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Recipes from the archive

The National Library of Australia's Trove database (trove.nla.gov.au) is full of small treasures. Here are a few recipes from the pages of some of the digitised historical publications available on Trove. Historical recipes can be a source of inspiration for anyone trying to reduce food waste, either for environmental reasons or to make the most of your grocery budget. And you might find some surprisingly accommodating of your dietary requirements!

If you try one out, don't forget to tag us on social media with a photo and review.

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Chicken pie

Border a small pie-dish with puff-paste [puff pastry], mince finely some cold fowl or the white meat of a rabbit with some ham or tongue, a little shallot, a few mushrooms, if at hand; season with salt, pepper, and pounded mace, moisten with white stock [or chicken stock], fill the pie-dish, cover with paste, bake in moderate oven [180–190C], and, when done, add through a hole in the top a little more well flavoured stock.

Cover of Australian Home Beautiful, December 1947.

Binding

THE AUSTRALIAN

DECEMBER, 1947

HOME BEAUTIFUL

Registered at G.P.O., Melbourne for transmission by post as a periodical.

ONE SHILLING



Build Your Furniture From Paper Patterns—Page 40

While a one-sentence recipe without an ingredients list might not get past many food editors these days, it was common in the ‘Useful recipes’ section of the *Victorian Almanac for 1870*. In the 1870 kitchen, basic culinary skills and knowledge were assumed, and nothing went to waste. Thrifty recipes like these were meant to be flexible, using up whatever quantities of food were to hand and letting the cook season to their own taste.

Don’t worry if you don’t have rabbit or tongue in your fridge; this pie will make another meal of your leftover chicken or turkey and Christmas ham, ‘minced’ with a knife. You could also use fresh chicken mince. Leeks or onions can be used in place of shallots, and carrots or peas can substitute for mushrooms. You can brown your shallots and cook the other filling ingredients together on the stove before adding to the pie. Mace was once a spice-shelf staple and you can still find it in many supermarkets. If you don’t have it, however, try nutmeg or allspice, or add your own spice mix to the dish.

Store-bought frozen puff pastry is perfect for this recipe. To avoid a soggy bottom on your pie, after you’ve lined the bottom of your pie dish, use a fork to poke the pastry all over and put it in the oven for 10–15 minutes before adding your pie filling. Give your pastry lid an egg wash before baking for a golden, crispy top. If you’re using leftover meat that has already been cooked or you’ve cooked your chicken mince on the stove, the pie will be done when the pastry has puffed up and turned golden on top and the filling is hot (about 20 minutes). If you’re using raw mince, you may need to cook a little longer to ensure the pie is cooked through (about 30 minutes, depending on the size of your pie).

Pear pie

Line a “Pyrex” pie dish with thickly buttered slices of bread, buttered side down. Fill the dish with ripe pears, peeled, cored and sliced. Grate a little nutmeg over all [or use ground nutmeg], add ½ cup honey mixed with ½ cup of milk and one beaten egg [you may need to gently warm the honey and milk together to dissolve the honey]. Add more slices of bread, placed buttered side up, and sprinkle with brown sugar and nutmeg. Cover and bake 20 minutes [at 200C].

What’s not to love about this super simple, waste-busting, crowd-pleasing recipe from the April 1935 issue of the Australian glass industry’s magazine, *Glass*. A Pyrex pie dish is the hero of this Depression-era recipe, the perfect support for a cheap and easy weeknight dessert using ingredients you already have in the pantry and fridge. More a bread-and-butter pudding than a pie,

this is a great recipe to use up the stale bread left over from your barbeque and the fruit that's languishing in the fruit bowl. If pears aren't in season or you don't have them to hand, try apples, berries or stewed quinces instead. If you've got a feijoa tree in the garden, scoop out their insides to fill the dish. Tinned or bottled fruit will work here too.

Citrus chiffon with stuffed apricots

One half cup lemon juice
 1/3 cup sugar
 3 eggs
 2 level teaspoons gelatine
 1 level teaspoon grated orange rind
 1 level teaspoon grated lemon rind
 1/3 cup cold water
 1/3 cup extra sugar
 1 dozen apricot halves
 1/2 cup cake or biscuit crumbs [leave this out for a gluten free option, or use gluten free biscuits]
 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
 1/2 level teaspoon each cinnamon and ginger
 Cherries or mint sprigs

Mix the lemon juice and sugar and add the unbeaten egg yolks. Cook over boiling water [using a double boiler] until the mixture coats the spoon. [Coating the spoon means that the mixture sticks well to the spoon and doesn't run off.] Soften the gelatine in cold water and stir into the custard mixture. Add the lemon and orange rind. Whisk the egg whites to a stiff froth and gradually whisk in the extra sugar and fold into the custard. Pour into mould to set. [Put the chiffon in the fridge to set for 2-4 hours. You may wish to lightly grease the mould to make it easier to turn out the chiffon later.]

Combine cakecrumbs, spice and nuts and moisten with fruit juice, sherry or rum. Pile into the apricot halves. Garnish each with mint or cherry. Turn out chiffon and serve with apricots. For six.

This dairy- and gluten-free dessert appeared in the December 1947 issue of *Australian Home Beautiful*. A chiffon is typically an airy cake, but in this case refers to the light texture of the set 'custard' and the shape of the mould – similar to a bundt tin, which you can use for this recipe. The finished dish



THE
VICTORIAN ALMANAC

FOR

1871,

CONTAINING A LARGE AMOUNT OF

GENERAL INFORMATION;

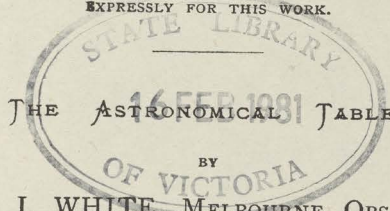
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ASTRONOMICAL EPHEMERIS

CONTAINING ALL NECESSARY INFORMATION,

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The title page of the *Victorian Almanac for 1871*, published by Mason & Firth. Published annually, almanacs gave detailed information about weather and climate, astronomical information, planting schedules and other useful information, such as recipes.

has a bright citrus flavour and the texture is like the very middle of a pavlova.

Apricots should be abundant in early and mid-summer. If they're not in season when you make this dessert, tinned or bottled apricots or another stone fruit will work (plums, peaches and nectarines). Or get creative and sprinkle the crumb over your favourite seasonal fruit to serve. If you can put it on a pavlova, you can serve it with a citrus chiffon.

You can also serve the chiffon without fruit, in which case you may choose to reduce the amount of lemon juice or serve with double cream to soften the bite of the citrus.

For a guide to some of the recipes in our collection, see Untried but true: Recipes and household hints from the Australian manuscripts collection, edited by Shona Dewar and Judy McDonald and available on our online catalogue: find.slv.vic.gov.au.