

Christmas Dinner

On Christmas day, of all days, the menu should show discrimination instead of superabundance. The characteristic of ancient cookery was profusion; of modern, is delicacy and refinement. The capacity of human digestion is limited and is not afforded any special dispensations on feast days.

Certain traditions must be observed in considering our Christmas menu. We desire the generally accepted goose or turkey and the historic plum pudding. These are our foundation stones. The food value of these two, with their accessories, is high, consequently we center the nourishment on these two courses, adding to them others of esthetic value which will not multiply our dietetic sins sufficiently to impair health. With this end in view the following menu has been arranged:

Clear Soup Toast Fingers
Pickled Peaches Salted Peanuts
Green Goose, Roasted
Potato Stuffing
Garnish of Jellied Apples and Celery Tips
Spiced Gravy
Steamed Sweet Potatoes
Turnips a la Creme
Celery-and-Orange Salad
Up-to-date Plum Pudding
Foaming Sauce
Priscilla's Pumpkin Pie
Kris Kringle Cakes Black Coffee

Have the soup clear and delicately flavored, floating a thin slice of lemon. In serving a holiday dinner, the soup should merely refresh and stimulate the appetite and not render it indifferent to the courses that follow. In this menu, the soup may be omitted, as also the salad, with an abundance of good cheer remaining. As arranged, the dinner is to be served in courses, but it may be modified to lessen the labor of serving. Arrange the dessert on the sideboard or side table, with the exception of the pudding, which should be served piping hot on heated plates, accompanied by the sauce in a separate dish. Coffee is preferably served at the close of the meal, but may accompany it when desired. Taken clear, it aids digestion, and cream and sugar should be omitted when such a bountiful dinner is partaken of, even if indulged in on other occasions.

The dressing of a goose requires more time and attention than that of a turkey, the oily skin needing a good scrubbing. Rinse outside and in. The goose should be considerably less than a year old, a "green" goose, four months old being the choicest, and it should be well fattened.

A dry-plucked fowl is preferable, but if it is scalded, remember it takes much longer for the water to penetrate to the roots of the feathers of a goose than those of a chicken. Draw and truss the goose the same as a turkey, remembering to remove the tough leg-tendons. Cut through the skin very gingerly about 2 inches below the leg joint, bend the leg at the cut against the table and break the bone; then withdraw the tendons. If cut, they cannot be removed.

One of the most toothsome goose stuffings is made of potatoes and parboiled onions cooked together until tender, mashed and seasoned highly with pepper, salt, butter and sage. The latter, and the onion, may be omitted, or the inside of the goose may be rubbed with a cut onion. Another dressing is made of chopped tart apples (peeled and cored), bread crumbs and boiled onions. But a more up-to-date method is to serve the cooked apples as a garnish or in a carefully prepared sauce. Apples in some form are the invariable accompaniment of roast goose.

HOW TO ROAST.

Roast on a rack in the dripping pans. Lay slices of fat pork over the goose, as it aids in drawing out the excess of oil. After three-quarters of an hour, remove the pork, draw all oil from the pan, and return goose to the oven, well dredged with flour seasoned with salt and pepper. After the flour has browned, begin basting, and continue this every 15 minutes. Formerly it was the custom to add some water to the pan, but good authorities omit it, and do not begin to baste until the fat has been drawn off. Cook until the joints separate easily, from 1½ to 3 hours. An eight-pound goose requires about two hours. Insufficiently cooked, a goose is very indigestible and unpalatable. It

should be killed at least two days before being roasted. Garnish the goose with tips of choice celery, alternating with jellied apples.

These latter will be found delicious. Pare and core whole apples, large and firm ones being preferable. Fill the holes with red currant jelly, sprinkle all over with lemon juice and dust with granulated sugar. Place a little water in the pan around the apples, and bake them until candied but not broken. Preserved ginger may be used instead of the jelly.

Spiced Gravy—Try this novelty in making gravy, and it will be found appetizing. Boil the giblets in three pints water an hour with a few cloves and allspice, one tablespoon grated lemon peel, one-half onion, chopped, one red pepper and one-half teaspoon salt. When the giblets are tender, remove them, mince, season with a dash of pepper and a saltspoon of salt, keeping them hot in the gravy boats. To the gravy add one tablespoon butter and two tablespoons hot browned flour, stirring until smooth. Strain and add one-half glass hot water or wine if too thick. Let simmer a few minutes and pour in the gravy boats.

Steamed Sweet Potatoes—These are better than boiled. Pare, steam until tender, put a pinch of butter on each and set in the oven to dry and brown a trifle.

Turnips a la Creme—Cut peeled turnips into half-inch dice, boil in salted water until tender, drain; to each quart of turnips add one tablespoon sugar, a little salt, and lastly three tablespoons cream into which a beaten egg is stirred. Serve very hot.

Celery and Orange Salad—Crisp the white stalks of celery in ice water, to which lemon slices have been added. Wipe the stalks dry, cut in tiny pieces and dress with French dressing. Add this just before it is to be served. Turn into a serving dish and garnish with slices of sour orange, cut lengthwise of the orange, then in halves lengthwise. Wafers should accompany it.

THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING.

And now comes the plum pudding without which, and holly and mistletoe, Christmas hardly seems real. Only once a year can the genuine Christmas pudding, decked with holly and wreathed with flames, make its picturesque entrance to the festive board. So many rich, indigestible concoctions have been served under this head, with their train of horrors next day, that it is with both pride and pleasure we present the following by Mrs. Kretschmar: Three-fourths cup New Orleans molasses, one cup brown sugar, one cup finely chopped suet from the region of the kidneys, three cups bread crumbs, two cups flour, one cup sweet milk, one cup mixed raisins, citron and currants, chopped, one teaspoon soda. Sift the sugar into the molasses and add the milk and suet. Mix the soda evenly through the flour and add the fruit to it, tossing it about to insure its being coated. Then put into the wet mixture, adding last of all the bread crumbs. Boil or steam in molds three hours. Cook beforehand and re-heat.

No demon of dyspepsia lurks in its luscious depths, and partakers will rise up and call you blessed. Serve with foaming sauce, or any other preferred. Foaming sauce is made thus: Two-thirds cup fine white sugar creamed with one-third cup butter; to this add three tablespoons thick cream, the white of one egg, and one-half teaspoon vanilla, beating them in with an egg beater. Set the bowl of sauce in a vessel of hot water, and use the egg beater steadily until the mass becomes light and smooth. Serve immediately. It should be a foam throughout, with no settling on the bottom. If it is allowed to stand or too much cooked, it will not be perfection.

In serving the pudding decorate it with sprigs of holly. Pour a tablespoonful of brandy around the base just before serving and light. No one need scruple to use this, or alcohol. It evaporates in the flame. Another way is to dip squares of loaf sugar in brandy and place around the dish, then set it afire and carry the dish to the table while it is wreathed in weird flames.

Priscilla's Pumpkin Pie.—To one pint cooked pumpkin add one egg, one gill molasses, butter size of an egg, one gill milk, one scant tea-



SANTA CLAUS ON THE WAY.

CHRISTMAS

Although no day is looked forward to with such joy and happiness as Christmas, few of us know anything more about the day than that we keep it in memory of the birth of Christ, and have a Christmas tree, or hang up our stockings, for the exchange of gifts which good, old, jolly Santa Claus, or Saint Nick, of course, brings along with him from his snowy home at the North Pole.

Consequently it won't do us any harm to know a little of the history of the day.

The institution of Christmas, Krismas, Christ Mass, or as it is spelled in Old English, Christe-Masse, can be authenticated as far back as the time of Emperor Commodus in 180-192. In the reign of Diocletian, 284-305, while the ruler was keeping his court at Nicomedia, he learned that a multitude of Christians was assembled in the city to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. The Churches were filled, he ordered the doors barred and then set fire to the buildings and every worshiper perished in the flames.

There was no special uniformity in the day set aside for the celebration of the Nativity among the early Christians, some put it in May, others in April, and still others in January, but finally December 25th was established arbitrarily, though, as a matter of fact, Christ was probably not born at that season of the year in Judea.

The fact that had most to do with fixing the celebration on December 25th, was that almost all heathen nations regarded the Winter Solstice (the time of the year when the sun is at its greatest declination), as the beginning of renewed life and activity of the powers of nature, and of their gods, who originally were merely symbolical of these nature powers. On this account the Celts and Germans, from oldest times celebrated the season with great festivities, holding their Yule-feast in commemoration of the return of the fiery sun-wheel.

Many of the customs and feasts of these old German and Roman heathen passed into Christianity, purified and adapted by the Church for the celebration of the Nativity. Manger-songs and Christmas carols sprang up. Later the Christ-trees, or Christmas trees, adorned with lights and gifts; the custom of giving and receiving gifts; special meats and dishes, such as Christmas cakes, puddings, etc., came into vogue.

By the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Church, and by the Lutheran Church, Christmas is celebrated by special services, and gradually the Protestant Churches are beginning to look upon it as a church day, and not altogether as a social holiday as they once did.

At one time the celebration lasted until Candlemas, but because of the increasing realization that it is in commemoration of the birth of the Christ Child, it has become more and more the children's day, one continuous round of shrieking happiness from first break of day until the tired little heads snuggle down into the pillows to dream of what Santa Claus brought them.

Let's first gather at the church to offer up the thanks that should so gladly pour from full hearts, and then the whole day will be so much more satisfying.

Perhaps this brief sketch may not add to your pleasure in keeping Christmas, but it has been a satisfaction to tell it. And now to dinner, for after all that's what we look forward to, next to the tree.

ALAS! TOO LATE.

It was Christmas Eve. Staring at the dying embers of the fire was a beautiful woman. Her face was worried, and she clasped and unclasped her hands in nervous excitement.

"Christmas Eve," she murmured, "and no money to buy baby a Christmas gift!"

Mechanically her eyes wandered around the room until, with a guilty start, they rested on something standing on the mantelpiece. It was baby's money-box.

"If I only dared," she thought, "but what would John say?"

For a few moments she stood debating the awful question in her mind, and then reached the box.

"John need never know," she said. With trembling hands she broke open the box and emptied on the table a collection of buttons, nails, and so on.

John had been there first

spoon salt, one teaspoon ginger, one-half teaspoon cinnamon, one-quarter teaspoon of nutmeg. This makes one pie. Bake 40 minutes.

While it is well to have a goodly supply of fruit cake and other varieties prepared in advance for the holidays, for the Christmas dinner, especially if there are children, it is far better to serve small, fancy cakes simply made, and lacking richness. They may be made very attractive by the various shapes and by the icing, which can be elaborated with citron, nuts, red candies or candied cherries, if desired. Mrs. Rorer gives the following, which can be made at slight expense, and which invariably pleases the little folk:

"Beat one cup butter to a cream and add, gradually, one and one-half cups sugar with the yolks of two eggs. Beat until very light. Sift two and one-half cups flour with two teaspoons baking powder. Beat the whites of the two eggs to a stiff froth, add one-quarter pint of water and half the flour to the first mixture and beat thoroughly. Add one-quarter pint water, the egg whites and the flour. When smooth and light, turn into two shallow buttered baking pans. Bake in a quick oven for 15 minutes. Turn out carefully and cut into fancy shapes, stars, diamonds, squares, etc.

DECORATIONS.

The dinner-table itself should proclaim the season by its artistic and seasonable decoration. Each hostess may exercise her ingenuity in using the materials at hand, whether they be holly and mistletoe, laurel or other greens. Do not crowd the table, and arrange the programme of cooking and serving as far as possible in advance.

In the menu suggested nothing complicated, expensive or out of season is chosen. Cheese, nuts, except in small quantities, and a profusion of rich dishes have been omitted intentionally.

FREE DINNER FOR BEGGARS

For nearly 300 years now Nancy, in France, has sent out its officials at Christmastide with instructions to bring back fifty-four beggars to a sumptuous feast. For the dining-hall an enormous barrel is specially built, as being emblematical of the town's dependence upon the vine, and in this the mayor bids the beggars welcome, and invites them to partake of the banquet. All the expenses are paid by the town.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN MARCH.

During the earliest times the favorite date for Christmas was in January. It was held in England in that month at the time of the coming of the Anglo-Saxon conquerors. March has also had its Christmas Days.



SANTA CLAUS' ARRIVAL.