

Cook a 3 Course Meal for your Family or Housemates

Background:

It was necessary for all Guides and particularly those going abroad on the G.I.S to be able to provide a balance meal for those in need around them. As rationing continued through the 1940s and into the 1950s, there would have been food items that were in short supply, such as meat, eggs, cheese and sugar. Think about meals that have lots of local fruit and vegetables in, as these would have been the most readily available items, especially if you had a garden and could grow your own!

Time Taken to Complete:

This will depend on what you choose to cook (and how you cook it!). Most 3 course meals cooked from scratch will take at least an hour to prepare, but be prepared for it to take much longer!

Equipment Required:

- A Sharp Kitchen Knife
- Chopping Board
- Baking Tray
- Saucepans and Frying Pans
- A Wooden Spoon or Spatula for Stirring
- Plates and Cutlery for Serving
- Ingredients! Variable depending on what you are making.

Safety Precautions:

- **Good Hygiene is Important!** Always wash your hands before handling food and after touching raw meat.
- **Kitchen Knives will be sharp!** Make sure an adult supervises you whilst you are chopping up ingredients and keep your fingers away from the blade. **Have a first aid kit with plasters in to hand in case you do cut yourself.**
- **Cooker Tops and Ovens will be hot!** Use an oven glove or a heat proof cloth when moving hot trays and pots. Think about getting an adult to help you take things out of the oven if they are heavy.
- **Beware of Splashback!** When stirring hot pans on a cooker-top be aware of splashes of liquid or oil spitting out of the pan as these will be very hot! **If you do burn yourself, hold the injury under cold running water for up to 10 minutes (and repeat after 5 minutes break if necessary).**

Suggested Activities:

Here are some suggested 1940s recipes for you to try, but of course there are many, many more options. Do your own research online or go through your family cookbooks and put together your own menu.

Starters:

Vegetable soup (*this is a great recipe as you can use whatever vegetables you prefer or need to use*) Serves 4

50g butter
225g carrots
175g swede
2 leeks
25g flour
450ml vegetable stock
225ml milk
Season to taste

Method:

1. Melt butter in a saucepan and fry the leeks, carrots and swede for 5-10mins
2. Stir in the flour, then add the stock and simmer until vegetables are soft
3. Add milk and stir until combined, season to taste, continue to simmer until soup is hot

Vegetable fritters makes 5 fritters

1 Large egg
50g Self-raising flour
150g sweet corn
1 onion
150g Courgette
Oil to fry

Method:

1. Finely chop onion and grate courgette
2. Add vegetables, mix egg and flour thoroughly mix together
3. Split mix into 5 fritters, cover with additional flour
4. Add oil into saucepan and fry the vegetable fritters ensuring to flip to cook both sides (for a healthier alternative try oven baking them)

Mains:

Bangers and mash

8 sausages
2 Large potatoes
1 Onion
2tbsp Plain flour
600ml Stock (ideally beef
but chicken or vegetable is fine)
Vegetable of choice (we
suggest peas or carrots)

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 200 degrees
2. Place sausages on a greased baking tray, prick with a fork and cook for approx. 15 mins or until cooked through, ensuring to turn half way through
3. Peel and boil potatoes on hob until soft
4. Drain potatoes and mash with a potato masher add margarine, salt and pepper until smooth
5. To make the gravy slowly cook the onions with a small amount of oil in a saucepan, when soft mix flour and slowly add the stock, cook until thick and add herbs and seasoning to taste, alternatively use gravy granules such as Oxo
6. Serve with boiled veg of choice

Cottage pie

600g beef mince
1 onion
2 carrots
1 clove garlic
peas
oxo cube
Wosershire sauce
Chopped tomatoes
3 Large potatoes
25g butter or margarine
100g cheddar cheese
Oil
thyme

Method:

1. Add oil to a saucepan and heat on the cooker top, and the beef and cook until brown
2. Chop the onion, garlic and carrots and add them to the saucepan
3. Add chopped tomatoes, worcester sauce and thyme and stock cube to the vegetables and mince mix, simmer on a low temperature
4. Peel the potatoes, put in a saucepan, add water and boil until soft
5. Mash potatoes with butter and add salt and pepper to taste
6. Put the Mince mix in a oven proof dish, and the mash potato on top and grate the cheese on top
7. Cook at 180 degrees until cheese is browned, serve straightaway

Macaroni cheese serves 4

250g macaroni
40g plain flour
40g margarine or butter
600ml milk
300g cheddar Cheese

Method:

1. Boil macaroni in salted water for 8-10 mins drain and set aside
2. Melt the butter in a saucepan and add the flour to make a roux, cook for a few mins
3. Slowly add the milk and stir constantly as you add the milk and cook it for approx. 10 mins until the sauce is thick and smooth
4. Remove from the hob and add the cheese (reserving approx. 50g) stir until cheese is melted
5. Add macaroni to sauce and mix well, transfer to an oven proof dish and sprinkle remaining cheese over top.
6. Cook at 180 degrees until cheese is browned, serve straightaway

Desserts:

Sponge pudding serves 6

175g Butter
125g Caster sugar
3 eggs
175g self-raising flour
vanilla essence
3 tbsp jam

Method:

1. Whisk together the butter and caster sugar until smooth and creamy
2. Whisk in the eggs one at a time adding a spoon of flour with each to stop the mix from curdling
3. Sieve the flour into the mix and gently fold together, then whisk in the milk
4. Grease an oven proof dish, then spoon the jam into the bottom. Pour the mix in on top
5. Cover and cook in oven at 180 for 40mins (or until cooked through)
6. Tip out sponge onto a plate to serve

Apple berry crumble serves 4

120g plain flour
60g caster sugar
60g unsalted butter
300g apple
30g unsalted butter
30g demerara sugar
115g blackberries
¼ tsp ground cinnamon

Method:

1. Mix together flour and caster sugar, add 60g butter and rub into breadcrumbs
2. Sprinkle mix evenly over baking sheet and bake for 15mins at 180 degrees
3. Peel, core and dice the apples
4. Melt together 30g butter and demerara sugar in a sauce pan, then add apples and berries and cook for 10mins.
5. Place fruit in a bowl, add crumble mix and reheat in oven for 10 mins

Challenge Yourself!

Here are some suggestions if you are looking for more of a challenge:

- A Guide must be resourceful! Try planning your menu based on what you have already available at home. Be creative!
- Cooking away from home would have been carried out over a fire. If you have a BBQ at home you could create a menu that can entirely be cooked on the BBQ. Remember, meat was hard to come by! **Don't forget to ask for an adult to help you if you are cooking on open flames.**
- Cooking on a fire also meant that you couldn't 'oven-cook'. Try creating a whole menu without using the oven (just the cooker-top).
- Hay Box cooking was a great way to conserve energy. The pan of food was brought up to the boil and the whole pan was then enclosed in a box filled with hay, so that it continued to cook in its own heat. You could use an insulated flask to simulate this. Make up your mix and then **carefully** pour it piping hot into the flask and leave for several hours. Before serving, tip it out and bring it back up to temperature.
- If you have a camping stove at home, you could make set this up outside on a patio on garden table (**check user instructions**) and cook your menu using only the cooking stove.

VIRTUAL VE DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Hints and Tips:

- Starters do not have to be ‘cooked’. Think about options for preparing a fresh salad or topped toast to save energy.
- Plan your menu in advance and write yourself a time plan, so you know how long each element will take you. It’s tricky to get everything out together and hot! Being prepared is always the best policy.
- Herbs such as sage, rosemary and mint as well as salt and pepper were all available during the war and could add a lot of flavour to dishes that might otherwise be quite bland. Make sure to season well!
- Talk to your family and friends about why you have left out certain ingredients that weren’t available during the war and what you found challenging about preparing the meal.

Photos:



Rotterdam 1945. G.I.S. open air kitchen where food was prepared.

Photo from ‘All Things Uncertain’