

FARAWAY PLACES INSPIRE BUDGET MEALS

Faraway places and exotic dishes conjure visions of expensive ingredients and complicated preparations. Many so-called exotic recipes are prepared with rice and use economical, everyday meats, fish and poultry, making them actually budget-wise meals.

In fact, rice is one of the few truly international foods — a food which harmonizes with the flavors of cuisines from around the world. Some of today's recipes call for a rice product that has undergone the "parboiling" or "converting" process. The rice cooks up with a superior texture and taste and never becomes sticky or lumpy, even when preheated. One cup produces almost four cups of cooked rice whereas a cup of uncooked ordinary long grain rice makes only three cups of the cooked product.

Your "cook's tour" of food can take you to glamorous islands and back. And although they may seem like company fare, their economy makes them practical for family dining.



Richard II loved to eat. Circa 1350, the English king, who squelched the Peasants' Revolt, requested that a cook book be written to preserve some of his favorite recipes.

The recipe for "Daryols" included the following advice: "Take creme of cow mylke, (or) almandes. Do there to add eggs with sugar, saffron and salt. Medle it. Do it in a coffyn of two ynche depe; Bake it well."

Transcribing such old English recipes to modern terms and quantities was the task required to produce "Dining with Caesars and Kings," a series of two illustrated lectures planned this weekend at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens.

A modern version of the Daryols will be one of the many old English dishes prepared for the second lecture. "A Gastronomic Tour of Richard II's Kitchen and Great Hall" will be at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, April 12 in the auditorium of the Botanical Gardens, 1800 North Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor.

"Dining in Imperial Rome," at 8 p.m. Friday, April 11, has recipes which required even more research. They had to be translated from the Latin. Lecturer will be Dr. Lorna J. Sass, a well-known historical cookery consultant and author. The lectures are sponsored by Sandy Hicks and her herb study group at the gardens. In fact, members of the club are preparing the foods which can be sampled after the lectures.

Proceeds from the benefit will go to the new herb garden at the University of Michigan Botanical Gardens. Admission is \$10 to both lectures or \$5 for one. For ticket information call the Gardens, 764-1168, or Sandy Hicks, 769-9414.

The Daryols were the medieval predecessors of Richmond Maids of Honor, a delicious custard tart. The following is the recipe followed by the Herb Study Group women who prepared the Roman and medieval feasts:

RICHMOND MAIDS OF HONOR

- Puff or pie pastry
- 1/4 pound cream cheese
- 5 tbsp. light cream
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup hot milk
- 1 tsp. gelatin
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 cup heavy cream, whipped
- 1/2 tsp. saffron

Make sufficient puff or pie pastry for 12 fluted tart pans or use muffin tins. Roll out to 1/4-inch thickness and cut into rounds to fit the pans. Pierce with a fork to prevent air bubbles, and bake at 450 degrees for 15 minutes or until delicately browned.

Filling: Blend the cream cheese with the light cream to a fluffy consistency. Set aside. In the top of a double boiler over simmering water, beat the sugar and the eggs together until creamy. Quickly add the hot milk, and stir until the mixture begins to thicken. Remove from heat. Dissolve gelatin in one tablespoon cold water and add to the hot custard. Add vanilla. Stir well. When custard is cool, add to the cream cheese mixture. Last, fold in the whipped cream. Fill the baked tart shells (no further baking is necessary). Garnish with silvered almonds.

TAHITIAN FISH FRY

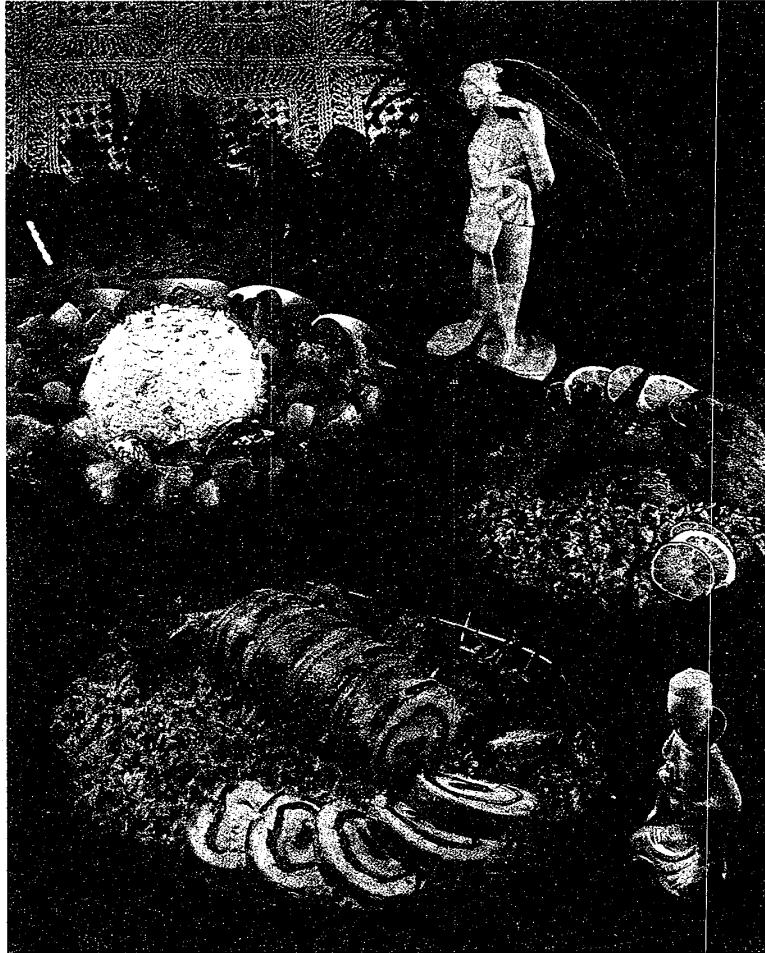
- 2 packages (1 pound each) frozen fish fillets
- 2-1/2 cups water
- 1 cup rice
- 7 teaspoons salt
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 3/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup toasted silvered almonds
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions including tops
- 1-1/4 cups sugar
- 1 can (8 ounces) pineapple chunks in natural juice
- 3/4 cup vinegar
- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 2 teaspoons molasses or brown sugar
- 1 green pepper, cut into short, thin strips
- 1 tomato, cut into wedges

Let fish stand at room temperature until slightly defrosted, 15 to 20 minutes. Bring water to a boil in medium saucepan. Stir in rice, 1 teaspoon of the salt and the butter. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 20 minutes.

While rice is cooking, prepare fish. Cut slightly defrosted fish into 1-inch squares. Pat dry with paper toweling. Combine 3/4 cup of the cornstarch, 2 teaspoons of the salt and the paprika in a paper cup. Dip fish squares with egg, then dip in cornstarch mixture. Fry in 1/4 cup hot oil (375°F.) in 10-inch skillet until brown on all sides, adding more oil if necessary. Drain on paper toweling; keep warm. Remove rice from heat. Stir in almonds and green onions. Let stand covered until all water is absorbed, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, drain oil from skillet; wipe with paper toweling. Combine sugar, the remaining 4 teaspoons salt and 1 tablespoon cornstarch in skillet. Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Add pineapple juice, vinegar, ketchup and molasses to mixture in skillet. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly. Add green pepper and pineapple chunks; reduce heat. Simmer until green pepper is crisp tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Gently stir in tomato.

Pack rice into 4-cup bowl; unmold in center of serving platter. Arrange fish around rice. Spoon green pepper, pineapple and tomato over fish; drizzle with about 1/2 cup sauce. Pass remaining sauce. Makes 5 to 6 servings.



The Sicilian Chicken Roll and Spinach Rice, Island Lime Chicken and the Tahitian Fish Fry are exotic but low-cost meals.

BRAZILIAN RICE RAGOUT

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 pound mild Italian sausage, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 6 pork chops
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 can (28 ounces) tomatoes
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 2-3/4 cups water
- 1 cup rice
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 1 can (about 16 ounces) kidney or black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped, mild green chilies
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch

Brown onion, garlic and sausage in oil in 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Season pork chops with 1 teaspoon of the salt and the pepper; add chops to skillet and brown on both sides. Drain fat. Drain tomatoes, reserving 3/4 cup liquid. Add tomatoes, 3/4 cup tomato liquid and wine to skillet. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until pork chops are tender, about 1 hour.

While meat is cooking, prepare rice. Bring 2-1/2 cups water to a boil in medium saucepan. Stir in rice, butter and the remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Cover tightly and simmer 20 minutes. Stir in beans and chilies. Remove from heat. Let stand covered until all liquid is absorbed, about 5 minutes. Spoon rice onto large serving platter. Remove pork chops and sausage from skillet and arrange on rice. Dissolve cornstarch in remaining 1/4 cup water; stir into pan drippings. Cook and stir over medium heat until slightly thickened; pour over meat. Makes 6 servings.

JAMAICAN HAM AND WILD RICE

- 2-1/2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 1 package (6 ounces) Long Grain & Wild Rice
- 1-1/2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 4 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 cup light rum
- 1 can (8 ounces) pineapple chunks in natural juice
- 1 green pepper, cut into 3/4-inch squares
- 2 cups 3/4-inch cubes of cooked (or canned) ham
- 1/3 cup sliced green onions with tops

Measure water and butter into medium saucepan. Stir in contents of rice and seasoning packets. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Cover tightly and cook over low heat until all water is absorbed, about 25 minutes.

While rice is cooking, combine sugar, cornstarch and cloves in medium saucepan; stir in rum. Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Add enough water to juice to measure 3/4 cup; add pineapple liquid to rum mixture, stirring until smooth. Add pineapple chunks, green pepper and ham to rum mixture; let stand 10 to 15 minutes. Place over low heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until smooth and thickened. Stir onions into cooked rice; spoon ham mixture over rice. Makes 6 servings.

SICILIAN CHICKEN ROLL AND SPINACH RICE

- 4 whole chicken breasts, boned and skinned
- 1/4 pound salami, thinly sliced
- 1/2 pound cooked ham, thinly sliced
- 5 slices bacon
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 2-1/2 cups water
- 1 cup rice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen creamed spinach, thawed

Arrange chicken, slightly overlapping pieces, to form a rectangle about 12 x 10 inches. Pound overlapping edges to seal chicken pieces together. Arrange salami and ham over chicken. Roll up jelly roll-fashion, beginning along shorter side of rectangle. Wrap bacon around roll. Wrap securely in large sheet of heavy duty aluminum foil. Pierce foil pan to come 3/4 of the way up the side of the roll. Place over medium heat and bring liquid to a boil; reduce heat. Simmer uncovered 1-1/2 hours.

During last half hour chicken roll is cooking, prepare rice. Saute garlic in oil in medium saucepan. Add water and bring to a boil. Stir in rice and salt. Cover tightly and simmer 20 minutes. Stir in creamed spinach. Remove from heat. Let stand covered until ready to serve.

Remove chicken roll from water; remove foil. Broil 4 inches from heat until bacon on top browns, about 10 minutes. Place chicken roll on platter; surround with rice. Makes 6 servings.

ISLAND LIME CHICKEN AND RICE

- 1 frying chicken, cut up
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon grated lime peel
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 tablespoons light rum
- 2-1/2 cups chicken broth
- 1 package (6 ounces) Long Grain & Wild Rice
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped, salted cashews

Brown chicken well in oil in 12-inch skillet over medium heat; season with salt and pepper. Combine corn syrup, lime peel, lime juice and rum; pour over chicken. Reduce heat, cover and cook over low heat until chicken is tender, 20 to 25 minutes. While chicken is cooking, bring chicken broth to a boil in medium saucepan. Stir in contents of rice and seasoning packets. Bring to a boil. Cover tightly and cook over low heat until all liquid is absorbed, about 25 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in cashews.

Remove chicken from skillet; keep warm. Remove excess fat from pan drippings with paper toweling. Bring pan drippings to a boil. Cook, stirring constantly, until reduced to glaze consistency. Arrange rice and chicken on serving platter. Spoon glaze over chicken. Makes 6 servings.