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Orrine Conard

Iowa State College

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The Union Offers

Party Clothes for Plain Foods

by Orrine Conard

A dash of differenteness! Don’t be the housewife who just cooks the same old thing in the same old way, day in and day out. Cease to wonder why your children like to dine at the neighbors and why your husband prefers a restaurant or cafeteria to your own dinner table. Take a tip from said public dining room.

Memorial Union kitchens and dining rooms are like pages in a story book to those who are interested in the tricks of the trade which may be used in the private home as well.

These are suggestions from the Union for your first course or cocktail which will add variety in an attractive way. When serving tomato juice hot as a cocktail let two or three olives float as a garnish. Add spices to cider and serve as a first course. Pour grape juice and ginger ale combined over white grapes or ginger ale with a dipper of any flavor ice for cocktails.

Cranberry juice will make a nice cocktail and may be prepared by cooking 1 quart of berries in the same amount of water until they burst. Cool and strain them through a cheese cloth. Add ¼ cup of sugar and bring to a boil. This may be served iced by itself or with 1 part of ginger ale to 3 parts cranberry juice.

Fruit soup for a cocktail may be made from mixed fruit thickened slightly with tapioca and served hot.

If you have some left-over mints, grind them and sprinkle on the top of a fruit cocktail such as grapefruit or orange. An ice sprinkled with colored candies is very attractive on a fruit cocktail.

TOMATO bisque is clear tomato juice, served hot, and topped with parsley on a teaspoonful of whipped cream. It is served as a first course. For variation sprinkle rice crispies on top instead of the parsley.

To be a bit different sometimes use potato chips with the cocktail instead of wafers. Edge the chip with a cheese decoration squeezed from a pastry molder.

But that’s all fancy stuff. What about the good old potatoes and gravy main course that we can’t get along without. Vegetables for instance present a problem in variety for many of us. Try putting grated cheese on cauliflower, for color and flavor, just before serving. Occasionally and just for a change add celery to carrots, peas or beans. Whole kernel corn may have bits of red pimento added for color and flavor. Serve almonds with brussel sprouts or cauliflower.

Add cheese or pimento to creamed peas or other vegetables used in patty shells. Cream carrots and mushrooms together. Vary “dear old mashed potatoes” by shaping them volcano style, top with cheese and let it melt in the oven before serving. Serve Spanish rice with a cream sauce. Use Hollandaise sauce on cauliflower or broccoli. Dip the ends of celery into red paprika when serving it alone as a fresh appetizer.

The meat dish is another which needs an occasional new frock. Serve baked heart with creamed mushroom sauce. Fry rings of pineapple and serve with them. Freeze cider to a mush and serve with a turkey dinner. Split pork chops, insert dressing and bake.

Roll meat in any thin biscuit dough, bake and serve with a creamed vegetable. Put giblet gravy over slices of chicken loaf. Cook veal or chicken timbals in rings and serve with mushroom gravy. Serve Hollandaise sauce with hot fish.

Aside from the variety of creamed soups we usually find, try a combination of celery and mushroom. Sprinkle paprika and crackers to be served with tomato soup.

Sandwiches always offer opportunity for variety. For a tea sandwich, spread the open face with cream cheese and lay a pecan on top. A sandwich of rye bread and butter with chopped watercress is good for serving with soup. Other tea sandwiches may be decorated with a cake decorator. Some may be cut in cubes spread with cheese and rolled in nuts. Others may be cut in long strips and spread with jelly and cheese.

Salads offer such a wide range for our talents that we sometimes wonder if there is any limit in the combinations we make. Stuff prunes with cottage cheese, stuff dates with nuts and place on a slice of pineapple, or stuff canned figs with cottage cheese and place on a curly lettuce leaf. Use a cranberry ring with lime ice in the center for a salad. Vary this by placing a Waldorf salad mixture in the heart of the cranberry ring. A tomato gelatin ring with a cheese center; a spoon of Waldorf salad on sliced oranges; a combination of cabbage, oranges, raisins and dressing; perfection salad ring with cottage cheese; or cottage cheese in a ring formation with shredded lettuce in the center topped with mayonnaise and about 4 pieces of strawberry are all examples of something simple but excitingly new.

Here is a gingersnap pie crust recipe. Graham cracker pie crust has been having its day, but gingersnap pie crust is brand new.

1 ½ c. gingersnaps
½ c. butter

Mix the crumbs of the gingersnaps with the butter and the sugar. Pat firmly into a pie pan. Place the pie pan in a refrigerator or a cold place. Allow to stand for several hours. Fill with a filling; chill. This pie crust goes especially well with pumpkin pie.