

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

RECEIVED

★ FEB 23 1933 ★

Wednesday, March 8, 1933.

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "A Low Cost Meal for Wednesday." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics and the Bureau of Chemistry & Soils, U.S.D.A.

--ooOoo--

What do you suppose arrived in my mail yesterday? A letter from a New England lady asking how to make codfish balls. That letter was a big surprise to me -- in fact, it was a shock. I thought everybody in New England -- old, young and middle-aged -- knew how to make codfish balls. In fact, I've always heard that the only original and genuine codfish balls in the whole world are made in the country of the "stern and rockbound coast."

Since this is fish season of the year and since codfish balls are one of those old-time, all-American, favorite economy dishes, I'm pleased to answer this request by giving, right here and now, the best codfish-ball recipe I know. The recipe calls for just four ingredients:

3/4 pound of salt codfish

Cold water

3 cups of hot mashed potatoes, seasoned with milk & butter or other fat, and 2 eggs

I'll repeat that list. (REPEAT)

Cut the codfish into small pieces and soak it in 1 quart of cold water for about two hours. Drain. Add another quart of water. Simmer for about thirty minutes. Place the fish on a double layer of cheesecloth, press out all the liquid. Then shred the fish and remove all the bones. Mix the shredded fish, the hot mashed potatoes, the well-beaten eggs. Then beat until light and add salt if necessary. Drop by spoonfuls into a kettle of fat, hot enough to brown a cube of bread in 40 seconds. When golden brown, drain the balls on absorbent paper and serve at once, garnished with cress or parsley.

Not long ago you and I discussed this matter of frying in deep fat. But perhaps we'd better make a short review of the subject again, just to insure the success of those fish balls.

Most cooks like a deep sturdy kettle for deep-fat frying. And they like a frying basket for convenience in putting the food in and lifting it out of the fat. If you haven't a basket, a wire spoon or egg whip is handy for removing the food from the hot fat. The kettle is usually two-thirds full of the melted fat, full enough to float the articles to be cooked, but not full enough to spatter the fat. Fry only small quantities at a time. When you take one out, reheat the fat and test it before you add a second lot.

The big secret of successful deep-fat frying is to have the temperature of the fat exactly right. If it is too cool, the fat soaks into the food and sometimes the food even falls apart during cooking. If it is too hot, the outer surface may burn before the inside cooks. A thermometer will insure accurate temperatures. But if you haven't a thermometer, test the fat with a cube of soft bread. As we said, for frying fish balls, you'll want the fat hot enough to brown a cube of bread in forty seconds.

Drain the fish balls on soft unglazed paper as they come out of the kettle. Paper towels are useful for this purpose.

After cooking, strain the fat through several thicknesses of clean cheesecloth, pour it in jars, cover it and set it away in the refrigerator, to be used when next you are frying. Some cooks like to clarify the fat by cooking a few slices of raw potato in it for ten minutes and then straining.

You can use the fat several times for frying and then make it into soap. That reminds me. If you ever want directions for making soap at home, write me and I'll send you a leaflet giving all the details. Many of the old-fashioned arts and crafts are coming back into the home these thrifty days -- soap-making among them. This is a good way to use up a large amount of fat, left from cooking or from home butchering and meat canning.

Time now for your Wednesday menu, featuring the codfish ball recipe I gave you today and the nut cooky recipe I gave you yesterday. Cream of pea soup with crackers to start the meal off with. Then, codfish balls; Buttered carrots; Fried tart apples; and, for dessert, Crisp nut cookies and Coffee.

Once more, Cream of pea soup -- use either dried or canned peas; Codfish balls; Buttered carrots; Fried tart apples; Crisp nut cookies; and Coffee.

Cream soup is one of our best cold-weather dishes, especially for the children. It provides a delicious, hot dish that includes two foods of our most important foods -- milk and vegetables. You can make cream soup of almost any vegetable. Just add cream sauce to the vegetable juice or puree. Cream soup made with beans or peas is especially nourishing. This is a good dish to use at the beginning of a rather light meal. It is too hearty for a heavy meal.

Tomorrow: "Remodeling Old Clothes." More news for the home dressmaker.

~~###~~

