

# First catch your locusts

## Cookery archives reveal the sometimes grotesque recipes of yesteryear

By Victoria Allen

**SHEEP'S** head broth with locust bread may seem a disturbingly grotesque dish nowadays.

But it forms part of a new Scottish collection of traditional recipes stretching back hundreds of years.

Electronic cookbook The Edible Archive also includes orange marmalade made by the Countess of Sutherland in 1683, a fish dish called Tweed Kettle and recipes for ginger beer and Invalid Fruit Tart, served up to improve the health of hospital patients in the 1950s.

Ben Bennett of the Scottish Council on Archives, which is running the project, said: 'The Edible Archive has unearthed a delicious treasure trove of Scottish food, past and present, that tells us about who we are, where we've been and how we've lived.'

'It has been a treat to see everyone exchanging their favourite recipes in a

### 'A delicious treasure trove of Scottish food'

celebration of our weird and wonderful food history.'

The project was designed to encourage the present generation to recreate traditional favourites - although some may be best left in the past.

Locust bread comes from a book called Moorish Recipes, collected by John Stuart, Fourth Marquess of Bute. Found in the archive at Mount Stuart House on the Isle of Bute, it calls for locust 'caviar', flour, salt, olive oil and yeast.

The directions read: 'The best way to catch locusts is to repair to the nearest high wall. If the season be propitious, numbers of these insects will be found flying against the wall and falling.'

'Pick up the females - they are larger and lighter in colour. Pull off the head like a shrimp, then squeeze the body and there will exude the eggs, like caviar.'

An even stronger stomach is needed for sheep's head broth, which involves cutting open the skull and rubbing the brains over the trotters.

Rather more appetising is Granny Goodwin's Gingerbread, dating from 1889, which calls for a cup of treacle and a teaspoon of ginger.

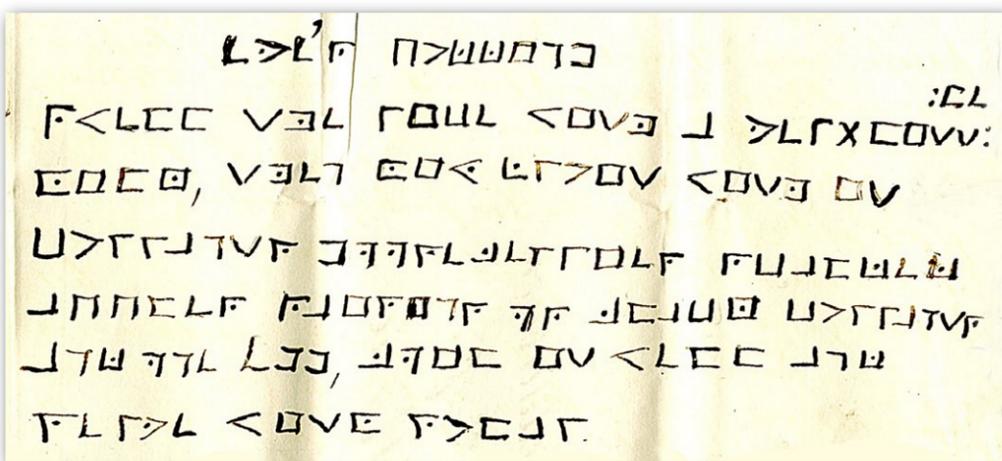
There is a strong tradition behind orange marmalade, which is said to have originated in Dundee. As the recipe records, it is believed that a 17th century Spanish ship carrying Seville oranges was forced to put in at Dundee in a storm.

Its cargo was bought by James Keiller and his wife Janet, who was concerned about the fruit rotting and so made marmalade to preserve it. The recipe was written down by the Countess of Sutherland in 1683.

Each recipe has a story behind it, old black and white photographs and clear directions. All that is needed is a little historical



Cookery course: The College of Domestic Science in the 1930s



**Top secret:** The rice pudding recipe in code cooked up by two Army officers in the early 19th century

### TWEED KETTLE

**(SERVES 4)**  
1 lb fresh salmon (skinned, boned and cut into one inch cubes)  
3 fl oz dry white wine or white wine vinegar  
3 fl oz water  
3 finely chopped spring onions  
Pinch of powdered mace or allspice  
¼-½ tsp salt  
1 tsp finely chopped parsley  
Freshly ground black pepper

Place salmon and white parts of the spring onion in saucepan with mace/allspice, white wine/white wine vinegar and water. Bring to boil and skim off any foam. Lower heat and simmer for 35 minutes. During cooking, keep the pan partly covered and check to ensure the fish does not cook dry. The fish should be moistened with cooking juices but not swimming in them. Remove from heat and gently stir in the rest of the spring onions. Season with black pepper. Allow mixture to cool and refrigerate before serving. Garnish with chopped parsley and serve with oatcakes.

knowledge (the gill of milk that makes up the Invalid Fruit Tart is a quarter of a pint) and a sense of adventure.

One of the vintage photographs, from the 1930s, shows rows of women in full-length white aprons preparing to begin a cookery class at the Glasgow and West of Scotland College of Domestic Science.

The archive also includes a recipe for rice pudding written in code by two Army officers practising their espionage techniques. It

was found among the papers of the Wedderburn family of Pearsie, near Kirriemuir in Angus - in a letter written by Lieutenant-Colonel William Rattray to Charles Wedderburn on February 11, 1808. Luckily, the ingredients of rice, milk, sugar and fruit were not top secret - so a key to cracking the code was included in the letter.

More recipes will be published in a book next year, including potato kugel, a traditional Russian Jewish dish similar to Swiss potato rosti, the Royal Bank of Scotland's

1960s strawberry cheesecake and the Royal College of Nursing's 1950s muffin recipe entitled For Husbands Only.

Angela Owusu of the Archive Awareness Campaign said: 'Connecting people to their past through food is a fantastic reminder of how archives bring communities together so they can celebrate their identity and better understand the society they live in today.'

The archive is online at [www.SCOARCH.org](http://www.SCOARCH.org)

# Why Kirsty is still haunted by crème brûlée



Confident cook: Kirsty Wark

**YOU** would think someone with a reputation as a stern political inquisitor would not be affected by a raspberry crème brûlée.

But yesterday Newsnight presenter Kirsty Wark revealed that her appearance on Celebrity MasterChef still haunts her.

The 56-year-old presenter, who lives in Glasgow, appeared on the programme earlier this year and impressed Judges Gregg Wallace and John Torode so much that she secured a place in the final.

Miss Wark served a starter of sorrel soup with salmon and dill, served with oatcakes; a main

By Emma Smith

course of calves' liver with Swiss chard, rosemary and garlic chips and mustard mayonnaise; and a dessert of pistachio meringues with rose cream and rose and cardamom panna cotta.

Her meringues were declared a triumph but Mr Wallace described the liver as 'furry'.

Former England rugby player Phil Vickery went on to win the show.

Miss Wark said if she was given the chance to compete again she would do things completely

differently. She added: 'I was doing raspberry crème brûlée. And you can only make that if the raspberries are really fresh.'

'If they are sitting, then they become acidic and soft and then it infuses the crème brûlée and makes it curdle.'

'If I'd just looked at the raspberries a little longer I would have realised.'

Miss Wark said she would have really liked to win the show but was relieved she had made it to the final.

She added: 'The ignominy of going out in the first round would have

just been too hard to live with.' Miss Wark, currently recording her new food panel show, A Question of Taste, said she thinks Scotland's food reputation still suffers from the 'whole deep-fried Mars bar thing'.

She added: 'It was a joke! One fish and chip shop did it for fun and then of course it gets picked up but it's never been a staple of any fish and chip shop.'

'Italian families came into Scotland after the First and Second World Wars and we have these wonderful fish and chip shops and brilliant quality of haddock.'