



Gingerbread

The history of gingerbread can be traced farther back than any other baked item except bread (first mentioned in print in 1320). Recipes recognizable to us as gingerbread appear in the 17th century, but the butter and eggs with which older, more bread-like gingerbreads were enriched don't show up in English recipe collections until the 18th century.

By the time Amelia Simmons published her *American Cookery* in 1796, gingerbread was popular enough in this country to be included in some five different versions.

Early American gingerbreads took two basic forms:

- Crisp gingerbread, the dough rolled, cut and baked to the crisp (or chewy) cookies we know as ginger snaps, drops, and gingerbread men.
- Soft gingerbread, baked in a pan, is the cakelike product we know as gingerbread today. Along with other plain cakes, gingerbread is a mainstay in the chapters on baking in every American cookbook from Amelia Simmons to the present.

- *Classic Home Desserts*, Richard Sax

Boston Cooking School Cookbook 1896 Soft Sugar Gingerbread

2 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups flour
3 teaspoons baking power
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ginger
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup thin cream

Beat eggs until light, and add sugar gradually. Mix and sift dry ingredients, and add alternately with cream to first mixture. Turn into a buttered cake pan, and bake 30 minutes in a moderate oven.



Victoria Sponge Cake

The Victoria sponge, also known as the Victoria sandwich or Victoria cake, was named after Queen Victoria, and is said to have been her favorite. A typical Victoria sponge includes raspberry jam and whipped double cream or vanilla cream. The jam and cream are sandwiched between two sponge cakes; the top of the cake is decorated with a dusting of powdered sugar.

The Victoria sponge is made using one of two methods:

- The traditional method involves creaming caster sugar with butter, mixing thoroughly with a beaten egg, then folding flour and a raising agent into the mixture.
- The modern method, using a food processor, involves simply whisking all the ingredients together until creamy. Additionally, the modern method typically uses an extra raising agent and some recipes call for extra-soft butter.

Although simple to make, Victoria sponge recipes are notoriously sensitive to cooking times and temperatures. As such, oven manufacturers often use a Victoria sponge to test their ovens. And our British friends tell us that mastering the Victoria Sponge is the true test of a good cook.

Mini Victoria Sponge

3 eggs
¼ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla

¾ cup of butter
1 cup sugar
1 cup flour
2 teaspoons baking powder

Beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time and beat well after each addition. Add vanilla. Sift dry ingredients and fold them gently into the butter mixture. Grease muffin tins and fill half-full. Makes 12 mini sponges. Bake at 350 for 12-15 minutes. Serve with good-quality raspberry or strawberry jam and whipped cream.



Pumpkin Pie

The first recorded recipe for pumpkin pie was published in 1796 in *American Cookery* by Amelia Simmons and it was called "Pompkin Pudding." The cookbook was the first to be devoted to foods native to the Americas.

Boston Cooking School Cookbook 1896 Pumpkin Pie

1 ¼ cups steamed and strained pumpkin
¼ cup sugar
½ teaspoon salt

1 egg
7/8 cup milk
¼ teaspoon cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg or
½ teaspoon lemon extract

Mix sugar, salt and spice or extract, add pumpkin, egg slightly beaten, and milk gradually. Bake in one crust following directions for custard pie. If richer pie is desired, use one cup pumpkin, one-half cup each of milk and cream, and an additional egg yolk.

Early workers in Mrs. Eddy's household were expected to demonstrate Christian Science in their daily work.

"Once she [Mary Baker Eddy] told me that some of her early students said they had never eaten a better pie than the one she made, and it was a demonstration for her to do it just as it was for me."

- Minnie Scott*

"One summer morning she called me to her, and when I started up the back stairs to go to her room, I found her seated on a step at the head of the stairs. She smiled at me and said without any further introduction, 'You have got your pie crust with too much shortening in it.' Then in the nicest, sweetest way imaginable she told me how she used to make it, with a little soda dissolved in water, and gave all the directions how to put together what she considered good pie crust. She liked pies herself, frequently eating apple, lemon, squash or custard pie, though she did not care for berry or mince pies. However, there was a member of the family who liked mince pie and that was Calvin Frye. He could have eaten it for breakfast if it was around - and sometimes he did."

- Minnie Weygandt*

**Quotations are from reminiscences at The Mary Baker Eddy Library.*



Longyear Party Punch

6 oz. frozen lemonade concentrate
12 oz. frozen orange juice concentrate
1 large can (46 oz.) pineapple juice

Oranges, thinly sliced
Maraschino cherries, halved (plus juice)
1 large bottle Ginger Ale or 7UP®

Mix undiluted frozen lemonade and orange juice concentrates with pineapple juice. Add fruit (including juice from maraschino cherries). Freeze in plastic containers.

Just before serving, place frozen mixture in punch bowl and add Ginger Ale or 7UP® to taste. Stir all together into a slushy punch. Enjoy!

(If desired, freeze some of the punch and fruit into a ring or other decorative mold to float in the punch bowl for decoration. Ingredients may be doubled for a large punch bowl.)



Lemon Pie

The art of making meringue was perfected in the 17th century, but it wasn't until the 19th century that lemon meringue pie as we know it today was developed.

Minnie Scott worked in Mary Baker Eddy's household for three years, first at Pleasant View and then at Chestnut Hill. She tells us how she turned to God for guidance one day when she received a special request from Mrs. Eddy.

"I had learned to make a good apple pie, when one day Mrs. Eddy asked me to send her a piece of lemon meringue pie for her noon dessert.... I tried to realize that I reflected the one Mind, who knew all things rightly and the same 'Christ Truth who gives mortals temporary food and clothing' as *Science and Health* had taught me, could surely impart the ability to make that pie as nearly perfect as possible."

Minnie reported that "the meringue pie looked perfect and did not shrink away from the sides but kept its proper shape even when cut and placed on Mrs. Eddy's tray. I was truly grateful for the proof that divine Love is ever near to meet our human needs. Then Mrs. Eddy sent back a little note on her tray commending my effort."

- Minnie Scott*

Minnie Weygandt's Lemon Pie

1 cup sugar

1 large tablespoon cornstarch, mixed with sugar

Add one cup boiling water and cook until clear, add the juice and grated rind of one lemon, yolks of 2 small eggs, lump of butter size of walnut. Put in crust and bake. Whites of eggs for frosting.

(Minnie Weygandt cooked for Mrs. Eddy at Pleasant View 1899-1907)

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