

## BUTTERED WORTES

*'Take al maner of good herbes that thou may gete, and do bi hem as is forsaide; putte hem on the fire with faire water; put thereto clarified buttur a grete quantite. Whan thei ben boyled ynough, salt hem; late none otemele come therein. Dise brede small in disshes, and power on the wortes, and serve hem forth.'*

*From 'Recipes from Two 15<sup>th</sup> Century Cookery Books'  
Thomas Austin 1888, reprint 1964*

"Wortes", not warts, was a broad term used for any number of leafy greens such as beet or mustard greens, borage, parsley, nettles, leeks, etc... This recipe is a simple and tasty way to prepare a healthy side dish to accompany a variety of other dishes. The original recipe calls for oatmeal as a thickener, but this is unnecessary. If a thickener is desired, a puree of peas is recommended for modern diners.



**2-3 lbs leafy greens** (*whatever you have*),  
**parsley**  
**2-3 leeks**, sliced into rings (*discard root & green tops*)  
**2 tbsp** (or more) **butter**, melted  
**4-6 slices bread**, *diced and lightly toasted*

Blanch greens and leeks in a large pot of boiling water 3-4 minutes – no longer. Drain in a colander, pressing excess water out with the back of a spoon or potato masher. Coarsely cut greens with a sharp knife. Place into a serving dish and toss melted butter into the greens until evenly distributed. Top with toasted breadcrumbs and 'serve it forth'.

## MAKEROUNS



*'Take and make a thynne foyle of dowh, and kerve it on peces, and cast hym on boillyng water and seep it wele. Take chese and grate it, and butter imelte, caste bynethen and aboven as losyns; and serve forthe.'*

*From 'Forme of Cury', 14<sup>th</sup> Century*

This recipe is an adaptation of an early – and delicious – version of an American favorite: macaroni and cheese. It appears to have been a favorite dish in England at least 700 years ago (judging by the number of cookery books including it), although their noodles were not tubular as we are accustomed to. The very word 'macaroni' comes from the original shape of the noodles – long, straight lines 'macron'.

**1 lb broad noodles** (*try making them yourself for more authenticity. You may also use prepared pasta 'sheets' available at some grocers. If you use packaged lasagna noodles, I prefer the 'no boil' type, as their shape is more appropriate.*)  
**½ Cup or more grated cheese** (*white cheddar, Parmesan, or jack cheese will be most authentic. If you are really ambitious, fresh, homemade ricotta or farmers cheese or both is especially good!*)  
**2 tbsp butter** (*or more*)  
**¼ Cup milk or half & half**  
**Freshly ground nutmeg** *to taste*

Boil noodles in lightly salted water until tender. In a buttered, ovenproof serving dish layer half the noodles, half the cheese, the other half of the noodles and the remainder of the cheese. Pour liquid evenly over the top and cover. Bake at 350° for about 30 minutes or until all cheese is melted and most liquid has been absorbed. Let stand for about 10 minutes and 'serve it forth'.

## GOURD SOUP

**'Gourdes in Potage'** *'take young gowrdes, pare hem, and kerve hem on pecys. Cast hem in gode broth and do therto a good partye of oynnons minced. Take pork sodden. Grynde it, and alye it therwith and with yolkes of ayren. Do thereto saffron and salt and messe it forth with powder-douce.*

*From 'To the King's Taste' Lorna J. Sass; Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1975*

According to Garard, "There are divers sorts of Gourds, some wilde, others tame of the garden: some bearing fruit like unto a bottle; others long, bigger at the end, keeping no certain form or fashion; some greater, others lesse." Assuming Gerard's "Gourds" were a wide variety of squashes, some of which were brought to the new world from European gardens, I'm certain this recipe would have applied all the edible squashes from acorn to butternut to zucchini! I have used all of these as well as several others. All are delicious!

**2 lg. Zucchini**  
or **1 small pumpkin**  
or **1 lg. Butternut**  
or **other of your choosing**  
**½ lb ground pork**  
**½ tsp salt**  
**2 lg. Onions, minced**  
**2 tbsp butter, unsalted**  
**6 Cups chicken broth**  
*(I often exclude the pork and substitute vegetable broth for an excellent vegetarian version!)*  
**½ tsp or more fresh, minced ginger**  
**¼ tsp cinnamon**  
**1/8 tsp nutmeg**  
**pinch saffron**  
**1-2 tbsp brown sugar**  
**2 tbsp fresh, minced parsley**



Peel and cut squash into small cubes. Brown pork with salt in pan. Set aside. Sauté onions in butter until lightly browned. Stir squash into onion and butter and sauté 5 min. or so. Add broth, spices, sugar and parsley. Simmer until squash is tender. Serve hot.

## TURNIPS BAKED WITH CHEESE

**'Rapum Armatum'** *'Cut up boiled or roasted turnips; do the same with rich chese, not to ripe but make the chese in smaller pieces. In a pan greased with butter or other fat, make a layer of cheese first, then turnips, repeat, puring in spice and butter. It should be quickly cooked.*

*Platina VIII [condensed from a very long recipe]*

*From Pleyne Delit: medieval Cookery for Modern Cookes C.B. Heatt, B. Hosinton, S. Butler; University of Toronto Press, 1996*

Turnips are one of the foods that modern folk inevitably associate with the diet of the medieval peasant. Despite the fact that they are available in our modern grocery stores, surprisingly few contemporary folk have actually eaten them. If you're one of those who have always been afraid to try them, here is a great way to give them a shot. You may be pleasantly surprised!

**2 lb turnips,**  
**12 oz. mild cheddar or Swiss**  
**4 tbsp butter melted**  
*Spices to taste:*  
**Allspice, nutmeg, salt, pepper**



TURNIP.

Peel turnips until just tender. Don't overcook! Roast in oven for 10-15 minutes. Allow these to cool while you grate the cheese. Slice cooled turnips. In a heavily buttered casserole dish, layer turnips and cheese and spices, ending with butter and spices. Bake long enough to thoroughly melt the cheeses (about 20 min.). Serve hot.

## APPLADE RYALLE (Royal apples)



*Take Apples and sethe them tylle they been tendyr, & lat hem kele; then draw hem thorw a straynour; & on flesshe day cast therto gode fatte brothe of freyshe beef, an whyte grece, & Sugre & Safroun & gode poudre; & in Fyshe day, take Almande mylke & oyle de Olyff, & draw ther-vppe wyth-al a gode powder, & serve forth. An for nede, draw it vppe wyth Wyne, & a lytil hony put therto for to make it thus dowcet; & serve it forth.*

Translation: Take Apples and simmer them until they are tender, & let them cool; then press them through a sieve; & on days [when you can eat] meat\*, put in good fat broth of fresh beef, and white grease, & Sugar & Saffron & good spices; & on [days when you must eat ] fish, take Almond milk & olive oil, & mix with [the apples and] a good [spice] powder, & serve forth. And if need be, mix it with wine, & a little honey added to make it sweet; & serve it forth.

from *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, Harleian Ms. 279, c. 1430

\* Fast days were numerous, so people needed plenty of non-meat options. On Sundays, Fridays and Wednesdays, along with the 40 day period of Lent, prior to Easter it was forbidden by the church to eat meat, so fish was often substituted. This might be a good dish to omit the meat altogether!

## TART DE BRY (Brie tarts)



*'Take a Crust ynche depe in a trap, take zolkes of Ayren rawe & chese ruayn, and medle it & the zolkes togydur; and do therto powder gyng. sug. safron. and salt. Do hit in a trap, bake it and serve hit forth.'*

Translation: Take a Crust [an] inch deep in a pan. Take yolks of eggs raw & cheese ruayn [soft creamy cheese such as Brie], and mix it & the yolks together; and add thereto powder [of] ginger, sugar, saffron, and salt. Pour it in a crust, bake it and serve hit forth.

from *The Forme of Cury*, by the Master-Cooks of King Richard II, From about 1390

**1 lg pastry crust** (or 2 doz. Small tart shells)  
**6 egg yolks** or  
**3 whole eggs**  
**5 oz. soft cheese** (preferably Brie with rind removed)  
**¼ tsp ground ginger**  
**¼ tsp salt**  
**¼ C sugar**  
**⅛ tsp Saffron**

Mix cheese, spices and eggs – one at a time – until light and smooth. Pour into tart shell and bake at 375° for apx. 15-20 minutes until lightly browned.

I have also seen this tart prepared with fresh pear halves (cored and lightly parboiled) baked in. It was delicious!

# SALAȚ



*“Take psel, sawge, garlec, chibolis, onyons, leek, borage, mynt, porrects, fenel and ton tresses, rue, rosemarye, purslanye, laue and waische hem clene, pike hem, pluck hem small with thyn honde and myng hem we with rawe oyle. Lay on vynegar and salt, and serve it forth.”*

Translation: Take parsley, sage, garlic, chibblings (green onions), onions, leek, borage, mint, porets (young leeks), fennel and town cresses (relative of watercress), rue, rosemary, [and] purslane, lave and wash them clean, pick them [off the stems]. Pluck them small with your hands and mingle them with raw oil. Lay on vinegar and salt and serve it forth.

This salad is a good deal different from what we are accustomed to today. Use this as a ‘guideline’, adjusting the recipe based on what you have access to. You can also use some of the other baby greens available on the market if you need to, and you need not use all of the herbs listed. When using borage, use the delicate blue star-shaped flowers which add visual interest as well as flavor. I have also used nasturtium flowers. Whatever you choose, try to get a good variety; this wide variety is the ‘period’ element. For the dressing, be sure to use a good quality olive oil and vinegar for best results. The flavor is worth the small additional cost.

\*This would NOT be a dish served at a winter feast, but during the spring or summer when the produce was available – much collected from the wild.

# Funges



*‘Take Funges and pare hem clene and dyce hem. Take leke and shred hym small and do hym to seeth in gode broth. Color it with safron and do there inne powder fort.’*

Translation: Take mushrooms and pare them clean and dice

them. Take leek and shred them small, and put them to simmer in good broth. Color it with saffron, and [season with [strong spice] powders\*]

\* “Powder fort” or “strong powder” was a powdered spice mix containing pepper, ginger, and some of the sharper sweet spices like mace.

from *The Forme of Cury*, by the Master-Cooks of King Richard II. From about 1390

**8 small leeks**

**3 tbsp butter**

**1 ½ lbs mushrooms** quartered (*we use wild mushrooms\* as often as possible. The Pacific Northwest offers a selection of wild edible mushrooms that Europeans have long been familiar with*)

**1 cup stock** chicken or vegetable

**½ tsp brown sugar**

**1/8 tsp saffron**

**½ tsp fresh minced ginger**

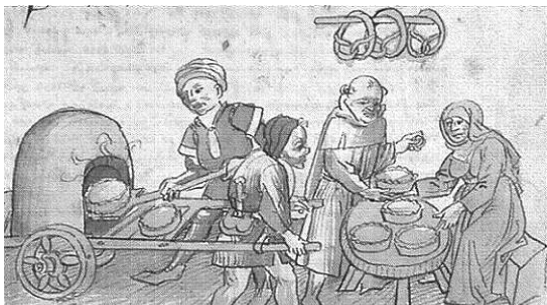
**3 tbsp soft butter combined with 3 tbsp flour**

**Salt and fresh ground pepper** to taste

Wash, and cut white of leeks into rings. Sauté leeks in butter until just tender; add mushrooms and continue to cook until tender. Add stock, sugar, saffron, and ginger and simmer covered for 2-3 minutes. Add flour/butter mixture over low heat, stirring rapidly to blend in thoroughly. Mixture will thicken and vegetable will be evenly glazed. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot with good bread.

\* *Only use wild mushrooms that you are SURE are safe*

## BASIC MEAT PIE



Medieval meat pies were made from nearly any meat you can imagine. Generally, the meat was boiled or broiled then cut into small pieces, though fowl (birds of nearly any variety from hummingbirds to hens) recipes often call for whole pieces still on the bone. Most meat pies also included dried fruits (currents, raisins, dates, etc) and spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, cloves, pepper, cubebs, etc). Breadcrumbs, along with some sort of liquid (broth, wine and/or eggs) were used to help bind all the ingredients together. The ingredients were then placed in the crust ('coffin') and baked.

I have developed the following version from several period sources and lots of experimentation. I have even made a vegetarian version using mushrooms instead of meat. Play with it and have fun!

**2 whole chicken breasts** cut into small pieces

**1 lg. Onion** chopped

**3 tbsp butter or olive oil**

**2 cups bread crumbs**

**1 – 1 ½ cup liquid** (*mixture should be sticky and a bit wet; it will set up in the oven*)

**1 cup golden raisin**

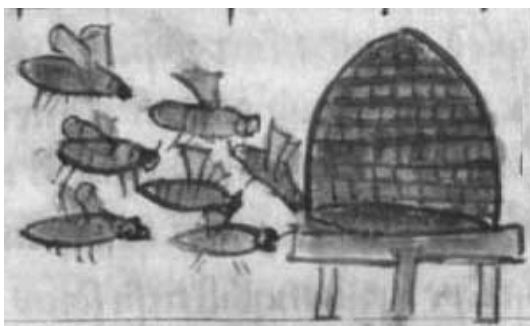
**1 cup dried cranberries** (*one version I saw called for "bog berries" similar to our cranberries. I've used dark raisins but prefer the golden. Dried apricots and dates are also good.*)

**1 tsp fresh ground pepper**

**2-4 tsp powder forte** (*A period mixture of spices. Mine includes ginger, cloves, nutmeg, mace and cubebs*)

Lightly sauté chicken, then add onions and spices and stir. Chicken will produce some liquid at this point, should cover bottom of pan ½" – 1" deep. Cover the pan and allow the chicken to simmer until tender and falls apart easily. Add chicken broth as needed to keep about an inch of liquid in pan at all times. Meanwhile, combine breadcrumbs and dried fruits in a large bowl. When chicken is tender, add to breadcrumb mixture and mix thoroughly. Add as much broth as necessary for mixture to be quite damp and a bit sticky. Put half of mixture into each of two pie shells. Add top crusts and seal. Bake at 350° for about 35 - 40 minutes, until crust is golden. Cool at least 15 min. before cutting.

## HONEY CAKES



Honey is the world's earliest known sweetener. We can document its collection at least as far back as Neolithic times. Until the spread of sugar cane cultivation in the late middle ages honey was used in most of the world for cooking, brewing and sweetening unpleasant medicinals.

The Romans used honey in special little cakes for rituals and celebrations. This tradition followed them into Western Europe and by the middle ages we see honey cakes listed for holy day celebrations as well. The following recipe is from [www.history.uk.com/recipes](http://www.history.uk.com/recipes) and is an extrapolation of roman and medieval recipes.

**3 lg. eggs**

**1 Cup clear honey**

**1/3 Cup Spelt flour or white flour** sifted

Preheat oven to 330°.

Beat eggs until quite stiff, beating lots of air bubbles into the mix. Gradually add the honey as it thickens, continuing to beat mixture. When all honey is incorporated and mixture is very stiff, fold in sifted flour.

Pour mixture into greased pan or muffin tins and place in oven. Bake 40-55 minutes (time may vary due to size of tins and thickness of batter) until golden brown and raised.

Remove from pan and place on rack to cool at least a few minutes.

Great served warm with a little additional honey drizzled over the top.



# compost



*'Take rote of persel, of pasternak, of rafens, scrape hem and waicsh hem clene. Take rapes & caboche, ypared and icorue. Take an erthen panne with clene water d& set it on the fire; cast all this therinne. When they both boiled cast therto peeres, & parboile hem wel. Take vyneger & powdour & safroun & do therto, & lat alle these thynges lye therin...al day. Take wyne greke & honey, clarified togider; take lumbarde mustard & raisouns, coraunce, al hole, & grind powdour of canel, powdour douce, anys hole, & fenell seed. Take alle these thynges & cast togyder in a pot of erthe, & take therof whan thou wilt & serve forth.'*

from *The Forme of Cury*, by the Master-Cooks of King Richard II, From about 1390

**½ lb ea. Parsnips, white turnips, radishes, firm pears, shelled walnut halves, raisins or currants**  
**2 C ea. wine vinegar, white wine**  
**8 oz. clear honey**  
**1-2 tbsp prepared horseradish in vinegar**  
**3 tbsp French mustard**  
**1 tsp salt**  
**1 tsp ea. anise, fennel, coriander seed**  
**1 tsp ea. ground ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon**  
**¼ tsp cloves**

Soak walnuts in cold water for 3 days (change water daily). When ready to prepare Composte scrub and pare pears and vegetables. Parboil root vegetables (including trimmed radishes) 5 – 10 min. Drain and mix with remaining ingredients in a large pot. Bring to a simmer and cook slowly, covered, until all veggies are tender and can be mashed (may take a couple hours). Mash until there are no visible large chunks. Ladle into clean jars. Cover tightly with lids. Store in refrigerator until ready to use.

This is an example of a recipe that can be traced all the way back to ancient Rome. Apicius (an early 'food writer') had a version calling only for turnips preserved in honey and vinegar with a handful of various spices. Over the ages, as the recipe traveled and was adopted and modified by generations of cooks, it finally evolved into something more akin to what we would call a chutney. It is good side dish with sliced, cold meat.

## FRITTERS OF PARSNIPS OR APPLES



*'Take skyrwaters and pasternakes and apples and parboile h em. Make a bator of floer and ayren. Cast thereto ale, safron and salt. Wete hem in the bator, and frye*

**2 cups white flour**  
**½ tsp salt**  
**½ tsp saffron (optional)**  
**1 egg**  
**1 ½ Cups ale at room temperature**  
**10-12 medium parsnips or**  
**6 large apples**  
**Oil for cooking**

*hem in oile or in grece. Do thereto almandes mylk and serve it forth.'*

Translation: Take skirrets, parsnips and apples, and parboil them. Make a batter of flour and eggs. Cast ale, saffron and salt into it. Wet them in the batter and fry them in oil or in grease. Pour on almond milk and serve it forth.

from *Boke of Nurture*, by John Russell c. 1460

Combine flour, salt, saffron, egg and ale. Mix well. Batter should be somewhat thick and a bit lumpy.

Scrape parsnips/wash apples. Cut parsnips lengthwise into 2 or 3 slices and parboil 8-10 min.; cut apples into ¼ - ⅓" slices. Pat dry and dip in batter. Drop battered fruit or vegetables into preheated oil (about 1 ½ - 2" deep. Cook until golden brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels. Can be served with salt, almond milk or honey.