

RECOMMENDED BY Judith Ann Field

Authority on Home Economics & Practical Kitchencraft

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Bewitching cookery with mustard



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in improving flavours during cooking! One teaspoon each of mustard, sugar and salt rubbed in before grilling is miraculous in its effect. Colman's Mustard puts magic flavour into cooked meats. And of course a dab of mixed mustard on the plate is a 'must'.



Colman's Mustard

M8.3H

Ask Aunt Daisy

Oysters are Valuable



OYSTERS are extremely valuable as a food, which is a good excuse for oyster-lovers who buy them anyway, regardless of expense. They are an excellent source of protein, comparing favourably with meat and eggs. They are a good source of iodine, also of iron and copper. This iron and copper content stimulates the regeneration of the red blood cells, and makes oysters valuable against anaemia.

Cooking Oysters

Oysters should be heated thoroughly rather than actually cooked. In stewing and scalloping they must never be allowed to boil, or they will become leathery and indigestible. When they are opened for cooking, the liquor should always be saved and added to the sauce in which they are heated. Many people prefer raw oysters "on the shell," with a squeeze of lemon juice and brown bread and butter.

On the Half Shell

(1) Raw: Serve each oyster on the deeper half of the shell (arranging them on a bed of crushed ice if possible). In the centre of each plate of 6-8 oysters, place a lettuce leaf filled with cocktail sauce (see below) and a lemon-wedge. Tiny sprigs of parsley, or watercress, should be placed between the shells. Serve with tiny crackers; horse-radish sauce is also appropriate. For the cocktail sauce blend together $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of ketchup, 3 tablespoons lemon juice, 3 tablespoons chili sauce, 2 tablespoons bottled horse-radish, a dash of cayenne pepper. These sauces are available sometimes now at very high class grocery stores; or even the cocktail sauce all ready, in bottles. Minced onion, or celery, or grated cucumber, may be added. Use imagination.

(2) Baked on half-shell: Place in a large baking pan the desired number of oysters on the half-shell; sprinkle liberally with breadcrumbs. Add a tiny speck of salt to each and sprinkle with paprika (mild Mexican pepper now available). Place a good-sized dab of butter on each, and bake in a hot oven for about 10 minutes.

Oysters and Mushrooms

You need $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. fresh mushrooms and 3 dozen oysters. Slice the mushrooms and brown them in 4 tablespoons of butter. Add 5 tablespoons flour, $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt, and blend all nicely. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk and cook, stirring constantly, over low heat until smooth and thickened. Meanwhile, heat the oysters in their liquor in a saucepan over a low heat until the edges just begin to curl. Add them (drained) to the creamed mushrooms, with a shake of pepper and celery salt. Mix thoroughly. Serve with toast points, made by cutting each slice in half from corner to corner. Or serve in patty shells. Some people prefer the sauce made with part oyster liquor instead of all milk.

Oyster Soup

Two dozen fresh oysters, bearded and cut in half, and their liquor, $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. butter, $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. flour, $\frac{3}{4}$ pint milk, 1 dessertspoon chopped parsley, pepper and salt. Melt the butter, add the flour, stir until smooth, cooking a little. Add

the hot milk gradually, and the oyster liquor, stirring well. Cook till it thickens. Then put in oysters, pepper and salt to taste. Do not cook any longer, only allow oysters to heat through on a very low heat. Add chopped parsley and serve.

Oyster Chowder

One cup tinned corn (or fresh-cooked corn), $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups diced celery, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon paprika, 2 cups water, 1 cup halved oysters, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt, 2 cups rich milk, 1 tablespoon butter, few grains cayenne. Put the corn, celery, water and seasonings together in a saucepan and bring to a slow boil. Place the oysters in a strainer and set over the boiling corn mixture. Cover closely and cook until the edges of the oysters "ruffle," about 12 minutes. Then add the milk to the cooking corn. Cook 5 minutes longer, add the oysters and butter and serve.

Oyster Surprises

Scald the oysters (after bearding) in their own liquor over low heat until edges just curl. Have ready a very light mixture made of 2 cups mashed potatoes whipped up with 2 tablespoons of cream, 1 tablespoon butter, salt and pepper to taste and a little grated nutmeg, and a tablespoon of very-finely chopped parsley. Form into balls or pats, and tuck 2 oysters in each pat. Dip these in beaten egg, roll in crumbs, and arrange in a baking dish. Bake a pretty brown in a hot oven, basting twice with a little melted butter.

Oysters with Tomatoes

Two breakfast cups of freshly-opened oysters, 2 cups soft breadcrumbs, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper, 3 tablespoons melted butter, 2 large tomatoes, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dry breadcrumbs, 1 tablespoon butter or fat additional. Wash each oyster separately. Be sure all shell is removed. Oil a shallow baking dish. Mix the breadcrumbs with the salt and pepper and the 3 tablespoons of melted butter and arrange a layer in the dish. Cover with a layer of the oysters. If very large, these may be halved. Put on another thin layer of crumbs, then another layer of oysters and sprinkle a few crumbs over the top. Over this place a tomato sliced quite thin. Sprinkle lightly with salt and cover with fine dry crumbs and the remaining tablespoon of butter. Bake 30 to 35 minutes in a moderate oven. The tomatoes may be omitted from the recipe if desired.

Oyster Curry

Leave oysters in their own liquor. For about 3 dozen allow a smallish onion. Cut this into very small shreds, and cook in about $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. butter, then mix in 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons curry powder and stir till very smooth. Now put the oysters and the liquor into the pan and stir over the heat just until the oysters are coated with the thick sauce. Serve at once.

FROM THE MAILBAG

This Soap Floats

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I see in *The Listener* that "Just Soap," Marlborough, is having trouble with her soap-making. I have had the

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 26, 1954.