

THE MAGE COOKBOOK



ENLIGHTENED DELIGHTS FOR
MAGE 20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

THE MAGE C⊕K B⊕K



FOOD IS LIFE

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For Coyote Ashley Ward

Love, I wish you could have lived to see this one. Thank you for the many years of magick, wisdom, madness, and love. Oh, yeah – and thank you also for the cannibal stew. It was delicious, though it would have been better if we'd been able to share some in person. Maybe next time around.

As you said to me years ago, upon reading an early draft of *Mage 20*: “*Time-up’s over. Time to get back to the war.*”



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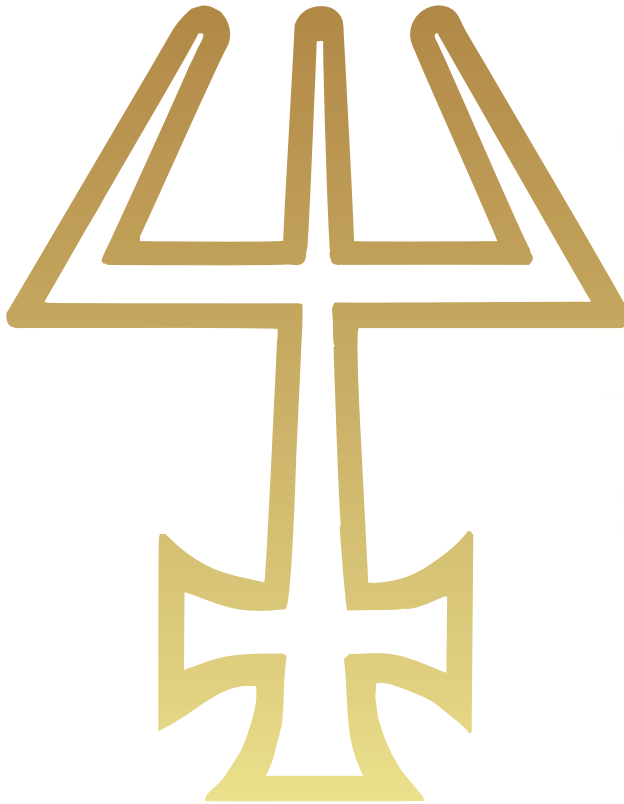
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Introduction: A Humble Baker's Son

Life is a combination of magic and pasta.
- Federico Fellini

I love food.

Who *doesn't*, right? Growing up as I did on a farm, some of my fondest memories are of the delicious meals that used to emerge out of our kitchen, made from the fresh vegetables harvested from our garden; the milk, cream, butter, and cheese that came from our cows and goats and that made our living; the eggs gathered straight from beneath the hens. The only thing we didn't provide for ourselves was meat, and that we got fresh from down at the butcher's, just a short bike-ride into town. My father, who had a veritable gift for cheese-making, was also a skilled baker. To this day, my favorite smell in the world is that of bread, fresh out of the oven, ready to be broken and slathered with aged butter. I still keep a jar of his thirty-year-old starter in our refrigerator at the lodge and I've taught some of my brothers how to keep it well-fed whilst I'm off on my travels.

The point I'm coming to is that I grew up in a community where everyone cooked. Men, women, children, everyone. Trips to restaurants where some fancy trained chef prepared the food were exceedingly rare. In point of fact, though my parents appreciated the sentiment when my sisters and I would surprise them with a dinner out, they'd have much rather stayed home and made a special meal themselves. People cooked with joy, with creativity, with fearlessness, even. I know my Uncle Richard was never afraid to experiment, though some of his more daring attempts were received with rather less enthusiasm than he would have liked. But that was expected. It was half the fun! We also ate seasonally, for the most part. I remember hunting for strawberries with my elder sister in the spring. My mother and my aunts used to have huge preserving parties at Mabon, and old Jack Rattigan would invite everyone 'round for a taste of the new brew at Lughnasadh.

As a young Aspirant newly blessed with the Holy Fire, I came to study and train in Dublin. It was rather shocking to discover that out of the twenty or so men and women living at the great lodge there, only a handful of us knew our way around a kitchen and could cook a meal on the stove or in the oven from raw ingredients (as opposed to nuking a pre-packaged meal in the microwave). Still, I figured that maybe my Brothers and Sisters had simply never been taught as I had been. Turns out, the phenomenon was far more pervasive than I'd previously thought, and extended far beyond our community.

Over the course of my Enlightened life, and by way of my work and adventures, I've had the opportunity to travel all over the world, meeting all manner of people. What I've discovered is that folk don't cook the way they used to. They don't teach their children. Restaurants and chef-made cuisine have become our standard fare. The simple alchemy of cooking has been removed from the hands of ordinary folk and placed in the "expert" care of celebrity chefs who speak of "elevating" food and flavor, and who disparage and even mock the simple, home-style cooking and experimentation that ordinary women and men have done ever since there were people and food and fire. I suspect that this is by design, and research done by friends amongst the Virtual Adepts leads me to believe it is true. That doesn't make the phenomenon any less sad to me.

The idea behind this little book of magical cookery was sparked nearly a decade ago when I met Bernadette - or Bernie, as she likes to be called - at a scrappy little co-op in Las Vegas. The individuals who live there, and who move in and out of that place (some of whom have the Fire and some who don't), are among the most unlikely and diverse folk you'll ever hope to meet. It is literally as if the place is a magnet, pulling in magi from all Traditions and none and from all walks of life. I came by the place on the invite of a Chorister friend of mine who had told me to skip the local restaurants and come with him to an "underground dinner." Not really understanding how or why a dinner would be an "underground" event, but intrigued by the prospect, I went. The experience was life-altering, and so very uplifting.

When you arrive at the large former-warehouse-turned-gallery-living-and-performance-space, you're greeted by a friendly young woman named Chinyere, with rainbow-colored braids, who offers you a drink and explains the rules: you can pay your way with cash, which goes towards keeping the larder well-stocked, or you can do kitchen duty. If you choose kitchen duty, they'll assign you a job and a dish to prepare. Oh, and there are *no* recipes. None. It's absolutely brilliant! And it doesn't matter if you screw up, because there are other folks cooking in that massive kitchen, too. Plenty of food will be had, whether yours turns out to be edible or not.

At the center of all this is Bernie, a whip-smart, sparkling lioness of a woman who - while not yet Awake - seems to sense, understand, and even direct the energy raised by all of the Divinely blessed people in her midst. She glides through the kitchen, telling jokes, giving words of encouragement, answering questions, and making suggestions, all the while helping to coordinate the timing and choreography necessary in an environment such as this. A good two-thirds of the folk cooking and working to bring these dinners to fruition are residents of the co-op, and what I prefer to call *Independents* (though some disparagingly call them "orphans"). On the night I visited, my colleagues included my friend Esteban, who looks more like a Colombian rock star than an organ-and-choir master; and a tall, elegant albino woman named Eleanor whose long sleeves were embroidered at the

wrists with elaborate Enochian symbols and other protective sigils used by the Houses of Hermes. I'd always heard tell that Hermetics were rather haughty and aloof, but Eleanor was most warm, generous, and accommodating. Nor was she afraid to tie on an apron and get her hands dirty.

Shortly after we arrived, we were joined by Arvid and Casper, both practitioners of elder Verbena traditions in Sweden, and Shea, Zenobia, and Katherine, a few of their American sisters from Tempe. The Swedes even brought their own earth-salt as a gift, informing us that it had been blessed by the trolls that stand guardian to their ancestral farmland. In the kitchen when we arrived were a Lakota woman named Alowana, who sang as she worked herbs and spices in a large mortar, and who had the most beautiful and mesmerizing voice I've ever heard; and Kakena, a Ngoma banker from Kenya whose initial aspect was of a stern, wizened, sharp-eyed mogul, but who chopped and chattered and grinned and laughed with all the exuberance of a teenage girl... all while wearing custom-tailored clothes and five-inch Christian Louboutin heels!

When it was time to dine, Bernie called the gathering together with the following Blessing:

We are here tonight, some of us strangers, some of us friends, some of us family: Family of Blood, and Family of Entropic Whim. We have labored to make this food together. This meal exists only tonight, and we eat as One, no matter how many we may be when we are away from this table. We eat knowing the only way to experience the beauty of this feast is to destroy it, and resign it to never manifest in this world again. We swear an oath of secrets to keep always the memories we hold of this meal. These flavors will always be ours, and only ours. On this night, we are cabal, and the secrets we hold are the musky breath of the earth we feed so it will feed us, and the salt of our sweat seasoning our bread.

I couldn't tell you the exact names of the dishes we ate that night. There were, as I've said, no recipes. What I can recall is that the meats were delicious: some roasted, some grilled, some fried. A rainbow of lovely vegetables was served in the simplest presentations, and also with sumptuous, flavorful sauces. There were beans and rice, pasta, and "gravy" - not "sauce," as Bernadette so informed me; potatoes prepared at least five different ways; bread that would have made my own father cry with joy (and that vanished almost as soon as it hit the table); and gorgeous desserts featuring flavors and spices that originated from all over the world but that tasted exactly like home and friends. Oh, and the *drinks!*

All of us assembled in that place - crowded around a common table, sharing our stories, jokes, thoughts, and cultures - understood that something important, something vital, had happened in that kitchen and at that table. As we finished out the evening on the rooftop, singing, laughing, spinning fire and wondering at the awesomeness of the night sky, I realized that I'd been given a Calling: To carry Bernie's powerful, terrifying idea of an underground dinner with me, wherever God's or the Generals' will directed, to share that experience with all I met, and to encourage people - Anointed and otherwise - to find the courage to cook *real* food again in defiance of the celebrity chefs and competition cooking shows, to trust their old family recipes, humble though they may be, and to share those experiences and that food with others.

As a young recruit and scholar, I learned so much about the things that divide the Awakened: Tradition vs. Technocrat vs. Disparate vs. Others. What my travels and meetings with Enlightened folk around the world (as well as in the strange spaces between and beyond it) have taught me is what ought to be obvious: We all eat; we all share a love of good food born out of a collection of smells and tastes and techniques that we call culture; and we all enjoy sitting down with friends and even strangers to partake of that food in friendship and peace. What you find collected in this book is the fruit of my labors in this regard. I pray that you will embrace these stories and recipes and work their magick over your own cook-fires and within your own kitchens. Play with them. Experiment. Break the rules. Make them your own. And above all, carry forward the quiet, defiant revolution of home-cooking wherever you are in the world.

Yours in Service,

- Brother Oliver Lyon,

Knight and Soldier of the Temple of God,

...and a humble baker's son

Metric Measurements

Speaking as a world-traveler and military man, I realize the metric system is more universal, precise, and efficient than the frankly outdated systems of US and Imperial measurements. Yet, as an American-born farm-boy, I default to those familiar measurements, especially when it comes to food, and many people I know back home still do, too. This cookbook, then, uses both forms of measurement, but features the metric versions in [brackets like these]. I've followed this convention even in **Chapter Two**, where the recipes I received were – as befits their source – given in metric terms only.

So as not to overcomplicate the recipe listings, and because these forms of measurements carry over between the US, metric, and Imperial systems, I have used "cups," "teaspoons (tsp)," and "tablespoons (tbsp)" alone, without additional metric conversations. Folk who want a more exact form of measurement can employ the metric ratios given below.

Happy cooking, and enjoy your meals!

US and Metric Conversions

(Conversions are rounded, not exact.)

1 metric tsp = 5 ml

1 metric tbsp = 15 ml

1 metric cup = 250 ml

Oven Temperatures

°F	°C	Oven Settings
200	90	Very Cool
220	105	Very Cool
225	110	Cool
250	120	Cool
275	135	Moderate Cool
300	150	Moderate Warm
325	160	Medium
350	180	Medium
375	190	Moderate Hot
400	200	Fairly Hot
425	220	Hot
450	230	Very Hot
475	250	Very Hot
500	260	Very Hot

Volumes

US Fluid Oz	US	Milliliters
1/8	1/2 tsp	2.5
1/6	1 tsp	5
1/4	2 tsp	10
1/2	1 tbsp	15
1	2 tbsp	30
2	1/4	60
4	1/2 cup	125
5		150
6	3/4	175
8	1 cup	250
9		275
10	1 1/4 cups	300
12	1 1/2 cups	375
15		450
16	2 cups	500
18	2 1/4 cups	550
20	2 1/2 cups	600
24	3 cups	750

Dry Measurements

Dry Oz	Pounds	Grams	Kilos
1		30	
2		60	
3		85	
4	1/4	115	
5		140	
6		170	
8	1/2	225	
9		255	1/4
12		340	
16	1	450	
18		510	1/2
20	1 1/4	570	
24 1/2	1 1/2	680	1



ISRETEBY
2001

Chapter One: Mystic Meals

Cooking is like love. It should be entered into with abandon or not at all.

- Harriet van Horne

Many Rooms in My Father's House

As its Greco-Persian origins suggest, the word *mage* represents someone with an intimate connection to the realm between humanity and the Divine. For obvious reasons of faith and history, my Templar order views such people with often-justified suspicion. It's a sad fact that a person with power tends to abuse that power. Those of us who follow some higher calling wind up defending innocents from people whose appetites and sins make them dangerous to everyone nearby. As a result, we don't usually feel comfortable breaking bread (literally or figuratively) with people from groups that view us as enemies, and who are seen as enemies in return. It's comforting, then, to share this collection of recipes from people whose approach to "magic" is... well, not my own but also not the Dark Arts of our Twisted enemies and the Fallen Path they pursue.

As our Lord assures us in John 14:2, God's house has many rooms. I have been fortunate enough to explore a few of them in the company of good friends and worthwhile allies. Like my predecessors in the medieval Crusades, I found common ground with the following mystics in various societies - a fellowship built on shared adversaries, mutual respect, and, of course, lots of really delicious food.

Ahl-i-Batin

Chicken Nanban, Miso Nas, and Japanese Mayonnaise

One of the first places I visited, following my experience with Bernie, was Miyazaki Prefecture on the island of Kyushu in Japan. Far more rural and sparsely populated than the main island of Honshu, this area boasts excellent farmland, and thus the markets are full of fresh seasonal produce and locally raised meat. Of particular note is the flavorful pork and the Miyazaki beef, which is raised in the same fashion as the famed Kobe variety. My team and I hadn't intended to spend much time here, but due to events beyond our control, we ended up staying the better part of a year in the city of Miyakonojo.

Now, I must admit that Japan was the last place I expected to find an enclave of Ahl-i-Batin, but that was the tradition that Yuki Mori claimed. She and her two compatriots worked in tandem with a small band of Akashayana defending the strong nodes of power that converged in that area, and we were often invited to dine at their highly traditional compound in the tiny town of Obi, just to the south.

While most of Japan features modern architecture, there are a few historical enclaves like Obi, where the architecture of the samurai era is preserved. The Akashayana lived in what was once the residence of a high-ranking retainer. Passing through the gate in the high wall off the street, I emerged into a beautiful and orderly garden, riotous with colorful flowers and redolent with the fragrance of mango and hyuganatsu trees. To the left, I could see a dojo, the warm wood floor gleaming and spotless. To the right, there was a modest bath house and a well that, to my utter surprise, was

The Mage Cookbook



The Deeper Mysteries of Deep Frying

Frying seems easy enough: heat up some oil, drop food in, take it out when crisp, brown, and delicious. Simple, right? Well... not exactly. Oil that's not hot enough will soak into your food, making it greasy and heavy. Oil that's too hot will burn your food before it's cooked through. So, how can you tell if your oil is at the right temperature without running out to buy a specialized thermometer? Well, you can drop a grain of rice into the oil. If it rises immediately and begins to bubble and cook, then the oil is ready. Also, if you have a humble wooden spoon close at hand, dip the end of the handle into the oil. If the oil starts to bubble around it, then you know it's hot enough for your deep-fried delights!

still functional. Ahead, beyond the garden, was the vast building that held common rooms, the kitchen, and living quarters. The most amazing thing about traditional Japanese living spaces is how easily they can be converted to accommodate whatever requirements the space must fulfill – often by the deft arrangement or re-arrangement of sliding doors, screens, and partitions. When I was there, it was in the last part of summer, leading into early fall... which meant that, thankfully, the worst of the summer heat had passed. The days were pleasantly warm, and the evenings were balmy and cool.

Yuki is an incredible cook. When I suggested we have our own underground dinner, she and her Akashic friend Michihiro were eager participants. The Japanese have a phrase to describe the plethora of seasonal foods available at this time of year: *yokushokuaki*, roughly translated as “good eating in the Autumn.” In addition to a heavenly array of fresh sashimi, Miyazaki beef, fresh vegetables, and handmade soba noodles, Yuki and her friends prepared a couple of local delicacies that stood out from the rest: Chicken Nanban and Miso Nasu.

Chicken Nanban – which can be roughly translated as either “southern style” or “European style” depending on who you ask – is crispy fried chicken tossed with a slightly sweet vinegar dressing and topped with a fresh and snappy tartar sauce. This dish was so common in Miyazaki that you could get it to go from most grocery stores. The homemade version Yuki made blew the store-bought kind out of the water.

Nasu is a small Japanese eggplant that is abundant in the late summer and early fall. When cooked and combined with a flavorful miso glaze, this humble vegetable transforms into something remarkably delicious. Once I learned to cook it for myself, it became my go-to side dish for the season. You may not be able to get Japanese eggplant at your market, but Chinese eggplant is similar in flavor and texture and will do as a substitution. Miso paste and some of the other ingredients might take some tracking down, but the dish is worth the effort!

A final note about mayonnaise: Japanese mayo tastes profoundly different from American mayo. I'm not sure why, but if I could hazard a guess, it would be because the Japanese variety is closer to the flavor of homemade mayonnaise. Because the creamy tartar sauce is a star of this dish, do yourself the favor and make up a batch of homemade mayonnaise. It is super-easy, and the flavor cannot be matched. I have included a simple recipe below.

Chicken Nanban

Ingredients

boneless, skinless chicken thighs (1-2 lb [454-907 g], depending on your crowd)
1-2 eggs
flour
oil for frying

For the Nanban Vinegar

red chili flakes, or thinly sliced red chili pepper
small knobs of carrot, ginger, and onion (for seasoning)
About 1/4 cup of each:
soy sauce
sugar
rice vinegar
mirin

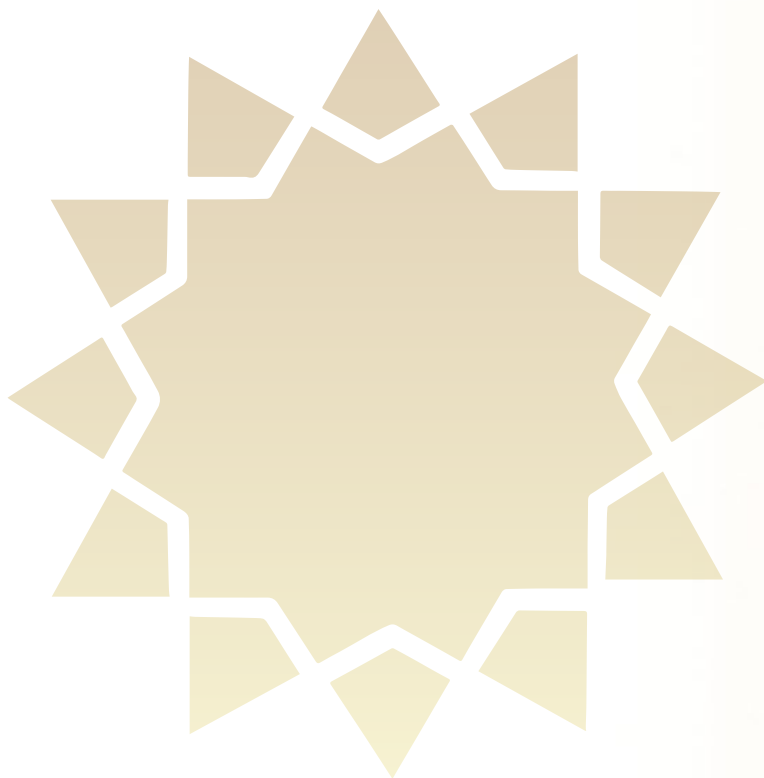
For the Tartar Sauce

1-2 boiled eggs
1 onion, chopped
1 cucumber, chopped and drained
mayonnaise (see recipe nearby)
mustard powder
salt
pepper
1 Chinese cabbage, shredded
1 tomato, sliced or quartered

Preparation

- The tartar sauce should be made first. Finely chop your boiled eggs and about 1/4 - 1/2 of an onion (more-or-less to taste).
- Peel and seed the cucumber, then finely chop the flesh - you're looking for a rough mince. To keep your sauce from being runny, lightly salt your cucumber, and then wrap it up in a bit of kitchen cheesecloth (or paper towel) and allow the liquid to drain for about 15 to 20 minutes. Once the cucumber has cast off enough liquid, pat it dry, and then mix it together with the chopped egg, onion, and mayonnaise. Season with mustard powder, salt, and pepper, to taste.
- Next make the vinegar. In a small saucepan, combine about 1/4 cup of soy sauce, 1/4 cup sugar, 1/4 cup of rice vinegar, 1/4 cup of mirin, and a few red chili flakes or some thin slices of fresh red chili pepper. Stir until sugar is dissolved, and heat until steaming.
- For added flavor, if you have a small knob of carrot, a bit of fresh ginger, and a small chunk of onion on hand, you can add those to the pot while the vinegar is heating. Remove before serving.

- Prepare the chicken by cutting it into large, bite-sized pieces (about six pieces per thigh). Season liberally with salt and pepper, and then coat the meat in flour.
- Heat your oil – either in a deep fryer (if one is available), or in a Dutch oven, or in a frying pan with tall sides.
- While the oil is heating, beat the eggs in a small bowl, and set them aside. When the oil is hot, dip the flour-coated meat in the beaten egg, and drop it into the oil to fry.
- To assemble the dish, make a bed of shredded cabbage on the plate and pour a spoonful of the vinegar over it.
- In a bowl, pour in a bit of the vinegar, and lightly toss a serving of the hot fried, chicken in it.
- Arrange the chicken on the bed of cabbage, garnish with sliced cucumber and tomato, and top with tartar sauce – or serve the tartar sauce in a small dish for dipping.



Miso Nas

Ingredients

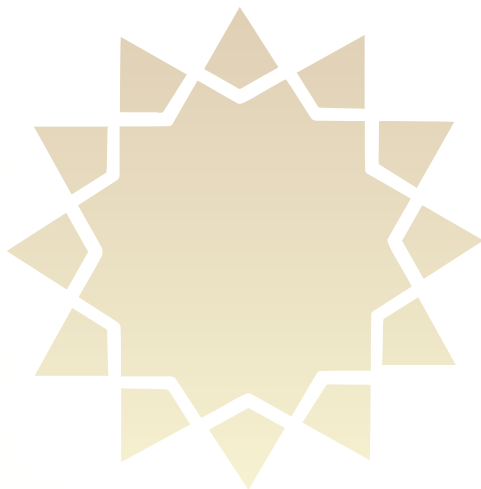
- 2 Japanese or Chinese eggplants
- 3 tbsp of white or red miso (or more, to taste)
- 1 tbsp mirin
- 2 tbsp sake or gin
- 2 tbsp Japanese soy sauce
- 1 tbsp sugar
- chili flakes
- 1 tbsp sesame oil

Optional Ingredients

- 4 oz [113 g] of ground pork, chopped
- scallion or green onion

Preparation

- Cut the eggplants on the diagonal into pieces of about 1/2 inch [12.7 mm] in thickness. In a frying pan, heat the sesame oil on medium heat.
- While the oil is heating, in a small bowl, mix together the miso, mirin, sake, soy sauce, and sugar. Don't worry if the miso is lumpy; the glaze will smooth out in cooking.
- When the oil is hot, add the eggplant and cook until the flesh begins to take on a pale-yellow color. If you are adding the ground pork, do that now and allow it to cook until the eggplant turns golden.
- Add the miso glaze, and stir the mixture, allowing it to coat the meat and the eggplant. Turn the heat up to high, and cook until the eggplant is dark brown and caramelized. Serve over freshly cooked sticky rice, or with pan-fried tofu.



Homemade Japanese Mayonnaise

Ingredients

- 2 fresh eggs, at room temperature
- 2 tbsp of freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 cup of mildly flavored oil
- fine sea salt

Preparation

- If you refrigerate your eggs, take two of them out and allow them to come to room temperature. *This will not work with cold eggs!*
- In the meantime, squeeze a fresh lemon to get about two tablespoons of juice. You will also need about a cup of neutral-flavored oil; grapeseed, sweet almond, and walnut oils all work well, but you could just as easily use light olive oil. Please, for the love of little chickens, don't use Canola or "vegetable" oil. Those are perfectly fine for frying, not for fresh mayonnaise!
- Take out a small but deep bowl and a whisk. If you wish to use a food processor or a blender, you can, but I prefer to make mine by hand as I find it easier to monitor and control the consistency. I also find that placing the bowl on a little piece of rubberized drawer liner, or on a damp kitchen towel, makes the entire process easier to manage when you get to the part where you're using both hands and don't have a third to hold the bowl steady!
- Separate the eggs, placing the yolks in the bowl and saving the whites for the next time you make an omelet or a meringue. Add your lemon juice, and whisk to combine with the yolks.
- Starting with a few drops at a time, *slowly* begin to add the oil, whisking briskly and constantly. After you've incorporated about a tablespoon or so of oil in there, you can begin to add the rest in a slow, steady stream. If the oil starts to pool, ease off and whisk until smoothly blended. Of course, if you're using a blender, this process is considerably easier.
- When all the oil has been incorporated, the mayonnaise should be creamy and your whisk should make "ribbons" through the mixture. If it's too thick, you can add a bit of water, a teaspoon at a time. If it's too thin, you can whisk in another egg yolk. When you're satisfied with the consistency, stir in your sea salt to flavor.

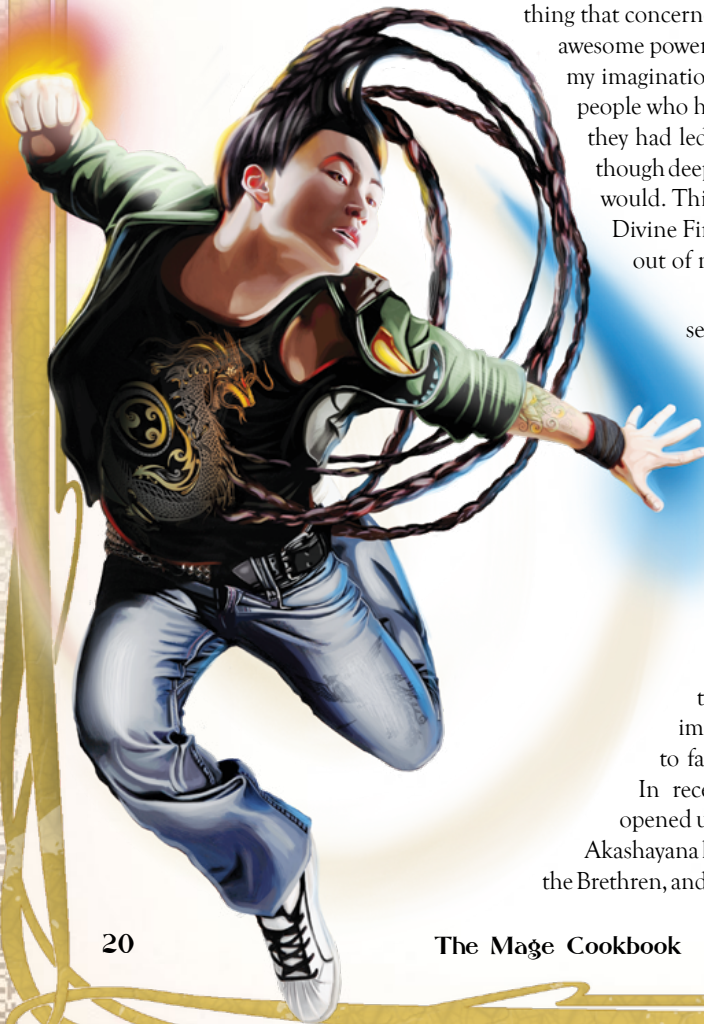
AKASHIC BROTHERHOOD

Fish Amok

When I was a child, I happened to encounter a series of glorious pictures of Angkor Wat in an old National Geographic magazine. At the time, I had no idea where in the world Cambodia was; nor did I have any inkling of the terrible atrocities perpetrated upon her people by Pol Pot and his horrific Khmer Rouge regime. The only thing that concerned my seven-year-old self was the awesome power and mystery of those ruins, and my imagination ran wild with thoughts of the people who had once lived there and the lives they had led. I swore I'd get there someday, though deep down, I didn't really think I ever would. This was long before the blessing of Divine Fire made a genuine world traveler out of me.

As it turns out, I have now made seven trips to Angkor Wat and its surrounding temples. Perhaps my young soul recognized what the place was long before I received Enlightenment. I can tell you with certainty that the Fallen know about it all too well. After Cambodian Akashayana wrested control of the place back from the dark forces behind Pol Pot, they vowed that never would a place of such immense sacred power be allowed to fall into Nephandic hands again.

In recent years, as globalization has opened up the world in so many ways, the Akashayana have enlisted the aid of the Batini, the Brethren, and others committed to fighting the



Twisted Ones wherever they may lurk. This strengthening of forces is necessary, most especially now, as the Fallen grow bolder in their attempts to plunge the world into chaos and death.

Thankfully, the locals in Siam Riep seem blissfully unaware that their hamlets and villages are at the center of a horrifying spiritual war. Then again, crushing poverty has a way of focusing one's priorities rather sharply upon basic survival. Thankfully, the tourism industry and Angkor Wat's status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site provide direct sources of income for enterprising young men and women (and quite often boys and girls as well). Fishing is a way of life here, and among the most delicious and delightful things you can find in the area are the carts selling the distinctive fish curry called *amok* or *hormok*, made with a mild, herby curry paste called *kroeng*, steamed in banana leaves, and served over steamed coconut rice. So popular and beloved is this dish, amongst natives and tourists alike, that village folk have set up cooking classes so that visitors can learn how to make this national dish.

I learned about this recipe from a twelve-year-old boy living in a town just outside the west gate of Angkor Thom. He spoke almost flawless Middle-American English, and invited me and my companions back to his mother's house, where together we cooked and ate our curry as he translated for his parents and siblings, who were curious and eager to learn all they could about me. I am quite sure that I was the first Black man they'd ever seen. For dessert, the boy's mother made an amazing dish of a small steamed pumpkin filled with sweet custard. My companions and I agreed that it was one of the best things we'd ever tasted. To reward their hospitality, I made sure to recommend the young man to the chef of a nearby restaurant that catered to wealthy tourists. Last I heard, he'd been hired as a line cook... and with the money he's earned, all five of his siblings can now afford to go to school in the city.



Amok (Cambodian Fish Curry)

Ingredients

For the Curry Paste

- 1 stem of lemongrass (with the outer layer removed), the bottom 3 inches finely sliced
- 1 1-inch [25.4 mm] piece of galangal, sliced
- 4 kaffir lime leaves, sliced, with the center stem removed
- 2 long, red Asian chilies, sliced and deseeded
- 4 cloves of garlic, sliced
- 3 shallots, sliced
- 3 tbsp of fresh turmeric, or 2 tsp of turmeric powder
- 2 tsp of shrimp paste

For the Amok

- 1 lb [454 g] of cod cheeks (or other white fish), cut into chunks
- 2 tbsp of coconut oil
- 1 cup of full-fat coconut milk (the thick cream part from the can)
- 1 tbsp of palm or brown sugar (plus more, to taste)
- 1 tbsp of fish sauce
- 1 large egg
- banana leaves (or foil)
- 3 kaffir lime leaves, sliced with center stems removed
- 1 red chili
- lime wedges
- steamed rice, or coconut rice

Preparation

- Place the sliced lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime leaves, red chilies, garlic, and shallots into the bowl of a mortar and pestle, then pound them until they're well-combined.
- Add the turmeric and shrimp paste, and then pound again until you have a smooth paste.
- Heat the coconut oil in a wok (or pan), over low heat.
- Add the curry paste, and stir until the fragrance permeates the kitchen.
- Stir in the coconut milk, sugar, and fish sauce, then simmer for 5 minutes.
- Allow the mixture to cool to room temperature, then add more sugar or fish sauce to taste; it should be deliciously sweet with a rich coconut flavor.
- When cooled, stir the egg in thoroughly, then fold in the fish.
- Lay two banana leaves on top of one another, so that the dull sides are together and the glossy sides face out. Fold the banana leaves so you have a cup-shape that will hold the curry, fixing the edges together with toothpicks. (You can also use staples.)

Banana Leaves?

Don't panic if you think you will never be able to find these items. Many Asian food markets sell them. If all else fails, Amazon.com sells packages of frozen banana leaves that are already cut into rounds.

The day before using them, simply thaw the leaves in the refrigerator and then – on the day you plan to make the dish – take the package out of the refrigerator, and allow the leaves to come to room temperature.

If the idea of folding banana rounds into cups terrifies you, fear not. The internet is your friend! You can find several lovely tutorials that will show you how to transform those flat rounds into lovely little curry cups that will astound everyone at your table.

- Spoon the curry into the leaf cup. Repeat until all the curry is used, then place leaf cups in a steamer and steam for 20 minutes, or until the fish is opaque. If you are using foil for this step, fold a doubled piece of foil into a boat shape and fill with curry.
- When the curry is done, shred the lime leaves and chili, and sprinkle them over the top of the curry.
- Serve over steamed rice or coconut rice, and squeeze a bit of lime juice over the top.



BATA'A

Ceviche and Mofongo

Miami is a captivating place. It has this marvelous mix of cultures – not just Cubano, which most people associate with the city, but also Venezuelan, Salvadoran, Colombian, Dominican, and Haitian. Up until a few years ago, it was also a city with one of the highest murder rates in the country. Thanks to the efforts of a strong Bata'a community, the city's murder rates have plummeted significantly. It helps that they've spent the past three decades slowly taking control of the police force and working their way into elected civic offices. Now, typically, Bata'a practitioners don't tend to get on well with the likes of me and mine, so I had every intention of laying low, keeping my head down, and not getting into any trouble. After all, I was on vacation. (Even Knights go on vacation once in a while.)

Following a lovely day at the beach, I headed out to sample the nightlife. I love salsa dancing, so I was eager to find a dance club where I could test out my moves and maybe meet some new people. Miami did not disappoint! After two glorious hours of dancing, most of it with a lovely Afro-Dominican woman named Isela, I offered to see her home, as her friends had already hooked up for the evening and left. Moving through darkened streets, I suddenly got that feeling of wrongness that only comes when one of the Fallen is in close proximity, accompanied by the tell-tale itch and hum of dark energy building.

I haven't yet mentioned the specific nature of my work, because this duty is far too sensitive and complex to explain in depth. The short version is that my Brothers and I have a mission to locate objects imbued with Holy Fire, and to help those individuals and communities who own such items keep them secure. If there are no obvious owners, then we strive to prevent them from falling into the hands of Darkness. That hum I felt came the distinct Resonance of a Holy object... and something, or someone, foul was in the process of using it for a purpose that could only be nefarious.

I turned to tell Isela that I'd have to call her a cab, and she was lit up like a beacon. It would be just like me to dance with a girl half the night and never notice that she was Enlightened. With a laugh and a "Keep up, Irish boy," she slipped out of her heels and took off running, barefooted, towards the danger.

We rounded a corner, and were nearly knocked off our feet by a shockwave of energy emanating from the center of a deserted parking lot. Isela suddenly clutched her head and fell backwards into me at the same time I felt something akin to a small sandstorm envelop and pass over us, temporarily blinding my directional sight. Years of training kicked in automatically, and I fought to re-orient myself and prepare for the next attack. But it never came. Instead, all I saw was a solitary figure lying dead on the ground about 40 feet in front of us, and another figure running for the shadows of a nearby alley. Without thinking, I set off in pursuit, trying to get a measure of the murderer's dimensions,

energies, and capabilities. Every line I cast out to latch on to him slipped off until eventually I'd lost him to the night.

Retracing my steps, I found Isela standing over the dead man, speaking heatedly into her cell phone in a rapid Creole, her face grim. Beside the body lay a colorful casino chip that gave off the telltale static of a recently-used artifact. She looked up at my approach and gestured for me to keep a healthy distance from both the body and the object.

"Police are on the way," she said, ending her conversation.

"Surely not!" I pointed to the colorful plastic round: "Do you know what that is?"

Isela placed a reassuring hand on my arm. "I get the feeling you do. Don't worry," she said. "These officers are Awake. They'll know what to do. We're going to need a statement from you, though."

Not more than two minutes later, I heard a siren in the distance growing closer, until the blue flashing lights of a police cruiser came into view at the end of the street. Fifteen minutes later, Isela and I sat in the office of Detective Fernan Acevedo, giving witness statements. It requires a massive amount of power to destroy an Enlightened soul, and the relic that we found beside the body of that unknown magus would have provided a deadly focus for such an atrocity. I felt it was my duty to cooperate with my companion and her associates, but I also knew that one of the Fallen with that level of power could not be allowed to run free. By the time we were finished at the police station, it was nearly dawn, and the sun was just rising as Isela and I made it back to my hotel room.

On television, this would have been the moment when the brave, young hero beds the gorgeous young woman he's just been through hell with. In reality, all we both really wanted was a shower and sleep, so Isela said goodnight and promised to come back in the morning with "some real food. Not that touristy 'gourmet' crap they serve here." I slept for most of the following day, and when I woke, there was a note on my nightstand that read: *Call me when you're ready to eat.* Within the half hour, Isela arrived with glorious meal of ceviche and mofongo served up with fresh guacamole and handmade corn tortillas. While this might not have been the dramatic sexual escapade so dearly beloved by our Hollywood establishment, it was a fine interlude in a larger adventure that, again, I am not at liberty to freely discuss.



Chapter One: Mystic

Ceviche

Make this on the same day you buy the freshest fish possible.

Ingredients

- 2 lbs [907 g] of fresh, firm-fleshed fish fillets (snapper, tilapia, grouper), completely deboned and cut into ½-inch pieces
- ½ cup of fresh-squeezed lime juice
- ½ cup of fresh-squeezed lemon juice
- ½ red onion, finely diced
- 1 cup of chopped, fresh-seeded tomatoes
- 1 Serrano chili, seeded and finely diced
- 2 tsp of salt
- dash of ground oregano
- pinch of cayenne pepper
- cilantro
- avocado
- tortillas or tortilla chips

Preparation

- Combine the fish, onion, tomato, chili, salt, oregano, and cayenne in a large glass casserole dish. Pour the lime and lemon juice over the fish mixture, covering as much of it as possible. Cover, and marinate in the refrigerator for one hour. Stir, ensuring that any fish that was previously uncovered is introduced to the lime and lemon juice. Allow to marinate for another hour or two, until the fish is opaque and no longer translucent.
- Serve in a transparent glass dish. Garnish with chopped cilantro and slices of avocado, and serve on fresh tortillas or with tortilla chips.

Mofongo

Ingredients

For the Broth

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 lb [454 g] beef bones (any type would do)
- 2 cloves garlic, mashed
- 1 onion, halved
- 4 cups water
- 1 sprig cilantro
- 1 sprig of cilantro (optional)
- ¼ tsp oregano
- ¾ tsp salt (or more, to taste)

Preparation

- In a deep pot, heat the oil over medium heat. Brown the bones, taking care that they do not burn. Add the garlic and onion, and stir.
- Pour in water, and add cilantro and oregano.
- Simmer for an hour over low heat, topping off the water occasionally to maintain the same level.
- Season with salt, to taste. Sieve, and remove the solids.

Ingredients

For the Mofongo

- 1 lb [454 g] crisp fried pork rinds (also known as *chicharrón*)
- 4-5 green plantains
- 2 cups olive oil
- kosher salt (to taste)
- 6 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 slices of thick-cut bacon, cooked
- 1 cup beef stock

Preparation

- Peel the plantains and cut into one-inch slices.
- In a large saucepan or deep fryer, heat 2 cups of oil to °350 F [°178 C]. Add the plantain slices in two batches, and fry for 5 to 7 minutes, turning once, until they're light-golden all over, but not browned. Drain on paper towels.
- In a large mortar, crush garlic cloves with a pestle, and sprinkle with salt.
- Add olive oil to the mixture, and keep pounding until it's well-incorporated.
- Transfer to a small bowl.
- In the same mortar or bowl, crush half of the fried plantain slices with half of the pork rinds, 1 slice of cooked bacon, and half the garlic aioli. Pound it all together.
- Add up to 1/2 cup stock as needed, to make it moist.
- Spoon the mixture, and shape into two-inch balls. Repeat with remaining ingredients, and keep in warm oven until ready to serve.
- Garnish with a spoonful of broth, and top with more crushed *chicharrón*, or cilantro, if you wish.

Celestial Torture

Amaretto and Angel Torte

When you attend services at the humble Church of the Epiphany in the sleepy Appalachian town of Henleysburg, the first thing you notice is the simple, artisanal beauty of the traditional Anglican architecture. The second thing you notice is the clear, strong voice of the Reverend Bettina Lockheart leading her parishioners in the singing of hymns. With her small congregation of blessed associates, this steadfast member of the Celestial Chorus single-handedly protects her community (and a major nexus point for sacred energies) from the assaults of Mad, Fallen, and Technocratic rivals who have been lured in by its considerable power.

At the time of my visit, Bettina was already engaged in providing something akin to underground dinners in her community. Because her parish is small, church members of all ages prepare the weekly Wednesday night dinners in the parish hall kitchen. In addition to these regular meals, her church staff – all of them Enlightened Choristers – funds much of their ministry with a small-batch distillery, producing Scotch whiskey and French brandy. That brandy is used to create a delicious home-made Amaretto cordial, which Bettina likes to serve with a light and delicious angel food torte.



Regardless of common misconceptions, neither Choristers nor my Brethren are forbidden from enjoying the blessings of a good alcoholic drink. We must be careful, of course, not to overindulge, or to let a good thing become a curse. Such pleasures in moderation, however, are a sign of God's favor. As Scripture tells us, the Lord Himself was no stranger to a good drink; in fact, He Himself claimed that his enemies called him a glutton and a drunkard. Although we have been known (to put it mildly) to hold disagreements of interpretation and implementation, Templars and Choristers can agree, if nothing else, on the joys of tasty food and delicious liquors! Perhaps it will be such shared pleasures that allow us to put the often-acrimonious differences of our sects aside for good and all. May God will it so, and *soon!*



Amaretto

Ingredients

Brandy / Vodka Mixture

- 2 cups vodka
- 2 cups high-quality brandy
- 1 fresh vanilla bean, cut in fourths and split lengthwise
- 6 tsp almond extract (real, not artificial)

Preparation

- Combine vodka, brandy, vanilla beans, and almond extract in a jar. Cover tightly, and let steep in a cool, dark place for at least 4 weeks. Strain and filter. (A coffee filter in a funnel works well.)

Sugar Syrup

- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup dark brown sugar
- 3/4 cup water

Preparation

- Combine sugars and water in a heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat; reduce heat and simmer until sugar has completely dissolved. Remove from heat, and let cool to room temperature.
- Combine sugar syrup with filtered brandy /vodka mixture. Pour into bottles, and cap tightly. Let age at least 4 weeks before serving.

Note: Expensive vodka is not necessary but, in general, higher-quality ingredients will improve the quality of your liqueur significantly. Also, the longer you age your liqueur, the smoother and richer the flavor will be. Amaretto that has aged a full year or longer is exquisite!

Citrus Angel Torte

Ingredients

General Ingredients

angel food cake (either 1 tube or 2 loaf pans)
assorted fresh fruit (kiwi, raspberries, etc.), sliced thin or smashed
3-4 cups whipped cream, or whipped topping

Filling

1 1/2 cups sugar
4 tbsp corn starch
dash of salt
1 1/2 cups cold water (or tangerine juice, if preferred)
4 beaten egg yolks
2 tsp citrus zest (orange, lemon, lime)
3 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp orange juice concentrate, or 2 tbsp mango juice
1 tbsp key lime juice
2 tbsp margarine or butter

Preparation

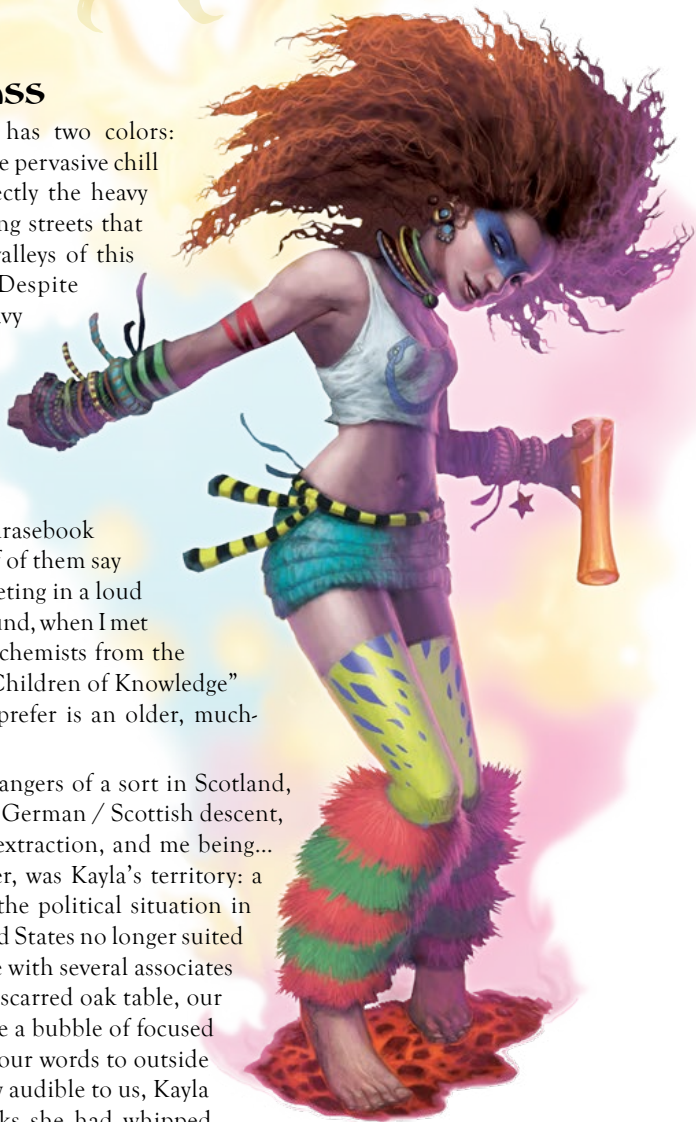
- Combine all ingredients except for margarine /butter in a small saucepan.
- Cook, stirring constantly, over medium heat until bubbly, then cook 1 minute more.
- Stir in margarine or butter. Cover surface with waxed paper; cool.
- Mix 1/2 of cooled filling with whipped topping. Slice angel food cake horizontally into 4 layers.
- Spread 1/2 of remaining filling on first layer, add bits of fresh fruit to taste, then cover with second layer.
- Spread whipped topping mixture on second layer, add more fruit, and then cover with third layer.
- Spread remaining filling on third layer, add fruit, and cover with fourth layer.
- Frost entire cake with remaining whipped topping mixture, and decorate with remaining fruit. Chill until ready to serve.

Children of Knowledge

Wild Sects in the Working Class

Edinburgh, Scotland, has two colors: stone gray, and mist gray. The pervasive chill and gloomy skies suit perfectly the heavy stone architecture and rolling streets that curl around the hills and valleys of this modern medieval town. Despite the gloom, though, the heavy surroundings feel very much like home, especially for a Knight of my order. The people, however, tend to be more cheerful than one would expect, even if an American like me needs a phrasebook just to understand what half of them say to you. I was attending a meeting in a loud nightclub, literally underground, when I met Kayla and T.J. - a pair of alchemists from the sect sometimes called "the Children of Knowledge" even though the title they prefer is an older, much-disputed one: *Solificati*.

All three of us were strangers of a sort in Scotland, Kayla being an American of German / Scottish descent, T.J. being of Scandinavian extraction, and me being... well, me. This club, however, was Kayla's territory: a venture she pursued when the political situation in both England and the United States no longer suited her. As my hosts and I spoke with several associates who had gathered around a scarred oak table, our conversation captured inside a bubble of focused sound that would scramble our words to outside ears but leave them perfectly audible to us, Kayla shared a collection of drinks she had whipped



up for what she called “her special customers”: people who understand the shadowy war waged underneath the perceptions of the Sleeping world.

The names given to these drinks display Kayla’s sardonic commentary on groups (and people) who perhaps take ourselves way too seriously. She also mentioned that she hoped I might understand her tribute to some ‘80s band that I confess I’d never heard of until she explained the story behind what she called her “wild sects in the working class” series of concoctions... a series she considers to be an ongoing project in whatever passes for her not-at-all-spare time. Although there’s nothing “magical” about the drinks themselves, I can say from personal experience that they taste delicious... or, well, *most* of them do, to be honest. I suspect that in several cases the taste of the drink may have taken a back seat to the commentary involved. Kayla would neither confirm nor deny that suspicion. When I asked, she just laughed and finished her drink.



Simple Syrup

An important ingredient in certain drinks, alcoholic and otherwise.

Ingredients

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups water

Preparation

- Pour water into a saucepan. Dissolve sugar into water, while stirring the mixture over medium heat.
- Once it has warmed up but not boiled, remove the saucepan from heat and allow the mixture to cool.
- Store the syrup in a tightly sealed container (preferably glass) in the refrigerator, for up to one month. Use as needed.

Sekahnjebin

A refreshing Persian hospitality drink. For those who can't or don't drink alcoholic concoctions, substitute this recipe for the other drinks in this entry.

Ingredients

- 2 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 bouquet of fresh mint
- sprigs of fresh mint
- 2-3 tbsp of grated cucumber for each drink

Preparation

- Put the water and sugar into a 2-quart [2 l] steel pot. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat.
- Remove pot from stove, and drop the bouquet of mint into the hot syrup. Cover the pot, and allow the syrup to cool completely.
- When mixture is cool, remove the mint plants, discard them, and pour the syrup into a glass or ceramic jar. This syrup will keep fresh for a long time without refrigeration, so long as it is kept out of direct sunlight.
- To serve, pour roughly 3-4 oz [89-118 ml] of syrup into a glass, top it off with cool water (and perhaps ice, if desired). Add 2-3 tablespoons of grated cucumber to each drink, and garnish with sprigs of fresh mint.

The Amazon

“Stand tall, and take no nonsense.”

Ingredients

Glassware: 3 shot glasses
3 oz [90 ml] Sambuca
3 oz [90 ml] Kahlua
3 oz [90 ml] raki or ouzo

Preparation

- Divide liquor between the three shot glasses, and enjoy with friends. War-cries and man-bashing not required, but often fun.

The Big Hoodoo

“Let it take you over.”

Ingredients

Glassware: 3 shot glasses, 1 water glass
1 shot VooDoo Hemp Rum
1 shot Captain Morgan’s Cherry Spiced Rum
1 shot amaretto syrup

Preparation

- Measure out three shots, and then pour them, in order, into the water glass.
- Best enjoyed with a good cigar.

The Choirgirl

“Classic and lyrical without the frills.”

Ingredients

Glassware: 1 pitcher
1 bottle of white wine (as preferred, sweet not dry)
1 cup of sliced oranges
1/2 cup of grapes
1 cup of strawberries
1/2 cup of raspberries
4 oz [118 ml] triple sec
2 oz [60 ml] brandy

Preparations

- Mix all together into pitcher. Put pitcher in refrigerator for an hour or more.
- Pour into wine glasses. Drink. Simple and good.



The Code Monkey

“Try to hide it with class, but you’re still a Mt. Dew-swilling hacker.”

Ingredients

Glassware: Collins glass
1/3 oz [10 ml] Dude Vodka
1/3 oz [10 ml] Gold Tequila
1/3 oz [10 ml] silver rum
1/3 oz [10 ml] Midori
1 can of Mt. Dew

Preparation

- In the Collins glass, add Dude Vodka, Gold Tequila, silver rum, and Midori.
- Fill the remainder of the glass with Mt. Dew.
- Garnish with a cherry, and perhaps a small computer cable.

The Darkling’s Dare

“Head like a hole / Black as your soul...”

Ingredients

Glass: hurricane glass
1 oz [30 ml] Kapali
1/3 oz [10 ml] whipped vodka
1/3 oz [10 ml] raspberry liqueur
iced black coffee

Preparation

- In a hurricane glass filled with ice, layer Kapali, raspberry liqueur, and whipped vodka.
- Fill with iced coffee, and then sweeten it to your liking.

The Dragon Tiger Prince

"All is perfect under heaven."

Ingredients

Glassware: Irish coffee glass
1 oz [30 ml] Dragonberry Rum
1 bag of Dragon Well tea
1 oz [30 ml] simple syrup
hot water

Preparation

- In an Irish coffee glass, add Dragonberry Rum to the simple syrup.
- Add hot water, and let the tea steep in that mixture, to your liking.

The Flames of Wrath

"Cast Fireball..."

Ingredients

Glassware: Irish coffee glass
1 oz [30 ml] Dansk Mjod mead
1 oz [30 ml] Fireball Cinnamon Whiskey
1 hot cider packet
hot water

Preparation

- Mix the mead, Fireball, and hot cider mix into the Irish coffee glass. Add hot water slowly as you stir. Simple, yet effective!

The Keeper of the Great Seal

"What is your wish, my master?"

Ingredients

Glassware: coffee mug
2 oz [60 ml] vanilla vodka
1/2 oz [15 ml] simple syrup
1/2 oz [15 ml] Jagermeister (optional)
Black Turkish coffee

Preparation

- Add vodka and simple syrup into the coffee mug.
- Top off with hot coffee, and float in some Jagermeister if desired.

The Kung Fu Kid

"Mystical, mind-clearing, and it packs a punch."

Ingredients

Glassware: 14 oz glass [414 ml] (with ice)

1 oz [30 ml] Oolong tea simple syrup

1 1/2 oz [45 ml] vodka

1-2 orange slices

mint sprigs

soda water

Preparation

- After making simple syrup, steep 1-3 tea bags of your favorite Oolong tea in the hot syrup. Allow to cool before making drink.
- In the glass, place orange slices and mint in the bottom of the glass, and then muddle them together.
- Fill the glass with ice. Pour in vodka, follow with the Oolong tea syrup, and fill with soda water.
- Garnish with mint sprigs.



The Little Good Death

“Life and Death in one glass.”

Ingredients

Glassware: martini shell, chilled
1 1/2 oz [45 ml] Death’s Door gin
1 oz [30 ml] live probiotic kimchi brine
1/2 oz [15 ml] raki or dry vermouth

Preparation

- In metal tumbler with ice, pour in Death’s Door gin, kimchi brine, and dry vermouth or Greek raki.
- Stir until the outside of the metal tumbler is frosty.

The Mad Doctor

“Just Victorian enough to still be modern.”

Ingredients

Glassware: stemless white-wine glass, chilled
1 1/2 oz [45 ml] sweet sherry
1 1/2 oz [45 ml] Malfy gin
2 lemon wedges
1 oz [30 ml] sweetened pomegranate syrup
1 orange wedge garnish

Preparation

- In metal tumbler, muddle lemon wedges, and then add ice.
- Pour in sweet sherry and Malfy gin.
- Stir until frost forms on the outside of the tumbler.
- Strain liquid into the white-wine glass.
- Carefully pour the pomegranate syrup down the inside wall of the white-wine glass.
- Add orange wedge for garnish.

The Magic Man

“Cool and dry”

Ingredients

Glassware: chilled stemmed martini glass
1 oz [30 ml] Ketel One Vodka
1 oz [30 ml] Hendrick’s Gin
1/3 oz [9 ml] dry vermouth
cocktail onion garnish

Preparation

- Shake vodka and gin in metal tumbler until ice forms on the outside.
- Pour dry vermouth into the chilled Martini glass, and swirl it around, making sure it covers the entire glass. Then pour it out.
- Strain the contents of the shaker into the martini glass, and garnish with a cocktail onion.

The Man-Machine

“Modified to graft the best parts of a Texas Tea and a Mai Tai into one monster of a drink.”

Ingredients

Glassware: pounder

1/3 oz [9 ml] Tarantula Tequila

1/3 oz [9 ml] Svedka Clementine Vodka

1/3 oz [9 ml] Don Q’s Coconut Rum

1/3 oz [9 ml] Malfy Con Lemon Gin

1/2 oz [15 ml] amaretto

1/3 oz [9 ml] grenadine

pineapple juice

orange juice

sweet-and-sour mix

Preparation

- In a pounder, add in grenadine, then add light ice over the top.
- Add in Tarantula Tequila, Svedka Clementine Vodka, Don Q’s Coconut rum, and the Malfy Con Lemon Gin.
- Then float the amaretto on top, and layer in the sweet-and-sour mix, and pineapple juice.
- Top off with orange juice.

The Medicine Talker

“Time to give back what you have taken.”

Ingredients

Glassware: hurricane glass (with a little bit of ice)

1 oz [30 ml] Kapalli (or favorite coffee liquor)

1 oz [30 ml] grain vodka

1 pinch of powdered cardamom

1 tsp of honey

ginger beer

1 lime wedge (for garnish)

Preparation

- Fill Hurricane glass halfway with ice. In a mixing cup, using a toothpick, mix the cardamom, honey, and a very small amount of the vodka. When finished, pour over the ice inside the glass.
- Add Kapalli and vodka, and then fill with Ginger beer.
- Garnish with a lime.

The Moreau

“Altered to the point of perfection.”

Ingredients

Glassware: pint glass
green tomato mixer (see below)
2 oz [60 ml] potato vodka
1 skinned carrot
lemon pepper seasoning
kosher salt

For the Green Tomato Mixer

2 cups tomatillo juice (or green tomato juice)
1/2 of a peeled yellow onion
2 celery stalks
2 oz [60 ml] lime juice
2 cloves of garlic
1 tsp celery salt
1 tsp black pepper
2 dashes of Green Tabasco Sauce

Preparations

- Combine all green tomato mixer ingredients into a blender, and blend until smooth. Let chill before using.
- Combine mixer into a glass with the remaining ingredients. Serve cold.

The Night Tide

“Cool as moonlight on wet black sands.”

Ingredients

Glassware: Collins glass
1 oz [30 ml] Spiritopia ginger
1 oz [30 ml] Okolehao (or moonshine)
1 oz [30 ml] simple syrup
coconut milk

Preparation

- In a metal tumbler filled with ice mix, all ingredients, and then stir until ice frost forms on the tumbler.
- Strain into Collins glass, and top with chilled coconut milk.

The Nubian Sage

"What's a Nubian?"

Ingredients

Glassware: bucket glass

1/2 oz [15 ml] hibiscus liqueur

1 oz [30 ml] honey

1 1/2 oz [45 ml] vodka

soda water

Preparation

- Mix all of the ingredients in the bucket glass, with ice.
- Stir well before drinking.
- If necessary, substitute *sekahnjebin* (as per that entry) for the liqueur and vodka, using soda water instead of pure water in the final drink.



The Mr. Spaceman

"Like being plunged into the dark before being devoured whole."

Ingredients

Glassware: pounder and a shot glass.

1 oz [30 ml] Blackmaker Liquor

1/2 oz [15 ml] Jagermeister

Ball's Geek Beer

Preparation

- Pour around 5 oz [148 ml] of the Ball's Geek Beer into the pounder.
- In the shot glass, add both Blackmaker and Jagermeister.
- Serve this drink as a bomb / drop shot.

The Reality Cop

"You will forget."

Ingredients

Glassware: bucket glass

1 oz [30 ml] Kapali (coffee liqueur)

1 oz [30 ml] whipped vodka

1 oz [30 ml] clear creme de cacao

soda water

Preparation

- Pour Kapali, whipped vodka, and creme de cacao into the bucket glass.
- Add ice, and top off with soda water.
- Use a zombie straw to drink this mixture quickly, like a mind-eraser.

The Shining Dragon

"Let the faerie wear the crown."

Ingredients

Glassware: martini shell

1 oz [30 ml] creme de cacao

1 oz [30 ml] absinthe

1 oz [30 ml] cream

Preparation

- In a metal tumbler filled with ice, mix the creme de cacao, absinthe, and cream.
- Shake until ice forms on the outside of the tumbler.
- Pour into martini shell. Garnish with a mint sprig.

The Subtle Bastard

"A little bit of everything from everywhere."

Ingredients

Glassware: pint glass
1/3 oz [9 ml] Cachaça
1/3 oz [9 ml] moonshine
1/3 oz [9 ml] Genever
1/3 oz [9 ml] triple sec
1/3 oz [9 ml] honey
cranberry juice

Preparation

- Rim the pint glass with honey.
- Add ice inside the glass, and then pour in the Cachaça, moonshine, and Genever.
- Add triple sec. Top with cranberry juice.
- For guests who do not drink fermented alcohol, substitute the alcohol with sekahnjebin.

The Tankard of St. George

"God wills it."

(I confess, I chuckled at that name, though I really shouldn't have.)

Ingredients

Glassware: 14 oz [414 ml] metal mug
1 oz [30 ml] whiskey
1 oz [30 ml] amaretto
4 oz [118 ml] mead
Coca-Cola

Preparation

- In a metal mug filled with crushed ice, mix the mead and all liquor.
- Top off with some Coke.

The Time Tripper

"One look and you'll want one too!"

Ingredients

Glassware: hurricane glass, with ice

1/2 oz [15 ml] amaretto

1/2 oz [15 ml] silver rum

1/2 oz [15 ml] grenadine

1/2 oz [15 ml] blue curacao (topping it off)

fill 1/2 of remaining glass with pineapple juice

fill 1/2 with orange soda (topping it off)

Preparation

- In the hurricane glass, pour in the grenadine, and then add ice.
- Layer in blue curacao, amaretto, pineapple juice, then amaretto, top off with orange soda, and then float the silver rum on the very top layer.

The Witchie-Poo

"And your little dog, too!"

Ingredients

Glassware: pint glass

2 oz [60 ml] Rouge GYO Single Malt Whiskey

Montreal seasoning

Bloody Mary mixer (below)

1 celery stalk

1 piece of bacon

For the Bloody Mary Mix

2 cups tomato juice

1/2 of a peeled white onion

2 celery stalks

2 oz [60 ml] lemon juice

1 red pepper

1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp celery salt

1/2 tsp horseradish

1 tsp black pepper

2 dashes of Tabasco sauce

1 sweet pepper

Preparation

- Combine all Bloody Mary mix ingredients into a blender, and blend until smooth. Let chill before using.
- In metal tumbler with ice, add whiskey, and then shake until frost forms on the metal.
- Rim pint glass in Montreal seasoning.
- Pour whiskey and Bloody Mary mix into the pint glass, and then garnish with the bacon and celery stalk.

Specialty Drinks

Generally given “on the house,” only to the right people.

The Digital Web

“Almost like real life, and yet not quite.”

Ingredients

Glassware: rocks glass
1 oz [30 ml] Peach Schnapps
1 oz [30 ml] Midori
1 oz [30 ml] Blue Curacao
1 oz [30 ml] Irish Cream
grenadine

Preparation

- Layer Peach Schnapps, Blue Curacao, and Midori.
- Float the Irish cream on top, and then carefully drip the grenadine into the center of the glass.
- Best enjoyed while surfing online.

MECHA Grease

“It gets between your gears.”

Ingredients

Glassware: beer stein and shot glass
Irish Death (or your choice of dark beer)
1/2 oz [15 ml] Rogue Dead Guy Whiskey
1/2 oz [15 ml] honey whiskey

Preparation

- Fill the beer stein 3/4 full of Irish Death.
- Add Honey Whiskey and Rogue Whiskey to shot glass.
- To drink, drop the shot glass into the beer stein, and then down the drink in one go.

The Orphan

“Surely I don’t need to explain this one.”

Ingredients

Glassware: water glass
cold water

Preparation

- Pour water into glass.
- Add alcohol as desired.
- Drink alone.

Porthos’ Revenge

“Hot and fiery, as in spicy, and rum as in... well, rum.”

Ingredients

Glassware: Collins glass
1 1/2 oz [15 ml] Silver Rum
1 oz [30 ml] simple syrup
soda water
1 jalapeno pepper
3 lime wedges
sprigs of mint

Preparation

- Muddle mint, jalapeno, and 2 lime wedges in bottom of glass.
- Fill glass with ice, and then add in rum and simple syrup.
- Fill with soda water, and garnish with lime.

The Secret Agent

“So arcane even HE doesn’t know who he is.”

Ingredients

Glass: Pounder
John Courage Pale Ale
Founder’s Rubaeus

Preparation

- Fill half the pounder with John Courage Pale Ale.
- Using a spoon or beer turtle, layer the Rubeus over the top.
- Don’t let anyone else see you drinking it.

CULT OF FESTAS



New England Lobster Bisque, with Crusty Bread

While traveling to conduct a training exercise for some brethren in coastal Maine, I happened to pass through the tiny hamlet of Tupper's Landing. Here, I discovered a surprisingly robust art- and-music collective made up of a handful of Ecstasies, a few other Awakened ones of undisclosed tradition, and a motley collection of those people the Sahajiya call "sleepwalkers." This delightfully intense and odd bunch took what was once a dying fishing village, and transformed it into a vibrant experiment in Enlightened communal living. I couldn't stay long upon my first encounter, but on the return trip, I made a point to stay for a few days and really take a look around.

The place looks like a picture postcard, exactly what I always imagined a coastal town in Maine would look like. But behind those traditional facades awaits an explosion of delights to stimulate the mind and the senses. From my conversations with residents and frequent visitors, it's clear that all who wish to do so are welcome to grow, create, experience, and contribute to the community, which draws a steady stream of visitors and tourists seeking farm-to-table and sea-to-table dining; peaceful bed-and-breakfasts; edgy experimental theatre; vibrant, original music; and wildly original art. In addition, those people (Awakened and otherwise) who enjoy the application

of consciousness-expanding drugs can also find quite a variety of substances and experiences to satisfy and delight.

The owner of Cricket's Place, the bed-and-breakfast where I stayed, goes by the name of Radha. She embraced the idea of a communal underground dinner with open heart and arms, though we didn't quite follow the original rules. We decided to give the participants a day or so to think about what they wanted to prepare and to gather their ingredients. Together with her partner Brianna, Radha cooked up the most decadent pot of lobster bisque I have ever put in my mouth and served it up with a simple, crispy, crusty bread that required very little work at all.

They started their bisque with a seasoned roux, and then built the rest on a gorgeous seafood stock that they had on hand. If you really want to go all-in on this one, I recommend making your own stock. If that's not possible, you can substitute store-bought chicken stock. Likewise, we were able to hunt for fresh mushrooms, since they were in season, and came back with a remarkable gathering of oysters and chanterelles. Not everyone is lucky enough to be able to do that, so if you can't find the fancy mushrooms, portabellas, or even humble white mushrooms will still do just fine. I warn you, though: this recipe is *not* for those who are watching their waistlines or are otherwise afraid to indulge!



Lobster and Mushroom Bisque

Ingredients

4-5 lobster tails and claws
1-3 lumps of crab meat
1/2 lb [227 g] shrimp, peeled and deveined
butter (1 stick, or more if needed)
2 cups of mushrooms, cleaned and roughly chopped
fresh flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
3 or 4 shallots, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup flour
2 cups of stock (see below), or dry white wine
4 cups half-and-half
cream sherry
sprigs of fresh thyme
salt
paprika or cayenne pepper

Preparation

Preparing Your Own Stock

- Clean the meat from the claws and tails of the lobster, and peel and devein the shrimp, reserving all of the shells.
- In a stockpot, add enough olive oil to coat the bottom of the pot, and turn on the heat to medium-high.
- Once the oil is warm but not yet hot, add in about half of a large onion, sliced; 3-4 cloves of garlic, peeled and smashed; a bay leaf, a few sprigs of fresh thyme, and a sprinkling of red pepper flakes, along with the shells.
- Sauté until the onions soften and the whole mixture smells fragrant.
- Add about two cups of white wine, and then allow this mixture to come to a low boil again. Then add enough cold water to just cover the shells, and bring the mix to a low boil once more.
- Turn the heat down, and allow to simmer for about 40 -45 minutes.
- Remove from heat, season to taste, and allow to cool slightly before pouring broth through a strainer.

Preparing the Meal

- In a large pan, melt half a stick of butter (about 1/4 cup) over medium heat, and allow it to get golden brown and bubbly.
- Throw in shallots, garlic, and mushrooms, and cook until the shallots and mushrooms are browned. Set aside.
- In a large pot, melt the other half of the stick of butter until it's golden and bubbly.

- Whisk in about 1/4 cup of all-purpose flour, or enough to make a roux. Stir until the flour is a dark golden brown, then pour in two cups of the broth (or white wine, if you choose not to use broth). Whisk together to incorporate and smooth out the roux.
- When the mixture begins to thicken, add one cup of the half-and-half. Stir until the mixture thickens, then add the next cup of half-and-half. Repeat this process until all the half-and-half is incorporated and you have a thick and creamy soup base.
- Add in the fresh thyme, chopped parsley, shrimp, crab meat, and lobster, and then allow it all to cook until the shrimp are opaque and coral-colored.
- Turn off the heat and add in the reserved mushroom mixture.
- Season with salt, pepper, and a few tablespoons of cream sherry, to taste. Let the bisque sit, covered for about 2-3 minutes, to allow the flavors to marry, then serve with a sprinkle of paprika or cayenne pepper.



Crusty Bread

Don't be afraid to bake your own bread! I will never understand the cult of prestige that has built itself up around this idea of "artisanal" bread... as if ordinary people haven't been mixing flour, water, and yeast together and baking it for thousands of years. There's no great mystery to great bread (though there is quite a bit of science – more about that later!). It carries the name, "the staff of life," and remains one of the most uncomplicated foods on the planet for a reason. If you want a good, easy recipe to get you started on the bread-baking path, this is a great one.

Ingredients

- 1 package active, dry yeast (about 1 1/2 tablespoons)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 6 1/2 cups unbleached, all-purpose flour (plus enough for the board)
- cornmeal
- silicone baking mat (or pizza peel and parchment paper)
- baking stone, or inverted cookie sheet
- broiler pan

Preparation

Two-to-Four Hours Ahead of Baking

- Mix yeast and salt with three cups of warm water (about °100 F [°38 C]) in a large bowl.
- Stir in the flour to make a loose, sticky dough. (Radha used a stand mixer with the paddle attachment to mix everything, and then used a spatula to work with the dough after that. Kitchen gloves help, too.)
- Cover the bowl with a warm, damp kitchen towel, and let the dough rise at room temperature (about °72 F [°22 C]) for at least two hours, but no more than five hours.

Shaping the Dough

- Sprinkle a bit of flour on the dough and, with a serrated knife, cut off a chunk of dough about the size of a large grapefruit.
- Rub a little bit of olive oil on your hands – not dripping with it, but enough to form a barrier between your skin and the sticky dough.
- Turning the dough in your hands, gently stretch the outer edge of the piece to the bottom, leaving a smooth, rounded top, and a somewhat lumpy bottom.
- Ideally, a pizza peel is a handy tool to have for this next step; if you don't have one, you can use a silicone baking mat or a rimless cookie sheet and some parchment paper. Lay out your baking mat, dust liberally with cornmeal, and place your rounded piece of dough on the baking mat. Repeat shaping with the rest of the dough, or you can cover and refrigerate the remainder for up to two weeks. Allow your shaped dough to rest for 40 minutes.

Prepare Your Oven

- Arrange your oven racks so that one is at the very bottom of the oven and one is in the middle of the oven. Place a broiler pan on the bottom rack, and place a baking stone on the middle one. If you do not have a baking stone, you can invert a cookie sheet with a shallow rim as a substitute.
- Preheat the oven to 450 F [230 C]. Once that temperature is achieved, allow your baking stone to heat at that temperature for about 20 minutes.

Baking Your Bread

- Lightly dust the rested dough with a bit of flour, then take a very sharp knife and make two or three slashes across the top.
- Slide your baking mat onto the baking stone (or use your rimless cookie sheet to slide the parchment paper onto the baking surface), then quickly pour a cup of water into the hot broiler pan, shutting the door quickly to trap the steam.
- Bake for 30 minutes, or until the bread is deeply browned.



DREAMSPEAKERS

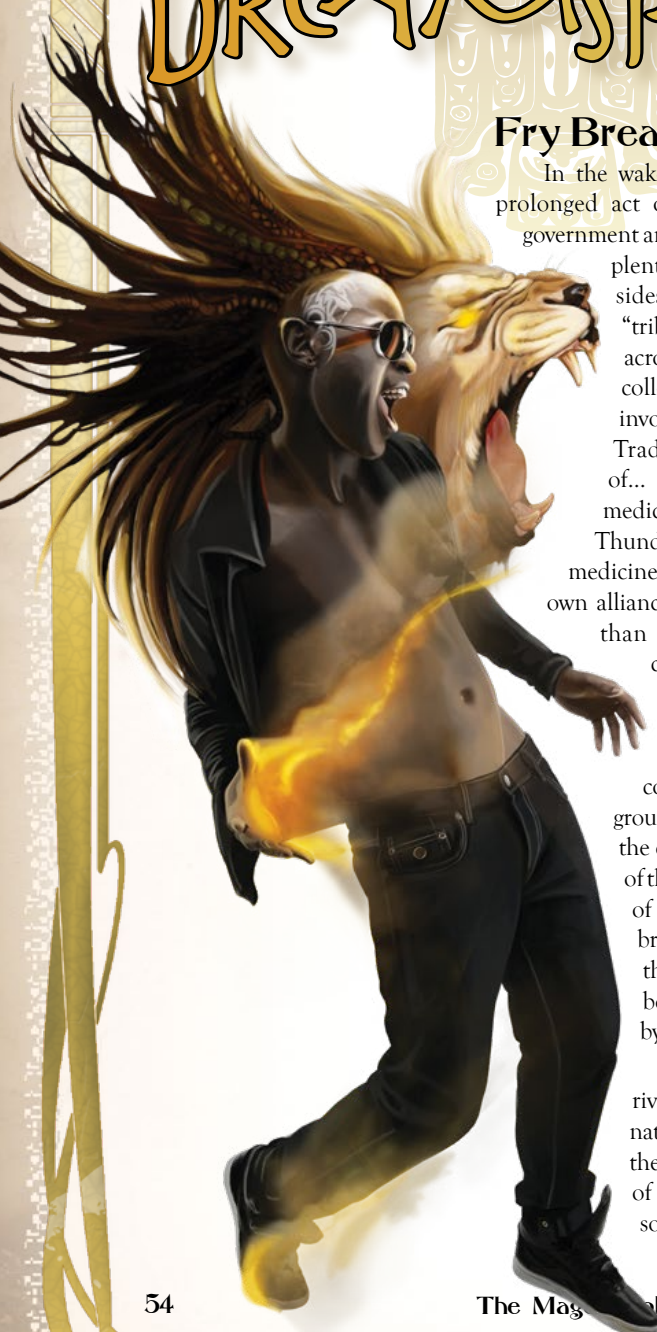
Fry Bread and Wojapi

In the wake of the Standing Rock gatherings – a prolonged act of defiance against the United States government and its “corporate citizens,” which involved plenty of metaphysical involvement on all sides of the dispute – the long-fractured “tribal” society of Indigenous people from across the world began a powerful act of collective healing. Part of this healing process involved members of the “Dreamspeaker” Tradition (an essentially forced collective of... dare I say it... disparate shamanic and medicine traditions) joining hands with the Thunder Society: a group of Native American medicine people who have chosen to forge their own alliances within the Enlightened world, rather than to define their company within the confines of the Dreamspeaker Tradition.

Claiming allegiance to a variety of tribes and nations, some of which I had never heard of before in my life, the goal of this collaboration involves advocacy, education, group healing, and collective protection; that is, the celebration of Native peoples, the sharing of their perspectives on history, the reclaiming of cultures and languages that teeter on the brink of extinction, and the resistance against the enemies which have so long divided both their people and my own... resistance by force, if need be.

This reconciliation between longtime rivals speaks volumes about the changing nature of these times we live in. Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting with several members of what may become a new Enlightened society in its own right.

Among this new-flowering fellowship,



a young friend of mine named Anna Se-se-pui-che (who couldn't have been older than nineteen) displays a prodigious talent for manipulating the delicate threads of time within the realms of spirit. After a long period of meditation and preparation – wherein I noticed that she constructs an invisible, protective cocoon of energy around her – Anna sends her spirit forth down the paths of history to witness the ancestors first-hand, before the arrival of white invaders. She learns language, stories, dances, rituals, and then returns to recount them to her comrades. This learning process takes several weeks... at the end of which, another member of the group places her into a deep, restorative slumber for at least three days. Then, the lot of them piles into a giant SUV to visit Native enclaves all across the Americas, sharing their newly learned wisdom. Last I heard, they had plans to arrange a Native cruise of the Caribbean, where the lost languages of the Taino and Carib peoples will be taught along with the true and authentic methods for making *barbacoa*: The food most of us around the world call *barbecue*.

I was delighted to discover that pie is universal, particularly fruit pie, which in North America is something of a beloved national dessert; “as American as apple pie,” or so the saying goes, but I suspect that a vast many Americans would be shocked to learn exactly how much truth is in that statement. Apples weren't indigenous to North America, of course, but the Native peoples had plenty of other wild fruits and berries to choose from when making the sweet fruit sauce used to fill their pockets of fried bread. Today, this tradition continues in the form of fry bread and wojapi, which is made with Bing cherries, blueberries, and other more-modern fruits instead of the wild choke cherries that were originally used.

Fry bread itself has a rather interesting history. During the awful and terrifying period of forced removal of Native peoples that included the Trail of Tears and the Long Walk, a group of Apache and Navajo people being held at Bosque Redondo, near Fort Sumner, had to find some way to survive on the rations of flour, lard, sugar, salt, powdered milk, yeast, and baking powder provided by the U.S. government. Thus was fry bread born out of severe adversity, to become one of the most ubiquitous staple foods among modern Native American people. When I traveled with Anna and her companions, we ate this for breakfast nearly every morning.

Navajo Fry Bread

Ingredients

- 4 cups all-purpose white flour
- 2 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 cups warm water
- about 2 1/2 cups vegetable oil or shortening (for frying)

Preparation

- In a large bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Gradually stir in the water, until a soft, workable dough forms that does not stick to the bowl.
- Knead the dough on a lightly floured surface for five minutes. Then return the dough to the bowl, cover with a clean towel, and allow it to rest and rise for 30 minutes.
- Shape the dough into about 12 or 16 evenly-shaped balls. You may pat the dough from hand to hand (like pizza dough) to shape it; or you may use a rolling pin to roll it out to 1/2-inch thickness on a lightly floured board. For crispier bread, roll the dough to 1/4-inch thickness. When done, the dough should have stretched to a circular shape that is about 10-12 inches in diameter. Poke a small hole in the center of the round.
- Repeat this process with the rest of the dough.
- Pour about 1 1/2 inches [38 mm] of oil into a large, well-seasoned cast-iron skillet or frying pan, and then heat over medium heat until the oil shimmers: hot, but not smoking.
- Carefully slip a round of dough into the hot oil, and cook until the dough turns golden brown and puffs up (about 1 to 2 minutes).
- Turn over with a fork, and cook until both sides are golden brown.
- Remove and drain on paper towels to absorb the excess oil. Repeat the process with each piece of dough. Keep the bread warm between two clean kitchen towels in an oven set on low or warm.
- Serve at once, either plain, sprinkled with powdered sugar, or topped with wojapi.

Wojapi

Ingredients

- 6 cups of fresh cherries, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, or strawberries
- 1 cup of water
- honey or sugar*
- 1 tbsp of cornstarch for thickness*

* *Traditional wojapi did not make use of sweetener or cornstarch. It was made with fresh, ripe, and naturally sweet berries, and the mixture was reduced over the course of hours until it had a thick, concentrated consistency. Given the scarcity of places in which to pick fresh berries, and the woeful state of fresh fruit in the supermarkets these days, you may need to sweeten your berries. Likewise, you may wish for your wojapi to have a more pudding-like consistency. In that case, cornstarch is a convenient and easy way to achieve this.*

Preparation

- Clean the berries and place them in a large bowl.
- Using a potato masher, crush the berries well.
- Add the fruit, water, and sugar /honey to a large saucepan, and bring to a boil over medium heat.
- Stir often, being careful not to burn the berries.
- Reduce the heat, and simmer on low heat for one hour, stirring constantly. Watch your pot carefully, because if the berries burn, the scorched taste will permeate the entire mixture and you'll have to throw it out and start again.
- As the fruit reduces, taste occasionally to see if you need to add more sugar or honey.
- At this point, continue to simmer and reduce the berry mix to the desired thickness. If you wish to have a more pudding-like consistency, place one tablespoon of cornstarch into a cup, and add just enough cold water to make a pourable slurry. Stir well to ensure that there are no lumps.
- Then slowly add the cornstarch mixture to the hot fruit, and stir until you have achieved the desired thickness.

EUTHANATOS

Muamba Nsusu, with Corn Fufu

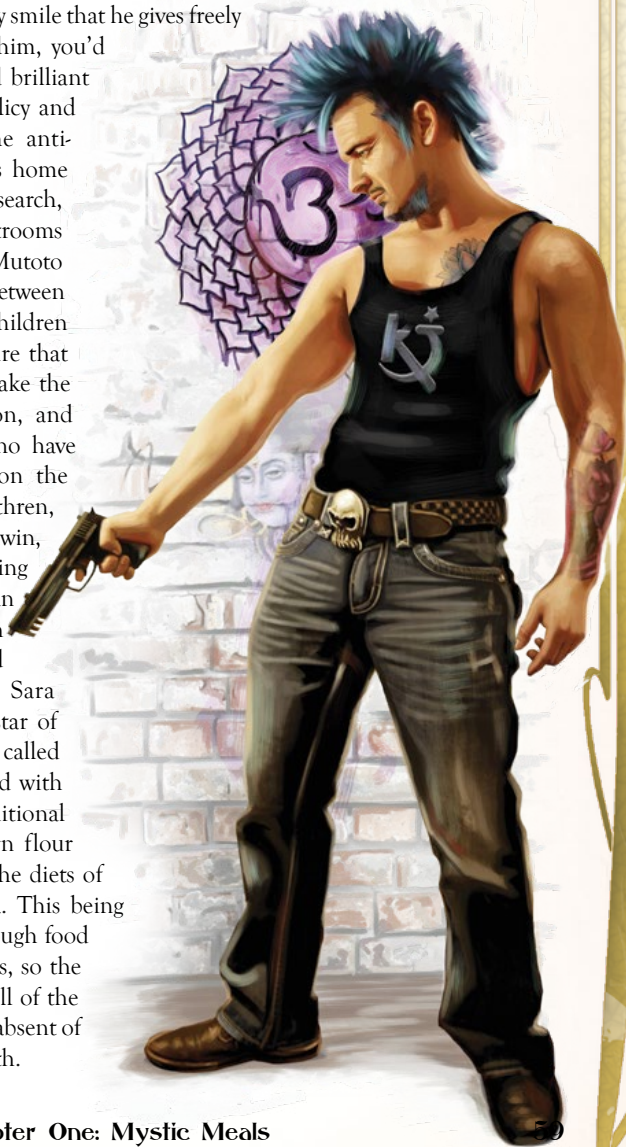
The conflict between Muslims and Christians in the Central African Republic has been going on for roughly a decade now, though you'd never know about it for all that the Western news media chooses to ignore the plight of the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing the bloody carnage. The vast majority of those refugees are young women and children under the age of 18, forced to leave their homes for fear of being raped, murdered, or both. Both my Brethren and the Ngoma, along with other non-affiliated Enlightened folk in the area, have taken it upon ourselves to strengthen and support human-rights efforts to aid these refugees as they flood into neighboring Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Unlike the situation in Syria, there are few official refugee camps waiting across the Ubangi River, the terrain there being mostly uninhabited and undeveloped due to its proximity to a number of wildlife preserves. What exists in that region are tiny villages and hamlets; communities that have selflessly welcomed these unfortunate people into their walls, and have shared their shelter, food, and water with them. Along with UNICEF and other international aid agencies, the Enlightened work tirelessly to ease the burden on these small towns and provide as much support as possible by opening and operating free impromptu grammar schools, as well as by funneling vital supplies like food and medicine to the refugees. Further complicating the situation, the DRC is itself suffering under the strain of armed conflict; her people starve while international investors siphon billions from them through the sale of gold, diamonds, and other conflict minerals. Given its vast natural resources, it's quite possible that the DRC could be one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Sadly, however, the exploitation of Africa continues, even in these supposedly modern times.

As much as I detest the so-called "Thanatoic" sects in many regards, I have witnessed firsthand the compassionate nature of these so-called "death mages." Beyond their fearsome – some would say murderous – reputation... a reputation that, as I can attest, is well-deserved in certain regards... I have also witnessed members of the Euthanatos Tradition aiding refugees from this horrific conflict, healing memories and bodies that have been scarred by torture and abuse, and when necessary (as it all too often is) purging unsalvageable offenders from this world. As a Christian, I cannot square my own faith with the reincarnationist beliefs of these ferocious magi. And yet, as a Warrior of Christ and a member of God's own crusade against the Fallen Ones, I cannot honestly begrudge these "surgeons of reality" their more militant tendencies. I can dispute their beliefs (which I do), debate their methods (which I have), and attempt to steer them to a cleaner path of Enlightenment than the one I find so morally reprehensible. In this fallen (perhaps literally Fallen) world of ours, however, even I must admit that harsh methods and deadly justice are necessities more often than we would often wish they were.

Given the Tradition's rather inexplicable Greek name (one that tends to be used incorrectly, even by the mages themselves), it's easy to forget the sect's origins in Classical India, Arabia, and Africa. One oft-neglected group among them, the secretive Madzimbabwe, even hails from Central and Southern Africa. Existing between the shadows of the Islamicized world, these Thanatoic holdovers – as with their rivals and occasional allies, the Ngoma – retain an intimate understanding of the role of death in the midst of life. Heretics and witch-doctors in the eyes of many outsiders, these people inhabit an especially dangerous world where the slightest misstep can bring devilish tortures and a very messy death. As much as I dislike and disagree with the precepts of these fearsome souls, I continue to pray for their salvation, respect their courage, and occasionally even call a few of them friends.

One of my dearest friends in this world, Mutoto Tambwe, is a tall, lean man with bright eyes, a strong handshake, and a ready smile that he gives freely to all who meet him. Looking at him, you'd never guess that he's a wealthy and brilliant lawyer specializing in economic policy and spearheading a great many of the anti-corruption efforts underway in his home country. When he's not buried in research, or fighting the good fight in courtrooms and boardrooms across the world, Mutoto can be found in that no-man's land between the CAR and the DRC, teaching children how to read and count, making sure that everyone has what they need to make the best of the worst-possible situation, and occasionally "removing" parties who have inflicted unforgiveable crimes upon the innocent. A contingent of the Brethren, headed by the indomitable Sara Goodwin, operates in tandem with him, ensuring that the displaced people there can find a small oasis of peace – an eye in the storm of war. When I last visited their headquarters, Mutoto and Sara prepared a magnificent feast, the star of which was a rich peanut-butter stew called *muamba nsusu*. This meal was served with skewers of vegetables and the traditional *fufu*: a light dough made from corn flour and water that is a staple food in the diets of many people across Central Africa. This being Mutoto, the two of them made enough food to feed the surrounding five villages, so the feast was a loud and lively event, full of the laughter of children and thankfully absent of the all-too-frequent presence of death.



Chapter One: Mystic Meals

Muamba Nsusu

Ingredients

For the Soup

- 3 lbs [1.36 kg] of dark-meat chicken on the bone (drumsticks or thighs)
- 3 tbsps of palm oil (or coconut oil)
- 1 large yellow onion
- 1 hot chili pepper, diced (or 1/4 tsp of cayenne pepper)
- 1 large carrot
- 4 large tomatoes, diced, (or one 14 oz can of diced tomatoes)
- 4 oz [113 g] tomato paste
- 1 cup of peanut butter
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp cumin
- salt, to taste*
- grated zest of one lemon
- 1/4 cup of crushed peanuts
- 1/4 cup of chopped green onions

* *Avoid the temptation to add too much salt to this soup, as it can overpower the subtle sweetness of the peanut butter and the onions. Likewise, the chili may be omitted if you prefer a milder-flavored soup.*

Preparation

- Chop the carrot into 3 or 4 large pieces, and place them with the chicken parts in a large stockpot. Add enough water to cover the carrots and chicken, and bring to a boil over medium heat.
- While the chicken is cooking, finely dice the onion and chili pepper (if you are using a fresh chili). Heat the palm oil in a pan, and sauté the onion and chili until the onion is lightly caramelized. Set this aside.
- When the chicken is cooked through, remove it from the pot. Reserve 1 cup of the stock and set aside, leaving the remainder in the pot. When the chicken is cool enough to handle, remove the bones and pull it into shreds. Set aside.
- In a small saucepan, melt the peanut butter over low heat. Add 3-4 ladles of stock, stirring often until the mixture is a smooth, creamy consistency.
- Add the peanut butter mixture back into the reserved stock in the stock pot.
- Add the rest of the ingredients into the soup and simmer until it is thickened to your liking.

Corn Fufu

Ingredients

- 2 cups chicken stock (see above)
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 tsp of salt
- 3/4 cup of corn flour

Preparation

- Pour the stock and the water into a saucepan with the salt, and then bring it to a boil over medium heat.
- Slowly stir or whisk in about half of the corn flour. Stir continuously for about 1 to 2 minutes, and then slowly add in half of the remaining corn flour.
- Continue to stir until the mixture begins to thicken and the lumpiness begins to smooth out. Add in enough corn flour to achieve a consistency like stiff mashed potatoes.
- Form the fufu into dumpling-sized balls, and place them into soup bowls. Ladle the muamba nsusu over the fufu, and garnish with crushed peanuts and green onions.



HOLLOW ONES

Decadent Desserts

The Brethren of my order prize restraint, modesty, and moderation (if not Spartanism) in all things. Some people, though, find wisdom in decadence... or, at least, in the superficial decadence of comfortable indulgences if not the outright selfishness of dedicated hedonism. While meeting with some contacts in Luxembourg City, I cast an admittedly wary eye over the club (a covert hangout named after an infamous but obscure French story from the Decadent school of literature) while enjoying a delectable dessert courtesy of our meeting's host, who goes by the name

Marcus Aurelius, and his lovely wife, Isabelle. Decked out in lush black finery with a rakishly romantic air, Isabelle and Marcus presented a deceptively blasé façade while exposing a traitor in their group - and they did it so skillfully that he didn't even realize the import of what they had said until the noose, so to speak, was tight around his neck. They did this, by the way, in the middle of a nightclub, surrounded by unaware innocents who never realized what was going on. People who underestimate the "Goth kids" that take their name from T.S. Eliot's poem do so at extreme peril.

As with so many things they do, the Hollow Ones (or, as many of them prefer to be called, the *Darklings*) have made an art of luxury while managing... in typically artistic fashion... to underscore luxury's illusions. They put on a great show to disguise how much they really care. I have seen Marcus and Isabelle comfort homeless children in the streets of Paris, calm a madman in a Berlin gutter, talk down a panicked girl who had combined hallucinogens and alcohol in a mob full of strangers, and free a clutch of Russian girls from a basement slave-market beneath the apparently tranquil streets of Marseille. And so, while I can't



pretend to understand or share their extravagant aesthetics, I appreciate their courage and enjoy their taste in food.

This “red and black trifle,” according to Isabelle, comes from the salons of *fin de siècle* Paris, and was supposedly a favorite treat of Jean Genet. Its layer of Port Wine jelly gives the dessert an air of excess and luxury. Meanwhile, the sweetest, syrupiest Ruby Port on the shelf reminds one what a mirage “luxury” really is. Cocoa – alkalized past anything even vaguely resembling nuance – somehow elevates everything else in the dish, while the combination of flavors drives home the fleeting illusion of glorious excess. As Vincent (Marcus’ favorite chef) remarked that night, there’s nothing more Hollow than that.



Chocolate Chiffon Cake

Ingredients

- 3/4 cups granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 oz [45 grams] double-Dutched black cocoa
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 egg white
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 tsp vanilla extract, or vanilla paste

Preparation

- Sift together 1/2 cup of sugar, the flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda, and salt for the chiffon cake. Set aside.
- With a hand mixer, beat egg yolks for the chiffon cake, until they're slightly pale. Turn the speed down to low, and drizzle in the oil, water, and vanilla for the chiffon cake. Gradually add the sifted ingredients, and mix on medium speed until they're just barely combined.
- In another clean large bowl, whip the 3 egg whites with a hand mixer, until soft peaks form. Start on medium speed, and raise speed as peaks begin to form. Gradually pour in the remaining 1/4 cup of sugar, and whip until the whites are shiny and firm, but not stiff.
- With a rubber spatula, fold 1/4 of the whites into the chocolate mixture, then scrape the chocolate mixture back into the whites, quickly folding until completely incorporated.
- Pour the mixture into a greased and floured number "9" shape in your cake pan, and bake at °375 F (°190 C) for 20-22 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean.
- Set the cakes aside to cool, and remove them from the pan as soon as the edges pull away from the sides. If you let the cakes completely cool in the pan, they will be more difficult to take out.

Blackberry Creme Patisserie

Ingredients

- 8 egg yolks
- 12 oz [340 g] blackberries
- 1/4 cup Ruby Port Wine
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup heavy cream

Preparation

- While the cake is baking, add the blackberries, sugar, and Ruby Port for the Creme Patisserie to a small saucepan. Bring the mixture to a boil while smashing the berries with a potato masher or a large fork. Stir regularly.
- Boil down until the mixture reduces into a lumpy syrup and becomes thick and glossy.
- Force the mixture through a fine sieve, in order to separate the syrup from the skin and seeds. Push until the pulp mixture in the sieve becomes fairly tacky and dry.
- Add heavy cream for the Creme Patisserie to the sieved blackberry mixture, and stir thoroughly. Allow this to cool for a few minutes, and then add the egg yolks to the mixture and mix thoroughly.
- Return the mixture to the stove over medium heat. Heat, stirring constantly, until there's light steam on the top of the mixture. Continue to cook at this temperature for 3 minutes while stirring the mixture. The mixture should thickly coat the back of a spoon or spatula.
- Push the custard through a fine sieve, but be sure not to push any solidified bits through the sieve.
- Push plastic wrap down onto the surface of the custard, and put it in the refrigerator to cool.





Port Wine Jelly

Ingredients

3 cups Ruby Port

9 sheets of gelatin, or 3 packets of gelatin powder

0.4 tsp of sugar (to taste, depending on the Port Wine and desired tartness)

Preparation

- Soak your gelatin sheets in water until soft. Squeeze the excess water out.
- Add the gelatin to the Port Wine for the jelly. If you're using powdered gelatin, sprinkle it on top of the port wine in a saucepan, evenly, and allow to sit until the powder is completely moist and blossomed.
- Bring the mixture to a simmer, until the gelatin has completely dissolved. If you used powdered gelatin, pour it through a fine mesh sieve.
- Pour the mixture into two 9-inch [230 mm] round silicone cake pans. Put into the refrigerator for roughly one hour, until it sets up.

Red and Black Trifle

Ingredients

- 1 batch of Port Wine Jelly
- 1 chocolate chiffon cake
- 1 batch of blackberry Creme Patisserie
- 1 lb [454 g] of strawberries
- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 3 tbsps sugar
- scrapings from 1 vanilla bean

Preparations

- Slice the strawberries into half-inch slices.
- Once everything is cooled, cut your cake into half-inch strips.
- Add the heavy cream, sugar, and vanilla for the whipped cream into a bowl. Whip the mixture until peaks form.
- Fill your trifle dish with the components above, in the following order:
 - ◇ 1/2 of the cake slices layered in the bottom of your trifle dish.
 - ◇ 1/2 of the Creme Patisserie.
 - ◇ 1 of the sheets of jelly. (If you're very good, and can get the jelly layers in a single piece, that's great, but breaking the jelly up to create a layer in pieces doesn't impact the final dish).
 - ◇ 1/2 of the sliced strawberries.
 - ◇ 1/2 of the whipped cream.
- Repeat for a second set of layers.
- Refrigerate for at least 1 hour, to allow the flavors to mingle and the texture to set.
- Serve, preferably with a fine wine, or (if you're truly decadent!) a glass or two of absinthe.





KOPA LOEI

Tuna and Salmon Poke

The Kopa Loei are not known for their friendliness to outsiders, particularly given the horrible things that *haoles* like me have done to them in the past. Still, the phrase, “the enemy of my enemy is my friend,” is universal, and while I doubt that the Brethren will ever be welcomed into the most sacred places in the Pacific islands, some of the Kopa Loei – such as Kai Kalawai’a and his brother Makanui – are at least willing to embrace the idea of strategic alliances. Perhaps my darker skin, which still marks me a *haole*, but at least not a white one, had something to do with their friendlier attitude. In my case, what began as a tentative and even somewhat hostile relationship with people who didn’t want me there, and who resented having to ask for my help, has developed over the course of years into a strong partnership and even a budding friendship. Food, as ever, played a critical role in this evolution.

All things die so that something else may eat, and there is a magnificent power in eating something that you’ve caught, hunted, or harvested yourself. Some of my Brethren understand this, having grown up on farms or in hunting communities themselves, but the overwhelming majority of people I’ve met in my life truly have no idea that this connection between life, death, and food even exists. The Kalawai’ans and their community, by contrast, try to source as much of the stuff of their lives from the sea and the land as possible; while I worked with them, then, I was just as responsible as the others for bringing in the catch of yellowtail and tuna that would feed us all. Kai and Makanui taught me how to gut and clean those fish. When that rather messy task was done, my hosts mixed up a brilliant marinade, tossed the cubed and sliced fish in along with some sweet onion and other things, and served the lot over freshly steamed rice and salad greens.

Poke, as this distinctively Hawai’ian dish is called, seems to be everywhere you look these days. More health-conscious diners create demand for simple, healthy, and delicious food such as this. That’s fine, I suppose – but, as I’ve mentioned before, the temptation to “elevate” or “chef up” food means that the simplicity of the poke made in a little beachside shack on Maui gets lost beneath spicy aioli sauces, crunchy tempura toppings, and bright pink pickled ginger. Ultimately, if you can’t get to Hawai’i, then the best poke is really to be had in your own kitchen with uncomplicated and fresh ingredients. In this recipe, yellowtail (which is a tough ingredient to source outside of the Northern Pacific) has been substituted with salmon, which is considerably more accessible.

Recipe Notes

The most important ingredient in this recipe is the fish. Your best bet is to purchase sashimi-grade fish for this, but you could also purchase frozen fish and use that. It is critical, however, that your tuna have as few white streaks as possible. This is connective tissue that can make your fish tough and chewy.

Traditional *'alaea* salt has a red color and an earthier flavor than ordinary salt. In addition to its culinary uses, *'alaea* is also used in traditional Hawai'ian ceremonies like ritual cleansings or healing. If you can't find it, coarse Hawai'ian sea salt is the next best thing. If you don't have either, coarse kosher salt is perfectly acceptable.

Some people enjoy adding other ingredients to their poke. Experiment with a little avocado, jalapeno, spicy aioli, fish roe, or wasabi; however, when adding ingredients, do so one at a time, and in small quantities, tasting after each addition. The fish is the star of the show here. You don't want to upstage it!



Tuna and Salmon Poke

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb [226 g] tuna steaks; and /or...
- 1/2 lb [226 g] salmon fillets
- 1/4 cup sweet onion, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup scallions, sliced thinly on the bias
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp toasted black sesame seeds (white seeds will also work)
- 2 tsp roasted, unsalted macadamia nuts (chopped and toasted)
- 3 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp sesame oil
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp coarse kosher salt (or, if you can get it, Hawaiian 'alaea)
- 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes (optional)

Preparation

- Slice the tuna (and /or salmon): Using a sharp knife, cut the fish into 1-inch cubes. Place in a large bowl.
- Combine all ingredients. Add the onions, garlic, sesame seeds, macadamia nuts, soy sauce, sesame oil, salt, and red-pepper flakes. Gently mix until thoroughly combined.
- Cover and refrigerate: Cover the poke with plastic wrap and refrigerate, for a minimum of 2 hours, or up to 2 days.
- Serve over warm – but not hot – steamed white rice. You may wish to add some salad greens to the bowl, or serve over chilled glass noodles.





NGOMA

Southern-Style Hoppin' John, Collard Greens, and Gullah Seasonings

One of the things I love most about the Enlightened is how amazingly diverse we are. There is literally no place on Earth that does not have people who have been Awakened. While the miserable and brutal events that ripped native West Africans from freedom and transported them to slavery in the Americas served to nearly destroy the ancient magickal traditions of the Ngoma, one of the happy results of that awful time has been the emergence of diaspora communities that have adapted and carried these traditions forward into the new world and now into a new century.

Dawanda Hopewell is a storyteller and Geechee Gullah Ring Shouter who hails from a tiny town called Hog Hammock, on Sapelo Island in coastal Georgia. The Gullah and Geechee peoples are responsible for creating and developing the foundation of what most folk now know as American Southern, Low-Country cuisine. This culture is remarkably rich, and the centerpiece of that culture is rice. The Africans who were abducted and forced into labor in the coastal Southeast were highly valued as cultivars of rice in their native lands. Along with the “holy trinity” of onion, bell pepper, and celery, plus a dizzying array of spices and seasonings, the Gullah-Geechee managed to transform a simple food staple into an art form.

Dawanda and I were thrown together by circumstance in Savannah, when my brothers and I happened to be investigating a human-trafficking ring run by Fallen agents operating in the area. Dawanda and her American Ngoma community provided us with no small amount of support and intelligence. As our partnership deepened into friendship, we had several opportunities to create magick in the kitchen. She introduced me to the famous Gullah dish Hoppin' John: not the mushy, bland concoction of canned black-eyed peas and rice that some folk in America eat on New Year's Day, but a ridiculously simple but amazingly flavorful pilaf featuring old-fashioned smoked bacon, Carolina Gold rice, and heirloom red cowpeas cooked together in one pot “until the rice takes on the purple color of the peas, and each grain stands apart.” Dawanda added pork sausage to hers along with her own Gullah Seasoning, which I've also documented here. Because this dish is traditionally served with collard greens, I've included her recipe for those as well.

Oh, and if you don't know what a Ring Shouter is, look them up. Better yet, go to a concert if you have the opportunity. You will not be disappointed!

Get the Good Stuff!

Quality ingredients are central to this recipe. Thankfully, in this digital age, finding these ingredients is not as difficult as it used to be.

Anson Mills (www.ansonmills.com) is responsible for fully resurrecting the once-assumed-lost Carolina Gold variety of rice. Seriously. Read about it on their website, as this is a remarkable piece of agricultural preservation and research. Because this is the rice that the originators of this recipe used, it's worth your while to seek it out. This rice is, quite literally, magical as it cooks differently depending upon the method used. A 14 oz package sells for about \$7.00 US. Anson Mills also sells an heirloom variety of Sea Island red peas. A 14 oz package sells for about \$6.00 US.

Let's talk about bacon. The smoked pork belly that our ancestors ate was rich, incredibly flavorful, and well-layered with fat: a far cry, flavor-wise, from what is sold in most grocery stores, particularly in the US; if you can, take the time to seek out bacon and pork belly produced in the old-fashioned way (just smoke and salt) in your area. Farmer Girl Meats (www.farmergirlmeats.com) sells a Heritage Pork Bacon that is salt-cured and hickory smoked. It sells for about \$13.00 US per pound.

Beware the "Struggle Greens"

Some cooks, inexplicably, choose to add all kinds of things to greens that either overpower the flavor, or alter the texture, of these wonderful vegetables. Don't get on the struggle-bus with your greens! Resist the temptation to do the following things:

- Add water. Greens will release their own liquid as they cook. If you start with a concentrated stock that fills your pot about 1/3 to 1/2 full, and you have your heat low enough, you will have plenty of liquid and should end up with delicious concentrated pot liquor.
- Add onions or garlic. Collards don't need the flavor-help from these two agents. Plus, when you add them, they tend to make the greens taste bitter, which is why people...
- Add sugar or vinegar. Folks do this, even when they haven't used onions or garlic, to "help" the flavor of summer collards, which tend to be tougher and not as flavorful as those grown and picked in cooler weather. Unfortunately, if you add sugar while the greens are cooking, it tends to burn, lending that burnt flavor to your whole pot. Furthermore, adding vinegar produces exactly the opposite of the desired effect, making the greens gummy or rubbery... not to mention overwhelming the flavor of the greens themselves.

Trust in the simplicity of your concentrated stock and the greens themselves to give your collards a delicious flavor... though if you want to crumble some crispy bacon over top of 'em, I won't be the one to stop you!

Hoppin' John

Ingredients

- 1 lb [454 g] slab-smoked and salted pork belly or bacon (cut into cubes)
- 1 lb [454 g] smoked sausage (sliced or chopped)
- 2 1/2 cups dry, Sea Island red peas (cow peas or pigeon peas may be substituted)
- 2 1/2 cups Carolina gold rice
- 1 cup of chopped Vidalia onion
- 1 cup of chopped celery
- 1/2 cup each of chopped red and green bell peppers
- 3 quarts [3 l] of chicken or pork stock
- garlic (about 3-4 cloves, chopped)
- Gullah Seasoning (see below)
- minced green parsley and chopped scallions for garnish

Preparation

The Night Before

- Wash and sort the dry peas, and then soak them in cold water in the refrigerator overnight.

The Day of Preparation

- Chop the bacon into cubes, and brown in a large Dutch oven or stock pot over medium-high heat. Remove the solid bits, and then reserve them for later.
- Add the chopped onion, bell pepper, celery, and garlic to the rendered fat, and allow to sweat until the onion is translucent. Add a healthy pinch or two of Gullah Seasoning and a bay leaf, and stir until the seasonings become very fragrant. Pour in the stock, and allow it to come to a steaming simmer.
- Meanwhile, drain and rinse the peas. Add them to the hot stock, cover, and allow it all to cook at a very low boil until about half done. Test after about 20 minutes, then again in 10-minute increments.
- While the peas are cooking, rinse and drain the rice. When the peas are about half-done, re-introduce the browned bacon and the smoked sausage. Allow to cook together until the peas are *almost* done. Test the flavor of the stock, and add salt and seasoning to taste.
- Incorporate the rice, and allow it to boil with the peas, bacon, and sausage for about half an hour.

At this point, you can do one of two things:

- ◇ You can either turn the heat down to the lowest possible setting, cover the pot, and let the mixture steam until the rice grains stand separate and apart from each other...
- ◇ Or you can preheat the oven to °175 or °200 F [°80 - °95 C], and when the rice has cooked for half an hour, place a lid on the pot and transfer it to the oven where the mixture can steam. I prefer the second method, as the heat is low and even around the pot, preventing the bottom from scorching.

Patience is the key to producing a Hoppin' John that is light, fluffy, and flavorful instead of mushy and unappealing.

Gullah Seasoning

Ingredients

About 3 tbsp each of:

onion powder
garlic powder
ground celery seed
ground black pepper
paprika

About 2 tsp each of:

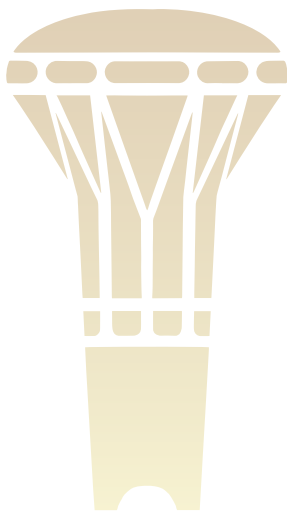
ground ginger
ground bay leaf

About 1 tsp each of:

allspice
cinnamon
mustard powder
salt

Preparation

- Mix together well, and store in an airtight container in a cool, dark place. This mixture will also keep in the freezer for up to a year. Feel free to tweak the amounts based on the flavors you enjoy. Gullah cooking is not usually done by measurement, but by flavor and “feel.”



Collard Greens

Ingredients

- 1-2 large bunches collard greens
- 1 bunch kale or chard
- 1 bunch turnip or mustard greens
- 1 package smoked pork neck bones
- 2 cups chicken stock
- water
- salt
- pepper
- bacon fat
- hot sauce (optional)

Preparation

- Place the neck bones in a large pot with just enough cold water to cover them. Bring the pot to a simmer /low boil over medium heat, and cook until the meat is just about done.
- While the pork stock is cooking, wash and de-stem your greens. (Some people enjoy the stems, but depending on the season, those stems can be bitter and woody. If you choose to use the stems, chop them in a 1/4-inch dice [6.4 mm].) Then cut the leaves into about 2-inch wide [50 mm] diagonal strips.
- Add a generous amount of salt (about two teaspoons) and pepper (about 1 1/2 teaspoons). *Slowly* add your greens until they are all in the pot. Next, pour in your two cups of chicken stock, and spoon in a generous amount of bacon fat. If you don't have bacon fat close at hand, you can cube up a stick of butter and toss that in.
- Cover and cook on low, stirring occasionally for about one hour, until greens are tender.
- When transferring the greens to a serving dish, be sure to gather up some of the meat from the neckbones. Put a bottle of hot sauce or pepper vinegar on the table for folks who like a bit of a kick with their greens!



ORDER OF HERMES

Beef Wellingtons, with Spinach, Caramelized Onions, and Blue Stilton Cheese

A few years ago, near Yuletide, I received an invitation from Lord William Fourtnoy, a Hermetic acquaintance living in York, to attend a Christmas dinner with him, his students, and a few other friends. It is a rare invitation, indeed, to enter the exclusive and secretive inner circle of the storied Order of Alchemy and Magick in this ancient Northern-English city, and it is doubly exciting when that invitation comes during the Solstice season. I was given instructions as to where I would be met by my guide and at what time. I was even given a phrase by which I would be able to recognize said guide, as well as a phrase to say in return! While I recognize that such secrecy is steeped in tradition and developed out of necessity, I have to say that the idea of the whole cloak-and-dagger process was loads of fun.

At the appointed time and place, I was met by a stone-faced young man who asked me my name. When I told him, he asked, "How were you brought in?" I replied as I had been instructed to do. At my response, the young man's demeanor softened considerably: "Then be ye welcome, Brother of the Art." He smiled and bade me accompany him, apologizing politely for the necessity of the blindfold.

Now, the Gifts bestowed upon me by the Divine Fire grant that I am rarely, if ever, misdirected or lost. That said, my journey with Liam was the most disorienting journey I've taken in all my days. No matter how I tried, as we walked down darkened streets and turned corner after corner, I could not, for the life of me, orient myself to any cardinal direction or form a connection between Liam and our destination. I suspect that this is because Liam was taking us on a careful path between the worlds, and I am almost certain that this is where Lord Fourtnoy hides his sanctum from the prying eyes of the mundane world.

Upon arrival, and with the removal of the blindfold, the feeling of disorientation lifted and I found myself in a lovely, warm, and elegant entry hallway. Liam showed me into the library where Lord Fourtnoy, guests, and students were gathered: some around the bright, roaring fire in the fireplace, others chatting quietly by the bookcases or seated in comfortable conversation chairs dotted around the room. On this occasion, I was not at all privy to witnessing the actual cooking, being a guest and all. After about half an hour, during which a few more individuals and

their guides joined us in the library, a tall, somber butler gravely announced that dinner was served. We adjourned to the dining room, where the scene looked like something straight out of Downton Abbey: tuxedoed footmen, glittering crystal chandeliers, gleaming silverware, fine china, and all! A full seven-course meal was served, “soup to nuts,” but the stars of the table were the individual beef wellingtons served to each guest, browned and deftly decorated with pastry holly leaves. They were so delicious and delightful that I begged Lord Fortnoy to have his cook write down his recipe and method. He was most happy to do so, and although it features the Order’s requisite complexity, I have recorded it here. This particular dish is a production and definitely something to serve for an extra-special occasion!



Beef Wellingtons, with Spinach, Caramelized Onions, and Blue Stilton Cheese

Prepare the components of the Wellingtons the day before, or the morning, before you intend to assemble them. Once assembled, freeze them for at least six to eight hours (ideally overnight) and up to a week. Make sure you have plenty of room in your freezer before starting.

Ingredients

For the Pastry

3 1-lb [454 g] packages of frozen puff pastry (6 sheets, total)
10-inch [254 mm] round pizza pan or cake pan (as a template)
flour (for rolling)

For the Mushrooms

2 large portabella mushrooms, with stems removed
olive oil
2 cloves of garlic, minced
1/2 tsp fresh thyme leaves, lightly chopped
1/2 tsp fresh rosemary, lightly chopped
coarse salt and black pepper

For the Onions

1/2 of a stick of butter
3 medium onions, thinly sliced
1/2 cup medium-dry sherry
coarse salt and black pepper

For the Spinach and Cheese

1 large package fresh baby spinach (14-16 oz [397-454 g])
1/4 of a stick of butter
6 oz [170 g] Stilton cheese

For the Filets

6 center-cut beef tenderloin portions, 5 to 6 oz [141-170 g] each
coarse salt and black pepper
3/4 cup olive oil

For Assembly

egg wash made from 2 eggs, whisked together lightly with 1 tsp water
flour
parchment paper, ruler, and pencil

Preparation

Step 1. Prepare the Pastry

- Roll out each pastry sheet to about 1/4 inch [6.4 mm] thick and, placing the cake pan or pizza pan over the pastry as a template, cut out a 10-inch [254 mm] round using a very sharp knife.
- From the scraps, cut out holly leaves or other decorative shapes.
- Layer the pastry rounds (and the decorations) between pieces of parchment paper, wrap the entire bundle in plastic wrap, or place inside a very large, zippered freezer bag, and freeze again.

Step 2. Cook the Mushrooms

- In a small bowl, toss the portabellas with about 1/4 cup of olive oil, garlic, thyme, and rosemary.
- Cover tightly with plastic wrap and marinate in the refrigerator for two hours.
- After that time, the mushrooms will have soaked up most of the marinade.
- Season with salt and pepper.
- Heat a heavy skillet over medium-high heat, add enough olive oil to thinly coat the bottom of the pan, and sear the mushrooms on both sides until they've softened and browned.
- Place on paper towels, turning once to drain both sides. When the mushrooms are cool, cut them in half, and then cut the halves into strips about 1/2 an inch [13 mm] thick.

Step 3. Caramelize the Onions

- Melt the butter in a heavy sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onions, reduce the heat to medium low, and cook slowly, stirring occasionally, until the onions are very brown, soft, and sweet.
- Add the sherry and cook until the pan is dry. Season with salt and pepper, then set aside to cool.
- Once cooled, place the onions in a colander, and then set the colander in a bowl to catch any offset liquid. Cover and refrigerate.

Step 4. Prepare the Spinach

- If you purchased loose spinach (not pre-washed and packaged), then wash the spinach until there is no longer any sand or silt at the bottom of the sink. Remove any stems.
- Before you start cooking, fill a large bowl with ice and cold, fresh water. Next, heat a large pan over medium high heat, and add a tiny amount of water, half of the butter, and a pinch of salt. When the pan is hot, add half the spinach, and toss just until wilted.
- Immediately put the spinach in the water bath to shock the color and stop the cooking. Scoop it from the ice water, and put it in a colander to drain. Squeeze the spinach, a small handful at a time, as much as you can and set it aside on paper towels to continue draining. Repeat with the remaining spinach.

While spinach is draining, move on to **Step 5**.

Step 5. Prepare the Cheese and Finish the Spinach

- Using a kitchen scale, divide the cheese into six 1-oz [28 g] portions. Try slicing the whole piece into six slices. If it crumbles, just evenly divide the cheese. Cover and refrigerate.
- Return to the drained spinach. Squeeze and squeeze again, until the spinach is as dry as it can be. Wrap tightly in plastic, and refrigerate.

Step 6. Prepare the Fillets

- Generously season each portion of meat on both sides with salt and pepper. Rub the seasoning into the meat to keep it in place.
- Pour enough olive oil into a heavy pan to fully cover the bottom, and heat it until it begins to smoke.
- Working in batches, sear the filets over high heat for two minutes on each side, until they're brown and crisp on the outside. This works best when your pan is very hot; that way, you sear the meat rather than overcook it. Likewise, don't crowd the pan, or the meat will steam rather than sear. As you cook, check the sides to be sure the filets are still red in the middle. You want a nice crust but a red center.
- Once they are wrapped in the pastry and baked, they will cook to medium-rare.
- Refrigerate the fillets until chilled, but no more than 24 hours.

Assembly

Step 7. Divide Your Fillings into Portions

- Take the mushrooms, onions, spinach, cheese, and filets out of the refrigerator and arrange them on your counter.
- Divide the portabella strips into six portions. Make sure the caramelized onions are well drained, and divide them into six portions too. Squeeze the spinach again, divide it into six portions as well, and leave it on paper towels for any further draining.

Step 8. Shape Your Pastry

- Cover a large rimmed baking sheet (that fits in your freezer) with parchment paper. Have a ruler, a small sharp knife, and a pastry brush on hand.
- Prepare your egg wash. Lightly flour one area of your counter.
- Pull a pastry round and a few decorative pieces from the freezer and set them on the floured surface. Work quickly to maintain the integrity of the pastry.
- Lightly score a 4 x 3-inch [101 x 76 mm] rectangle in the center of the round—don't cut through the pastry. Extend the lines of the rectangle and cut out the corners of the round created by the line extensions, leaving a cross of pastry with a 4 x 3-inch [101 x 76 mm] center. Save the scraps to cut out extra decorations, if needed.

Step 9. Assemble Your Wellingtons

- Give a spinach portion one last squeeze, and spread half of it over the rectangle of pastry. Follow with a portion of blue cheese, a portion of onions, a filet, a portion of portabellas in one layer, and the rest of the spinach portion.

- Spread each layer as evenly as possible.
- Brush a light coating of the egg wash on each of the four panels of dough.
- Check to be sure that the pastry is now pliable enough to fold without breaking; wait a minute or two, if necessary.
- Fold each side panel onto the top, stretching the dough a bit if necessary to make the ends meet, or slightly overlapping if necessary. Follow suit with the top and bottom panels. Seal the panels together by pressing in the top panel where it meets the bottom panel, and by pinching each of the four sides together where the panels meet.
- Don't worry if the package doesn't look pretty; it is far more important that it is well-sealed so the juices don't leak out. Hold the package upright in your hands, securing all the seals and smoothing the rough spots to make the package into a neat, rounded block.
- Set it seam-side down, and gently press the top and sides to make them as even all the way around as possible.
- Brush the top and all sides with egg wash. Put the decorations on top, and brush again with egg wash. (When the pastries are baked, but before serving them, you will be cutting the package in half, so place the decorations with this eventuality in mind.)
- Set the Wellington on the parchment-lined baking sheet. Put the pan in the freezer to set and chill the pastry. Repeat with the five remaining Wellingtons, adding each one to the pan in the freezer as you go.
- After they chill for an hour, wrap each one tightly in plastic, and return them to the freezer.

Baking and Serving

- Heat the oven to °400 F [°204 C]. Make another egg wash. Remove the Wellingtons from the freezer (do not thaw), and brush them with a fresh coat of egg wash.
- Put them on a lightly greased, rimmed heavy baking sheet, and cook for 20 minutes.
- Reduce the heat to °350 F [°177 C], and cook until the internal temperature is °110 F [°43 C] (be sure the tip of the thermometer is inserted in the center of the package), about another 35 to 40 minutes.
- Set them aside to rest for no longer than 10 minutes; any longer, and the beef will overcook.
- Cut each Wellington in half, arrange on warm plates, and serve immediately.

ORPHIANS

Coyote Cannibal Stew

Traveling the world as I do, one encounters many... shall we say, *unexpected* moral dimensions. For most of us, the idea of cannibalism – the eating of one’s one kind for sustenance – is abhorrent. I share this view, of course. And yet, the eating of meat is a common feature in almost every sort of traditional human cuisine. As I’ve mentioned elsewhere in this book, all forms of life exist at the expense of other forms of life. We humans, omnivores by nature and design, hunt, raise, and kill other animals for our meat. Not all cultures, however, have restricted their choice of meat “animals” to non-human species. Either for reasons of starvation and necessity, ritual practices, warlike traditions in which the enemy becomes literal prey for the warriors, or even in certain near-taboo forms of ancestral communion, human beings do sometimes eat our own kind. The idea is repugnant to me, obviously, and yet certain people (and certain mages) do not agree with a more “civilized” impression of where the line between “edible” and forbidden meats is drawn.

I encountered Ashpaw Ten Sticks during an especially wild gathering, of the sort I don’t usually attend. Brethren business, though, leads us to unusual alliances, especially in these strange days, and so I met Ashpaw and her “tribe” during one of the many “burn”-style events that prosper in the wake of Nevada’s notorious Burning Man festival. It’s not my cup of tea, of course, but I like to think I’ve retained a fairly open mind without succumbing to the many pitfalls of our Enlightened world. I kept reminding myself to focus my attentions several inches above Ashpaw’s bare chest throughout the festival, remembering that many of my own ancestors held different standards of “modesty” than the ones I learned on my family’s farm back home. As we talked, she shared with me a rather delicious, hearty meal that she had been cooking as I spoke to Ashpaw and her companions. “What is this?” I asked her.

Ashpaw laughed. “Cannibal stew.”

It did not, thank all that’s holy, contain human meat. That sort of “communion” would have had an unfortunate effect on our meeting that night. Still, once I had ascertained that we were not consuming the remains of some unfortunate hitchhiker, the ensuing debate around that campsite left me with a deeper appreciation for – if not agreement with – the ethical questions involved in eating meat, and the sources from which that might come.

As I mentioned in this book’s Introduction, my family sourced our meat from the local butcher. He was a family friend of ours, though, and everyone I knew back then understood, whether or not they slaughtered their own animals, that the adorable calf you had raised by hand might wind up on your dinner table within a year or two... and probably *would*, more often

than not. Much as we loved our dogs, cats, and horses (often retaining a certain fondness for the other animals as well), the fact that certain animals were meant to be eaten – and *would* be eaten, eventually, by someone else if not by us – was an inescapable part of life on a farm. Most families we knew hunted their own venison and rabbit, and the messy business of a butcher’s trade was common knowledge, if not daily experience, for all of us.

We would, of course, draw the line at eating people.

Not everyone does that, though. Or maybe they just draw that line differently. In Ashpaw’s words: “*Everything* is a person. And everything is eatable. When we eat people, we must honor them; each vegetable, each grain, each plant, each fruit, each meat. This is true when working in them with ways other than eating them as well, but since eating is what we’re talking about right now, that’s what I’m focusing on.”

The word *cannibal* comes from a name given to the Carib people of the region named for them. Spanish chroniclers insisted that the Caribs ate human meat, and while the truth behind that claim remains debatable (the Spanish, of course, conquered, enslaved, and massacred those people... and did the same to my people too, for that matter), the name has, as the saying goes, stuck since then.

Let’s be clear: *I am not advocating eating people.* For me, speaking as a Christian, the ethos against eating other human beings is clearly established in the Bible, as well as by what we typically consider common decency. Ashpaw and her companions,

however, raised troubling questions about the ethics involved in eating other animals to which we have attributed human-like qualities. Modern science and ancient tradition both hold that non-human animals still have conscious awareness, a sense of self, the ability to reason in some abstract fashion, and the undeniable social connections that we think of as friends and family. Is it then, Ashpaw argued, somehow more “moral” to consider such beings our food, and yet to hold ourselves above that standard too? Other animals eat us when they can, she insisted, and so what is it that makes us more ethically superior to those animals when we raise, stalk, and slaughter them? Despite my assertion that it is the soul God has given each of us that makes us different, history and culture do not always offer such clear answers.

It’s not my place, in this cookbook, to present a detailed history of cannibalism, or to argue its pros and cons from an objective perspective. I must admit, though, that the meal Ashpaw referred to



as “Coyote cannibal stew” (named for her relationship with an especially dubious trickster spirit from certain Native American traditions, as well as for its literally “catch as catch can” composition) was both delicious to eat and intriguing to consider after eating it. What is it that makes us find the idea of eating cows and pigs acceptable, and yet the idea of eating dogs or monkeys (traditionally common in many parts of the world even now), much less human beings, so appalling? Once raised while we were eating the meat of various dead animals, that question did not seem nearly as simple as it might seem otherwise.

Meat, obviously, is the essential ingredient in Coyote cannibal stew. The meal we shared that night featured copious amounts of venison, beef, rabbit, a bit of bison meat, and mostly pork. Ashpaw informed me that “pork recipes should be easily converted to human meat, provided you’re paying attention to whether it’s a white- or dark-meat pork recipe and which cut of a human you have.” I would prefer to think that she was kidding, but given some of the magi I’ve met in my travels, I am not entirely certain she was. Ashpaw is no Nephandus; believe me, I used my own gifts to make sure of that! Still, there are many sinister corners of the Enlightened world that have nothing to do with the Fallen, and many traditions of human cuisine that are... well, “distasteful” really is the right word for it... to a modern sensibility. Obviously, I cannot in any sort of conscience recommend eating human meat to my readers. That said, the multitude of non-human meats in this stew makes for a tasty combination. As for whether or not it is somehow more “moral” to eat non-human animals but not human ones, I side with the idea that it is immoral (not to mention impractical) to cannibalize our fellow human beings, though to be honest the question troubles me more than I had expected it to do.

Cannibal Stew

Ingredients

- 3 lbs [1.36 kg] bones and connective tissue
- 1 1/2 lbs [680 g] pigs’ feet
- 1 or 2 beef heart(s)
- 1 1/2 lbs [680 g] pork loin, bison, rabbit, and /or venison
- 2 lbs [907 g] dark-meat pork (with skin attached)
- 1 sweet onion
- 1 white onion
- 1/2 purple /red onion
- 1/2 yellow onion
- 3 red potatoes
- 3 gold or yellow potatoes
- 3 small white potatoes
- olive oil
- salt (to taste)

Preparation

- Preheat oven to °500 F [°260 C]. Lay the bones and pigs' feet into roasting pan(s). Thank them for their sacrifice, and mean it. Salt the meat liberally.
- Roast at °500 [°260] for 45 minutes. Drop oven temperature to °300 F [°150 C], and cook the meat for 2 more hours. If drippings in the pan look like they might burn, add 1/2 cup water to the bottom of the roasting pan(s).
- Thank the onions. Chop the onions. Cover the bottom of your favorite soup pot with olive oil, and then stir in onions and salt. Let them begin to soften on the lowest setting of your stove.
- Pick one of each kind of potato; clean, thank, and chop. Add to onions. Stir occasionally, and let the vegetables sweat.
- When the vegetables have released their juices, add bones, connective tissue, and feet. Let simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Avoid burning.
- Add water to fill the pot. Bring to a boil, and then lower to a slow simmer. Keep an eye on things, and add water if the stew is in danger of burning.
- Place pork loin, dark-meat pork with skin, and beef hearts in roasting pan(s). Salt liberally. Thank them. Ask the people who were the hearts for strength. Roast at °500 [°260] for 40 minutes. Drop to °300 [°150] for 2 hours. Remove from oven, and set aside to cool until you can handle them without burning yourself. Let them rest for at least 20 minutes.
- If you wish, remove the bones from the soup. Ashpaw prefers to leave them in.
- Chop up the roasted meat, and add to simmering pot of broth.
- Clean, thank, and chop the remaining potatoes, and add them to the pot. Add salt and other seasonings if you want them. Simmer until the potatoes are tender. Add water as needed.



SISTERS OF HIPPOLYTA

Lahanodolmades

There's a special sort of wonder in the streets of Greece. Maybe it's simply because I'm an American, but the experience of walking among buildings that are thousands of years old, surrounded on all sides by ghosts and legends at the heart of Western civilization, never fails to humble me. The people of Greece (or, as they know it, *Hellas*) are impressive, too: passionate, generous, charismatic, and so beautiful it almost hurts to look at them. My host during a "business trip" in Piraeus (the port district of Athens) was named Nina, a so-called "wolf-sister" among the often-secretive Amazons known to some people as Sisters gathered under the name of their legendary queen, Hippolyta.

Greece's fortunes, like those of so many other nations, have fallen drastically in the last few years. Political and economic chaos left the nation's finances in ruins, and riots have become a weekly – sometimes even daily – event in the streets of Hellas. Naturally, this makes Greece a haven for the Fallen Ones and their pawns. And so, Nina and I – in the uneasy company of her Sisters of Hippolyta, who have a long, uneasy relationship with my Brethren – hunted them from the hot stone streets of the Plaka, in the shadow of the Acropolis, to the smoke-filled nightclubs of maze-like Athens, the jagged cliffs beside the Temple of Poseidon, and the eerie "forest of the satyrs" near Cithaeron. Fire, swords, guns, and magic drove them from their hiding places among right-wing political factions and anarchist cells, corrupted temples and graffiti-scarred mansions. In between those hunts, we shared vehement debates about belief and language and one's relationship with what these pagan women regard as their gods. Obviously, we had to – as the saying goes – "agree to disagree" about our respective paths to Divinity. That said, these Sisters of Hippolyta have as much courage and integrity as any man I've met, and far more than most. And Greek food, as Nina demonstrated during our campaign, is a glorious thing to share among kindred spirits, whether or not one calls them "family."

As Fresh as Fresh Can Be

During my stay in Athens, Nina and I shopped in the street markets ubiquitous in many Greek cities and towns. Sure, Greek people buy food in the supermarkets just like Americans do; whenever possible, though, that food is best purchased in a reputable street market, often from the people who grew it themselves. Freshness really does make a huge difference in the taste and quality of food!

The experience of buying fresh produce from farmers and their families had me feeling oddly homesick. Despite our differences of language (spoken Greek, by the way, sounds nothing like what we Americans *think* it sounds like), faith, and temperament, my grocery-shopping trips with Nina and her Sisters felt very much like home.



Lahanodolmades (Cabbage Rolls)

Ingredients

- 1 big cabbage
- 1 lb [454 g] beef mince
- 1 onion, chopped
- dill, finely chopped
- 2 cups olive oil
- 1 cup white rice
- juice of 2 lemons
- 2 egg whites
- 2 cups water
- 4-5 tbsp white flour
- salt (to taste)
- pepper (to taste)

Preparations


- Bring a large pot of water (about 2/3 filled) to a boil, and add some salt.
- Core the cabbage by using a small knife to cut around the stem and then popping the core out with the tip of the knife. This will create a hole in the cabbage, which will allow the leaves to come out easily during parboiling.
- Put the cabbage in the water until the leaves are tender. Make sure to not boil the cabbage, only parboil it.
- After allowing it to cool down somewhat (so as not to burn your hands), carefully peel the cabbage, layer by layer, reserving the leaves and placing them in a strainer. Let the leaves cool down.
- Put the beef mince in a large bowl. Pour one of the two cups of olive oil in a deep skillet, and sauté the onion. After it has cooled down, combine it with the mince, along with salt, pepper, and dill. Mix well, add the uncooked rice, and mix again.
- Lay a cabbage leaf flat on your working surface, and place about a tablespoon of the mixture at the bottom. Wrap once, fold the sides inwards to secure the mixture, and roll upwards to create your cabbage roll.
- Place the rolls inside a wide saucepan, in a circular pattern. If necessary, start a new layer. Add 2 cups of water, some salt and the remaining olive oil.
- Place a large, flat dish on top of the cabbage rolls (this will keep them from unfolding during cooking), and cover the saucepan.
- Cook over low heat for about 45-60 minutes. Make sure both the cabbage and stuffing are cooked. Remove the broth, and reserve it in a bowl.
- In a different saucepan, combine the flour and 2-3 tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat, mixing well with an egg beater.

- After 2-3 minutes, add the remaining broth (and water, if need be) until the consistency of the mixture turns creamy.
- Beat the lemon juice and egg whites, until they have all thoroughly combined. Pour the mix into the saucepan, season to taste, and stir.
- Take the saucepan off the heat, and pour the egg-and-lemon mixture over the cabbage rolls.



Sons of Ether

Battenburg Cake, or Gâteau à la Domino



The London headquarters of the Society of Ether is truly a magnificent place to visit, evoking the posh, smoky warmth and exclusivity of a Victorian gentlemen's club without too many of the racist and sexist undertones. Furthermore, the blend between historical romanticism and wild, bleeding-edge science and technology can be more than a little bit terrifying if one is not expecting it. The "servants" may easily be mistaken for actual humans, so lifelike are these AI-driven androids! Nevertheless, Etherite Society members are a friendly, gregarious bunch, and while the vast majority of today's generation choose not to revel in the resurgence of the late Victorian-fashion aesthetic favored by their predecessors, a small few have been known to don a top hat, a bustled overskirt, or a pair of antique, lace-up boots. Thomas Church and Madeline Mason – the two Peers who met me at my hotel – exhibited this divergence of tastes when they arrived, Thomas wearing a gray morning coat with waistcoat and cravat over a pair of blue jeans with what my sister would call "curb-stomping boots," and Madeline looking sleek in a smart Victoria Beckham ensemble, Hermes Birkin handbag, and Prada pumps.

Part of what makes a visit to the Society headquarters so lovely is the daily tea service, which features a beautiful array of tea cakes and sandwiches, as well as the requisite beverage. On my visit, Thomas introduced me to the magnificent piece of alchemical equipment that is the Continental balancing tea siphon. (I have since been informed that one can use it to render coffee as well, but... well... *why?*)

On one side of the cherry wood base is the brewing vessel, which rather resembles a parfait glass topped with a silver lid. Into the brewing vessel extends the siphon, which connects to the vacuum flask, itself situated to hover above a spirit lamp. A counterweight sits on two metal arms which wrap around the brewing vessel and attach to the vacuum flask. These arms pivot on a central metal

The Mage Cookbook

column. A cloth filter is placed on the siphon filter head, and then tea leaves are spooned into the brewing vessel while water is poured into the vacuum flask. Once the flask has been sealed, the cap of the spirit lamp is lifted to reveal the wick. When the wick is lit, the water in the vacuum flask is heated and passes through the siphon to the brewing vessel, which receives the water. As the flask gets lighter, the counterbalance falls until another small mechanism causes the cap of the spirit lamp to flip shut, extinguishing the flame. The cooling of the vacuum flask causes the water in the brewing vessel to be drawn back up into the flask. When the process is done, the tea is served by way of a small tap jutting off from the flask.

You may well ask, *Why all this process when a tea bag will suffice?* The answer is in the flavor of the resulting beverage. It is smooth and nuanced, without the bitterness that comes of water that was too hot and thus burned the leaves. Again, I am told that the same is true of coffee brewed in this fashion, but I cannot, myself, attest to that since I'm not a coffee drinker. Either way, using a balancing siphon is loads of fun, and my experience with one at the Society tea left an indelible, positive impression upon me.

Included on the menu that day was one of my all-time favorite indulgences: Battenburg cake.

There is no shortage of mythology surrounding the origins of this iconic, parti-colored sponge cake held together with apricot jam and wrapped in marzipan. The most pervasive story is that the cake was commissioned to celebrate the nuptials of Princess Victoria and Prince Louis of Battenburg in 1884. However, when Madeline and I discussed it with the chef, he pointed us to a recipe created nearly 14 years later by Mrs. Agnes Marshall and published in her popular Victorian magazine, *The Table*. She called this confection a Domino cake, and while the standard Battenburg features four alternating blocks, hers called for six. Honestly, none of that matters to me. What matters is that this cake is colorful, delicious, and well worth the time and effort it takes to make it.

Mrs. Marshall's gateau is actually a pound cake, and the chef modified the recipe so that the cake itself is moist and delicious, with a delicate orange and cardamom flavor that marries nicely with the apricot jam and the marzipan.

The Balancing Siphon

This is actually a thing that exists in the mundane world, and it's a magnificent piece of equipment to have if you love coffee and tea. Unfortunately, balancing siphons are not cheap; they run anywhere from \$120 to \$190 US for the average model. The Royal Coffee Co. sells completely hand-crafted and bespoke models that range between \$11 K and \$20 K!

Battenburg Cake, or Gâteau à la Domino

This is a two-day process, so plan accordingly

Ingredients

For the Cake

- 1 1/2 cup butter (do not substitute)
- 8 oz [227 g] organic cream cheese**
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 6 large eggs
- 1 tsp orange liqueur
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 1 tbsp orange zest (optional)
- 3 cups all-purpose or cake flour
- 1/2 tsp cardamom
- 1 tsp salt
- red food coloring paste

*** Testing of this recipe has shown that using regular cream cheese leads to strange dense streaks within the finished cake. For some reason, organic cream cheese does not produce this result.*

Otensils

- 2 8 x 8 x 3-inch square [200 x 200 x 76 mm] baking pans
- baking parchment
- cake tester/long toothpick
- sifter

Preparation

Several hours before baking, place butter, cream cheese, and eggs on the counter, and allow them to come to room temperature. As much as possible, all these ingredients should be the same temperature before you work with them. Resist the temptation to soften the butter in the microwave; this will make it too hot, and it will not properly behave and incorporate into the cake.

- Arrange the rest of your ingredients in place:
- For the flour: dip out 3 cups into the sifter, and add cardamom and salt.
- Sift into a large bowl to remove lumps. Once all flour has been sifted, measure out 3 cups of the flour mixture as follows: fluff with a fork, spoon flour into measuring cup, then level with a knife. You do not want to pack down the flour. A light touch is best.
- Preheat the oven to °325 F [°160 C], and liberally butter two 8 x 8 x 3-inch [200 x 200 x 76 mm] loaf pans. Line the bottom and sides of the pan with baking parchment. There are a variety of methods for doing this; just be sure that your parchment fits snugly into the corners of your pan. Once the parchment is in the pan, liberally butter the parchment. You should have butter on both sides of the parchment.
- Using a food scale, measure the weight of your mixing bowl, and write it down. This will be needed later when it comes time to divide the batter equally between the cake pans.

- In that same large mixing bowl, beat together the softened butter and cream cheese until smooth. Add in the sugar, and beat for 5-7 minutes, until the mixture is light and fluffy and almost white in color. This is a vital step, so be sure to let your butter and sugar cream together for at least 5 minutes.
- Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. A good practice is to crack each egg into a small cup or dish first, then transfer the egg into the batter. This ensures that you don't get any stray egg shells in your cake!
- Blend in orange and vanilla flavorings, and the orange zest.
- With the mixer on low, stir in flour, about 1 cup at a time. Do not over-beat!
- Place your bowl back on the food scale, and write down the measurement. Subtract the weight of the empty bowl that you recorded earlier. What remains is the weight of the batter. Divide this number in half, and then add back the weight of the empty bowl to the result; this measurement will let you know when you've poured half of your batter.
- Pour half of the batter into one of the prepared pans (or enough to fill the pan 2/3 of the way full). If you have any extra batter, set it aside.
- Add enough red food coloring paste to the remaining batter to give it a rich pink color. Pour the pink batter into the other prepared loaf pan. Tap pans on the counter to eliminate any air bubbles in the batter.
- Arrange the pans in the center of the oven and bake for 25 minutes to half-an-hour, or until the smell of the cake begins to permeate the kitchen.
- Take a cake tester or a long toothpick – anything that will extend into the center of the cake – and test for doneness. When the tester comes out clean (that is, no raw cake batter sticks to it), the cake is done. If your cake needs to bake a bit longer, set your timer for 5-minute intervals and re-test until the cake is done.
- Allow the cake to cool in the pans for about 15 minutes. Then turn the cakes out onto a wire rack and cool *completely*. When cool, wrap cakes in plastic wrap and refrigerate.

Assembly and Decoration

Additional Ingredients

1 jar smooth apricot jam
 1 1/2 lbs [680 g] marzipan or almond paste
 powdered sugar
 pastry brush rolling pin

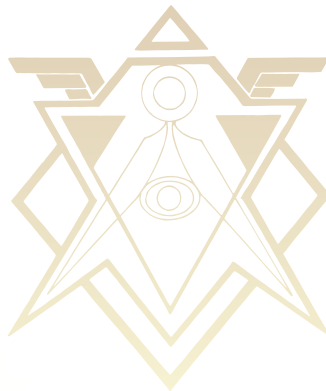
Final Preparation

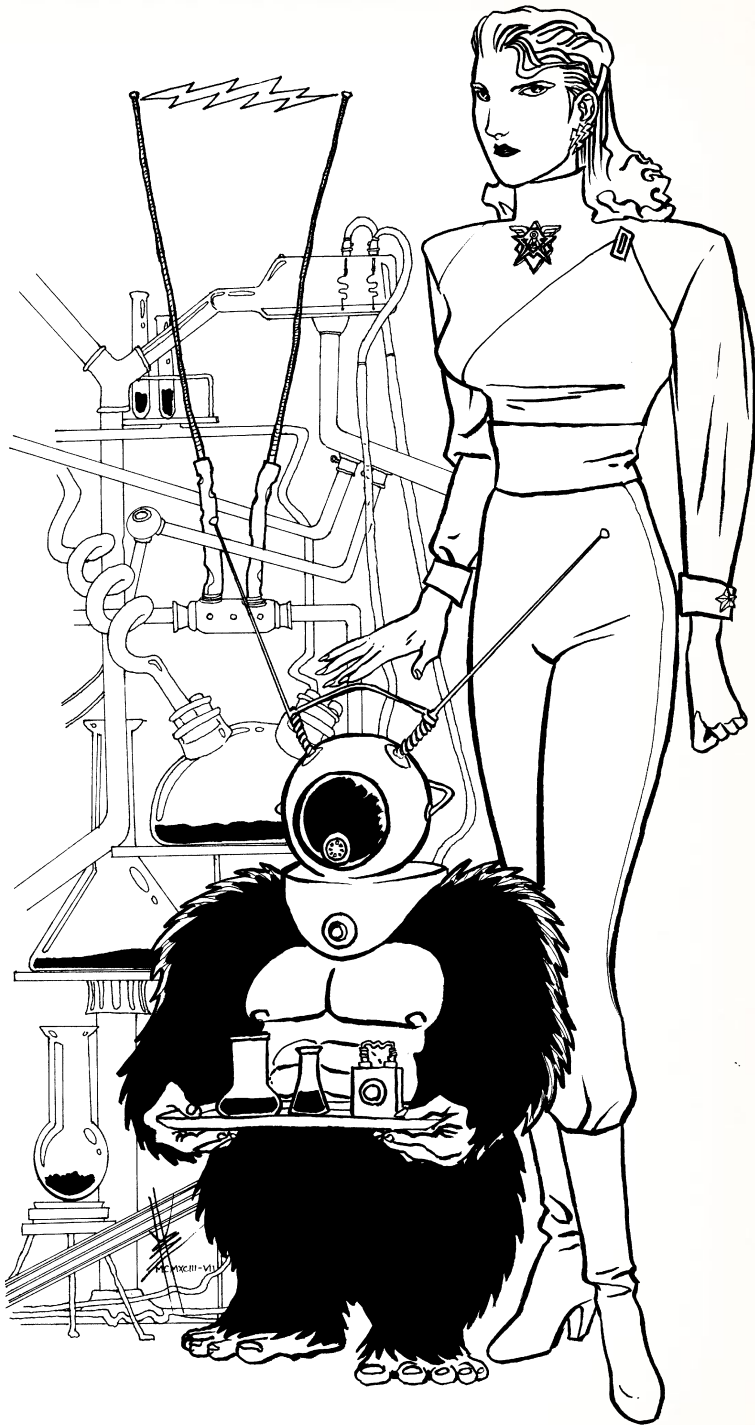
- With a sharp knife (and while cake is still cold), trim tops of each color cake so that they are of equal size and shape. Cut each cake into four equal pieces lengthwise. You should have four long rectangles of each color. Each rectangle should be as close in shape and size to the others as possible.
- In a small saucepan over low heat, warm the apricot jam until it resembles syrup.
- While the jam is heating, lightly dust rolling board and rolling pin with powdered sugar.

Variations on a Theme

While this particular version of Battenburg cake is a traditional one, there is no limit to the color-and-flavor choices you can make. I have seen chocolate and coffee-flavored Battenburgs with raspberry jam, blue-and-white vanilla flavored-Battenburgs with blueberry or blackberry jam. Some people like to make a flavored buttercream icing and spread that on the inside of the marzipan to help it stick to the cake better. Experiment, and see what flavor and color combinations tickle your tastebuds best.

- Roll out half of the marzipan, about 1/4-inch thick [6.4 mm], and shape it into a large rectangle the length of the cake and wide enough to wrap around both sides.
- Using a pastry brush, liberally paint some apricot jam along the center of the sheet of marzipan, about the width of two rectangles of cake. Paint one long edge of a plain rectangle of cake and then join it to the long edge of a pink rectangle of cake. Place the “glued” pieces onto the marzipan where you brushed it with jam. Brush the top of the cake with jam and then place two more rectangles of cake together on top to create a checkerboard effect.
- Brush the top of the cake with jam. Next, spread jam on the sides of the marzipan, leaving about 1 1/2-inch [38 mm] at the edge.
- Wrap the marzipan tightly over the sides and top of the cake, pressing to mold the marzipan in place. Overlap the unpainted marzipan edges and press together to form a seam. Turn the cake over so that the seam is on the bottom. “Hug” the cake with your hands to ensure that the marzipan is well bonded to all sides of the cake.
- Trim each open edge so that it is neat. If you wish, with a fork or with a fondant decorating tool, score a quilted pattern on the top and sides of the cake.
- Repeat these steps with the remaining cake, jam, and marzipan. This recipe yields two 8 x 4 x 4-inch cakes [200 x 100 x 100 mm].
- Slice, and serve with tea.





the taftani

Sharbat, Sharbat Sorbet, Rahat Lokum, and Borrage Flower Tea

While the modern Knights are best known for our prowess in the arts of war, many amongst us are more inclined to the loving work of peace. The bloody conflicts in Syria and Iraq have made refugees out of so many people, Enlightened included, which means that on occasion, even we Hawks are called upon to join the Doves in finding food, shelter, clothing, and medical care for the thousands of people who've been displaced from their homes and lands. One would think that such work might be bloody miserable... and it can be. Where the Weavers are involved, however, joy and wonder seem to permeate even the most horrible scenes and situations.

I met Aydin and Fatimah in a refugee center in Kilis, Turkey, arguably one of the most strained and overwhelmed centers along the Turkish-Syrian border. Aydin is a giant, barrel-chested man with lush black hair and a full, luxurious beard that gleams with scented pomade. When he appears, it's often in a swirl of exuberant chatter. He heartily greets the men he meets as brothers, and seems to always produce exactly what this one or that one might need, out of a colorful cloth bag he carries



slung across his back. All the children call Fatimah “Auntie,” and her presence is announced by squeals, laughter, and cries of “Again! Again!” as she performs sleight-of-hand tricks to their great delight. Fatimah stands tall and lean, with a lovely smile and a collection of riotously-colored headscarves woven with sigils and designs that would give a Batini or a Hermetic pause. Once the children are satisfied, she moves amongst the women of the camp and – as Aydin does – manages to produce miracles out of a small, dusty rucksack.

In addition to this generosity – and in spite of the magnitude of the crisis and the near non-existence of anything but the bare necessities – Aydin and Fatimah somehow manage to create traditional Arab and Persian desserts out of thin air, and serve them to as many people as possible until they run out. My rational and Enlightened mind knows that they must be pulling upon resources from a distance, but the small child in me glories in the magic and mystery of watching someone produce a bit of sweetness where it is least expected. While I was in their company, they made a lovely sharbat, and served it up with a light and creamy almond sorbet. A few nights later, they brought around homemade *raha*, or *rahatlokum*. Though we in the West know of this confection as Turkish Delight, it is popular across the Arab world, and throughout the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. Fun fact: this is the precursor to the modern jelly bean, though the fancier varieties feature dates and pistachios nestled in the colorful-flavored bites. Thankfully, Aydin and Fatimah were kind enough to share their recipes with me, and to allow me to share them with you as well.



Strawberries aren't very Middle-Eastern...

Traditionally, sharbat is made with pomegranate, with blue-lotus powder as a thickening agent. However, finding said blue lotus powder outside the Middle East is not easy, and can be prohibitively expensive. The mashed strawberry in this recipe has the same flavor profile, and is much easier to acquire.

Sharbat

Ingredients

- 1 lb [454 g] of stone fruit (peaches, nectarines, apricots, plums, cherries)
- 1/2 lb [227 g] strawberries
- 1 1/2 cups almonds
- 1 cup borage flower tea, cooled
- 4 mint leaves
- zest of 1 lemon (cut into strips that can be strained out)
- 2-4 tbsp honey to taste based on the ripeness of your fruit
- 1 tsp rose water

Preparation

- Thoroughly rinse the almonds, then roughly chop them.
- Next, rinse and mash the strawberries with a potato masher. Push the mashed strawberries through a fine mesh strainer, until the pulp is dried out and you have a somewhat thick gelatinous strawberry "juice." Rinse the stone fruit, cut into slices, and put them into a non-reactive bowl.
- Now add the rose water, borage tea, strawberry juice, honey, mint, and almonds to the bowl with the fruit. Cover the liquid, and leave it to macerate for 8 hours (or overnight) in the refrigerator.
- Strain the liquid, and pour it into a wide baking dish. Place the baking dish into the freezer for 45 minutes. Remove the dish from the freezer, and scrape a fork along the surface of the liquid to break up any ice crystals. Place the dish back in the freezer, and take it back out every 15 minutes to scrape the crystals apart, until the mixture is completely dry.
- If you have access to an ice shaver, you can alternatively put the syrup over shaved ice. This preparation is more traditional, and is the one that Aydin used at the camp.

Sharbat Sorbet

Ingredients

- fruit pulp from the sharbat solid
- almonds from the strained sharbat solids
- 3 cups of borage flower tea
- 6 dates
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1/3 cup of granulated sugar

Preparation

- Separate out the almonds from the remainder of the strained sharbat solids. Add the almonds, the dates, and the remaining 3 cups of borage tea to your blender, and blend until it's completely smooth.
- Put the mixture in a nut bag (or strain through several layers of cheese cloth), and push out the almond milk until no more liquid is coming out. Discard the almond pulp.
- Rinse out the blender, and put the almond milk back into the blender with the stone fruit from the sharbat solids, the honey, and sugar. Blend for a minute, or until the mixture is completely smooth. Push the mixture through a mesh strainer with a rubber spatula to remove the larger pieces of stone-fruit skin.
- Chill the mixture in the refrigerator for an hour, and then freeze in an ice cream-maker, as per the manufacturer's instructions. Serve with a scoop of the sharbat to balance the sharp fruit flavor of the sharbat with the creaminess of the almond sorbet.

Rahaf Lokum

Ingredients

- 4 cups sugar
- 1 cup cornstarch
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp rose water
- 1 tsp cream of tartar (*do not leave this out!*)
- water
- food coloring

Preparation

- Kitchen tools needed include a candy thermometer, and possibly a hand-held mixer or immersion blender.
- In a heavy saucepan, combine 1 1/2 cups of water with the sugar and lemon juice, and bring it to a boil over medium-high heat. Keep stirring constantly, until the sugar mixture reaches °240 F [°115 C] on the candy thermometer. Immediately remove from the heat, and allow the mixture to cool while you proceed to the next step.
- In another saucepan, combine 2 cups of water, the cream of tartar, and the cornstarch. Whisk the mixture until it becomes smooth. Continue to whisk as you bring the mixture to a boil. Whisk and cook, until the mixture is the consistency of thick mashed potatoes. Remove from the heat.
- A little at a time (about 1/4 to 1/2 of a cup), add the sugar mixture to the cornstarch mix, and whisk to combine. Do this until you have incorporated all of the sugar syrup, and the mixture is thick and smooth. Return the pan to the heat, and bring the mixture to a boil once again.
- Turn down the heat to the lowest setting, and allow the mixture to simmer for an hour, stirring frequently. It will turn a lovely light-amber color.
- Remove from the heat, and add in the rose water plus a bit of food coloring.
- Lightly coat a square pan with non-stick spray, cover the bottom and sides with parchment paper, and then use the non-stick spray to coat the parchment.
- Pour in the flavored jelly, cover lightly with a kitchen towel (or another piece of oiled parchment), and allow to cool completely. The jelly will be slightly sticky to the touch.
- Combine 1 cup of confectioner's sugar with about 1/4 cup of corn starch. Liberally dust your working surface with the powdered sugar, and turn out the jelly onto the surface. Carefully remove the parchment (*go slowly!*), and dust the sticky surface with powdered sugar.
- With a sharp, lightly oiled knife, cut the jelly into bite-sized pieces.
- Drop the pieces, a few at a time, into the powdered sugar-and corn starch-mix, and toss lightly to coat. Continue until all the jelly is in the sugar mix, and has been generously coated.

Flavoring your Rahat Lokum

While rose water provides the most traditional flavoring for this confection, other options are just as delicious:

orange water

lime juice

bergamot

chopped dates and pistachios, with cinnamon

Experiment with your own flavor choices. As mentioned above, rahat lokum is an ancestor of the jelly bean, so any fruit flavor would more than likely taste delicious!

- Arrange pieces on a decorative tray to serve, or place them in an air-tight container along with the remaining powdered sugar /corn starch mix. *Note:* Do not store this in the refrigerator, as that will cause the jelly to “sweat.” It will keep quite nicely in an airtight container at room temperature.

Borage Flower Tea

Ingredients

.10 oz [2 grams] of dried borage blossoms

4 cups of strained water

Preparation

- Pour boiling water over the borage flowers in a 4-cup teapot, and allow the mixture to steep for five minutes. Strain the tea, and allow it to cool to room temperature.

VERBENA

Polpetted'estate in Tomato Ragu, with Pizza Bianca

Growing up, I was not taught – as others of the Faith so often are – that witches were wicked, evil people intent on gobbling up little children or selling them to the faeries. Then again, any witches who may have been so kept themselves well-hidden in our little village, though I'm sure they were there. When one receives the Divine Fire, one's eyes are opened to a great many things. Alas, my fellow Brethren do not often seek out the help and friendship of the Verbena; to be completely fair, the Verbena rarely make themselves seen or available to us, given the bad blood that has long existed between the Church and the old magickal traditions it has relentlessly persecuted. Nevertheless, I somehow managed to convince a Stregheria by the name of Giullietta D'Agosto to not only talk to me on multiple occasions, but also to become an ally and a friend, in spite of my "unfortunate" affiliations.

Nonna Giulla, as her friends and family call her, lives with her nephew Cosmo in a rambling Queen Anne Victorian home in San Francisco with a round tower pointing up to the sky and wide bay-windows shaded by lush, green trees. Inside, the interior and furnishings are just what one would expect in an historical home such as



this, but a careful inspection of the carved wood and ornamental glass in the transoms over the doors reveals hidden figures and symbols that reflect the rich traditions of Italian wise-craft. The kitchen is warm and inviting, featuring a wood-fired stove in addition to a state-of-the-art gas stove and double convection oven. Nonna Giulia explains that for some things, the old ways are best, but that doesn't mean she's unwilling to keep up with the times! Just off the kitchen, there is a good-sized solarium and workshop where a veritable jungle of herbs, flowers, and other plants grow and thrive. At the center is Nonna's worn, wooden work table, brought with her great-grandmother from the Old Country and installed when the house was built. Her knowledge of herb-craft and the creation of life-sustaining teas and tinctures is a prized and carefully guarded family tradition.

Luckily, Nonna's recipe for meatballs and sauce isn't a guarded secret; upon hearing about my project, she was more than willing to share it with me. Cosmo thought the idea of an underground dinner was intriguing, especially given the number of great cooks Nonna counted amongst her friends. We set up a dinner party for ten. Another stand-out dish from that dinner was a white pizza drizzled with herb-infused olive oil and topped with caramelized onions and mild provolone cheese.



Polpetted'estate in Tomato Ragu

Ingredients

For the Ragu

1/4 lb [113 g] pancetta or slab bacon, ground or finely chopped
6 oz [177 ml] tomato paste
1 28 oz [830 ml] can peeled, whole San Marzano tomatoes
1 cup dry, drinkable red wine
olive oil and butter
1 onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 carrot, finely diced
1 stalk celery, finely diced
dried basil, marjoram, thyme, and oregano
salt and pepper

For the Polpetta

1/3 lb [150 g] ground pork
1/3 lb [150 g] ground veal
1 cup crumbled, day-old, Italian bread or bread crumbs
1/2 cup parmesan cheese
1/2 onion, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
1/2 cup fresh basil, minced
1/2 cup fresh mint, minced
1 egg
ragu sauce (see above)
salt and pepper

Preparation

Start with the Ragu

- Heat a knob of butter, plus enough olive oil to coat the bottom of a tall sauce pot, over medium-high heat. When the butter is bubbly, add in the onions, carrot, celery, and garlic, and let them sweat until the onions are clear.
- Turn up the heat a little, and add in the pancetta, stirring the contents of the pot near-constantly. When the onions and pancetta begin to brown, add in the tomato paste, and allow it to brown a bit. It will not turn very brown, but it will lose its brightness and turn a richer, darker red.
- Pour in the can of tomatoes with the liquid and add the red wine. Stir the contents of the pot to mix well.
- Add in the dried herbs as follows: Enough dried basil to fit in the hollow of your hand, three pinches (what you can pick up with your thumb and first two fingers) each of

the marjoram, thyme, and oregano. Massage or “work” the herbs a bit before adding them to the pot.

- Lower heat to the lowest setting, and allow the sauce to simmer for two hours, stirring occasionally to prevent the bottom from scorching.

Meatballs

While the ragu is cooking, begin work on the meatballs.

- The texture of the meatballs will be different depending upon your use of day-old Italian bread or commercially-produced bread crumbs. If you choose to use the day-old bread, rip the bread into very small pieces, and then lightly toast them on a cookie sheet to dry them out a bit more.
- Add all the ingredients for the meatballs *except* the ragu sauce into a large bowl. With your hands, blend the meat and other ingredients together as uniformly as possible. Spoon about 3 tablespoons of the cooking sauce into a small bowl or dish, and then allow it to cool down before adding it to the meatballs.
- Blend again, then shape the mixture into balls about two inches in diameter, and lay them on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. It is okay if the sides touch. Wrap the baking sheet in plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator to allow the flavors to marry.
- In a heavy frying pan, pour in enough olive oil to coat the bottom of the pan, and heat until the oil just begins to smoke.
- Add meatballs into the pan a few at a time, until the pan is full but not crowded.
- When the bottoms are brown, turn each meatball over and allow it to brown on the other side. They will not cook completely through!
- As the meatballs finish browning on both sides, transfer them to the pot of hot, simmering sauce. Gently fold them in, being careful not to break them apart. The meatballs will finish cooking in the sauce.
- Serve in a bowl with a generous amount of shaved parmesan cheese, a drizzle of fine olive oil, and a sprinkling of pepper flakes if you like a little kick. These can also be served over pasta if you so desire.



Pizza Bianca with Carmelized Onions and Provolone Dolce

Nonna Giulia often laments that what most Americans think of as “pizza” is actually a far cry from what she grew up with and learned to make from her relatives. The key to an excellent pizza is a well-hydrated, flavorful dough, and a light and simple combination of toppings that allow the flavor and texture of the crust to shine along with them. She uses a traditional, wood-fired oven to make her pizza. For the rest of us, here’s how to re-create that crunchy, chewy crust in a standard oven.

Ingredients

For the Dough

- 3 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 2/3 cups water at room temperature
- 1 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 1/2 tsp rapid-rise yeast
- 1 1/4 tsp sugar
- about 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 oz [227 g] shredded mild provolone cheese
- 2 tsp fresh thyme leaves, minced

For the Onions

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp light brown sugar
- 4 medium onions, sliced into 1/4-inch [6.4 mm] thick rounds
- 1 tbsp water
- ground black pepper

Utensils

- stand mixer, with dough hook attachment
- rubber spatula
- pizza stone
- 1-2 rimmed, 18 x 13-inch [457 x 330 mm] baking sheets (one can be used in place of a pizza stone)

Preparations

Make the Dough

- Place a damp towel, or a rubber shelf-liner, underneath a stand mixer in order to keep it from “walking.” In the bowl of a stand mixer with a dough-hook attachment, mix flour, water, and salt on low speed for about 4 minutes, or until there are no dry patches of flour. You may need to occasionally scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a spatula. Turn off the mixer, and let the dough rest for 20 minutes.

- Sprinkle the yeast and the sugar over the dough, and knead on low speed for about 2 minutes, occasionally scraping down the sides and the bottom of the bowl. Increase the speed to high, and knead for 6-10 minutes until the dough is glossy, smooth, and pulls away from the sides of the bowl. *Be aware:* Once you turn the mixer off, the dough will fall back to the sides.
- Coat a large bowl with one tablespoon of the olive oil. Use your fingers for this. Rub the excess from your fingers onto the blade of a rubber spatula. Use that oiled spatula to transfer the dough to the oiled bowl, and then pour another tablespoon of oil over the top.
- Again, using your oiled spatula, flip the dough over so that it is well-coated with oil. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap, and allow the dough to rise at room temperature until it has tripled in volume and large bubbles have formed. This should take about 2 to 2 1/2 hours.

Prepare the Onions

- Heat the butter and the oil in a large non-stick skillet over high heat, and allow the bubbling of the butter to subside a bit before adding in the salt and sugar. Introduce the onions, and stir well to coat them. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onions start to soften. Reduce the heat to medium, and cook until the onions are a deep, rich brown and are slightly sticky. This will take about 30 to 40 minutes. *Note:* Stir frequently, and be mindful of your heat. If your onions are scorching, reduce the heat. If they haven't browned after 15 to 20 minutes, raise the heat.
- Remove the pan from the heat, and stir in the water. Season with pepper (to taste), then transfer to a wide, shallow bowl to cool to room temperature.

Prepare Your Oven

- About an hour before baking, move your oven rack to the middle position and place a pizza stone on the rack. If you do not have a pizza stone, you can substitute an inverted baking sheet with a low rim. Turn the oven on to °450 F [°230 C].

Bake the Pizza

- With your fingers, coat a rimmed baking sheet with the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil. Re-oil your spatula if necessary.
- Using your spatula, turn the risen dough out onto the baking sheet with any excess oil that remains in the bowl. Press the dough out towards the edges of the pan. Use your fingertips, and be careful not to tear the dough. Don't panic if the dough doesn't fit snugly into the corners of the pan.
- Let the dough rest for about 10 minutes, until it is slightly bubbly. Poke the surface of the dough with a fork all over (about 40 times), and sprinkle with salt.
- Bake for 15-17 minutes, until the surface is just beginning to brown in spots.
- Remove the pizza from the oven, spread the onions evenly over the surface, and sprinkle with the Provolone and the thyme.
- Put the pizza back in the oven, and bake until the cheese becomes bubbly and starts to brown in spots.

Final Notes

This is a very well-hydrated dough, so you *must* handle it with slightly oiled hands and utensils; otherwise it will stick to everything. Standard procedure in bread-making involves flouring your hands and surfaces. Don't do that with this dough – you will regret it!

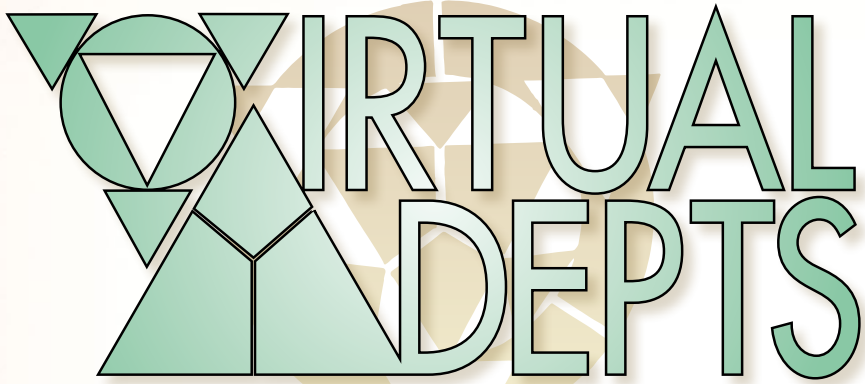
Once the pizza dough has been placed in the oiled bowl, it can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. I actually recommend this, because a dough that has been allowed slow, cold rise will develop all kinds of delicious flavor.

If you choose this option, be sure to set your dough out on the counter at room temperature for a good 2 to 3 hours before attempting to shape it; otherwise it will not relax enough to spread out into the pan. If you find that it threatens to tear, even after you've brought it up to room temperature, press it out as far as you can, and then allow it to sit in the pan for a few minutes before trying again.

A pizza stone is a great piece of equipment to have, but if you don't have one, you might want to make a few adjustments to get the kind of crispness desired in this pizza. If your crust doesn't get crispy enough when baking in the center of the oven, try placing your rack and inverted pan at the lowest possible position, and increase the oven temperature to °500 F [°260 C].







VIRTUAL DEPTS

Kuih Lapis

Sometimes food is a cathartic celebration, particularly if you've been through hell and have come out the other side alive and at least somewhat mentally and physically intact. In my experience, the vast majority of the Enlightened still believe that the Fallen and their minions gather around stone altars dripping with the blood of children, summoning demons, and chanting monsters into existence in cursed languages. That's complete and utter shite. The reality is that the Fallen look all too ordinary, like the doctor who readily over-prescribes deadly opiate cocktails to her patients, or the owner of a for-profit prison who entices elected officials to invest in his enterprise while looking the other way at the horrific abuses perpetrated behind those barbed-wire fences and thick cinderblock walls.

Worst of all, perhaps, are those wealthy, upstanding families who put forth their beautiful, educated daughters and sons as online brides and grooms, promising a life of prosperity in the cities to naive, rural folk who are desperate to help their families and improve their lot in life. These people, many of whom are college-educated men who come from dirt-poor, opportunity-starved villages all across Southeast Asia, enter into these arranged marriages with the understanding that when they arrive in Hong Kong, Jakarta, or Singapore, their in-laws will provide work for them until such time as the new couple can establish themselves and make networking connections. At that point, so the in-laws promise, the young person can move on to even better, more white-collar opportunities.

Of course, this is a lie.

A young man arrives, and almost immediately, his passport is taken from him by his wife or her family - forcibly, if necessary. Then he is required to work backbreaking hours during the day in construction or some other form of manual labor, only to be forced into servitude for the family at home at night. Any money he makes is directly paid to that family (not his own), and his meager allowance is monitored to ensure that he's not trying to secretly build himself an avenue of escape. He's trapped as a slave until either he dies or he runs away... and, in the latter case, with no passport, he becomes invisible.

Where do I Find This Stuff?

Pandan leaves are what give this dessert its distinctive flavor. While they are readily available in Southeast Asia, they can be rather difficult to source in other parts of the world. If you have access to a Thai or Vietnamese farmer's market, you might be able to find fresh pandan leaves there; if not, there may be online sources that sell fresh and frozen ones that will work just as well.

As a last resort, you can reconstitute dried pandan leaves, but the flavor will be much weaker. Avoid many of the extracts or pastes you might see online. These are largely food coloring, and the artificial flavor is not really appetizing. If all else fails, you can substitute any sort of floral aromatic flavoring like rose, jasmine, or orange blossom.

Thank the Lord above for the alliance of the Blessed: a wildly varied hodgepodge of Tradition mages, Technocrats, and unaffiliated magi who have begun to fight this particular flavor of evil head-on, seeking to root out the twisted forces at the heart of this most heinous form of human trafficking. Mary Pei, a Virtual Adept I know in Singapore, thought that perhaps a clutch of the Fallen within her city were using a relic to strengthen the persuasive power of their trap. My fellow Brethren and I engaged in the fight, not only to recover the artifact, but to save at least seven men and women who had been tricked and enslaved. The story of that fight is not important right now; the thing that sticks with me, to this day, is the meal that we all shared with those newly liberated people.

The food in question wasn't particularly special: a platter of satay, hand-pulled noodles, some kind of savory steamed dumplings, a tureen of seafood broth, and little steamed layer cakes called *kuih lapis*, which we ate for dessert with some tea. But I tell you that I have never seen people so grateful to eat their fill – to ask for second and even third helpings, to experience the pleasure of those little cakes – that they could barely eat for weeping. The overwhelming freedom of that moment was something I will never forget.



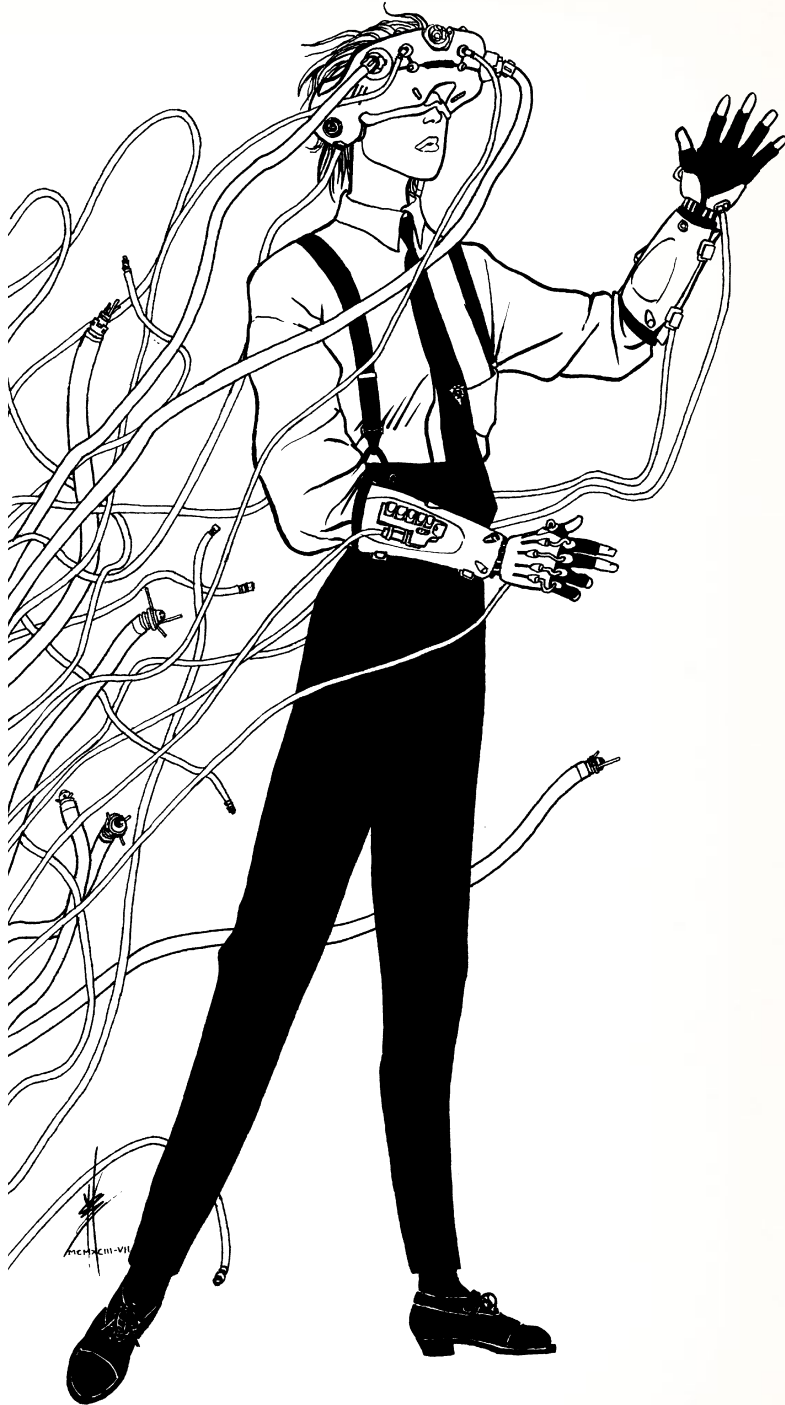
Kuih Lapis

Ingredients

- 3 cups tapioca flour
- 2/3 cup rice flour
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 4 pandan leaves
- 2 cups full-fat canned coconut milk
- food coloring

Preparation

- In a heavy saucepan, combine the water, sugar and pandan leaves, then boil until the sugar is dissolved. Remove from the heat, discard the pandan leaves, and stir in the coconut milk. Set this mixture aside to cool.
- In a separate bowl, mix the tapioca flour and rice flour together with a fork. When the coconut liquid has cooled to room temperature, gradually whisk both liquid and flour together. Strain the mixture through a sieve to remove any lumps.
- Divide the batter in two (or more) equal portions, and then color each portion as you desire, keeping one portion white. (Traditional kuih are often pink-and-white, or green-and-white.)
- Using coconut oil or ghee, grease a square or round cake pan, and place it in the basket of a steamer for few minutes over boiling water.
- Pour about 1/2 cup of white batter into the heated pan, and steam at high heat for about 4 minutes or until the batter is cooked. Then add 1/2 cup of colored liquid onto it, and steam for another 4 minutes. You can reduce the amount of batter for thinner layers.
- Repeat this process, alternating white and colored liquids until all the batter is used up. Be sure to stir the batter every time before pouring out the liquid into the cake pan.
- After the final layer is steamed, remove the cake pan from the steamer, and leave the cake in the pan to cool completely.
- When the cake has cooled, grease a knife, and run it along the sides of the cake pan, then invert the pan over a cutting board or a plate to remove the cake.
- Grease your knife again with coconut oil before cutting the cake into small, bite sized pieces.
- As a finish, you may also wish to brush some melted coconut oil onto the surface for a pretty gloss.



WU LLING



Hongshao Shizitou (Red Braised Lion's Head), with Mandarin Fried Rice

Like many non-Asian Americans, I was deeply ignorant about Chinese food. As a child, my introduction to Asian cuisine came by way of the soggy canned garbage sold under the name Chung King. Occasionally, my food-loving family would grab some goodies at the Peking Dragon - a far cry from "the good stuff," but several steps up from tinny Chung King. Not until I worked with a friend I'll call Zhang Hungzhen during a London operation, though, did I understand the gulf between middle-American "Chinese food" and the real thing. I'm not certain my family knows the difference even now.

Thanks to Britain's unfortunate history throughout Asia, London plays host to some of the best (and some of the worst) Chinese and Indian restaurants on earth. To celebrate a major breakthrough in our fight against the Fallen Ones of London, Hung (Zhang is a family name, which I have used first in honor of the Chinese tradition even though it's not his true family name to begin with) took me to a restaurant whose name and location I must, for obvious reasons, keep secret. After a magnificent dim sum, zesty hot sour soup, and a startling dish that featured a cooked, defeathered pigeon cut into bits arranged in the shape of a bird on the plate, we enjoyed the main course: *hongshao shizitou*, or *red braised lion heads*.

Named because it resembles lion heads (complete with cabbage “manes”), hongshao shizitou is a common dish in North and South China, but one rarely found in restaurants outside Asia. The variation I learned from Zhang Hungzhen involves the “red-cooked” (*hongshao*) style of poaching food in a mixture of chicken stock and soy sauces. A different version can be cooked without the soy sauces, simply by substituting a similar amount of chicken broth instead. Like many Dragon Wizards (which, as Hung explained, is a terrible translation of the group’s real name to begin with), Hung favors the traditional meals of the Chinese Imperial Courts over what he called “the mongrel peasant foods” generally found on American plates. Even so, we also enjoyed large helpings of Mandarin fried rice with that meal, which is a food more common among merchant and artisan classes than among the upper nobility of Imperial dynasties, but a tasty dish regardless. And so, I have included that recipe here, along with the one I secured (through copious flattery) for braised lion heads.

By the way, I recommend using fresh water chestnuts rather than the canned, sliced, and brined water chestnuts commonly used in American cooking. Shelling the nuts can be kind of a hassle, but the resulting taste and texture are worth the effort. Also, speaking as one who now knows better: Do yourself a favor, and don’t eat that Chung King junk. Ever.



Hongshao Shizitou

Ingredients

For the Meat Balls

- 1 wok, oiled (you really need a wok to prepare this dish correctly)
- 1 1/2 lbs [680 g] ground pork
- 20 oz [567 g] Napa cabbage (root ends trimmed, leaves separated)
- 1 1/4 cup chicken stock (home-made is best)
- 8 water chestnuts
- 3 scallions (minced)
- 3 tsp ginger (minced)
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- 2-3 tbsp cornstarch
- 3-4 tbsp peanut oil
- 2 tbsp dark soy sauce
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce

For the Potato Flour Slurry

- 1 tsp potato flour
- 1 tsp water

Preparation

- Mix the pork meat with 4 teaspoons of water. Mix the meat in one direction only, and mix it for a few minutes until the texture is somewhat fluffy. Drop in the minced scallion, ginger, and chestnuts, along with the salt and sesame oil. Mix well, and then form the meat into 5 or 6 large meat balls.
- Dust the meat balls with the cornstarch, and set them aside.
- Grease your wok with the peanut oil, and heat it over medium heat. Once the oil has just barely begun to smoke, add your meat balls – one at a time – and fry them. Roll and turn the meat around in the wok, gently yet constantly (wok-frying is an art of constant motion), until each ball has browned. Remove and set aside.
- Clean wok (*not with soap!*), heat it again, and add 6 teaspoons of water. Drop in the cabbage leaves, cover the wok, and steam the leaves for roughly 5 minutes, until the leaves are flexible. Remove from heat, and set aside.
- Once the cabbage leaves have cooled down enough to handle, line a small casserole dish with roughly 2/3 of those leaves. Place the meat balls on the leaves, and then pour in the chicken stock, soy sauces, and sugar. Lay the remaining leaves over the meat balls, cover, and braise the meal for roughly 1 1/2 hours on the top of your stove.
- Make a small batch of potato flour slurry by mixing the potato flour and water together. Set aside, but make sure it does not lose its liquid consistency.

- When the meat balls and cabbage have cooked, remove the meat. Arrange the cabbage leaves on the serving plate, arrange the meat balls in the center, on top of the leaves.
- Combine the potato flour slurry with the remaining liquid from the casserole dish. Mix it together until it coats the stirring utensil thickly, yet still retains its liquid consistency. Pour this liquid over the “lions’ heads,” and garnish the meal with minced carrots or green onions.

Mandarin Fried Rice

Ingredients

- 5 cups cold cooked (not raw) rice
- 2 eggs
- 1 *lachang* (Chinese dried-pork sausage, finely minced)
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1/2 cup sliced scallions
- 2 tsp fresh ginger (finely chopped)
- 3 tbsp canola oil
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1/2 tsp white pepper
- kosher salt

Preparation

- Pour 2 tablespoons of canola oil, plus 2 teaspoons of sesame oil, into your wok. Heat the wok over medium-to-high heat; when the oil shimmers, break the eggs (which will puff up almost immediately) into the wok.
- Allow the eggs a few seconds to set up, and then (using a spatula or other tool, not your hand!) push the sides of the egg-mass toward the center of the wok so that the uncooked egg can fully cook as well. Flip the cooked egg-mass over for 5 seconds or so, and then pour the mass off onto a plate. As they cool, break the egg-mass into small bits, again using a spatula or similar instrument. Set aside.
- Add the remaining oil to the wok. Swirl it around to coat the inside of the wok; again, heat the oil until it shimmers, and then add the ginger and garlic into the wok; stir-fry for roughly 2 minutes, until the ingredients grow soft.
- Add in the scallions, sausage, and rice. Stir-fry the food with constant motion.
- Add the pepper, soy sauce, and eggs. Toss and blend all ingredients together.
- Season to taste, and serve immediately.



Chapter Two: Technocratic Foodstuffs

*The science which feeds men is worth at least as much
as the one which teaches how to kill them.*

- Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

For obvious reasons, my opportunities to interact with members of the Technocratic Union are limited. Even though the Templar Knights were once a part of the Order of Reason, the wholesale betrayal and slaughter of our forerunning Brethren at the hands of their supposed allies and compatriots, as well as the slow and pervasive rot of Nephandic corruption that has permeated their ranks, has made saving them impossible and working with them when our aims overlap an unadvisable prospect. However, after sharing dinner with a Virtual Adept named Qu33n3L\$A in St. Petersburg, both of us were curious about our adversaries' relationships with food, and had us wondering whether they had the same interest as we did with regards to working with food.

A month or so after our conversation, I received an encrypted communication from Nataliya:

Lion-Man,

I did some poking around, not expecting to find anything, but – SURPRISE! You were right! They DO eat! More than that, I think that the Syndicate communications I intercepted provide proof that what you've observed amongst the "Muggles" is a deliberate initiative on their part. Anyway, enjoy these notes. Some are rather funny, and others are a bit disturbing, quite honestly.

Hope our paths will cross again, Soldier.

Qu33n3L\$A



ITERATION X

Synthetic Cashew Curry Cheese

INTER AMALGAM RESOURCE LOG 3.3.17.S0WIA52X

ItX seeded the idea of aquafaba a year ago, not only reinforcing the importance of industrial processing in the Consensus, but also encouraging more comprehensive use of appliances in the home. It was a roaring success. Most of my Convention-mates won't admit this, but the spark of brilliance that was using aquafaba to make vegan cheese belongs to one of the first ordinary citizens who started working with the bean juice.

I've tried the faux-Mozzarella made with aquafaba, and it's not bad. Why, however, would you spend all your time trying to reproduce something that already exists, instead of pushing the boundaries of what's possible? I started tinkering around with it, and decided to take the cheese approach and see how far in the other direction I could go without having the whole thing fall apart due to statistically-inevitable failure. When I was done, I had Indian cashew curry cheese.

The newest member of our amalgam comes from the Kerala School of Astronomy and Mathematics, and she said her mother would probably gut me and leave me in the streets for the strays to ravage if she knew what I'd done with cashew curry. She also ate more of it than anyone else, so I don't really know if that's an endorsement or not.



Cashew Curry Cheese, with Homemade Aquafaba

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup raw cashews, soaked for 8 hours
- 1/4 cup aquafaba (liquid from a can of garbanzo beans)
- 2 tbsp tapioca starch
- 2 tsp kappa carrageenan
- 1 tsp lactic acid or lemon juice
- 1 tsp nutritional yeast
- 3/4 tsp salt (leave out if you use canned aquafaba with salt)
- 1/2 cup coconut cream (the solids from the top of a can of coconut milk)
- 1/2 tsp cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp mustard seed
- 1 tsp coriander seed
- 1/2 tsp chili flakes
- 1/2 tsp saffron threads
- 1-inch [25 mm] ginger root, finely minced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 2 tbsp minced onion
- 1 tsp coconut (or other neutral oil) for sautéing

Preparation

- Mix the saffron and aquafaba, and leave them to soak while you complete the next step.
- Add the cumin, mustard seed, coriander, chili flakes, and oil to a small sauté pan over medium heat. As soon as the seeds begin to pop and brown a bit, add the onion, garlic, and ginger, and then sauté until lightly browned.
- Strain the cashews from their liquid, and add them to a blender with the aquafaba. Blend them with the sautéed spices until completely smooth.
- Push the mixture through a fine-mesh strainer with a rubber spatula, to remove the pulp and any bits of cashew that aren't completely smooth.
- Add the mixture back to the blender, then add the tapioca starch, kappa carrageenan, acid, nutritional yeast, and salt. Puree again until completely smooth.
- Add the coconut cream, and pulse a few times until smooth. Blend as little as possible during this step.
- Add the mixture to a saucepan, and stir over low heat until the mixture thickens completely. When an instant-read thermometer reads °170 F [°77 C], the cooking process is finished. Be careful not to heat too quickly during this stage.
- Add the mixture to a medium covered bowl, and put in the refrigerator until the mixture has set.
- Serve the cheese in slices, or shred. It will melt if heated.
- Suggested serving applications: Sliced on papadum, melted over flatbread, shredded over cauliflower and roasted.

Homemade Aquafaba

Author's Note

I must admit that I was wholly intrigued by the cashew curry vegan cheese, but I never use canned garbanzos. Therefore, I'm including the recipe I used to make my own homemade aquafaba.

Ingredients

- 1 cup dried beans
- 4 cups of water

Preparation

- Rinse the garbanzo beans, and then add them to a saucepan with the water, and simmer that combination on a stove with the lid on. The simmering time will vary, depending on the beans, but will range between 1 and 2 hours.
- Set the beans aside for use in another recipe. Reduce the remaining liquid until it has reached roughly 3/4 of a cup for weak aquafaba (which can be used in simple applications, such as meringue or cheese), or to 1/3 cup for strong aquafaba (for use in applications where the meringue will have to support heavier ingredients, such as macarons or chiffon cake).
- If the aquafaba seems too weak at these volumes, leave them in the liquid for anywhere from a few hours to overnight (once the beans are done cooking) before reducing the liquid. This will allow you to get more protein out of the beans without overcooking them.
- Aquafaba from a can of chickpeas should be considered weak. It can be whipped immediately for meringues, but needs to be reduced to make macarons.



NWO

NEW WORLD ORDER

Pretzel Logic

INTER AMALGAM RESOURCE LOG 2.12.17.Z7K2PS9M

In the interest of maximizing performance efficiency per research submitted by Progenitor agent Joshua Maxwell, I have prepared the following recipe and procedural log.

The number of NWO sleeper agents, both Enlightened and Extraordinary, has increased considerably in the past year. To minimize conditioning regression in the growing ranks, a food-related identifier has been built into the standard sleeper agent conditioning regimen.

All sleeper agents consume sunflower seeds as a consistent part of their snacking habits. This consumption pattern will emerge from a cursory review of their offices, vehicles, or itemized expense reports. If this pattern is absent during agent review, immediately refer the suspected personnel for potential reconditioning.

Sleeper-agent partners have reported difficulties related to this conditioning during extended stakeouts. The following recipe expands food options that will ensure that the agent-monitoring protocol is undisturbed, and optimal work-stress ratios are maintained for individuals assigned to agent-monitoring.



Sunflower Kernel Pretzel Knots

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cup warm water
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 package (or 1 1/2 tsp) active dry yeast
- 4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour (plus perhaps a bit extra to dust your hands and work-area)
- 4 tbsp melted butter
- 1 egg yolk beater with a splash of water
- 1/4 cup roasted sunflower seeds
- 8 cups water
- 1/2 cup baking soda

For Topping

- 1 tsp cumin
- 2 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- several fresh grinds of pepper
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1/4 cup shelled sunflower kernels

Preparation

- Mix the warm water with the sugar, salt, and yeast. Allow to sit in a warm place for 5 minutes, or until bubbly.
- While the yeast is activating, mix together the spices and salt for the pretzel-knot topping.
- Mix the flour and butter into the yeast mixture, and then stir together until fully incorporated. Either turn the dough out onto a counter and knead until the dough tightens up, or knead with the dough hook in a stand-mixer until the dough pulls away from the mixer bowl and is completely smooth.
- Form dough into a ball, and allow to rise in a warm place for 1 hour, or until the dough has doubled in size.
- When the dough is almost fully risen, add the baking soda to your 8 cups of water in a 4 quart [4 l] saucepan, and then bring to a low boil. Preheat your oven to °450 F [°230 C].
- Separate your dough into 16 equal pieces by cutting the dough in half, then halving those pieces, and repeating this process 2 more times.
- Roll each piece of dough into a 1/2-inch wide [13 mm] rope of dough, and then loosely form a knot.
- Put the knots in the boiling alkalized water 2 at a time, and allow them to boil for 15 seconds.
- Flip the knots, and allow them to boil for 15 more seconds.
- Move the knots to a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, or to silicone baking sheets.

- Coat each pretzel knot generously with the egg-and-water mixture, and then sprinkle with the spice mixture and sunflower kernels. Lightly press the sunflower kernels into the knots with your fingers.
- Bake the pretzel knots for 12 to 14 minutes, or until they have become dark-brown and crusty.

Vegan Option

- To make these pretzels vegan, replace the egg wash with aquafaba, and the melted butter with sunflower oil.

PROGENITORS

Eggs Came First

INTER AMALGAM RESOURCE LOG 1.12.17.D8W6351Q

Good day, all! Since the Mirrorshades finally processed Performance Efficiencies of Allowing Agents on Long-Term Assignments to use Intranet Systems for Inter-personal Content, I'm starting up a sub-forum on the new site for recipes.

I've been assigned to deep-sea lab duty for the last two years, and while the nutrition-synthesis team has improved the flavor-profile of the soy slurry considerably in that time, you occasionally want a flavor you grew up with.

One of the bench-workers had the shockingly enlightened idea to buy some sous vide bags and get some extra use out of the incubation tanks. So I figured I'd kick things off with some of the fillings I put in my omelettes. I mean I'm using Dulce instead of bacon, and you're probably happier not asking what counts as an "egg" around here, but our breakfasts are still pretty epic.

Other sous vide recipes are appreciated. We have the incubation tanks and one standalone burner to cook for the whole lab. The last time someone tried to requisition more cooking equipment, we were reminded just how much effort the nutrition-synthesis team puts into our rations. It's clear we're never getting a second burner.



Sous Vide Omelette Fillings

Ingredients

12 Eggs

For Bacon Filling

1 package thick-cut bacon
1 8 oz [227 g] package of baby spinach
8 oz [227 g] shredded cheddar

For Shrimp Filling

12 oz [340 g] medium shrimp, shelled and deveined
24 cloves of garlic, depending on preference
2 tbsp olive oil
1/2 tsp red pepper flakes

For Mushroom Filling

1 8 oz [227 g] package button or crimini Mushrooms
1 tsp chopped rosemary
2 cloves minced garlic
3 tbsp red wine
1/4 cup sour cream
1 dry parmesan cheese rind
salt and pepper, to taste

Preparation

- To prepare ingredients for the sous vide via the water-submersion method, put all ingredients in a large zip-lock bag.
- With the bag open, put the bottom of the bag into a large bowl of water. Do not submerge to the point where the open top will allow water in. The pressure from the water will force the bag closed. Push as much of the bag underwater as you can without letting water flow over the top, then close the zip-lock bag.
- When you prep a bag this way, you can use wet marinades, which you cannot do with a vacuum sealer. There may be a little air left, so you might need a light weight – like a small ramekin – to keep your food submerged during cooking.

For the Bacon

- Turn your sous vide onto °145 F [°63 C], and allow the water to come up to temperature. Then submerge your bacon in its original vacuum packaging into the water bath. If you purchased your bacon in bulk, bag it using the water method above, or using a vacuum sealer.
- Allow to cook for a minimum of 8 hours, but up to 48 hours.
- Take the bacon out of the sous vide, and sear it hard on one side, and then for a few seconds on the other side to remove the pale color. The bacon will be crisp on the

outside, but tender overall. If you prefer completely crispy bacon, then cook until it is evenly, but lightly, browned on both sides. It will be crisp, but more tender than bacon that is not pre-cooked.

- Pour all but 1 tsp of bacon grease out of the pan. Sauté your spinach until it begins to wilt, and then remove it from the pan and put it in a bowl.

For the Shrimp

- Turn on your sous vide to °135 F [°57 C], and allow the water to come to the set temperature.
- Add your shrimp, olive oil, chopped garlic, and red pepper flakes to a zip-top bag. Mix then around in the bag until the oil and spices have covered the shrimp fairly evenly. Then seal the bag using the water-submersion method described above, and cook in your sous vide for 15 minutes. When it comes out, it is ready to add to omelettes.

For the Mushrooms

- Turn on your sous vide to °185 F [°85 C], and allow the water to come to the set temperature.
- Add your mushrooms, herbs, wine, garlic, and parmesan rind to a sous vide bag, and then seal the bag using the water-method described above. Cook in the sous vide for 1 hour. You may need to weigh this down to keep it under water with a light weight, as described above.
- Empty the bag into a small bowl. Remove the parmesan rind and discard. Mix in the sour cream. The mixture is ready to add to omelettes.

Omelette Preparation

- Preheat a 10-inch stainless steel skillet, and add 1/2 tablespoon of butter to the pan. The butter should quickly froth, but should not immediately brown or burn. If it browns slightly, then the temperature is fine; if it burns and smokes, the pan is too hot.
- Put 2 beaten eggs in the pan, and let them cook for several seconds while tilting the pan to make sure the entire bottom is covered in egg.
- Very lightly ease the edges of the cooking egg up with a rubber spatula, allowing the egg to cook for a few more seconds so that the bottom sets. Flip the pan a few times to gather the eggs at the far edge of the pan.
- While the eggs are still wet on top, add your fillings. Allow the egg to cook to the desired consistency, and then pour out onto your plate and fold over with a spatula. The insides should ideally be thick and custardy, but not entirely set.

SYNDICATE

Seductive Desserts

INTER AMALGAM RESOURCE LOG 1.26.17.63B521Q0

A note to Syndicate agents in the field managing inter-Convention amalgams. Don't be seduced by the flash of the procedures used in the Conventions we fund. We seduce, and our tools are subtle.

Any good chef (the best of whom, of course, share our Convention), will tell you it is their job to elevate food beyond its roots while evoking the emotion and nostalgia buried deep in the primal energy of their work. This isn't just pretentious self-aggrandizement. It's quite true.

The greatest dishes are themselves instruments of our work, as this recipe shows. No element of these ravioli is quite what you would expect it to be, and yet these foodstuffs are steeped in experiences embedded deeply in cultural identity. The burst of gelatinized raspberry is familiar, but in no way Italian. The zabaglione is intentionally changed so the flavor is unexpected, but (unlike the technique used for the raspberry) remains entirely grounded in Italian products.

I finish every new negotiation with this dessert. I insist all meaningful decisions wait until the ritual of breaking bread is complete. By the end of the first bite, I carefully observe my opponent. Do they lose themselves in the flavor, forgetting the careful game of chess they are playing? Do they recognize what the dish is designed to accomplish, and raise their guard, or do they smile with knowing respect, recognizing the excellence of not only the dessert's craft, but the elegance of its place in our negotiations?

By the third bite, I know everything I need to know about the nature of my opponent, and by the end of dessert the negotiations that follow are a passing formality.



Chocolate Ravioli

Ingredients

fresh berries for garnish

Raspberry Jellies

12 oz [340 g] frozen raspberries

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 oz [7 g] powdered gelatin

1 tbsp water

Chocolate Ganache

12 oz [340 g] semi-sweet chocolate chips

3/4 cup heavy whipping cream

1 tbsp butter

Zabaglione Sauce

6 egg yolks

1/4 cups sugar

1/2 cups Prosecco (or a similar white wine)

2 tbsp orange liqueur

pinch of salt

Chocolate Pasta

1 1/2 cups flour

1/2 cup cocoa powder

3 large eggs

Preparations

- Mix the gelatin with the 2 tablespoons of water, and let sit to soften while you prepare the raspberry sauce.
- Add the raspberries and sugar to a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer, mashing occasionally with a spatula or fork.
- When the sugar has completely broken up, push the mixture through a wire sieve with a spoon or spatula, until the mixture left in the sieve has dried but the seeds have not burst through the sieve. Occasionally wipe the sauce from the bottom of the sieve during this process to make sure no seeds have pushed through.
- Mix the softened gelatin with the raspberry mixture until it is dissolved, and then pour it into a pan and evenly spread across the bottom of the pan.
- Put this into a refrigerator, to set.
- Bring the cream to a simmer in a small saucepan, and then remove from the heat.
- Add the chocolate chips and butter, and mix until it is smooth. It will look like it won't come together and first, but the chocolate will melt. Put this in the refrigerator, to set.

- To make the pasta, mix the flour and cocoa together in a bowl. Set aside 1/4 cup of the mixture.
- Make a well in the middle of the pasta, and then crack the eggs into the well. Whisk them together, and slowly incorporate the flour mixture.
- When it is mixed together, pour the mixture out onto a clean counter, and then knead the dough until it comes together. This will take several minutes of kneading.
- Cut the dough into 4 equal parts, and cover to let rest for 15 minutes.
- Run one of the 4 pieces of dough through a pasta maker on the widest setting several times, folding it over before each rotation. When the dough begins to become smooth, and stays together when going through the machine, begin to move to thinner settings, repeating the folding and turning procedure a few times at each thickness until you reach the setting your pasta maker's manual recommends for ravioli.
- Cut the raspberry jelly into small cubes. To make the ravioli, cut out circles of pasta with a biscuit cutter.
- On a circle of pasta, put a teaspoon of ganache and a few cubes of jelly. Coat the outside of the pasta circle with water or egg wash, and then put another circle on top.
- Seal tightly with your fingers, making sure not to leave any air in the dumpling.
- Repeat pasta rolling and ravioli filling until you are out of pasta. If you cut out all your circles at once, keep them well-covered to prevent them from drying out.
- Mix the yolks and sugar of the zabaglione sauce, and then mix until the yolks are slightly frothy. Add the wine, liqueur, and salt.
- Whisk continuously over a double boiler, until the custard thickens.
- Boil the ravioli for 5 minutes, and serve over several spoonfuls of the custard with a garnish of fresh berries.
- You will have some leftover ganache. Enjoy this excess on absolutely everything.

Void Engineers

The Statistically Inevitable Corned Beef Sandwich

INTER AMALGAM RESOURCE LOG 2.3.17.N29A10S4

Most people don't think much of the VA corp's culinary sensibilities. They think we're limited to dehydrated ice cream, and borscht from a tube. We aren't always off-world, though, and sometimes we're downright cheeky about our food choices.

In the early days, when we were first integrating the idea of space-food into the Consensus, an Extraordinary Citizen almost crashed the whole program. In March of 1965, he snuck a corned beef sandwich onto the Gemini 3 mission inside his space suit. It was one of the first trips where we were actually taking the new freeze-dried food packs off the mudball.

Now the public story was it was a cute prank, and some crumbs started floating around the cabin in the microgravity. Congress threw a little fit because they thought we were mocking their space-food program. They threatened to cut funding, and eventually everyone had a good laugh, cast the sandwich in resin, and we moved on with our lives.

Don't believe a word of it. We were listening to ship techs grumble about our flagrant disregard for cascading statistical inevitability a decade later. The old 'Nauts still make jokes about how statistically inevitable their lunch choices are when they can catch an ItX or forgiving NWO agent in earshot. Let it never be said we don't have a wicked sense of humor. We've also learned how to make a mean corned beef.



Statistically Inevitable Corned Beef Sandwich

Ingredients

For Russian Dressing

- 2 cloves of garlic, finely grated
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp chili sauce
- 2 tsp grated horseradish
- 1 tsp hot sauce (or to taste)
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 tsp sweet paprika
- 1/4 tsp salt

For Sandwich

- 8 slices of rye sandwich bread
- 1 lb [454 g] sliced corned beef
- 8 oz [227 g] Jarlsberg cheese
- softened butter (for sautéing and browning the sandwiches)

Preparation

- Mix all the ingredients of the Russian dressing in a small bowl.
- Shred the Jarlsberg cheese, and cut the corned beef into thin strips.
- Pre-heat a griddle and a sauté pan to medium heat.
- Spread a thin layer of butter on 1 side of each piece of bread.
- Put a pat of butter in the sauté pan, and put the bread on the griddle, dry-side down. If the bread won't all fit on your griddle, then repeat the sandwich construction steps enough times to make all 4 sandwiches.
- Sauté the corned beef until about a quarter of the surface is somewhat browned but most of the meat is still soft and moist. Turn off the heat under the sauté pan.
- Repeat this step for each sandwich. Flip the bread so the buttered side is on the heat, and coat the lightly toasted sides with Russian dressing, to taste. Pile a quarter of the cheese on one piece of bread, and then pile one-quarter of the sautéed corned beef on top of the cheese. Put the other piece of bread on top of the corned beef to complete the sandwich, and press slightly to bind the sandwich together.
- Cook the sandwich until the bottom is golden brown, then flip the sandwich and cook until the other side is golden brown as well.
- Serve the sandwiches with the side-dish of your choice.







Appendix

Coda: Good Home Cookin'

For all that I spend a great deal of my life trekking the globe, there is nothing finer than allowing my feet to guide me back home to the roads and lanes that I ambled down as a boy. As I mentioned at the start of this book, I grew up in a town where everyone cooked, so when I think of home, I think of the kind of food that my mother, my neighbors, and my aunts and uncles used to make on a daily basis. To this day, if ever I'm feeling low and poorly, or if it's a cold, wet day and the darkness is doing its damndest to drag me down into the pit of sorrow and despair, I try my best to make a meal that reminds me of home, of my father's bakery, of my mother's kitchen, of my sister's warm smile, and the many joyful times that we shared together. Nothing does that better than lamb stew; a rich, buttery colcannon; and fresh soda bread baked in a deep, cast-iron skillet. I've shared so many recipes from everywhere else. So here are a few of my own from my home.

I wish you peace, safety, and many good meals to come!

Lamb Stew

Ingredients

- 2 lb [907 g] of potatoes, peeled and cut into quarters
- 1 lb [454 g] of boneless mutton or lamb cutlets, cut into 2-inch [50 mm] chunks
- 2 tbsp of all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp of olive oil
- 1 cup of roughly chopped onion
- 1 cup of leeks, cleaned and thinly sliced (white parts only)
- 1 cup of carrots, roughly chopped
- 3 cups of dark beef stock
- 2 to 3 cabbage leaves, thinly sliced
- salt and pepper

Preparation

Please note that this stew is best made a day before serving, to allow the flavors to marry and develop.

- Preheat the oven to °350 F [°177 C].
- In a large frying pan, heat half the oil until it is shimmering but not smoking. Add half of the lamb chunks, and allow them to brown all over. Use tongs to place the meat in a large casserole dish, and cover it with a half of the quartered potatoes, onions, leeks, and carrots. Repeat with the remaining oil, lamb, and vegetables.
- Make a roux by adding the flour to the frying pan, and then stirring constantly to absorb the fat and juices from the meat. Cook on a low heat for 3 minutes, and then add the beef stock in, one ladle at a time and whisking constantly, until you have thick gravy that's smooth, silky, and free of lumps. Pour this over the lamb and vegetables.
- Add the remaining stock to the casserole, cover with a tight-fitting lid, and bake in the oven for 1 hour. Add the cabbage, replace the lid, and cook for another hour.
- Check from time to time to make sure the stock isn't reducing too much. If it is, add a small amount of boiling water to ensure that the meat and vegetables are always covered by liquid. If the gravy is too thin at the end of the cooking time, remove the lid, and cook a bit longer until the desired consistency is achieved. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Soda Bread

Ingredients

- 4 cups of all-purpose flour*
- 1 1/8 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 14 oz [414 ml] (about 2 cups) of full-fat, cultured buttermilk

*Note: In the US, you may also wish to use “soft” wheat flour, sometimes called “cake” flour. Just be sure that it is not self-rising flour.

Preparation

- Adjust the oven rack to the middle position and preheat to °425 F [°220 C]. Roughly cover the bottom of a deep 10-inch cast iron or enameled Dutch oven with a sheet of parchment paper; no need to trim.
- In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking soda and salt.
- Use a large spatula or wooden spoon to gradually fold in the buttermilk, until the dough is fully moistened, sticky, and no pockets of flour remain. Stop folding as soon as the dough comes together.
- Scrape the dough into the prepared Dutch oven, and smooth it into a rounded, dome-like shape. With a sharp knife or a kitchen razor, deeply score a cross into the top.
- Cover and bake the bread for 30 minutes, or until it is golden and well-risen. Remove the lid, and bake 15 minutes longer. The bread is done once it gives a hollow sound when the bottom is tapped.
- Invert the loaf onto a wire rack, remove and discard the parchment, and turn it right-side up. Cover the bread in a tea towel, and lightly sprinkle water on the cloth to keep the bread moist.

Irish Cheese and Butter

The Kerrygold brand sells a lovely and flavorful Irish butter, which truly *does* make a difference in this dish where butter is rather the star. Likewise, a good Irish cheese can easily be found at most supermarkets. Do yourself the favor and splurge on these quality ingredients. They are well worth the extra cost.

Colcannon with Bacon, Leek, and Kale

Ingredients

- 2 lb [907 g] of red or golden potatoes, cut into large chunks
- 3/4 cup of whole milk
- 3/4 tsp of salt
- 1 cup of leeks, well-washed and chopped (white parts only)
- 6 cups of finely shredded kale (green cabbage may also be used)
- 4 or 5 strips of thick-cut bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1 cup of shredded Dubliner cheese
- salted Irish butter, melted
- freshly ground pepper, to taste

Preparation

- Boil the potatoes for about 20 to 30 minutes (or until very tender). Drain well, and mash them with the skins on, adding the milk and the salt.
- While the potatoes are cooking, fry the bacon, and then set it aside until it's cool enough to crumble.
- In a large skillet, melt about 6 tablespoons of the butter. Add the leeks, and cook them in the butter, stirring occasionally, until they're very soft and translucent. Add the kale, and cook, stirring constantly until the kale is quite wilted and soft.
- Stir the kale-and-leek mixture, the crumbled bacon, and the shredded cheese into the hot potatoes, and then season them with pepper.
- Transfer the potatoes into a large serving bowl, making a deep well in the center.
- Pour melted, browned butter into the well, and serve.

**Nothing would be more firesome than eating
and drinking if God had not made them a pleasure
as well as a necessity.**

- Voltaire

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