

## Colonial Recipes

### Buttermilk Biscuits

#### **History:**

As long as people have known how to make bread, they've been making biscuits. The idea of biscuits goes back to the Romans, but biscuits as we currently know them came about in the Middle Ages, although not mass-produced in any way until the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century. Originally, buttermilk was the liquid left behind after churning butter out of cultured cream; this is now referred to as "traditional buttermilk" to distinguish it from modern buttermilk, which is made from cow's milk. For this particular recipe, we're going to use modern ingredients and make it the Southern way, because few biscuits beat out the Southern buttermilk biscuit.

#### **Ingredients:**

2 c unbleached all-purpose flour  
¼ tsp baking soda  
1 Tbsp baking powder  
1 tsp salt  
6 Tbsp unsalted butter, very cold  
1 c buttermilk (approx)

#### **Directions:**

Preheat your oven to 450° F. Combine the dry ingredients in a bowl, or in the bowl of a food processor. Cut the butter into chunks, and cut into the flour until it resembles coarse meal. If using a food processor, just pulse a few times until this consistency is achieved. Add the buttermilk and mix just until combined. If it appears on the dry side, add a bit more buttermilk. It should be very wet. Turn the dough out onto a floured board. Gently, gently pat (do not roll with a rolling pin) the dough out until it's about ½" thick. Fold the dough about 5 times, then gently press the dough down to 1" thick. Handle the dough carefully and as little as possible, or you will have tough biscuits. Use a round cutter to cut into rounds. Place the biscuits on a cookie sheet. If you like soft sides on your biscuits, place them so they touch each other. If you like crusty sides, place them about 1" apart. Bake for about 10 to 12 minutes, until the biscuits are a light golden brown on top and bottom. Do not overbake. Be sure to have a pat of butter ready for your readers, and we recommend getting a locally made jar of apple jam.



Adapted from *Food*, and modified by Leah Angstman.

## Ship's Biscuit (Hardtack)

### **History:**

Before the age of refrigeration, sailors and folks on land had to be able to store food for long periods of time without it perishing. Hardtack was the most common, and cheapest, of the ships stores available to sailors, even though it often went moldy or was infested with maggots before the sailors could polish off the rations by the end of a journey. It was not uncommon for sailors to wait until after dark to eat, so they couldn't see the amount of worms and maggots that got into their mealsacks. Even though hardtack is largely considered a sailor's food in our 21st-century mentality, one could find hardtack in the pantries and underground cellars of almost all land-dwelling pre-American colonists, as well, because it provided shelf-stable sustenance through harsh winter months when planting, hunting, gathering, and fishing were impossible. Hardtack, even then, was nearly inedible, and was largely a way of transporting and distributing flour, which the sailors needed in their diets. It was not meant to be delicious, only nutritious, filling, and easy to transport. Sailors had to soak the hard biscuit in water, grog, or slop to get it soft enough to eat, and often they fried it in grease to kill the worms or insects that infested it. In today's recipe, we modify it slightly with a bit of butter and milk instead of water, to make the end result easier to bite into, so no one breaks a tooth. Makes about 16.



### **Original Ingredients\*:**

1 lb flour  
½ pt water  
½ Tbsp sea salt

### **Leah's Modifications** to make biscuits easier to eat and not so hard:

2 oz butter  
½ pt skim milk **INSTEAD** of water

### **Directions:**

Place flour and sea salt in mixing bowl, and mix. Place milk and butter in a separate saucepan, and melt together over very low heat. Add the milk and butter mixture into the flour mixture to make a dough, and knead until the flour is absorbed. The mix should be thick, shiny, and stiff. Once mixed, roll the dough out with a rolling pin until fairly thin. Using a round or square cookie cutter (or a cup rim, if you don't have a cookie cutter), cut circles or squares in the flat biscuit dough. Place the circles on a baking tray and use a fork, screwdriver, straw, key-tip, or awl to prick large holes into the dough, in order to let out air when cooking and to dry the biscuit through thoroughly, so the insides don't get moldy at sea. The larger the holes, the better. They should poke all the way through the dough. (If galley cooks didn't have a biscuit cutter, they used nails and awls to make their holes.) Bake slowly at a moderate heat, around 200° F, until golden brown, 30-60 minutes, depending on the thickness of your biscuits. (True hardtack is baked slowly for 3 to 5 hours, but if you do this, your hardtack will become too hard for you to eat.) Let biscuits cool before moving them off the tray.

*\*Unless you were in the Navy, in which case, to save expenses, they didn't use salt.  
Adapted from Vice Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson's 1778 naval recipe  
and Ancient Roman hardbread recipes, and modified by Leah Angstman.*

## Thirded Bread

### **History:**

This was a “make do” bread for Pilgrims and their descendants in the 17th and 18th centuries, whenever they didn’t have enough (or couldn’t afford) wheat flour. It was made from one third wheat (white or whole/Graham), one third Indian meal (corn/maize), and one third rye. It was meant to stretch the wheat as far as it could go, at a time when cornmeal and rye (also called Boston Brown Bread, and often mixed with molasses) was considered commonplace and not as prestigious. This is not bread a colonist would have ever made for guests. In 1792, Parisian bakers tried to re-brand it as “Bread of Equality,” which was a combination of brown, white, and rye grains, in order to popularize cheap foods and to symbolize that being the common man was something to be celebrated, not degraded. During the Victorian era, when the idea of a “traditional Thanksgiving” began taking hold, this “bread of the olden days,” as it was then-called, became a new fad, and thus rye grains managed to stay with us, despite that early colonists once referred to them as “the poorer cousins” to wheat flour. Early Thirded Bread was steamed instead of baked, as many early homes had thatched roofs and no ovens; steaming was an effective way to cook bread without an oven (*American Cooking: New England* by Jonathan Norton Leonard). It has also been suggested by some historians that steaming was a way for Puritans to get around their rule of not cooking on the Sabbath, and thus a new ritual was born. This bread was often served as an entire Sunday meal, alongside baked beans if the bread contained molasses, which complemented the beans. There are many recipes for the bread, dating back to the Old World, but for history-lovers’ sake, today’s recipe comes from no less than Mary Todd Lincoln’s own personal cookbook.



### **Ingredients** as Mary Todd Lincoln wrote them\*:

- 1 cup white flour (St. Louis).
- 1 cup rye flour, or sifted rye meal.
- 1 cup yellow corn meal.
- 1 teaspoonful salt.
- 3 tablespoonfuls sugar.
- ½ cup yeast.



### **Mary Todd Lincoln's Directions:**

Mix with milk (scalded and cooled) till thick enough to be shaped. Let it rise until it cracks open. Put it into a brickloaf pan, and when well risen bake it one hour.

### **Leah's Modifications:**

If you are not familiar with scalded milk, it is milk that is brought almost to a boil, and then left to cool slightly. Scalded milk makes yeast breads lighter, and lighter dough will rise faster, cutting your waiting time down considerably. If you are not familiar with letting bread dough rise, it can be a lengthy process, but here are some tips to speed it up: Use the scalded milk idea instead of water, as scalded milk lightens the dough. Warm up your kitchen. A lean, moist dough can rise in a warm kitchen in 45 minutes, but yeast is very temperature-sensitive; even a degree or two can make the process much longer. Moisten your dough, not only with the milk, but with a bit of oil on the top and bottom of it. Moist dough rises faster, but more than this: oil keeps your dough from drying out as it rises, which will keep your bread lighter, fluffier, and moister in the end. Covering your dough bowl with a damp cloth, or creating steam around the bowl by placing it next to hot, steaming water, will also decrease your rising time. If you've never risen dough before, it can be tricky to know when it's done, because it's more by sight and feel than by the timer. When it is done, it will look soft and bloated, and when you touch the dough, it will be a soft texture, and your finger will leave an indentation. If it is not done, the dough will slowly spring back from the indentation. You want the end result to be puffy, as more gas inside it will mean lighter, fluffier bread, and it will be double or more its original volume. (And some people prefer to let their bread rise very slowly, sometimes putting it in cool places to slow the process, because this brings out the acidic flavor of the yeast, perfect for breads like sourdoughs.) Because ovens have changed tremendously since Mrs. Lincoln's day, we recommend a temperature of 375° to 400° F, and to leave the pan in for 30 to 50 minutes, checking it every 10 minutes at the half-hour mark, until a cake- or bread-tester goes all the way through it without any stickiness. The crust should be dry, very firm, and a dark brown color with darker spots here and there. If you have an instant-read thermometer, most bread is done when the internal temperature reaches 190° F. If you're in doubt, it's better to cook the loaf a little longer than to undercook it. Let the bread cool completely before you remove it from the pan or cut into it. For added sweetness, add a dab of molasses to taste.

*\*We left "St. Louis" in the ingredients, for posterity, although we can find no indication of what that actually means.  
Adapted from Mrs. Lincoln's Boston Cook Book by Mary Todd Lincoln, and modified by Leah Angstman.*

## **Zucchini Bread**

### **History:**

Because good grains weren't always plentiful or cheap, colonists learned early on to mix other ingredients with their breads to make them taste better and to stretch them further. This was also a means of keeping foods that were close to natural expiration from being wasted, especially items of abundance from a garden, ripening all at once. Cranberries, pumpkins, squash, raisins, molasses, corn, and almost anything else that the colonists had on hand would be thrown into bread. Squash-planting was one of the first things American Indians taught colonists upon arrival, so naturally, types of squash breads endured throughout colonial times. These breads were also good for bartering.

### **Ingredients:**

4 large eggs  
2 c sugar  
1 c salad oil  
1 tsp vanilla  
3 ½ c unsifted flour  
1 ½ tsp soda  
¾ tsp baking powder  
1 ½ tsp salt  
1 tsp cinnamon  
4 c grated zucchini  
2 c chopped dates (or raisins as an alternative)  
2 c chopped walnuts

### **Directions:**

Preheat oven to 350° F. Beat eggs until frothy. Add sugar and oil. Mix well. Add vanilla. Combine flour, soda, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon slowly into the mixture, then add zucchini, dates, and nuts. Pour into 2 greased and floured 9" x 5" loaf pans. Bake for 1 ¼ hours at 350° F, slightly below oven center.



Adapted from the family recipe of Elaine Angstman, originally borrowed from George Heaton, and modified by Leah Angstman.

## **The Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free Option (Peanut Butter Cookies)**

### **History:**

Peanut butter was not invented until 1895, when Dr. John Harvey Kellogg patented it as a healthy protein substitute for people with no teeth. So, the inclusion of peanut butter cookies has no historical merit for a 1689 book party, but you should have a gluten-free and dairy-free option for those allergic to lactose and gluten, and this is our tried-and-true recipe to cover both of those bases in one. You can easily modify an icing decoration to match your club's theme.

### **Ingredients:**

1 c peanut butter  
1 c brown sugar  
1 large egg  
1 tsp vanilla extract



### **Directions:**

Preheat oven to 350° F. Combine all ingredients and drop by spoonful on cookie sheet. The key is not to flatten the drops too much, and to keep them thick. Bake for 8 minutes. Let cool.

For the perfect finish, ice the cookie with Simple Mills Organic Vanilla Frosting (or equivalent), which is gluten-free and dairy-free. A drop of blue food coloring will give you an ocean, and you can decorate it with a nautical ship or anchor on a toothpick. Can't find organic icing? Add a couple drops of blue food coloring to creamy peanut butter and spread a small amount over each cookie. This step is optional.

Recipe by Leah Angstman.

## Dry Apricots

### **History:**

Long before refrigeration, people were drying fruit to preserve it. Apricots were known to the Ancient Greeks; the Romans learned of the apricot in the first century C.E.; and Arabs were importing the fruit from C.E. 750 (“The Moon of Faith” on NPR). The following is a 1653 recipe for “Dry” Apricots, which would have been more likely used in France or England, although pre-American colonists would have dried cherries, persimmons, cranberries, apples, and even pears; we know that the first Pilgrims brought over pear trees in 1629 at Plymouth because one of the oldest fruit trees on our soil, the Endicott Pear Tree from 1630, still stands there today.



### **Ingredients:**

Fresh apricots  
Powdered sugar (optional)

### **Original 1653 Directions:**

Drain them, and turn them into ears, or in round, then bestrew them with sugar in powder, and dry them in a stove.

### **Leah’s Modifications:**

Start with whole, fresh apricots. Use ripe fruit only; green apricots will dry flavorless. The best time to purchase ripe apricots is in late summer, or between July and September. If your apricots are not ripe, you can place them in a paper bag and set it on a sunny windowsill to speed up the ripening process. Wash them, soak them in warm water for 10 minutes, and remove their pits by simply pulling the two halves of the fruit apart and removing the seed, or cutting with a knife along the natural indentation. Your fruit should now be in halves. Turn the fruit inside out, so that the fleshy, soft side is facing up, like a popped disc. If you like your fruit even sweeter than it is, you can sprinkle or pat the fruit with powdered sugar, although apricots are already pretty sweet on their own. Place your apricots on parchment paper on a large baking sheet, fleshy side up, evenly spaced apart. Preheat your oven to 175° F. Do not try to speed up the drying by increasing the heat; you want a low, steady heat that is under 200° F. 130° to 160° F is even better, especially if your slices are thin, but then you increase your wait time for the drying. Wait at least 10 to 12 hours for the apricots to dry. Turn them at the halfway mark to ensure even drying and to curtail curling. They should be slightly soft, pliable, but leathery, and with no juice, when they are finished. Leave the fruit in open containers for a few days to evaporate any remaining moisture (if storing and not eating immediately), and then seal the fruit in glass or plastic containers after 5 days or so. Dried fruit has a shelf life of about 10 months.

Adapted from *The French Cook* by François Pierre, La Varenne, “Englished” by I. D. G., 1653, and modified by Leah Angstman.

## Gibraltar Peppermint Sticks

### **History:**

Gibraltar, as in Gibraltar Rock, gets its name from the Battle of Gibraltar in 1607, and refers to any number of hard candies, lozenges, penides, sticks, lollipops, and drops that descended from ancient Arab boiled sugar, dating back to the 17th century. The hard candy would have just been called Gibraltar, a nickname, not a brand name, as in: "Have a stick of Gibraltar! It's hard as rock!" Modern hard candies, as we know them today, were first produced in the 17th century, and those living in larger cities, such as Boston or New York City, might have gotten them regularly on incoming merchant ships. Peppermint dates even further back, to Ancient times, having first been used as a medicinal lozenge or herb for upset stomachs and sore throats, then later as a precursor to toothpaste; but as a candy stick, it most likely came from Germany in the late 16th or early 17th centuries. This recipe makes 12 peppermint sticks with as basic of ingredients as you can get, much the way they would have been made in the 17th century.



### **Ingredients:**

3 c granulated sugar

1 tsp peppermint extract (Old recipes would have used peppermint oil.)

½ c water

¾ c light corn syrup (Old recipes would have used a molasses or cane syrup.)

¾ tsp red food coloring

¼ tsp cream of tartar

### **Directions:**

Combine sugar, water, syrup, and cream of tartar in a saucepan, and heat until sugar has dissolved. Divide the mixture into 2 saucepans. Do not stir. Bring to a boil without stirring until a candy thermometer reads 280° F in each pot. Add ½ teaspoon of peppermint extract into each pot. Add the red food coloring to one of the pots only. The mixture should be thick. Oil an enamel or marble surface, countertop, sheet, or slab. Place the mixture from one pot onto the surface, and stretch it like taffy, pulling and forming the mixture into a rope. Set that rope aside, and continue with the mixture from the other pot, following the same procedure. Take both the red and the white ropes and twist them around each other again and again, smoothing out the twist as you go. Cut into desired stick sizes. Oil the surface lightly again, and space the sticks out on the surface. Allow them to harden completely before removing.

Adapted from *Genius Kitchen*, and modified by Leah Angstman.



## Horehound

### **History:**

Horehound is one of the best worst things in existence. Many hard candies began as herbal medicines, and horehound is no exception. While traveling through Wall Drug on a road trip with a friend, I found a bag of horehound and was in heaven; when I gave my friend a piece, I've never seen anyone spit anything out so fast in my life. That's the beauty of horehound; it's an attention-grabber on a table, because it's such an acquired taste. You'll have to have a small bundle of napkins and a wastebasket next to your candy bowl. But I was raised on the herb by a grandfather who loved it (and anise!) and throughout history, it wasn't always such an acquired taste. For most of the 16th and 17th centuries, it was a familiar medicinal lozenge, a precursor to modern cough drops, and its herbal medicinal qualities have been used since Ancient times (Joseph Dommers Vehling's translation of Apicius, from 1-3rd century C.E., contains a glossary item for horehound). The earliest recipes available for it were medicines, generally sweetened syrups, and it is believed the hard candy version evolved from the syrup in the 17th century for the sake of convenience. This recipe uses only simple, old-fashioned ingredients, and makes about 12 dozen hard candies.

### **Ingredients:**

1 ½ qt water  
1 qt loosely packed horehound leaves and stems  
3 c sugar (We prefer brown for added sweetness, but white will work.)  
1 tsp cream of tartar  
1 tsp lemon juice  
1 tsp butter  
Superfine sugar, to taste



### **Original 1615 Directions:**

For the phthisic. Take horehound, violet leaves, and hyssop of ech [sic] a good handful, seethe them in water, and put thereto a little saffron, liquorice [sic], and sugar candy; after they have boiled a good while, then strain it into an earthen vessel, and let the sick drink thereov [sic] six spoonful at a time morning and evening.

### **Leah's Modifications:**

What do you mean, you don't have violet leaves sitting around? Or hyssop? Let's make this easier, shall we? First, if you can't find horehound leaves, you can substitute horehound tea, but you might have to taste-test the strength of the tea proportions for measurement accuracy. Combine the water and the horehound in a large saucepan, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat, and simmer 30 minutes. Remove from the heat, cover, and let steep for 30 minutes. Strain it. Discard horehound, keeping the liquid. Combine liquid, cream of tartar, and sugar in a medium saucepan. Slowly bring to a boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Cover and cook over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes to get all the sugar crystals melted from the sides. Uncover and cook, without stirring, until mixture reaches 220° F. Add butter, but do not stir. Continue cooking, without stirring, until mixture reaches hard crack stage (300° F). Add lemon juice, but do not stir. Gently shake pan. Quickly pour syrup onto a roughly 15" x 10" x 1" jellyroll pan. Let cool slightly. Mark the top of the warm candy into 1" squares or rectangles, using a sharp knife. Cool completely, and break into squares. It's okay if they have uneven edges, as early candy didn't have perfect molds, but if you want them to have a different shape, then remove them just before they are completely cool, and mold the edges. Roll the candies in superfine sugar or powdered sugar to get a nice powdered look. Wrap in wax paper to keep fresh.

Adapted from *The English Housewife* by Gervase Markham, published in 1615, with further adaptations from Oxmoor House, and modified by Leah Angstman.

## **Fruit and Nut Jumbles**

### **History:**

Jumbles were an early form of shelf-stable cookie or biscuit, largely formed from nuts, dried fruits, sugar, and butter, sometimes boiled, as everything was boiled, and sometimes just packed together and hardened. Buttermilk jumbles have been around in England since the Middle Ages and were a simple mixture of nuts, flour, eggs, and sugar, with occasional other items for flavoring, such as dried fruits, anise, or caraway seeds. They traveled well because, like a hardtack, they were dense and hard, and they could be stored up to a year, often longer, without becoming stale. By the late 18th century, they were baked, and resembled a modern sugar cookie more than a hard biscuit. Jumbles were thought to have been brought to America on the *Mayflower* and in Jamestown before that, and we'll be taking a look at Martha Washington's own famous recipe from the 1700s for comparison. The one we're ultimately going to give you, however, will be modified slightly, for ease and immediate consumption, since you'll have a heckuva time hunting down illegal musk from the anal glands of civets and illegal ambergris from the bellies of sperm whales. Your jumbles might not be worth the jail time the black market will cost you. But then again ... they're pretty tasty. There are many different kinds of jumbles, so I'll give you a recipe for two, and you can decide which you like best! One is more of a pretzel-type cookie or biscuit, and the other is more of a hardened blob of nuts and dried fruits, with no dough.



### **Ingredients for Doughless Recipe (top picture):**

- 2 Tbsp butter
- 1 c raisins or 1 c dried apricots (You can use any dried fruit or combination.)
- 2 eggs
- 1 c sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ½ c chopped nuts (You can use any nut or combination of nuts.)
- ½ c shredded coconut
- 1 c graham cracker crumbs, finely crushed

### **Directions for Doughless Recipe:**

Melt butter in skillet over low heat. Add raisins or dried fruit and stir. Beat eggs well in a separate bowl. Blend in sugar and beat. Add to fruit mixture. Cook over low heat for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla, nuts, coconut, and crumbs. Drop by teaspoon onto wax paper. Let stand until set.

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### **Ingredients for Modified Dough Recipe, based on 1830 dough recipe (bottom picture):**

- 2 c soft butter
- 2 c white sugar
- 2 tsp nutmeg (You can add or adjust your own spices to suit your taste.)

2 tsp cinnamon  
2 tsp ginger  
3 medium eggs  
6 c white flour

**Original 1830 Recipe:**

Two cups of butter, two of sugar, three eggs, as much flour as will make it thin, and any good spice you like.

**Leah's Modifications for Dough Recipe**, based on 1830 recipe:

Not too specific, huh? The above account of Historic Fort York's recipe from the Mess Establishment Officers' Brick Barracks for Jumbles, No. 115, originally comes from *The Cook Not Mad; or, Rational Cookery*, first published in New York in 1830, wherein there are four separate jumbles recipes. If you use the ingredients list we give you above, you'll get a modern equivalent of this 1830s officers' mess recipe. The texture is delicate, so handle gently, and feel free to add your own spices to taste. Cream butter and sugar until very light. Add spices. Whisk eggs to a pale yellow cream in a separate bowl. Blend whisked eggs into butter and sugar mixture. We recommend adding some nuts, even though these mass-produced, cheap military recipes don't call for it. Sift in flour, one cup at a time, until a tender but not sticky ball of dough is formed; use more or less as necessary. Roll out with a rolling pin on a floured surface, about ¼" thick, then cut with a cutter, OR roll into ropes or rings about 6" long, ¾" diameter. Bake in a moderate oven at 350° F on ungreased baking sheets for 12 to 15 minutes, without turning. Sprinkle the top with a light sugar or powdered sugar coating.

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**Martha Washington's 1700s Jumbles Recipe** (everything is [sic]'ed):

To make Iumbals: Take a pound & a halfe of fine flowre & a pound of fine sugar, both searced & dried in an oven, 6 youlks, & 3 whites of eggs, 6 spoonfulls of sweet cream & as much rose water, fresh butter ye quantety of an egg. Mingle these together & make it into stiff paste. Work it a quarter of an hour then break it abroad, & put in as much annyseeds or carraway seeds as you shall think fit, & put in A little muske & ambergreece. roule them into roulz & make them in what forms you please. lay them on pie plates thin buttered, & prick them with holes all over. then bake them as you doe diet bread. If this quantety of eggs will not be enough to wet ye flour & sugar, put in 3 or 4 more, but no more cream, butter, not rosewater.

**Modern Translation of Martha Washington's Recipe:**

Though we don't recommend making Martha's jumbles from her *Martha Washington's Booke* [sic] of *Cookery* because they're just not that accurate or delicious, we're happy to give you the modern translation of this recipe, just for fun. Most old recipes required people to know already how to cook, so exact measuring wasn't necessary (or common). You'll need 1 ½ lbs all-purpose flour, 1 lb granulated sugar, 6 egg yolks, 3 egg whites, up to ¼ cup whipping cream to your personal tastes, 2 tablespoons rosewater, and an egg-sized lump of butter. Mix and knead the items for 15 minutes. Add in a small amount of aniseed or caraway, with a strong recommendation toward anise over caraway seeds. Martha's recipe will be a little strong on the seed spices for modern sensibilities, so we'd recommend not putting in as many as she calls for. Musk comes from the anal glandular secretions of a civet, and is illegal now. Amberggris is a greasy, musky substance produced in the digestive system of a sperm whale, so it's illegal to get from the source, and highly expensive to get from the market of collectors who procure it from beached whale remains. So, we'll skip those. Roll your dough into forms and place on a lightly greased pie plate or baking sheet. Prick with a fork. If the dough is too stiff, add up to 4 more eggs, but do not increase the amount of the other ingredients.

Adapted from respective notated sources, with the doughless recipe adapted from a 1970s Hospital Auxiliary Cookbook called *Cooking in General*, and all modified by Leah Angstman.

## Rum Balls or Bourbon Balls

### **History:**

Although these no-bake rum balls most likely only date back to the mid-20th century, baked goods, such as rum cakes and various types of baked rum sweets, date back hundreds of years, as far back as rum was coming in on ships to the New Land. There is no written documentation of rum balls in this exact manner existing before the 1940s (and bourbon did not exist in colonial pre-America at all, although bourbon balls are darn delicious!) but that does not mean that rum balls didn't exist, or that their predecessors didn't, just that we don't have written record. Rum was a popular ingredient in early American baked goods, and it served as both food flavoring and preservative agent. The difference between the new and the old is that these modern ones are not baked, which would have been too modern for colonial times.



### **Ingredients:**

2 c vanilla wafer crumbs  
2 Tbsp cocoa  
1 ½ c confectioner's sugar  
1 c pecans, very finely chopped (or substitute with nuts of your choice)  
2 Tbsp white corn syrup  
¼ c bourbon or dark rum

### **Directions:**

Mix well the vanilla wafer crumbs, cocoa, 1 cup of the confectioner's sugar (leaving ½ cup for later), and pecans. Add the corn syrup and bourbon/rum, and mix well. Shape into 1" balls, and put into a tin or other metal container for at least 12 hours before serving. Take balls out and roll them in the last of the confectioner's sugar. You can roll the balls before or after storing them, but we prefer to do it after, so the sugar is fresh for the consumer. For a special treat, you can put a whole drained maraschino cherry in the center of each ball as you roll it, for a chocolate-covered cherry surprise (although you'll have to store the balls in the fridge if you do this). Please be advised that, because these balls are not baked, they retain their full rum or bourbon kick, so be careful of your intake if you're a lightweight!

Adapted from Colonial Williamsburg's *The Williamsburg Cookbook*, and modified by Leah Angstman.

## **Pimîhkân (Pemmican)**

### **History:**

Pemmican is supposedly “the ultimate survival food” (although for prolonged periods of eating *only* pemmican, you’d be missing some key vitamins) first introduced by American Indians. (The word comes from the Cree Algonkian language.) From the 1700s fur traders, to early Arctic and Antarctic explorers, pemmican was the survival food of choice, so crucial a foodstuff in the food-scarce Red River Colony in 1814, that the governor passed the (disastrous and short-lived) Pemmican Proclamation forbidding the export of pemmican from the colony, and nearly starting a war with the Métis—Natives who traveled onto the prairie, killed and butchered buffalo to convert to pemmican, and sold it to fur trading posts. It is something like an energy bar, ridiculously high in protein, that can easily last up to 50 years if packaged well. This recipe is not actually recommended for a book club but for a tiny taste or novelty, as pemmican is heavy and dense, and just one bite makes you feel like you need to go chop logs or dig a ditch.



### **Ingredients:**

- 4 c dried, lean meat (only deer, moose, elk, caribou, bison, or beef)
- 3 c dried fruit (currants, dates, apricots, apples, chokecherries, or cranberries)
- 2 c rendered fat (only beef fat)
- 1 c unsalted nuts (optional, but recommended for taste, especially pistachios)
- 1 Tbsp of honey (optional, but recommended for taste)

### **Directions:**

There are a million ways to make pemmican, and every survival nut hiding in his bunker has a recipe for you. This is an easy one: First, dry the meat by spreading it thinly on a cookie sheet or hanging it over the racks in your oven. Dry at 180° F overnight, or until crispy and sinewy. With a mortar and pestle, grind the dried meat into a powder. Add the dried fruit and grind accordingly, leaving some larger fruit chunks to help bind the mixture. Cut the beef fat into chunks. Heat the stove to medium, and cook the beef fat until it turns to tallow (rendered fat). Lard or bacon grease also work well for this. Stir the fat into the powdered meat and fruit mixture. Add the optional honey and nuts to improve the taste (unless you like the more fatty taste, which can be ... overwhelming). Shape the pemmican into balls or bars for easy and quick consumption. Wrap individual servings in wax paper or storage bags.

Adapted from University of Minnesota, and modified by Leah Angstman.

## How to Use Chocolate Molds (Tips & Tricks)

Start with the mold of your choice (we recommend nautical, horse, or colonial themes), melted chocolate or candy melts, a squeeze bottle, and some wax paper. Put the approximate amount of candy melts that you'll need into your squeeze bottle, and heat the squeeze bottle in 15-second increments until the candies are fully melted. Shake the bottle gently to make sure there are no lumps. Don't overheat your chocolate, or you'll end up with lumps in your candy if it burns.

Don't grease your molds with any sprays, oils, butter, or shortenings. Squeeze the bottle into your candy mold. Only squeeze directly in the center of the mold, and don't move your bottle around. Stop squeezing your bottle when the cavity is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way full, and don't try to fill in the corners, or you'll make a blob on the backside when the candy has hardened. Don't overfill your molds. If you have very fine lines or multiple colors that you want to add delicately, use a fine-tipped paintbrush before squeezing in the rest of the chocolate (as seen in photo).



Hold the edge of the mold and tap it up and down gently a couple times on the table. The chocolate will go into the corners and settle, getting rid of air bubbles. Once all your cavities are filled, put the mold in the freezer for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the chocolate hardens. Don't remove chocolate pieces before they have fully hardened, or they will melt.

Once they are hardened, take them out of the freezer. Don't use spoons or spatulas to remove your candy from molds. Instead, place a sheet of wax paper on your table, and gently flip your candy mold upside down. Tap the top of the mold gently, and the pieces will just fall out. Store in a sealed container on sheets of wax paper. These candies can last for months and can be used as small decorations for cupcake toppers, or as single candies on their own.

Adapted from *Cake Journal*, and modified by Leah Angstman.

## Drinks

For a ladies' afternoon teatime, we highly recommend a ginger tea, much like the one served on the *RMS Titanic*, which is just a blend of fresh ginger slices, filtered steaming water, a dab of honey, and a squeeze of lemon juice (and chamomile flowers, if you can find them), suited to your taste. For adult hour, we recommend spiced or dark rum, with a sprig of mint or slice of lime. Want to drink it like the sailors did? Try some traditional Grog or Hot Buttered Rum.

### Grog

#### **History:**

Grog's precursor has been a sailor's staple since rum became a thing, back in the 17th century, after distillation first happened on the sugar plantations of the Caribbean with the enslaved people's discovery that molasses, a byproduct of the sugar refining process, could be fermented into alcohol. To stave off "the scurves" and to stretch the rum further, ship captains diluted it in water and squeezed limes into it. Grog in the proper noun sense came about in the 18th century under British Admiral Edward Vernon, nicknamed Old Grog for the grogram fabric coat he wore, who added brown sugar to the mixture, thus creating the world's first known cocktail (which is delicious, but will rot your teeth faster than it will save you from scurvy). (As a little historical aside: George Washington's brother, having served under Admiral Vernon in the War of Jenkins' Ear, named the Washington family plantation Mount Vernon in Old Grog's honor.)



#### **Ingredients:**

2 oz dark rum

1-3 tsp unrefined dark cane sugar, to taste (or brown sugar, if you can't find it)

1 lime ( $\frac{1}{2}$  for glass +  $\frac{1}{2}$  for garnish; or  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz fresh lime juice if you don't have limes)

#### **Directions:**

To serve cold, add sugar and juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  a lime into a mixing glass to stir and dissolve the sugar. Add rum and 1 cube of ice to the glass, and stir gently until ice is halfway diluted. Strain into a glass or mug over ice and garnish with the other  $\frac{1}{2}$  lime. To serve hot, pour all the ingredients into a mug, top it with steaming water, and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Garnish with a cinnamon stick or an orange slice, if you want something more fancy.

Adapted from Pusser's Rum, and modified by Leah Angstman.

## **Hot Buttered Rum**

### **History:**

Rum drinks are an essential part of our colonial history, and hot rum drinks, especially, since the colonists spent more than half of any given year staving off the cold. In the 1650s, Jamaica began steadily importing molasses to pre-America. New England opened distilleries where colonists added distilled rums to hot beverages, thus first creating toddies, nogs, buttered rums, and more. Egg nog and hot buttered rum are two winter traditions that started back in the 1600s on our soil, and we still enjoy them today. (If you're hosting your book club on or around January 17, that day is the annual National Hot Buttered Rum Day!) We're going to be using an authentic colonial recipe to make about 8 servings, but we recommend a slow cooker to do your simmering.



### **Ingredients:**

2 c brown sugar (Do not use any sugar substitutes.)  
½ c unsalted butter (Do not use any butter substitutes.)  
1 pinch salt  
2 qt hot water  
3 cinnamon sticks  
6 whole cloves  
2 c rum (Dark rum is best.)  
1 c sweetened whipped cream  
Ground nutmeg, to taste

### **Directions:**

Combine brown sugar, butter, salt, and hot water in 5-quart slow cooker. Add cinnamon sticks and cloves. Cover and cook on High for 30 minutes, then Low for 5 hours. Stir in well any butter that is sitting on top of the mixture. (If there are lumps of butter still visible, then your CrockPot isn't hot enough, or you need to let it simmer longer because it's not ready. Likewise, if you plan on having the drink in less than the 5 or 6 suggested hours of heating, then turn your cooker to High, OR boil the ingredients on the stove, let simmer for 15 minutes, and then move the mixture to a slow cooker on High for 2 ½ hours or so. Make sure you keep your cooker covered. Simmering is the key, so don't rush it if you don't have to.) When the crock is steaming, and the butter is glistening, then your drink is ready. Stir in rum. Ladle from the slow cooker into mugs, and top each mug with whipped cream and a dusting of nutmeg. Before you ladle, every time, make sure you've stirred up the butter that may float on the top of the mixture, so it isn't floating on the top of the mug. If you are sensitive to the rich buttery taste, you can scale back on the butter, or let it simmer longer. If you'd prefer to control your amount of rum, or you have some readers who are more or less sensitive to it, you can leave the rum out of the slow cooker, and just add it to the bottom of each mug individually before adding the batter on top, then give it a quick stir before you add whipped cream. Dabs of nutmeg, allspice, and vanilla can be added to the mixture for more flavor, to taste.

Adapted from an authentic colonial recipe by Linda Corrier at All Recipes, and modified by Leah Angstman.