



SPRING RHUBARB

RHUBARB is always welcomed when it first comes in—although we are inclined to disparage it a little later on, when gooseberries and other berry fruits take first place. Still, even then, the useful and wholesome rhubarb combines well with gooseberries for puddings and pies, besides helping out with the more expensive strawberries and raspberries in jam.

Try baking rhubarb, cut in inch pieces, in a slow oven, in a covered casserole, with one-third as much weight of sugar and very little water. The rhubarb expresses its own juice, which is thick and rich; this is quite a change from the ordinary stewed rhubarb. Flavour with lemon rind, either grated or left in strips, and taken out before the rhubarb is served.

New Rhubarb Pie

Stew a pound of rhubarb with water to a pulp, sweeten, and add grated rind of a lemon, a cup of breadcrumbs, an ounce of butter and the beaten yolks of 2 or 3 eggs. Pour this mixture into a baked pie-shell, and bake in a hot oven. Whip the egg-whites to a stiff froth with a tablespoon of sugar, and spread this meringue on top of pie when cooked. Return to oven for a few minutes to set, and brown lightly. Some people prefer to use an unbaked pie-shell; if this is done, see that the pastry is very thin, so that it cooks quickly.

Rhubarb and Bread Pudding

Stew rhubarb carefully, and half-fill pie-dish or casserole. Cover with a layer of stale bread cut into fingers. Beat up 2 egg-yolks, and add a breakfast cup of milk and about a dessertspoon of sugar. Pour this over the breadfingers and leave to stand for about half an hour. Then beat the egg-whites stiffly with a pinch of salt and a tablespoon of sugar and spread over the bread. Bake till a pretty brown in a moderate oven—20 to 30 minutes. May be eaten hot or cold.

Rhubarb and Banana Betty

Two cups stale bread cut into small cubes, 4 tablespoons butter, 2 sliced bananas, 3 cups cut-up rhubarb, 1 cup brown sugar, good pinch of cinnamon. Lightly fry the cubes of bread in butter till a light brown. Put in layers in a buttered dish: rhubarb, sprinkling of sugar and cinnamon, sliced bananas, bread cubes. Repeat, finishing with the bread. Sprinkle top with a mixture of 1 tablespoon orange juice, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 2 tablespoons water. Bake in a moderate oven about ¾ hour. Eat hot or cold.

Spring Rhubarb Pie

This is an American recipe. We cannot get proper corn syrup, so I suggest we use half golden syrup and the other half hot water and lemon juice. Six tablespoons flour, ¾ cup sugar, 2lbs. rhubarb, cut in ½-inch pieces, ¾ cup white or dark corn syrup, 1 tablespoon butter, flaky pastry. Combine sugar and flour, and mix with the rhubarb. Arrange in a shallow baking dish. Pour corn syrup over all. Top with butter

in bits. Roll pastry one-eighth inch thick, and two inches larger than the diameter of the baking dish. Fold in half, then make several slits in an attractive design. Place on top of rhubarb and unfold. Trim overhanging pastry evenly, then fold it under and flute the rim. Bake in a hot oven (425 degrees), for 20 minutes, then moderate heat to 350 degrees for 1 hour. Serve with cream.

Rhubarb Shape

Line a pie-dish with breadcrumbs or thin slices of bread (without crusts). Cover with boiling stewed rhubarb. Now put another layer of bread and another of rhubarb. Meantime, make up a packet of jelly crystals, using a little less water than usual, and pour this hot over the whole. Leave to set overnight. Turn out and serve with cream or custard. *Alternative:*—Instead of bread, use stale sponge cake, in which case the rhubarb need not be hot. Lemon jelly is good for this.

Caramel Rhubarb Pudding

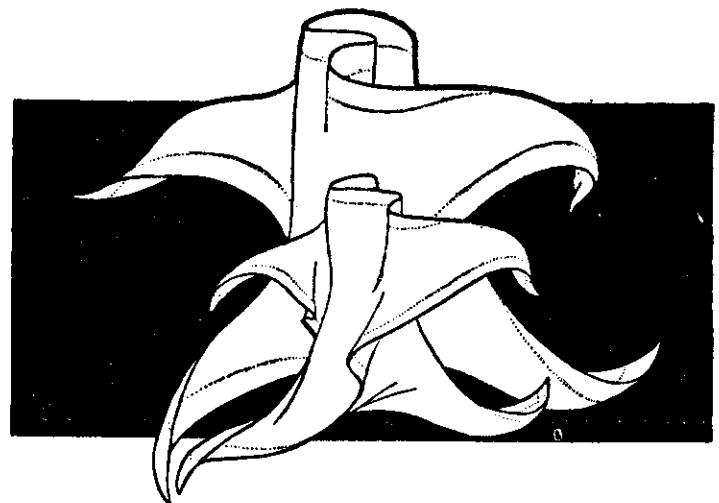
Mix together 3 tablespoons each of brown sugar and butter, spread this inside a pudding basin. Now line the basin with a good suet crust, on top of the caramel. Half-fill with cut-up rhubarb, sprinkle thickly with brown sugar, add juice of half a lemon, then pile on more rhubarb till basin is full. Cover with a top crust, and either bake in a hot oven, or cover with a butter paper and boil. Very nice.

FROM THE MAIL BAG

Oil On Men's Boots

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Here's a tip which you may or may not have. If men's shoes get oil or grease on them, rub over with a raw potato. Leave them to dry, then polish in the usual way. My brother, who is in the Navy, once stood for 17 hours in oil during an action in a practically new pair of shoes. However, he rubbed them with potato, left them to dry, and then repeated the process. They are now as good as new again. It is the starch which draws the oil.—A.G. (Grey Lynn, Auckland).



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