



Tea Times

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In this session, we have some fun Early American recipes to try for teatimes: Apple Tansey, Queen Cakes, Molasses Cookies, Johnny Cakes, Blackberry Fool, and Spoon Cakes.

In the Spirit of '76, our teatimes will be called "Liber-Teas." We will have two Poetry teatimes, a Speech teatime, a Fable teatime, a Story teatime, and a read-aloud teatime!

Liber-Tea #1: "Paul Revere's Ride," by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Liber-Tea #2: Patrick Henry's famous "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech to the Virginia Convention.

Liber-Tea #3: "The Wolf and the House Dog," by Aesop

Liber-Tea #4: "Molly Pitcher: The Brave Gunner of the Battle of Monmouth," by Kate Dickinson Sweetser

Liber-Tea #5: "America: A Prophecy, Preludium" by William Blake

Liber-Tea #6: *A Fine Dessert* by Emily Jenkins & Sophie Blackall
(Note- this is a link to a read-aloud of this book, though you can choose to get your own copy to read at home [here](#) if you prefer!)

*"I know not what course others may take; but as for me,
give me liberty or give me death!"*

~ Patrick Henry

Apple Tansey

"Apple Tansey" is a colonial recipe brought to the Virginia colony from England in the early 18th century. The first known recipe was found in *The Compleat Housewife: or, Accomplish'd Gentlewoman's Companion* by E. Smith, and published in London in 1754.

The recipe is as follows:

"To make an Apple Tansey, take three pippins, slice them round in thin slices, and fry them with butter; then beat four eggs, with six spoonfuls of cream, a little rosewater, nutmeg, and sugar; stir them together, and pour it over the apples; let it fry a little, and turn it with a pye-plate. Garnish with lemon and sugar strew'd over it."

It's a very "interesting" recipe, kind of like a thick omelette with apple in it.



Ingredients

- 2-3 apples
- 3 T butter
- 4 large eggs
- 2 T heavy whipping cream
- 2 tsp. rose water
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 2 T sugar
- Powdered sugar
- Lemons

Directions

Preheat oven broiler. Core the apples then slice them into thin rounds.

Melt the butter over medium heat in a cast iron skillet. Add the apple slices to the butter and fry them for 5 minutes, turning once, until they soften and are brown around the edges.

While the apples are frying, beat the eggs together with the cream, rose water, nutmeg, and sugar. As soon as the apples are brown, pour the egg mixture evenly over them and cook for about 3 more minutes until the bottom solidifies. Then place the skillet in the oven under the broiler for 2-3 minutes until egg mixture is fully cooked.

Turn the apple tansey out onto a large plate. Sprinkle it with sugar and lemon juice if desired, and garnish with lemon slices. Cut into pie wedges to serve.

Queen Cakes

Queen Cakes (or Little Cakes) were a staple in American homes during Colonial times. Although dating back further, the first recorded recipe was in 1747, appearing in the *Art of Cookery*, by Hannah Glasse.

Since baking soda and baking powder weren't around in those days, this recipe depends upon well-beaten eggs to make them rise. And even though we bake them in a muffin pan, they won't rise like muffins, nor will they have their consistency. Rather, their texture is more like a delicate cornbread. This is a lovely tea time treat and simple to make.

Ingredients

1 c. all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp nutmeg
1/4 c. currants (or raisins)
1 stick of butter, softened
1/2 c. sugar
2 eggs
2 T rose water

Directions

Heat oven to 325 degrees. Grease and lightly flour a 12-cup muffin pan.

Mix flour, salt and nutmeg in a medium bowl. Stir in currants, making sure each one is coated with flour.

In a large bowl, stir the butter until it is smooth. Add sugar, mixing well. Add each egg, one at a time, until batter is smooth. Stir in rose water, then add flour mixture, stirring just enough to blend the flour.

Add only a tablespoon of batter into each muffin cup at first, then divide the the remaining batter among the cups. Bake for 15-20 minutes until cakes are golden around the edges.

Carefully loosen with butter knife to remove from pan. Eat warm or let them cool first on a wire rack.



Molasses Cookies

Molasses was first brought to the American colonies by European settlers in the 17th century. It quickly became a staple in colonial cuisine, used in sweetening baked goods and drinks.

The Molasses Act of 1733 was a tax placed on imports of molasses from non-British colonies, primarily targeted at the French West Indies. The law was heavily protested by colonists and merchants, and served as one of the early contributing factors to colonial resentment towards British rule and ultimately contributed to the American Revolution.

In 1764, Parliament repealed the act in an attempt to ease tensions with the colonies. However, by this point in history, it was too late to reverse growing revolutionary sentiments.

This recipe is perfect for fall and Christmas baking (or any time of the year)!



Ingredients

2 cups flour
1 cup sugar
3/4 cup butter, softened
1 egg
1/4 cup molasses
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. ground ginger
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. ground nutmeg
1/4 tsp. ground cloves
1/2 tsp. allspice
1/2 cup sugar for rolling

Directions

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In large bowl, beat butter, egg and molasses together.

In separate bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, and spices.

Add dry ingredients to butter mixture and

beat till smooth. Form dough into 1-inch balls and roll in sugar. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake until the edges are firm and the surface cracks, 9-11 minutes. Cool on wire racks.

Johnny Cakes

Johnny cakes, also known as journey cakes or johnny bread, have been a staple in New England cuisine since the colonial era. The simple mixture of cornmeal, water, and salt could easily be made over an open fire and was a common option for travelers or soldiers on their journeys.

The origin of the name "johnny cake" is unclear, with some speculating that it derives from the word "joniken," meaning little or small in Narragansett. Other theories suggest it comes from "journey cake," as previously mentioned, or "shawnee cake," named after the Shawnee Native American tribe who were known for making similar cornbread dishes.

Today, johnny cakes can vary in texture and ingredients, with some recipes calling for flour, sugar, baking powder, or eggs. However, the traditional version remains a beloved breakfast option in New England, often served with butter and molasses or maple syrup.

Ingredients

1 c. stoneground cornmeal
1 T granulated sugar
1/2 tsp salt
2 1/2 c. water
2 T butter
Butter or cooking spray (for frying)
Maple syrup (optional)

Directions

Combine cornmeal, salt, and sugar in a mixing bowl.

Bring water to a boil in a large saucepan. Gradually pour cornmeal mixture into the boiling water, whisking constantly. Turn off heat and continue whisking until the mixture is smooth. Add the butter and whisk until melted into mixture. Let the batter rest for up to 15 minutes to thicken. (The consistency should be thick like mashed potatoes and not runny.)

Heat a cast iron skillet (or griddle) over medium-high heat. Add butter (or cooking spray). Drop the batter in 1/4 c. scoops onto the pan about 3 inches apart. Let them fry undisturbed until edges are brown (6-12 minutes each side). Don't flip too soon or they will fall apart. After flipping, use a spatula to press them down to a thickness of no more than 1/4 inch so they will be thoroughly cooked and crispy. Serve hot with butter and maple syrup.



Spoon Bread

Ingredients

1 ½ cups water
2 cups whole milk
1 ½ cups cornmeal
1 ¼ tsp salt
1 ½ tsp sugar
2 tbsp salted butter
3 eggs
1 tbsp baking powder

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bring water and milk to simmer in a saucepan on medium-high heat. Whisk in cornmeal, salt, sugar, and butter. Cook about 3 minutes until thickened.

Allow to cool for 5 minutes. While the milk mixture cools, whip eggs together with baking powder until light and fluffy. Fold into milk-corn mixture until uniform in color.

Pour into a generously-greased 9"x9" baking dish or 9" round cast iron pan. Bake for 45 minutes or until mostly set. Cover with foil if the top browns too quickly. Remove from the oven and top with butter before spooning out individual servings. Serve warm with some cinnamon sugar, maple syrup, or fruit.



Blackberry Fool

Ingredients

1 pint (12 oz) fresh blackberries
2 tbsp granulated sugar
2 tsp vanilla extract
1 cup heavy whipping cream
2 tbsp confectioners' sugar

Directions

In a medium bowl, sprinkle the blackberries with granulated sugar and vanilla. Toss lightly to evenly coat and allow to steep for 10 minutes. Then mash the blackberries until they release their juices and form a thick pulp.

Use an electric stand or hand mixer to combine the heavy cream and confectioners' sugar in another bowl until stiff peaks form. Pour the berry mixture over the cream and gently fold until combined. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day. Serve with cookies if desired.

