

## **AN IRISH DINNER FROM GOURMET MARCH, 1979**

The Irish, long famed for their outgoing good humor and readiness to tell a tale, write a poem or sing a song, enjoy nothing more than an opportunity to gather with a group of friends for a “wee drop” and a bit of good cheer. The March dinner which was first served in March, 1979, suggests some authentic Irish dishes, starting with an Irish drink — Black Velvet. It’s a mixture of stout and champagne that is surprisingly hearty and good. The meal has as the main course corned beef studded with cloves, spiced with chili powder, and glazed with brown sugar and beer. It is accompanied by a casserole of sliced and layered cabbage, potatoes, and apples. Irish soda bread, loaded with raisins and caraway seeds round out the meal. For dessert, we will have Topsy Squire, a true Irish version of the classic trifle.

This meal and its setting are a wonderful way to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day -even if it isn’t St. Patrick’s Day- and even if it’s the only day you’re Irish. So, greet each other with “Céad mille failté” (A hundred thousand welcomes) and “begorrah”, you’re bound to have a good evening.

Bon Appetite  
Gourmet Committee

### **Menu**

Potted Cheese Spread with Black Velvet Aperitif

Glazed Corn Beef

Casserole of Cabbage, Potatoes, and Apples

Irish Soda Bread

Topsy Squire

Irish Coffee

## **Assignments:**

Host Couple: Glazed Corn Beef, Irish Coffee, Black Velvet, and beverages

Couple #2: Irish Soda Bread and Potted Cheese Spread

Couple #3: Casserole of Cabbage, Potatoes, and Apples

Couple #4: Topsy Squire

## **Black Velvet**

Equal amounts: Guinness stout and champagne  
Cold glasses

The traditional way of making a Black Velvet is to hold the cold stout in one hand, the cold champagne in the other and to pour them into a tall, cold glass simultaneously. A simpler way is to pour in the stout first and then very slowly fill the glass with champagne. Do not stir, but drink immediately before the bubbles die and the taste flattens.

## **Potted Cheese Spread with Crackers**

Makes 2 cups

10 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, diced, room temperature  
1/3 cup ruby Port  
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
1/4 cup finely chopped green onions  
Assorted crackers

Combine cheese, Port, butter, mustard and pepper in processor. Blend until mixture is smooth, scraping down sides of bowl occasionally. Add onions; using on/off turns, process until just blended. Transfer spread to small bowl or crock. (Can be prepared 3 days ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Bring spread to room temperature before serving.)

Place bowl of spread on platter. Surround with crackers and serve.

## **GLAZED CORNED BEEF**

Serves 8-10.

4-pound piece corned beef  
20 cloves or more, as desired  
½ cup brown sugar  
1 ½ teaspoons chili powder  
½ cup beer  
3 to 4 tablespoons additional brown sugar

Preheat oven to 425 Degrees

Parboil corned beef according to package directions and proceed as follows: stud corned beef evenly with cloves. Prepare a paste of brown sugar, chili powder, and enough beer to make a spreadable paste. Spread paste over corned beef and put in oven. Reduce heat at once to 350 Degrees and bake 20 minutes. Sprinkle with additional brown sugar and cook 20 minutes longer or until you have an attractive shiny glaze.

## **CASSEROLE OF CABBAGE, POTATOES, AND APPLES**

Serves 8

1 medium head of green cabbage, thinly sliced  
3 baking potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced  
3 cooking apples (preferably Granny Smith), peeled, cored, and thinly sliced  
1 onion, finely chopped  
8 Tablespoons butter  
salt and freshly ground pepper  
1 cup heavy cream  
¼ cup fine bread crumbs  
¼ cup finely grated Swiss cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Arrange 1/3 of the cabbage, potatoes, apples and onion in layers in a large ovenproof casserole. Dot heavily with butter, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Repeat with the next 1/3 of the vegetables, and again dot with butter and season. Layer the remaining 1/3 of the vegetables, piling it high in the center of the casserole; dot with butter and season. The dish will now be quite full, but it will cook down. Pour in the heavy cream, cover the casserole, and bake in a 350 degree oven, for about 45 minutes, or until just tender. Sprinkle with the bread crumbs and cheese, and return to oven, uncovered, until the top becomes browned and forms a nice crust.

## **Irish Soda Bread**

Serves 8 – 10

4 cups flour sifted  
3 ½ teaspoons baking powder  
½ teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoons salt  
1 cup sugar  
¼ cup butter – very soft

2 to 3 teaspoons caraway seeds  
1 ¼ to 2 cups cups seedless raisins  
1 ½ cups milk or as needed  
butter or oil for preparing skillet

Preheat oven to 300°

Mix flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and sugar. Blend in butter, caraway seeds, and raisins, then mix in milk to make a stiff dough. Butter or oil a 10 -- inch iron skillet and fill with bread dough. (With a sharp knife, cut a 1 inch deep X in top, dividing bread into quarters) Bake 1 hour in 300 degree oven.

## **TIPSY SQUIRE**

Serves 8-10.

12 ladyfingers, split, or a 7 by 11-inch Spongecake (recipe below), cut into squares and split horizontally  
1/3 cup seedless black raspberry jam  
½ cup white wine  
1 ½ cups milk  
3 tablespoons sugar  
¼ teaspoon salt  
4 egg yolks  
1 cup heavy cream, whipped  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
¼ cup toasted slivered almonds

Spread ladyfingers or spongecake with jam, cover with a top layer, and put in a rectangular 7 by 11-inch glass dish. Pour wine over the top and refrigerate about 4 hours.

Cook the milk, sugar, salt and yolks over low heat, stirring constantly, until

thickened. Do not allow to come near the boiling point. Whip cream, sugar, and vanilla until stiff. Add the custard, to the cake in the dish and top with whipped cream and slivered almonds just before serving.

## **SPONGECAKE**

1 ¼ cups sifted cake flour  
4 eggs  
¾ cup sugar  
grated zest of 1 lemon  
butter for cake pan

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Beat eggs and sugar in the top of a double boiler over simmering water until thick and creamy. Remove from heat and beat 5 minutes longer. Add the lemon zest and fold in the flour. Butter a 7 by 11 -- inch pan and pour in batter, bake for 20 minutes in a 350 degree oven, until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

## **Irish Coffee**

Pour 1 jigger Irish whisky into a warmed goblet or coffee cup. Add 1 to 2 teaspoons sugar. Add hot strong coffee to within 1 inch of the top. Top with chilled, sweetened whipped cream. This makes one serving.