



STUART

Love of Home

There is no "cheap" love and imagination
 become major ingredients
 in the preparation of a meal

By GLEN WALKER

Better a dinner of herbs where love is, says the Good Book—and what a loving cook can do with a handful of herbs is something wonderful. With a bit of this and a bit of that she enriches and encourages a soup, a stew, a casserole, a dinner in a dish. To her, these are not penalty dishes, held down by the budget, but triumphs of ingenuity, built up from a moonbeam. It is in the field of seasoning that a woman expresses her personality.

Many families protest they like "plain cooking," but their favorite "plain cooking" dishes are not all that plain. Cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, vanilla and cloves come from half the world away to flavor and scent familiar dishes. How they would groan if the sage and thyme were left out of the turkey dressing, or the bay leaves out of the stew! Savory, marjoram, sweet basil and oregano, though less familiar, are quite as natural in origin.

Approach the use of spices and herbs on tiptoe, remembering that if a spice is new to you and you do not know its carrying power, a "pinch" is better than a "punch." A good rule of thumb is to use $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon dried herbs—or 1 scant teaspoon of the fresh—for 4 servings. Also, remember to investigate the herb blends now readily available. Here are nine main dishes, some for large families, some for small, all designed to flatter both pocketbook and palate.

CALIFORNIA CORN

In a large skillet, sauté 1 large onion, sliced, and 1 clove garlic, minced, in 2 tablespoons olive or salad oil until golden. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ small green pepper, cut into thin slices, and 1 pound sliced mushrooms. Cook over low heat for 5 minutes. Lightly grease a casserole and layer in it half of a 1-pound-4-ounce can cream-style corn. Then add half of the pepper-mushroom mixture. Grate $\frac{1}{2}$ pound sharp Cheddar cheese and add half of this, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt. In a bowl, mix 1 cup minced parsley, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry bread crumbs, 1 teaspoon ground cumin seed, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon oregano and $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon coarse black pepper. Add half of this in a layer. Repeat the layers, topping with the crumb mixture. Cover, bake in slow oven, 300° F., for 45 minutes. Remove cover and bake 25 minutes more. Brown under broiler. Makes 4 servings.

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LOVE AND IMAGINATION

BEAN LIMAS

Cover 1 pound dried Lima beans with water and let soak overnight. Drain beans and place in a large Dutch oven or pot. Add 1 ham hock with boiling water. Bring to a boil and simmer until beans are tender, about 2 hours. Drain beans, saving the liquid. Remove ham from the bone in bite-sized pieces. In a large skillet put $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups bean liquid, 1 lb. ham, finely chopped, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped green pepper. Simmer until the ham is almost tender. Add the meat. Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons flour. Cook slowly. Slowly add a 1-pound-13-ounce can tomatoes. Cook slowly, occasionally, until thickened, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Add beans. Season with 2 teaspoons salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sweet basil and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper. Turn into a greased casserole and bake in a moderate oven for 1 hour. Makes 6-8 servings.

RAISED BEEF BELGIAN STYLE

In a very heavy pan sauté $\frac{2}{3}$ cup minced onion in 2 tablespoons butter. In the same pan, brown 2 pounds chuck which has been cut into $3" \times 1" \times \frac{1}{2}"$ cubes. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon thyme, 1 bay leaf and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pepper. Mix together $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups water, 1 tablespoon tomato catsup, 1 tablespoon vinegar and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sugar. Add to the meat and $\frac{1}{2}$ slice bread, crumbled. Simmer over very low heat 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, adding more of the water mixture until it has thickened. Makes 4 servings.

STUFFED FILLET OF FLOUNDER

Sauté $\frac{2}{3}$ cup finely minced onions in $\frac{1}{3}$ cup butter until slightly browned. Add $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups soft bread crumbs, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped green pepper, 2 tablespoons chopped capers, 1 teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper. Add small fillets of flounder (about 2 pounds) with salt and pepper. Roll up fillets, making a hole in center for stuffing, and fasten with toothpicks. Place in a greased dish. Fill centers with stuffing. Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk around fish. Cover, bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., 25-30 minutes, until fish is browned. Makes 6 servings.

SPANISH SOUP

Soak 3 cups chick peas overnight in water to cover. The next morning drain and then turn into a large soup kettle. Also add 1 stewing hen neck, cleaned and singed, a 2-pound piece boiling beef, a 1-pound piece lamb shank, a 2-pound piece ham, 5 quarts water. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 2 hours. Add 1 pound pepperoni sausage cut into 1" pieces, 2 leeks washed and sliced (or 1 large onion, peeled and sliced), 1 peeled tomato and 1 scraped carrot. Season with 2 teaspoons salt, a dash of pepper and marjoram. Cover and continue simmering for another 2 hours. Take away all bones and skin (from the chicken) and discard. Return to the soup. Cool and chill overnight. Skim off fat. Reheat and taste for seasonings. Makes about 6 quarts soup. Will freeze well. Could use leftover lamb bone and le

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