A Culinary Ode to Endewearde

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Showcasing Local Ingredients

in a

Medieval Feast

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Good Gentles,

When offered the chance to prepare a feast for the first Baronial Investiture in Endewearde, the thought of showcasing Endewearde's natural bounty seemed the best way to honor the land and the people that we would be celebrating at this event. Unfortunately, many of the things that the State of Maine offers in abundance are either not period or are often overlooked for use in our feasts and dayboards. This feast is our attempt to pay homage to those ingredients that are prevalent in our native land (whether they would be used in period or not), while still practicing the medieval style of cookery that we strive to exemplify in the SCA.

Additional inspiration for this style of feast comes from our personal feeling that we should never forget that one of the SCA’s founding purposes is creativity. We should also remember that “Endewearde” only exists because of the hopes and dreams and hard work of those people who live within her borders. Is that not the true essence of “the dream”?

Here you will find the original recipes that inspired each dish in the feast and the changes that were made to them. We hope you will take the time to both read and enjoy.

So tuck in, and eat the dream!

Lord Gruffydd Abernethy and Admiranda Howard

The Menu

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Rabbit Baked in Pastry

Salat with Blueberries and Almonds

Grilled Mussels with Verjuice

Maize-corn Gnocchi with Goat Cheese

Apple Mousse with Almond Milk

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Winter Squash Soup with Cranberries and Almonds

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Trenchers

Seymé of Wild Game

Lobster Escabèche

Hashed Leeks

Asparagus with Saffron

Crème Boylede – Maize-corn Pudding

Candied Orange Rind

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Blueberry, Orange, and Cardamom Shaved Ice

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Roast Turkie-cock with Sauce of Gold

Grilled Salmon with Herbs and Spices

Roasted Onions with Cranberries

Potatoes Armoured in Self Defense

Rapé of Blackberries and Cranberries

Candied Nuts

Remove One

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“Coney Pies: When they are old they must be cut into pieces, and young ones left whole; and with finely chopped pork fat on top; for spices: cloves, ginger, grains of paradise, and pepper”[[1]](#footnote-1)

Both the original recipe and the redaction call for the use of whole and/or cut up rabbit. The redaction instructs the use of a thick, squared pie crust, much like what we would see in truly period cooking.

For the feast, we will prepare the rabbit ground and in circular, modern day pie plates. We chose not to serve the rabbits whole, as many people are quite apprehensive about eating rabbit (they make such lovely pets, after all). Grinding the meat also makes the pies easier to cut into equal portions for the feast service. Baking the pies in a circular plate adds to the ease of portioning and presentation, and also lends to a more even cooking of the crust all around. In addition, there is no waste of the thick base crust. The rest of the preparation is quite similar: the spices are the same and bacon will be used to add fat (as Endeweardians are quite fond of bacon).

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“Take parsley, sage, garlic, chibol, onions, leek, borage, mints, porret, fennel, and watercress, rue, rosemary, purslane, laver, and wash them clean. Pick them over, pluck them into small pieces with your hand, and mix them well with raw oil. Add vinegar and serve it forth.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

With such an extensive list of ingredients, one can imagine that many salads were created with many different combinations of greens and herbs. Since many greens only grow at certain times of the year, the salad would most likely change depending on the time of year and location.

For the feast, we decided to use a simple bed of mixed greens (very easily grown in most gardens) with a dressing of olive oil, apple cider vinegar, and blueberry syrup. We garnished the salad with dried blueberries and sliced almonds. Blueberries are a very important crop in the state of Maine and are often enjoyed as a dessert, so it is nice to use them in a more savory presentation.

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“Oysters are cooked over hot coals, and when they open they are cooked and can be eaten thus. And it you want them in a different way, take them out of their shells and fry them a little in oil, and put on them some verjuice and strong spices.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

Although this recipe calls for oysters, it seems easy enough to cook any manner of bi-valve shellfish with this method.

For the feast, we decided to use mussels as the feature of the dish. Maine is famous for its steamer clams and its mussels (although oysters can be harvested as well). To keep the flavor simple and true to the mussels, we serve them on the half-shell with no extra spices and a spritz of verjuice.

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“If you want some gnocchi, take some fresh cheese and mash it, then take some flour and mix with egg yolks as in making *migliacci*. Put a pot full of water on the fire and, when it begins to boil, put the mixture on a dish and drop it into the pot with a ladle. And when they are cooked, place them on dishes and sprinkle with plenty of grated cheese.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

As mentioned in the book, these gnocchi are small flour, egg, and cheese dumplings. The recipe is simple, but also leaves a great deal of room for creativity.

For the feast, we wanted to feature our native grain: maize-corn (an added bonus of using maize-corn is the absence of gluten, thus making this dish friendly to those with gluten allergies). We use cornmeal in place of the flour and soft goat cheese in place of the cream cheese recommended in the redaction. Using egg yolks (as the recipe states), we found that the dumplings were too dry, so we tried using whole eggs. The resulting dish was moist and smooth, with a tangy flavor from the cheese. They are additionally seasoned with parsley and sage.

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“Apple Sauce. To explain it to whoever will make it, he should take good barberine apples depending on the quantity to be prepared. Then he should peel them carefully and cut them into pieces into fine gold or silver platters. He should take a good earthenware pot, very clean, and boil some pure water over good bright coals, then add the apples. He must also have good, sweet almonds, in large quantity depending on the quantity of apples being cooked; he should skin them and wash them well, then crush them in a mortar that has no garlic odor; when they are very well crushed, he should moisten them with the liquid in which the apples are cooking, and when the apples are sufficiently cooked he should remove them to a nice clean surface, and strain the almonds with this water, making a good, thick milk, and return it to the boil over bright, clean, smoke-free coals, with a tiny bit of salt. And while it is boiling, he should chop the apples finely with a small, clean knife; when they are chopped, he should add them to the milk and add a great deal of sugar, as required for this applesauce; then, when the physician calls for it, he should serve it in fine bowls or dishes made of gold or silver.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

The only change we made to this recipe was the type of apple, as “barberine” isn’t a variety we have access to. Golden Delicious apples are both tart and sweet, and cook very well. Otherwise, this recipe is quite detailed and easy to follow, and creates a lovely, not-too-sweet treat.

Intermezzo

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“Squash. For squash, peel them and cut them into slices. Remove the seeds if there are any and cook them in water in a pan, then drain them and rinse in cold water; squeeze them and chop them finely; mix with some beef and other meat broth and add cow’s milk, and mix half a dozen egg yolks, put through a sieve, into the broth and milk; on fast days [use] the cooking water from [dried] peas, or almond milk, and butter.”[[6]](#footnote-6)

Although the title of the translated original recipe is “squash”, we can assume that they are talking about gourds or zucchini-type squash, as the heavier winter squash did not exist in the Old-World during our period. Still, this method will lend itself well to the winter squash that grows so abundantly in our state of Maine.

For the feast, we tried a few different variations, and decided that there is little difference between pumpkin, butternut, or hubbard squash in the final product. We used a home-made vegetable broth as a base, but declined to use the cream or egg yolks recommended as the winter squash is much richer than the summer variety the original recipe most likely refers to. The soup is garnished with dried cranberries (another native fruit to Endewearde) and sliced almonds to give the puree a bit more texture and to add a contrasting flavor.

Remove Two

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“*Gravé* or *seymé* is a winter *potage*. Peel onions and cook them all cut up, then fry them in a pot; now you should have your chicken split down the back and browned on the grill over a charcoal fire; and the same if it is veal; then you must cut the meat into pieces if it is veal, or in quarters if it is a chicken, and put it into the pot with the onions, then take white bread browned on the grill and soaked in broth made from other meat; then crush ginger, cloves, grains of paradise, and long pepper, moisten them with verjuice and wine without straining this, and set aside; then crush the bread and put it through a sieve, and add it to the *brouet*, strain everything, and boil; then serve.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

This recipe describes a rich stew of chicken or veal, but could easily be adapted for any type of meat or game. We were fortunate enough to have several pounds of mixed wild game donated to our feast by a friend of Endewearde’s seneschal, so this stew will feature game from the state of Maine: moose, geese, ducks, venison, and pig.

For the feast, we prepared the game in two different fashions: some was cut into small pieces and dredged in rice flour (although we have found no evidence that dredging in flour is a period technique, it adds a significant amount of flavor to the dish and acts as a thickener; additionally, the combination of rice flour and cornstarch somewhat emulates the texture of a stew thickened with bread, as rice flour is more course than wheat flour), and some was rolled into small meat-balls (some of the game came to us ground). The spices are very similar to those that Lord Gruffydd uses in his hyppocrass, so the stew is seasoned with a well-aged red hyppocrass instead of the spices soaked in wine and verjuice. The stew is served on bread trenchers instead of having bread mixed in as a thickener.

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“Jellied fish without oil. Boil wine with vinegar and put in the well-washed fish to cook; and when they are cooked, remove them and put them in another container. And into the wine and vinegar put onions sliced crosswise and boil it long enough to reduce by two-thirds: then put in saffron, cumin, and pepper and pour it all over the cooked fish and leave to cook. This is “Innkeeper’s *Escabèche*.”[[8]](#footnote-8)

Possibly the most famous creature on any menu in the state of Maine is the lobster. Once looked down upon as the food of the poor, it is now considered a delicacy across the country, and many people will flock to the state each summer to spend large amounts of money on this strange-looking crustacean. We knew that we could not do this feast without featuring lobster, and this dish seemed the perfect way to show it off.

For the feast, we boiled the lobsters in a sweet white wine. The lobsters were then “picked” (all the meat was removed from the shell) while the onions were added to the wine and reduced into a sauce. Saffron, cumin, and pepper were added to the sauce as well as the meat, and the dish was left to cool and gel before service.

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“*Tredura*. To make *tredura*, take whites of leek and boil them, whole, then chop them well with a knife; then fry them with the fat of meat you have cooked; take the bread and grate it, and soak it in hot water take a piece of meat, and chop the bread and the meat with a knife; then take beaten eggs and plenty of saffron, beat together, and pour over the fried leeks with plenty of spices; and it will be good.”[[9]](#footnote-9)

Leeks are possibly Endewearde’s second favorite food (following closely behind bacon). Both leeks and bacon are featured in this dish.

For the feast, we used chopped bacon as both the meat and the fat. The leeks were seasoned with both saffron and black pepper, and pan-friend with the bacon (no boiling!). No eggs or bread were added—we didn’t find that either gave anything to the dish beyond bulk.

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“Of asparagus. Take the asparagus and boil it; when it is cooked, put it to cook with oil, onions, salt, and saffron, and with ground spices, or without.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

Asparagus grows quite well in Endewearde, and is very similar to another local delight: fiddleheads. Unfortunately for the timing of the feast, fiddleheads are quite out of season, but would have been delightful prepared in the same manner.

For the feast, we pan-fried the asparagus (no boiling!) and simply added saffron, nothing else.

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“Take cream or milk, and bread of paindemaine, or else of tender bread, and break it in the cream, or else in the milk, and set it on the fire till it is warm hot and through a strainer throw it, and put it into a fair pot, and set it on the fire, and stir evermore: and when it is almost boiled, take fair yolks of eggs, and draw them through a strainer, and cast them thereto, and let them stand over the fire till it boils almost, and till it is reasonably thick; then cast a ladleful, or more or less, of butter thereto, and a good quantity of white sugar, and a little salt, and then dress it on a dish in manner of *mortrewys*.”[[11]](#footnote-11)

This recipe describes a very loose bread pudding, much like porridge. Again, we decided to feature maize-corn, or more specifically, cornbread.

For the feast, we first made a cornbread with no wheat flour. This lent itself to the recipe quite well. We added both cream and eggs, as recommended in the original recipe, and sweetened it with maple syrup, another Maine delight.

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“To make *orengat*, cut the peel of an orange into five segments and, with a knife, scrape off the white pith that is inside. Then soak them in nice, fresh water for nine days, and change the water every day; then boil them in fresh water until it comes to the boil, then spread them on a cloth and let them dry thoroughly; then put them in a pot with enough honey to cover them completely, and boil over a low fire, and skim it; and when you think that the honey is done (to see if it is done, put some water into a bowl and drop into that water a drop of the honey, and if it spreads it is not cooked; and if that drop of honey holds its shape in the water without spreading, it is done); then, remove your orange peel, and make a layer of it and sprinkle ginger powder on top, then another layer, and sprinkle, etc., ad infinitum; leave for a month or longer before eating.”[[12]](#footnote-12)

For the feast, we decided to use a similar recipe with somewhat faster results. Instead of soaking the orange rind for nine days, we simply rinsed them thoroughly. The rinds were still cooked in a syrup, then sprinkled with a mixture of sugar and ginger and left to dry overnight. This allowed us to use the remaining orange fruit for other parts of the feast, and also gave us a product we could use immediately.

Remove Three

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“Roast kid in sauce. Take a quarter of a kid, and prepare it carefully as it should be for roasting, and lard it and put in it plenty of peeled cloves of garlic, as though you were studding it or larding it. Then take good verjuice, two egg yolks, two finely crushed cloves of garlic, a little saffron, a little pepper, and a little rich broth, and mix all these things, and put them in a dish under the kid as it roasts; and baste it with this sauce from time to time. And when it is cooked, place the quarter kid on a platter and pour the sauce over it, along with a little finely chopped parsley. And this quarter kid should be well cooked, and eater as hot as can be.”[[13]](#footnote-13)

Although it would have been fun to serve quarters of goat at the feast, it was much more appropriate to serve the strange Endeweardian bird commonly known as the turkey. Considered to be a non-period food, it seems that they turkey (called a turkie-cock) was known in Europe as early as 1523 and was widely used by the 1570s[[14]](#footnote-14)--very close to the end of SCA period. Still, it is a very common food here in Maine and this sauce compliments it quite well.

For the feast, we roasted turkie-cocks in a similar manner to the kid from the recipe. The sauce is added only at the end, however, as the turkey is wrapped in bacon and bastes in its own juices inside a dutch oven.

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“Roast fish. If you want fish roasted on the grill: take the fish, wash it, and then split it and sprinkle some salt over it. Take good spices, sprinkle them on the outside skin: gather it together so that the [edges] of the skin meet; put good aromatic herbs between the layers of skin, tie with a string, brush oil on the fish with a branch of sage, put it over smoke-free embers; turn it often, and remove. Serve either with sauce or with salt.”[[15]](#footnote-15)

Atlantic salmon is abundant in the ocean off the coast of Maine. This recipe is an excellent way to show off the rich flavor of this lovely fish.

For the feast, we followed the recipe quite closely, and made no significant changes; we simply chose salmon for our fish.

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“Of onion salad. Take onions; cook them in the embers, then peel them and cut them across into longish, thin slices; add a little vinegar, salt oil, and spices, and serve.”[[16]](#footnote-16)

For the feast, we prepared this dish as recommended, with the addition of dried cranberries for a contrasting flavor and texture.

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“Cut up boiled or roasted turnips; do the same with rich cheese, not too ripe, but make the cheese in smaller pieces. In a pan greased with butter or other fat, make a layer of cheese first, then turnips; repeat, pouring in spice and butter. It should be quickly cooked. [condensed from a very long recipe]”[[17]](#footnote-17)

Potatoes are starchy tubers that, although native to South America, grow extremely well in Maine. As the lobster is our most famous food-creature, potatoes may well be our most famous food-plant. Prepared in this dish, they are reminiscent of potatoes au gratin, or scalloped potatoes (both excellent, more modern dishes), which may surely hold their roots in this armoured turnip dish.

For the feast, we prepare the potatoes exactly as the roasted turnips are described, with the cheese and butter, and spices including mace, marjoram, and cubebs.

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“Take equal parts of figs and raisins and pick them over. Wash them in water and scald them in wine. Pound them in a mortar and push them through the strainer. Cast them into a pot and add ground pepper and other good spices. Mix it with rice flour and color it with sandalwood. Add salt and divide it into portions.”[[18]](#footnote-18)

Blackberries are yet another fruit native to Maine, and their flavor mixes well with that of dried cranberries. Together, they make a sweet-tart combination that lends well to this recipe.

For the feast, we used blackberries and cranberries instead of figs and raisins, but otherwise, we prepared the dish in the same manner as the recipe, without the rice flour, as it was not necessary to attain the right consistency.

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“Of honey boiled with walnuts, known as *nucato*. Take honey, boiled and skimmed, with slightly crushed walnuts and spices, boiled together: wet the palm of your hand with water and spread it out; let it cool, and serve. And you can use almonds or filberts in place of walnuts.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

The redaction for this recipe recommends using a cut lemon for spreading the mixture so as to not burn your hand with piping hot honey. We decided to follow this recommendation and used an orange instead.

For the feast, we prepared this dish as described.

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19. Redon et al. *Medieval Kitchen* 217 – original source *Libro della cucina del secolo XIV* edited by Francesco Zambrini [↑](#footnote-ref-19)