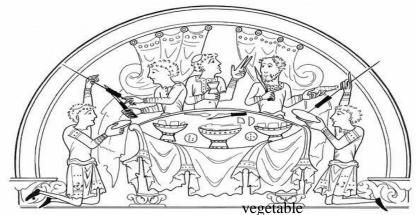
Anglo saxon Recipes



Meat

- 1. Crustade of Chicken and Pigeon
- 2. Hare, Rabbit, Veal or Chicken Stew with Herbs & Barley
- 3. Small Bird and Bacon Stew with Walnuts or Hazelnuts
- 4. Chicken stew with herbs and barley
- 5. Chicken in Lemon Sauce
- 6. Pork and Beer Stew
- 7. Spit Roast
- 8. Pork Stew with Apricots
- 9. Bacon Barley
- 10. Roast Mutton
- 11. Lamb Stew
- 12. Peas with Ham and Garlic
- 13. Kale and Chestnut Soup
- 14. Spinach, Bacon and Blue Cheese Soup
- 15. Lamb and Rosemary Stew
- 16. Veal or Chicken Stew
- 17. Rump Steak Stilton
- 18. Lamb and Apricot Stew
- 19. Pan Roasted Venison with Cherries
- 20. Venison and Bacon Stew
- 21. Sausage with Broad Beans
- 22. Boiled Beef and Leeks
- 23. Bacon and Mushrooms in Garlic

fish

- 24. A Jellie of Fyshe
- 25. Griddled Trout With Herbs
- 26. Fish Baked in Clay
- 27. Seafarers Stew
- 28. Mackerel with Onions
- 29. Cockles and Mussels with Smoked Bacon
- 30. Scallops with Spiced Sausage Meat
- 31. Fried Trout, Stuffed with Sliced Ceps, Garlic and Diced Bacon

- 32. Nut and Leek Stew
- 33. 'Fenkel in Soppes' or Braised Fennel with Ginger
- 34. Prune Sauce
- 35. Leek and Split Pea Soup
- 36. Cream of Mushroom Soup
- 37. Omelette with Home-Made Cheese
- 38. Quick Ricotta-style Cheese
- 39. Lettuce with Hard-boiled Eggs and Spring Onions

deserts

- 40. Lozenges or Curd Cheese Pastries
- 41. Summer Fruit, Honey, and Hazelnut Crumble
- 42. Griddle cakes
- 43. Gustum De Praecoquis
- 44. Griddle Cakes / Pancakes
- 45. Honey Oat Cakes
- 46. Honey Shortbread
- 47. Cream Cheese & Honey Slices

breads

- 48. Sourdough Rolls
- 49. Malt Bread, Leavened

porridge

Beverages

1. Beer / Ale

Anglo Saxon food stuffs

Sources

Meat

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.

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 of the slices on the pieces of bread, with plenty of the juices and "bits".

A good green salad to follow is the best accompaniment.

Chicken stew with herbs and barley

Ingredients

50g butter 1- 1.5 kg chicken joints 450g leeks 4 cloves garlic 175g pot barley 900 ml water (3 ³/₄ cups) 3 tablespoons wine vinegar 2 bay leaves, salt, pepper 1 tablespoon dried sage

What to do

Wash, trim and slice the leeks.
Chop up the garlic cloves.
Melt the butter in a large saucepan and fry the meat with the leeks and garlic until the vegetables are slightly softened and the meat lightly browned.
Add the the barley, water, vinegar, bay leaves, salt and pepper.
Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 1 to 1½ hours, until the meat is tender and about to fall off the bone.
Add the sage and cook for several minutes.
Serve in bowls

Chicken in Lemon Sauce

kg chicken drumsticks (or 800g boneless breasts)
 chopped onions
 tbls oil
 cup ground blanched almonds
 cups chicken stock
 1.5 tsp ground ginger
 fresh ground pepper
 salt
 5 tsp pure saffron (threads) infused in 0.25 cup hot stock

Trim chicken pieces as necessary, pat dry. Heat oil in a pan (big enough to hold chicken in one layer). Lightly fry onions till soft, but do not allow them to colour. Add chicken pieces and slowly seal on all sides, again without browning. Place almonds in food processor, add hot stock and blend for approx. 2 minutes.

Using a sieve, strain this almond milk over the chicken, pressing the almond residue to extract all the liquid. The almond milk should have the consistancy of thin cream; it will thicken during cooking. Add the ground ginger and saffron steeped in stock, together with a good grinding of pepper.

Cover and simmer for 15min for breasts or 30min for drumsticks. Remove the lid and increase the heat to boil the sauce down to a thick, creamy consistancy. Add the juice of one lemon, taste and add more if necessary. The lemon flavour should be distinct but not overpowering. Check for seasoning and add a little salt if desired.

Pork and Beer Stew

2 kilos diced Pork (1 inch cubes) 60-80 gram Lard 2 cooking Apples or 6 Crab Apples 1 bunch Chives 500 gram Leeks 500 gram Fresh Peas 1 litre Brown Ale 250 grams Bulgar Wheat

Brown pork in batches in pan with lard. Cover with beer and simmer for 45 mins. Add chopped apples, chives salt and sweated leeks, simmer until meat is nearly tender, add peas and cook until peas and meat are tender add bulgar wheat, check seasoning.

Spit Roast

Loin of pork, do not chine (remove the bones). Score rind and rub with salt. Place 60 – 80 cm above fire, turn regularly – will take 5-7 hrs to cook depending on heat of the fire and wind. Rest for 30 mins before carving.

Pork Stew with Apricots

This is a recipe that a wealthy Anglo-Saxon might have eaten. It is influenced by Roman cookery and is slightly sweet and sour. Serves 4.

Ingredients A large handful of pearl barley 1 1/2 pounds diced pork 1 large onion, chopped Fresh rosemary, chopped 1 Tablespoon olive oil 1 teaspoon ground cumin 2 teaspoons ground coriander A dash of white wine vinegar 1 tin apricots in fruit juice Salt & pepper

Method

Soak the barley for a couple of hours, or if you have forgotten all about that stage, pour boiling water on the barley and let it stand while you do the next bit.

Fry the pork fairly hot in the oil until it is brown on all sides. Turn the heat down and add the onion. Stir in the cumin and coriander and fry gently for a few minutes.

Add the juice from the apricots, the rosemary, vinegar and barley. Add enough water to cover the meat. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently for about 40 minutes or until the pork and barley are tender.

Season to taste and stir in the apricots.

Bacon Barley

This simple dish is very tasty, and can be served at a winter or spring banquet because it uses only stored foods. This kind of one-pot wonder is very much the sort of dish that Vikings would have cooked.

Serves 10-15 people as a starter.

Ingredients 500 g (1 lb) pearl barley 2-3 lbs smoked bacon, cut into 1/2 inch pieces. Bacon mis-shapes are ideal because they are chunkier. 4 onions, chopped 75 g butter black pepper Mixed herbs Water

Method

Soak the barley in cold water for a couple of hours. This reduces the cooking time significantly, thus saving precious fuel. If you forgot to do this and have modern technology available, put the barley in a pot when you start cooking, pour boiling water on it and let it stand until you need to add it to the bacon and onion. This will take quite a while off the cooking time. If you don't presoak barley at all it can take an hour or more to cook.

Melt the butter in a big saucepan. Add the onion and saute for a couple of minutes. Then add the bacon and continue to fry gently, stirring occasionally, for 10-15 minutes or until the bacon is no longer pink.

Add the barley, herbs and pepper. Stir it around and then add water until the barley is covered to a depth of about an inch. Cover, bring to the boil and simmer for about 20 minutes. Then uncover and continue to cook for another 15-25 minutes, stirring occasionally and adding more water if necessary, until the barley is tender and the water all absorbed.

A vegetarian version can be made by frying vegetables such as leeks, carrots, mushrooms and nuts with the onion, and optionally adding dried fruit with the barley.

Roast Mutton

Mutton should not be gamey: it should taste like lamb, but with a fuller flavour. It isn't easy to find mutton, but a game dealer or other good butcher should be able to get it for you. This method of slow roasting makes the meat tender and juicy. The wine, garlic, juniper and rosemary are Mediterranean touches, so this is really a Roman-influenced recipe. Serves 10 people.

Ingredients 1 leg mutton (4-5 lbs) Generous slosh of cheap red wine 3-6 cloves garlic, peeled 4 juniper berries Several sprigs of rosemary Salt and pepper Gravy browning (check packet for amount) or 2 teaspoons (30 ml) cornflour

Method

You can ask your butcher to bone the mutton, which will make it easier to carve. This is also worth doing if you want to use the leg bone to make knife handles or whatever, because roasting would make the bone brittle. You can stuff the cavity with a mix of chopped prunes, hazelnuts, finely chopped onions and fresh herbs. Remember to allow for any stuffing when calculating the cooking time.

Cut slots in the meat with a sharp knife. Push the garlic, juniper berries and rosemary into these slots. How much of each you use depends on your taste; too much juniper will make it bitter, and not everybody is mad about garlic.

Heat the oven to 150° C (300° F). Put the meat into a roasting dish. Sprinkle it with salt and pepper and then slosh wine over it. Put the lid on the roasting dish, or cover the joint with aluminium foil.

Roast the meat for 40 minutes per lb (450 g): if necessary, add more wine during cooking to keep the dish from drying out. Remove the lid or foil for the last half hour of cooking. When it's cooked, put the meat onto a carving platter to rest while you make gravy with the cooking juices.

To make the gravy, put the roasting dish on the hob and add some water (or cooking juices from vegetables). You should get nearly a pint of gravy. Thicken the gravy with gravy browning, or mix the cornflour with a little water until smooth, and stir this into the gravy. Keep stirring until the gravy has thickened. Strain it into a warmed jug, spoon the fat off the top of the gravy and serve. I retain the fat to use for roasting vegetables.

Lamb Stew

The cooking method described is the way that I cooked this easy, tasty and sustaining stew. However, it would be just as good simmered on a stove or cooked in the oven. Serves 12-15 people.

Ingredients
4 lbs diced neck of lamb
3 tablespoons olive oil (or sunflower oil, or butter)
4 onions, chopped
2 carrots, diced
1 small green cabbage, coarsely chopped
Several sprigs of rosemary, chopped
1 lb (450 g) tin of haricot or borlotti beans
1 lb (450 g) tin of garden peas (fresh or frozen peas would be fine too)
6 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
Salt and pepper
About a pint of water

Method

I recommend that you ask the butcher to dice the meat for you - it will save you a lot of time and effort.

Brown the meat in the oil. Add the onions and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are translucent.

Add all the other ingredients except the beans and peas. Cover the pan, bring to the boil and simmer for 1/2 hour. Add the beans and peas and continue to simmer for another 1/2 hour.

Wrap the covered pan in your oldest, double-thickness wool cloak and rest it in the passenger footwell of the car. Ask the passenger to sit with their legs resting on the pan to make sure it doesn't slide around. Drive to the venue, about an hour's drive. The meat will continue to cook slowly and will fill the car with a mouth-watering aroma of lamb and garlic.

Build up a small, hot cooking fire and put the pan over it on a trivet. If the meat is already tender, serve the stew as soon as it is hot. Otherwise, continue to simmer until ready, which shouldn't take more than half an hour.

Serve with crusty bread or baked root vegetables.

Peas with Ham and Garlic Servings: 1

dry-cured Ham or Bacon some Peas Oil Garlic

Cut the ham into small pieces. Blanch the peas in lightly salted boiling water for 1 minute, then drain. Fry a couple of clove's worth of sliced garlic in the oil. Add the ham and cook for a couple more minutes. Add the peas and cook for another couple of minutes.

Comment: As yet untested.

Kale and Chestnut Soup

Servings: 4

500g/18oz Chestnuts 500g/18oz Kale or another winter green 250g/9oz Bacon or leftover ham Oil

1 litre/1¾pt Poultry or Game Stock

To Prepare the Chestnuts

Make a slit in the shell of each chestnut and plunge them into a pan of boiling water. Bring the water back to boil and simmer for 3-4 minutes.

Drain, leave until cool enough to handle, then peel off the skin, including the thin brown inner skin (or you can roast and peel the chestnuts if you prefer this way of removing the skins).

The Soup

Wash and trim the Kale, cutting out and discarding the tougher stalks. Shred coarsely. Roughly dice the Bacon and fry in the oil until just crisp.

Simmer the peeled Chestnuts in the stock until tender. Lift out with a slotted spoon. Mash about a quarter of the Chestnuts with a fork and stir them back into the soup to thicken it a little.

Roughly chop the rest of the Chestnuts and return to the soup.

Add the Kale and Bacon and simmer for just 3 minutes, until the Kale is lightly cooked but fresh and green in colour.

Comment: As yet untested.

Spinach, Bacon and Blue Cheese Soup Servings: 10

2 cups chopped onion
1 cup all-purpose flour
12 cups chicken broth
1 cup thick cream
½ pound crumbled blue cheese
2 (10 ounce) packages frozen chopped spinach OR 2 bunches fresh spinach, stems removed and coarsely chopped
Salt to taste
4 cups milk
Ground pepper to taste
1 pound bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled

Sauté onions in butter for about 3 minutes. Add flour and stir well until mixed. Add broth, raise heat to high and bring to a boil. Whisk mixture to keep flour from clumping. Add milk, reduce heat to medium and simmer for about 5 minutes. Add the blue cheese and stir until blended, then add the spinach and cook 3 more minutes. Add the cream, bring just to a boil, take off heat and stir well. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Comment: Lovely if you like blue cheese! Very tasty and totally authentic if you are representing a wealthy household

Lamb and Rosemary Stew Servings: 4

4 lamb chump chops 8oz/225g each, trimmed of fat
2 cloves garlic
1 medium onion
½ pint/285ml lamb stock
2 sprigs fresh rosemary or 1 tsp dried
¼ tsp salt
Black pepper
8oz/225g green beans

Brown lamb in oil for 15 minutes over a medium heat. Drain off the excess fat. Add onion, stock, rosemary, salt and some pepper and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 25-30 minutes. Stir in beans, cover and cook until tender.

Comment: Another favourite. Very authentic and simple to make

Veal or Chicken Stew Servings: 6

1kg/2lb boneless veal or chicken, in 4cm/1½" cubes 2 medium onions, chopped 250g/8oz mushrooms 250ml/½ pint dry white wine 250ml/½ pint chicken stock Herbs Seasonings Sorrel to taste

Sauté meat in oil and butter until golden. Transfer to pot. Sauté mushrooms and onions until tender in the same pan until they are tender. Add to the pot with wine, stock, herbs and seasoning. Cover and simmer for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Rump Steak Stilton Servings: 4

1202/15g butter 1202/15g flour 14pt/150ml milk 202/50g white Stilton 14pt/150ml single cream seasonings 11b/450g rump steak, cut into 1/2"/1cm strips

Toss the meat in the butter for about 5 mins. Mix milk and flour together in a jug, then stir into the pan and continue to stir until sauce thickens and is smooth. Cook for 1 minute. Add the Stilton and cream, season. Do not allow to boil.

Comment: Another feast day food or one for the wealthy, I always make double the amount as it's so good!

Lamb and Apricot Stew Servings: 6

2kg leg lamb, boned 1 onion, thickly sliced 1/2 cup white wine 1 tbsp grated lemon rind 1/4 cup lemon juice 1 tbsp ground coriander seasonings 2 tbsp oil 170ml can apricot nectar 1/2 cup dried apricots 1/2 cup dried pitted prunes 1 tbsp cornflour Parsley

Combine onion, wine, lemon rind, juice, coriander, and seasonings in a bowl. Cover the bowl and marinate the chopped meat overnight. Stir a couple of times. Drain meat & onion mix, reserving juice. Brown meat & onion. Add the marinade and apricot nectar, bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 30 mins. Add the apricots and prunes, stir gently, cover and simmer for another 30 mins. Add cornflour to thicken and simmer for 15 mins.

Comment: This was a very popular stew with my re-enactor chums- not sure about the authenticity of the apricots though

Pan Roasted Venison with Cherries Servings: 4

4 chunks of venison, cut into pieces Salt, (optional), to taste Freshly-ground black pepper, to taste Oil, as needed 1 small spoon oil 1/4 cup chopped shallots ½ cup red wine 1 cup stock ½ large spoon flour 1/3 cup dried cherries

Season the venison with salt (if using) and freshly ground pepper. Heat the oil to sizzling in a pan, add the venison and sear until well browned. Add the shallots and red wine to the pan and cook, stirring, until the shallots are wilted and the wine is reduced by half. Whisk the stock and flour together and whisk into the pan. Cook until the mixture thickens. Add the dried cherries to the pan and heat through.

Comment: Both Saxons and Vikings were keen on mixing their sweet and savoury flavours - this one works really well.

Venison and Bacon Stew Servings: 2

1lb/400g diced venison third pint/200ml White Wine Marinade salt and pepper butter 2 small onions, peeled and chopped 1 shallot, peeled and chopped 1/2 clove garlic, minced 1/4 pint/150ml white wine third pint/250ml beef stock 7 whole button mushrooms 3 thick bacon slices, diced and crisp-cooked 1 tspn flour mixed with 2 tspns water White Wine Marinade 1 small onion, thinly sliced 1/2 clove of garlic, minced 1/4 bottle dry white wine 1/2 tblspn chopped fresh parsley 1/2 bay leaf, crumbled 3 peppercorns, crushed 1/4 tspn thyme 1 tblspn melted butter 1/2 tspn salt MIX all ingrediants together and pour over the meat. Marinate the meat for 1 0r 2 days (depending on age and toughness) in a cool place. Drain and dry the meat, reserving the marinade. Sprinkle the meat with salt and pepper

Heat the butter in a pan and cook the onion until tender.

Add and brown the meat.

Remove excess fat from the pan and add the shallots and garlic, turning and browning over a medium heat.

Add wine, $\frac{1}{2}$ the marinade and enough stock to cover the meat.

Bring to the boil, lower heat, cover and simmer for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. (Add more stock if necessary).

Remove meat and strain the gravy. skimming off excess fat.

Return meat to the pan, pour in the strained gravy, add the mushrooms, onions and diced cooked bacon.

Add flour paste, if necessary, to thicken.

Simmer for 25 minutes more, until mushrooms are heated through.

Comment: This is a very tasty, if complicated recipe. Because of the inclusion of wine - it would probably be enjoyed by the wealthier households (those who could afford to import it).

Sausage with Broad Beans Servings: 1

250g broad beans 100g sausage 1 tbsp Olive oil

Cook the beans for about 2 minutes in salted water, then drain. Finely slice the sausage and fry for a minute or so. Add the beans to the pan and heat through.

Comment: As yet untested.

Boiled Beef and Leeks Servings: 2

1lb / 450g stewing steak, cut up 2 tblspns red wine vinegar 4fl.oz. / 100ml Oil Salt to taste 1 tblspn fresh or 1 tspn dried Dill 2 Leeks, chopped

Cut stewing steak into bite size pieces and place in a large pan with the oil and vinegar. Bring to the boil and simmer for a few minutes. Add salt to taste. Chop up the leeks and add to the pan, cook until tender. Add the dill and stir through, then serve.

from London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D XVII (Bald's Leechbook II), Winchester - mid 10th century.

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Against hiccupy stomachs or swellings take [horned cattle] flesh [seethed/boiled/cooked] in vinegar and with oil (coagulated ?thickened) with salt and dill and leek, partake of that {for} a seven night, henceforth relieven thence the afflicted stomach

Comment: this is a little oily, but very tasty and totally authentic!

Bacon and Mushrooms in Garlic

Bacon Mushrooms Garlic Oil to fry in

Add bacon, mushrooms and garlic to a pan and fry in oil to preference.

Comment: Absolutely the best breakfast ever!

fish

A Jellie of Fyshe Serves 6

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 teacloth. You should have appoximately 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 of four pices. 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.

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.

1 Salmon or other large fish 1 cup Wild Plums Burdock Leaves

Clean the fish, de-scale it by rubbing with the back of a knife and wash in cold water. Stuff the cavity with wild plums, wrap in burdock leaves and tie. Put on a board and encase with clay. Leave to dry in a warm place for about 1 hr.

Bake on embers for 1 hr, check temperature is on or above 72°c with digital thermometer. Let rest for 20 mins, break clay and eat.

Seafarers Stew Servings: 4

225g/8oz undyed smoked haddock fillet 225g/8oz fresh monkfish fillet 20 mussels, scrubbed 2 bacon rashers 15ml/1 tbsp oil 1 shallot, finely chopped 150ml/¼pt single or double cream

Simmer haddock and monkfish in 2 pints of water for 5 mins, then add mussels and cover pan with lid.

Cook for 5 more mins until all mussels have opened (discard any that haven't). Drain, reserving the liquid. Return liquid to rinsed pan and set aside.

Chop up fish and bacon.

Fry shallot and bacon for 2-3 mins. Add to the strained fish broth. Bring to the boil and cook for 10 mins.

Stir in cream and all remaining fish and heat gently without boiling.

Comment: Not a very popular stew as the mussels look at people! Authentic, though

Mackerel with Onions Servings: 2

2 Mackerel fillets2-3 large onionsOlive oil3-4 Bay leavesA sprig of thymeA splash of white wineSalt & Pepper

Slice the onions and sweat in a pan with the oil, bay leaves and thyme, tossing and stirring frequently, for at least 10 minutes.

Add the white wine and cook until the wine has evaporated, then season with salt and pepper. Make space in the pan for the mackerel and lay them flesh side down. Cook for about 7-8 minutes, turning halfway through and covering with the onions.

Comment: I've eaten mackerel with oatcakes and watercress, which was very good, too

Cockles and Mussels with Smoked Bacon Servings: 4-6

1 kilo live Cockles
1 kilo live Mussels
1 onion
2-3 Garlic cloves
50g Butter
1 tbsp Oil
1 large glass of White Wine
1 large glass Water
250g thick sliced Smoked Bacon

Scrub and rinse the shellfish, discarding any that don't close when handled. Roughly chop the onion. Bash, peel and roughly chop the garlic. Sweat the onion and garlic in the oil and butter in a large pan. Add the wine and water after a few minutes. Bring to a rapid boil and add some of the shellfish (so they are 2-3 shells deep in the pan). Cover and cook until the shells open (about 3 minutes), giving them a jostle occassionally. Any that don't open should be discarded. Strain the liquid and keep it. Deshell the shellfish (leave some in shells if you like the decorative effect). Cut the bacon into strips and fry until crisp. Pour in the shellfish liquid and adjust the seasoning, adding some fish or chicken stock if necessary. Bring to the boil, add the fish and mix well. Cook for a couple of minutes then serve.

Comment: As yet untested.

Scallops with Spiced Sausage Meat Servings: 4

12-16 fresh Scallops 250g sausage meat 2-3 cloves Garlic 1 tsp fennel seeds Salt & Pepper Olive oil

Rinse, trim and pat dry the scallops. (Leave the corals on if they are fat and bright orange.) If they are large scallops, slice them horizontally through the middle.

Mix the sausage meat with the spices and leave in the fridge for 1 hour or overnight.

Form the meat into small meatballs and fry in the oil over a medium heat.

Remove and keep warm.

Turn up the heat until the oil is almost smoking, then add the scallops turning after 1 minute, cooking for 1 minute each side only.

Remove the pan from the heat and add the meatballs, mixing them well together, until heated through.

Comment: As yet untested.

Fried Trout, Stuffed with Sliced Ceps, Garlic and Diced Bacon Servings: 4

4 Trout Fillets
40g Butter
60g rindless Streaky Bacon, chopped
175g fresh Ceps, trimmed and cut into 4mm thick slices
2 Garlic Cloves, finely chopped
1 tbsp Parsley, roughly chopped
25g Plain Flour
2 tbsp Oil
salt and fresh ground black pepper

Melt the butter in a large frying pan and as soon as it is foaming, add the bacon and fry briefly until lightly coloured.

Add the sliced ceps and the garlic and toss over a medium-high heat for 1 minute until lightly cooked.

Season with salt and pepper and remove from the heat.

Lay the fillets on a chopping board and season the cut face with salt and pepper and then cover one fillet with a few slices of the ceps and bacon mixture.

Sprinkle with a little parsley, place another fillet on top (cut side down) and tie round in two places with fine string to hold everything together.

Season the outside of each parcel with a little more salt and pepper, then dredge with the flour and pat off the excess.

Add the oil to the pan and heat over a moderate heat.

Add the fish and fry for 2 1/2 minutes without moving them, until nicely golden.

Carefully turn the fish over and cook for another 2 1/2 minutes, until golden brown on the second side and cooked through.

Comment: As yet untested

vegetable

Nut and Leek Stew

150 gram Hazelnuts
110 gram Butter
1 handful Sorrel
1 bunch Chives
½ bunch Wild Marjoram
1 kilo chopped Leeks
1 kilo shelled Peas
500 gram Bulgar Wheat
Large sprig Mint
Salt

Fry nuts in butter (a wok works well for this and they had something similar). Add chopped and washed leeks and herbs, sweat to opaque. Add peas, mint, salt and just cover with water, simmer until peas are cooked, add bulgar wheat and cook until water absorbed, 5-8 mins. Serve at once

'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 teapsoon 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.

Prune Sauce

This is a mediaeval recipe. All the ingredients were available to Vikings & Anglo Saxons, though only the wealthy had access to wine and spices. Vikings & Anglo Saxons were very fond of plums, and of course prunes are dried plums. It is excellent with cheese and meats. Serve hot as a sauce or cold as a chutney. Serves 10 people, or more if used as a chutney.

Ingredients 24 prunes 2 cups (0.48 I) strong red wine 1 cup (0.24 I) water 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 ml) powdered cinnamon 1/8 teaspoon (0.6 ml) powdered ginger 3 Tablespoons (45 ml) honey 1 Tablespoon (15 ml) vinegar 2 Tablespoons (30 ml) flour

Method

Gently simmer all ingredients, except the flour, for 30 minutes. Remove the prunes and extract their pits if necessary. Chop them finely

Remove 1/2 cup of the spiced wine syrup and stir the flour into it, blending thoroughly. Stir this thickener into the rest of the sauce.

Return the prunes to the pot, stir, and slowly simmer an additional 4 minutes.

Leek and Split Pea Soup Servings: 4

3 oz/75g split peas 1 large onion, chopped 2 pints veg stock 1½ lb/675g leeks, sliced Seasoning

Cover peas with boiling water and leave for 2 hours. Drain and reserve water. Fry onion in butter. Add peas, stock and seasonings. Bring to boil, cover and simmer for 1 hour. If water gets low, add reserved pea juice. Add leeks and cook for further 15-20 minutes.

Comment: A very thick, tasty soup. I've done this one over a fire and on the hob, great both ways. Watch it doesn't boil dry, though. My favourite.

Cream of Mushroom Soup Servings: 4

275g/10oz button mushrooms 1tbsp oil 3tbsp butter 1 small onion, finely chopped 1tbsp plain flour 450ml/¾pt vegetable stock 450ml/¾pt milk a pinch of dried Basil 2-3tbsp single cream

Fry mushrooms for about 1-2 mins in the oil and butter. Then cover and sweat for 6-7 mins. Stir in flour, stock, milk, basil and seasoning and bring to the boil. Simmer, partly covered for 15 mins. Add cream.

Comment: Classic mushroom soup, rich and creamy, and doesn't take very long

Omelette with Home-Made Cheese

3 eggs Salt Pepper A knob of butter A couple of handfuls of Ricotta-style Cheese

Lightly beat the eggs and season with salt and pepper. Heat the butter in a pan and gently cook the eggs. While the omelette is still a little runny crumble over the cheese. Fold over the omelette and cook until done.

Comment: As yet untested

Quick Ricotta-style Cheese

Traditionally the quality of milk improves in April, as the dairy herds come out of their winter housing and graze on the new growth of grass - which is richer than at any other time of year.

2 litres fresh whole milk (unpasteurised)

A pinch of salt

4 tsps rennet

Scald a large saucepan with a kettle of boiling water to sterilise it.

Add the milk and salt and heat gently to blood temperature, then remove at once from the heat.

Add the rennet and stir well in.

Leave for about 15 minutes, while the milk separates into curds (at the top) and whey (at the bottom).

Use a slotted spoon or small sieve to skim off the curds, in as large pieces as possible, placing them in a colander lined with a large square of double-layered muslin.

When you've skimmed off almost all the curds, tie up the corners of the muslin and hang the cheese to drip above a sink or bucket.

Leave for about 3 hours, then unwrap the cheese, place in a pudding basin, cover and store in the fridge.

Keep the cheese covered, in a bowl in the fridge, and it will stay fresh and 'sweet' for 2-3 days. After that, the flavour will turn more tangy and cheesy - still good to eat, but more suited to cooking and savoury applications. Use it up within a week.

From 'The River Cottage Year' - Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall.

Lettuce with Hard-boiled Eggs and Spring Onions Servings: 4

2-4 lettuces 6 eggs Olive Oil Vinegar Mustard Salt & Pepper 5-6 Spring Onions

Wash and gently dry the lettuce leaves. Hard boil the eggs and peel when cool enough to handle. Make a simple salad dressing by mixing the oil and vinegar together in the ratio 5:1, add a dab of mustard and some salt and pepper. Mix it all together well. Finely chop the spring onions. Throw the lettuce leaves in a salad bowl.

Roughly chop the eggs and put them with the spring onions.

Pour the dressing over the eggs and onions and mix well.

Pile this mixture over the lettuce leaves and toss.

deserts

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 nuts 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.

Summer Fruit, Honey, and Hazelnut Crumble Serves 6

....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...

1 kg (2 1/2 lb) mixed soft summer fruits-- raspberries, loganberries, strawberries, currants, bilberries or whatever is available honey or brown sugar to taste 75 g (3 oz) tasted hazeInuts 75 g (3 oz) wholemeal or wholewheat brown breadcrumbs

Put the fruits in a pan or microwave dish with about 20 cm (1 inch) water in the bottom and cook gently for 10-15 minutes (4-6 minutes in microwave), or till the fruits are soft without being totally mushy.

Sweeten to taste with honey or brown sugar (Saxons would have used honey); how much you need will depend on what fruits you have used. drain the 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 hazelnuts and crumbs.

Bake in a moderate oven (180C, 350F, Gas Mark 4) for 20 – 30 minutes or till the top is slightly cruncy and browned. Serve with lots of cream or plain yogurt and the warmed fruit juices.

Griddle cakes

I ngredients Spelt flour Butter Sugar and/or honey Rolled oats Dried fruit Milk or water

the ingredients aren't weigh, go by what lookes right.

First put 1 part butter, 1 part sugar and 2 parts flour into a mixing bowl or trough. Add a blob of honey. Rub in until you get even breadcrumbs (like when you make pastry). Add extra flour/butter as needed. Add a little milk or water to bind into a dough - not too much or it will become sticky. Knead briefly. Add as many oats and dried fruit as you like and knead into the dough. Take small balls of the dough and flatten into rounds (3-4 mm thick). Melt some butter on a griddle or in a flat pan, and drop the cakes in. Turn every 30 seconds - 1 minute until both sides are nicely browned. Eat while still hot!

Gustum De Praecoquis (Starter with Apricots)

1 kg (2.20 pounds) firm ripe plums
200 ml (.85 cups) white wine
500 ml (2.10 cups) grape juice for passum
1 peppermint tea bag or 1 tsp dried mint leaves
1 Tbsp vinegar
1 Tbsp honey
¼ tsp each salt and pepper

General notes.

The posted recipe called for Liquamen, a salty fish paste to be used. While this may have been historically accurate, I had no desire to make (or eat) salty fish paste.

I also omitted the cornstarch from the recipe. Corn was not available until after 1492, so cornstarch wouldn't have been available as a thickening agent.

The recipe didn't call for any quantities on the vinegar, honey, salt, or pepper, so the quantities posted are the ones I used.

Method:

Place grape juice in a small saucepan and heat on medium high heat until gently boiling. Boil approximately 15 minutes until volume has halved.

Wash plums and cut into large pieces, removing the pit.

Place plumbs in a large pan and mint, salt, pepper, and honey.

Once the grape juice has boiled down to passum, add the wine and passum.

Cook on low to medium for approximately 20 minutes.

Let stand about 10 minutes to allow sauce to thicken.

Serve warm with plain yoghurt.

Griddle Cakes / Pancakes

2 cups wholemeal flour 1 duck egg or 2 chicken eggs Full cream milk Pinch of salt

Place the flour in a bowl add egg and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk, mix to a smooth batter, add more milk to a drop scone consistency, (thin down with milk until it covers the back of a wooden spoon for pancakes.) Rest for at least 1 hour.

Temper the cast iron griddle with salt (heat griddle, lightly coat with salt, rub well with an old cloth until smooth.)

Lightly grease with butter or lard.

Pour on mix, test it doesn't stick - re-temper if it does.

When mixture starts to bubble turn over griddlecake, (pancakes when set turn) a long handled palette knife or a thin piece of wood shaped like a spatula is good for this.

Serve with local honey or wild plums cooked with honey until just soft- serve warm.

(Chopped pears, apples or blackberries can be added to the griddle cake mix before cooking for a fruity change.)

Honey Oat Cakes

These are easy to make and very tasty. Serves 10-15 people.

Ingredients 350 g (12 Oz) Rolled Oats (Whole rolled oats if possible) 225 g (8 Oz) Butter 225 g (8 Oz) Honey Pinch of salt

Method Melt the butter in a medium sized saucepan. Add the salt, honey and oats and stir until they are well mixed. Spoon the mixture out onto a greased baking tray or swiss roll tin and press it down well. Bake at 325F/170C for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for a few minutes then mark into squares while still warm and serve when cold.

Honey Shortbread

This is easy to make and very tasty. Serves 10-15 people.

Ingredients 225 g (7 Oz) Plain Flour (Wholemeal is nice too) 50 g (2 Oz) Cornflour 175 g (6 Oz) Soft Butter 125 g (4 Oz) Honey

Method Mix the ingredients together until they form a dough ball. Spoon the mixture out onto a greased baking tray or swiss roll tin and press it down well. Bake at 325F/160C for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for a few minutes then cut into fingers while still warm and serve when cold.

Cream Cheese & Honey Slices

These are easy to make and very tasty. Serves 10-15 people.

Ingredients 100 g (4 Oz) Plain Flour 75 g (3 Oz) Soft Butter 100 g (4 Oz) Cream Cheese 50 g (2 Oz) Honey 2.5 ml (half level teaspoon) Ground Cinnamon 2 eggs, beaten

Method

Sift the flour and chop in the butter; add 15 ml (1 tbsp) water, work with a knife to a smooth dough. If necessary chill to make rolling out easier. Use to line a 28.5 by 18.5 by 1.5 cm (11.75 by 7.75 by 0.75 inch) Swiss roll tin.

Mix together the cream cheese, honey and cinnamon and add the eggs. Pour this mixture onto the pastry.

Bake at 350F/180C for about 30 minutes. Cut into slices when cool.

Breads

Sourdough Rolls

Sourdough is a method of leaven for bread making using fermented dough, originally dough left over from the last baking.

Day 1: Mix 1 cup of water and 1 cup of freshly ground wholemeal flour, beat well and leave in a warmish place.

Day 2: Add 1 cup warm water and 1 cup wholemeal flour, beat until well mixed.

Day 3: Repeat Day 2.

Day 4: Use two thirds of the sourdough mix, add 3 cups of warm water. Add to wholemeal bread flour until firm dough, add ½tsp salt and knead well until very smooth and elastic, 15-30 mins. Leave to prove in a warm place covered with muslin.

When doubled in size knock back. Divide in to rolls and mould, leave to prove until doubled in size. Brush with milk, place in a very hot oven (210-220) for 10-20 mins. If a roll sounds hollow when tapped it is cooked.

Malt Bread, Leavened

500 gram stone ground flour1 good cup wheat malt1 tsp sea salt1 cup sour doughWater to mix

Mix dry ingredients together, add yeast and enough water to make soft, dough. Knead until smooth and springy, leave in warm place for 3-3½ hrs until doubled in size, knead again shape either into rolls or flatten, prove and cook on griddle.

Rolls prove again for 1 hr until doubled in size, bake in a hot oven until brown and sound hollow when tapped.

Beer /Ale

Beer is a very simple drink to produce. In its simplest form it is quick to produce, but almost unpalatable to modern tastes!

Before I describe how the beer is made, here are a few background details:

Correctly any beer made in our period should, in fact, be referred to as Ale. The word Beer used to refer to a brew containing hops, or Beor (honey). Hops were not used in this country until much later. The first record of their use being 1236 A.D.

Malt.

This is the name given to the cereal (nearly all cereals can be used in brewing) once it has been "Malted". Malting is the process by which the grain is soaked over a few days and then laid out to dry. Once it starts to germinate, it is very roughly crushed or ground so that the husks are just starting to break away from the grains. This ensures that as much as possible of the food contained is available for fermenting..

Mash

No not the potato variety! Mash is the name given to the mix of malt and gruit which are allowed to ferment together.

Gruit

The name given to the flavouring. It is well known that nowadays we use almost exclusively the hop flavour for beer, but in Saxon times many other things were used, such as: Bog Myrtle, Honey, Yarrow, and Cinnamon, to name but a few. Sometimes a mix or blend was used often incorporating a blossom. Blossoms can add additional yeast to the brew.

Yeast

Normally yeast would not be added to the "first brew", instead, it would rely on natural airborne yeast to "infect" it. Before final straining of the brew any yeast that had grown would be removed and added to the next brew at the start of the next fermentation. Some extra yeast can be obtained from certain gruits. The purpose of yeast in the brew is to create alcohol. As some of you may have noticed this is a particularly popular ingredient in any beer.

How to Brew

Using, if possible, a copper cauldron as it adds a bit of flavour, simmer (bring it to the boil and keep it gentle boiling) the malt in soft water (hard waters can alter the taste of some ales) for around two hours (some brews may need more, some less). Transfer to a wooden barrel or similar container and leave to cool down to a temperature of around 16°C (around 60°F).

Add the gruit and leave to ferment in a warm location. After about six to eight hours cover with a thin cloth. Apart from the occasional stir there is no need at all to touch the mash and looking at it every five minutes will not increase the speed of fermentation!

Leave to ferment for at least 24 hours but no more than three days. The final strength of the beer will be affected by the length of time the brew is left. (the alcoholic content of Saxon beers was probably low, but the point of the process was to produce a safe and pleasant drink with any intoxication being a bonus). Other factors such as ambient temperature contribute to the end result. Now you can strain the mash. This can be done with a fairly course sieve as a second and third straining are always needed to remove the yeast. By now you will (should) have a wooden container full of an insipid yellowish opaque liquid and a sieve full of mash. Do not throw the mash way, as this contains a lot of yeast and can be used to make bread.

Beer /Ale cont.

The liquid should now be left to stand for a further hour or so to let the sediments drop to the bottom of the container. It is quite drinkable at this point, but may cause wind amongst those who drink it.

For the second straining a fine weave cloth may be used as this retains a great deal of the yeast. Leave again for an hour and repeat. If a second brew is anticipated keep this and add it to the start of the fermentation of the next brew. By this method the same strain of yeast can be kept alive for a long period. In Belgium , one abbey, where brewing takes place, have been using the same yeast for over eight hundred years.

After the third and final straining the ale should be ready to drink. It must be drunk quickly, after a day or so it begins to go off and after a week would possibly cause an upset. One Saxon writer of the time wrote "...after two days only the bravest or silliest men of the village would drink the ale, but usually it was only fit for pigs." The stale brew was often fed to the pigs as it was said to improve the flavour of the meat (and also gave rise to the saying "as drunk as swine").

At Preston we had an attempt at brewing and I am pleased to report that the brew was a complete success. It was called Dennis and here is the recipe.

- Malt Wheat pre malted
- Gruit Locally collected Elderflower blossom

Boiled for one and one half hours and allowed to ferment. Straining took place over two days and a good time was had by all those that assisted in this later process. Some of the cooks on duty that day took the mash and made a very nice, but slightly flowery tasting bread which they named Denise.

Since I first penned this article further brews have been produced using such flavourings as Apple & Honey, Bogmyrtle, Elderberry & Honey with Barley malt.

Bringing things right up to date, an old type of beer, similar to our saxon style brewed today is Lambic. The main difference being the addition of hops (albeit so dry that they add no flavour, their purpose being to stop the beer going off quickly) but the process would be familiar to our saxon forebears.

Postscript: Beer and other brewed fluids had quite possibly another more hygienic task to do. The key to this is the fact that all beer production involved boiling and simmering of the brew, rendering it fairly sterile. Whilst the Anglo-Saxon gut was far more robust than ours is today, (which is always a keen talking point as to whether we are indeed weaker to the bugs in the soil etc.), good drinking water was a luxury. Especially in the towns and cities that were evolving a thousands years ago. Digs from York and elsewhere, demonstrate that our ancestors back then had little concept of public works, with wells and cess pits or toilets situated within feet of each other. So beer, held few dangers other than intoxication.

Many of the large cauldrons that have survived were in all likelihood intended for the production of vast amounts of beer for feasts and celebrations, rather than boiling up pork and other meats, not that they couldn't be pressed into being expensive saucepans as well. Toasting and swearing of oaths were probably far more meaningful with a belly full of beer.

Anglo Saxon food stuffs

Fruit – figs and grapes, small apples (crab apples) plums, cherries and sloes

Vegetables - wheat, rye, oats and barley, carrots, 'Welsh carrots'; or parsnips, Cabbages, burdock and rape, Onions and leeks, wild garlic Legumes - peas and beans

herbs and spices - ginger, cinnamon, cloves mace and pepper

Honey

Wine & Mead, 'apple-wine', probably a form of cider, fruit juices including apple, pear and plum, herbal 'teas' and infusions, beer ale

Acorns

Fish - herring, salmon and eel, pike, perch and roach, flounder, whiting, plaice, cod and brown trout, oysters, mussels and cockles

Meat – pig, chicken, ducks and geese, wild ducks, plover, grouse, herons and geese. Hares, Deer, Wild boar, cow, sheep, goat

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