

Pistachio pie and plum nutty cake

From Aunt Olivia's Kitchen

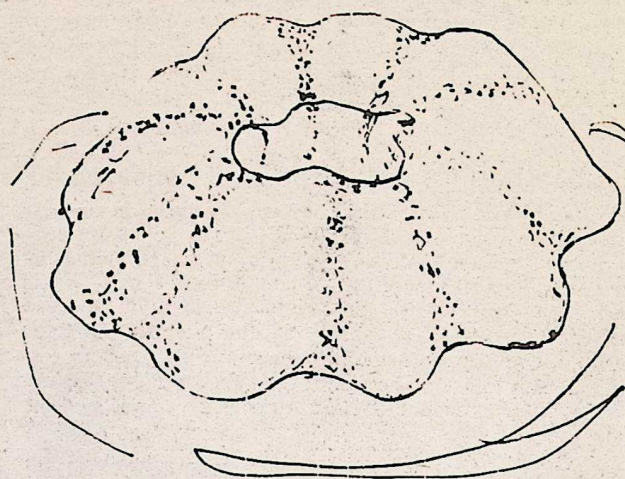
by Lydia Lovell

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Same old story? Jaded appetites? Everything you've cooked all winter seem to have been served repeatedly? You'd welcome something really different? You're not alone. Aunt Olivia often found herself casting about for a picker-upper this time of year. One of her favorites was **Ginger Pork Chops with Apples and Prunes**. Doesn't the very sound of it tickle your taste buds?

8 prunes, pitted and halved
1/4 C. brandy
4 thick center-cut pork chops, trimmed
Fresh-ground black pepper
2 T. corn oil
2 cloves of garlic, minced
Peel of half-a-lemon, grated

2 slices fresh ginger root, minced
2 large red apples, cored, thick-sliced
1 C. apple juice
1 C. plain yogurt
1 T. cornstarch
1-1/2 lbs. boiled new potatoes



4 C. shredded carrots
2 T. minced onion
1/2 t. dried rosemary
1 t. salt
1/4 t. pepper
3 T. butter
1/2 C. water

In a large bowl, combine carrots and onions. Butter a 1-1/2 quart casserole and fill with carrot/onion mixture. Sprinkle seasonings over surface and dot with butter. Add water, cover, and bake at 350° for an hour.

Veal is expensive but one small cutlet per person may suffice when other delicious dishes are offered as well. **Breaded Veal Cutlets** make a fine company dinner for four.

1 C. fine-crumbled bread crumbs
1/4 C. Parmesan cheese, grated
1/8 t. each: oregano, basil, garlic, salt, black pepper

1 t. paprika
1/4 C. butter
4 slices veal
3 T. cooking oil
1 C. chablis
1/2 T. fresh parsley, chopped
3 green onions, chopped
1 T. corn starch
1/4 C. water

In a shallow bowl, combine crumbs, cheese, and seasonings. Set aside. In a large skillet, melt butter. Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly. Dip veal slices in melted butter, then coat with bread crumb mixture. Return skillet to heat. Brown veal quickly, turning to cook both sides. Cover pan, reduce heat, and simmer about 10 minutes until meat is tender. Remove meat and keep warm. Add wine, onions, and parsley to pan juices. Stir and simmer five minutes until onions are tender. Dissolve cornstarch in water and thicken gravy. Simmer five minutes more. Serve cutlets with gravy.

Flavors of chablis with veal and marsala with rice promise to brighten the most winter-weary appetites. Aunt Olivia served wine with meals only on special occasions but enjoyed wine-flavored foods knowing the alcohol cooked away leaving a delicate fruity piquancy. A perfect partner to Veal Cutlets is **Gourmet Rice**.

3-1/2 C. chicken broth
1/2 C. dry marsala wine
4 T. margarine
1 medium onion, finely diced
2 C. raw white rice
1/2 C. grated Parmesan cheese

Heat broth (use chicken bouillon cubes to make broth if there's no homemade supply on hand) and wine in saucepan; do not boil. Set aside. Melt butter in small skillet; saute onion. Add rice and brown it slightly, stirring well. In a 1-1/2 quart casserole, pour broth over rice. (Rinse skillet with broth mixture.) Sprinkle cheese on top. Cover and bake at 325° for 50 minutes. Yields enough for 8 servings; can be reheated.

Uncle Henry liked a salad with veal cutlet and baked rice. Either **Stuffed Tomato** or **Tomato Aspic with Artichoke Hearts** suited him to a "T." Both recipes follow so you may choose between them. In a small bowl combine the following ingredients and refrigerate several hours:

1-1/2 C. cottage cheese
1 green pepper, finely chopped
1/2 cucumber, finely diced
1 medium onion, minced

For individual salads, slice stem ends from four medium-size, ripe-but-firm tomatoes. Remove seeds and pulpy centers. Fill

tomatoes with cottage cheese mixture, dividing it evenly among the tomato shells. Top each with a heaping teaspoon of mayonnaise and serve on crisp lettuce leaves.

Alternatively, in a small bowl, stir one envelope of unflavored gelatin into 3 T. cold tomato juice. In a saucepan, heat a cup of tomato juice, but do not boil. Blend hot tomato juice into soaked gelatin. Mix 1/2 C. cold tomato juice with 1 T. lemon juice, 1/8 t. salt, and 3 drops Worcestershire sauce. Stir into gelatin mixture. Open a can of artichoke hearts and cut an X across the top of each, spreading to cover the bottoms of four 1-cup metal molds. Fill with tomato mixture and chill until firm. At mealtime, unmold onto leaves of Bibb lettuce. Pass mayonnaise diluted half-and-half with lemon juice and seasoned with fresh-ground pepper.

A sweet is the traditional topper-offer for every meal the Lovells have shared year-in, year-out; I'm confident Lovells are little different from other families in this. For Aunt Olivia in days gone by and for me today, the question is not whether to serve dessert, but which of many possibilities will best bring this meal to its finale. Shall we have cake? Or pie? And if so, what kind? Aunt Olivia was partial to cake. Try **Plum Nutty Cake** to find out why.

1 C. Wesson oil
2 C. sugar
3 eggs
1 T. cinnamon
2 C. self-rising flour
2 small jars baby-food plums
1 C. chopped pecans

In a large bowl, combine ingredients in order given, beating with electric mixer at medium speed after each addition. Stir in pecans. Pour into a well-greased and floured tube pan, a Bundt pan if you have one, and bake at 350° until done.

Tests for doneness include: toothpick comes out clean; surface springs back when pressed lightly with finger; cake has shrunk slightly away from the sides of pan. Cool cake on rack. It keeps well, covered, in the refrigerator.

Prefer pie? **Pistachio Pie Royal** should be just the ticket. I've adapted Aunt Olivia's recipe and the result is one of the easiest, quickest, and most elegant pies ever to grace a table.

1 graham cracker crust
1 egg, separated
1 16-oz. can fruit cocktail
1 7-oz. can crushed pineapple with juice
1 pkg. pistachio pudding mix, dry
1 8-oz. container whipped topping
1 C. tiny marshmallows
1 C. chopped walnuts

Separate egg. Brush yolk evenly over crust and bake at 375° for 5 minutes. In a small bowl, whip egg white until stiff. Set aside. In a large bowl, combine drained fruit cocktail and crushed pineapple and its juice with pudding. Stir well. Fold in whipped topping, marshmallows, egg white, and 1/2 C. chopped nuts. Pile into baked shell. Sprinkle surface with remaining chopped nuts. Refrigerate overnight.

An old-fashioned remedy for spring fever was a good dose of sulfur and molasses... or so Aunt Olivia used to declare. She never administered the foul-sounding mixture to me (or to anyone else as far as I know). It's doubtful that anyone ever prescribed it for her. Probably nobody knows, anymore, exactly what a "good does of sulfur and molasses" consists of... and probably, too, that's just as well. No need of such primitive stimulants... not as long as imaginative and creative cookery comes up with appetite pleasers like pistachio pie and plum nutty cake.

Bon appetit.