

parts, using a soft rag. Do not have paste too wet. When dry, brush off, and hang outside till smell of methylated spirits disappears.

Cooking Good Cakes

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Here are the instructions for baking good fruit cakes like Christmas or birthday ones, given me some years ago by a very noted cooking demonstrator. I always feel that many people cook large rich cakes at too high a temperature; and our many young cooks, especially, may follow this hint with confidence. "Remove all solid trays from oven, light the gas and turn regulo to No. 1. Leave for 15 minutes, then place cake on second slide from the bottom, allowing 1 hour for each pound of mixture."

"Rata, of Hataitai."

Bottling Plums

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I wonder if any of your Chain have ever done plums in plain boiling water? I have kept them for years like this, and they are very much nicer than when done in syrup; they seem to lose all bitterness and extreme tartness; and all our family, who can't bear ordinary stewed plums, like mine very much. I simply wipe the plums and put them in the hot jars, then pour boiling water over them from the kettle, brim the jars over; and screw on the lids. I did a whole case of plums once in about half an hour and didn't lose one bottle, keeping some of them for two years. When cooking the plums I always pour off the water they were bottled in, at least all except a wee drop; the bitterness is all in the water. I add sugar when cooking, of course.

"Jean," Mount Eden.

Curing a Dog's Skin

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Could you publish a recipe for curing a skin with hair on? I have hunted through books, but can't find a recipe for tanning. We just have the one skin—a dog's—and would be very pleased to get a method to cure it.

"Wanganui-ite."

I have not a recipe for curing dogs' skins, but should think that the method used for calves' skins or lambs' skins would do: Scrape the skins clean, and then simply stretch them on a floor, or wall, tacking them in place. Floor is best, as "curing" mixture is not wasted. Rub with kerosene till wet all over; then spread about 1lb. of baking soda over the skin, and rub well in. Leave for 1 week, rubbing 2 or 3 times during the week. Then pull off any loose inner skin, and rub with a piece of pumice or brick till soft and pliable. Rugs done this way always lie flat on the floor.

To cure rabbit or lambskins scour pelt in warm soapy water to clean wool or hair. Rinse in clean warm water. Shake skin as dry as possible, and lay on clean sack pelt side upwards. Boil 2 tablespoons alum and 1 tablespoon salt in 1 pint water till dissolved. When at blood heat, wash pelt with it, putting plenty on. Use a soft cloth for this. Roll skin up, folding pelt to pelt, keeping mixture away from wool or hair. Leave for 2 days. Repeat process twice, giving three dressings altogether. Then spread out to dry away from sun and wind. While drying frequently stretch and pull and rub between hands to soften. When nearly dry, work with blunt knife, or rub with pumice stone until skin is as soft as suede.

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