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HOME COOKERY

by "CUISINIÈRE"

About Casserole Cooking

IT is only in comparatively recent years that English people have taken to cooking in casseroles, though the French have always been very conversant with that method. Once tried, every woman will realise the great saving in nourishing value and flavour of foods cooked *en casserole*. The fireproof dishes used will last a long time with care, and the dish cooked can be served up in them, which in cold weather is another great advantage.

Cookery *en casserole* means dishes cooked and served in the same earthenware utensil, with a cover, whether pot or dish. They can be bought in green, yellow, brown or red fireproof stoneware. They may be served at table in holders of metal, or without, though if no holder is used they should be placed on a dish to prevent scorching the tablecloth or mat.

New casseroles should always be soaked in cold water for several hours, the water then gradually brought to the boil. This will prevent them from cracking on their first exposure to heat. The vessel should not be put on the stove or in the oven without water or fat in it, neither must a hot casserole be put in a wet sink, or in cold water, when straight out of the oven, or it may crack.

Cooking *en casserole* is economical in many ways, as nearly every kind of food can be cooked by this means. It must be remembered, however, that a longer time is required, as only gentle heat is needed, and thus less fuel or gas is used.

As I mentioned before, all flavour and nourishment in the food is retained when cooked *en casserole*, and for stews less water is required than when cooked by other methods. Food can also be allowed to stand without harm, if a meal is delayed. And not only can stews, roasts and pies be cooked in these fireproof vessels, but all kinds of little fancy dishes and savouries which are served in ramequins, small earthenware dishes, with or without handles.

Ox Tail En Casserole

- 1 Ox tail
- 2 dessertspoons butter or dripping
- 1 carrot
- 1 onion
- 2 celery stalks
- 1 teaspoon mixed herbs
- 4 peppercorns
- 1 dessertspoon flour
- 1 pint stock
- 1 teaspoon Worcester sauce
- 1 teaspoon of meat extract.

WASH and dry the ox tail and cut it into joints. Pour boiling water over, and let it stand in that half an hour, then dry thoroughly. Place butter or dripping in the casserole, add vegetables and other ingredients, then put pieces of tail on top, stirring occasionally. When meat and vegetables are nicely browned, add stock or meat extract and water, also sauce, if liked. Place the lid on, and simmer gently three hours. When the pieces of tail are tender, take them out, strain off the soup, thicken with the flour and return to the casserole, adding only the smaller pieces of tail, serving one in each plate of soup. The larger pieces are generally used as an *entrée*, served with a nice brown gravy, and a *macédoine* of vegetables.

Chicken Au Gratin

- 9 ozs. cold chicken
- 4 ozs. grated cheese
- 1½ oz. rice
- 1 breakfast cup of tomato gravy
- Breadcrumbs, salt and pepper.



COOK the rice in boiling salted water until tender. Cut the chicken into neat pieces. Butter a fireproof dish, place a layer of chicken at the bottom, then a layer of well-drained cooked rice. Pour the tomato gravy over this, sprinkle with breadcrumbs, grated cheese, salt and pepper. Repeat layers until dish is full. The last layer should be cheese and breadcrumbs, with little knobs of butter dotted over the top. Place in a hot oven to brown. The tomato gravy is made by cooking four or five tomatoes in stock or gravy until soft, then straining through a sieve, returning the liquid to the pan. Add one tablespoon of butter, and simmer very gently until it thickens (30 to 45 minutes).

Eggs in Ramequins

- Several (4) hard-boiled eggs
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ lb. cooked chopped ham
- White breadcrumbs
- 1 teacup white sauce
- Salt and pepper to season
- 3 drops anchovy sauce.

MELT the butter in a pan, add to it the anchovy and white sauce, and simmer gently five minutes, then add the ham and cooked eggs, cut in slices, season nicely, and, when hot, turn into well-buttered ramequins, cover with white crumbs and little dots of butter. Brown in oven and serve very hot.

Sultana Cake

- ¾ lb. butter
- ¼ lb. sugar
- ½ lb. flour
- ¾ lb. sultanas
- 4 eggs
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼-teaspoon vanilla and lemon essence
- 2 tablespoons or more milk
- A strip of candied peel and a pinch of salt.

BEAT the sugar and butter to a cream, drop eggs in two at a time, and beat for five minutes each time. Not less than ten minutes for four eggs. Sift flour and add gradually, also the peel (chopped fine) and sultanas; essence last. Bake thoroughly in a moderate oven. Desiccated cocoanut may be used instead of sultanas, if preferred. The mixture should be a paste soft enough to drop from a spoon.