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# Christmas in the Happy Home





## CHRISTMAS IN THE HAPPY HOME



*“ At Christmas play, and make good cheer,  
For Christmas comes but once a year ”.*

So runs the old rhyme. Yes, Christmas can be great fun, but it can also mean a good deal of extra work for the housewife. The happy home is, of course, the well-organised home, and good planning will make all the difference to the success of your Christmas entertaining. In this leaflet you will find a number of useful hints for successful party giving, together with recipes both for traditional Christmas fare and party dishes guaranteed to ensure your success as a hostess. And if you want further information on any aspect of good home-making you will find everything you need to know in a lavishly illustrated 400 page manual of household management from which many of these ideas for Christmas meals have been taken. It is called “The Happy Home”, and has been produced by the Good Housekeeping Institute in collaboration with Mr. Therm, price 30/- a copy.

### Happy Christmas Cooking

Christmas celebrations are usually family affairs, and everyone takes a hand in the last-minute preparations. If, however, you have to prepare your Christmas fare more or less single-handed, the following time-table may be useful :

About a month before Christmas : Make your Christmas cake, wrap in greaseproof paper and store. Make puddings and store in a cool place. See your butcher about “the bird”.

One week before Christmas : Cover the cake with almond paste.

Two or three days before Christmas : Ice and decorate cake. Hang the turkey if obtained direct from the country.

The day *before* Christmas is the time you should be really busy, leaving only the absolute essentials to be coped with on Christmas morning. Make the stuffing, stuff and truss the bird for cooking. Get together the ingredients for any sauces. Make your mince pies. Re-tie Christmas pudding in readiness for re-heating. It will also save time if you can prepare your vegetables the night before ; leave these till as late as possible so that they do not soak in water too long.

A time-table for Christmas morning is liable to be disrupted in many exciting ways! The main item is, of course, the bird ; it is important to calculate accurately the time it will take to cook, so that it will be ready for dishing up 15 minutes before the time you want to serve the dinner. Put the pudding on to steam as long as possible. Lay the table early and prepare any wines well in advance of serving ; you will then have a reasonable amount of time in which to finish off your sauces and other accompaniments to the main courses. Whip the mince pies in the oven to heat through the moment the bird is removed. The pudding should also be dished before dinner starts and kept covered over a pan of hot water.





## THE BIRD

### Hints on buying poultry

*Turkeys* should be plump and have bright eyes ; short spurs and smooth black legs are a sign that the bird is young. *Geese and ducks* should have soft and pliable feet, yellow in colour, and yellow bills. *Chickens*—the end of the breastbone should feel soft and flexible ; the skin thin, moist and tender, the feet smooth, with short spurs and small scales.

### Cooking times and accompaniments

*Turkey.* Up to 14 lb. dressed weight, 15 mins. per lb. and 15 mins. over. Over 14 lb., 10 mins. per lb. and 10 mins. over. Stuff with chestnut or sausage stuffing. Cover the breast with fat bacon and cook in a moderate oven, basting frequently. When the breast is sufficiently brown, cover with greaseproof paper. Serve with bacon rolls, sausages and bread sauce.

*Goose.* Small, 1½ hrs. ; large, 2½ hrs. Stuff with sage and onion stuffing. Put a little fat from the goose over the breast, and cook in a moderate oven, basting about every 20 mins. Geese are generally rather fatty birds, and it may be necessary to draw off some of the excess fat from under the bird during cooking. Serve with apple or gooseberry sauce.

*Duck.* Stuff with sage and onion stuffing and cook for 1¼-1½ hrs. in a moderate oven. Serve with apple sauce or cranberry jelly.

*Chicken.* Cook, with or without a forcemeat stuffing, in a moderate oven for 1-1½ hrs., according to size. Cover bird with a little bacon fat and baste at intervals. Serve with the same accompaniments as turkey, adding forcemeat balls if the bird is not stuffed.

### Bread sauce

1 medium sized onion ; 2 cloves ; ¾ pint milk ; salt ; a few peppercorns ; ¼ oz. butter ; 3 oz. breadcrumbs.

Peel the onion and stick the cloves in it. Place in a saucepan with the milk, salt and peppercorns, bring almost to the boil and leave in a warm place for about 20 minutes, in order to extract the flavour from the onion. Remove the peppercorns and add the butter and breadcrumbs. Mix well and allow to cook very slowly for about 15 minutes, then remove the onion and serve.

### Sausage Stuffing

1 large onion ; 1 lb. pork sausage meat ; 1 oz. dripping ; 1 teaspoon chopped parsley ; ½ teaspoon mixed herbs ; 4 tablespoons fresh breadcrumbs ; seasoning.

Mix the chopped onion and the sausage meat, and sauté them in the dripping for a few minutes. Mix in the other ingredients and use as required.





## THE PUDDING

6 oz. flour ;  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon mixed spice ;  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon grated nutmeg ; 2 oz. breadcrumbs ; 4 oz. chopped suet ; 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. mixed dried fruit ; grated rind of orange ; 1 chopped apple ; 3 oz. sugar ; 2-3 fresh eggs ; a few drops almond essence ; few drops vanilla essence ; 1 teaspoon lemon juice ; 1 small teaspoon gravy browning or caramel ; milk or milk and water to mix, with a little brandy.

Sieve the flour and spices into a bowl ; add the breadcrumbs, suet, cleaned dried fruit, grated orange rind, chopped apple and the sugar. Mix with the beaten eggs, essences, lemon juice and gravy browning or caramel. Add a little liquid to give stiff dropping consistency. Three-quarters fill a large greased pudding basin (or two small ones), cover closely with greased paper and a floured cloth, and steam 5-6 hours. When the pudding is cooked, allow it to dry thoroughly, then replace the cloth with a clean one, leaving the original greaseproof paper in position. If protected in this way, the pudding is ready for further cooking on Christmas Day ; store in a cool, dry place. Serve with hard sauce.

### Hard Sauce

4 oz. fresh butter ; 2 oz. castor sugar ; 1 tablespoon ground almonds ; 1 tablespoon sherry ; 1 dessertspoon brandy.

Cream the butter and sugar until light-coloured and frothy, then beat in the almonds. Keep cool until required, and just before serving add the sherry and brandy a little at a time.



## TEA-TIME RECIPES

The guest who drops in to wish you "A Merry Christmas" round about tea-time can no doubt be persuaded to have a piece of Christmas Cake. Or perhaps a cup of tea and a sandwich will suffice after a heavy lunch !



## THE CHRISTMAS CAKE

1 lb currants ; 8 oz raisins ; 1 lb. sultanas ; 6 oz. mixed peel ; 4 oz. glacé cherries ; 4 oz. shelled almonds ; 10 oz. margarine ; 10 oz. castor sugar ; 6-8 eggs ; 12 oz. flour ; pinch salt ; 2 teaspoons mixed spice ; grated rind of lemon ; lemon juice ; a little milk.

Clean fruit and chop the peel and cherries ; blanch and chop the almonds. Have all the other ingredients ready. Cream the margarine and sugar together till light and fluffy. Break each egg separately into a basin, beat lightly and add one by one to the creamed mixture, beating each one in thoroughly before adding the next. Sieve the dry ingredients into a bowl and add fruit and lemon rind. Fold gradually and very lightly into the creamed mixture, adding the lemon juice, and add a little milk alternately with the



dry ingredients until a stiff dropping consistency is obtained. Put the mixture into a greaseproof-lined 9-inch cake tin and bake in a moderate oven for about 2 hours, then reduce the temperature to slow and continue to cook for 4½-5 hours in all. When the cake is sufficiently brown, cover top with double sheet of greaseproof paper. When cold, cover with almond paste and royal icing.

### Some novel ideas for sandwiches

*Rolled Sandwiches.* Use new bread, butter it, and cut thinly. Spread with filling or insert asparagus tips, and roll up.

*Pinwheel Sandwiches.* Make large rolled sandwiches with slices cut lengthways off the loaf, then cut them across to give a Swiss roll effect.

*Fancy Shapes.* Cut the slices lengthways and shape with cutter into hearts, diamonds, etc.

*Bread Bars.* Cut the bread in chunks or bars measuring about 1 by 3 inches, spread each side with savoury butter or cream cheese, then roll each piece in chopped nuts or parsley, sieved egg yolk, etc.

*Neapolitan sandwiches.* These are made of white and brown bread alternately, with different coloured fillings between the layers. Cut slices lengthways across the loaf, sandwich three or more together, and cut across the layers.



## CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINING

It is not customary nowadays to offer elaborate food at informal parties; small, piquant savouries and cold sweet dishes can make an attractive running buffet, offering great scope for the ingenuity of the hostess. For drinks concentrate on the well-tried favourite cocktails with a gin base, which are easily mixed. Serve sherry for those who do not drink cocktails, or a claret or cider cup is always welcome.

### Cider Cup

1 quart cider; ½ lb. sugar; rind of lemon; nutmeg; 1 syphon soda water; grapes and slices of lemon for serving; ½ wineglass sherry.

Mix together the cider, sugar, thinly peeled lemon rind and a good grating of nutmeg, and chill for two hours. Strain and add the soda water, fruit and sherry.

Some delicious party dishes . . . .

### Lobster Creams

1 lobster or 1 tin lobster; ½ pint aspic jelly; 1 oz. margarine; 1 oz. flour; ½ pint milk; seasoning; ¼ oz. gelatine; ¼ pint evaporated milk; cress to garnish.

Prepare the lobster and reserve the best pieces for decorating: chop the rest. Set a little jelly in the bottom of about ten moulds, put a few pieces of lobster in each, then set a little jelly on this. Make a white sauce with the



fat, flour and milk, season well and add the remaining chopped lobster. Dissolve the gelatine in the rest of the aspic jelly and add to the sauce. Whip the evaporated milk until it is thick and fold into the mixture, fill up the moulds and leave to set. When firm, turn out, and serve garnished with cress and a few lobster claws.

### Sherry Trifle

9 sponge fingers ; raspberry jam ; good cooking sherry ; 3 eggs ; 1 pint milk ; sugar ; vanilla essence ; blanched almonds ;  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. ratafia biscuits and macaroons ;  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint whipped cream ; decorations as required.

Cut the sponge in half, coat with jam and arrange in a large glass dish. Pour over sufficient sherry to soak, then cover with a custard made with the eggs, milk, sugar to sweeten and a few drops of vanilla essence ; sprinkle with chopped almonds and add ratafias and macaroons soaked in sherry. Decorate the top of the trifle with more sweetened cream and other decorations to taste.

### Apricot Creams

$\frac{1}{2}$  oz. gelatine ;  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint fruit juice ;  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint apricot purée ; 2 oz. sugar ;  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint cream ; a little jelly, fruit and angelica for decoration.

Dissolve the gelatine in the fruit juice, add it to the fruit purée and sweeten to taste. Whip the cream until it is quite thick and fold it into the gelatine mixture when the latter is thick and on the point of setting. Pour the mixture into sundae glasses and leave to set. Decorate with a little jelly, fruit and angelica.

### Appetizers and Canapés

Serve stuffed olives, knobs of Danish Blue cheese, gherkins and cocktail onions speared on cocktail sticks. More elaborate canapés can be made by arranging small quantities of various piquant mixtures, such as chopped egg and anchovy, grated cheese and chutney, or sardines mashed with a sharp sauce, on little cheese biscuits, rounds of pastry or fingers of toast. Garnish attractively about an hour or two before the party—canapés prepared too long in advance of eating tend to go soft.



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