CHRISTMAS PASTRY

PIES—mince, cranberry, pumpkin, etc.—are an important part of the Christmas dinner. Owing to the many other rich ingredients which comprise the Christmas feast, heavy pastry is likely to prove disastrous. Unless the housewife is an excellent pastry maker she would be wise to buy her Christmas pies.

Only the best materials should go to the making of the Christmas pastry.

Most housewives use lard instead of butter for shortening pies because it is cheaper. The result is not as good or as digestible as it would be if butter were used or even butter and lard together. The French use eggs in their puff paste. But they are not really necessary. Expert cooks have half a dozen different kinds of pastes suitable for various kinds of pastry. The finest of these is puff paste, but it is so rich that it is best to use it only for tarts and the upper crusts of pies.

Materials Should Be Good.

The following rules for pastry making have been contributed by a clever cook: One of the first essentials for pies is to keep everything as cool as possible. Use the best quality of flour and sift it fine. The butter, lard or other shortening should be good and used in the proper proportions. When mixing the pastry use water sparingly. The paste should not be sticky. A knife should be used for mixing. When rolling out use as little flour as possible. To bake the pastry you must have a hot oven. Do not open and shut the oven doors often. A draft will prevent the pastry from rising. When baked, cool gradually in a warm place. This will prevent the crust collapsing. If stored in a cool place and reheated when served pastry may be kept for several days.

Plain Pie Crust.

A good plain pie crust may be made as follows: Put one and a half cupfuls of flour in a bowl, a quarter cupful each of lard and butter and a teaspoonful of butter. With a chopping knife chop the shortening into the flour and add about a quarter to a half cupful of ice water, just enough to hold the ingredients together. Chop while the water is being added until the dough is smooth. The paste should be allowed to stand in a cold place a day or two before using.

To make puff paste take a half pound each of flour and butter, the yolk of an egg, a teaspoonful of lemon juice, a pinch of salt and water to mix. The puff paste should be allowed to stand ten minutes between every other rolling; otherwise it will be too soft and oily. Puff paste is better if made the day before it is to be cooked.

A cream crust may thus be prepared: Mix one and one-half teacupfuls each of graham and white flour. When smoothly blended moisten with one scant teacupful of cream as lightly as possible, making a rather stiff dough. Roll out not quite so thin as for white flour crust. Use for pies as any crust. The lower crust of a fruit pie should be dusted with a little flour and sugar mixed together. This will keep the juice from soaking in.

One Crust Pies.

If pie crust is at best indigestible then surely one crust pies are preferable to those with two crusts, for each portion contains only half as much crust. And a well baked one crust pie is considered much more tempting and savory by many than a pie with two crusts. In many cases the one crust pie can be wholly or at least partly baked before the filling is put in. There are several ways of baking crusts so that they will keep their shape. Some cooks stretch the crusts over the outside of the pie plates and stand the pie plates upside down on a tin cup in the oven. When the crust is brown they turn it gently into a pie plate and put in the filling. Other cooks spread the crust in the pie plate, then cover it with a sheet of waxed paper and fill it with beans or rice to weight it down and so hold its shape. When the crust is brown the waxed paper and beans or rice are removed.

Making Cakes.

When about to make cake, or any other dish read over carefully the recipe and directions. Be sure all required ingredients are at hand, and unless you are experienced do not substitute something else as "just as good." Have the best of everything needed, if you can get it, and do not skimp on butter, eggs and flavoring. Poor butter and stale eggs will give a bad taste to the entire batch of dough.

When baking cakes, particularly where a gas stove is used, the tin which contains the cake should be put inside another tin which has a layer of sand laid in. This will prevent it from burning.

SIMPLE DINNER MENU.

Consommé
Roast Turkey, Oyster Stuffing.
Plum Jelly. Cranberry Sauce.
Olives. Pickled Peaches.
Mashed Potatoes. Creamed Onions.
Celery Mayonnaise. Cheese Wafers.
Plum Pudding, Hard or Soft Sauce.
Coffee.

LET THIS BE YOUR CHRISTMAS.

A day off, a few remembrances from relatives and friends and a good dinner—is that all that Christmas means to you? Surely you are going to make it an occasion for more than usual rejoicing this year, a real old fashioned Christmas. Surely you are going to be more liberal in spirit than ever before and scatter merriment on all sides. Have you been a little selfish, have you devoted so much time to enjoying yourself that you have forgotten other folks?

Those you have forgotten are good folks, aren't they, the best folks in the world? And you are just going to show them how appreciative you are. You don't like this way of turning dear old Christmas into an occasion for trading and exchanging gifts.

You are going to see all the friends you can on that day and shake hands with as many; pat them on the back and tell them how glad you are to be with them. And to those you cannot see you are going to write cheery, warm hearted letters and tell them you want to hear from them oftener. Isn't that how you feel about the greatest of all holidays?

FAMOUS TREE THAT BLOOMS ON CHRISTMAS.

A very interesting group of Christmas superstitions clusters about plant and animal life. Tradition tells us that after Joseph of Arimathea had begged the body of our crucified Saviour and had laid it in his own newly hewn tomb he left Palestine forever. Staff in hand, he traveled many weary months and finally reached Glastonbury, in England. Here he planted his staff, and in the course of time it sent out leaves and buds. On the glad Christmas morning the buds burst into a mass of exquisite bloom. Since that day of long ago the Glastonbury thorn never fails to be covered with delicate white flowers on Christmas morning. By the following day they have all disappeared.

A cutting of the Glastonbury thorn was taken to Buckinghamshire, where it became as famous as the parent plant itself. Thousands of people from near and far were wont to go to see the blossoming of the thorn on Christmas morning. When about the middle of the eighteenth century England adopted the Gregorian calendar, which brought Christmas eleven days earlier than under the older style of reckoning time, the common people were greatly dissatisfied. To their simple minds they had actually been deprived of eleven days of their mortal life, and mobs marched through the streets carrying placards bearing the inscription, "Give Us Back Our Eleven Days!" That they had been wronged became a conviction when the Buckinghamshire thorn failed to blossom on the new date, and when the people actually refused to attend church on the 25th of December the clergy in that part of England were forced to celebrate divine worship on both the old and the new dates.

In pagan times special deities were supposed to preside over the harvests, and the people sought in every possible manner to propitiate these powerful gods. In out of the way parts of Europe the trees are still formally invited to the Christmas feast. Taking acceptance for granted, the remains of the Christmas dinner are spread about the roots of the fruit trees. This ceremony is supposed to insure plentiful harvests the following autumn. In other places the trees were in olden times beaten with clubs to make them more productive.

TWO CHRISTMAS COOKIES

In all good, old fashioned German households the hausfrau is very busy for days baking her Christmas cakes. Does it seem to you rather early? No, indeed. It is high time that the Yuletide goodies were being packed in the huge earthenware crocks to stand in the cool storeroom to "mellow." They improve with age, just like fruit cake. Here are a few delicious cookies that are served at festive coffees during the holiday season:

CHOCOLATE KISSES.

One pound ground almonds, one pound pulverized sugar, one-half pound sweet chocolate (ground), stiffly beaten whites of eight eggs, juice of one-half lemon.

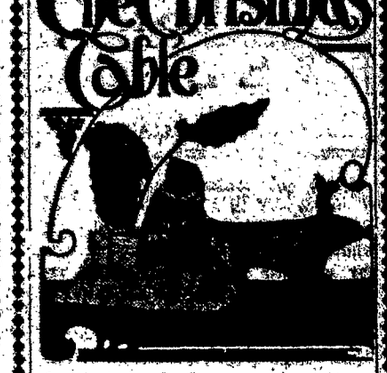
Stir the sugar into the beaten whites for ten minutes. Add the lemon juice, chocolate and almonds. Drop with a spoon on buttered tins and bake in a very cool oven until crisp to the touch.

HAZELNUT COOKIES.

One-half pound ground hazelnuts, one-half pound ground almonds, one pound pulverized sugar, whites of five eggs.

Beat the whites stiff. Add sugar and stir ten minutes. Take out one-half cupful of the mixture to be spread on the top of the cookies just before baking. Roll out the mixture one-quarter inch thick, cut into pretty shapes and bake in a cool oven until the pale fawn color appears.

The Christmas Table



FOR the woman who likes to entertain Christmas offers many opportunities. The social obligations of months may be paid off at this time with little extra trouble or expense. Decorations, of course, must be seasonable, although the Christmas table may be decorated in a number of ways.

Christmas bells covered with holly will give a festive appearance to any dining room. Strong wires wrapped around with ribbon and draped with greens should be fastened to the chandelier and bent to form the support of the bells. Each small bell is then suspended by a loop and bow of red ribbon to fall in front of a plate.

A large bell hangs a little higher in the center. From each corner of the small bells is fastened a place card by means of baby ribbon. Around each plate there is a garland of evergreen fastened with a bow of red ribbon. This makes a very pretty table.

Tree Decoration.

For a variation in the way of table decoration set tiny Christmas trees at the four corners of a large mirror and a larger tree in the center. The frame of the mirror and the tree stands should be covered with green moss over which asbestos snow should be piled. The trees should be decorated with tinsel and ornaments, and the center tree may have small candles.

The Basket Centerpiece.

The hostess who prefers a simpler decoration may perhaps find something to her liking in the following suggestion of a tasteful combination of holly and ribbon: A silver basket—or if a silver basket is not at hand any basket of a fancy weave of straw—filled with holly may form the centerpiece for the dinner table. A bow of red ribbon should be tied on the handle with one end trailing on the table. Bank holly around the basket, coming to points on the white table cloth.

Candlestick Arrangement.

Candlesticks should stand at each point bearing white tapers, with dainty shades of white lined with red. The places may be designated by dolls stockings caught with bows of red ribbon and should be filled with nuts and bonbons. If desired red ribbon may stretch from each stocking to the hostess, where, concealed by holly, it may be attached to some gift, to be drawn out at the end of the dinner.

Christmas Candies.

Christmas candies make suitable favors for the Christmas dinner or for the children's Yuletide party. The candies should be placed in fancy boxes, of which a wide assortment shown in the shops at the holiday season, will serve as inspiration for those who wish to make their own. After all, with a little gay paper, some cardboard and a jar of paste very creditable substitutes may be prepared in case the hostess does not wish to purchase boxes.

Candy Recipes.

Some simple Christmas candies may be prepared as follows:

Cocoanut Snowballs.—Form some cooked or uncooked fondant into balls of uniform size, roll lightly in grated cocoanut and place on glazed paper to harden. These are especially attractive for children's Christmas boxes and for parties.

Christmas Stars.—Cook two pounds of sugar and one pint of water until when a little is poured into cold water it can be formed into a ball; then remove from the fire and add a pound of grated cocoanut. Stir with a wooden spoon until it looks white, pour into a shallow pan and when nearly cold cut into stars with a tiny cake cutter. These may be colored yellow to look like gilt stars.

Appropriate Sweets.

Holly Balls.—Boil two cupfuls of granulated sugar, a saltspoonful of cream of tartar and a cupful of water until it threads when poured from the spoon. Remove from the fire and beat until it begins to cream slightly; then add the beaten whites of two eggs and half a teaspoonful of lemon juice and beat until nearly cold. Season with a teaspoonful of vanilla or half a teaspoonful of orange extract. Drop on a buttered platter and form into balls, into each of which press a conserved cherry. Pecan, English walnut or almond kernels may be substituted for the cherries if preferred.

Mince Bars.—Into plain fudge work a mixture of ground cinnamon, nutmeg extract, minced nut meats, conserved ginger, cherries and raisins. With the hands work it to a paste and then form into a loaf and let it stand until slightly hardened. Cut the bars and serve in fancy boxes or on a tray surrounded with a wreath of holly.

CHICKEN DINNER.

Bouillon in Cups.
Roast Chicken, Giblet Gravy.
Mashed Potatoes.
Boiled Onions.
Cranberries.
Brown Bread.
Mince Pie.
Nuts. Raisins.
Coffee.

THE BEST CHRISTMAS TREE

The balsam fir makes the best Christmas tree because of its regular form and beautiful dark green foliage. Spruce is used also, but it is not as attractive in form and color as balsam. Hemlock, pine and cedars are used occasionally, but also not considered equal to balsam fir or the spruce. Every one interested should try to prevent clear cutting, but should favor thinning of the young forest, saving the best forest, never cutting young trees on the ground to leave the future forest. The thinnings should be made in the dense young stands only, and no large open spaces should be left. The state will suffer a great loss if the young spruce and fir forests are clear cut for Christmas trees.

Where the forest is under rational methods of management the Christmas tree is a legitimate byproduct in the development of the forest. Whether the forest is planted or starts naturally from seed there will usually be many more trees on the ground than soil and moisture conditions and the proper development of the trees justify. If the small trees which are crowding others of greater value are not removed nature will do it and that in a more effective way than if the small trees are removed as a thinning from the developing forest. Trees six feet high and two inches in diameter at the butt are most in demand, although larger ones are frequently sold at good prices. The Christmas tree, provided it is properly cut, is a preliminary crop from the forest which should be taken out on the same principle as vegetable crops are thinned.

The Accusing Coin

A Christmas Parable

By EDWIN MARKHAM

It was when Ferdinand was king
In Naples, back in a little ring
Of misty years forgot and gone,
A whirl of mist across the dawn,
A little legend of those years
Stays to proclaim their tale and tears.
One little legend that, I wit,
Is in the Book of Judgment writ.
And now the accusement of this time
Will cry it into the ear of Time.

The king to bind with crafty hold
St. Francis of Castellammare,
Flung to the friar a purse of gold—
You should have seen the courtiers stare
A thousand ducats on an alms
To lay within God's receiving palms!

But Francis, friend of God, stooped down
And, lifting up one coin askew
New stamped with Ferdinand's head and crown,
He beat it till it broke, when, lo,
Blood gushed from it in scarlet flow!

"Take back your gold," the friar cried;
"The traitor gold that props your pride!
Behold, the people's blood you draw
Through stealthy treasons of the law!
This blood cries out the griefs and wrongs
Of them to whom the gold belongs.
Give all to them if you would give
The gift into God's hand and live!"

Beware! All deeds, even deeds of kindness,
May cry from out these mortal things—
—New York Sun.

HOMEMADE TRIMMINGS ADD TO TREE'S BEAUTY

The beauty of a Christmas tree does not depend upon the amount of money which has been expended upon it. Capable fingers and judicious thought may weave the magic spell of romance about it. Indeed, the flutter of preparation and the merriment of creating your own decorations have far more the real spirit of Christmas than a hurried visit to a store where these things can be purchased at short notice.

Indeed, nothing quite takes the place of the old time tree, with its boughs laden with simple gifts and homemade ornaments. Each trifle has some significance—has a meaning of its own, or a funny incident connected with it. If you live away from the city there are many things right at hand which you can turn to good account for the purpose.

Nuts may be gilded or silvered or covered with gold or silver paper. Popcorn may be strung, and if you wish for a bit of gay color it may be dipped into a dye of the color you want. Individual cranberries, or strings of them, make effective trimmings. Crabapples, in all the radiance of their fresh color, or oranges make a bright spot on the somber green. Gingerbread animals, birds and dolls are a delight, and flowers of tissue paper, cornucopias and many geometrical figures may be made with a little ingenuity. Paper dolls, cut from magazines and colored, if they are not already so, mounted on cardboard look quite imposing, and chains of colored or gold paper may be made by folding the paper innumerable times and cutting it in the shape required. When you unfold it one link is fastened within the other, and a large chain may be draped from branch to branch. Circles, made by folding a paper in quarters and stringing a number of these together at the folded point make lovely balls. Dolls can be fashioned from many objects. A cotton holds many possibilities, legs and arms and a cotton padded head being joined to this body. And did you ever see a dolly shaped from a clothespin?

CHRISTMAS WORK.

[illegible]

The Christmas Gift Food Is Here

A [illegible]

ROAST PIG DINNER.

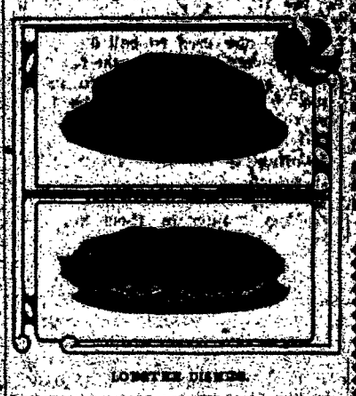
Olives. [illegible]
Pickles of Rule. [illegible]
Roast Suckling Pig.
Apple Cranberry [illegible]
Sweet Potatoes. [illegible]
[illegible]
Boiled Tomato [illegible]
Waters. [illegible]
English Plum Pudding.
Fruits. [illegible]
Coffee. [illegible]

THE FISH COURSE.

Lobster Appropriate to Serve with Christmas Dinner.

The color of boiled lobster makes it useful at Christmas, when red and green are the seasonable colors. The color served whole, dressed with sprigs of holly, is a handsome addition to the table.

Creamed lobster, croquettes or patties are nice, but by far the most popular way of serving it is in a salad. To make this, prepare thick and well seasoned mayonnaise dressing and place on the ice. Then throw a very little garlic in a small cube of bread and rub the bread, garlic side down, [illegible]



LOBSTER PIECES.

bottom of a cold salad bowl. Mix the diced meat of a boiled lobster, a hard boiled egg chopped fine, a cupful of chopped celery, salt and pepper and the mayonnaise.

Put the mixture in the salad bowl and arrange a border of crisp, white lettuce leaves. Garnish the dish with the small claws of the lobster. The garlic gives an elusive flavor, but since it is protected from touching the salad by the bread it is in no wise too strong.

Curry of lobster may be prepared with canned lobster. Take between two and three pounds of lobster meat, a small onion, three tablespoonfuls of butter, two of flour, a scant teaspoonful of curry powder, a dash of cayenne, a little salt, a scant pint of water or stock. Let butter get hot; then add onion cut very fine and fry brown. When the onion is cooked add the flour and curry powder, and stir all together for two minutes; add stock, cook two more minutes and strain. Add meat of lobster cut thin, heat and simmer five minutes. Serve with border of boiled rice round the dish.

[illegible]

CHRISTMAS [illegible]

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