

They're easier now

Old-time Canadian recipes updated for modern cooks

A hundred years or so ago when Canada was young, women were busy in their kitchens cooking foods to tempt their families and to entertain visitors. Only life was much more difficult. Most women cooked over open fires, some did cope with new-fangled iron stoves, but no one had a really reliable oven.

Yet so many good things came out of these kitchens even though baking powder was a very new product and the flour for cake had to be dried in front of the fire before it could be sifted.

Coconut had to be laboriously cracked and grated to make the fashionable new pie. Even the raisins had to be seeded, while each grain of rice was washed and picked over before being used in soup or puddings.

The recipes offered were old a hundred years ago, and these are updated versions that are as delicious as ever.

Wherever the Scots settled, they brought with them a heritage of good heart-warming thrifty foods. One of the soups that became part of Canada's cooking lore was Cock-a-Leekie; a chicken, vegetable and rice soup. It is delicious and easy to make, so it is understandable that it has been the pride of many homes for generations.

COCK-A-LEEKIE SOUP

6 cups beef or chicken broth
6 leeks, split and cut in 1-inch pieces, or 2 bunches green onions, cut in 1/4-inch pieces
1 cup rice
1 cup cooked chicken, cut in strips
2 tablespoons minced parsley
Combine broth and leeks in

a large saucepan. Bring to a boil. Cook over medium heat 15 minutes, or until leeks are just tender. Add rice and simmer 5 minutes. Season to taste. Place chicken in soup tureen. Ladle in soup and sprinkle with parsley. Makes 6 or 7 servings.

Coconut and lemon were luxuries to be used for special occasions. This Coconut-Lemon Pie is too good to be saved for such an affair. Besides, coconut ready to use is just a package away. Following old-time tradition, the tart-sweet lemon filling flecked with coconut is encased in a rich, flaky two-crust pie.

OLD-FASHIONED COCONUT-LEMON PIE

1 1/4 cups sugar
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup soft butter
3 eggs
1 cup shredded coconut
1/2 cup water
2 teaspoons grated lemon rind
1/4 cup lemon juice
Pastry for 2-crust 9-inch pie
1 tablespoon sugar
Mix 1 1/4 cups sugar with flour and salt. Blend in butter. Break eggs into a bowl; set aside 1 teaspoon of the egg white. Beat eggs thoroughly; add to sugar mixture and blend well. Add coconut. Then mix in water, lemon rind and juice. Pour into pastry-lined 9-inch piepan. Moisten edge of crust. Cut slits in top crust to allow escape of steam. Place top crust over filling; fold edge of crust under bottom crust. Press edges to seal; flute, if desired. Brush top crust with reserved egg-white and sprinkle with 1 tablespoon sugar. Bake at 400 degrees for

about 35 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Cool.

From the late 18th century, Canadian women made jellied desserts. Sometimes there were many light-reflecting layers. Sometimes cubes of jelly were set in a rich cream base. In the early days, it meant painstaking kitchen preparation from straining the jelly to making the color, as well as selecting home-made flavors. Today it is merely a choice of one of several jelly powders and some boiling water. In honor of our red and white flag, we have updated an old-time jellied cream.

RED AND WHITE DELIGHT

1 double size package (6 oz.) jelly powder (any red flavor)
2 cups boiling water
1 cup cold water
1 cup pineapple juice
1/4 cup sugar
1 package (3 oz.) lemon jelly powder
1/2 cup cold water
1 envelope dessert topping mix
Dissolve red jelly powder in boiling water. Stir in 1 cup cold water and divide in half, pouring the mixture into two

Old Commons

All public functions were held on the commons which was the block bordered by Mill, Wilbur, Church and Guelph streets. The first fireworks ever seen in Acton were let off there and the Orange parades used the commons as the rallying centre on the 12th of July. A little over 85 years ago the Grand Trunk came through and built their station and yards east of the commons.

8-inch square pans. Chill until firm. Combine pineapple juice and sugar; heat to boiling. Remove from heat and dissolve lemon jelly powder in the hot liquid. Stir in remaining cold water. Chill until just syrupy. Prepare dessert topping mix according to package directions and fold into lemon jelly powder. Cut the firm red jelly into cubes about half inch square. Fold into lemon mixture; then pour into a 6 cup mold. Chill until firm. Serves 8-10.

This cake with the catchy title is a real old-time favorite. Cook books were telling housewives to take a cup of butter, two of sugar, three of flour and four eggs, way back in the 1850s. Your grandmother inherited this recipe and your mother knew it. Here it is once again, as light and as tender as ever.

1-2-3-4 LAYER CAKE

3 cups sifted cake flour
3 teaspoons double-acting baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup butter or margarine

2 cups sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/4 teaspoon almond extract
4 eggs
1 cup milk

Measure sifted flour, add baking powder and salt, and sift together. Cream butter until very soft. Add sugar 2 tablespoons at a time, creaming after each addition until light and fluffy. (This should take 10 minutes on an electric mixer or longer if creamed by hand.) Stir in flavorings. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each. Alternately add flour and milk beating until smooth after each addition.

Evenly divide batter between three 9-inch layer pans which have been lined on the bottoms with paper. Bake in moderate oven of 450 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes, or until cake tester inserted into centers comes out clean. (If only 2 layer pans are available, one-third of the batter may be held under refrigeration while the first two layers are baking.)



REMARKABLY SIMILAR to its appearance today, the town hall was pictured in 1897. The bell the firefighters put in their calm is seen in the belfry. (A. T. Brown Collection)



BUILT IN 1835, this was the residence of D. Henderson, M.P. The photograph was taken in 1899. (A. T. Brown Collection)

Erect town hall to fill town need

The erection of a town hall and lock-up was quite an important improvement and addition to the town, but it was met with storms of disapproval and controversy. Clippings will tell more vividly of the issue but in all the town hall was erected and is still serving the town although there has been one fire, though not serious. Sixty-nine years ago the town hall, lock-up, council chamber, fire hall and auditorium were erected. All this received its

inception in 1881 when a meeting of the ratepayers was called to consider the erection of the building. Major Wm. Allan proposed a hall and a good one, on a central site on the front street. He would have it constructed with stores on first floor, main hall on second floor, with society halls on the third floor and council chamber and lock-up in the basement.

The others' opinion varied, however and when they came to choosing the site, there were just as many varied ideas as to the location. In fact the final

decision was a decision that met with much discontent on the part of citizens after the choice was made. This is apparent by the abundance of "Letters to the Editor" following the selection. The building to-day, however, is still serving the community's needs and the siren mounted in the belfry still signals citizens in time of fire.

Adams family supply names Acton streets

Two of the Adams' being Methodist preachers who had done much "saddle-back" preaching between the time they left New York State and settled in this community, which years ago they called Adamsville, reserved a site for a church on one of the new streets and named it Church Street. The site was the lot on the corner of John St. This old Adams family was very proud of the family names and they decided to immortalize a number of their children by naming Adamsville's streets after them. So we have John, Wilbur, Ransom, Maria, Agnes and Frederick streets in present day Acton.

Remember when

Back in 1881

July - Is there any necessity for cows pastured inside the corporation to wear bells? Some of the citizens are greatly annoyed at night with the clatter and intend trying to prove that they are a public nuisance.

August - A travelling fire eater struck Acton on Thursday last and gave an exhibition of his fire eating propensities, at the corner of Mill and Main Streets which amused the juveniles. The collection he received was insufficient to pay his hotel bill, so he said.



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