

BOOKS FOR COOKS: PART 1

Just about every home today has at least one cookbook in its kitchen, and many of us have several. From new cookbooks we learn different ways to prepare foods today and from old cookbooks we learn how they cooked foods in kitchens of the past.

Cookbooks first appeared in Colonial America in the mid 1700s. In 1796, Amelia Simmon's self-published "American Cookery" became known as the first American cookbook. The primary cooking source at this time was the fireplace, and the first ingredient listed was corn meal.

Fannie Merritt Farmer (1857-1915) is credited with creating the formula for how we write recipes today. She attended the Boston Cooking School and in 1896 wrote the "Boston Cooking School Book", which became known as the "Bible of American Cooking". Her method of cooking was very scientific and her recipes were the first to give very precise measurements.

Grandma's Pantry carries a number of cookbooks, but there is one that we are particularly proud of because it was written by a local lady. Her name is Esther Shank and her cookbook is "Mennonite Country-Style Recipes and Kitchen Secrets". Esther's concern for the young people of today growing up in urban settings and having little time for food preparation encouraged her to compile this book. She dedicated her book to her three daughters, "sharing all the practical assistance that I can to help them be successful in their cooking - and to enjoy it as well". Her book is a compilation of recipes from family and friends. Esther Shank is also a contributing editor to the magazine "Taste of Home".

"Mennonite Country-Style Recipes and Kitchen Secrets" is packed with 662 pages of information – delicious, easy-to-follow recipes, how-to tips, nutrition guides, non-food recipes, and much more. The following is a recipe from the "Cakes, Frostings and Cookies" chapter:

OATMEAL CAKE

1 cup quick oatmeal *
1 ¼ cups hot water

Combine and set aside to cool for 20 minutes.

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1/2 cup margarine Cream thoroughly.
1 cup sugar
1 cup brown sugar*

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2 eggs Add, beating until fluffy.
1 tsp. vanilla*

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1 1/3 cups flour Sift together and add alternately with oatmeal
1 tsp. baking soda* mixture.
1/4 tsp salt*
1 tsp. ground cinnamon*

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Pour into greased 9X13 pan and bake at 350 degrees about 35 minutes.
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Topping:

1/4 cup soft margarine Mix together thoroughly and spread on top of
1/2 cup brown sugar * hot cake. Broil a few minutes until slightly brown.
1/4 cup cream or rich milk
1 cup angel flake coconut*
1/2 cup chopped nuts*

*Ingredients available at Grandma's Pantry.

This is just one sample recipe from the "Mennonite Country-Style Recipes and Kitchen Secrets" by Esther Shank available from Grandma's Pantry at www.GrandmasPantryVa.com.

More of our cookbooks will be featured in our upcoming newsletters, so stay tuned and check back with us for another sampling of our great cookbooks.

***"So, whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God."*** (1 Cor. 10:31)