

## RECIPES FOR A HUNDRED CRICKETS SINGING

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### LILLIANA'S EMPIRE BISCUITS



#### Ingredients:

2 cups butter, softened  
1 cup white sugar  
4 cups sifted all-purpose flour  
1 cup raspberry preserves  
24 maraschino cherries  
8 cups confectioners' sugar (*I found 4 cups of confectioners' sugar to be plenty*)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup milk (*I used about  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup milk and a splash of almond flavoring with 4 cups of confectioners' sugar*)

#### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
- In a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until smooth.
- Gradually stir in the flour until well blended.
- On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough out to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thickness.
- Cut into rounds using a cookie or biscuit cutter.
- Bake 8-10 minutes on parchment paper in the preheated oven.
- Allow cookies to cool on baking sheet 5 minutes before removing them to a wire rack to cool completely.
- Spread one teaspoon of jam on a cookie, then top with a second cookie, creating a sandwich.

- Repeat with remaining cookies.
- In a medium bowl, gradually stir the milk into the confectioners' sugar until the icing is of a spreadable consistency.
- Spread icing on top of the sandwiched cookies.
- Top each cookie with half of a cherry while the icing is still wet.

Adapted from *All Recipes*

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## MERCY TATE'S SWEET POTATO PIE



### Ingredients:

1 to 1 and ¼ pounds fresh sweet potatoes (not canned)—*I recommend increasing this amount of sweet potatoes for a thicker filling.*  
 1 can (12 oz.) sweetened condensed milk  
 ¾ cup granulated sugar—*I recommend decreasing this amount of sugar or eliminating it.*  
 ¼ cup brown sugar  
 ½ stick butter  
 2 teaspoons vanilla extract—*The first time I tasted this recipe the baker substituted bourbon for vanilla flavoring, and it was good.*  
 ¼ teaspoon molasses, in Ava's memory (no more)  
 2 eggs  
 ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 1 good dash grated nutmeg  
 One 9-inch pie crust, homemade or store bought

### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Bake sweet potatoes (skin on) for about 45-50 minutes, until soft. Let cook in cold water.
- Peel potatoes
- Mash potatoes gently with a potato masher or large spoon—leave a little texture.
- Add milk, sugar, eggs, butter, spices and flavorings. Stir thoroughly.
- Pour into pie crust and bake for one hour.
- Let sit at least a half-hour before serving.

Adapted from *The Best Cook in the World—Tales From My Mama's Table*,  
by Rick Bragg

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## MARTHA'S TWELFTH NIGHT CAKE

### Ingredients:

1 pound of butter  
 ½ pound sugar  
 8 eggs, separating yolks and whites  
 3 cups flour  
 ¾ teaspoon mace  
 ¾ teaspoon nutmeg  
 ½ cup brandy  
 ¼ cup each candied orange, lemon and citron rind  
 1 cup slivered almonds  
 1 pound zante currants  
 Silver coin, not copper, if desired

### Directions:

- Have all ingredients ready and prepare pan before beginning. It helps to work with another person.
- Traditionally wooden hoops were used, but metal ones work. I used a springform pan.
- Line the bottom of the 9-inch cake ring with parchment paper, bringing it up the outside of the pan and tie a string around it.
- Butter the inside of the pan.
- Line the inside of the buttered pan with buttered parchment paper, making sure the bottom rim is tight.
- Combine flour, mace and nutmeg and set aside.
- Combine currants, candied rind, almonds and brandy and set aside.
- Cream butter, add sugar, and cream until light.
- Whip egg whites until stiff peaks form.

- Whip egg yolks until thick.
- Gently combine creamed butter and sugar with whisked egg whites and yolks
- Gradually add flour to butter and egg mixture, mixing constantly to keep light fluffy until all is combined.
- Stir in fruit/sweetmeats.
- Spread into prepared pan
- Insert coin, if desired.
- Bake in 350 degrees for about 80 minutes if using a metal ring and about 2 hours if using a wooden ring.
- Remove from cake ring and let cool on a rack.

Adapted from *The English Art of Cookery*, by Richard Briggs



## MERCY TATE'S BLACKBERRY PIE

1 pie crust (I use Pillsbury Roll out Pie Crust)

### Filling Ingredients:

4 cups fresh blackberries (sometimes I use 5 cups and add a little extra flour)

½ cup sugar

¼ cup flour

2 teaspoons lemon juice

¼ teaspoon ground ginger

### Crumble Topping Ingredients:

1 cup flour

¾ cup toasted and coarsely chopped pecans

¼ cup sugar

1 teaspoon ground cardamom

4 oz. melted butter (1 stick)

### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Place pie crust (store-bought or homemade) in 9 inch pie pan, crimp edges, and fork prick sides and edges.
- Bake pie crust in 350 degrees oven for 10 minutes, then remove from oven and cool completely.
- In a large bowl gently hand mix blackberries, sugar, flour, lemon juice and ginger with a spoon.
- Pour the mixture into the cooled pie shell.
- In a separate bowl, mix together flour, toasted chopped pecans, sugar and cardamom.
- Mix in melted butter thoroughly.
- Top the pie with the crumble mixture (crumble over it).
- Place in oven @ 350 degrees and bake for 30 minutes (sometimes this takes longer, maybe up to 40 or 45 minutes), or until crumble topping is golden brown.
- Remove from the oven and cool completely.
- Serve with vanilla ice cream, warm or cold. Yum!!

*I don't remember where I found this recipe, but it has become a family staple over the years. We often serve it to celebrate my son, Daniel, on his birthday. He was born just as the blackberries ripened!*

## **ITALIAN RED GRAVY FOR PASTA**

**Two Delicious Recipes, one with meat and one without can be found here:**

**Italian Sunday Gravy—Recipe Handed Down From Nonna**

**<https://www.gonnawantseconds.com/italian-sunday-gravy-recipe/#wprm-recipe-container-16924>**

**Italian Tomato Gravy**

**<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/tyler-florence/italian-tomato-gravy-recipe-1938803>**

## LORD WOOLTON PIE

### Ingredients:

Approximately 1 pound of each of the following vegetables (or whatever you have on hand)

1 Pound Carrots

1 Pound Parsnips

1 Pound Cauliflower

1 Pound Potatoes

Spring onions

1 Tablespoon of rolled oats

Vegetable bouillon cube

Parsley (fresh or dried), chopped

Salt and Pepper to taste

Pastry for topping pie or mashed potatoes to top pie (your choice)

A little milk if using a pastry topping for pie

### Directions:

- Scrub and dice vegetables. Place in pan and just cover with water.
- Add vegetable-herb bouillon cube and rolled oats.
- Stir until vegetable cube dissolves and cook until most of the water has been absorbed and the sauce begins to thicken.
- Cool. Stir in salt and pepper to taste.
- Place cooled vegetables into a pie dish.
- Sprinkle parsley over vegetables.
- Cover with either mashed potatoes or a pastry crust (brush with a little milk).
- Bake 30 minutes or until potatoes on top are golden brown or crust is golden brown.

\*Serve with brown gravy and greens, fresh or cooked.

*Lord Woolten Pie was a WWII staple in most British homes. Despite rationing of meat and many other foods, this dish creates a nutritious and filling meal, largely from root vegetables. The recipe was named after Lord Woolten, Minister of Food in England after 1940, who made the recipe popular.*

*--Lord Woolten Pie is not mentioned in A Hundred Crickets Singing, but I include it here as one very popular in England during WWII.*

## POTATO JANE

### Ingredients:

1 and ½ pounds potatoes, sliced (skins on is more nutritious, but peel if you prefer)  
½ leek, chopped  
2 oz. breadcrumbs  
3 oz. cheese, grated  
salt and pepper  
1 cup to 1 and ½ cups milk

### Directions:

- Place a layer of potatoes in a Pyrex dish.
- Alternate layers of leek, breadcrumbs, cheese and seasoning, finishing with a layer of cheese and crumbs.
- Pour milk over all.
- Bake @ 350 degrees for 45 minutes until potatoes are slightly soft and top is golden brown.

(Adapted from *Victory Cookbook—Nostalgic Food and Facts from 1940-1954*, by Marguerite Patten OBE)

*—Although Potato Jane is not mentioned in A Hundred Crickets Singing I wanted to include it here as a recipe very popular in England during WWII.*

## **BRETON PEARS**

### **Ingredients:**

4 ripe pears

Jam to fill pears (apricot is nice)

1 and ½ cups self-raising flour

pinch of salt

5 and ¾ Tablespoons butter

Water to mix

### **Directions:**

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Peel and core pears, but leave whole.
- Fill centers of pears with jam
- Make short crust pastry by mixing flour, salt, butter and water.
- Roll out pastry dough and cut into 4 equal squares.
- Place pears on pastry.
- Brush edges of pastry with water and seal firmly around pears.
- Bake in an oven proof dish or on parchment papered cookie sheet for 30-35 minutes.

(Adapted from Breton Pears recipe in *Victory Cookbook—Nostalgic Food and Facts From 1940-1954*, by Marguerite Patten OBE)

--Although Breton Pears is not found in *A Hundred Crickets Singing* I wanted to mention it here as a recipe popular in England during WWII.