

## **19th CENTURY PLANTATION CUISINE**

The range of foods available to the 19th century cook was amazingly wide, and the receipts reflect this. Surely one of the most intriguing accounts of foods generally available is this one from "Bernard de Marigny Entertains - 1812-1820:"

Grassees that fed on Magnolia berries  
Turkeys fattened on pecans  
Papabotse  
Snipe kept until they ripened and fell from their hangings  
Terrapin from his own pens  
Soft shell crab from the beach  
Oysters fresh from his own reefs  
Green Trout and Perch from the Bayous  
Croakers from the Lake  
Pompano, Redfish, Snappers, from the Gulf  
Vegetables from his own forest garden  
Cress from his own sparkling spring  
Fruit from his own orchard  
Eggs  
Chickens  
Capons from his own fowl yard

These with Sherry, Madeira, Champagne, and Liqueures were the crude elements of repasts that he combined into menu that the Brillat Savarin would have been glad to have composed.

from *The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1841*, composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p 11.

## GUMBO

Gumbo, one of the most original creations of Louisiana cuisine, developed from specialties of the Africans, Indians and Creoles. It was served on every occasion at the tables of rich and poor alike - even in soup houses in town. The soup, gumbo, could be made with any game or domestic fowl, meat, seafood or a combination thereof. A family reunion in 1803 included 24 kinds of gumbo in its menu.

Gumbo also referred to the vegetable okra/ocra/ochre itself. It could be served boiled, buttered and seasoned with salt and pepper. When cooked it has a thready quality. This particular quality of gumbo -- vegetable or soup, came to be its chief characteristic. The Creoles adopted, from the Choctaw Indians, the use of dried, finely ground sassafras leaves which they called file, meaning "thready." Consequently any number of soups, with okra or with file, came to be known as gumbo.

From: *The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1841*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p.14.

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Persimmons, widely grown in the area, were used not only for Big House for the liqueur for the Big House, but also for the slaves' Persimmon Beer.

### RECEIPT:

*Place the Persimmons in 2 to 3 gallons of water with sweet potato peelings. Add large hunks of cornbread and leave to work.*

On sugar plantations at grinding time, extra rations were served to increase strength and the good will of the slaves. Hot coffee was kept in the sugar house, and they were sometimes allowed to drink the hot cane juice, considered a great treat to mark the end of the grinding season.

From: *The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1841*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p.11

## TO GRILL A FISH

*After cleaning and scaling your fish, salt, pepper and oil it and let it hang to develop a taste. Put some milt or its roe in butter with some fine herbs. Put this in the opening of your fish and sew it up. Put it on a gridiron over a moderate fire. When done, place it on a plate and serve with a caper sauce or a Maitre d'hotel sauce.*

Taunt Huppe

From: *The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1841*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p. 29.

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## GRENOUILLES EN FRICASSEE DE POULET

*The frog should have legs of a good size to cut from the body. Cut the feet off, then skin the legs. Put them in boiling water then remove them to fresh water, and put them in a casserole with some mushrooms, a bouquet of parsley and chives, a clove of garlic, two cloves of clove, a piece of butter. Place it on the fire with these seasonings; add a pinch of flour, moisten with a glass of white wine and a little bouillon, put salt, lots of pepper, cook and reduce the gravy, thicken with yolks of three eggs, a piece of butter and then throw in a little minced parsley.*

Tante Huppe

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### TO STEW OYSTERS

*To stew oysters separate the liquor from them, then wash them from the grit; strain the liquor, and put with them a bit of mace and lemon peel and a few white peppers. Simmer them gently and put some cream and a little flour and butter. Serve with sippets.*

Butler Papers

From: *The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1841*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p. 28.

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### TO DRESS A DUCK WITH GREEN PEAS

*First put a deep stew pan over the fire, with a piece of butter, singe your duck and flour it, turn it in the pan two or three minutes, then pour out all the fat, but let the duck remain; put to it a pint of good gravy, a pint of peas, two lettuces cut small, a small bunch of sweet herbs, a little salt and pepper, cover them close, and let them stew for half an hour, now and then give the pan a shake; when they are just done, grate in a little nutmeg and put in very little beaten mace, and thicken it either with a piece of butter rolled flour, or the yolk of an egg beat up with two or three spoonfuls of cream.*

Butler Papers

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## LAPEREAUX AUX FINES HERBES

*Cut and prepare your young rabbit - put in with fine herbs chopped very fine and cook in a casserole with a little butter, parsley and green onions tied together, shallots and mushrooms chopped. When the rabbit done, remove the tied bouquet. Skim off the fat from the sauce and add the juice of a lemon or a small amount of verjus.*

Tante Huppe

From: *The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1841*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p. 36.

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*Notice by the city council concerning transport of meat by wagon: "It is strictly forbidden for butchers to sit on their meat while transporting said meat from the slaughterhouse to the butcher shop."*

Daily Life in Louisiana 1815-1830.

From: *Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana, 1795-1831*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p. 38.

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## A CURE FOR DRUNKENNESS

*A prescription in use in England with success:*

<i>Sulphate of Iron</i>	<i>20 grains</i>
<i>Magnesia</i>	<i>40 grains</i>
<i>Peppermint</i>	<i>44 drachms</i>
<i>Spirits of Nutmeg</i>	<i>4 drachms</i>

*Dose - one tablespoonful twice a day.*

From: *The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1841*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p. 58.

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"When the first white hairs appeared, she is said to have dyed them with coffee extract."  
Daily Life in Louisiana

From: *Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1831*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p. 59.

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#### RECEIPTS FOR SUMMER BEER

*Take four quarts of molasses, half a pint of yeast, and a spoonful of powdered race ginger; put the ingredients into your vessel, and pour on them two gallons of scalding hot water; shake them well till it ferments, and add thirteen gallons of cold water, to fill up the cask. Let the liquor ferment about twelve hours, when it will be fit for use. It may be kept in the bottles to a great age.*

Baton Rouge Gazette

From: *Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1831*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p. 58.

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#### Advertisement for Exchange Coffee House

*Mr. E Papillot is updating and enlarging his facilities to accomodate travelers - bed and board stables and hostlers - Coffee and Billiard room where bar is located - choicest wine and best of spiritous liquors. During the season, fresh oyster on the shortest notice in soup, fried, raw, etc. Those who desire to be served with the wines which are generally drunk when eating oysters may be accomodated with Sauterne, Graves or Madeira and best claret, champagne, muscat, etc. As he has just prepared an Extensive Ice House, he will be enabled in the summer season to serve cool drinks - handbills will be issued when he plans to serve green turtle soup.*

The Republic

From: *Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1841*, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986, p. 57.

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## GLACE A LA VANILLE

*Crush a demi-gros of vanilla beans. Bring beans and eight ounces of sugar to a boil in half pint of milk, pour it through a filter and freeze it.* Tante Huppe

*From: Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book , Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1831, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986 p. 52.*

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## A FRENCH CAKE

*Take 5 common-sized tumblers full of sifted flour, 3 tumblers of powdered white sugar, half a tumbler of butter, one tumbler of rich milk or cream, and a tea-spoonful of pearl ash dissolved in as much lukewarm water as to cover it. Mix all well together in a pan. Beat 3 eggs 'til very light and then add them to the mixture. Throw in a tea-spoonful of powdered cinnamon or nutmeg and beat the whole very hard about 10 min. Butter a deep pan put in the mixture and bake in a moderate oven.* Baton Rouge Gazette

*From: Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book, Being a Compendium of Foodways and Customs of Early Louisiana 1795-1831, Composed by Dedicated Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 1986 p. 50.*

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## GINGER CAKES

*One quarter of a pound of butter, the sauce of lard, one half pound of sugar, one pint of molasses, and two tablespoons of ginger, 2 ounces of spice and a little pearl ash.* French-Edwards Papers