once, when a certain person was sick; otherwise it is unlikely that leftovers will be a problem.

*Solid Sweet Food*  
*Volcanoes*

1 cup	Unsalted butter (abt 250g)
3 tbsp	Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar
1	Egg yolk
1 tbsp	Brandy
½ cup	Toasted almonds, finely chopped (optional)
2½ cups	Plain flour
1 tsp	Baking powder <sup>13</sup>
qty	Whole cloves
2 cups	Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar

Melt the butter until bubbles subside and sediment is golden brown. Pour into a mixing bowl and wait until it has solidified.

Add 3 tbsp Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar and beat until light and fluffy. Add egg yolk and brandy and beat well.<sup>14</sup>

Add the almonds (if used). Sift the flour and baking powder to combine it and mix carefully into the butter. Knead by hand until smooth.

Break off small pieces the size of a mouthful, roll them into balls, pinch tops twice to make miniature mountains, insert a whole clove in the summit each, and place them on baking sheets. Bake in a moderately slow oven for 20 minutes or until lightly coloured. Do not brown!

Sift Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar over waxed paper and lift the warm shortbreads onto it. Sift more Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar over them. When cool, put in a container and sift the remaining Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar over them.

Seal and store for two days to improve the flavour.<sup>15</sup>

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13 Self-raising flour has a lot more baking powder in it.

14 Pour a large glassful of brandy and test it. You are meant to beat the contents of the bowl, not passing cats.

15 This is impossible without continuing the beating on passing dogs and children.

## *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 erotically.*

1 qty                    Wholemeal flour  
1 qty                    Desiccated coconut  
½ qty                    Brown sugar  
sufficient              Butter  
3 lots                    Fruit

Mix the flour, coconut and sugar together and rub in the butter.<sup>16</sup> Place the fruit 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.<sup>17</sup>

### Richard's Crumble

This recipe was developed because the above recipe is just too much work.

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

3 qty<sup>18</sup>                    Crunchy toasted muesli  
3 lots                    Tinned fruit

Place the fruit in a dish and cover with muesli.

Serve with a lot of cream.

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

17 Cream can be runny or thick. To make thick cream, half fill a Chinese whizzy thingy container and whiz. I prefer to use a hand beater because if you don't watch it you will produce solid cream, or butter.

18 Or 1 large qty.

## *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.<sup>19</sup>

*Time*            *50 minutes*  
*Skills*            *Patience.*

### *Layer 1:*

2                    Eggs, separated  
½ cup             Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar  
½ 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 tin,<sup>20</sup> smooth the top and freeze until firm.

### *Layer 2:*

2                    Eggs, separated  
½ cup             Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar  
½ cup             Cream  
1 small handful Dark chocolate  
2 tbsps            Cocoa  
1 ½ tbsps        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.<sup>21</sup> 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.

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19 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".

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

21 If you don't know what this is, see page 57.

## *Solid Sweet Food*

### *Layer 3:*

1	Egg white
1 cup	Cream
1 teaspoon	Pure vanilla essence
4 tbsps	Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar
2 tbsps	Red glace cherries
1 tbsp	Green glace cherries
2	Glace apricots
2	Glace pineapple rings
1 handful	Flaked almonds <sup>22</sup>

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 the toasted almond flakes.<sup>23</sup> 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 about 1.5 cm of whipped cream and grated chocolate.

Serves 6-8 people or 2 dogs.

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<sup>22</sup> The recipe required only 30 gm of almonds, but the quantity has been increased to allow for 'snacks'.

<sup>23</sup> To toast the almonds, place on a tray in a moderate oven for 5 minutes.

## *Banana Cake*

This recipe is to provide snacks during the day (and night).

<i>Time</i>	<i>45 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>None</i>
1 cup	Self-raising flour
1 cup	Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar
1/5 small slab	Butter (or 1/10 large slab of butter)
1	Egg
1 tsp	Pure vanilla essence
1/4 cup	Milk
2 or 3	over-ripe, inedible bananas <sup>24</sup>
1 qty	sugar
1 qty	cinnamon

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Choose old bananas whose skin is going black and whose center is mushy. Remove the skin and mash the bananas in a Chinese whizzy-thingy.

Warm the milk and the diced butter in a microwave oven, just enough to melt the butter (maybe 10 or 20 seconds). When cool, add the egg and vanilla and mix.

Sift the flour into a bowl, stir in the sugar and make a well in the center. Add the butter, egg, vanilla, milk, and banana and stir to blend them together.

Pour into a suitable container lined with baking paper.<sup>25</sup> Sprinkle the top with sugar and cinnamon and bake for 30-35 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean.

Lick out the bowl; if it is deep then use your finger.

Serve slices liberally coated with butter.

## *Orange Cake*

Instead of bananas, use an orange.

Put the zest from the orange in with the sugar before whizzy-thingying it. Remove the skin and pips from the orange and mash the orange separately in the Chinese whizzy-thingy.

Make the cake as above.

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<sup>24</sup> Firm, edible bananas can be used, but they are difficult to mash.

<sup>25</sup> Or grease-proof paper. A 25 x 8 cm container is about right. Often the paper refuses to take the shape of the container, so hold it in place with 4 clothes-pegs; see page 53.

## *Ice Cream*

This recipe was given to me by George and it came from her mother-in-law. Most ice cream recipes do not have enough cream in them. Also, most ice creams have to be remixed after being partly frozen, but this recipe does not.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Using an electric drill.</i>
4	Eggs, separated
1 cup	Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar
1 large lot	Cream (1 ½ cups?)
½ tsp	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 into 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:

- (a) Coffee: Add 2 tablespoons of strong coffee and 1 heaped tablespoon of brandy to the egg yolks.<sup>26</sup>
- (b) Chocolate: Add 6 tablespoons of drinking chocolate to the egg yolks.

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26 To measure a heaped tablespoon of liquid, hold the spoon over the bowl and pour the liquid into it until it overflows for a bit.

## *Another Ice Cream*

To a pound of preserved fruit, of any kind, add a quart of cream,<sup>27</sup> the juice of two lemons, to quicken the flavour, and sugar to your taste. Rub the whole through a fine hair sieve; and to raspberry, or any other red fruit, add a little cochineal colouring, to give a better tint. (*Domestic Cookery*, pages 285.)

Before refrigerators an *ice-pot* was used, described on the previous page:

Get a few pounds of ice, break it almost to a powder, throw a large handful and a half of rock salt among it. You must prepare it a part of the house where as little of the warm air comes as you can possibly contrive. The ice and salt being in a bucket, put your cream into an ice-pot, and cover it; immerse it in the ice, and draw that round the pot, so as to touch every possible part. In a few minutes put a spatula or spoon in it, and stir it well, removing the parts that ice round the edges to the centre. If the ice-cream, or water, be in a form, shut the bottom close, and move the whole in the ice, as you cannot use a spoon to that without danger of waste. There should be holes in the bucket, to let off the ice as it thaws.

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<sup>27</sup> Two pints or a quarter of a gallon.



## *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 repeat the original here without any editing.

<i>Time</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Skills</i>	<i>Converting °F to °C</i>
1	Festive cake pack from Nature's Works <sup>28</sup>
¾ cup	Self-raising flour, (I use wholemeal, but the ordinary would do).
½ tsp	Salt.
¾ cup	Chinese whizzy-thingy sugar.
3	Eggs
1 tsp	Pure vanilla
1	Concrete mixer (or a wooden spoon)
1	Bricklayer's trowel

Grease the bottom and the 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 better.<sup>29</sup>

Line the bottom and the 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 foil.<sup>30</sup>

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 spoon,<sup>31</sup> so the fruit and nuts are evenly coated.

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28 It was Sanitarium before the Seventh-Day Adventists sold the business. I assume it is mixed dried fruit and nuts.

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

30 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.)

Apparently the author did not know about baking paper and grease-proof paper which are far better to use (or the recipe was written before 1960).

31 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.

## *Solid Sweet Food*

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

Shovel the resulting concoction into 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 top.<sup>32</sup>

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 Australian 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.<sup>33</sup>

The time taken to cook does seem to vary. After about two hours it is worth checking and it may take three or more.<sup>34</sup> 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 OK if one probes about in several places to find a way in. The cake is baked when no sticky bits appear on the shaft of the skewer.<sup>35</sup>

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.<sup>36</sup>

It is supposed to last about a season in the fridge,<sup>37</sup> but in my household I never was able to test this. It always went too fast.

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32 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.

33 Because many ovens use °C it is necessary to convert the instructions: If  $m$  °F is specified then use  $\frac{5}{9}(m - 32)$  °C or an approximate equivalent.

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

35 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, page 13).

36 The cake rather than the foil.

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