

California Cocina

By

L. J. Martin

A peek at the past...

The California Kitchen
Rancho & Frontier Foods
In
Today's Kitchen

What say the Bells of San Blas
To the ships that southward pass
From the harbor of Matzatlan?
To them it is nothing more
Than the sound of surf on the shore—
Nothing more to master or man.
The chapel that once looked down
On the little seaport town
Has crumpled into dust;
And on oaken beams below
The bells swing to and fro
And are green with mold and rust.

*From the Bells of San Blas,
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

Introduction

This cookbook is, like my *Cooking Wild & Wonderful*, a narrative as well as a "recipe" book. It's full of historical references as it's a look at the past, a look at old California, and the wonderful lifestyle that preceded the Gold Rush and the influx of 350,000 argonauts from the world over. The California Gold Rush was the largest migration in the history of the world, as California, in four years, grew from fifteen or twenty thousand paisanos (Californios, of Mexican and Spanish heritage) and native American's. California had over 30 tribes who mostly lived in peace and harmony in the plentitude of the state with it's mild weather and abundance.

In the middle of the eighteen hundreds, before the interlopers began to control the water for irrigation, the great central San Joaquin Valley and the Sacramento Valley to the north, enjoyed over 4,000 miles of salmon stream. Now it's the most productive agricultural valley in the world, but the salmon, and much else, is lost.

But that's another story for another time.

This is a tale of, and an opportunity to enjoy a taste of, life as the Californios lived it.

You'll see lots of quotes out of journals and novels of the time, some from my own writing but all based on much of my reading of those old texts, and lot's of recipes purloined from cookbooks and recollections long out of print.

I hope you get a feeling for the fun, and education, I got out of compiling this "cookbook." And I hope you enjoy it at least half as much as I enjoyed writing (and copying) the content.

Buen provecho, amigos!

You'll note that some type is in **brown** which indicates it's either from the past, or from one of my novels. Either way, it's good history.

Read on....

Old California is gone, but in her wake is left an exciting new land rich in agricultural diversity, and richer in cultural variety. Her people now stem from all walks of life and all parts of the world. So does her cuisine. Here is just a dollop of it.

This is not a Mexican cookbook!

This is a celebration of early California cooking, with its oodles of influences.

Like the Longfellow poem so aptly portrays, the lethargic lifestyle of Old California is no more, the Dons and Doñas and haciendas a thing of the past--but we can savor the best of it.

Then foods were partly Indian, partly Mexican, and a great deal what the outdoors had to offer. Tiny horsebeans flanked creek beds, wild mustard, *mostaza*, grew with abandon (its yellow flowers still grace California's hillsides in profusion), even the fearful stinging nettle was steamed, minced, and mixed with cream fresh from the goat or family cow. Beef grazed so abundantly that carcasses were left to rot in the fields—after the taking of hide, horns, and tallow—and feed the wolf, grizzly, and lesser predators and scavengers. Hides, horns, and tallow were taken to supply the trader's ships, vessels crewed with men like Richard Henry Dana.

The noonday meal was the biggest, with *frejoles de olla*, *frijoles refritos*, *carne con chile*, flour and masa tortillas, fruit, and if a ship had arrived since the last supply was spent, coffee and maybe something sweet with valuable sugar added. More likely, dessert was a tortilla filled with chocolate.

The *haciendados* were generous to a fault, and the general feeling was, "it is better to be on time than be invited." And

even if you weren't on time, the table was set with whatever was handy. Even money was available to the traveler, with a bowl of coins always near by for whoever felt the need to dip a handful.

But times were to change.

After braving an icy trip around Tierra Del Fuego, across the burning jungles of the Isthmus of Panama, or across the blazing deserts of Utah and Nevada then the numbing cold of the Sierra mountains, hardy Anglo argonauts and pioneers found Alta California with an almost embarrassing cornucopia of game and seafood, fruits, grains, and vegetables. And they added to her bounty bringing seeds and recipes from all over the world.

The gold rush took California from a lazy agrarian society of Creole Spanish, Mexicans, Mestizos, and Indians of only thirty five thousand population to three hundred and fifty thousand from all over the world--and this happened in a period of four turbulent years from 1848 to 1852. The French, Russians, Australians, Chi-leans, Chinese and Sandwich Islanders--and a hundred or more other countries--played a part in the development of California, and contributed to its varied cuisine. Much of the same dramatic change occurred in Oregon and Washington and soon afterward in Nevada and Arizona.

French, Italian, and Chinese chefs (and get-by cooks) found themselves in the homeland of the Californio, who had his own: Spanish/Mexican/ Basque/European heritage of fine food, all of which he combined with the plentiful bounty of California. From the most simple fare of pozole, tortillas and frijoles, or Chile, to the most intricate combination of subtle flavors in a fabulous paella, the Alta California *cocinas* produced sumptuous fare. But even the greatest can be improved by variety, and the gold rush brought that.

This cookbook brings you both the most simple fare of the Mexican and Indian, some of the finer aspects of Rancho and native cooking, and many of the wonderful influences of those who poured into the golden state in the mid 1800's.

Here is a cornucopia of California's finest from her most exciting historical period.

But more importantly, I won't get bogged down with the limitations of the past. Where an old recipe might call for chokecherries, you will have the option of adding succulent bing cherries. And a wild duck can be replaced with a fat pen raised, corn-fed duckling. You won't have to stomp the fields to find native ingredients, although I will show you how. Masochism has no place in my kitchen.

Adaptability and creativity are the hallmarks of a great cook. In every aspect I will encourage you to substitute and create, adapt and improve, and simplify to make your time in the *cocina*, or kitchen, more enjoyable.

The real object of time in the *cocina* is to bring friends and family together around a loving and laughing table, to celebrate life and God's abundance--and I hope these recipes help you do just that. In Old Alta California, when one left the table ahead of others, he wished them "*buen provecho*," which translates something like, "may it do you good." As then, and with these recipes....

If you see a variety of measurements, such as a "palm full" or "bit of..." that's because that's the way the recipes came to me, and I'm merely passing them along.

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A little sittin'-round-the-fire cookin' philosophy!

Don't you dare be afraid to cook! Eggs are the toughest things a chef has to master and I'll bet you've conquered them long ago. If you can fry an egg, you can master any recipe in this cookbook, or any other.

As I mentioned in the introduction, adaptability and creativity are the hallmarks of a good cook. I've had my share of flops--all good cooks have. If they haven't, they're not trying hard enough.

I learned to cook at home from age eight, with a mother who worked and an older brother who was more than glad to share the chores. I went on to cook my way through college, manning a grill 3' deep by 18' long, feeding 1,500 at lunch and dinner--not much for style but it did wonders for charge-forward and damn the torpedoes. As fast as I could, I threw the hamburgers or chops on, ran back, salting on the way, and turned them on the way forward again, only to run back salting again--then I could immediately begin picking them up with a three-patty spatula. Like a machine gunner, I had a loader who walked alongside, only this one carried a tray to fill with food. And God help the irate student who wanted his "a little more done," or, worse, complained about over-

cooking. Later in life, I had four sons only a couple of years apart, which was almost as crazy as cooking for 1,500. They, by the way, are all good cooks.

During and after college, I did a stint counseling and wrangling horses at a boy's camp, and had to do the cooking for as many as twenty at a time over a campfire with only what we carried on our backs. I also seemed to get the cooking job for many a horseback hunting, fishing, or just lookin' trip into the back country, and still do as my wife and I try to get into the high Sierra at least once a year-- usually with an entourage of a half dozen or more who work up big appetites. There are a lot of tricks to making camp cooking easy, and I'll share a few here.

Notice, I refer to myself as a cook, not a chef. Standing over an open campfire, before dawn, not able to see if you're burning the flapjacks and having to judge by nose power alone, is not the bailiwick of a la-ti-da chef. More than once I've made a lantern out of an empty coffee can and bacon grease, so I could see in the pre-dawn to cook. Most chefs would quit under far better cooking circumstances, but just try and quit when you've got a camp full of hungry hunters or fishermen or cowhands--at worst, you might quit more than just a job, at best, you'd leave camp a'skippin' with cans tied to your tail.

In everything else I'm hell for prompt--not cooking. I learned a long time ago that the most appreciative eaters are damned hungry, or movin' on toward drunk, so I've always made it a habit to serve about an hour after I said I would. You can get by with this in polite society, don't try it at a campfire.

Now that you know my background, I will tell you that I can set as fancy a table as most chefs. I can Wellington a beef and bone a chicken and crown a rib roast and flambeau and all the rest--and yes, I own French Cooking Volumes 1 & 2.

But its seldom I use a recipe book when cooking for friends. After cooking a while, you develop a sense of what will work and what won't. Some of my best meals have come about from the habit of using left-overs (having grown up poor I always cook too much) but not as originally served. Day-old mashed potatoes can become wondrous treats in the hands of an imaginative cook.

So don't be afraid to add to or subtract from or change most of these recipes. I stole most of them from other cooks, and changed them (or didn't) to suit me. You do the same, and if you hate cilantro or lemon pepper, leave it out and add what you love.

After all, they're your pork chops.

*"Were the devil himself to call
for a night's lodging, the
Californian would hardly find
it in his heart to bolt the door..."*

*Diary of
Walter Colton
Monterey, 1850*

Blossom Fritters

- 12 male squash or pumpkin blossoms
- 3/4 cup warm flat beer
- 2 eggs
- T oil
- 1/4 t salt
- 1/4 t sage
- 4 oz Monterey Jack or other white cheese

Separate eggs and beat yolks with beer, salt, and flour until smooth. Beat egg whites until stiff, then fold gently into batter. Remove all stems and stamens from blossoms. Fill each blossom with enough cheese so you can twist blossom ends and seal, dip in batter, fry in hot oil. Drain and serve warm.

Chicken Drumettes

- 2 doz. chicken wings (discard last 2 joints)
- 1 cup tortilla chips or corn flakes
- Pam
- 2 eggs (separate whites)
- 1/4 c water
- 1 t garlic salt
- 1 t sage
- 1 t lemon pepper

Crumb chips. I use a plastic bag and crush with whatever's available. Place crumbs in bowl and flavor with garlic salt, sage, and lemon pepper. Wash chicken and dip in mixture of water and egg whites. Roll in crumbs and spray with pam.

Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

Dips: I use a variety of dips with these snacks.

- 1/2 cup catsup
- 2 T mustard
- 2 T brown sugar
- 1 t soy sauce

Mix in sauce pan over medium heat.

or:

- 1 small can pineapple
- 1 t corn starch
- 1 T vinegar
- 1 T brown sugar
- 1 T red jelly

Drain juice from can and add enough water to make 1/2 cup liquid. Mix in corn starch until smooth then place in sauce pan over medium heat, add vinegar, jelly, and brown sugar. Cook until sugar and jelly is absorbed and mixture thickens. Jelly is for color.

Pemmican

1 pound white suet
2 cups chokecherries
1 pound jerked meat
sugar

Roast jerked meat over open fire until bone dry. Pound to a dust. Add it, chokecherries, and as much sugar as you can afford and roll into balls the size of hen's eggs. This will keep in your park for a good long spell.

From Wikipedia:

Pemmican is a concentrated mixture of [fat](#) and [protein](#) used as a nutritious food. The word comes from the [Cree](#) word *pimihkân*, which itself is derived from the word *pimû*, "fat, grease".^[1] It was invented by the [native](#) peoples of North America.^{[2][3]} It was widely adopted as a high-[energy](#) food by Europeans involved in the [fur trade](#) and later by [Arctic](#) and [Antarctic](#) explorers, such as [Robert Falcon Scott](#) and [Roald Amundsen](#).

The specific ingredients used were usually whatever was available; the meat was often [bison](#), [moose](#), [elk](#), or [deer](#). Fruits such as [cranberries](#) and [saskatoon berries](#) were sometimes added. [Cherries](#), [currants](#), [chokeberries](#) and [blueberries](#) were also used, but almost exclusively in ceremonial and wedding pemmican.^[4]

Soups

Woolgrower's Restaurant Vegetable (Thanks Jenny & Mayie Maitia) (Basque)

- 3 carrots
 - 2 large potatoes
 - 2 leeks
 - 1 small cabbage
 - 1 small can tomato sauce
 - 1 T chicken base
 - 1 c chopped onion
 - 1/2 t thyme
 - 10 c water
- salt and pepper to taste

Bring water to boil, add chicken base. Chop all vegetables and add. Fry chopped onion in a little oil; drain and add. Add seasonings and tomato sauce. Simmer 2 hours.

Skinny-up Soup

Years ago, after almost any rain, you could find me walking the desert looking for those little button mushrooms peeking up through the sod. I'd use them fresh, oil and vinegar the excess, or dry them. Every once in a while I would find one that "looked like" a mushroom, and would take it to Grandma Delfino, who lived not far from me, for her expert opinion. Mrs. Delfino has gone to her reward (a natural death, not due to mistaken mushroom consumption), and I'm not anxious to go to mine, particularly after the embarrassment of rolling around on the floor squealing like a poked piglet and holding my stomach. I'd hate to die of pure stupidity. That's why I now buy my mushrooms at the store.

This is almost a zero calorie soup. There are 8 cal in a bullion cube and about 1 in a mushroom. Serves two.

- 2 cups water
- 4 med. mushrooms
- 2 beef bullion cubes
- 1 t garlic crushed
- 1 T cilantro chopped

Bring water and bullion cubes to a boil until dissolved. Add garlic, pressed or chopped, a couple of shakes of lemon pepper, all but a few pieces of cilantro. Add mushrooms, sliced 1/4", and immediately remove from fire. Let steep for a moment. Float remaining cilantro on the top and serve. Offer this with a couple of celery sticks on the side and you'll use up more calories chewing than you take on. This soup is great with chopped up onions, carrots, and celery, if you want more substance, but still almost no cals. Throw in a half a handful of barley if you don't mind a few dreaded calories--but cook it first or your mushrooms will all but disappear.

In the cocina, sides of meat and a few plucked chickens hung from hooks, adorning one wall alongside iron skillets, pots, spoons, spatulas, and a hand-held coffee grinder. Red peppers, green peppers, dried tomatoes, garlic flowers, and bay leaves, all strung together in multicolored bunches, hung from a wrought-iron roof-hung rack in the center of the room, directly over a butcher-block table where two women stood working. Their speed belied the flesh that vibrated pendulously under their arms. Fat fingers flashed and flour hung in the air as they formed, twirled, and patted tortillas into shape with the staccato rhythm of chubby, slapping palms.

Bins of wheat, beans, lintels, dried peas, and fresh vegetables lined the wall opposite the meat and utensils--a flash of warm natural color that contrasted with the cold metal hanging overhead. Two six-burner black-iron stoves huddled side by side against one wall, each flanked by a through-wall wood box that could be loaded from the outside. One stove, and part of the stovepipe that rose through the red-tile roof glowed red-hot in the dim light. This was the reason for the cocina being separated from the main house: the threat of fire. The stove supported a variety of steaming pots and an iron pitcher bubbling with hot water that did a thousand violent jigs in little droplets on the glowing surface before roiling upward in vapor.

The room smelled pleasantly of spices, and roasting meat--and of coffee.

A smiling Indian woman had a cup poured and hot rolled tortillas waiting by the time Clint had stored the musket. She handed him a mug laced with sugar carved from a Barbados cone, and whitened with thick rich cream...

*from the novel
Against the 7th Flag
by Larry Jay Martin*

Frontier Corn Chowder

- 1 16 oz can creamed corn or equal amount cut from cob and filled to brim with heavy cream
- 1 cups chicken broth
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 t thyme
- 1 cup half and half or heavy cream
- 1 stick butter
- 1/2 t coriander
- 1/2 t salt
- 1/2 t cayenne pepper
- 1 T chile pepper
- 1 T pimiento
- 1 T parsley
- 1/2 c flour
- 1/2 c diced celery
- 1/2 c diced carrot
- 1/2 c diced onion
- 1 c diced potato

Add vegetables (no corn or parsley) and spices to boiling chicken broth, cook until tender. Make a roux of butter and flour, thin with a little broth until you're sure there're no lumps, and add to broth, reduce heat and add balance of ingredients (no parsley). Cook 10 minutes and serve garnished with parsley.

Pumkin' Soup

The lowly pumpkin is truly a scrumptious squash, not only for use as a pie. The California Indians were cultivating the golden globes long before the Anglo arrived.

- 1 LB peeled and cubed pumpkin
- 2 T butter
- 3 leeks sliced thin, discard green
- 2 c chicken broth (3 bullion cubes, 2 c water)
- 2/3 c milk
- 1 lime
- ½ t paprika
- salt and white pepper to taste

Cook leeks in a hot skillet with 1 T butter until soft. Add pumpkin, broth, salt and pepper to taste. Cook until pumpkin is soft then blend or food process until smooth. Reheat and serve with thin floating slices of lime and sprinkle of paprika.

Baking Powder Substitute

1/4 t baking soda

1/2 c buttermilk

Gradually stir the soda into the buttermilk with a whip. This combination is equivalent to 1 teaspoon double acting baking powder. The 1/2 cup buttermilk should replace 1/2 cup of liquid in your recipe

Baking Powder

6 T cream of tartar

3 T cornstarch

2 1/2 T bicarbonate of soda

Sift the ingredients together at least six times. Dry thoroughly. Single acting, so double the amount your recipe calls for if it requires double acting. Make each time you use.

...the ink was taken from the mill pond fresh this morning, being composed of three parts water, two of mud, and one of tadpoles well ground.

from a letter

Hugo Reid to Don Able Sterns

Los Angeles, 1838

The vineyard is walled around. It contains vines totaling 22,730 and ground sufficient to make up the number of 40,000, besides 430 varieties of fruit trees: 20,500 parras (vines on stakes) of uba prieta (dark grapes), 2,070 uba blanca (white grapes), 160 uba cimarrona (maroon grapes), in all, ... 21 fig trees, 7 plums, 25 pears, 5 apples, 32 ornages, 40 granadas (pomegranates), 2 alvechegos (honey mesquite trees), 240 duraznos (peaches), 8 capulines (blood oranges), 3 nogales (walnut trees), 7 olivos (olive trees), 40 limones (lemon trees), in all 430 trees.

I don't include my tuna (cactus fruit) patch.

from a letter

Hugo Reid to Don Able Sterns

Translations are mine, not the author Reid's

Los Angeles, 1844

The purser maintained a storeroom: tallow for grease; tar; whale oil for lamps; a slopchest to replace uniforms; tools; sailcloth; and shelves and bins holding every other imaginable item that might be of need for both ship and personal use in the middle of the wide Atlantic; kegs of rum, dried vegetables, pickles, salt pork and beef, salt cod, flour, beans, suet, raisins, butter, bread, wine, brandy, condiments; vinegar, olive oil, mustard seed; and live stock. Prunes, pickled sorrel, onions, and sugar were kept, but only for the captain's table or the sick.

*To both the joy and bane of the middies, the *Independence* kept a complement of live chickens, sheep, and hogs aboard, the only way to provide fresh meat when at sea. Hog, sheep, and chicken pens--for meat only, as the hens promptly stopped laying when on board--huddled first gun deck forward, where they provided some of the least desirable duty, slopping and sloshing, for those who needed dressing down.*

*Aboard the 84 gun frigate *Independence*
from the novel *Rush to Destiny*
by Larry Jay Martin*

The term "middies" refers to midshipman. In 1835 young men were inducted into the Navy at age fifteen. Training and education was accomplished onboard, as the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis came later. Edward Fitzgerald Beale, the hero of the Battle of San Pasqual near San Diego and the subject of the biographical novel, *Rush to Destiny*, served aboard the *Independence*. She was built in 1814 and razed from an eighty-four-gun frigate to a fifty-four-gun

frigate in 1836. She was sold by the Navy in 1914. In my opinion, Edward Fitzgerald Beale was the most exciting character ever to come from the west or the mid-nineteenth century.

Beef & Veal

Burgundy Sweetbreads

- 1 LB sweetbreads (veal if possible)
 - 1 c burgundy wine
 - 1 c beef broth (use 4 bullion cubes)
 - 1 stick butter (1/2 c)
 - 1 T olive oil
 - 1 c flour
 - 1 t chopped shallots
 - 1 t minced garlic
 - 1/2 c chopped chives or green onion tops
 - 6 medium mushrooms
 - T vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste

Soak sweetbreads in cold water for 1 hour. Prepare a saucepan with water to cover, 1 T vinegar, 1 t salt, bring to boil and blanch sweetbreads, lower to simmer and cook for 4 minutes. Remove and cool sweet breads and pull apart and clean all connecting tissue and cartilage and discard. Now you're ready to begin! Dust sweetbreads in flour. Prepare skillet with 1/4 c butter and 2 T olive oil over medium heat. Add garlic, a couple of shakes of white pepper, and salt to taste. Brown sweetbreads and remove from fire. Discard drippings and scrape pan. Return to medium heat, add 1/4 c butter, mushrooms, shallots, cook 1 minute and return sweetbreads to skillet, lower fire. Add wine and cook until almost gone, add beef broth and cook until thickened (a few minutes). Serve over rice or noodles, garnished with chives. Accompany with a glass of burgundy.

Sweetbread Sauté

- 1 LB sweetbreads
- 6 medium mushrooms
- 1 cloves garlic minced
- 2 beef bullion cubes
- 1/2 t sage
- 2 T olive oil
- 1 c flour
- 1/2 c marsala wine
- salt and pepper to taste

Slice sweetbreads 1/2 inch. Dredge in flour. Brown in hot skillet in 2 T olive oil and minced garlic and remove. Add 1 1/2 c beef broth made with bullion cubes and sage and 1/2 c marsala. Add flour and make a smooth gravy, return sweetbreads to skillet and simmer for 8 minutes over low fire. Serve.

Los Angeles is a city of some 3,000 or 4,000 inhabitants, nearly a century old, a regular old Spanish-Mexican town, built by the old padres, Catholic Spanish missionaries, before the American independence. The houses are but one story, mostly built of adobe or sun-burnt brick, with very thick walls and flat roofs. They are so low because of earthquakes, and the style is Mexican. The inhabitants are a mixture of old Spanish, Indian, American, and German Jews; the last two have come in lately. The language of the natives is Spanish, and I have commenced learning it. The only thing they appear to excel in is riding, and certainly I have never seen such riders.

Here is a great plain, or rather a gentle slope, from the Pacific to the mountains. We are on this plain about twenty miles from the sea and fifteen from the mountains, a most lovely locality; all that is wanted naturally to make it a paradise is water, more water. Apples, pears, plums, figs, olives, lemons, oranges, and "the finest grapes in the world," so the books say, pears of two and a half pounds each, and such things in proportion. The weather is soft and balmy--no winter, but a perpetual spring and summer. Such is Los Angeles, a place where "every prospect pleases and only man is vile."

*From the journal of
William H. Brewer
Sunday Evening, December 9, 1860
Los Angeles*

Happy Shortribs
(frontier)

- 2 LBs shortribs (4" lengths or so)
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped carrots
- 1/2 cup chopped turnip
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/2 t sage
- 1/2 cup burgundy
- 2 ounces brandy
- 1 T arrowroot
- 2 cups beef stock (made with 3 bullion cubes)
- 2 T cooking oil
- salt & pepper to taste

Brown ribs well in a hot skillet with 2 T cooking oil. Set aside. Add another 2 T cooking oil to skillet and add vegetables and sage, salt and pepper to taste. Place ribs and vegetables in roasting pan and bake at 450 degrees to braise, then add brandy, wine, and beef broth. Reduce oven to 350 degrees and bake, covered, for 2 hours. Remove ribs and set aside, remove and set aside vegetables with a strainer so you get little grease. Strain the rest of pan juices into a pan and set aside, skim grease away. Add 1 T of oil to skillet and add arrowroot, blending until smooth. Slowly add strained pan juices, stirring until smooth. Add meat and vegetables back and serve, garnish with parsley.

Chicken Fried Steak
(frontier)

- 2 LBs round steak (3/4 inch thick)
- 2 t vinegar
- 2 t salt
- 2 c flour
- 1 T cooking oil
- 1 t paprika
- 1 t sage
- 2 T butter

Cut round steak into servings and pound until flattened to 3/8 inch. Place servings in a pan of cold water to cover. Add vinegar and salt. Dredge around to mix and soak for 2 hours. Drain and dredge in flour, Salt and pepper each piece and drop in a skillet hot with cooking oil. Fry brown on both sides and remove. Drain skillet and add butter, then 1 heaping T flour and blend. Add milk (heated is better) to pan and whisk until smooth. Add a couple of dashes of sage. Cook until the consistency you like it. Serve steak covered with gravy and dusted with sprinkles of paprika.

Saturday I attended Mass in the morning... Not the least interesting to me were the costumes. Standing, kneeling, sitting over the floor were the people of many races. Here is a genuine American; in that aisle kneels a genuine Irishman, his wife by his side; near him some Germans; in the short pew by the wall I recognize some acquaintances, French Catholics, also an Italian. But the majority of the congregation are Spanish Californians... All are dressed in holiday clothes. Here is a man with Parisian rig; there one with the regular Mexican costume, buttons down the sides of his pants; beside him is an Indian with fancy moccasins and gay leggins; behind me, in the vestibule, looking on with curiosity, are two Chinamen. No place but California can produce such groups.

*From the journal of
William H. Brewer
Sunday evening, March 31 (Easter) 1861
Los Angeles*

Monterey has about 1,600 inhabitants and is more Mexican than I expected. It is the old capital of California. There are two Catholic churches, and Spanish is still the prevailing language. Like all other places yet seen, more than half of the "places of business" are liquor stores, billiard saloons, etc.--all the stores sell cigars, cigarritos, and liquor. Stores are open on Sunday as well as

other days, and that is the day for saloons and barrooms to reap a rich harvest. Billiard tables go from morning till midnight--cards and monte are no secrets. Thus it has been in all the towns. Liquor and gambling are the curse of this state.

*from the journal of
William H. Brewer
Monday, May 27, 1861
Monterey*

Fallin' Off The Bone
Ribs & Beans

2 1/2 LBs shortribs (4 inch) or country style
1/2 cup soy sauce
2 lemons
3 T black strap molasses or sorghum (honey will do)
2 t chile powder
1 t sage
1 t cumin
1 t ginger
salt & pepper
3 cloves garlic (minced)
1/2 cup brown sugar
1 8 ounce can of pineapple chunks
1 pound pinto or Santa Maria beans (almost any bean you like will do)

Pick the rocks out of the beans and soak overnight. Cover to twice depth of beans with water, 1/2 t salt and 1 t sage, and cook beans slowly until done. Pour most of water, add juice from can of pineapple, garlic, soy sauce, juice of two lemons, molasses (or honey), cumin, chile powder, and ginger, then salt and pepper to taste. Place in a 9 inch by 14 inch roasting pan and layer on ribs. Put, uncovered, in preheated 400 degree oven and brown ribs (30 minutes) reduce to 225 degrees and cook, covered, 2 hours. If you use shortribs, drain off the fat a couple of times. Add pineapple chunks 10 minutes before removing from oven. Serve.

Pepper Steak

2 T-bones, porterhouses, or New York steaks

2 T cracked peppercorns

1 jigger of brandy

3 T heavy cream

1/2 stick butter

Pat dry the steaks and salt lightly. Spread the peppercorns on a plate or board and roll or press steaks so they're well coated. Cook the steaks to your liking in a cast iron or heavy skillet in 1/4 stick butter with a hot fire. Pour the brandy over the steaks and flambeau, ignite and burn off the alcohol. Remove steaks and keep warm. Pour any liquid off frying pan and add remaining 1/4 stick butter and cream. Cook 1 minute over high heat, absorbing pan flavor. Remove and serve pepper steaks swimming in sauce.

Cantina Steak

4 12 oz filets or New York's
1/2 c tequila
1 t crushed garlic
1 t soy sauce
1 T cracked pepper corns
2 T lemon or lime juice

Soak steaks in covered pan overnight. Douse with marinade while cooking. Remove from pan and grill over hot fire just how you and yours like them.

Garlic Flank Steak

1 lb flank steak (trim fat)
1 large head garlic (mince)
1 ear corn
1/2 t chili powder
1 t ground cumin
1 t ground coriander
1 cup picante sauce

Combine spices, rub steak well with them.
Mix 1/2 c picante sauce and garlic and cover steak and marinate for several hours, rotate steak. Grill or BBQ, slice thin (1/4"). Cut corn from ear, mix with remaining picante sauce and saute until corn is hot, then serve over steak.

Skirt Steak Californio

2 lbs flank steak (outside)
2 lbs yellow or white onions
1 tomatoe
1/4 red bell pepper
1/4 yellow bell pepper
1/4 green bell pepper
4 sprigs of cilantro
2 t salt
2 t pepper
2 t cumin
1 t soy sauce
2 cloves garlic
1/4 cup cooking oil

Mix 1 t each salt, pepper, soy sauce & cumin, crush and add garlic, and pat into meat on both sides. Let sit in refrigerator at least 2 hours, overnight is fine. While cooking meat on BBQ to your taste, slice onions into 1/4" thick rounds and bell pepper into 1/4" slices and smimmer in oil in hot skillet for five minutes or until tender. Slice BBQ steak into thin slices and serve on a bed of onion and bell pepper, garnish with slices of fresh tomato and a sprig of cilantro. Serve with hot flour tortillas.

Pork & Lamb

Corning Beef and Pork

Beef

water

1/2 oz. saltpeter

1 3/4 pounds table salt

3/4 pound brown sugar

Place beef in barrel with a bung, or crock if you must, and cover with cold water. Let stand for two days, then drain off water, keeping track of how much it took to cover. Add that amount to a pot, and to each gallon of water you add back, an equal amount of saltpeter, brown sugar, and salt as shown above. Bring to a boil for a quarter hour, skim, then pour over beef. Weight beef down to keep under brine. Ready in ten days.

To corn pork, do the same, only add a cup of molasses to saltpeter, salt, and sugar and rub meat with mixture and set in cool place for two days. Return to barrel, but this time rest meat on rack above water level and each day drain off and pour over pork. After two weeks, take meat out and rub well with salt. Make a new batch of boiling brine and pour over, covering meat with it. Leave covered and weighted down, checking regularly for another

two weeks. If you don't like the way it's coming along, rub with salt again. Pork thus prepared should last up to two years.

Pozole & Pork Chops
(revised Californio)

Pozole was a staple for the Californio. You see many recipes called pozole where it's combined with meat, but originally, it was just a corn meal mush. It's rather bland, but nutritious. It's much better when complementing other foods.

- 2 1/2 oz. (a little more than 1/2 cup)
yellow masa, or corn meal
- 1 1/2 c. water
- 4 nice pork chops
- 1 c flour
- 2 1/2 oz. can chopped or sliced olives
- 2 T olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1/2 c. chopped onions (green, yellow, or white)
- 15 oz. can sweet corn (drained)
- 1 large or two small tomatoes sliced 1/4 inch, or a
small can of stewed, well drained (fresh is
better)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 t lemon pepper
- 1 T chile powder
- 2 T lightly chopped fresh cilantro

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Begin pozole by boiling water in a small saucepan and slowly adding corn meal. Add salt, pepper, and lemon pepper, to the mush while stirring. Mush should just pour, so add water or cook down as necessary. Using a cast iron or oven proof skillet, flour and brown the chops--don't cook, that's later--in olive oil, salt, pepper, and lemon pepper to taste. Set aside on paper towels to drain. Making sure there's oil left (if not, add), sauté onions, olives, and garlic in skillet--don't be afraid to scrape up remnants of browning chops into the sauté. Set skillet off fire and

add mush. Then add corn and olives and blend. Smooth out in pan and cover with a light coat of chile powder, top with a layer of sliced tomatoes, then another coat of chile powder. Top all that with the four chops, sprinkle them with cilantro, and stick into preheated oven for 30 to 40 minutes, depending upon how crazy you are about having cremated pork. I like mine at 25 minutes and squealin'.

As with most my recipes, if you want to try other vegetables or whatever, throw it in. If you like your food with a little kick, add some peppers.

They're still your pork chops!

Food Presentation

A smart cook will make his dishes a feast for the eyes as well as the taste buds. Like any good design, food preparation is color and composition, and since you can't pick up a brush and reach for a pallet, you must use the colors nature has provided and pre-plan. A red-boiled red potatoes,-a yellow--crook neck squash,-a green-broccoli,-and a beautiful bronzed piece of meat make a exquisite plate and presentation. Garnishes make up for much of what may be left out by what you're serving. Gravies and sauces also can be used to compliment colors and add background. Sometimes a sprig of parsley and a slice of orange is just the touch to take a plate from the mundane to the sublime. I love to surround my meat dishes, on the serving plate with mounds of cut and whole fresh fruit--peaches, grapes, prunes, apples, kiwi, etc., etc. It takes just a little extra time and effort to plan the color coordination of your meal, and it pays well as your guests sit with visual pleasure and stimulation already working in your favor.

Old Fashioned Pozole With Pork
(old Californio)

- 1 3 LB pork shoulder
- 1 large onion
- 2 small red peppers
- 1 T mint
- 1 T oregano
- 1 T mint
- 1 small can chopped ortegas
- 3 large cans hominy

Simmer meat covered in water 3 hours then remove and trim off fat, gristle, and bone. Chop into 1 inch squares. Skim fat from liquid. Add meat, chopped onion, and other ingredients and simmer long enough to mix flavors and cook onion. Serve with tortillas, chopped onions, and salsa.

nixtamal

1 gallon water

2 quarts (8 cups) dry corn

Indian maize or field corn

1/4 cup unslaked lime

In a large iron pot mix water and lime, add the corn and stir until bubbling stops (not boiling bubbles, but from mixture effervescence). Cook over medium heat, careful not to boil, for over an hour until hulls can be rubbed off individual kernels. Remove from heat and cool, letting stand for a day. Hulls will now drop away from kernels with a little rubbing. Rinse kernels repeatedly until all lime is gone. The corn is now nixtamal, much like hominy, ready to be ground into masa.

For the modern cook, masa can be purchased at most supermarkets. A Quaker Oats product!

Leg of Lamb

- 1 Boned leg of lamb
- 4 Beef Bullion Cubes
- 2 Yellow Onions
- Salt, Pepper, Lemon Pepper to taste
- 1 Bulb of Garlic
- 2 LBs New or Small Red Potatoes
- 1 LB Green Beans
- 8 Large Mushrooms
- 1/2 Cube Butter
- 1/2 c Rich Red Wine

Boil 1 1/2 quarts water with wine and bullion cubes. Break bones of lamb leg and add to water. If you've left a little meat on them, all the better. As bones boil, dig the marrow out with a skewer. Add a little garlic to stock. Spread inside of lamb leg with garlic, salt and pepper, and lemon pepper. Quarter onions and stuff lamb, roll and tie with butchers string. Cover outside with garlic, salt and pepper, and lemon pepper. Place lamb, uncovered on a rack over a pan with a little water in bottom, in a 325 degree oven for two hours--less if you like it on rare side, more if you like it cremated. Remove bones from stock. Boil potatoes in stock until just tender to fork. Transfer, well drained, to frying pan hot with melted butter. Save stock, keeping on medium low heat. I use two pots and pour stock back and forth through a colander. Brown potatoes, salt, pepper, set off fire. Add green beans to stock, cook al dente, remove from stock and spread over pan of potatoes, cover with lid to retain heat. Add mushrooms to stock, removing a half cup and blending well with a tablespoon of flour. Add back to stock, if it doesn't thicken to a gravy, remove another 1/2 cup and add another tablespoon of flour. If you start vegetables too early, just keep warm by giving a shot of heat once in a while.

Grilled Lamb Chops

- 4 nice center cut lamb chops
- 4 garlic cloves minced
- 1 1/8 cube butter or Pam
- 1 T soy sauce

Get your center cut chops cut more than an inch thick. Square is best. A pat of butter or spray cast iron or heavy skillet with Pam or other coating. Add a little soy sauce (T) to the skillet and lay chops in. Take a lid smaller than the skillet and weigh it down so there's pressure on the chops. Grill to your taste then turn and spread a crushed garlic clove on each chop, and weigh down again. Extra thick (square) chops may have to be cooked on all four sides. Grill on each side for at least 20 seconds after spreading garlic, so garlic is browned. A little Roquefort cheese spread on the chops before the last turning gives them an interesting flavor--if you like that cheese.

Cheese

From a freshly butchered calf, clean the stomach, rub generously with salt and hang to dry. This will become the rennet, and provide the acid to coagulate the milk to be converted to cheese.

After well dried, trim a small piece of rennet and soak in warm water for one day.

2 Gallons Milk

1 Cup Rennet Water

Warm milk and add rennet water. Set aside and let stand until a firm curd is formed. This should take at least one hour. Gently press the curd to one side and ladle or pour off the whey. It should appear clean with a green tint. Pour curd into a cheesecloth bag and squeeze out water. Hang to dry. Squeeze again and hang again until no water comes. Place in a box with small drain holes in the bottom and weight the lid to press out any remaining liquid. After a few hours take out curd and chop. Salt to taste. Scald box before returning curd and pressing overnight. The next day, rub with salt and wrap in a clean cloth, let stand one day, then trim off edge and return to scalded box and press again for one day. Remove cloth and place on a shelf in root cellar. Turn every day for a week, rub with a coarse cloth every day for a month. Eat anytime now, but better to age for several months.

Down Home
Chicken & Dumplings

- 5 LBs chicken (buy a stewing chicken)
- 1 cup chicken broth (use 2 bullion cubes)
- 1 cup milk
- 1 large onion chopped large
- salt to taste
- 1 T poultry seasoning
- 1 t peppercorns
- 1 t baking powder
- 3 cups flour
- 1 T shortning
- 1/4 cup butter (1/2 stick)
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup

Put in large pot and cover chicken with water, add peppercorns, poultry seasoning, and onion. Boil 30 to 40 minutes until chicken is coming off bone. Remove and bone, discarding skin, bones, and gristle. Cube meat bite size. Skim fat off broth and strain. Pouring through a paper towel will remove a lot of fat. Salt to taste and boil broth down to 2/3rds while making dumplings. In large mixing bowl, mix flour (reserve 1/4 cup), cut in shorting, add milk and slowly add broth until reaching biscuit like dough. Add balance of broth to pot, if any left. Roll on floured board to 1/4 inch, cut into 2 inch x 3 inch squares. Return chicken to pot and at a low boil, drop in dumplings, one at a time. Boil another 10 to 12 minutes. You can add carrots and celery to pot initially if you like the variety.

Chicken Rolls

- 2 boned chicken breasts
- 1 package prepared, or 2 bunches spinach
- 1 carton Feta cheese
- 1 c bread crumbs
- 1 c flour
- 1 cmushrooms
- 1 c white wine
- 2 chicken bullion cubes
- salt & lemon pepper to taste
- 1 T olive oil

Pound breasts to 1/4 inch. Blanch spinach so barely cooked, spread on chicken breasts 1/2 inch thick. Sprinkle feta cheese on spinach, Salt and lemon pepper lightly. Roll tightly, use toothpicks if necessary, to hold rolls. Brown in frying pan in hot olive oil then place in a pre-heated 350 degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes. Pour off excess olive oil from frying pan and add 1 cup water with a dissolved chicken bullion cube. Bring to boil and add a dash of white wine. Add Wondra flour until thickened slightly, add sliced mushrooms and almost immediately remove from fire. Serve with gravy and excess spinach if any.

"Come," she said briskly, "you must be hungry. Who'll bear a hand to help me get tea?"

She had no lack of volunteers. In a few moments Yuba Bill was engaged like Caliban in bearing logs for this Miranda; the expressman was grinding coffee on the veranda; to myself the arduous duty of slicing bacon was assigned, and the Judge lent each man his good-humored and voluble counsel. And when Miggles, assisted by the Judge and our Hibernaian "deck passenger," set the table with all the available crockery, we had become quite joyous, in spite of the rain that beat against windows, the wind that whirled down the chimney, the two ladies who whispered together in the corner, or the magpie who uttered a satirical and croaking commentary on their conversation from his perch above. In the now bright, blazing fire we could see that the walls were papered with illustrated journals, arranged with feminine taste and discrimination. The furniture was extemporized, and adapted from candle-boxes and packing-cases, and covered with gay calico, or the skin of some animal. The arm-chair of the helpless Jim was an ingenious variation of a flour-barrel. There was neatness, and even a taste for the picturesque, to be seen in the few details of the long low room.

The meal was a culinary success.

*From the novel,
The Luck of Roaring Camp
by Bret Harte*

Mustard Chicken

- 2 boned chicken breasts
- 3 T mustard
- 1 t soy sauce
- 1/4 garlic powder
- 1 t lemon pepper
- 1 T olive oil
- 1/4 c white wine
- 1 c flour

Mix mustard, soy, garlic powder, a couple of shakes of lemon pepper, in small mixing bowl. Pound chicken breasts to 1/4" to 3/8" and flour lightly. Add to skillet hot with olive oil and dash of white wine. Brown on one side and turn, coat browned side with mustard mixture. When done through, turn again to cook-on mustard and coat other side, turn once more to cook-on.

Chicken Breast Sauté

- 4 boned chicken breasts
- 1/2 green bell pepper
- 1/2 red bell pepper
- 1/2 medium onion
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 cube butter (1/2 cup)
- 3 to 4 medium mushrooms
- 1 T poultry seasoning
- 2 c chicken broth
- 1 c white wine
- small can sliced olives
- salt and pepper to taste
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- 1 c flour
- 1 t paprika
- 1 T parsley

Dust chicken in flour. Heat olive oil in skillet and brown chicken on both sides. Remove and discard drippings. Add butter and sauté peppers, onions, adding mushrooms last. Add chicken back to skillet and sprinkle all with poultry seasoning. Add broth and cook down five minutes, add white wine. Cook down again five minutes. Sprinkle with paprika and parsley and serve.

"¿Hay alguna cosa de comer?" said I, from my grammar. "Sí Señor!" said he. "¿Que gusta usta usted?" Mentioning frijoles, which I knew they must have, if they had nothing else, and beef and bread, with a hint for wine, if they had any, he went off to another building across the court, and returned in a few minutes with a couple of Indian boys bearing dishes and a decanter of wine. The dishes contained baked meats, frijoles stewed with peppers and onions, boiled eggs, and California flour baked into a kind of macaroni. These, together with the wine, made the most sumptuous meal we had eaten since we left Boston; and, compared with the fare we had lived upon for seven months, it was a regal banquet."

*from the journal of
Richard Henry Dana
California, 1835*

Oakland is a pretty little place, springing up with residences of San Francisco merchants. It is like Brooklyn from New York, only it is farther, the bay being some seven or eight miles wide there. Pretty oaks are scattered over the sandy flat....

*From the Journal of
William H. Brewer
September 20, 1861*

Cornish Game Hens
In Leek Sauce

- 2 Cornish game hens
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 pat butter - 1/8 cube
- 1 cup sliced leeks
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 cup cream
- salt, pepper, lemon pepper to taste
- 2 minced garlic cloves

Season hens inside and out with salt, pepper, and lemon pepper. Brown game hens on range in deep hot skillet (oven proof) with olive oil and remove. Wipe skillet clean. Add leeks, butter, and garlic to reheated skillet, sauté, then add back hens. Transfer to preheated 375 degree oven with hens breast down, cook 40 minutes turn oven up to 425 degrees then rotate breast up and cook another 10 minutes. Remove from oven back to range over medium heat, remove and set aside birds, add butter and a little flour to absorb fat, add chicken stock. Beat egg yolk into cream and add to skillet. Salt and pepper to taste. For those of you who like gizzard, liver, and heart, these can be boiled into chicken stock, removed, sliced, and added to sauce.

Baked Chicken And Simple Gravy

One of the plebeian pleasures of cooking and eating is a baked chicken!

- 1 whole fryer
- liver, gizzard, heart, and neck
- 1 T garlic salt
- 1 t lemon pepper
- 1 medium onion
- 2 chicken bullion cubes
- 1/4 t poultry seasoning
- 1 T soy sauce
- 1 T flour (Wondra if available)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Wash chicken well inside and out and make sure there are no pin feathers. Season inside and out with garlic salt and lemon pepper. Stuff chicken with whole onion. Place chicken breast down on a rack over a pan covered with 1/2 inch of water. Bake for one hour then turn breast up. Bake for another 30 minutes, or until skin on the legs is beginning to pull up and chicken is well browned. While baking, boil bullion cubes, poultry seasoning, giblets and neck until done in a small saucepan in 1 and 1/2 cups water. About 13 minutes. Discard neck and chop and return giblets to bowl. Thicken with 1 T Wondra. A touch of white wine or a bit of sage doesn't hurt the gravy. Cut chicken in as many pieces as you want, I generally use my poultry clippers and snip in half. Serve with generous amount of gravy.

You can skip the gravy and onion and simply insert a couple of sprigs of rosemary and drizzle a good balsamic vinegar over the chicken a few minutes before removing from oven. This is a delightful and unusual dish. Cooking time should be reduced as chicken is not stuffed--say 45 minutes on breast then 15 minutes on back to brown breast.

Take a dozen big Pacific Oysters, fresh off the skiff. Chop up a handful of parsley and add a palm full of smashed up celery seed and bring to boil with a cup of water--set off fire. Beat together a dollop of fresh cream, the yellows of three hen's eggs, and a palm full of flour, mix well and add to water, over low heat, but don't boil again. Crush a palmful of double baked rusk. Drop in oysters and butter, just long enough to heat oysters through. Serve in a shallow dish.

Rusk was a sweet bread, toasted and crumbled.

I have been hard at work all day, and provisions getting lower. Peter shot some quail and rabbits, and we have had two or three "potpies" that vanished before our attacks like dew on a summer's morning....

*From the Journal of
William H. Brewer
Corral Hollow, October 21, 1861*

Apricot Chicken

- 2 Chicken Breasts
- 1/3 c sliced dry apricots
- 1/2 c water
- 1/3 c brown sugar
- 1 t soy sauce
- 1 heaping T apricot jam
- 1/4 t garlic salt plus a few shakes
- 1/4 t lemon pepper plus a few shakes
- 1/4 t msg (Accent) if you use, 1 t salt if not
- 1 t corn starch dissolved in 1/3 c water
- 1/4 c brandy or muscat canelli wine or ?

Bone and flatten chicken breasts. Dust patties with flour, garlic salt, and lemon pepper. Bring 1/2 cup water and apricots to boil, reduce fire and cook until cots begin to soften. Add soy sauce, garlic salt, lemon pepper, msg, apricot jam, and brandy. Cook until reduced to 1/2 liquid, add water and corn starch and thicken. Be careful to just keep hot until serving, or sauce will become too thick. Cook breasts through and brown slightly, serve with generous dollop of apricot sauce with a bit on the side.

Wild Game

Hasenpfeffer

(German rabbit)

- 1 rabbit
- 1 large onion
- 1 T pickling spices
- 2 cups vinegar
- 2 cups water
- 1 t sage
- 1 c Flour
- 1/2 c sugar
- salt & pepper to taste
- 1/2 c lard or cooking oil

Cut rabbit into serving size piece; salt and pepper; and place in crock or deep bowl. Add pickling spice, sage, and sugar to water and vinegar to make marinade. Cover rabbit with marinade. Add equal parts if necessary. Place in refrigerator for two days. Remove rabbit and dry well. Retain marinade. Dredge rabbit in flour and brown in a hot skillet 1/4" deep in lard or cooking oil. Pour off excess oil. Add about 1 cup of strained marinade, cover and simmer for 1 hour. Remove rabbit and thicken remaining liquid for gravy.

Rabbit Pie
(frontier)

1 rabbit cut into pieces
1 large onion
1/4 pound bacon
salt & pepper
1/2 t sage
1/2 t tarragon
pie dough
lard or cooking oil
2 medium carrots
flour

Dredge rabbit pieces in flour and brown in a hot skillet 1/4" deep in lard or oil, remove and drain. Place in a deep pot, cover with water. Simmer rabbit, sliced onion, bacon slices (cut in quarters), tarragon, sage, sliced carrots, and salt and pepper to taste, until tender. About 20 minutes. Remove ingredients from broth and set aside. Take two cups of broth and thicken with flour to gravy. Bone rabbit and mix with vegetables, add to pie pan lined with dough. Add gravy to 1/4" of rim. Cover with pie dough and place in a 350 degree preheated oven for 25 minutes or until pie dough is golden brown. Cool for 30 minutes before serving,

On the crest of Presidio Hill above Old San Diego and the Old Town State Historic Park, Father Junipero Serra established the first California Mission, San Diego de Alcalá, on July 16, 1769. Fragrances of that old time still linger in Old Town as many fine restaurants there still carry on the old traditions. Many of Old Town's original buildings can still be observed, and some visited. The Whaley House, built in 1857, is a stately brick building said to be the oldest of that material in San Diego. Old Town Plaza, as plazas were in most of old Alta California, is the center for social and cultural events--and the spot where the first Stars and Stripes was raised in the state. Olive and fig, pepper, pine, and palm, take you back in time, as well as flowers of hundreds of varieties

Mincemeat
(frontier)

- 1 pound venison
- 1 c pork suet
- 1 c raisins
- 1 c dried apricots or other
- 1/2 c sugar
- 1 1/2 c brown sugar
- 2 c chopped apples
- 1 t cinnamon
- 3 medium lemons (juice)
- 6 medium oranges (juice)
- 1 c apple or other jelly

Grind or fine chop venison and pork suet. Simmer all ingredients 45 minutes over low fire. Jar and refrigerate, or cool and use in pie shell, bake only until crusts are done. You may can this mixture, but be careful of canning any meats. Follow the directions faithfully and make sure there's a good vacuum when reopened.

Since it was Sunday and since Gordy was not there to tend the stove, Ramon had pulled one of the sandhill cranes from the smokehouse where it had hung a few days, then slow-roasted it spitted over an outside low-ember fire on a green willow branch, all afternoon. The ten pound bird had taken on a golden brown, basting in its own juices as one or the other of the four took turns at the makeshift spit, turning it slowly and seasoning it with salt and hot pork fat, then collecting the drippings in a bucket. They had also buried a generous portion of plump tule roots, wrapped in a blanket of wild grape leaves, and covered the nutty-tasting tubers with coals. Ramon collected some of the bird drippings and fetched them to the stove inside and made a fine gravy by adding a little flour and water. That and the usual corn mush and beans graced the table, as well as golden brown drop biscuits. Ramon had also made a pie from the last of the dried apples they had.

They sat down to a feast.

from the novel
Shadow of the Grizzly
by L. J. Martin

Mixed Meats

California Paella

This is simply the most elegant of dishes. It's the dish I serve for that very special guest or guests. I also make this with wild pheasant and/or wild ducks, neither of which are my favorite birds, but in this presentation, are wonderful! Don't be afraid to substitute sea food--squid, sea bass, etc.,etc.--or birds--Cornish gam hens, quail, pigeons, etc., etc.--in this dish, it's very forgiving. The saffron is terribly expensive (this amount cost \$7.00 the last time I made this dish) but it, unfortunately, is necessary

Timing is the thing with this dish. It's a little work, but well worth the trouble.

- 1 3 LB chicken
- 2 nice lobster tails (or 12 more shrimp)
- 12 mussels, in shell
- 18 medium deveined shrimp
- 4 nice clams, in shell
- 2 king crab legs
- 2 chorizo sausages $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ lb
- 2 garlic cloves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ t saffron
- 2 c rice
- 4 c chicken broth (6 bullion cubes to 4 c water)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c pimientos diced
- 1 cup flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter (1 stick)

Cut a 3 pound chicken into single serving size pieces. Dredge in flour and brown in a hot skillet with 1/2 c butter. Remove and set aside. Sauté 2 cups rice until golden. Add 4 c chicken broth, sprinkle with saffron. Bring liquid to boil. Salt and pepper to taste. I use a paella pan, but a roasting pan or large casserole will do. Place 1/2 chicken in pan and cover the pieces with bits and pieces of 1 chorizo, and 1/2 c pimientos. Add rice to mixture. Pour in chicken broth. Top with remaining chicken and repeat with second chorizo. Bake, uncovered, in preheated 350 degree oven for 30 minutes. Cut lobster into 1 inch cubes and add. Cook another fifteen minutes. Add mussels, shrimp, clams, crab legs (cut in half), and cook for another 10 minutes. Garnish with pimiento and parsley and serve in bowls with French bread and a green salad--and a bib for your guests. Serves four big eaters or six normal ones.

Hop Sing's Visiting Card

*"To the stranger the gates of my house are not closed;
the rice jar is on the left, and the sweetmeats on the
right as you enter.*

Two sayings of the Master:

*Hospitality is the virtue to the son and the wisdom
of the ancestor.*

*The superior man is light-hearted after the crop-
gathering; he makes a festival.*

*When the stranger is in your melon patch observe him
not to closely; inattention is often the highest form
of civility.*

Happiness, Peace, and Prosperity.

Hop Sing"

From the Novel

The Luck of Roaring Camp

by Bret Harte

Californio Cocida
(beef brisket plus)

- 1 beef brisket 3 lbs or so (fat trimmed away)
- 2 chickens, quartered
- 2 lbs of sausages (pork, kiebasa, Italian beef or turkey, smoked--any kind you favor)
- 1 cabbage
- 4 leeks
- 4 cloves garlic
- 2 16 oz cans garbanzo beans
- 8 carrots
- 4 potatoes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 t sage
- 2 chicken bullion cubes
- 2 beef bullion cubes
- 1 t cumin
- 2 lemons or 4 limes
- 2 dried pasilla chiles, seeded
- 2 yellow onions, chopped
- 1 T peppercorns, crushed
- ½ c parsley

In a large kettle brown brisket, chicken, and sausages in olive oil. Remove excess oil (save) and return brisket and chicken to pot, cover with water and add onion, peppercorns, crushed garlic (2 cloves), bullion cubes, and crushed chiles. Simmer 1/2 hour and remove and set aside chicken. Simmer brisket alone for another hour. Add carrots in bite size pieces, garbanzos, and potatoes in bite size pieces. Cook 10 minutes, then add chopped cabbage and leeks (white only), and return chicken to pot. Cook the sausages in the olive oil with remaining 2 cloves garlic (crushed) in a separate skillet. Arrange sliced brisket, chicken pieces, sausages, on a large platter and

surround with vegetables. Offer broth on the side. Serve as a hearty meal for eight to twelve.

Washtunkala

*2 pounds jerky, whacked into bite size
8 meadow onions or two medium domestic ones
2 dozen baby taters
8 ears of corn*

Slice corn from cob. Simmer the whole mess in a pot until the taters are done.

Prairie Butter

Split beef or buffalo thigh bones the long way. Lay up next to a hot fire, tilted so's the marrow browns nicely. Spread on hardtack or soft bread.

Vegetables

Corn Pudding 1

- 1 can creamed corn (or equivalent cut fresh from the cob. Fill cup with heavy cream or evaporated milk just to cover corn)
- 1 green onion
- 1/2 green bell pepper
- 1/2 red bell pepper
- 1/2 yellow bell pepper
- 1 jalapeno
- 1 love garlic
- 1/4 cup flour (a little less)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup cooked bay shrimp
- 1 small can sliced olives
- 1 T sage
- 3 eggs
- 1 T sugar
- 1 c milk
- butter to cover saucepan

In buttered saucepan, add chopped onion, peppers, crushed garlic, olives, jalapeno and saute. Add flour, sugar, milk, beaten eggs, sage, sugar, and shrimp. Salt and pepper to taste. Blend well then pour into 9" x 9" baking pan. Bake in preheated 350 degree oven for an hour.

Corn Pudding 2

- 1 medium can creamed corn
- 3 eggs
- 1 c milk
- salt & pepper to taste
- 1 t sugar
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 ea red, green, & yellow bell pepper
- 1 medium onion
- 1 cloves garlic
- 1/4 cube butter

In large sauce pan sauté chopped peppers, onion, and minced garlic in melted butter until onion is cooked soft. Stir in seasonings, salt and pepper to taste. Remove from range and add corn, beaten eggs, and milk until well blended, bake in a shallow 1 1/2 quart (9" x 9") dish, uncovered, at 350 degrees until center is set, or toothpick comes clean, approximately 45 minutes.

THURS. 9th. This day some sales of cargo have been effected, and a ton of hides taken on board. The carpenter caulking the deck. Took my gun and started on a ramble over the hills, found some strawberries & blackberries; the season for them is nearly over, but whortleberries are abundant, but not quite ripe. Bagged nine partridges and three Pigeons and returned on board about 4 PM. The country about Monterey is agreeably broken by hills and vallies having a verdant appearance. The hills are crowned with trees mostly of the pine tribe, with clumps of scrub oaks & the surface of the vallies & plains covered with rich feed for cattle, but I have not seen enough of the country yet to speak of its character, soil, & productions. I can only say now, that its general appearance is pleasant.

...Employed in filling water, repairing old sails & making sales of goods. 5 PM went upon the Hills & picked a considerable quantity of Berries. Got the launch in and stowed. Employed in restowing the Hold & getting ready for sea. Sent the cutter a fishing at daylight and 4 boys a berrying. At 11 AM the Cutter returned with about 200 fine Large Fish, and the Boys returned at dark with a good lot of berries....

*From the journal of
William Phelps
Monterey, July, 1840*

Drunken Sweet Potatoes

- 2 large sweet potatoes
- 2 T tequila
- 1 small can mandarin orange slices
- 2 limes
- 2 T sugar
- salt & pepper to taste
- butter to cover frying pan

Peel shred, or process, sweet potatoes, add sugar and mix again. Add mixture to hot buttered frying pan. When good and hot, add tequila and juice of 1 lime. Salt and pepper to taste, and mix again. When potatoes begin to caramelize or look slightly translucent, juice second lime over the top and remove from fire. These hold well in the refrigerator and can be warmed the next day.

Barley Dressing

- 2 cups cooked barley (follow directions on package for quick or regular)
- 1/2 c green, red, and yellow bell peppers
- 1 small can (single serving) corn
- 1 T chopped cilantro
- 1/4 t ground cumin
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- 1 small green onion
- 1/4 cup fresh salsa (bottled if you must)

Either add peppers, corn, cilantro, and cumin during last five minutes of cooking time for barley, or par boil and add to cooked grain. Mix in tomato sauce, chopped green onion, and salsa and cook another five minutes, just to get good and hot.

Monday 27th. Employed in Wooding and taking on board Hides. Killed a Bullock for Ships use. Sent the cutter after Craw Fish & was successful in obtaining about 40 they taste similar to our Lobsters, and resemble them in size & formation with the exception that they are destitute of the two large claws which our Lobsters possess....

Mon. 4. Went up the creek & killed a fine mess of curlew. Sent the 2d officer & some men to kill a Bullock.

Friday Aug 7th. Employed in selling goods. Taking on board Hides & Tallow, & various other work. Went in the afternoon to shoot Rabbits, returned with 5 & 1 Plover.

Wed. 12th. No Traders off. Sent the Yawl fishing & went up the Creek myself in the Cutter gunning. Shot 19 Rabbits & a Large Wolf.

*From the journal of
William Phelps
off San Pedro, August, 1840*

Green Tomato Pie

- 8 medium green tomatoes
- 1 large lemon
- 1 9" pie crust
- 2 T cornstarch
- 2 T cold water
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 T butter
- 1/2 t ground cinnamon
- salt & pepper to taste
- sage

Slice lemons thin, seed, and slice tomatoes about 1/4". Cook in sauce pan over high heat until boiling. Reduce heat and simmer until tomatoes cook (approximately 12 minutes). Make a smooth paste of cornstarch and water, add sugar, butter, cinnamon, with a dash of salt and pepper and blend, then add mixture to tomatoes, bring to a boil and remove from heat. Line a pie plate with crust and add mixture, top with crust and place in a preheated 425 degree oven for 35 minutes. Cool before serving.

Hash Brown Hannah's

- 5 large potatoes
- 1 T salt
- 1/2 t pepper
- 2 T butter
- 1 T olive oil
- 1/2 green bell pepper
- 1/2 red bell pepper

Place potatoes in cold water in a large sauce pan, add salt, cover and bring to a boil. Drain immediately and cover again with cold water. Grate potatoes into a bowl and toss with salt, pepper, and chopped peppers. Heat 1 T butter and olive oil in a 12 inch non-stick skillet until coated and good and hot, then add potatoes and press firmly into a large pancake. Don't stir. Cook for 5 minutes until golden brown on the bottom. Slide out of skillet onto a plate without breaking pancake. Drizzle melted butter over uncooked side and invert plate back into skillet. Cook for another 5 to 8 minutes until golden brown, slide out onto a serving platter. Serve.

Chorizo

*1 lb. ground beef
1 lb. ground pork
1/2 c. sherry
1/2 c. vinegar
1 t. pepper
1 t. salt
1 1/2 t. cayenne pepper
1-3 t. chile powder
1 small head garlic (5 or 6 cloves)
1/2 t. oregano (crushed to powder)
1 t. ground coriander
1 t. ground cumin*

With meat blended in a large bowl, add all ingredients. Blend thoroughly with hands. Let set, covered, in cool place for 72 hours before using. Sherry and vinegar will cure meat.

*For the modern cook
Wrap in wiener sized pieces and freeze if you desire.*

Eggs

Oven Finished & Fluffy

- 10 large fresh eggs
- 1 can whole jalapenos
- 2 oz jack cheese
- 1/2 t msg
- 1 t (heaping) lemon pepper
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 2 medium ripe tomatoes
- butter to cover pan

Beat eggs, chicken soup, and MSG together. Start eggs in buttered frying pan over low fire, turn as they begin to cook. Line buttered baking dish with jalapenos (clean scale and stems). When eggs are beginning to harden, pour into baking dish and pat down lightly. Slice tomatoes and cover top, grate cheese and coat. Salt and pepper and place in 375 degree preheated oven for 20 minutes.

Ahh, San Francisco. If that's been said once, it's been said a million times.

Baghdad-by-the-bay, the home of the infamous Barbary Coast, has always been of mixed character, but it's never, never, never been accused of being boring.

The gold rush era El Dorado Saloon, the Bella Union, or the California Exchange, or the later Delmonico's, Tait-Zinkand's, the Poodle Dog, the Tadich Grill (one of my world class favorites), Hang Far Low, Jacks (unfortunately closed a few years ago, but was a great CNBC joint--that's see and be seen), Caesar's Bohemian, and the many fine hotel restaurants that have glowed like stars--and speaking of Stars, a few of the newer joints aren't a bit bad. Even though some of the old ones burned out, a few, like Tadich's Grill (Tadich's Cold Day Tavern in days gone by) still rule the town to my taste. There's nothing quite like a platter of petrale sole, fries, and a plate of spinach at the Tadich to make a man glad he bellied up to the tall bar to wait--and belly up he had to for they provide no stools. And wait he probably had to for there's most always a line.

Breads & Baking

Sourdough Starter

(frontier)

- 4 c 80 degree water
- 5 c flour
- 1 package yeast
- 1/4 cup sugar

Dissolve yeast in water, add other ingredients and place mixture (covered) in a warm place to sour. It will foam up, then flatten out, then thicken. Store in refrigerator, adding equal parts flour and water back each time you use it. Bring portion you use to room temperature.

Hardtack

(frontier)

- 4 c flour
- 1 c water
- 1/2 T salt
- 1/2 T sugar

Mix ingredients with hands. Roll out on floured board until 1/4 inch thick. Score with a table knife in size squares you want to end up with. Bake on a cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Indian Fry Bread
(frontier revised)

- 2 c Bisquick
- warm water to soften dough
- 1/2 t salt
- 3 c cooking oil (or enough to cover balls)
- 2 T buttermilk

Mix ingredients, adding enough warm water to make a soft dough. Let stand 1 hour up to overnight. Shape pieces into balls the size of a small hen egg, flatten to 6 inch rounds, about 1/8", and drop into hot oil until brown. This is great dripping with sage honey.

A bit o' the Irish!

(I include the Irish as they were such a large part of the Gold Rush)

Yellow Man

- 1 LB syrup
- 1/4 LB butter
- 1 t baking soda
- 2 t vinegar

Dissolve all ingredients except soda in a pan over a medium fire, cook until a drop hardens in cold water. Remove from heat and, in a flash, stir in the soda. The mess will foam like the lip of a mad dog. Pour into a greased pan to cool. Break into pieces and store in a tight tin.

Brotchan Foltchep

- 3 nice leeks
- 2 cups cow's milk
- a fist full of parsley
- 1/2 cup milled oats
- salt and pepper to taste
- a palm full of butter

Cook the milled oats in the milk and butter. Chop the leeks bite size and add. Cook on low heat for 1 hour. Salt and pepper and serve with a bit o' parsley to color the top.

Guinness Cake

- 1 bottle Guinness stout
- 1 LB flour
- 1 LB sugar
- 1 lemon
- 4 hen's eggs
- 1/2 LB pitted prunes
- 1/2 LB dried apricots
- 1/4 LB raisins
- 1/4 LB dried apples
- 1/4 LB lemon peels
- 1/4 LB cherries
- 1 t baking soda
- 1/2 t nutmeg

Cut the butter into the flour, then balance of dry ingredients, then wet fruit, then bottle of Guinness, lemon juice, and finally 4 beaten eggs. Bake in a slow oven until a kitchen knife comes clean--about 3 hours.

Colcannon

- 1 medium cabbage
- 6 medium potatoes
- 1 onion
- salt and pepper
- A bit o' butter

Mince the cabbage and boil soft. Boil the potatoes until soft and mash. Cook the onion in butter until clear and mix with potatoes, cabbage, and salt and pepper.

Dublin Coddle

- 1 LB pork sausages
- 1 LB onions
- 3 LBs potatoes
- 2 LBs bacon cubed 1 inch
- 1 bunch parsley
- 1 c beef stock

Cover sausages and bacon with water and bring to a boil. Cook for ten minutes then remove from water and put in a baking dish. cover with slice potatoes, sliced onions, and beef stock. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and bake for 1 hour.

Clint found an adobe with a small sign, *JUANITA'S CANTINA*, and tied the horses to the rail in front, loosening the cinch on the gray, which had carried him the last few miles into the village. He had grazed the horses along the way, while he had been limited to the old man's small portion of frijoles and tortillas.

As soon as he pulled away the cowhide that covered the doorway, he paused, closed his eyes, and inhaled deeply in appreciation. He knew he had come to the right place. Just outside the backdoor of the small cafe, he saw a cooking pit with a metal grill. A variety of pots were located on the grill and the odors that emanated from them, some in roiling steam, promised what was to come.

He sat at one of the many plank tables and smiled at the approaching woman. She had obviously partaken of the succulent dishes often, since she waddled over, melon-sized breasts straining to escape from her red-dyed jerga blouse.

"*Buenos días*," she said, grinning at her early customer.

"Feed me, senora, *pro favor*," Clint said simply, and the woman beamed and hurried away.

She returned with a tray full of steaming delights, setting them in front of him. He recognized the tortillas and frijoles and salsa, but when he looked quizzically at the other bowls, she explained each dish with a point of a stout finger whose joints bulged.

Cordero cabazo, lamb's head; *migas*, sour bread sliced thin and fried in garlic oil until crisp; *pastel de tomat*, a pie of onion, garlic, chicken meat, beef roast, corn, tomatoes, peppers, and olives, richly

spiced, and served in a masa cheese crust; *mostaza*, wild mustard greens in olive oil and garlic; *pie cerdo*, pig's foot.

Clint smiled and said, "*Con vino, por favor*," and the woman hurried away for a mug of wine.

from the novel

The Benicia Belle

by L. J. Martín

Irish Soda Bread

- 3 1/2 c flour
- 1 6 oz (1 c) semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 1/2 c buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- 1 t baking powder
- 1 t baking soda
- 1 t salt
- 1/2 c sugar
- 1/4 c butter (1/2 stick)
- 1 c raisins (golden are nice)

Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and sugar. Cut in butter until you have crumbles, or crumbs. Blend in raisins and chocolate chips, then egg and buttermilk. Knead on floured board and form into ball. Place in 375 degree (preheated) oven and bake for 1 hour. Brush with combination egg yolk and water for nice finish, if you wish.

Salt Rising Bread
(frontier)

Starter:

- 7 T white cornmeal
- 1 c milk
- 1 t salt
- 1 t sugar

Scald milk and stir in other ingredients. Place in a warm spot, covered, until gas begins to escape.

Sponge:

- 2 c flour
- 2 T sugar
- 3 T melted shorting (Crisco or other)

Combine all ingredients including starter in a jar and seal, place in a warm water bath (115 degrees) until the sponge rises and bubbles and appears light.

Dough:

- 8 1/2 c flour

Knead flour into sponge, 10 to 12 times, then shape into three loaves. Place in bread pans and allow to rise until double in size. Bake at 375 degrees for 10 minutes then lower to 350 degrees for another 25 to 30 minutes until done.

Frying Pan Soda Bread
(Irish)

- 2 c whole wheat flour
- 1 c white flour
- 1/4 c sugar
- 1 t baking powder
- 1 c buttermilk
- 1/2 t salt

Mix dry ingredients well. Add buttermilk and blend. Shape on a floured board, patting into a round flat loaf. Oil or butter a cast iron skillet and place loaf in a preheated 450 degree oven, baking 10 minutes until bread rises, then lower heat to 375 degrees for 25 minutes until done.

Spoon Bread
(frontier--southern origin)

- 2 c cornmeal
- 1 t salt
- 3 T butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 quart milk

Bring milk just to a boil, stir in cornmeal, salt, and butter while cooking another five minutes. Set aside to cool. Beat egg yolks and add to mixture, stirring well. Beat egg whites stiff and fold in. Pour batter into a 9 inch by 12 inch buttered or oiled pan and bake in preheated oven at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until well browned.

Wine

The wine of pastoral days was made after this manner: Suitable ground was selected, and a desfan or platform placed thereon. This was covered with clean hides, and the grapes piled upon it. Some well-washed Indians, having only a zapeta, the hair carefully tied up and hand covered with cloth wherewith to wipe away the perspiration, each having a stick to steady himself withal, were put to treading out the grape juice, which was caught in coras, or in leathern bags. These were emptied into a large wooden tub, where the liquid was kept two or three months, under cover of the grape skins to ferment. Such as did not flow off was put into wooden presses, and the juice into copper jars, and covered with a kind of hat. Through two or three inserted tubes heat was conveyed to the mass to aid evaporation and condensation. These jars served as a still for brandy. For white wine the first juice only was taken and stored.

(Zapeta: loin-cloth)

Dairy of Carlos N. Híjar

California, 1834

Olives

*...in some missions they have already begun to harvest olives; and
at San Diego they have already made some very good olive oil.*

Fr. Fermín de Lasuen

California, 1803

*The olive press for Mission San Diego still stands in the Junipero
Serra Museum, San Diego.*

Gravies, Sauces, & Marinades

Californio Barbacoa (paste)

- 4 small dried red chiles
- 4 dried cascabel chiles
- 8 dried California chiles
- 4 dry ancho chiles
- 20 cloves garlic
- 2 T dry oregano
(poultry spice for birds)
- 2 t black pepper
- 8 medium tomatillos
- 1 cup hot water

Soak all dried peppers in water until soft (20 min.)

Buzz all ingredients in blender or processor until smooth. Apply to meat prior to roasting. Not for the faint hearted.

Chile Marinade

Many Old Californio recipes use lime. It's a flavor that adds freshness to almost any dish or drink.

- 1/4 c fresh lime juice
- 1 c orange juice
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 1 T grated orange peel (zest)
- 1/2 t pepper
- salt to taste
- 1 t cumin seeds
- 1/4 t sage
- 1/4 red wine
- 1 T oregano
- 6 canned chipotle chiles

Boil lime, orange, & red wine until reduced to half. Buzz all ingredients in blender or processor until smooth.

Tomatilla/Mushroom Sauce

- 3 tomatilla
- 1 large or 2 medium tomatoes
- 1/2 jalapeno pepper
- 1 beef or chicken bullion cube
- 1 T water
- 3 medium mushrooms
- 1/4 cup white or red wine
- 1/4 t chile powder
- dash of sage
- pepper to taste

Clean stems (core) from tomatilla and buzz in blender with 1 tablespoon water. Pour into small saucepan over medium heat. Add jalapeno, chopped. Add chile powder and bullion cube--chicken for fowl or pork, beef for red meat. Blanch and peel tomato, cube 1/2 inch and add. Use wine only if you need more liquid, Red for red meat sauce, White for white. Add sage and pepper to taste. Use to dress meat during or after cooking.

THURS. 26th. Westerly winds and fine weather throughout the day. Killed a Bullock for ships use. After breakfast I started with one of the Boys and two Horses to shoot wild geese at a place about three miles from the landing. At this we were joined by a number of California boys, half breeds and Indians on horseback, who hung in our rear waiting for sport of some kind. The scamps are always ripe for mischief and on the present occasion I could see they had fun in view, but I warned them.... They are all very expert in the use of the lasso (a small rope made of hide, about 6 or 7 fathom long with a running noose in one end) which they will throw when at full gallop over the horns of a bullock or round one of his legs, with the greatest precision. A Californian spends two thirds of his life in the saddle & of course are excellent horsemen; even a boy of 8 years of age will lasso a wild Bull & bring him to the ground. I was uncertain what was the object of my present company, until I fired into a flock of geese on the plain, two had their wings broke and made off on their legs. And now the shout was raised from the "muchachos" and away they started full speed swinging their lassos over their heads in pursuit of the wounded geese, and which the never failing lasso soon dragged to my feet.

*From the Journal of
William Phelps
November, 1840, San Pedro*

Oyster Catsup

*A common condiment in the old west, used like any other catsup!
Actually, it tastes more like a mustard. You have to like oysters, and
like "hot" to love this catsup.*

- 1 pint oysters in their own juice (this is two of the normal
8 ounce jars common in the market)
- ½ c oyster liquor (retain from jars)
- 1 cup sherry wine
- ½ t chile powder
- 1 t cayenne pepper
- 1 T salt
- 1 t lemon pepper
- 1 lemon

Chop oysters fine and cook over slow fire with sherry, the 1/2 cup oyster liquid, and the juice of one lemon. Add spices and buzz in blender until smooth. Save the 8 ounce oyster jars to re-bottle the sauce for storage in the refrigerator.

CAUTION: don't try and can seafood of any kind unless you're an expert. Make this fresh and keep it in the refrigerator, not more than a week.

Grill BBQ Sauce

- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1/2 cup (1 cube) butter
- 2 beef bullion cubes
- 1/4 cup red wine
- 1/2 t garlic powder

Blend in pan over a low fire and use on meat on **BBQ** while cooking. I do a fillet strip with this, over a hot fire. It's the best!

Butter/Lemon Sauce (revised French)

- 8 T unsalted butter (1 stick)
- 2 T lemon juice
- 1/4 c water
- 1/8 t salt
- 1/2 t **MSG** (if you use, increase salt if not)
- 1 T soy sauce

Bring water, lemon juice, **MSG**, and salt to a boil in a heavy sauce pan, drop in butter 1 T at a time over high heat. Move the pan gently as butter melts and begins to foam. It should rise half way up the pan in buttery bubbles.

Use over asparagus, carrots, broccoli, potatoes, etc. It's wonderful.

Honey Mustard

6 T honey
1/2 c Dijon mustard
1 t Tobasco
1 t soy sauce
1/4 t Cayenne pepper

Combine ingredients in a mixing bowl with a dash or two of cayenne, depending upon how brave you are.

Brandy Sauce
(for meat)

- 1 1/2 c broth (use broth of meat you're cooking if possible)
otherwise use water & 2 chicken bullion cubes for
fowl, 2 beef for red meat.
- 4 T brandy
- 4 T port
- 4 T butter
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1/2 t sage for red meat, poultry seasoning for fowl

Saute minced garlic in olive oil, pour off oil and add all ingredients.

ED. 3rd. The Morning pleasant. We left the Creek after partaking of an excellent breakfast with our host & his family who I'm sure did all in their power to render our stay as agreeable as possible. The good Donna [Dona] pride themselves on their skill in the culinary department, and we were fully satisfied that their pretensions were not vain ones. In fact we were enabled while here with Ducks, Geese, Salmon etc. which we obtained ourselves and which were served up to us in excellent order together with the good things the house afforded such as milk, eggs, good fresh butter etc., etc., to live on the fat of the land & sea....

FRIDAY 5th. Weather as yesterday. The Crew filling water, repacking beef, etc. Dined on board the Hon. Hudson Bay Co. Ship Columbia. I will not trouble you with an account of the dinner--you know I'm no epicure--and will only say that I partook of part of a Beaver which was the first I had ever seen. Mr. Douglas brought it from his hunting camp on the Sacramento a few days before....

*From the journal of
William Phelps
San Francisco, March, 1841*

Conclusion

I sincerely hope you've had a much fun reading these recipes and methods from Old California, before and after the gold rush, and from seeing the impressions of some of the early explorers, as I had bringing them to you.

I've had lots of fun in the kitchen messing with many of them, however a sand hill crane is a little hard to come by these days, as is a haunch of grizzly.

Still, it's fun to dream, and see how they lived in beautiful California, when game was plentiful and humans sparse.

This book is an ongoing project, and I'll continue to add to it as I come across recipes from the past, and passages from books of the time, just as I do to my serious cookbook, *Cooking Wild & Wonderful*.

Buen provecho, amigos!

About the Author

L. J. Martin is the author of over 35 book length works from such major NY publishers as Bantam, Avon, and Pinnacle. His works of fiction include westerns, thrillers, mysteries, and historicals; and of non-fiction a book on killing cancer (he's a two time cancer survivor), two cookbooks, two how-to books on writing, a book of cartoons, and a political thesis. He's also a publisher. His Wolfpack Publishing LLC has over 70 books of all genres on the market in both print and eBook. L.J. has had a varied past having been a wrangler, camp cook, draftsman, water company manager, sailor (his own ketch), printer, real estate broker (specializing in farms and ranches) and developer, appraiser and contractor.

His avocations include photography (with over 100 videos on youtube.com, search ljmartinwolfpack), cooking (see www.wolfpackranch.com), travel, gardening, shooting, fishing and hunting. L. J. lives in Montana with his wife, Kat, an NYT bestselling internationally published author of over 55 historical and romantic suspense novels. He has three sons in the Pacific North West, and six grandchildren. When not writing, the Martin's travel extensively, both stateside and abroad, gaining new material, making new friends, and enjoying this great world. They live in Montana in the shadow of that state's beautiful Sapphire Mountains, on a small horse ranch with the two million acre Lolo National Forest as their backyard, and winter in California near the Santa Barbara channel.

L. J. is a member of The Society of Professional Journalists, Mystery Writers of America, Western Writers of America, Western Fictioneers, and International Thriller Writers. Accomplished in Western History, he's available as a speaker on that subject and writing (see his Write Compelling Fiction), and has spoken and

given seminars at several writer's conferences. Among them Pike's Peak Writer's Conference, Fresno Writer's Conference, Romance Writer's of America, Bakersfield Writer's Conference, RT Book Reviews Conference and others, as well as presenting at International Thriller Writers, Western Writer's of America and many more. More about the Martin's on [ljjmartin](#), [wolfpackranch](#), and [katmartin](#), (all .com). Or on facebook as L. J. Martin, Larry J. Martin, The Kitchen at Wolfpack Ranch, From The Pea Patch, and Kat Martin (both friend and fan page).

