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each end of the cucumbers, and place in a good brine of salted water. Change the brine after two days and stand another two days in the fresh brine. Drain the cucumbers well. Make the spiced vinegar fairly strong—say, two tablespoons of whole mixed spice and a few chillies, and a tablespoon of sugar to a pint of vinegar. Boil a few minutes, and when cold cover the cucumbers with this mixture. They are soon ready for eating—the skins and all. Do not put metal tops on.

Here is the other method: In the bottom of a barrel, or stone jar, put a thin layer of salt, sugar and grape leaves. Then put in the cucumbers, and repeat until the jar is full. Do not cut or skin the cucumbers, and small ones are better. Seal well, and they will be ready in about two months. Some people bury the jar in the garden.

### Sweet Pickled Cucumber

Use full-grown, large cucumbers. Peel and scrape out the inside. Cut into suitable pieces, sprinkle salt over, and let stand all night. To 4lb. of cucumber add one quart of boiling vinegar. Strain the cucumber before pouring on the vinegar. Let stand one day, pour off the vinegar, and boil it with ½lb. sugar and some cloves, ginger, and cinnamon to taste. When cool, pour over the pickle. Put into screw top jars. In a fortnight's time, pour off the vinegar, boil again, and return to the pickle when cold. Make airtight.

### Preserved Cucumbers (African)

Peel and slice some good cucumbers, which must not be too old. Put them into salt water overnight. Drain well, then pack into jars, and fill up with cold boiled water, to which some vinegar has been added. Adjust the rubber rings, screw the lids on lightly, sterilise for one hour, and finally tighten the lids.

## FROM THE MAIL BAG

### Chocolate Shortbread

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I wonder if you could publish in your page of *The Listener* a recipe for Chocolate Shortbread? I have tasted it at various parties, but have been unsuccessful in obtaining the recipe. It has wholemeal in it, and cuts and looks very much like Fudge Cake. It is delicious, and I would be delighted if you or any of the readers of *The Listener* could publish the recipe.

—“Dot” (Christchurch).

I have more than one good recipe for Chocolate Shortbread. You must make them all, and see which you like best, and whether either is like the one you have tasted.

(1) *Welsh Shortbread*.—Half a pound of butter; ½ lb. of castor sugar; 12 oz. of wholemeal; 3 oz. ground rice; and 1 oz. of cocoa. Cream the butter, and sift in the flour, and the castor sugar; also the cocoa. Knead the paste with the hands till it is smooth, divide it into four portions, form into flat round cakes, pinch the edges, and prick all over with a fork. Place on paper on the oven slide, and bake in a moderate oven for about 30 minutes, or until the shortbread is cooked.

(2) *Inglewood Shortbread*.—Four cups of flour; 1½ cups of cornflour; ¼

cup of cocoa; 1 lb. of butter; and 5 oz. of icing sugar. Mix up and cook in the usual way.

(3) *Chocolate Shortbread*.—For the white layer underneath you will need 8 oz. of flour; 4 oz. butter; 4 oz. sugar; 1 egg; and ½ teaspoon of baking powder. Roll out, and place on top the following—with raspberry jam between if you like. 4 oz. flour; 4 oz. butter; 1 oz. cocoa; 3 oz. light brown sugar; 1 egg; a pinch of salt; and ¼ teaspoon of baking powder. Bake about half an hour in a moderate oven, and cut into squares when cold. This is probably the one you tasted.

(4) *Easy Chocolate Shortbread*.—One and three quarter cups of flour; ¼ cup of white sugar; ¼ cup of cocoa; ¼ lb. of butter; and a pinch of salt. Sift the dry ingredients twice, and rub the butter in coarsely. Do not knead it. Turn it into a shallow dish and press lightly all over with the fingers, making it about half an inch thick. Mark into sections with the back of the knife so that it can be cut into pieces when taken from the oven. It will take 30 to 40 minutes at about 325°.

### Mint Chutney

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I am writing to ask you if you could please give me a recipe for Mint Chutney in *The Listener*. Mother bought some at a garden party, and it was so nice.

—Mrs. P. (Wellington).

I also had another request for Mint Jelly, and as the little spring labras are not quite so expensive now, and the mint is so nice and fresh, I thought you all may like to have one or two recipes.

*Mint Chutney*.—Two pounds of tomatoes; 2 lbs. sour apples; 2 lbs. of onions; and 2 cups of mint leaves; 2 cups of sugar; 4 cups of vinegar; 2 dessertspoons (or less) of mustard; 2 teaspoons salt; 2 chillies; and 2 cups of raisins. Put all the fruit through the mincer, and have a basin underneath to catch any liquid—the tomatoes, onions and apples will have a lot of juice. Bring the vinegar to the boil, add the sugar, salt and mustard which has been previously mixed smooth with a little vinegar. Boil all this for five minutes; and when it is cool, add the minced ingredients, and mix thoroughly. Let it stand till the next day, then bottle, and cover. It will be ready for use in a fortnight.

And here is the *Mint Jelly*.—Take 1 teacup of mint; 1½ cups of water; 2 dessertspoons of gelatine; ½ cup vinegar; and 1½ oz. of sugar, as well as the usual pinch of salt. Warm the water, and add the gelatine. When it is dissolved, allow it to cool, and add the finely chopped mint, sugar, vinegar and salt. Stir the gelatine until nearly set, to prevent the mint from sinking to the bottom. Pour into a large flat mould, and when it is set cut into fancy shapes. Serve with hot, or cold, lamb or mutton.

*Preserved Mint Sauce*.—One teacup of chopped mint; ½ cup of vinegar; ½ lb. sugar; ½ cup of water, and salt and pepper to taste. Put the vinegar, sugar and water into a pan, and bring it to the boil. Boil for five minutes. Cool, then add the mint and the seasoning. Pour it into small bottles, and screw them down. When it is used, you may add a little vinegar, if it is too sweet.

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