

DAINTY ORANGE DISHES.



THE fruit under consideration needs no recommendation. Much might be said in its favour, and little or nothing against it. Amongst other advantages, its appearance, cheapness, and wholesomeness may be specially named. The people who find oranges disagreeable are in the minority ; and although in a few cases the peculiar acid found in the tribe of fruits of which the

orange, lemon, and lime are familiar types, causes discomfort, for the most part, "golden pills of health," as a well-known surgeon has christened oranges, is a well-deserved title.

Such dishes as "orange jelly," "orange sponge," and others of a like nature, are not enumerated here, being pretty well known ; my object is to introduce a few less familiar dishes, which will be found economical and delicious. Here is a dish that is pretty enough to put on the table at a wedding-breakfast, and simple enough for the birthday tea of a four-year-old child, being far less hurtful than the indigestible fruit cakes one often sees on such occasions. Not that fruit cakes are of a necessity unwholesome ; I am speaking relatively.

Orange Cake

Take a plain sponge cake, of a pound weight and not less than two days old. This may be bought of a confectioner or made from any reliable recipe. A very good one is to allow as much sugar as the eggs used weigh in the shells, and two-thirds the weight in fine flour ; say, six ounces each of the first-named and four ounces of flour. The flavouring should be the grated rind of an orange or a few drops of essence, or the two mixed.

Then proceed as follows :—Cut the cake in slices—a sharp knife, please—and let the layers be even in thickness ; then squeeze the juice of an orange and sweeten it a little ; spread each piece with a thin coating of good, genuine orange marmalade, and moisten with the juice, then build the cake up to its old form. Now for a mixture to coat your cake. This is simplicity itself.

Two more oranges will be wanted ; the rinds are to be grated with that of a lemon—it is wonderful, by the way, what a difference

the addition of a lemon makes to all sorts of orange dishes ; then add all the juice—strained, let me remind you, for a single pip will make it bitter. Then put in water to make the whole up to half a pint ; add a tablespoonful each of sugar and marmalade and a little orange essence, and thicken with a generous tablespoonful of corn-flour, smoothly mixed with some of the liquid. The boiling-up does want care, easy as it is to avoid lumps, and as soon as the mixture does boil, remove the pan to a cooler part of the stove and let it simmer a minute ; but do not cease the stirring, and use a wooden spoon. Then, when cool, spread the top of the cake smoothly, using a palette-knife.

The dome part only is to be coated, the sides being left uncovered. For the finishing touches, chop up a morsel of any green dried fruit and shake over the top, then cut a few strips of the same—there is nothing better or cheaper than angelica—and with a wooden skewer make some holes round the cake, and put in the strips to form a pattern. Or, in place of fruit, some fondants may be used ; green and yellow mixed are the most effective, and they should be fastened on with a little icing sugar, mixed to a stiff paste with the white of a raw egg.

Those used to icing cakes will know how to set about this task. A last reminder : Serve this in thin slices from top to bottom, that all may get some of the top coating, which is the making of the cake. For the sake of appearance, dish it on a green paper or on a white one with a garniture of green leaves.

Orange Pudding.

This ought to be called a soufflé, for it is too light for an ordinary pudding ; but some are alarmed at the mention of a soufflé, which is often supposed to be too much of a mystery for ordinary cooks, so to encourage a trial of it I have given it a homely name. It sounds a good deal more extravagant than it is. The materials should be all to hand ; they are four eggs, two ounces of the finest rice-cream, two and a half to three ounces of castor sugar, four oranges, half an ounce of butter or a dash of cream, a little orange essence, and half a pint of milk. The mode is simple, but involves care ; those who possess a copper or steel pan, as bright as hands can make it, should use it ; a burnt pan will ruin the dish. The rice-flour is to be mixed with some of the cold milk, and it *must* be smooth ; the rest of the milk is to

be boiled with the sugar and butter, and stirred to the rice, and then boiled up; remove the pan, and add by degrees the grated rinds of all the fruit, and the juice of half the number, together with the pulp, which must be freed from any trace of white, and should be rubbed through a coarse hair sieve; but which may, if more convenient, be scooped out with a spoon. A hint that will perhaps bring a smile to the face of the experienced cook is to wipe the fruit with a cloth before grating it, and to remove the grater before the white is reached. How many puddings and cakes have been made bitter for lack of this precaution!

The milk cannot be too good and fresh for all dishes containing fruit. Now put in the yolks of the eggs, one at a time, without previously beating them, and give a good vigorous beat between each addition. The mass by this time should be smooth and rich-looking. The whites of eggs are the final addition. Some of my readers are new ones, without doubt, and many may be novices in the culinary art; if of the latter class, they have it in their power to completely spoil this pudding. But we will pass over the wrong way and detail the right.

Put the whites on a large plate with the tiniest pinch of salt—I am assuming that in breaking the eggs no trace of yolk got mixed in the white—then beat (in a current of air) with a knife, until the mass is so stiff that, when the plate is reversed, the eggs show no tendency to drop. A simpler way to some is to put the eggs in a jar and beat with an egg-whisk. The fresher the eggs the firmer the froth; do not try to beat stale ones in this fashion, for it cannot be done.

Now transfer the snowy mixture to the pan with a few light strokes, so as to incorporate the whole without any more beating. Remember you have now filled the pudding mixture with a number of air bubbles, which with the heat of the oven will expand, and bring about the lightness that is the feature of this dainty. The dish for baking should be deep and well-buttered, and the oven should be what is known as "sound and steady," without being fierce enough to burn the top.

It should be firm to the touch, and a delicate brown when done. This is good without sauce, but better with; and here is a famous one, as nice with hosts of other puddings as with this particular one.

Orange Sauce.

Melt in a stewpan two ounces of fresh butter, and take care to skim away any scum; then stir in two ounces of fine dry flour, a

little at a time. The precaution of sifting should not be forgotten; stir and add the juice of two oranges left over from the pudding, and enough water to make about half a pint of liquid; when this boils add sugar to taste and a little of the clear part of some orange marmalade, quite free from any chips—say a tablespoonful—then put in a few drops of yellow colouring.

Remove the pan and add another ounce of butter, a bit at a time, stirring it well in, and do not let it taste the fire again. The use of a quarter of a pint of whipped cream will be better liked by some, but the sauce loses in heat what it gains in richness. Another way is to use a little cream only with about half an ounce of butter.

In all these ways the sauce may be recommended. When a fuller orange zest is liked, a few drops of orange essence may go in. A mixture of orange and vanilla essence is thought to be better than anything else by some cooks; the blending of the two flavours is certainly very pleasant, but the vanilla must be good, and not used in excess: that is, the dish must not actually taste of vanilla, but owing to its variable strength the precise amount to use can only be determined by the cook.

The sauce and pudding must be so timed that neither waits for the other, and no time is to be lost in sending them to table.

Orange Butter.

This is easy to make. Take two hard-boiled eggs and put in a mortar with an ounce of butter, a tablespoonful of thick cream, an ounce of blanched chopped almonds, two ounces of sugar, the grated rind of an orange, and a little colouring; then pound all and moisten with orange juice until a softish paste is formed. Sometimes a mixture of orange-flower water and orange juice is preferred, but the first mode is the cheaper and better liked, as a rule. The whole should be sieved.

Lemons and oranges can be thus blended, and the exact amount of sugar regulated by taste. Set by in the coldest part of the house until the time comes for using—best of all, set on ice. As to the uses, they are very numerous. Serve with biscuits or thin bread and butter, or make sandwiches by putting the "butter" on one slice of bread and a morsel of honey or nice preserve on the other: sweet sandwiches are now quite a feature at afternoon teas. With many puddings, both hot and cold, instead of sauces of the ordinary kind, this butter is acceptable; and a particularly good dish is made by cutting up a sponge or Madeira

cake into little blocks—triangular, for instance—and spreading one side with the butter and covering it with Devonshire or any other thick cream.

I have seen this made so stiff, by using more egg yolks, that it can be moulded into little pyramids, but then there is not a chance of working in so much of the juice, and the taste is not nearly so nice. The deficiency is then made up by an extra supply of grated rind.

Tangerine Creams.

This is one of the best dishes on my list. The peel is to be taken off and the fruit cut up in thin slices, and put on to boil with half its weight in crushed lump sugar. Then to every half-pound of sugar used allow half a pint of water and the juice of a lemon—bearing in mind these proportions, any quantity can be made. The whole should boil—about ten minutes should suffice—then add an ounce of sheet gelatine, stirring until it is quite melted, for every half-pint of water. When on the point of setting, take some tiny glass dishes, rather deep, or some of the little fire-proof china cases of any fancy shape, and three-parts fill them.

When quite cool, pile on the top some stiffly-whipped cream that has been sweetened and nicely-flavoured with orange rind or essence. The mixture *may* be poured in one large dish, and finished off in the same manner, but it is not intended to be moulded and turned out; it should be served from the dish into which it is poured.

For a more elaborate sweet, some green fruit or coloured sugar can be used for garnishing the cream; or lumps of orange jelly can be put about it. I can recommend a variation that entails but a trifle more trouble and expense. Reduce the water to half, and when the pan is taken from the fire add some good orange jelly that has been just melted, and if this is stiff and the weather cool, very little gelatine need be added, for

the precise consistence is a matter of taste. Then again, you may pour a good orange-flavoured custard over instead of cream, or cream can go over the custard. In all these ways I venture to say that it will be a case of "Cut and come again." Jaffa oranges can be used instead of tangerines.

Orange Trifle.

This is a dish for festive occasions, and no one need be alarmed at a request for more from the juvenile members of the family. Some ordinary penny sponge cakes are to be sliced into a deep glass dish, and moistened with orange jelly that is tepid and just beginning to set. When the slices have formed a layer nearly an inch thick, a thick plain custard should go over; one made from corn-flour answers admirably, but it should be coloured a little and be well-flavoured with orange rind.

Then have a compôte of oranges, made by dividing the fruit in its natural sections and removing the pips, and stewing the fruit in a thin syrup of sugar and water until done. The syrup should be reduced and thickened by further boiling after the fruit has been taken up. This must be cold before it is laid on the custard, and that should be cold; if either be warm, a messy dish is a sure result. There must be only enough syrup to coat and moisten the fruit. Now take some whipped cream and some lumps of orange jelly; the latter may be made by pouring the jelly into a tin or deep dish, and cutting in squares when cold.

Use these for garnishing, putting some jelly and cream alternately, covering all but the centre; to be explicit, make a ring of the garnish. The centre should be highest, some more of the stewed fruit being piled up at the last. The colder this is served the nicer; and those who will look over the preceding hints and recipes will see a number of ways of varying it when tired of it in its present form.

