

Viking - and Anglo-Saxon Recipes.

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Viking and Anglo-Saxon recipes

Bread

Viking Recipe - Bread

After grinding barley or rye you would have to make dough. No exact recipe has been found, so you can make your favorite dough recipe using barley or rye. One bread loaf, found in Sweden contained pine bark and dried peas. The next step is to shape it into a loaf of bread, and cook it on a large stone tab (you may just as well use an oven, cooking times and heat should be followed by the actual dough recipe). At dinner time plop on your favorite toppings such as butter, meat of the Wild Boar, red deer, elk, or bear. This may go well with some milk (or beer, if you can have beer legally) in a drinking horn.

Based on: Margeson, Susan M. Viking. Alferd A. Knopf: New York, 1994.

Flatbread/Shardbread

Measurements are given in cups. One cup=1 ½ dl or about 90 g flour.

7 Cups of gruttet flour or thick wheat flour.

3 cups of liquid. Use whey or butter milk

1 Egg

A dash of salt (if desired)

1. Flour, liquid, egg and salt must be kneaded long and thoroughly. If needed add more flour or liquid so the dough is just right.
2. The dough should be shaped into small balls and then pressed flat and thin.
3. The bread is baked over a glowing fire on shards of pottery or pans, about 2-3 minutes on each side. The bread should be light brown and sound hollow when you knock on it lightly with a fingernail. For the pottery you can use the shards from an average red burned herbal pot...

Sweeter bread/cakes can be obtained by sweetening the dough with honey.

Toasted stinging nettles give a good spicy taste.

Chopped nuts and cooked acorns in the dough are also good.

Osyrat Kornbröd (Barley Flatbread)

This recipe is from Över Öppen Eld Vikingatida Recept (Over an Open Fire Viking Age Recipes). Makes approximately eight servings.

Ingredients

- 1-1/2 cups barley flour
- 1/2 cup water

Blend ingredients together until a stiff dough is formed. Warm a griddle over a fire (or you can use a cooking sheet in the oven). Take a heavy rolling-pin and take a ball the size of a walnut and roll the ball until flattened. Roll outward so that it is as thin as you can until you have a flat, round disk. Lay it on the griddle and place it over the fire (or cook at high heat in the oven) about 30 seconds on either side. One flat loaf at a time, roll out the dough and cook. It is most efficient to have two people, one rolling dough and one cooking flat loaves.

The bread should be eaten immediately, but may be frozen and then reheated. They are good with all Viking foods but also may be eaten with butter or [Skyr](#).

Viking Barley Bagels: Unleavened Barley Buns

The contents and proportions of the grains are based on analyses of buns found in ninth- and tenth-century graves at Birka, Sweden; the bagel shape is lifted directly from a Migration Era grave find, also Swedish. The technique I adapted from an unleavened barley bread recipe I found in *The Tassajara Bread Book*, which happily uses flour proportions very like the Viking ones.

The Recipe

- 2 cups barley flour
- 4 cups whole-wheat flour
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 4 tablespoons oil (I used cold-pressed sesame)
- 3-1/2 cups boiling water

In a heavy pan over medium-low heat, roast the barley flour in 1 T. of the oil until it smells good and turns several shades darker but is still off-white; flour should not turn brown. Mix barley and wheat flours with salt and remaining oil in a big bowl, using fingers to rub in oil, until it's of uniform consistency. Add the boiling water all at once and stir up quickly.

Being careful not to scald your hands, take out a small clump of dough and work it between hands until it's uniform, glossy and translucent. Repeat with rest of dough, then work it all together into one smooth lump.

Divide lump into into 24 smallish balls. Shape into bagels; poking a hole through the ball of dough works well. Arrange on oiled sheets (they won't rise much).

Let sit overnight. (Still look just the same, don't they?) Bake in 450 oven 20 minutes, then reduce to 400 and cook until "done," about another 45-60 minutes. They'll have hard, dark brown undersides. There is a fine line between gummy-undercooked and done-but-impossibly-hard; good luck finding it. I recommend testing one every five minutes after they've cooked an hour.

Let cool; if they're "done," they'll soften up a bit and be easier to chew. Slightly sweet and good with butter.

These were unexpectedly popular with people who aren't adventurous about food. Perhaps it was more than just the novelty that they enjoyed.

Soups

Meat soups (4-6 servings)

Measurements are given in cups. One cup=1 ½ dl or about 90 g flour.

8-12 cups of water

½ kg meat (pork, beef, lamb, chicken, hen etc)

Salt

3-5 cups of herb such as the top shoots of stinging nettles, young dandelion leaves, wild chervil, cress, wild marjoram, dill, plantain, angelica, wild onions, caraway greenery, thyme, or whatever the season has to offer.

Remember: You must always be sure that the plants are edible!

1. Put the meat in the kettle. Pour water over the meat so it is covered and put the kettle on the fire. In order that the heat is spread evenly the kettle must be turned about every 5-10 minutes.
2. When the water boils it should cook for about one hour. It may be necessary to add more water so the meat is always covered with water.
3. While the meat is cooking wash and chop the herbs. They will go in the soup when it is ready.
4. When the meat is tender take it out and slice it to a size fit for a spoon and return it to the soup.
5. Add salt as desired, then it is ready to be served.
6. It can be served with flatbread.

Green Soup

This recipe comes from [Vikingars Gästabud \(The Viking Feast\)](#), and is for four servings.

Ingredients

- 3-1/2 to 5 oz. of fresh, parboiled spinach, or about 8 oz. of frozen whole spinach
- 10 cm of the white part of a leek
- 1 quart good bouillon < chopped finely cup 2>
- Dash of pepper
- Dash of ground ginger
- 2 to 3 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup cream

- Grated nutmeg

Clean and rinse the fresh spinach or thaw the frozen. Rinse the leek and slice thinly. Bring the bouillon to a boil and add the spinach and leek. Let boil for 5 minutes. Add the parsley and boil together a few more minutes. Season with salt, pepper, and ginger.

Whisk the yolks with the cream in the bottom of a soup tureen. Pour in the soup while whisking briskly. Grate some nutmeg over the soup and serve it with a good bread.

For a more visually appealing presentation, I have whipped the cream and yolks separately, then placed them in a squeeze bottle with a narrow opening (the type you'll sometimes see in restaurants with mustard or ketchup in them). Place the soup in the individual soup bowls, then use the squeeze bottle to draw a sunburst design -- a wavy line around the outer edge of the bowl, and place dots inside and outside the line. Add nutmeg as before. Diners stir this into the soup themselves.

Nässelsoppa (Nettle Soup)

This recipe is adapted from [Över Öppen Eld Vikingatida Recept \(Over an Open Fire Viking Age Recipes\)](#). Makes 4 servings.

Harvest nettles early in spring. To avoid the sting of the fine hairs of the nettle, wear gloves or grab the stalk very firmly. Personally, I always wear gloves as I've never got the "grab firmly" part perfected and always get stung. Nettles are rich in vitamins and minerals, which the body craved after a long Viking Age winter.

Ingredients

- 2 quarts fresh nettles
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons wheat flour
- 1 quart good bouillon
- salt
- 1/2-1 teaspoon thyme
- 1/2-1 teaspoon marjoram
- 1/3 cup chopped chives
- 4 cooked egg yolks, chopped finely

Wash nettles well. Cover nettles with bouillon and boil for 5 minutes or until just tender. Drain the liquid off the nettles and save it. Chop the nettles. Melt the butter in a saucepan. Add a little flour to the butter and stir until it starts to brown, then gradually add the bouillon. Add the nettles back in, then cook at a simmer for 3 to 4 minutes. Season to taste with salt, thyme, marjoram, and chives. Place into individual bowls and garnish with chopped egg yolk.

Viking Fish Soup

Ingredients

- The head of a large fish
- 1 small haddock
- 2 teaspoons salt
- pepper 2 tablespoons flour
- cup of milk
- 1 litre of cold water

Method

1. Wash the fish and place in a pan with the water and salt.
2. Boil and skim the froth off the top.
3. Add pepper and leave to simmer for 40 minutes.
4. Strain the mixture to get rid of the bones and put the stock back in the pan.
5. Mix the flour and the milk and add to the stock.
6. Boil until thickened.
7. Add more salt or pepper to taste, serve with warm baps. Serves 6

Meat Dishes

Kokt Svinmålla (Boiled Lambsquarters)

This recipe is adapted from [Över Öppen Eld Vikingatida Recept \(Over an Open Fire Viking Age Recipes\)](#).

Lambsquarters (*Chenopodium album*, also called fat hen, goosefoot, or pigweed) are a member of the same family as chard and beets. From the Viking Age until nearly the end of the Middle Ages, lambsquarters has played the same role in cooking as spinach does now.

Lambsquarters are an ancient food that has been almost completely forgotten today. It is uncertain whether lambsquarters were domesticated or gathered in the wild during the Viking Age, but ample finds have been made of lambsquarters from the Bronze Age to suggest that it was being deliberately cultivated. The leaves of lambsquarters are edible and contain more iron, protein and Vitamin B12 than spinach. Lambsquarters were a valued vegetable crop throughout early Europe until spinach was introduced from Asia in the 16th century.

Lambsquarters are found today as weeds at the edges of ditches and gardens. They have several near-relatives, such as orache (*Atriplex patula*) and spear-leaved orache (*Atriplex prostrata*), which are also good to eat. All these plants may be boiled just like spinach or used in salads. To make four servings:

- 1 lb. fresh, very young, tender lambsquarters
- 2/3 cup water
- dash or two of salt

Rinse the lambsquarters. Add the salt to the water and bring to a boil. Add in the lambsquarters and boil for about 5 minutes. Pour off the liquid and allow the lambsquarters to drain. Serve with a little butter.

Hare, Rabbit, Veal or Chicken Stew with Herbs & Barley

Serves 6

In 7th century England, herbs were one of the few flavourings available to cooks and were used heavily...

50g (2oz) butter

1 -1.5kg (2-3 lb) (depending on the amount of bone) of hare or rabbit joints, stewing veal or chicken joints

450g (1lb) washed and trimmed leeks, thickly sliced

4 cloves garlic, chopped finely

175 g (6 oz) pot barley

900 mL (30 fl oz, 3 3/4 cups) water

3 generous tablespoons red or white wine vinegar

2 bay leaves, salt, pepper

15 fresh, roughly chopped sage leaves, or 1 tablespoon dried sage

Melt the butter in a heavy pan and fry the meat with the leeks and garlic till the vegetables are slightly softened and the meat lightly

browned. Add the barley, water, vinegar, bay leaves and seasoning. bring the pot to the boil, cover it and simmer gently for 1 - 1 1/2 hours or till the meat is really tender and ready to fall from the bone. Add the sage and continue to cook for several minutes. Adjust the seasoning to taste and serve in bowls-- the barley will serve as a vegetable.

Small Bird and Bacon Stew with Walnuts or Hazelnuts

Serves 6

6 fatty rashers of bacon, chopped roughly
3 cloves garlic
4 pigeons or other small game birds (6 if very small)
225 g (8 oz) mushrooms, whatever variety, chopped roughly
75 g (3 oz) roughly chopped roasted hazelnuts or walnuts
300 ml (10 fl oz, 1 1/4 cups) real ale
150 ml (5 fl oz, 3/4 cup) water
2 or 3 bay leaves
a little salt and freshly ground black pepper
6 coarse slices brown bread

Fry the bacon, with the garlic, till it is lightly browned in a heavy bottomed casserole. Add birds and brown on all sides. Add the mushrooms and nuts, continue to cook for a couple of minutes, then add the ale and water with the bay leaves.

Bring to the boil, cover and simmer very gently for 2 - 2 1/2 hours-- the birds should be falling off the bone. Remove the birds from the juices, cool juices completely and remove any excess fat. The birds can be served whole on or off the bone. If the latter, carve them while they are cold then return to the skimmed juices and reheat gently. Adjust the seasoning to taste and serve either the whole birds or the slices on the pieces of bread, with plenty of the juices and "bits". A good green salad to follow is the best accompaniment.

Tabahajah

250g lamb
pinch salt
1 tsp rue*
0.25 cup murri**
0.25 tsp coriander
pinch peper
60ml olive oil
1.5 tbs fresh coriander leaves
1.5 tbs mustard greens (leaves)
30g honey
0.5 tsp cinnamon

Beat the murri and honey in a bowl. Add the spices and stir well. Cut the meat into thin strips and marinate in this mixture for 1,5 hours. Chop herbs, removing stems. Heat oil in frying pan over a high heat until a few bubbles come up. Add meat and marinade and salt. Cook stirring for 15min until the saurce has reduced. Remove from heat and serve with fresh herbs on top.

Serves 4

* Rue is a herb that makes you throw up when eaten in quantity. Use with caution.

** You really don't want to know what this stuff is!

Chicken Stew With Beer

This recipe comes from [Vikingars Gästabud \(The Viking Feast\)](#), and is for four servings.

Ingredients

- 1 chicken, about 2 to 2-1/2 lbs.
- 3-4 carrots
- 3 yellow onions
- 1 turnip, about 1 lb.
- 1-1/2 teaspoon salt
- Dash black pepper
- Thyme
- 6-8 whole allspice
- 1 bottle (12 oz) dark beer

Chop the chicken into 8 pieces. Peel and cut the vegetables into pieces. Fry the chicken in butter, about 5 minutes on each side. Season with salt and pepper and place in a pot. Add the vegetables, thyme, allspice and beer. Let boil for about 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Serve the dish with bread.

Note:The use of allspice in this recipe probably isn't a very good recreation. Allspice is the dried, unripe berry of *Pimenta dioica*, an evergreen tree in the myrtle family. After drying, the berries are small, dark brown balls just a little larger than peppercorns. Allspice comes from Jamaica, Mexico, and Honduras, all in the New World in areas where the Vikings never visited. Christopher Columbus discovered allspice in the Caribbean, mistaking it for black pepper, which he had heard about but never seen himself, calling it "pimienta," which is Spanish for pepper. Its Anglicized name, pimento, is occasionally used in the spice trade today.

Crustade of Chicken and Pigeon

Serves 6

225-350g (8-12oz) wholemeal or wholewheat pastry (depending on whether you want a lid on your crustade)

1 pigeon

2 chicken joints (2 breasts or 2 whole legs)

150mL (f fl oz, 2/3 cup) dry white wine

several grinds of black pepper

4 cloves
15 g (1/2 oz) butter
50g (2oz) mushrooms, roughly chopped
25g (1oz) raisins
3 large eggs
salt, pepper, and 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

Roll out 225g (8 oz) of the pastry and line a 20cm (8 inch) flan dish; back the crust blind.

Put the pigeon in a pot with the stock, wine, pepper and cloves and cook very slowly for an hour. Add the chicken and continue to cook for a further 45 minutes or till the meat of both birds is really tender. Meanwhile cook the mushrooms lightly in the butter. Remove the birds from the stock and bone them. Cut the flesh into quite small pieces, mix it with the mushrooms and the raisins and spread them over the base of the flan case. Beat the eggs with a fork and season with the salt, pepper, and ginger. Add 240mL (8floz, 1 cup) of the cooking juices and pour over the meat in the flan case. If you want to have a lid, roll out the rest of the pastry and cover the flan. Bake it in moderate oven (180C, 350F, Gas Mark4) for 25 minutes if uncovered, 35 minutes if covered. Serve warm with a good green salad.

For a more 20th century flavor-- double the chicken, leave out the pigeon, and substitute 25g (1 oz) chopped fried bacon for the raisins.

Fish Dishes

Rökt Fisk (Smoked Fish)

This recipe is adapted from [Över Öppen Eld Vikingatida Recept \(Over an Open Fire Viking Age Recipes\)](#).

Smoking is a common method for preserving foods, and is especially good for fish. Many types of fish were preserved in this manner.

First you will need to build a smoker, or you can buy small smokers commercially these days that resemble small barbecue grills with deep lids. Collect wood for the fire. The very best wood is not the nice, dry seasoned wood, but rather a mixture of dry woods that will burn well with a larger amount of wet wood which will smoke. Taking oak or hickory or fruitwood chips and soaking them overnight in water, then adding them to the fire, or even to a charcoal fire, will work well also.

Gut and scale the fish. Leave the backbone intact with the two sides still connected to it, but remove as many of the remaining bones as is possible. On a large fish, cut a series of parallel slices into the muscle to allow the smoke to completely penetrate the flesh. Place the fish above the fire. In a smokehouse, the fish would be hung from lines. In a commercial smoker, lay on the highest rack. Do not seal tightly, allow a little air in for ventilation for the fire.

How long you will need to smoke the fish depends on the size of the fish. A small fish may take only ten minutes or so, while large fish can take much longer. The fish is done when the meat will flake with a fork.

Scandinavian specialty stores and some of the larger supermarkets will also have smoked mackerel or herring available for purchase.

Fresh Oysters

3-4 oysters per person
pinch of pepper
pinch of ground lovage
2 egg yolks
1 tbsl vinegar
1 tbsl olive oil
1 tbsl wine
1 tsp anchovy essence
1 tbsl honey (optional)

Open the oysters as near as possible to the time of eating. They may be served raw, stewed, or baked then covered with the following sauce. Mix the pepper and lovage with the egg yolks, then add the vinegar, a drop at a time, to make a smooth mixture. Stir in the olive oil, wine, and anchovy essence. Honey may be added if you like. Mix all ingredients together thoroughly and pour over oysters and serve.

Honey-glazed Shrimps

'Honey-glazed shrimps besides, my love', as quoted from a unique Greek or Sicilian document of around 400 BC. The strange and sensuous Banquet of Philoxenus is a poetic celebration of obsessive culinary pleasures.

The author is likely to have been the once famous Philoxenus of Cythere, who was court poet to the ruler of the

Greek cities in Sicily, Dionysus I of Syracuse (c.430-367 BC), and best known for his tale in Galatea in which the Cyclops falls in love with a mountain nymph.

Serves two

225g/8oz cooked, peeled shrimps
15ml/1 tablespoon olive oil
30ml/2 tablespoons fish sauce
30ml/2 tablespoons clear honey
2 teaspoons chopped, fresh oregano
Black pepper

Place the oil, fish sauce and honey in a saucepan and add the shrimps. Saute them gently in the cooking liquor for 2 or 3 minutes until they are tender, Remove them with a slotted spoon and keep warm. Continue to cook out the liquor until it has reduced by half. Add the chopped oregano and pour the sauce over the shrimps. Sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper and serve with a crusty loaf and a simple salad.

Griddled Trout With Herbs

Serves 6

The herbs below are what might have been used in Anglo-Saxon East Anglia, but use whatever you might fancy. Try to use fresh, although dried is acceptable.

6 fresh cleaned trout
6 sprigs fresh rosemary, or 1-2 tablespoons dried
75g (3 oz) soft butter
18 fresh mint leaves or 2 teaspoons dried
leaves from 6 sprigs fresh thyme or 2 teaspoons dried
6 fresh sage leaves or 1 scant teaspoon dried
1-2 teaspoons coarse sea salt
6-9 grinds black pepper

Put one sprig or generous shake of rosemary down the middle of each fish. Chop all the other herbs and seasonings and mash them into the soft butter. Use this to coat the fish generously on each side. Griddle, barbeque or grill it for 4-5 minutes on each side or till the skin is well browned and the flesh flaking off the bone. Baste now and then with the butter which runs off. Serve at once with lot of fresh bread and a salad or a simple green vegetable.

A Jellie of Fyshe

Serves 6

Ms. Berriedale-Johnson explains that elaborate and highly decorative jellies were "the delight of the artistic medieval cook, often enhanced with edible gold and silver."

225 g (8 oz) hake, cod, haddock, or other well-flavored white fish
3 scallops
75 g (3 oz) prawns (shrimp)
2 onions, roughly sliced
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
25g (1 oz) ginger root, peeled and finely chopped
1/3 teaspoon sea salt, 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
450mL (15 fl oz, 2 cups) each white wine and water
20g (3/4 oz) gelatine

Put the white fish in a pan with the onions, vinegar, ginger root, spices, wine and water. Bring it gently to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the scallops and prawns and cook for a further 3 minutes. Remove the fish; bone and skin the white fish and set it all aside. Strain the cooking juices and set aside to cool for several hours by which time a lot of the sediment will have settled in the bottom of the bowl. Carefully pour off the juices, leaving the sediment, and then strain several times through a clean tea cloth. You should have approximately 750mL (25 fl oz, 3 cups) of liquid left. Melt 20g (3/4 oz) of gelatine in a little of the liquid, cool it to room temperature, then mix it into the rest of the juices.

Pour a thin layer 1 cm (1/2 inch) of the juice into the bottom of a 1.2 liter (2 pint, 5 cup) souffle dish or fish mold and put it in the fridge to set. Flake the white fish into smallish flakes; remove the coral from the scallops and cut the white flesh into three or four pieces. Once the jelly is firm, arrange the most decorative of the fish in the bottom of the dish-- some scallop coral in the middle, prawns around the outsides, flakes of white fish in between or however you feel inspired. Spoon a little more of the juice and return it to the fridge to set. Continue to layer the fish in the mould, setting each layer with a covering of juice until you have used up all the fish and juices. Leave the jelly to set for at least 4 hours in a fridge. Unmold and decorate with fresh herbs; serve as a starter.

Vegetable/Vegetarian Dishes

Honey Glazed Root Vegetables

This recipe comes from [Vikingars Gästabud \(The Viking Feast\)](#), and is for four servings.

Ingredients

- 1 turnip
- 2-3 carrots
- 1 slice of white cabbage (use a quarter of a head of cabbage)
- 1 leek
- butter
- honey
- salt and pepper

Peel the root vegetables and cut them into pieces. Boil together in slightly salted water about 5 minutes and drain. Sauté the root vegetables in butter until soft. Let the leek and cabbage sauté with them at the end. Add some honey and stir the dish carefully. Season with salt and pepper.

'Fenkel in Soppes' or Braised Fennel with Ginger

Serves 6

The original version of this recipe comes from the "Forme of Cury," a collection of 196 "receipts" copied by Richard II's scribes at his cooks' directions.

750g (1 1/2 lb) trimmed, fresh fennel root; cleaned and cut in matchsticks
225g (8 oz) onions, thickly sliced
1 heaped teaspoon of ground ginger
1 level teaspoon of powdered saffron
1/2 teaspoon of salt
2 tablespoon olive oil
150mL (5 fl oz, 2/3 cup) each dry white wine and water
6 thick slices of coarse wholewheat or wholemeal bread (optional)

Put the fennel in a wide, lidded pan with the onions. Sprinkle over the spices and salt, then the oil and finally pour over the liquids. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes or till the fennel is cooked without being mushy. Stir once or twice during the cooking to make sure the spices get well distributed. Serve it alone with a roast meat or griddled fish or place one slice of bread on each warmed plate, cover it with the fennel and pour over the juices.

Lozenges or Curd Cheese Pastries

Serves 6

225g (8oz) wholemeal or wholewheat shortcrust pastry

225g (8 oz) curd cheese

25g (1oz) very finely chopped stem or crystallized ginger or plump raisins

15g (1/2 oz) toasted and chopped pine nuts

sugar to taste

lemon juice to taste

Roll the pastry out very thin and cut it into small rectangles-- approximately 15x8 cm (6x3 inches). You should have at least 24. Bake them in a moderately hot oven (190C, 375F, Gas Mark 5) for ten minutes or till they are crisp and brown. Remove them and cool on a rack.

Meanwhile mix the curd cheese with the ginger or raisins, the pine nutes and the sugar and lemon to taste. Set aside. When you are ready to serve, sandwich together two pieces of pastry with the cheese mixture. They can be used as a dessert or as a snack.

Salad Oxogarita

cos lettuce

chickory or endive

basil

cucumber

squill vinegar

garum (fish sauce)

Shred and mix lettuce, chickory and basil. Bathe cucumber in squill vinegar, then slice and add to the salad. Lightly splash the salad in 2:1 mixture of vinegar and garum (well mixed).

Deserts

The Viking family's porridge (4-6 servings)

Measurements are given in cups. One cup=1 ½ dl or about 90 g flour.

- 10-15 cups of water
 - Two cups of chopped wheat kernels. Let them soak over night so they won't be so hard to chew.
 - Two cups pearl barley
 - A handful whole grain wheat flour
 - A handful crushed kernels of nuts
 - 3-4 tablespoons of honey
 - A healthy portion of apple bits, hippells, pears or....
1. Put the chopped wheat kernels, wheat flour, pearl barley and crushed nuts in the kettle. Pour 10 cups of water in the kettle and place on the fire.
 2. Stir the porridge evenly and turn the kettle to spread the heat. If the porridge starts to get too thick, pour more water in it.
 3. After about ½ hour add the honey, nuts and fruit. The porridge should now cook until the fruit is wet and the porridge has the desired consistency. It should take 15-30 minutes.
 4. It should be served warm, possibly with some cold cream.

Korrmjölgröt (Barley Porridge)

This recipe is adapted from [Trine Theut](#) and from [Över Öppen Eld Vikingatida Recept \(Over an Open Fire Viking Age Recipes\)](#), with my own modifications, notes and observations. Makes about 4 to 6 servings.

- 10-15 cups of water
- salt
- Two cups of chopped barley kernels, soaked overnight in cold water
- A handful whole grain wheat flour
- A handful crushed hazelnuts
- 3-4 tablespoons of honey

Instead of chopped barley (which to date I haven't been able to get in Texas) I have had very good luck using John McCann Oatmeal, which is not that flat rolled stuff, but rather whole grains which have been steel-cut. I've used the pearl barley that can be obtained for soups and stews with good results as well. I've also gone to my local brewing supply and gotten various types of malted whole grain, including various roasts of barley and wheat, had them run it through the crusher, and used that -- this results in a much sweeter, darker flavor because of the malt and the roasting.

Put the ingredients in a large pot. Pour 10 cups of water in the kettle and heat to a rolling boil. Stir regularly, reducing heat if needed to maintain a low boil. Add water if needed if the mixture starts getting too thick. Cook until done. This takes me about an hour, but I've had it vary.

There are two ways to serve porridge. The first is what Americans would consider "hot breakfast cereal" style. For this type of porridge, about 15 to 20 minutes before the porridge is done, add a cup of chopped fruit, such as apples, pears, rose hips, etc., then serve with fresh cream and some butter on top. Any left-overs may be pressed into a buttered mold and chilled for storage a day or two, then sliced, fried in butter, and served with either a hot fruit compote, or with butter and jam.

Another way to serve porridge is to make it a savory dish. The *Poetic Edda* mentions the god Þórr eating porridge with herring in it. I've had good results adding chopped chicken, veal, or pork. The meat should be added to the porridge early enough in the cooking process so that it is cooked thoroughly. For fish, this will be closer to the end than it will be for the various meats. You can also add garlic, onion, and other herbs and spices. This makes a hearty, filling dish.

Färskost (Skr)

This recipe is adapted from [Över Öppen Eld Vikingatida Recept \(Over an Open Fire Viking Age Recipes\)](#).

Skr has a consistency and flavor that reminds many people of yoghurt. However, skr is made much like cottage cheese or cream cheese, using rennet to congeal the milk solids and allow the whey to be separated -- thus the Swedish name, *Färskost* or "fresh cheese".

True skr is made with unpasteurized buttermilk. The fresher the buttermilk is, the better the results will be. In Iceland, skr is properly made by adding a little skr to the new mixture, which inoculates the new batch with all the special cultures that make up the flavor of skr. A similar result may be obtained elsewhere by adding sour cream to the mixture.

Ingredients

- 6 cups skim milk
- 1 cup buttermilk
- Rennet
- 2 tablespoons sour cream
- 1 tablespoon milk
- Candy thermometer to check milk temperatures

Check the rennet package for specific instructions on how much rennet to use. This will vary depending on whether you are using vegetable rennet or not, and whether it is liquid, granular, or tablets. If you are not using liquid rennet, you will need to dissolve the rennet beforehand in a little tepid water. Ideally this should be done in a small measuring cup which has been pre-warmed using hot water.

Heat the milk to 185-195°F (85-90°C) and hold it at that temperature for about 10 minutes. Be careful not to boil or scorch the milk. Cool down to 100-102°F (38-39°C). It is important that

you allow the milk to cool properly, or else the rennet may not work. Check the rennet package instructions for heat tolerance guidelines.

Stir the sour cream (or skyr, if you're lucky enough to have the Icelandic variety) into a tablespoon of milk until well mixed. Pour into the warm milk and mix well. Add the rennet.

You now need to allow the rennet to work its magic. For best results, the skyr needs to cool down gradually. I sometimes use a crockpot for making skyr, because the insulated cooker and heavy stoneware vessel cool very slowly. Allow the skyr to cool about 6 hours. You will be ready to proceed to the next step when you can make a cut in the skyr which will not close immediately.

Line a sieve or colander with cheesecloth or a fine linen cloth and pour in the skyr. Tie the ends of the cloth together over the top and hang over a bucket or other container so the whey can drip off. Be sure to retain the whey -- it can be used to pickle foods, and adds lots of flavor to recipes when substituted for part or all of the water. Allow the skyr to drain until it is fairly firm. The consistency should be like ice cream.

Before serving, whip the skyr with a whisk until smooth. Skyr should not be lumpy or grainy. Skyr may be served with cream and honey, and goes very well with fruit such as bilberries or lingonberries. Skyr may instead be flavored with garlic, chives or caraway seeds.

Pancake with Berries

This recipe comes from [Vikingars Gästabud \(The Viking Feast\)](#), and is for four servings.

Ingredients:

2/3 cup white flour

1/2 cup whole wheat flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

2-1/2 cups milk

2 tablespoons butter

1 cup lingonberries or bilberries

Turn on the oven to 425°F (225°C). Whisk the batter together without the butter and stir in the berries. Melt the butter in a heat-resistant baking pan and pour it in the batter. Bake it in the middle of the oven for about 20-25 minutes until the pancake has a nice color. Cut it into pieces and serve with some jam.

Anglo-Saxon Britain: Summer Fruit, Honey and Hazelnut Crumble

Before the Norman Conquest far larger areas of the country were covered with lightly forested scrubland than today – a wonderful home for brambles and berry-bearing bushes – so, in the summer months, wild soft fruits would have been there for the picking. A baked dessert like this would have been sunk in the embers of the log fire with a cauldron or pot upturned over it to form a lid.

Serves six

1kg/2½lb mixed soft summer fruits (raspberries, loganberries, strawberries, currants, bilberries or similar)

Honey or brown sugar (to taste)

75g/3oz toasted hazelnuts

75g/3oz wholemeal or whole wheat brown breadcrumbs

Put the fruits in a pan or microwave dish with about 20cm/1" water in the bottom and cook gently for 10-15 minutes (4-6 minutes in microwave on high) or till the fruits are soft without being totally mushy. Sweeten to taste with honey or brown sugar (Anglo-Saxons would have used honey); how much you need will depend on the fruits you used. Drain off excess juice and save to serve with the pudding. Chop the hazelnuts in a processor or liquidiser until they are almost as fine as the breadcrumbs but not quite, then mix the two together. Spoon the fruit into an ovenproof dish and cover with a thick layer of the hazelnuts and crumbs. Bake in a moderate oven (180C/350F/Gas mark 4) for 20-30 minutes or till the top is slightly crunchy and browned. Serve with lots of cream or plain yogurt and the warmed fruit juices.

Drinks

Hot, nutritious drinks

A delicious apple drink

Water

Apple bits

Apple leaves

Honey

1. Fill a jar with water, small pieces of apple (with peel) and apple leaves.
2. The drink should simmer on the fire; when it reaches the boiling point sweeten it with honey.
3. Serve hot..

The apples can be replaced with pears. Berries are also quite delicious in this drink - try different mixes of fruits as desired.

Herbal drink

Herbal drinks can be made with many different plants. The drink is prepared by putting the leaf or flower in boiling water and letting it cook for a few minutes

Good drinks can be gotten from the young leaves of

Stinging nettles

Mint

Hawthorn

Raspberries

Strawberries

... and the flowers of:

Elder

Linden

Yarrow

Chamomile

Remember: Be sure that the plants you use are edible!

Mead (Honey Wine) - 5 gallon recipe

- 8-10 lbs pure raw honey (for light, delicate Mead)
- (or) 12-13 " " " " (for medium sweet Mead)
- (or) 15-16 " " " " (for very sweet or alcoholic Mead)
- 4-5 gallons purified spring water (not distilled)
- 3 tsp. yeast nutrient (or 5 tablets)
- 1 tsp. acid blend (combination malic/citric acid)
- 5-7 oz. sliced fresh ginger root (1 finger's length)
- 1/4 tsp. fresh rosemary (optional, as desired)
- 5-6 whole cloves (optional, as desired)
- 1-2 vanilla beans (optional, as desired)
- cinnamon/nutmeg (optional, as desired)
- lime/orange peels (optional, as desired)
- crushed fruit (peaches, strawberries, grapes, etc.)
- 1 tsp. Irish Moss (to clarify Mead)
- 1/2 tsp. clear gelatin (to clarify Mead)

- 1 spotted newt's tail (optional, as desired :)
- 1 packet yeast (champagne or ale yeast)

Heat spring water 10-15 minutes till boiling. Stir in honey, yeast nutrients, acid blend, and spices (rosemary, ginger, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, lemon peel). Boil for another 10-15 minutes, (overcooking removes too much honey flavor), skimming off foam as needed (2 to 3 times during last 15 minutes). After 15 minutes, add Irish Moss or clear gelatin to clarify. After last skimming, turn off heat, add crushed fruit, and let steep 15-30 minutes while allowing mead to cool and clarify. After mead begins to clear, strain off fruit with hand skimmer and pour mead through strainer funnel into 5 gallon glass carboy jug.

Let cool to room temperature about 24 hours. After 24 hours, warm up 1 cup of mead in microwave, stir in 1 packet "Red Star" Champagne, Montrechet, or Epernet yeast (or Ale yeast in order to make mead ale), and let sit for 5-15 minutes to allow yeast to begin to work. Add this mead/yeast mixture to carboy jug and swirl around to aerate, thereby adding oxygen to mead/yeast mixture.

Place run-off tube in stopper of bottle, with other end of tube in large bowl or bottle to capture "blow-off" froth. Let mead sit undisturbed 7 days in cool, dark area. After initial violent fermenting slows down and mead begins to settle, rack off (siphon off) good mead into clean sterilized jug, leaving all sediment in bottom of first jug. Attach airlock to this secondary carboy. After 4-6 months, mead will clear. During this time, if more sediment forms on bottom, good mead can be racked off again to another clean sterilized jug.

When bottling, in order to add carbonation, add either 1/4 tsp. white table sugar per 12 oz bottle, or stir in 1/2 to 1 lb raw honey per 5 gallons mead (by first dissolving honey with a small amount of mead or pure water in microwave).

Hávamál (Sayings of the High One)

Byrþi betri berrat maþr brautu at,an sé manvit mikit;auþi betra þykkir þat í ókunnun staþ,slíkt es válaþs vera.

A better burden no man can bear on the way than his mother wit:and no worse provision can he carry with him than too deep a draught of ale.

Esa svá gott, sem gott kveþa,öl alda sunum,þvít fæ'ra veit, es fleira drekk, síns til geþs gumi.

Less good than they say for the sons of men is the drinking oft of ale:for the more they drink, the less they can think and keep a watch over their wits.

Óminnis hegri heitr sás of ölþrum þrumir,hann stelr geþi guma;þess fugls fjöþrum ek fjötraþr vaskí garþi Gunnlaþar.

A bird of Unmindfulness flutters over ale-feasts,wiling away men's wits;with the feathers of that fowl I was fettered once in the garths of Gunnlodr below.

Ölr ek varþ, varþ ofrölvíat ens fróþa Fjalars;þvi's ölþr bazt, at aþr of heimtirhverr sitt geþ gumi.

Drunk was I then, I was over-drunk,in the fold of wise Fjalar;But best is an ale feast when a man is able to call back his wits at once.

These are the words of the great god Óðinn, cautioning against drunkenness and unrestrained drinking. And yet the drinking of alcoholic beverages was a prominent feature of Scandinavian life in the Viking Age.

Sweets

Nut and Honey Cake with Honey Cream

Archeological Information:

At the York Archeological Site, a known Norse settlement in England, many types of foods were found in various states of preservation. A few honey bees and an layer rich in honey bee corpses together with twisted straw indicate that honey bees were kept at this site. The archeologist states that "Clearly bees were kept by the inhabitants of York." (A.R Hall et al. P.207.) Many nutshells were found in the site to include both walnuts and hazelnuts.

The World of the Viking's CDROM data base produced by several museums in England and Denmark depicts evidence of both walnuts and hazelnuts used during the Viking period.

Remains of bee hives were also found at several sites in Denmark. The remains of clay ovens were found in most sites in Denmark indicating that baking was a method of food preparation in the Viking period.

Surviving Recipes:

Emeles:

Take sugar, salt, almonds, and white bread and grind them together; then add eggs; then grease or oil or butter and take a spoon and brush them and then remove them and sprinkle them with dry sugar. (Pleyn Delit #129)

Cream Bastarde

Take the white of eggs a great heap and put it in a pan full of milk. And let it boil; then season it so with salt and honey a little, then let it cool. And draw it through a strainer and take fair cow's milk and draw it withal, and season it with sugar and look that it be poignant and sweet: serve it forth for a pottage, or for a good baked meat, whether that thou will. (Take a Thousand Eggs of More p196)

Honey Nut Cake (Recipe from "Viking Cookbook" p 37)

2 cups hazelnuts

1 cup dried apple

1 1/2 cups ml honey

4 eggs

Preheat the oven to 175 C. Finely chop the hazelnuts and apple. Mix the nuts, apple and honey in a bowl. Whisk in the eggs. Spread the mixture into a large circle on a greased baking tray. Bake on the middle shelf for approx. 15 minutes

Honey Cream,

2 cups whipping cream

1/2 cup cranberries

1 cup honey

Mix the cream and honey in a pan. Simmer the mixture while whisking until it thickens. Spread the honey cream over the cake and serve with whipped cream.

Nut and Honey Cake with Honey Cream

I used the recipe from the Viking cookbook as a base for the Honey Nut Cake. My version of the cake adds additional chopped nuts. When I used the recipe as stated in the Viking cookbook the mixture was too thin to spread on cookie sheet. My recipe is as follows:

2 cup hazelnuts
1 cup walnuts
1 cup dried apple
1 1/2 cups ml honey
2 eggs

Finely chop the nuts and dried apple. Mix all ingredients in a bowl and then spread the mixture on greased pan. Bake the cake for 10 - 15 minutes in an oven at 400 degrees.

I followed the recipe for the cream as indicated. Cranberries are a modern substitution for the period lingunberry, which would have been found in 10th Century Denmark. I did not want to omit the berry from the honey cream because the overall dish is very sweet and the berries add a tartness to the cream which helps the overall flavor of the dish. Since lingunberries and cranberries are closely related and cranberries have a similar taste to the European lingunberry, I chose to use the cranberries as a substitution.

I choose to use a combination of nuts for a better flavor. All ingredients used were obtainable during the Viking period, except for the cranberries which are a substitution for lingunberries. I then baked the cake and made the sauce using a modern stove and oven.

Sweet Wine Cakes

450g self-raising flour
1 tbs sweet white wine
pinch aniseed
pinch cumin
50g lard
25g grated cheese
1 beaten egg
12 bay leaves

Moisten the flour with the wine and add the aniseed and cumin. Rub in the lard and grated cheese and bind the mixture with egg. Shape into 12 small cakes and place each one on a bay leaf. Bake in the oven at 200oC for 25-30min.

Stuffed Dates

dates
shelled almonds, hazelnuts or pine kernals (one per date)
pepper
salt
2 tbs honey

Stone the dates and stuff with the nuts and a little pepper. Roll the dates in salt and heat the honey in a frying pan. Fry the dates briskly and then serve. Recipe from The British Museum Cookbook

Archaeological Finds of Ninth- and Tenth-Century Viking Foodstuffs

Jorvík [York], Danelaw [England]

Meat -- red deer, beef, mutton/lamb, goat, pork

Poultry -- chicken, geese, duck, golden plover, grey plover, black grouse, wood pigeon, lapwing

Freshwater fish -- pike, roach, rudd, bream, perch

Saltwater fish -- herring, cod, haddock, flat-fish, ling, horse mackerel, smelt

Estuarine fish -- oysters, cockles, mussels, winkles, smelt, eels, salmon

Dairy products -- butter, milk, eggs

Grains -- Oats (*Avena sativa* L.), wheat, rye, barley

Legumes -- fava (*Vicia faba* L.)

Vegetables -- carrots, parsnips, turnips (?), celery, spinach, brassicas (cabbage?)

Fruits -- sloes, plums, apples, bilberries, blackberries, raspberries, elderberries (*Sambuca nigra*)

Nuts -- hazelnuts, walnuts

Herbs/spices/medicinals -- dill, coriander, hops, henbane, agrimony

Cooking aids -- linseed oil, hempseed oil, honey

Beverages -- Rhine wine

Birka, Sweden

Ingredients found in breads -- rye, wheat, spelt, oats, barley, emmer wheat; linseed; sprouted pea [=Erbsenkeimblatt], unidentified *Vicia* legume (mix of barley plus one of the wheats seems to have been most common)

Fruits -- sloe (*Prunus spinosa*); hawthorn (*Crataegus calycina*), plum (*Prunus insititia*)

Nuts -- hazelnut

Hedeby, Denmark

Meat -- pork, beef, mutton/goat

Poultry -- chicken, duck, goose

Fish -- herring

Fruits -- plum (*Prunus domestica* L. ssp. *insititia* C.K. Schneider), sloe (*Prunus spinosa* L.), cherries, elderberries, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries

Oseberg, Norway

Meat -- beef

Grains -- oats, wheat

Fruit -- crabapple

Nuts -- hazelnuts, walnuts

Herbs -- watercress, cumin, mustard, horseradish

Jarlshof, Shetland Islands

Meat -- beef, lamb/mutton, pork, possibly venison and whale

Fish -- ling, saithe, cod

Dublin, Ireland

Meat -- pork, beef, mutton/lamb, hare

Poultry -- chicken, wild goose

Saltwater fish -- cod, ling

Estuarine fish -- cockles, mussels, oysters, scallops

Grains -- wheat, oats, barley, rye, *Chenopodium album*, *Polygonum* spp.

Legumes -- fava (*Vicia faba* L.), peas

Vegetables -- wild celery, wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), cabbage, turnips, radishes

Fruits -- cherries, sloes, blackberries, hawthorn, apples, rose hips, elderberries, rowanberries, strawberries, Vaccinium myrtillus

Nuts -- hazelnuts

Herbs/spices/medicinals -- poppyseeds, black mustard, fennel

Cooking aids -- rapeseed oil (*Brassica campestris*)

Some Suggestions

Vikings did not rely on the same set of dried fruits and nuts as did later Europeans. One really basic way to readjust a feast (or a camp kitchen) toward a Viking food aesthetic is to replace your other dried fruits with prunes and cherries, your almonds with hazelnuts and walnuts. Plums and prunes especially seem to have been very popular; both domestic and imported varieties are found at Viking sites, suggesting that domestic supply was insufficient to sate the appetite for these goodies. But be careful: developing a Viking palate can transform your daily habits. Before long you may be insisting that all your peanut butter sandwiches be eaten with imported plum preserves!

Viking Age cooking gear included large pots for boiling, hooks and spits for roasting, and ovens for baking. Frying pans and warming griddles were also known. Eating utensils were the knife and spoon. Some Viking Age spoons had fairly flat bowls, making them more shovel-like than modern soup spoons; presumably these were used to eat foods with a texture somewhere between roasted flesh (to be eaten with the help of a knife) and the broth resulting from seething flesh (to be drunk or eaten with a soup spoon).

Although there are no extant "Viking recipes," there are a few books that might be helpful. One is Mark Grant's translation of Anthimus' *De observatione ciborum*, which is a West Roman's-eye view of sixth-century Frankish cuisine. It makes recommendations for preparation methods involving most of the basic foodstuffs that Vikings were likely to have cooked. Another helpful set of books is Ann Hagen's pair on Anglo-Saxon food and drink, although there are no recipes.

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Viking Recipe - Bread

http://www.internet-at-work.com/hos_mcgrane/viking/eg_viking_10.html

Flatbread/Shardbread

The Viking family's porridge

Meat soups

A delicious apple drink

Herbal drink

<http://www.vikinganswerlady.com/food.htm>

Kornmjölsgröt (Barley Porridge)

Osyrat Kornbröd (Barley Flatbread)

Green Soup

Nässelsoppa (Nettle Soup)

Rökt Fisk (Smoked Fish)

Chicken Stew With Beer

Honey Glazed Root Vegetables

Kokt Svinmälla (Boiled Lambsquarters)

Pancake with Berries

Färskost (Skyr)

<http://www.blue-n-gold.com/halfdan/meadrecp.htm>

Mead Recipe

[http://www.sca.org.au/cunнан/wiki/Viking_Fish_Soup_\(recipe\)](http://www.sca.org.au/cunнан/wiki/Viking_Fish_Soup_(recipe))

Viking Fish Soup

http://bjornsson.crosswinds.net/sca/isabel_as/nut-cake/nut-cake.htm

Emeles

Cream Bastarde

Honey Nut Cake

Honey Cream

Nut and Honey Cake with Honey Cream

<http://users.bigpond.net.au/quarfwa/miklagard/Articles/ByzRecipes.htm>

Fresh Oysters

Chicken in Lemon Sauce

Salad Oxogarita

Tabahajah

Sweet Wine Cakes

Stuffed Dates

<http://www.cs.vassar.edu/~capriest/vikbagels.html>

Viking Barley Bagels: Unleavened Barley Buns

<http://www.cs.vassar.edu/~capriest/vikfood.html>

Archaeological Finds of Ninth- and Tenth-Century Viking Foodstuffs

Recipes from The British Museum Cookbook

Anglo-Saxon Britain: Summer Fruit, Honey and Hazelnut Crumble

A Jellie of Fyshe

Crustade of Chicken and Pigeon

`Fenkel in Soppes' or Braised Fennel with Ginger

Lozenges or Curd Cheese Pastries

Griddled Trout with Herbs

Hare, Robbit, Veal, or Chicken Stew with Herbs & Barley

Small Bird & Bacon Stew with Walnuts or Hazelnuts

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