



NORWEGIAN FOOD

EVERY aspect of Norwegian life is of interest at the present time, and not least is the subject of food. What are the staple dishes of this sturdy nation, and how do they maintain their great physical stamina and resistance to the rigorous climate? I spent only one wonderful week in that beautiful country during my world tour, so cannot speak authoritatively; but it seemed to me that the housewife's pride was to use as much home-grown food as possible, buying only the very minimum, so that milk, eggs, cheese, poultry, potatoes and all root vegetables; cabbages, cucumbers, onions and tomatoes, and particularly lovely rhubarb, were always set before one. The meals were very substantial, and it seemed to me that only the tourists demanded snacks in between. Specially I noticed how everyone drank plenty of milk; for although coffee was always served—and what lovely coffee!—and there was tea, too (good tea!) for the asking; yet the waitress came round with her big jug of rich milk and replenished one's glass throughout the meal-time, very much as one is kept supplied with iced water in the United States.

Fish is a staple food of course—fish-soup and plainly cooked fish—plenty of herring and salmon and barracouta. Pork is the principal meat used—in fact in the country household it is the staple food all the year round, either preserved in brine or as smoked or dried ham, which is eaten raw! Although we sat at small tables and were served by waitresses, yet there was nearly always a lavishly-spread buffet-table in the dining rooms also. Upon these were big baskets and trays of various rolls and sliced bread, and biscuits; bowls of stewed prunes, and apricots, and really "super" rhubarb, besides many varieties of the ever-present "smorbrod," or open sandwich—a most substantial snack, covered with sliced sausages, veal, beef, ham, caviare, tongue, smoked salmon, scrambled egg, cheese, lobster—almost anything, in fact. They are served with a cake-slice of silver.

Here are a few Norwegian recipes which you might be interested to try:

Fish Soup and Pudding

Although the fish used is the barracouta, I should think we could follow this recipe out with a good-sized

schnapper. Scrape off all the flesh and put it aside in a bowl ready for our pudding. Place the hard skin and bones in a saucepan, cover with water, adding a little salt, and boil for 30 or 40 minutes. In the meantime, cut up finely a carrot, a parsnip and a couple of sticks of celery. Strain off the fish stock, cook the vegetables in it until tender, and then thicken the soup with arrowroot. Add a good cupful of milk, and just before serving add finely chopped parsley and a knob of butter.

THE PUDDING: Scrape the raw fish into a pulp and work into it two fresh eggs. Use a big bowl and a wooden spoon, and make it smooth. Gradually add a pint of milk, stirring very vigorously; also a little pepper and salt, and grated nutmeg—to taste. Finally add a good tablespoon of arrowroot already melted in a little milk; and then steam the mixture in a basin for one-and-a-half to two hours. Fill the basin only three-quarters full, and cover it with a

A Norwegian "Special"

Beat together four egg yolks and 4oz. of sugar, for half an hour. (Cooks are not in a hurry in Norway, apparently!) Stir in 4oz. of butter, already creamed; and then 4oz. of flour. Make into a paste, roll it out, and cut it into strips. Roll these strips lightly under the hand, and with each one form a ring. Dip the rings first into lightly whisked egg white, and then roll them in chopped almonds. Bake in a moderate oven, till cooked. They must be only lightly browned

buttered paper. If you have too much for the pudding, the remainder can be fried in butter—just dropped into the frying-pan in dessertspoonfuls.

Stuffed Cabbage

Hollow out a large, firm cabbage by slicing off the top and scooping out the centre with a sharp knife. Mince together about one and a-half pounds of veal and half a pound of bacon or fat pork, and make it into a stuffing with breadcrumbs (or soaked bread), seasoning with pepper and salt and nutmeg.

(They nearly always put a little nutmeg in their meat flavourings). Moisten the stuffing with milk. Fill the hollowed-out cabbage with this mincemeat, cover the top over with cabbage leaves, and either tie the whole in a cloth or bind it round with string to keep it together. Steam it in a big saucepan with not very much water for about three hours. Thicken the liquid with flour and serve with the cabbage.

Cabbage Ragout

Here is another simple and nourishing dish: Cut a large cabbage into slices, and put a layer at the bottom of a casserole or saucepan. Next put a layer of good stewing chops, and sprinkle with pepper and salt and a few cloves. Now another layer of cabbage slices, and another layer of chops, and so on till all is used up. Pour a cupful of water over and cook very slowly either in the oven or on top of the stove for two to three hours. Thicken the gravy with flour.

Flotesans (Ox Liver)

In Norway, cream is very plentiful and is used freely in cooking, which accounts for the rich, mellow flavour of their many savoury dishes. Ox liver, for instance, is much improved by a cream gravy. This is how they cook it: Cut up some fat pork into strips about three inches long, and quarter of an inch thick; and with these "lard" the surface of the ox liver, at regular spaces, leaving about an inch of fat loose at each end. Of course, a "larding needle" is necessary for this, and few of us have one of these; but one must make shift and put the strips of fat over the liver somehow. Then melt a little butter in a saucepan, and brown the liver on both sides. Now add about a cupful of stock and a seasoning of salt. When this is hot, stir in a cupful of cream, put the lid on the pan, and cook very gently for about an hour. Meantime, have a dishful of tomatoes baking in the oven, in a little butter. Serve them with the liver. This really sounds very tasty, doesn't it?

Mor Mousen

This is a sort of butter sponge with currants on top.

Beat together $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of butter, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of sugar, and 3 egg yolks for about 15 minutes, or even longer if you have patience, or an electric beater. Sift together $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of flour and a teaspoon of baking powder, and stir into the beaten mixture. A little vanilla flavouring is added before putting in the flour. Then fold the stiffly-beaten egg-whites lightly into the mixture. Butter a baking tin, and put the cake in, sprinkling the top with currants and chopped almonds. Bake for about half an hour in not too hot an oven. Leave it in the tin until cold, and then take out and cut into squares.

FROM THE MAIL BAG

Drying Apple Rings

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I hear you saying each morning to eat plenty of apples, and how to keep them. Well, here is one good way to keep the apples, although not whole; but they are very handy in the winter, and one can make such a lot of delicious pies, puddings, etc., if one only has the apples.

First, you must have only sound, firm apples. Peel, core and cut them into rings of not more than quarter of an inch in thickness. These are then dried in a moderate oven (temperature not more than 140 degrees Fahrenheit). The apples should be put in the oven on wire trays, covered with cheese cloth which should be washed before use, as it is liable to scorch. As only a cool oven is needed for drying, the oven heat can be utilised after the main cooking for the day is finished. It is not essential for the drying to be a continuous process. The apple rings can be taken out of the oven after a couple of hours, and returned to finish in a couple of more "goes" on successive days, at convenient times. If the drying is continuous, four to six hours in the oven is long enough. To test whether the rings are sufficiently dry, press a number together in the hand, and see whether they are springy enough to separate at once when released. Also the rings should be so dry that no juice can be pressed out when they are cut through and squeezed between the fingers.

This seems a terrible lot to do, but really when it is done, there is very little to it, and after all, it is worth it when one has the goodness of the apples to fall back on in the cold months.

I enjoy your sessions, and listen every morning. I have one or two marmite recipes for you, but will send them in some other time, when I am not quite so busy, as I have three little children to care for, and it has taken me a good part of my spare time to write this. I only hope it does not take so long to put over the air, or we shall hear nothing else but dried apple rings!

Here is a handy hint you might like to pass on to jam makers: To cover jam quickly, cut out your page covers, and soak them in milk. Then place them on top of your jars. When dry, the paper will be fixed and tight. This helped me out when I had run out of the transparent covers, as I live in the country, and was unable to get any at the time.—"22B Fan" (Awahuri).

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