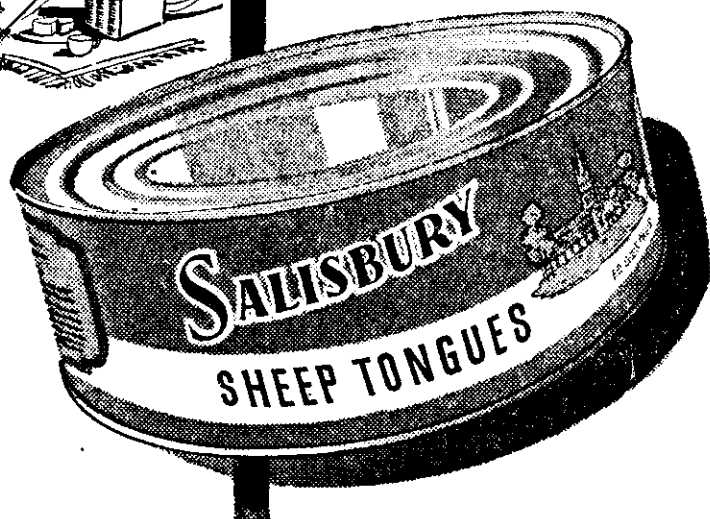




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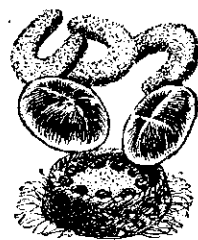
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Ask Aunt Daisy

Easter Specials



HERE is the Easter page a little early, to allow you to arrange your cooking days. Of course you can't make the hot cross buns till the day before Good Friday, but one or two good cakes are usefully made well beforehand and kept in a tin; and a full biscuit tin is another comfort. The hot cross buns are really simple—if you haven't compressed yeast, use the dried. The packets of compressed yeast weight $1\frac{1}{4}$ oz. Yeast buns must be cooked quickly in a hot oven and taken out promptly.

Quick Hot Cross Buns

This is a good and simple recipe, and quicker than the traditional one which is made with a "sponge." You may leave out the candied peel if you don't like it. One pound flour, $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. yeast, 1 level teaspoon powdered cinnamon, 2 oz. mixed candied peel, 2 oz. sultanas, pinch salt, 2 tablespoons castor sugar, 1 teaspoon mixed spice, 2 oz. butter, 2 oz. currants, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint milk, 1 egg. Sift flour with salt and spice, rub in butter and add prepared fruit and sugar, keeping back a teaspoon of sugar to mix with yeast. Mix sugar and yeast till liquid, then stir in lukewarm milk. Strain this mixture into centre of dry ingredients, make into soft dough, adding also beaten egg. Divide into small portions, shape into buns, put on greased slide. Mark with a cross, leave to rise until twice the size. Bake in hot oven, brush over with sugar and milk, and return to oven for a minute or two.

Simnel Cake

This is the traditional English Easter cake, which may provide young wives with an idea how to compromise when there is a difference of opinion about a cake; the spelling should be "Sim-Nell," for it was Simon and Nell who argued about whether the Easter cake should be plain or fruit. So Nell compromised by putting a fruit cake mixture at the bottom of the tin, then a layer of almond paste, and then an equal quantity of plain cake mixture on top. (Trust a woman to manage!) Gradually, however, it came to be the custom to make only a good fruit cake mixture, putting half into the cake tin first, then the layer of almond paste, and the other half of the mixture. However in Gloucestershire, they bake the whole cake first without any almond paste, and then next day split it open through the middle, spread each half thickly with apricot jam and put it together again with a thick layer of almond paste between in sandwich fashion. A thin spread of apricot jam and another round of almond paste goes on top of the cake. The cake mixture is 6 oz. butter, 6 oz. sugar, 8 oz. flour, 4 eggs (added one by one), $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. mixed fruit and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon mixed spice. Cream the butter and sugar and make as usual. Cover the almond paste on top with a little soft white icing, and set in this tiny fluffy Easter chicks, if you can still buy them, and little marzipan eggs. At Home they sometimes put an empty egg-shell filled with spring flowers in the middle of the cake.

Easter Horseshoes

These are traditional for Easter weddings. Mix together 4 oz. ground almonds, 4 oz. castor sugar and $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. ground rice (or flour, or finely crushed

wine biscuits). Add gradually 3 beaten egg yolks and mix well. Roll out and cut into strips about 4 inches long. Have ready about 2 oz. of coarsely chopped almonds, and roll these strips in them, so that they are covered; and then shape them round into horseshoes. Bake on sheets of grease-proof paper, not too close together, in a moderate oven about 20 minutes.

Lovely Luxury Cake

This is sent by "Monica" whom I know as an excellent cook. She says, "It is a little extravagant but good, and good food-value, and don't the men's eyes shine when you give them a piece! Tell the girls to ask their mothers to make it for a special boy friend they are fond of! Much better than a 'come hither' with the eyes!"—Half a pound of butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sugar, pinch salt. Beat these and add 4 eggs, one at a time, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sultanas and $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. mixed peel are added, then $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. ground almonds; 4 oz. of flour if eggs are small but 6 oz. if they are large or medium. Bake in slow oven for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. No baking powder and please don't spoil it with icing.

Chocolate Marshmallow Biscuits

Cream $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. butter and $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. sugar. Add 1 egg, beat, then sift in $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. flour and 1 teaspoon baking powder. Make into rounds the size of walnuts, flatten a little, bake till golden brown.

Marshmallow: One large cup sugar, $1\frac{1}{4}$ large cups water, 1 tablespoon powdered gelatine. Boil together for 8 minutes, and whisk till fairly firm. Fluffy and delicious.

Chocolate Icing: A cake of good chocolate, 2 tablespoons cream from top of bottle, 1 teaspoon vanilla. Grate chocolate, mix everything and dissolve in double saucepan or basin in hot water. While warm, pour over marshmallow. Goes nice and smooth.

Italian Chicken

This is lovely for a "special," not as a family dish. Two (2 pound) frying chickens, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive or salad oil, 2 medium onions, chopped, 2 green peppers, chopped, 1 red pepper, minced, 1 clove garlic, minced, 3 tomatoes, peeled and chopped, $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups tomato puree, 2 tablespoons dry white wine, $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt, $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper, $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon allspice (if desired). Cut chicken into serving portions and brown in hot olive oil. Add onions, peppers and garlic and brown lightly. Add remaining ingredients and simmer $\frac{1}{2}$ hour or until chicken is tender. Pour sauce over chicken.

Chicken Stuffed with Oysters

Prepare chicken as for roasting. Sprinkle inside and outside with salt and pepper. Stuff with raw oysters, fasten securely, and put in steamer with close fitting lid. Steam till bird is tender, then keep in hot oven on dish.

Gravy: Put 1 tablespoon butter in pan, and when hot stir in 1 tablespoon flour. Stir till it bubbles. Add some minced parsley, and some of the liquor in the pan below the steamer in which the chicken was cooked. Add also a blade of mace and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cream or top milk. Stir until boiling, and boil 5 minutes. Add 3 hard-boiled, cut up eggs, and pour sauce over chicken.

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 25, 1955.