

The Santesson Recipe Collection

These recipes first appeared on Anne
and Johan Santesson's website at
URL
<http://www.santesson.com/recept/>,
the first ones being included in 1996.
Many of the aphrodisiac recipes were
originally part of "Johan's Guide to
Aphrodisiacs" at URL
<http://www.santesson.com/aphrodis/>

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Our recipes are of three types: favourite recipes (often of our own design), typical Swedish dishes and dishes with aphrodisiacal properties. Look out for these indications:

Swedish dishes



Aphrodisiac dishes



Eggs in a Blue Sauce

This mildly exotic recipe is contained in the "Honeymoon Cookbook", which the Swedish "Kooperativa Förbundet" distributed to all newlyweds during the 1930's. Do not worry, the acute toxicity of methylene blue is low.

Ingredients:

- 3 hard-boiled eggs (shelled!)
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp flour
- 200 ml white wine
- an additional 10 grams of butter
- a few drops of white wine in which you have dissolved a small quantity of methylene blue
- finely chopped parsley or dill

Proceed as follows:

1. Melt the butter in a casserole at low heat, add the flour while stirring and then the wine. Let the mixture simmer at low heat for 20 minutes.
2. Add salt and pepper, an additional 10 grams of butter and the methylene blue, dissolved in white wine.
3. Pour the sauce over the hard-boiled eggs and sprinkle the dish with parsley or dill.

A slightly more "Swedish" version (blue-and-yellow) can be obtained by dividing the eggs in two halves and pouring the blue sauce carefully around the halves.

Gravlax and Avocado Mousse

When you end up with leftovers of gravlax, this mousse is a great way of using them. On a hot summer evening serve it refrigerated, but on a cold winter day it can even be served at room temperature.

Ingredients:

- 200 g gravlax
- 200 g avocado meat (scoop out the meat of a medium size ripe avocado)
- 2 tbsp dry sherry
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- salt and pepper as desired

Proceed as follows:

1. Set aside 50-75 grams of the gravlax. Puree the remainder in the food processor.
2. Add the avocado meat and continue pureeing.
3. Add the sherry, the lemon juice and pepper and salt as desired and continue the pureeing until you have a smooth mousse.
4. Spread the mousse on crackers or small pieces of toast.
5. Cut the remaining gravlax into thin strips and use these to adorn the mousse.

We have tried several ways of spicing the mousse (e.g., cognac and port wine) but dry sherry is by far the best way. What remains to be tested is what a few dashes of Tabasco® would do to the dish. If you try that before we do, please let us know about the result.

Janssons frestelse - Jansson's Temptation

This dish is a modified form of the anchovy gratins which were popular in Sweden during the 19th century. In its present composition it dates back to around 1900. Earlier it was believed that the name came from the Swedish opera singer Pelle Janzon, however it now appears that the dish got its name from the title of a 1928 movie.

Ingredients:

- 200 - 300 g anchovy filets (Please note: Swedish anchovy filets are prepared from sprat (scientific name: *Sprattus sprattus*) whereas US filets are prepared from anchovy (scientific name: *Engraulis encrasicolus*). Sprat filets should be used!)
- 6-8 large potatoes
- 2 large yellow onions
- 30 g butter
- 1/3 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 150 ml cream
- 2-3 tablespoons breadcrumbs (dried and finely crushed white bread)

Proceed as follows:

1. Peel and slice the potatoes, cut the slices in thin strips (or use your food processor!). Cover the potato strips with plenty of water.
2. Peel and chop the onions finely and fry for a few minutes.
3. Heat the oven to 250 °C, butter a dish.
4. Drain the potato strips, put a layer of potato strips at the bottom of the dish, on top of this a layer of anchovy filets and chopped onions, then another layer of potato strips, then another anchovy/onion layer, etc. The uppermost layer should be potato strips.
5. Spread the dried breadcrumbs over the dish, sprinkle with melted butter.
6. Place in the oven for 30 minutes, then add the cream and continue baking for another fifteen minutes. Serve hot!

A completely different origin of the dish has been suggested by Suzanne Koski in an e-mail: "According to Craig Claiborne, Pastor Jansson brought his flock to Bishop Hill, Illinois in the mid-19th century. He preached mightily against succumbing to temptation, but he himself did so when spying, and then tasting a potato and anchovy dish on a parisher's table. The story goes that the dish went back to Sweden with disillusioned followers (perhaps the woman who originated the dish)."

Escargots à l'amour - Love snails



Normally, snails are served à la bourguignonne, dripping of fat. But love food should be light! For a change, try this recipe for an early Sunday lunch.

Ingredients:

- 2 medium-sized tomatoes
- 1 green bell pepper
- 25-50 g celery
- 50 g butter
- 2 garlic cloves
- 0.2 g saffron
- thyme and sage
- salt

Proceed as follows:

1. Remove the skin and seeds from the tomatoes
2. Remove the seeds from one green bell pepper.
3. Chop the tomatoes and the bell pepper, together with a piece of celery, coarsely, using a food processor for 5 seconds.
4. Melt the butter, add two pressed garlic cloves, saffron and generous pinches of thyme, sage and salt to the melted butter
5. Let stand for a few minutes, then add the chopped vegetables.
6. Place 24-48 snails (depending on size) in special snail porcelain ramekins with handles or simply in two individual gratin dishes and cover with the butter-vegetable mixture.
7. Cook in the preheated oven (260 °C) for 10 minutes or until the vegetables begin to turn slightly brownish.

Serve together with a baguette type bread and a glass of Chablis.

Mushrooms With Garlic

A specialty of the restaurant Le Gentilhomme in The Hague is mushrooms prepared in the same way as snails. Our children love these mushrooms as much as we do, and of course we started to look for how to prepare them. A piece of advice: Be generous with the garlic!

Ingredients:

- two dozen large mushrooms, stems carefully removed
- 50-100 g butter
- 25-50 g crushed garlic (3-6 garlic cloves)

Proceed as follows:

1. Fry the mushrooms in a small quantity of butter at high heat. It is important the mushrooms do not release water, which will happen if the heat is too low. The mushrooms are ready when they have acquired a golden brown hue.
2. Mix remaining butter with the crushed garlic.
3. Place the mushrooms, one by one and upside down on snail porcelain ramequins, and add a small spoonful of the garlic butter on top of each mushroom.
4. Place the snail ramequins in a preheated oven at 200-225 °C and fry for 5-10 minutes.

Serve together with white bread or toast to facilitate sponging up the melted garlic butter.

Scrambled Eggs With Truffles



This is a light and still very tasty dish. It must be freshly prepared, but since the actual cooking only takes 5 minutes, it can be served as a nice post-theater supper. (The time-consuming part is heating the waterbath to a boil. Turn it on immediately upon your return back home from the theater.)

Ingredients:

- 4 fresh eggs
- 50-75 g truffles
- salt
- pepper
- 1 tbsp creme fraiche

Proceed as follows:

1. Beat four eggs with a whisk in a heavy-bottom saucepan.
2. Slice 50-75 grams of fresh or canned truffles (truffle substitutes usually work equally well!) and add to the eggs.
3. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Bring water in large saucepan to a boil and place the egg saucepan on this water bath. Stir the mixture constantly until it suddenly begins to thicken.
5. Remove from the water bath and add one tablespoon of crème fraiche.
6. Serve immediately together with slices of toast. A glass of red port wine combines nicely with this dish.

Spanish Snails

Snails are high up on our list of favourite foods. When you cook them, some fat is required as taste carrier, but they do not have to *swim* in fat.

Ingredients:

- 2 dozen snails
- a finely chopped green bell pepper
- 2 ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeds removed, and finely chopped
- garlic to taste (10-30 g is normal)
- 50 g butter
- cayenne pepper, thyme
- salt

Proceed as follows:

1. Mix butter, bell pepper, tomatoes and crushed garlic until a smooth paste is obtained, then add spices as desired (but remember, the cayenne pepper is essential!).
2. Take four or two ovenproof snail plates (depending on whether they are for 6 or twelve snails each), put one snail in each hole and on top of the snail the buttery paste.
3. Cook in a preheated oven at 250 °C until the butter is bubbling and the vegetables are beginning to turn brownish.

Serve together with toast or baguette, if possible also with a glass of dry, unpasteurised cider from Normandy.

Spicy Feta Dip

The starting point for this recipe came from Maiken Karlsson who, in turn, had picked it up from a hotel in Umeå, Sweden. As usual, we began experimenting and, after a while and many attempts, came up with an alternative composition. The dip mix can be used, inter alia, as a spread, together with tortilla chips, as a stuffing for mushroom caps and in canapés. A similar dip mix has also been included in our collection of aphrodisiac recipes.

Ingredients:

- 200 g feta cheese (preferably in brine)
- 10 g (3 medium-sized cloves) garlic
- 2 g fresh basil (6 4-cm leaves) (some might prefer to use less basil)
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
OR
- 3 tbsp creme fraiche (sour cream)

Proceed as follows:

1. Purée the feta cheese, cut into small cubes, the garlic and the basil leaves in the food processor.
2. Add either the olive oil or the crème fraiche and continue pureeing until you have a smooth paste.

The dip mix based on olive oil is the original one. Substituting olive oil by crème fraiche results in a dip mix with a softer taste and smoother texture. Both forms have plenty of applications in the hors d'oeuvre context. They will keep for up to week in the refrigerator but usually they have been devoured long before that. Deep-freezing is possible, especially of the crème fraiche based dip.



Sillsallad - Swedish Herring Salad

This is a typical Swedish Christmas dish to be included in the traditional smörgåsbord served as dinner on Christmas Eve.

Ingredients:

- 1 can (400-500 g) pickled sliced beets
- 250 g boiled, peeled potatoes
- 150 g marinated herring filets
- 1 apple
- 1 small onion
- 100 ml dill pickle

Proceed as follows:

1. Drain the liquid from the pickled sliced beets, reserving the liquid.
2. Drain the liquid from 3/4 cup (or one jar, 6-8 oz. size) refrigerated, marinated, snack tidbits or wine-flavoured herring filet pieces.
3. Cut (into 5-8 mm cubes) the beets, herring, one medium sized tart apple (peeled), and potatoes (boiled and peeled, hot or cold) and mix them all together.
4. Blend in the finely chopped dill pickle, one small (finely chopped) onion and the reserved beet liquid.
5. Put into a serving bowl or pack into a 1 litre mold. Cover and chill, at least over night or for as long as two days.

Tapenade in Cucumber

Tapenade is in itself a delicacy. But served together with crispy cucumber it becomes even better, thanks to the differences in texture, the smooth tapenade contrasting the crunchy cucumber. And together with a cracker, it can be served as a snack before dinner.

Ingredients:

- 250 g black olives without stones
- 100 g garlic
- 100 g anchovy in olive oil
- 80 g drained capers
- 60 - 70 ml olive oil (if possible extra virgin olive oil)
- freshly ground black pepper
- cucumber
- Ritz crackers (or similar circular, salty crackers)

Proceed as follows:

1. First, prepare the tapenade. Puree the olives, garlic, anchovy and capers in a food processor until you have a smooth paste of an unappetizing colour.
2. Add the olive oil, continue processing for a short while, and the tapenade is ready.
3. Cut off one end of the cucumber and remove the seeds using a narrow knife.
4. Fill the hollowed cucumber with tapenade.
5. Press a cracker against the cucumber end, cut off a slice of the cucumber and catch the slice on the cracker. Repeat the procedure until you have enough crackers, each covered with a tapenade-filled cucumber slice.

Serve together with a frozen margarita or other suitable drink. Any tapenade that is left will keep for at least a week in the fridge and can be used in many contexts, e.g. as a spread on "knäckebröd".

Avocado Soup

This dish can be served as a starter (enough for at least 4 persons) but it is also rich enough to be a meal in itself, e.g. a lunch for an amorous couple.

Ingredients:

- 3 ripe avocados
- 350 ml chicken broth
- 200 ml whipping cream
- 30 ml lemon juice
- 30 ml cognac (or brandy)
- curry, salt and black pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut the avocados into halves, remove the large seeds. Pour the lemon juice over one of the halves to prevent it from darkening.
2. Scoop out the meat from the five halves.
3. Put the avocado meat, the chicken broth and 150 ml of the whipping cream in a food processor. Puree until the soup is very smooth.
4. Add the cognac and curry, salt and black pepper as desired.
5. Whip the remaining 50 ml of whipping cream.
6. Remove the skin from the remaining avocado half, cut the meat into thin slices.
7. When you serve the soup, add avocado slices to each plate. Top with a dollop of whipped cream.

Brussels Sprouts Soup

Two days before Christmas 1998 the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet* published a recipe for a Brussels sprouts soup. After all, Christmas is the time for cabbage type dishes in Sweden. We played around with the recipe and not only modified it but also found that if you eliminate most of the liquid, you end up with a delicious vegetable puree.

Ingredients:

- 650 g Brussels sprouts
- 150 g finely chopped onion
- butter
- 1 l chicken bouillon (from bouillon cubes)
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- salt, cayenne pepper

- 200 g chicken breast filets
- 2 tbsp soya sauce
- 2 tbsp dry sherry
- whipped cream

Proceed as follows:

1. Sautee the onion in butter until soft and translucent.
2. Add the Brussels sprouts and the chicken bouillon. Cook for 15 minutes. Shortly before the cooking is complete, add salt, cayenne pepper and white wine vinegar.
3. Puree the Brussels sprouts in a food processor together with a small quantity of the cooking liquid until you have a smooth paste.
4. Cut the chicken breast filets into small cubes and marinate them in the soya/sherry mixture for a few hours at room temperature.
5. Mix the Brussels sprouts puree with the remaining cooking liquid, add the marinated chicken cubes and let simmer for at least 5 minutes.
6. Serve together with whipped cream, to be added to the soup plates as desired.



Fennel Soup



Already during Pharaonic time fennel was well known for its medical properties, including its use as an aphrodisiac as well as a laxative. All parts of the plant can be used, including the bulb, the leaves and the seeds.

Ingredients:

- 500 g of fennel bulb
- 200 ml dry white wine
- 100 g smoked chicken breasts or shrimps
- chicken bouillon cube
- 125 ml crème fraîche
- 2 tbsp ouzo or Pernod
- 200 ml water

Proceed as follows:

1. Trim the fennel stalks down to the bulb, Peel off any wilted outer layer. Set the fine fennel leaves aside after having cut them with a scissor into small pieces.
2. Cut the fennel bulb in small pieces and boil them together with dry white wine, water and a chicken bouillon cube for 8-10 minutes in the microwave oven at full power.
3. Transfer the fennel and the liquid to a food processor, purée and let it cool.
4. Cut the boneless, skinless chicken breasts (if possible smoked) into thin slices and add to the purée. If you are using shrimps instead of chicken, proceed straight to the following step.
5. Microwave on high for four minutes. If you are using shrimps, add them. Microwave for another minute.
6. Add the crème fraîche (sour cream) and two tablespoons of ouzo, pernod or a similar licorice/aniseed type aperitif. Stir well.
7. Add some of the finely cut fennel leaves on top of the soup.

Serve immediately together with, e.g. toast. Add more of the finely cut fennel leaves on top of each plate. The combination of two powerful aphrodisiacs (fennel and licorice or aniseed) might lead to pleasant surprises, but should be handled with care.

Melon and Cucumber Soup

The first time we tried this soup was at the Hourglass Tavern at West 46 Street in New York. It was a very hot and humid August evening, the soup was deliciously refreshing and we immediately asked for the recipe. The restaurant only has seven tables. During lunch hours an hourglass is turned over when the first course arrives. Within an hour you must have finished your lunch!

Ingredients:

- a small (500 g) melon (honeydew, galia or cantaloupe)
- 200 - 300 g peeled cucumber
- 40 ml Cointreau or Triple Sec

Proceed as follows:

1. Divide the melon, remove the seeds and transfer the pulp to a food processor.
2. Add the cucumber and process for 2-4 minutes until the mixture is almost smooth.
3. Add the liqueur and leave the soup in the refrigerator until it is thoroughly chilled.
4. Serve as is, on a hot summer day even with some ice cubes.

When it is really hot (by European standards) this soup is an interesting alternative to gazpacho. If you skip the cucumber, the soup becomes a wonderful dessert. If you prepare a large quantity, it can be preserved in the deep freeze. On a very hot day it is best to thaw the deep frozen soup only until you have an ice slurry.



Nässelsoppa - Nettle Soup

The use of the stinging nettle as food appears to be most common to Sweden. The only exception we have come across on the Net is a Slovenian spring-soup recipe. The nettles should be collected very young (use gloves!), the leaves not longer than 2 - 3 cm.

Ingredients:

- 2 litre rinsed leaves of stinging nettle
- 1.5 litre water
- 2 tbsp (30 g) butter
- 3 tbsp (50 ml) flour
- 25 - 50 g chives
- 2 beef bouillon cubes
- salt, pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Let the nettle leaves simmer until tender, usually 5 - 10 minutes is enough.
2. Strain and set the liquid aside.
3. Puree the nettles together with the chives in a food processor. The result should be a creamy paste.
4. Melt the butter in a deep casserole, add the flour and mix thoroughly at moderate heat.
5. Add the nettle water while stirring, then add the nettle puree. Let simmer for a few minutes, then add salt and pepper if required.

Nettle soup is traditionally served with halved hard-boiled eggs, but the eggs can be whole or sliced as well.



Ärtsoppa - Pea Soup

During centuries, the pea soup prepared from yellow split peas was served every Thursday. Only during the second half of the 20th century has this tradition begun to disappear. The pea soup is best when cooked on very large scale; thus, the version served in the Army has a well-deserved good reputation since it is normally cooked in 200 litre batches. But you might want to try it on a somewhat smaller scale...

Ingredients:

- 500 g yellow split peas
- 1.5 - 2 litre of water or vegetable bouillon (can be made from bouillon cubes!)
- 2 finely chopped onions
- 20 - 30 g of fresh, whole ginger
- 5 - 10 g of marjoram or thyme or both
- optional: potatoes
- optional: carrots
- optional: 500 g of diced bacon

Proceed as follows:

1. Soak the yellow split peas in water for at least 12 hours. Discard the water (even though some insist you should use this water for the soup).
2. Boil the peas, bouillon, onion and ginger for at least 90 minutes. Now and then, carefully skim off the pea hulls as they float up to the surface. When 15 - 30 minutes remain of the cooking time, add the marjoram and/or thyme.
3. The optional ingredients should be added at a late stage during the cooking. Potatoes and carrots will require 20 - 25 minutes of cooking, the bacon at least 30 minutes
4. Taste, add salt if required.

The pea soup is often served together with some mustard. A very (old) Swedish tradition is also to serve it together with hot punsch, an arrak-based, intensely sweet liquor. However, beer will do fine as a substitute.



Pine Nut Soup

First a word of warning

Be careful when deciding when to serve this delicious, very rich soup. I serve it with pleasure to my wife but never when we have couples as dinner guests.

Ingredients:

- 100 g pine nuts
- 3 egg yolks
- 250 ml chicken bouillon
- 250 ml cream
- saffron, ouzo or cayenne pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Purée a mixture of the pine nuts and the egg yolks in the food processor until you have a fine, smooth paste.
2. Put this in a saucepan and add one cup of chicken bouillon and one cup of cream. The chicken stock can be added already at the food processor stage if you have difficulties in obtaining a smooth paste. This far the dish can be prepared hours in advance.
3. Heat over a gentle fire under constant stirring until the mixture thickens. It must not, however, be brought to a boil!
4. Serve immediately.

If desired, suitable spices can reinforce the aphrodisiac properties. We have tried three equally successful alternatives: 0.5 g of finely divided saffron, two tablespoons of ouzo and a pinch of cayenne pepper. The spice (but only one of them!) is added before the soup is heated. Especially the saffron gives the dish a pleasing reddish colour.



Laxsoppa - Salmon Soup

When you prepare the gravlax, you end up with a lot of salmon trimmings, not the least the meaty tail part which is usually cut off. Why not use these trimmings for a traditional salmon soup?

Ingredients for the stock:

- 0.5 - 1 kg salmon trimmings (head, skin, tail, bones)
- 1 onion
- 1 leek (white part only)
- 1 large carrot
- 5 dill sprigs
- 5 parsley sprigs
- whole peppers and Jamaica peppers

The stock - proceed as follows:

1. Cut the salmon trimmings into small pieces, rinse in cold water, place in a casserole, cover with cold water and bring it to a boil.
2. Skim carefully, then add the vegetables and the spices. Let it simmer for 45 min, then strain the stock.
3. Remove and set aside any salmon meat adhering to the head, tail or bones.

Ingredients for the soup:

- 1 tsp butter
- 1 tsp flour
- 1 l salmon stock
- 100 ml cream
- 2 egg yolks
- 50 g cooked and diced carrots
- 50 g cooked baby peas
- chopped dill and parsley

The soup - proceed as follows:

1. Melt the butter in a deep, heavy casserole over low heat, add the flour while stirring, then add the salmon stock. Bring to a boil and let simmer for 15 min.
2. Whisk egg yolks and cream, add the mixture to the soup, followed by salt and pepper (if required).
3. Finally, add the vegetables and any salmon meat that could be removed from the trimmings. Serve sizzling hot!



Shrimp Soup

The taste and texture of this shrimp soup could seduce any adult person. Small shrimps swimming in a pink delight...

Ingredients:

- 250 g shelled shrimps
- 3 egg yolks
- 250 ml (light) cream
- 250 ml dry white wine
- 1 fish bouillon cube
- 0.2-0.5 g saffron

Proceed as follows:

1. Purée half of the shelled shrimps in the food processor together with the egg yolks, saffron, (light) cream, dry white wine and a fish bouillon cube (intended for 0.5 liter of bouillon).
2. Heat the mixture in a pan at low-moderate heat while constantly stirring until the mixture thickens.
3. Pre-heat the other half of the shelled shrimps for 40 seconds in the microwave oven.
4. Add the pre-heated shrimps to the soup.
5. Serve immediately.

If possible serve together with some black lumpfish roe on the side and white toasted bread.

A variation is to purée all the shrimps and serve the soup as a fish dish sauce.



Bruna bönor - Brown Beans

Brown beans is a classical Swedish dish, which has become less popular during recent decades.

Ingredients:

- 400 ml dried brown beans
- 2-3 tbsp syrup (molasses)
- 2 tbsp vinegar
- 1/2-1 tbsp potato flour

Proceed as follows:

1. Rinse the brown beans and soak them in cold water overnight.
2. Let them simmer, well covered by water (add some salt), until they are (very) soft. This normally takes 1 1/2 hours. Check now and then and add more water if required.
3. Add the syrup and vinegar, then the potato flour suspended in a small quantity of cold water as a thickener.
4. Heat briefly.

Serve together with, e.g. fried pork, meatballs or sausages.

Brussels Sprouts Puree

Two days before Christmas 1998 the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet* published a recipe for a Brussels sprouts soup. After all, Christmas is the time for cabbage type dishes in Sweden. We played around with the recipe and not only modified it but also found that if you eliminate most of the liquid, you end up with a delicious vegetable puree.

Ingredients:

- 650 g Brussels sprouts
- 150 g finely chopped onion
- butter
- 1 litre chicken bouillon (from bouillon cubes)
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- salt, cayenne pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Sautee the onion in butter until soft and translucent.
2. Add the Brussels sprouts and the chicken bouillon. Cook for 15 minutes. Shortly before the cooking is complete, add salt, cayenne pepper and white wine vinegar.
3. Puree the Brussels sprouts in a food processor together with a small quantity of the cooking liquid until you have a smooth paste.
4. Serve as is, e.g. together with pork or turkey dishes.

Cardon au Gratin

Cardon is an artichoke variety. Not only the flower buds are eaten (in the traditional artichoke fashion) but also the leave stalks. These are very popular in western Switzerland, in southern France and in Spain, but otherwise rather difficult to find. Fortunately they are also sold canned, and this product is good substitute for the fresh produce.

Cardon au gratin is the traditional Christmas dish in the Swiss canton of Geneva

Ingredients:

- 600 g drained, cooked cardons (the contents of an 800 g can)
- 300 - 400 ml sauce bechamel
- 100 g grated cheese, preferably Swiss Gruyere or Emmenthaler
- grated nutmeg
- salt and black pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Place the drained pieces of cardons in a buttered gratin or shallow baking dish.
2. Add half the grated cheese to the sauce bechamel together with grated nutmeg, salt and black pepper as desired.
3. Pour the sauce over the cardon pieces and sprinkle with the remaining cheese.
4. Put the dish in a preheated oven at 225 - 250 °C until several spots of a dark golden brown colour have developed and the sauce is bubbling. This normally requires 15 - 20 minutes.

This starter becomes a main lunch course for 4 persons if you add 250 g diced ham or cooked and diced chicken breasts.

Our Own Guacamole

We began loving guacamole during a few summers in New York, e.g. at Rosa Mexicana (First Avenue and 59 Str) and El Parador (34 Str between Second and Third Avenues). And after a lot of trial and error we finally arrived at this recipe which we find better than the restaurant concoctions!

Ingredients:

- 3 ripe avocados
- 3 medium sized tomatoes (about 200 g), peels and seeds removed
- 1 green pepper or 100 g celery
- 2 garlic cloves (not too small)
- 1 tsp freshly crushed coriander seeds
- 60 g onion (about 1/2 onion)
- 75 - 100 ml fresh lemon juice

Proceed as follows:

1. Run the food processor with the garlic and the onion for 10 seconds.
2. Add the green pepper or the celery, run another 5 seconds, add the tomatoes, run an additional 5 seconds. There should still be recognisable pieces left of the vegetables.
3. Transfer to a serving bowl and cover with the lemon juice.
4. Scoop the avocados using a spoon in order to get small pieces, which are put in the bowl with the lemon juice and the processed mixture.
5. Add the crushed coriander seeds, stir with a wooden fork and crush the avocado pieces additionally if desired.
6. Stir again and add salt and black pepper.

Hasselbackspotatis - Hasselback Potatoes

Hasselbacken is a still functional restaurant in Stockholm where this delicious potato dish first was served.

Ingredients:

- 12 medium-sized potatoes
- 3 tbsp butter or margarine
- 3 tbsp grated cheese
- 1-2 tbsp dry bread crumbs
- salt

Proceed as follows:

1. Preheat the oven to 225 °C.
2. Place the peeled potatoes in a wooden spoon and make vertical slices, 2-3 mm apart, about 3/4 of the way through the potatoes. The wooden spoon will protect the final 1/4 of the potatoes.
3. With the cut-side up, place the potatoes in a buttered baking dish.
4. Melt half of the butter and pour it over the potatoes, then sprinkle with salt.
5. Bake for 30 minutes, now and then basting the potatoes with molten butter.
6. After 30 minutes, sprinkle over bread crumbs and, if desired, grated cheese.
7. Continue to bake for another 15 minutes.

Kohlrabi-ramequine

We set out to prepare a form of kohlrabi pancakes, but ended up producing ramequines instead. They are delicious as a starter served together with slices of, e.g. smoked ham or smoked chicken breast.

Ingredients:

- 400 g kohlrabi
- 150 g onions
- 4 garlic cloves, medium size and strength
- 4 egg yolks
- extra virgin olive oil
- salt, black pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Peel and dice the kohlrabi, cook the dices in the microwave oven at full heat (700 W) for 6 - 7 minutes.
2. Chop the onion and the garlic together, using a food processor, and fry the mixture in olive oil until it acquires a pale golden yellow colour.
3. Return the fried mixture to the food processor, add 3/4 of the kohlrabi, salt and black pepper as well as the egg yolks.
4. Process until you have a smooth mixture.
5. Divide the remaining kohlrabi dices into 5-mm pieces.
6. Oil six ramequines. Put a spoonful of the mixture in each ramequine, add kohlrabi pieces, then more of the mixture, followed by more kohlrabi pieces, etc., until the ramequines are 80 % full.
7. Cook the ramequines in the microwave oven at full heat (700 W) for 3 - 5 minutes until the mixture solidifies.
8. Turn each ramequine upside down to release its contents and serve together with a wedge of lemon on top of each ramequine.

Orange and Onion Salsa

Mix oranges and onions? Before you deem us crazy, please reconsider once more. In our opinion this is a most refreshing salsa, which will provide a welcome interlude between more spicy Mexican dishes.

Ingredients:

- 2 large oranges
- 1 small onion
- 1/2 jalapeño pepper (deseeded!!)
- cumin seeds
- crushed coriander seeds

Proceed as follows:

1. Chop the onion and the pepper in a food processor.
2. Peel the oranges and chop them coarsely, using a knife (not the food processor!).
3. Mix with the onion and pepper, add cumin and crushed coriander.

This salsa is at its best immediately after it has been prepared. It will only keep for 24 hours in the refrigerator.

Red Bell Pepper and Pine Nut Salsa

We found the starting point for this recipe in Wise & Hoffman: The Well-Filled Tortilla Cookbook, one of the best cookbooks for Mexican food that we have come across. During early autumn the red bell peppers are at their cheapest, at least in Sweden and the Netherlands. You can then prepare a large quantity of the pepper paste and keep it deep-frozen until required.

Ingredients:

- 4 red bell peppers (300 - 400 g)
- 6 garlic cloves
- 2 red jalapeño peppers, deseeded
- 75-100 g pine nuts (if you find them difficult to procure, send us an e-mail (sante@bart.nl)!)
- 1 tbsp crushed coriander seeds
- salt and black pepper as desired

Proceed as follows:

1. Bake the bell peppers in the oven at 250 - 275 °C until a major part of the skin is blackened. This normally requires 20 - 30 minutes. If the oven is equipped with a grill, do not use it.
2. Transfer the bell peppers to a paper bag, close it, open again after 15 minutes and remove the black skin and the seeds from the bell peppers. Instead of using a paper bag, you can wrap the baked peppers in household tissue.
3. Process the baked and deseeded bell peppers, the garlic, the jalapeño peppers and the pine nuts in a food processor for 30 - 45 seconds.
4. Add spices, and, if necessary to get the right consistency, also some water.

The salsa can be kept in the refrigerator for up to a week but should not be frozen.



Rödkål - Red Cabbage

Red cabbage is a traditional dish, together with the ham, on Christmas Eve for many Swedish families. But it is also often served outside the Christmas season, together with ham, pork, spare ribs or similar types of meat. Canned cooked red cabbage is commercially available, but does not compare with the real stuff!

Ingredients:

- 1 red cabbage (about 1 kg), cored
- 1 yellow or red onion
- 4 sourish apples
- 2 tbsp margarine or vegetable oil
- 8 cloves
- 5 Jamaica peppers
- 1-2 tbsp sugar
- 3 tbsp red wine vinegar and/or lemon juice
- salt to taste

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut the red cabbage into thin slices. Cut the apples (without cores and peels) into pieces. Slice the onion(s).
2. Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat.
3. Add the cabbage, onion, apples, vinegar, spices and salt.
4. Cook covered over low heat for one hour, stirring occasionally.
5. Add more vinegar or lemon juice according to taste. Serve hot.

If prepared during high season for red cabbage (autumn - early winter), the dish can readily be deep frozen and be kept for at least half a year.

Tomato Salsa

This was the first Mexican salsa we came across. After some trial and error finally we managed to modify the recipe to the requirements of Swedish taste bulbs.

Ingredients:

- 4-6 red and/or green jalapeño peppers, depending on taste and availability
- 3 large radishes
- 3 large garlic cloves
- one small onion
- 2 ripe, peeled and deseeded tomatoes (use a potato peeler!)
- 1 tbsp crushed coriander seeds
- salt as desired
- 100 - 200 ml water

Proceed as follows:

1. Make certain the jalapeño peppers are completely deseeded. Wash your hands carefully after having handled the peppers and do not rub your eyes for a few hours (if you do the burning sensation can be very unpleasant, we have tried it).
2. Process the vegetables in food processor and add the crushed coriander, possibly also some salt.
3. Add water until the liquid just covers the vegetables.

This salsa can be kept for up to a week in the refrigerator (although it is so delicious it will be gone within days).

Zeekraal as a Fish Vegetable



Zeekraal is the Dutch name for the plant *Salicornia europaea* (Chenopodiaceae), which grows on the beaches of Zeeland. In a book from 1981 you could read that: "During the spring *zeekraal* and *lamsoren* are being sold on the markets in Tholen, Bergen op Zoom and Goes. These are characteristic vegetables, which you do not find elsewhere in the Netherlands."

But that has changed. *Zeekraal* can now be bought in many places all over the country. It is best from April - June and can be eaten raw or (as we prefer) cooked.

Ingredients:

- 100 - 150 g *zeekraal* per person
- water
- butter if desired

Proceed as follows:

1. Soak the *zeekraal* for at least 15 minutes in fresh water to remove some of the salinity. Discard the water.
2. Microwave on high for one minute per 100 grams of *zeekraal*.
3. Rinse quickly with some water, then add some butter if desired. Serve immediately.

Zeekraal is delicious together with fish dishes. It is, however, rather salty, and if *zeekraal* is served, additional salt is usually not required.

Chicken Bokchoy Dolma



We started to experiment with bokchoy (nappa cabbage, a form of Chinese cabbage, in Dutch paksoi) recently, and we have found it quite a versatile vegetable. One interesting use is as covering leaf in dishes of the dolma type (a leaf-covered stuffing). Generally, it is easier to handle for this purpose than either wine leaves or cabbage.

Ingredients:

- 150 g chicken (or turkey) breast
- 40 g brie cheese
- 1 egg
- 2-4 bokchoy leaves
- 10 green olives (filled with red bell pepper)
- oregano
- pepper, salt

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut away the coarsest central white part from the bottom of the bokchoy leaves. Cover the leaves with cotton cloth and microwave them at high for 1 minute per 100 grams.
2. Purée chicken breast, egg and cheese, together with oregano, pepper and salt in a food processor until you have a smooth paste.
3. Place 1-2 parboiled bokchoy leaves on a carving board. Form the chicken paste into a loaf-like sausage and place this on top of the bokchoy leaf/leaves. Press the olives into the "sausage". Roll the leaves around the "sausage" to form a dolma.
4. Place another 1-2 parboiled bokchoy leaves on the carving board, put the dolma on top of the leaf/leaves and roll it/them around the dolma.
5. Firmly roll a cotton cloth around the dolma to ensure that it will keep its shape during the cooking.
6. Microwave for 10 minutes. Leave to cool.

The chicken bokchoy dolma is best served cool, cut in thin slices, as a starter together with more olives and some colourful vegetables. The above quantity is sufficient for two persons. You can double the recipe and still make only one dolma, but if you go beyond that it is better to make several dolmas. An alternative to the use of cotton cloth in step 5 is to use leek. Cook a **long** leek at high for 1 minute per 80 grams, then cut it into thin long strips. Wrap these strips around the "dolma sausage" to ensure that the cover bokchoy leaves do not unwrap.

Anna Cutlets

"Allt om Mat" is a leading Swedish food magazine. We were immensely proud when it published our recipe for Anna cutlets in the early 1970s. (We also appreciated when the magazine, 25 years later, included a link to our recipe collection - see AoM #17, 1997.) It is a very convenient dish, can be prepared long in advance with everything contained in one pot.

Ingredients:

- 2 bone-free cuts of pork, e.g. cutlets, 150 g apiece
- 200 g sliced mushrooms (canned or deep-frozen mushrooms can be used)
- 400 g peeled potatoes, in thin slices
- butter for frying
- salt and pepper as desired

Proceed as follows:

1. Fry the mushroom slices briefly in a hot frying-pan.
2. Place the pork cuts in a buttered gratin dish and cover them with the mushrooms, then put the potato slices on top in an even layer.
3. Use salt and pepper as desired, then top with very thin slices of butter.
4. Cook in the oven at 200 - 225 °C for 45 minutes.

Serve together with a tomato-lettuce-cucumber salad.

Argentinean Potato Pie

This recipe was e-mailed to us by Claudia M. Villar, a netwriting student from EF Internet School. "I remember in winter when I came back from the school," she writes, "and my mother was waiting with a big potato pie for me and my brother. It's delicious, specially when it's cold because this a meal with many calories." It is really worth trying!

Ingredients:

For the meat sauce:

- 800 g minced meat
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 chopped onions
- 1 400 g can of tomato sauce or crushed tomatoes
- 6 chopped olives
- 2 sliced carrots
- 1 chopped red bell pepper
- 2 tbsp grated cheese
- 2 eggs
- condiments: salt, white pepper, marjoram, dried parsley and garlic powder;

For the mashed potatoes:

- 1/2 kg. potatoes
- 150 g cream cheese
- 2 tbsp grated cheese
- 150 ml milk

Proceed as follows:

1. Fry the chopped onions oil together with a little garlic powder (or fresh, crushed garlic) and dried parsley.
2. When the onions are cooked, add in the same skillet the minced meat, the tomato sauce (or the crushed tomatoes), sliced carrots, chopped olives and the chopped red pepper. Mix, season with salt, white pepper and marjoram. Cook over high heat for 10 minutes.
3. Add two chopped hard-boiled eggs and 2 tbsp of grated cheese,
4. Taste the preparation when the meat is cooked and add condiments as you like.
5. Cook and mash the potatoes. When ready, add a little milk, cream cheese in small bits and 2 tbsp grated cheese. Mix them. The mashed potatoes should be like rich cream.
6. Put the meat sauce in a rectangular ovenware or casserole, and cover it with mashed potatoes. If desired, you can sprinkle some grated cheese on top of the mashed potatoes.
7. Put the potato pie in a hot oven at 225 °C for 7 - 10 minutes or microwave at high until it is hot.

Serve on a cold winter night together with an Argentinean Mendoza Tinto.

Chili Con Carne In Our Way

Probably chili con carne was the first Mexican recipe we tried to modify according to our own taste. The objective was to develop a dish that could readily be prepared from easy-to-store ingredients (except for the minced meat). The jalapeño peppers? They can be kept deep frozen and be used as required. But deseed them first, they can then be put directly into the food processor without thawing.

Ingredients:

- a large, finely chopped onion
- 200 g lean minced meat
- one 400 g can peeled tomatoes
- 2 large crushed garlic cloves
- 2 red jalapeño peppers, deseeded and finely chopped
- 75-100 g tomato paste
- oregano, cayenne pepper, white pepper and salt as required
- one 400 g can with baked beans in tomato sauce
- butter or olive oil for frying

Proceed as follows:

1. Fry the onion for 5 minutes in butter or olive oil at moderate heat, add the minced meat and divide the lumps using a fork until the mixture has a grainy consistency.
2. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, garlic, jalapeño peppers, salt and spices. Let the mixture simmer for 10 minutes without cover.
3. Add the baked beans and let simmer for a few minutes more.
4. Serve together with garlic bread and iceberg lettuce.

The dish can be deep frozen and thawed in the microwave oven. Leftovers can be used by putting them on slices of white bread, cover with cheese (grated or in slices) and bake in the oven.



Julskinka - Christmas Ham

The main dish served on Christmas Eve is the "julskinka", the traditional Christmas ham. Usually, a ham should last at least for a week and appear at almost all meals between Christmas Eve and New Years Day.

Ingredients:

- 3 - 5 kg of salt-cured fresh ham (do not use dried cured ham)
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp mustard
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 3 tbsp breadcrumbs

Proceed as follows:

1. Depending upon the method of salt curing it might be necessary to leave the ham overnight covered with water to desalt it.
2. Pre-heat the oven to 125 °C. Insert an oven thermometer in the thickest part of the ham. Leave it in the oven until the temperature reaches 75 °C.
3. Remove the rind carefully and as much of the fat as you like. (With less fat left it is healthier but drier!)
4. Heat the oven to 225 °C.
5. Mix egg, mustard and sugar.
6. Place the ham on a roasting-pan, cover it with the mixture and sift the breadcrumbs over it. They should stick to the egg-mustard mixture.
7. Bake the ham for 10 minutes in the oven. When ready, it should have a golden colour with a few deep brown but no black patches.

If you're not going to use it as the centrepiece on the buffet table you can serve it together with potatoes, red cabbages, mustard and stewed and mashed apples.



Hamburger à la Lindström

The origin of this dish is not entirely clear. Most believe that it was introduced by Captain Henrik Lindström (1831-1910) at Hotell Witt in Kalmar, Sweden, in the 1860s. Others suggest that the originator was Maria Kristina Lindström, who operated a delicatessen in Stockholm at about the same time. Whoever the originator, it is now almost a national dish in Sweden.

Ingredients:

- 500 g ground beef
- 2 egg yolks
- 100 ml cream
- 100 g finely chopped onions
- 150 ml finely chopped pickled red beets
- 50-100 ml liquid from the pickled beets
- 2 tbsp finely chopped capers
- butter for frying
- salt, pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Mix ground beef, egg yolks, and cream in a bowl. Add salt and pepper. Add enough liquid from pickled beets to produce a dough-like mixture.
2. Sautee the chopped onion until translucent. It must not, however, turn brownish. Add the onion to the beef mixture.
3. Gently stir in pickled beets and capers. Some (but not we!) even like to add 100-150 grams boiled and mashed potatoes.
4. Shape into four round patties, about the same size as a BigMac.
5. Melt some butter in a frying pan. Fry the beef patties at moderate/low heat for 3-5 minutes. It is important that they remain rosy inside, otherwise they will be too dry.

Serve together with Hasselback potatoes and iceberg lettuce.

Mustard Burger

The name of this dish can be somewhat misleading. Yes, it is a burger but oversized, large enough to feed two persons. Originally we made it from minced beef, but later found that using minced veal will make the burgers much juicier.

Ingredients:

- 300 g minced veal
- 200 g shallots
- 2 eggs
- 3 tbsp mustard (Dijon if possible)
- 50 g capers
- olive oil
- salt and black pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Finely chop the shallots, e.g. using a food processor. Fry gently in olive oil in a frying pan until the shallot pieces have softened; they must not, however, turn brown.
2. Mix the fried shallots with the minced veal, the eggs, the mustard, the capers and some salt and pepper in a bowl.
3. Cover a plate with a thin film of olive oil. Transfer the meat mixture from the bowl to the plate and form it into an oversized burger with the same diameter as the frying pan.
4. Let the burger slide from the plate into the heated frying pan. Fry for about 4 minutes.
5. Remove the frying pan from the heat. Put the plate on top of it. Turn frying pan and plate upside down so that the burger will end up on the plate. Take another plate, cover it with a film of olive oil. put it on top of the plate with the burger, turn the two plates upside down.
6. You should now have the burger on the second plate with the fried side up. Let it slide back into the frying pan. Fry the burger for another 4 minutes.
7. Divide the burger in two halves and serve together with, e.g. mashed potatoes and a salad.



Kroppkakor - Potato Dumplings

There are many forms of potato dumplings in Sweden and we strongly dislike them all. However, many have asked for recipes. "Kroppkakor" is especially popular on "Öland", a Baltic Sea island just outside the Swedish east coast.

Ingredients:

- 1 kg cooked potatoes
- 2 egg yolks
- 300 ml all purpose flour
- 1 onion
- 100 g smoked ham
- 100 g bacon
- salt, pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Mash the potatoes. Put it on a breadboard and make a small pit in the middle.
2. Put eggs, flour and salt in the pit and work the potato-dough fast together. Too much kneading makes the potato tough.
3. Chop finely the onion, cut the bacon and ham into small pieces and fry it until it gets coloured. Flavour it with white pepper.
4. Form the potato-dough to a thick roll. Cut it in thick slices and put a pile of bacon mix in a pit in a slice, then put another slice on top of it, press the edges together and roll it to a ball.
5. Lower the balls in boiling salted water and boil them approx. 10-12 minutes or until they float to the surface. Pick them up with a perforated ladle and put them on a hot serving plate. Don't boil too many at a time, they will then have some difficulty to float to the surface.
6. Serve hot with melted butter and red whortleberry (lingonberry) jam or cranberry jam.

Serve together with clarified butter and lingonberry jam.



Pyttipanna - Hashed Leftovers

"Pyttipanna" can be made in a variety of ways. Essentially, it is a traditional Swedish way of using meat leftovers. The three basic ingredients are finely diced potatoes, finely chopped onion, and diced meat leftovers (e.g. sausages, pork chops, tenderloin, almost anything will do; the better the meat quality, the better the "pyttipanna").

Ingredients:

- 700 g (1 1/2 lb) finely diced potatoes (raw or cooked)
- 250 g (1/2 lb) finely chopped onions
- 250-500 g (1/2-1 lb) finely diced meat leftovers
- olive oil (for frying)

Proceed as follows:

1. Sautee the chopped onion in some olive oil until golden.
2. Fry the potato dices in some olive oil until properly cooked (or heat the dices made of cooked potatoes briefly).
3. Fry the meat dices (or heat the already cooked meat briefly).
4. Mix potato, onion and meat.

Serve with pickled red beets if available.



Sjömansbiff - Sailor's Stew

We have been unable to trace the origin of this dish. There is no mentioning of it in our 19th century cookbooks, but suddenly, at about the turn of the century, it starts to appear.

Ingredients:

- 600 g of thick flank, cut in thin slices
- 4 onions, cut into thin slices
- 8-10 potatoes, peeled and cut in rather thick slices
- butter
- bay leaf
- thyme
- salt and white pepper
- 500 ml water or bouillon, mixed with beer, or just beer

Proceed as follows:

1. Brown the onion slices and remove them from the frying-pan.
2. In the same pan brown the meat slices briefly on both sides. Season with salt and white pepper.
3. Add water, beer and/or bouillon, bay-leaf and thyme, cover and let the meat cook for 10 minutes in the frying-pan.
4. In a casserole put layers of meat, sliced potato and onion, potatoes forming the bottom and uppermost layer.
5. Cover with liquid and let the stew simmer in the oven or on the stove for 45 - 60 minutes (cooking time is not critical). Serve sizzling hot.

You can also prepare the stew in a pressure cooker instead of a casserole. This will shorten the cooking time to 15 minutes and, at the same time, less liquid can be used, since in a pressure cooker it is not essential that the stew be completely covered.



Köttbullar - Swedish Meatballs

There are almost as many recipes for Swedish meatballs as there are Swedish amateur *chefs*. The three main types are: (1) small, fried, served without sauce; (2) large, fried, served in brown gravy; (3) medium size, boiled, served in sauce. The present recipe is a very simple version of type-1 meatballs, a children's favourite.

Ingredients:

- 500 g ground beef
- 1 small onion
- 1 egg
- 50-75 ml dried bread crumbs
- vegetable oil (for frying)
- salt, pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Finely grate or chop the onion.
2. Mix the ground beef, the onion, the egg and the bread crumbs. Add some white pepper and salt to taste.
3. Form into 30 walnut-size meatballs.
4. Heat 2 tbsp of vegetable oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Sauté the meatballs in two batches until browned on all sides and cooked through (approximately ten minutes).

The meatballs can be served alone as cocktail snacks or, as a meal, together with, e.g. mashed potatoes and lingonberry jam.

For meatballs in a brown gravy, fry the meatballs in four batches. After each of the first three batches add 3-4 tbsp of water to the skillet, stir and pour the water into a separate vessel. After the fourth batch powder 1-2 tbsp all-purpose flour over the skillet, stir, add 3-4 tbsp cream, stir, add the water from the first three batches, stir, add some Japanese soya sauce, stir and bring to a slow boil, then add the fried meatballs and heat for a few minutes.



Kalvfrikadeller - Veal Meatballs

Normally, meatballs are brown and served in a brown sauce (if any). But there are other possibilities. The first guestbook entry asked for a recipe for Swedish meatballs in a white sauce. Here it is! There are two possibilities: the easy way or the traditional way.

Ingredients:

Easy way:

- 400 g minced veal
- 100 g mashed, cooked potatoes
- 1 egg
- 1 can concentrated mushroom soup
- 150 ml milk
- 100 ml cream
- salt, pepper, parsley, spices

Difficult way:

- 200 g minced veal
- 50 g veal suet
- 2 eggs
- 100 ml cream
- 10-20 grams mie de pain
- 1 l bouillon

Proceed as follows:

Easy way:

1. Mix the minced veal with salt and pepper, add the mashed potatoes and the milk, stir well
2. Add the egg and spices according to taste, stir until you have a smooth paste.
3. Heat the concentrated mushroom soup, mixed with the cream and some finely grated lemon peel in a casserole.
4. Form meat balls (diameter 2.5 - 4 cm / 1 - 1.5 inch) from the minced meat mixture and put the balls into the simmering soup concentrate. Let simmer, covered, for 5 - 6 minutes.
5. Serve as is in the sauce.

Difficult way:

1. Mix the minced veal, the suet and the mie de pain (which should have been soaked in the cream).
2. Puree it in the food processor until you have a very smooth mixture.
3. Add the eggs, the remaining part of the cream and salt and pepper according to taste.
4. Form meatballs from the minced meat mixture (diameter 2.5 - 4 cm / 1 - 1.5 inch).
5. Bring the bouillon to a boil, let the meatballs simmer in the bouillon for at least 5 minutes.
6. Drain, serve together with a sauce velouté.

Basic Aphrodisiac Mussels



This recipe is the starting point for a few mussel dishes with a truly aphrodisiac touch. The mussels as well as the bouillon are suitable for deep freezing; thus, whenever required you can pick a plastic bag of mussels and another of bouillon from the deep freeze, thaw them in the microwave and within minutes prepare a delicious and seductive mussel dish.

Ingredients:

- 3 kg of mussels, cleaned
- 350 g onion, coarsely chopped
- 300 g celery, coarsely chopped
- 250 g shallots, coarsely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves (10-15 g), finely chopped
- 3 fish bouillon cubes (intended for 750 ml of bouillon)
- 1 teaspoon dry thyme leaves
- 1 teaspoon dry basil leaves
- 1 bottle (750 ml) of dry white wine
- 3 g saffron (the quantity can be reduced)

Proceed as follows:

1. Let the vegetables and the garlic simmer in the white wine for 15-20 minutes in a pan with a volume of 4-6 litres. At a late stage add the thyme and the basil.
2. Increase the heat, place half of the mussels on top of the vegetables and let them steam until they have opened. This should take about 5 minutes.
3. Remove the steamed mussels using a perforated ladle and set them apart. Place the remaining half of the mussels on top of the vegetables and let them steam for another five minutes until they all have opened. Remove them and add them to the first mussel batch.
4. Sieve the liquid to remove the vegetables, let the sieved bouillon boil for 5-10 minutes to reduce the volume somewhat, then leave it to cool. When cool, add the saffron.
5. Remove the mussels from the shells. Keep them separated from the bouillon.

Now you have the starting materials for a number of delicious dishes, e.g. mussel soup, diet mussel soup, mussel pasta sauce and mussel risotto. You can put the mussels and the bouillon in the deep-freeze for use later on; if so we suggest you pack in separate plastic bags about 100 grams of mussels per bag and 250 ml of bouillon per bag. Otherwise you can use the ingredients almost immediately, but remember that the saffron will require a few hours to merge with the bouillon!



Kräftor - River Crayfish

Earlier crayfish was abundant in most Swedish fresh waters. However, beginning in early 20th century a severe fungus infection has diminished the crayfish stock considerably. Most of the crayfish consumed in Sweden today is imported from Turkey and the U.S.A.

Ingredients:

- 10 - 20 river crayfishes per person (alive!)
- plenty of dill (best is to use the inflorescences, if not available dill sprigs will do)
- enough water to cover the crayfishes
- 2 tablespoons of salt per liter of water

Proceed as follows:

1. Bring the water, the salt and half of the dill to a boil. Add the crayfishes, 10 at a time and let the water come to a boil between the successive additions.
2. Add the other half of the dill, cover and let boil for 10 minutes.
3. Leave the crayfishes to cool overnight in the refrigerator, submerged in the brine.
4. When ready to serve, pour off the brine and remove the soggy dill. Arrange the crayfish on a platter and garnish with dill inflorescences.

Serve together with buttered toast and "snaps" (Swedish aquavit). At a crayfish party, it is mandatory to sing each time you take a "snaps". Most meat is in the tail. Simply twist off the tail section from the rest of the body and split it open.



Diet Mussel Soup

The starting point for this recipe is the Basic Aphrodisiac Mussels. Actually, the dish was originally not developed as an aphrodisiac but for dietary purposes. Because of intestinal cancer, Johan was on a very restricted diet. This dish turned out to be quite acceptable to his digestion, while at the same time tasting "just like gourmet restaurant food", according to Anne.

Ingredients:

- 100 g of cooked and deshelled mussels (see the basic recipe)
- 500 ml (2 cups) of saffron-spiced mussel bouillon (see the basic recipe)
- 100 g rice vermicelli, broken down into short pieces

Proceed as follows:

1. Bring the bouillon to a boil.
2. Add the rice vermicelli pieces and cook at a low heat for 3 minutes. Some varieties of vermicelli might require a slightly shorter or longer cooking time.
3. Add the mussels and heat (but do not boil) for a minute or two.
4. Optional improvement: Before serving, add two tablespoons of cognac to the soup.

A dry white wine with a lot of taste goes nicely with the soup. However, even a light Riesling can be appropriate.

Fish Stew

We needed a good fish stew to serve as the basis for the "Tropical Fish Stew" we came across in Tanzania and developed this recipe. Virtually any fish with a firm, white meat can be used. If you use several different fishes, keep the cooking time required for each type in mind and add them in such an order that they will not be overcooked.

Ingredients:

- 300 g of (mixed) fish fillets of white, firm meat
- 1 fish bouillon cube or 1 tbsp of fish bouillon powder
- 250 ml dry white wine
- 1 tbsp butter
- 25-50 g *beurre manié* (a mixture of equal parts of all-purpose flour and butter)
- salt and pepper as required

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut the fish fillets into inch-sized cubes and dip them into the flour-pepper-salt mixture.
2. Prepare the bouillon from bouillon cubes or powder but use white wine instead of water.
3. Melt the butter in a pan. When the butter is slowly turning dark yellowish, fry the fish fillet cubes for one minute, then add the bouillon and let the fish cubes simmer for a few minutes.
4. Remove the pan from the heat and decant the liquid into another pan.
5. Bring the liquid to a boil and add small quantities of *beurre manié* while constantly stirring until you have a rather viscous sauce. Remove the pan from the heat and pour the sauce over the fish cubes in the first pan.
6. Add salt and pepper as required.
7. Heat briefly until the sauce is just about to begin boiling again, then remove the pan from the heat.

Fried Fish Fillets with Garlic Mushrooms

You can combine garlic and fish! One extreme is to serve fish filled with garlic (bake plenty of garlic cloves in the oven at 250 °C for 10 minutes, then stuff, e.g. a cod, laithe or similar fish with the baked cloves and bake the stuffed fish at 200 °C for another 25-50 minutes, depending on size). But usually it suffices to let the garlic add a magic touch.

Ingredients:

- 250 g fillets of a fish with firm, white meat, cut into 6 pieces
- 250 g fresh mushrooms
- 25-50 g crushed garlic cloves
- 3-5 tbsp dry white wine or vermouth
- extra virgin olive oil for frying
- spices: salt, estragon, black pepper as desired

Proceed as follows:

1. Divide the mushrooms into 2 - 4 pieces.
2. Heat the oil to about 160 °C in a frying pan (at this temperature butter starts to acquire a nut brown colour and a piece of white bread dropped into the oil turns golden brown within 15 - 30 seconds).
3. Fry the mushroom pieces together with the crushed garlic until the mushrooms begin to turn brownish (it takes at least 3 - 4 minutes, if necessary, lower the temperature after a few minutes).
4. Remove the mushrooms from the frying pan but leave any garlic residues in the pan.
5. Add the fish pieces, kind of stir-fry them for 15 - 30 seconds, then add the wine and bring to a boil for another 15 - 30 seconds.
6. Return the mushroom pieces to the frying pan and let the mixture simmer for one minute.



Gravlax - Salt and Sugar-Cured Salmon

Internationally, this might be the best known Swedish dish. Several recipes have been posted on the Net, but, of course, ours is the best! (We are a little bit skeptical when people try to "improve" the *gravlax* by using, e.g. whisky or gin in the marinade.)

Ingredients:

- 2 pieces of centre-cut salmon fillets, little more than 500 g each, if possible of equal size, and with skin left on.
- slightly more than 125 ml sugar
- slightly less than 125 ml coarse salt (somewhat more sugar than salt)
- 15 coarsely crushed white peppercorns
- 1 very large bunch of dill (very important) – it is not necessary to chop the dill

Proceed as follows:

1. Remove any small bones from the fillets, it is easily done with the use of a pair of forceps.
2. Mix sugar, salt and pepper in a bowl.
3. Cover the bottom of a baking dish with dill.
4. Rub half of the sugar-salt mixture into the first fillet, on both sides, and lay it skin side down, on top of the dill. Cover with lots of dill. Prepare the other salmon fillet in the same way, and cover with the remaining fillet., skin side up. with the remaining dill on top.
5. Cover in plastic wrap, place a cutting board with some heavy weights on top and marinate in the refrigerator for 48 - 72 hours, turning the salmon upside down at least once a day. (Personally, we favour 3 days in the refrigerator!)
6. Scrape the marinade off and slice the fillets very thinly. Serve with a mustard sauce

Mussel Pasta Sauce



Fresh pasta can be prepared in a matter of minutes, a rather important aspect when it comes to aphrodisiac cooking. And what can be a better way of serving the pasta than together with a mussel sauce with a strong saffron taste?.

Ingredients:

- 100 - 200 g of cooked and deshelled mussels (see the basic recipe)
- 250 ml of saffron-spiced mussel bouillon (see the basic recipe)
- 125 ml whipping cream
- 1 egg yolk
- fresh pasta as desired, e.g. linguine or a similar band pasta that can well carry the chopped mussels

Proceed as follows:

1. Chop half of the mussels coarsely.
2. In a large pan (there should be space enough also for the pasta), mix the whipping cream and the bouillon; heat until a slow boil, add the chopped mussels and let the mixture simmer for a few minutes.
3. Remove the sauce from the heat, add the egg yolk while stirring.
4. Continue the heating at a very low heat (the sauce must never boil!) until the whole mussels have absorbed enough saffron taste.
5. Meanwhile, cook the fresh pasta. The cooking time will depend on the type of pasta you have chosen.
6. Drain the pasta, then add it to the mussel sauce, stir, add the remaining unchopped mussels, and continue stirring at very low heat for a minute or two. Serve immediately.

The selection of pasta is important. Do not use a dry type pasta; the flavor of the mussel sauce is too delicate. Also, stay away from very thin fresh pasta since that requires a creamy sauce without any solid particles.



Mussel Risotto

There were two starting points for this recipe: our "Basic Aphrodisiac Mussels" recipe and the basic risotto recipe of Jamie Oliver, published in his book "The Naked Chef". Many of the vegetables used to prepare the risotto are the same as used for the "Basic Aphrodisiac Mussels", thus you might consider preparing the risotto at the same time as the basic mussel dish. Please note that the quantities indicated are enough for two servings of the dish as the only course at a meal.

Ingredients:

- 100 - 200 g of cooked and deshelled mussels (see the basic recipe)
- 250 ml of saffron-spiced mussel bouillon (see the basic recipe)
- 1 shallot, finely chopped (about 30 g)
- 100 g celery, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 125 g risotto rice
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 150 ml dry white wine
- 3 tbsp high-quality cognac or similar brandy

Proceed as follows:

1. Heat the bouillon and keep it hot.
2. In a separate pan, heat the olive oil, add the chopped shallot and celery and let it steam for a few minutes, then add the garlic and continue heating the vegetables for another 2-3 minutes..
3. Increase the heat and add the rice. It should start to adsorb the moisture from the vegetables. Be careful with the heat; you must not fry the rice. After a few minutes the rice should be somewhat translucent. Lower the heat.
4. Add half of the white wine to the rice, the other half of the wine to the bouillon. Stir frequently until the rice has adsorbed virtually all of the added wine.
5. Now start adding the bouillon, ladle by ladle. Stir all the time; add the next ladle only when the last one has been more ore less completely adsorbed. The whole process of adding the bouillon should take 15-20 minutes.
6. Add the mussels on top of the rice. Cover the pan and keep it at very, very low heat for a few minutes until the mussels have been heated all through. Remember that you do not have to cook the mussels, just to heat them.
7. Bring the pan to the table. Turn off any electric lights, there should only be candle-light. Remove the cover from the pan, add the cognac, replace the cover, wait 30 seconds, remove the cover again and ignite the cognac fumes. When the flames have died, serve the risotto immediately.

You can prepare the risotto in advance and keep it deep frozen. The rice will loose some of its texture and some of the bite, but so what? if you are in a hurry..

Mussels for Gourmets on a Diet

The availability of mussels in Umeå was very limited. Small and expensive plastic bags with a contents of dubious freshness appeared once a week on the fish dish at one of the major department stores in the town (there were two of them), otherwise all mussels were of the canned variety.

You can imagine how thrilled and enthused we became when we first became aware of the ready availability of mussels in the Netherlands. Of course we started to experiment, and finally arrived at the following recipe.

Ingredients:

- 2 kg fresh Zeeland mussels, the larger the better (and more expensive)
- 100-200 g peeled and thinly sliced carrots
- 100 g thinly sliced celery
- a small leek, thinly sliced
- 6-10 garlic cloves, finely chopped (this is one secret ingredient!)
- a small onion, finely chopped
- 100-200 ml dry white wine
- 0.5 g saffron (this is the other secret ingredient)

Proceed as follows:

1. Clean the mussels and discard those that appear to be dead, i.e. will not close their shells when a friendly pressure has been applied a few times. Parboil the veggie mix in the microwave oven at full power (700 W), 1.5 minutes for every 100 gram of vegetables.
2. Transfer the vegetables to a 6 liter casserole, add the wine, the saffron and the mussels and bring to a boil.
3. Stir now and then (about every 10 seconds), using a wooden fork if available, until all the mussels have opened (this should only take a few minutes). The dish is now ready to be served.

The mussels can best be served together with toast, aioli and, if available, zeekraal. The easiest way to eat the mussels is to use a pair of empty mussel shells as tweezers to pick the mussel meat out of the shells.

Mussels with Pine Nuts and Garlic



Roasting will not destroy the aphrodisiac qualities of pine nut and can in some combinations enhance the taste. Keep in mind, though, that pine nuts roast quickly in comparison to other nuts and also burn easily.

Ingredients:

- 300 g freshly cooked mussels
- 100 g pine nuts
- 25 g garlic
- olive oil

Proceed as follows:

1. Chop the garlic and the pine nuts briefly in the food processor. Heat some extra virgin olive oil in a pan and add the coarse pine nut - garlic mixture.
2. Roast the mixture until it just begins to acquire a golden brown colour (usually 2-3 minutes) and let it cool.
3. Purée the cooked mussels and the roasted pine nut-garlic mixture in the food processor. If possible, use freshly prepared mussels which have been cooked together with white wine, fennel, celery, leeks and carrots.

The pine nut-garlic-mussel purée can be served as it is, on toast or crackers, or (our preference because of the eggs!) as an omelet filling. In the latter case, a glass (or two) of dry cider is a perfect accompaniment.

Mussel Soup



The starting point for this recipe is the Basic Aphrodisiac Mussels. Actually, the dish was originally not developed as an aphrodisiac but for dietary purposes. Because of intestinal cancer, Johan was on a very restricted diet. This dish turned out to be quite acceptable to his digestion, while at the same time tasting "just like gourmet restaurant food", according to Anne.

Ingredients:

- 100 - 200 g of cooked and deshelled mussels (see the basic recipe)
- 500 ml of saffron-spiced mussel bouillon (see the basic recipe)
- 6 slices white bread, at least two days old
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves
- 125 ml whipping cream

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut the bread slices into cubes with a side of approximately 1 cm.
2. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan. Add the crushed garlic, continue the heating until the garlic turns dark golden brown. Remove the garlic from the oil by filtration through a metal sieve.
3. Fry the bread cubes in the garlicky olive oil until they are golden brown. If the bread is fresh it will adsorb much olive oil and you might have to add a little bit more of the oil. Set the fried bread croutons aside.
4. Mix the mussel bouillon and the whipping cream, let simmer for a few minutes. Add the mussels, let them simmer until hot (but remember: the purpose is to heat the mussels, not to cook them).
5. Pour the soup into two soup plates. Add the bread croutons on top of the soup and serve immediately.

A dry white wine with a lot of taste goes nicely with the soup. Why not try the spicy Gewurtztraminer from Alsace?

Pine Nut and Shrimp Paste



Both shrimps and pine nuts are well known for their aphrodisiacal qualities. Imagine then what would happen if you combine these ingredients!

Ingredients:

- 100 g shelled shrimp
- 50 g pine nuts
- 75 g sour cream or creme fraiche
- pastry shells
- or endive leaves

Proceed as follows:

1. Purée the shelled shrimps, half of the pine nuts and the sour cream in the food processor until you have a smooth paste.
2. Add the remaining pine nuts and mix thoroughly.
3. Serve, e.g. in small pastry shells or on leaves of Belgian endive as an appetizer before

Since the taste of the paste is very delicate, it should not be combined with strongly tasting items.



Scallops in Saffron

The starting point was a recipe in Leith's Fish Bible, which we modified to suit our palate. Yes, we know that saffron is expensive, but plenty of saffron is a must for this dish.

Ingredients:

- 250 g scallops
- 200 ml dry white wine
- 50 g finely chopped shallot
- 100 g finely chopped chestnut mushrooms
- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 g saffron
- 150 ml fish stock
- 150 ml creme fraiche

Proceed as follows:

1. Soak the saffron in the fish stock.
2. Separate the coral from the scallops. Cut the white meat in half horizontally.
3. Place both coral and white meat in a saucepan and cover with white wine.
4. Bring the liquid to a boil. Remove from the heat immediately and set aside.
5. Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the shallot and the mushrooms and cook over a low heat for a few minutes.
6. Pour the saffron/fish stock over the shallots and mushrooms, bring to a boil and let simmer for a few minutes.
7. Add the creme fraiche, let simmer for another 7-10 minutes.
8. Add the scallops, let simmer for another minute.

Serve together with toast and a salad.

Seviche

During "normal" cooking fish flesh, i.e. the protein, is transferred into a new, coagulated form by heating. A similar result can be achieved by the use of an acid. Seviche is fish that has been cooked by treatment with lemon or lime juice and bears no similarity to raw fish. It is important that the fish is very fresh and skinless.

Ingredients:

- 400-500 g fish filets, e.g. plaice or sole
- 200 ml fresh lemon juice
- 1-2 finely chopped red jalapeño peppers
- 1-2 crushed garlic cloves
- 5-10 g crushed coriander seeds
- salt and black pepper as required
- 200 g peeled, deseeded and coarsely chopped tomatoes
- 100 g finely chopped leek
- 200 g peeled and diced cucumber

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut the fish filets into 1.5 - 2 cm pieces. Place them in bowl that is not too large for the refrigerator. Add the jalapeño peppers, garlic and coriander and pour the lemon juice on top of the mixture. The juice should cover the fish pieces, if not they will have to be compressed.
2. If so desired also the vegetables can be added to the fish-lemon-spice mixture. This is specially recommended if you intend to serve the dish as the main course during a lunch on a hot summer day.
3. Leave the bowl for at least 3, if possible 4 - 6 hours in the refrigerator. The fish flesh should be white and opaque and not translucent any more when the "cooking" is complete.
4. Serve together with a cold beer (Corona?) and toasted bread or baguette.

Skate Wings with Capers

Before arriving in The Hague we had actually never eaten skate in any form, but skate wings (rogvleugels) soon became a favourite dish, not the least because of the stimulating effects of this fish.

The "bones" (which are not bones but cartilage) are so few and easy to manage that it would be a pleasure even for a small child. Usually we prepare the skate wings according to the following recipe, based on Bocuse's "Regional French Cooking".

Ingredients:

- 400 - 500 g skate wings (2 - 4 pieces)
- 25 - 50 g capers
- Dijon mustard, salt
- 25 - 50 g butter

Proceed as follows:

1. First prepare the "nutbrown butter" (beurre noisette): Melt butter and continue to heat it rather slowly until it has acquired a dark golden brown colour and small dark brown grains of deep fried proteins begin to appear.
2. Place the skate wings on a suitable glass or ceramic form with the thickest part facing outwards. Add some salt and cover the skate wings with a very thin layer of Dijon mustard.
3. Cover with plastic wrap and cook in the microwave oven at full heat (700 W) for one minute per 100 g skate wings.
4. Remove the plastic wrap, strew capers generously over the wings and serve together with the nutbrown butter. Carefully decant the butter over the skate wings, leaving the fried protein behind.

Almost any source of "slow carbohydrates", be it potatoes, fresh pasta or rice can be served as a side dish.

Tropical Fish Stew



We came across this dish when we spent two weeks at White Sands hotel, 20 km north of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. We found it so delicious that we had it three times during that period. Back in the Netherlands, of course we started to try to copy the dish.

If you can get hold of a really ripe and succulent pineapple, we believe our copy is as good as the original. When eating it, you start to dream of the beach at the Indian Ocean...

Ingredients:

- 1 ripe pineapple
- 600 g of our fish stew (or of yours!)
- 50-75 g grated cheese
- paprika powder

Proceed as follows:

1. Prepare the fish stew.
2. Preheat the oven to 225 °C .
3. Cut the pineapple vertically into two halves and scoop out the fruit flesh.
4. Mix the fish stew with some of the fruit flesh. How much you take is a matter of taste; we normally use one third (and have the remainder for dessert).
5. Fill the two pineapple halves with the hot (or, at least, warm) fish stew.
6. Cover with the grated cheese and some paprika powder.
7. Place the filled pineapple halves on a plate and put it in the preheated oven for 10 minutes. After that, raise the thermostat setting and turn on the grill element. Grill until the cheese has melted and turned golden brown.
8. Serve!

Any thick fish stew can be used. "Watery" stews of the bouillabaisse type are less well suited. As a drink, we recommend beer. For once, white wine does not come well together a fish dish.



Trout Mousse

This dish can be prepared even a day in advance and be kept in the refrigerator until required. The texture makes it very well suited for spoon-feeding (each other).

Ingredients:

- 500 g trout (or other salmon type fish)
- 100 g boiled potatoes
- 150 ml freshly pressed lemon juice
- 3 tbsp cognac
- 2 tbsp molten butter
- 2 avocados
- cayenne pepper
- black pepper, salt

Proceed as follows:

1. Cook any salmon type fish, e.g. trout, in the microwave oven: 1 minute at high for every 100 gram. Remove skin, bones, tail and head, and let the meat cool. About 300 gram of meat should remain.
2. Purée the trout meat together with cooked potatoes, freshly pressed lemon juice, cognac and molten butter in a food processor.
3. Add the flesh of 1 1/2 peeled avocado, a very generous pinch of cayenne pepper and pinches of salt and black pepper.
4. Purée for another 15-30 seconds.
5. Transfer the mousse to a suitable bowl and let it cool for at least a few hours in the refrigerator.

Serve the mousse together with lumpfish roe in canapés or on toast, using the remaining 1/2 avocado cut in thin slices as a decor.

An alternative is to take the mousse bowl, sit down upon a bed and spoon-feed each other. In this case the roe should be excluded.



Amorous Pesto (Feta Dip)

The starting point for this recipe came from a Canadian contributor to the Aphrodisiacs Exchange. As usual, we began experimenting and, after a while and many attempts, came up some possible modifications. The dip mix can be used, e.g. as a pesto sauce. A similar dip mix has also been included in our collection of favourite recipes.

Ingredients:

- 150 g feta cheese (preferably in brine)
- 1 bulb and 1 clove garlic
- 2 g fresh basil (6 4-cm leaves) or 2 g fresh cilantro (coriander) leaves
- 50 g pine nuts
- 1/2 - 1 tsp saffron - optional!
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil or 3 tbsp creme fraiche (sour cream)

Proceed as follows:

1. Remove the papery skin from the garlic bulb and bake it in the oven for 1 hour at a temperature of 175 °. Let it cool and remove any residual skin. You should have about 25 grams baked garlic with a creamy texture.
2. If you use saffron, soak it in the lemon juice for at least 30 minutes.
3. Purée the feta cubes, the baked garlic, the raw garlic clove, the basil or cilantro (coriander) leaves and the lemon juice (with or without saffron) in a food processor. Add olive oil or creme fraiche to get a smooth, creamy consistency.

The dip mix based on olive oil is the original one. Substituting olive oil by creme fraiche results in a dip mix with a softer taste and a smoother consistency. Both forms can be used in the same way as ordinary pesto sauce. Deep-freezing is possible, especially of the creme fraiche based dip. Remember: If you leave out the saffron, the aphrodisiacal effects might be very weak or even absent.



Spicy Onion Paste

This paste is not a dish in itself, but rather a delicious condiment that can add an aphrodisiac touch to very many different dishes. The aphrodisiac qualities of onions are well known since the days of antiquity.

Ingredients:

- 3 medium-sized onions
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tbsp black pepper

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut the onions in very thin slices but do not chop them
2. Heat extra virgin olive oil and butter in a pan, add the onion slices and coarsely ground black pepper and let simmer at very low heat for 45 minutes, while occasionally stirring.
3. Add balsamic vinegar and continue the simmering for another 5-10 minutes.
4. Let the paste cool overnight in the refrigerator.

The paste can best be served as a condiment to, e.g. plaice or paté.



Äppelmos - Stewed and Mashed Apples

Especially during the late part of the 19th century and the early days of the 20th, sugar was often used in main dishes and sweet condiments were served as side dishes. One of the few sweet condiments that goes well with meat, especially pork, is *äppelmos*, stewed and mashed apples.

Ingredients:

- 1 kg apples (not too ripe, not too sweet)
- 50 - 100 ml water
- 200 g sugar
- 1 g ascorbic acid (vitamin C, to prevent the apples from darkening by air oxidation)

Proceed as follows:

1. The peeled and cored apples are cut into small pieces which are left with a little water to simmer at low heat until the pieces begin to soften up. This should not take more than 10 minutes. It is not necessary that all pieces have softened.
2. Add the sugar. The quantity can be adjusted according to your preferences. Bring the mixture to a boil and mix carefully, mashing the apple pieces at the same time
3. Remove the stewed and mashed apples from the heat and add the ascorbic acid. It is best first to mix the ascorbic acid with a small quantity of the apple sauce and then add this mixture to the main part of the apple sauce.

It is best preserved deep frozen and will keep for at least half a year. It is often served together with the traditional Swedish Christmas ham or almost any other pork dish.



Hovmästarsås - Mustard sauce

This is the standard sauce served together with gravlax, salt and sugar-cured salmon. It is also very good together with mussels, crayfish or shrimps.

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp of sweetened mustard, for example Slottssenap, acquired from "IKEA" (but do not hesitate to substitute!)
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp vinegar
- (1 egg-yolk)
- salt and coarsely ground white pepper
- 125 ml vegetable oil
- plenty of chopped fresh dill

Proceed as follows:

1. Mix the mustard, (egg yolk), vinegar, sugar salt and pepper. The egg yolk is not necessary, but will make the sauce smoother and softer.
2. Whisk constantly and add slowly the oil. Continue until the sauce is creamy.
3. Add the chopped dill.



Candied Violets

This mildly exotic recipe is contained in the "Honeymoon Cookbook", which the Swedish "Kooperativa Förbundet" distributed to all newlyweds during the 1930's. Although we have not yet tried ourselves, we believe it might also work with lilacs!

Ingredients:

- Freshly collected flowers of violets
- Sugar solution: 0.5 kg sugar, 0.1 kg glucose, 100 ml of water

Proceed as follows:

1. Prepare the sugar solution by letting the mixture simmer at low heat until sugar and glucose have dissolved.
2. Let the solution cool but not to the extent that sugar crystals begin to precipitate.
3. Put the flowers of violets in a strainer and dip them into the solution.
4. Let them cool and dry on a roster or a paper towel.



Ostkaka - Cheesecake

"Ostkaka", cheesecake, is a traditional dish from the province of Småland in southern Sweden. Swedes normally do not prepare the dish themselves but buy it ready-made. However, "ostkaka" is not easily available outside Sweden; hence we have included a recipe (which should serve 15-20 persons as a dessert) for those who would like to try.

Ingredients:

- 12 l milk
- 0.3 l all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon rennet
- 1 l cream
- 6 eggs
- 250 g granulated sugar
- 200 g almonds
- 10 pieces bitter almonds

Proceed as follows:

1. Heat the milk to 37 °C. Add the all-purpose flour and the rennet. Stir until the mixture thickens.
2. Let it stand until it separates into cheese and whey. Stir a few times so that the cheese separates from the whey.
3. Strain the mixture and make certain virtually all of the whey is removed.
4. Stir cream, granulated sugar, eggs and finely chopped almonds and bitter almonds into the "cheese".
5. Pour the mixture into suitable buttered forms. Place the forms in a water bath and bake them at low heat in the oven (175 °C) until the mixture solidifies and acquires a light brown colour.

Serve together with, e.g. whipped cream or a cinnamon sauce.



Västerbottensglass - Cheese Ice Cream

"Västerbotten" is probably not only the best known but also the best of all Swedish cheeses, The production is small and it is difficult to find this cheese outside Sweden. A well-aged Stilton cheese might be a possible substitute in the present recipe, which we originally got from Maiken Karlsson. (When we first heard about cheese ice cream, we were as hesitant as you probably are, but give it a try!)

Ingredients:

- 60 g grated Västerbotten cheese
- 3 egg yolks
- 60 g icing sugar (powdered sugar)
- 300 ml whipping cream
- 3 egg whites

Proceed as follows:

1. Mix the grated cheese with the sugar and the egg yolks.
2. Whip the whipping cream. Add the whipped cream to the cheese-egg yolks-sugar mixture.
3. Whip the egg whites into a firm foam. Add the foam under a very gentle mixing to the cream-cheese-egg yolks-sugar mixture.
4. Pour into a low mould; place it in the deep-freeze for a few hours.

If possible, serve the Västerbotten cheese ice cream together with cloudberry jam.



Saftsås - Fruit Syrup Sauce

This is the standard sauce for "Ris à la Malta", rice with oranges and whipped cream.

Ingredients:

- 200 ml fruit syrup, not too sweet
- 250 ml water
- 1 ½ tbsp potato starch (potato flour)
- honey as required

Proceed as follows:

1. Mix the fruit syrup, water and potato starch and bring it to a boil while stirring constantly.
2. Let it boil for 6 - 8 seconds and remove it from the heat.
3. Taste and add honey as required.
4. Serve either cold or above room temperature (but not hot).

Lemon Parfait

A refreshing dessert for a summer evening. In place of the lemon juice and lemon zest, you can also use the same quantity of Swedish arrak punch.

Ingredients:

- 150 ml granulated sugar
- 3 egg yolks
- 300 ml whipping cream
- 50 ml lemon juice
- zest of one lemon

Proceed as follows:

1. Beat the egg yolks into the sugar until you have a very fluffy mixture.
2. Whip the whipping cream.
3. Add the lemon juice and the lemon zest to the egg-and-sugar batter. Stir.
4. Fold in the whipped cream, working so as not to deflate the volume.
5. Pour the mixture into a bowl or baking tin. Leave it in the deep-freeze for at least 12 hours to solidify.



Lussekatter - Saint Lucia Buns

On 13 December the Swedes celebrate the Italian Saint Lucia with a remarkable enthusiasm, surpassing any Italian festivities devoted to the same lady. One mandatory constituent in the celebrations is a saffron-flavoured bun, in Swedish called a *lussekatt*, a "Lucia cat". The shape of this bun might vary somewhat, but is always based on bread designs dating back to earlier Christmas celebrations in Sweden.

Ingredients:

- 300 ml milk
- 1 g saffron
- 50 g fresh baker's yeast
- 150 g sugar
- 125 g butter or margarine
- 700 g all purpose flour
- 1 egg
- salt, raisins

Proceed as follows:

1. Melt butter or margarine in a pan and add the milk and the saffron. Warm the mixture to 37 °C. Use a thermometer, the correct temperature is important!
2. Pour the mixture over the finely divided yeast, then add the remaining ingredients (except for the egg and the raisins), which should have a temperature of 21-23 °C. Mix into a smooth dough.
3. Cover the dough with a piece of cloth and let it rise for 30 minutes.
4. Knead the dough, divide it into 25-30 pieces and form each piece into a round bun. Let the buns rest for a few minutes, covered by a piece of cloth..
5. Form each bun into a string, 15-20 cm long, then arrange the string in a suitable shape, e.g. like an S or a double S. Regardless of the shape, the ends of the string should meet. Press a few raisins into the dough.
6. Cover the "Lucia cats" with a piece of cloth and let them rise for 40 minutes.
7. Whip the egg together with a few grains of salt. and paint the "Lucia cats" with the mixture.
8. Bake them for 5-10 minutes in the oven at 250 °C until golden brownish yellow.

Popcorn Crunch

This is not a dessert, but rather a form of sweet. We got the recipe from Annmarie Santesson-Gerber (our sister/sister-in-law), presently living in the southernmost part of Sweden, where she is raising geese and lambs.

Ingredients:

- 200 ml granulated sugar
- 100 ml treacle (molasses)
- 125 g butter
- 2 l popped popcorn
- 200 g salted peanuts

Proceed as follows:

1. Mix sugar, treacle and butter in a pan. Bring to a slow boil.
2. After a few minutes, by means of a teaspoon take a small sample of the boiling mixture (be careful, the mixture is very hot) and let it drip into a glass of cold water. If the mixture solidifies into a hard lump, it is ready. If not, continue the boiling and repeat the test after a few minutes.
3. Add the peanuts and the popped popcorn. Mix carefully, you will have to stir forcefully for at least a minute.
4. Pour the mixture onto any cold, clean metal surface and let it solidify.
5. Break up the solid mass in small pieces.

Serve the popcorn crunch in a small bowl. It will keep for days as long as there are no children (or adults) around.



Ris à la Malta - Rice with Oranges and Whipped Cream

Strictly speaking, this is probably not a dish that originated in Sweden. In a Swedish cookbook from 1879 the dish is called "*Risgryn med apelsin*" (literally "Rice grains with orange") and the French name is given as "*Riz à la Malte*". Whatever the origin, it is very popular in Sweden (as well as in Denmark).

Ingredients:

- 400 ml cooked white rice, cold and soft
- 200 ml whipped cream, whipped to a volume of 400-500 ml
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 orange, peeled and cut in very small pieces and/or
- 3 slices of pineapple, cut in very small pieces

Proceed as follows:

1. Add the sugar to the cream and whip until reasonably firm, then add the lemon juice and the fruit pieces.
2. Mix carefully with the cooked rice.
3. Rinse a large bowl with water, then fill it with the rice-cream mixture, press cautiously to remove any trapped air, and leave it for at least one hour in the refrigerator.
4. Remove the bowl from the refrigerator and turn out the rice-cream mixture on to a round dish.
5. Garnish with thin slices of orange and/or pineapple.

Many Swedes love to serve the *Ris à la Malta* with "saftsås", fruit syrup sauce.



Skånsk äppelkaka - Scanian Apple Cake

The southernmost province of Sweden - Scania - is famous (at least within Sweden) for its food. This Scanian apple cake is a true calorie bomb but so delicious that it has to be eaten at least once even if you will have to stick to a water-and-bread diet for few days afterwards.

Ingredients:

- 16 large apples
- 500 g (1 lb) granulated sugar
- 400 ml dried bread crumbs
- plenty of butter

Proceed as follows:

1. Peel the apples, remove the cores and cut them in thin slices.
2. Butter a suitable form and cover the bottom with a thin layer of sugar and bread crumbs.
3. Place half of the apple slices in the form and spread half of the sugar and half of the bread crumbs on top of the slices.
4. Add the remaining apple slices and cover them with the remaining sugar and bread crumbs.
5. Slice ice-cold butter over the form, using a cheese slicer, so that the contents of the form is covered by a thin butter layer.
6. Bake in the oven at 175 °C for 10 minutes.
7. Slice a new butter layer over the contents of the form.
8. Bake for another 10 minutes at 175 °C.
9. Raise the oven temperature to 250 °C and bake for a further 20 minutes.



Semlor - Almond and Whipped Cream Stuffed Buns



In their present shape *semlor* only dates back to the turn of the century. Originally, the stuffed buns were boiled in milk before serving on the Tuesday preceding the Lent. Now they are eaten from January until Easter.

Ingredients:

For twelve buns:

- 50 g yeast
- 100 g butter
- 300 ml milk
- 75 g granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 500-550 g all-purpose wheat flour

For the stuffing of six buns:

- 100 g almond paste
- 75 ml milk
- the crumbs from 6 buns
- 200 ml whipped cream

Proceed as follows:

1. Melt the butter, add the milk and heat to 37 °C, add the finely divided yeast and stir.
2. Add sugar, salt and almost all of the flour. Mix thoroughly and leave it in a warm place for 40 minutes to raise.
3. Knead the dough and divide it into 12 parts. Form round buns, knead them a little and leave them for 30-40 on a baking tray to raise.
4. Bake them in the oven at 225-250 °C for 5-10 minutes (watch carefully at the end to avoid burning the buns).
5. Cut off the top of six buns as a lid. Scoop out the crumbs and mix them with the almond paste, the milk and half of the whipped cream until you have a soft paste.
6. Fill the scooped out buns with the paste, cover with whipped cream and, finally, with the lid. If desired, sprinkle powdery sugar on top.

Strawberries in a Melon Sauce



During the summer and even a month or two into the autumn succulent melons (galia, candeloupe, etc.) are at their cheapest. Puréed melon fruit meat has many uses.

Ingredients:

- 500-700 g fresh strawberries
- 1 small sweet melon (500-700 g)

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut the melon into halves and deseed them.
2. Spoon out the fruit meat and purée it in a food processor. Place the resulting "soup" in the refrigerator for at least two hours.
3. Pour some of the "soup" into a deep plate and place strawberries in it. Serve immediately.

Swedish Punch and Chocolate Sweets

For many years these deliciously fattening sweets were served at Christmas time in our family. Any dietist would scream blue murder after reading the recipe, since they come loaded with cholesterol-raising saturated fat. But they are sooooo delicious, so once a year you should be permitted to indulge in them.

Ingredients:

- 300 ml granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 300 g coconut butter
- 100 g cocoa powder
- 100 ml Swedish arrak punch

Proceed as follows:

1. Beat the eggs into the sugar.
2. Melt the coconut butter, then let it cool until it almost starts to re-solidify.
3. Pour the melted coconut butter into the egg-and-sugar batter, mix.
4. Add the cocoa powder and the punch, stir until you get a homogenous mixture.
5. Pour the mixture onto a wide dish or baking-tin. This should be so large that the resulting layer is not more than 1 cm deep.
6. Leave it in the refrigerator to solidify. Afterwards, cut it up into small pieces, which can be covered by sprinkles or jimmies for easier handling.

The punch and chocolate sweets must be stored in a cool place. The softening point for the coconut butter-punch mixture is around room temperature.



Våfflor - Waffles

In Sweden waffles are traditionally eaten on 25 March, Annunciation Day or, in Swedish, *Vårfrudagen*. They are also very popular in Swedish mountain resorts, where they generally are served together with whipped cream and cloudberry jam.

Ingredients:

- 250 ml water (ice cold!)
- 200 g all-purpose flour (325 ml)
- a pinch of salt
- 400 ml heavy or whipping cream
- melted butter

Proceed as follows:

1. In a large mixing bowl, toss together the flour, the water and the salt until you have a smooth mixture.
2. Whip the cream until it is firm and mix it carefully with the water-flour mixture.
3. Pre-heat a waffle iron (yes, unfortunately you do need a special iron; we have not been able to find a good substitute) and grease it lightly.
4. Pour 100 ml of the batter onto the waffle iron and cook until crisp and golden (approximately 2 minutes).

Serve immediately together with whipped cream and a suitable fruit or berry jam. Some even like to sweeten the waffles with some granulated sugar.



Svartvinbärsbrännvin - Home-made **Absolut Kurant**

"Absolut Kurant" is a very popular Swedish vodka, colourless but with a strong taste of black currant. You can prepare a similar (but stronger) beverage yourself, although it takes time. (Normal Swedish "svartvinbärsbrännvin" has a deep dark violet colour and is prepared by extraction of black currant berries.)

Ingredients:

- 1 l 96 % alcohol
- 1 kg black currants

Proceed as follows:

1. In a closed large glass jar place the 96 % alcohol at the bottom.
2. Place 0.5-1 kilograms of black currants in a gauze bag and suspend this bag over the alcohol. It is important that the black currants are not in any way submerged in the alcohol.
3. Leave the jar closed in a warm place for at least two months. After that time most of the aroma will have evaporated from the black currants and dissolved in the alcohol, however the pigment still remain in the currants.

Cider and Melon Juice, a Driver's Drink

The starting point for this drink was our Melon and Cucumber Soup. Our son Peter suggested that a melon soup could be mixed with cider. We tried and indeed, the result turned out to be a refreshing summer drink, very low in alcohol contents

Ingredients:

- one part dry cider
- one part melon juice
- ice cubes as desired

Proceed as follows:

1. Cut a melon into halves, deseed them and spoon out the fruit meat.
2. Purée the fruit meat in a food processor.
3. Filter the purée through a fine-mesh sieve (time-consuming but essential!).
4. Mix with the cider and, possibly, ice-cubes.

The drink should be served cold. This is best achieved if you chill the melon and the cider beforehand.

Frozen Margarita

Yet another memory of the summers in New York. At Caliente Cab (*inter alia* situated at the corner of 7 Ave. and Bleacher Street) brunch was served during the weekend under the motto "Drink 'til you drop". \$ 7 bought you a main course and an unlimited supply of frozen Margaritas which you consumed using a very special form of drinking straw, similar to what is used in hospitals for patients who cannot raise their heads anymore. A coincidence? Maybe.

Ingredients:

- 60 ml tequila (preferably José Cuervo Gold)
- 40 ml fresh lime juice (in case of emergency, use lemon juice)
- 20 ml Triple Sec or Cointreau
- 300 g crushed ice

Proceed as follows:

1. Mix all the ingredients in a suitable vessel.
2. Add the ice to the mixture and crush it, using a mixer, until a thick sludge is obtained.
3. Serve in a large glass.

If you like your Margarita salty, moisten the brim of the glass by means of a lemon slice and roll it in coarse salt before you pour the Margarita into the glass.



Soft - Fruit-syrup

In early autumn, berries are converted into fruit syrup which will be happily consumed by the kids during the long and dark winter, reminding them of (weatherwise) happier days.

Ingredients:

- 1 kg (2 lbs) of berries, e.g. black or red currants, cherries, raspberries, strawberries, etc.
- 300 - 600 ml (1 - 2 cups) of water
- 300 - 600 ml (1 - 2 cups) of granulated sugar
- 5 g of sodium benzoate to preserve the "saft"

Proceed as follows:

1. Clean the berries. The pit can stay in cherries; black and red currants can remain as racemes.
2. Weight the berries and determine the water quantity. Black and red currants require the largest water quantity, strawberries, cherries, and raspberries require less water.
3. Boil the berries in the water under cover for 10 minutes. Squeeze them now and then with, e.g. a wooden spoon in order to make certain they are crushed.
4. Now comes the tricky part: You have to strain the "saft", using a straining-cloth. Do not apply pressure, but let gravity do the trick. This part of the preparation might take up to an hour.
5. Measure the quantity of "saft", bring it to the boil and add the sugar. If required, carefully skim off any scum.
6. Add the sodium benzoate if desired (first dissolve it in a small quantity of saft, then add the solution to the rest of the "saft").
7. Fill the "saft" into hot, clean bottles and seal the bottles immediately (e.g. using cork). Before serving, mix the fruit-syrup with water to desired strength.



Glögg - Spicy Hot Red Wine

Swedish glögg can usually be bought at IKEA furniture super-stores all over the world (except, of course, in Sweden!) But you can also make your own glögg. If you want to know more about glögg, check our webpage on Swedish Christmas Chemistry!

Ingredients:

- one bottle cheap red wine
- 100 ml (half a cup) vodka
- 10 g whole cinnamon
- 1.5 grams cloves (about 20 pieces)
- a small piece of ginger
- 2 g crushed cardamom seeds
- the (dried) peels of half a bitter orange
- 300 g (slightly more than a cup) sugar
- 1 tbsp vanilla sugar
- almonds and raisins as desired

Proceed as follows:

1. Crush the cardamom and cinnamon, put all spices in a covered glass jar, add the vodka. Let stand for 24 hours.
2. Sieve the vodka, discard the spices.
3. Put the almonds in boiling water for 10 seconds, rinse them with cold water and peel them.
4. Mix the red wine and the spicy vodka in a pan, add vanilla, sugar, almonds and raisins.
5. Heat covered for a few minutes, but do not under any circumstances let the mixture boil.

Serve sizzling hot but only when it's freezing cold outside!



Vargtass - Wolf's Paw

Hard liquor is very expensive in Sweden. This means that some chemists turn to laboratory alcohol in order to their expenses at a more reasonable level. *Vargtass* is one favourite way of making use of the tax-free lab alcohol.

Ingredients:

- 60 ml vodka or
- 25 ml lab alcohol (96 %)
- 35 ml water
- 60 ml lingonberry juice

Proceed as follows:

1. Mix equal parts of vodka and lingonberry juice in a shaker with plenty of ice. Shake and serve!

Even better is to mix without ice and leave the mixture in the refrigerator for a few hours. Thus you avoid an unnecessary dilution, but that requires careful planning.