

# Decorating Artist

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and water color. Another craft she enjoyed was making Christmas decorations such as pine cone wreaths and teaching people to make them. She gave talks on Christmas decorations and antiques. She also enjoys cooking. Here are some of her favorite recipes. Why not try her round Easter bread recipes. It might be well to file her Ratatouille recipes until the vegetables are in season and plentiful. Most women are anxious to try new recipes for eggplants and squash when you have so many in your gardens and these recipes call for both plus other vegetables that are abundant at the same time.

## Tsourekia (Round Easter Bread)

3 lbs. flour  
 ½ lb. butter  
 1½ cups sugar  
 1½ cups of warm milk  
 6 eggs  
 2 pkgs. of yeast  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 1 tablespoon grated lemon peel (grate through yellow peel only; the white part is bitter)  
 1 teaspoon vanilla (or ½ teaspoon cinnamon and ½ teaspoon ground cloves)  
 Sesame seeds  
 5 raw eggs which have been dyed red

Dissolve yeast in ½ cup of warm water and set aside. Cream butter, add sugar gradually and cream well. Add six eggs, one at a time, and beat. Add grated lemon peel or spices, salt, about half of the flour, and warm milk. Beat until smooth. Add dissolved yeast and beat. Pour this mixture into remaining flour and knead until dough is smooth and elastic.

Cover dough with waxed paper, then clean towels. Let stand in warm place (about 80 degrees) until dough is double original size. This will take about two or three hours.

When dough has risen, punch it down with fist. Divide into two equal portions and shape each into a smooth ball. Allow dough to rest ten minutes. Butter a baking sheet 15½ by 12 inches.

Roll each ball of dough into a long roll about three feet

long and one to one and one-half inches in diameter. Place the two pieces of dough on baking sheet. Form a loosely braided ring, leaving spaces for the five colored eggs. Place colored eggs into spaces of braid. Cover with waxed paper, then clean towels and let rise in warm place until double its original size. Brush wreath with beaten egg and sprinkle sesame seed on it. Bake in preheated oven at 350 degrees for 45 to 50 minutes or until bread is golden brown. When bread is removed from oven the colored eggs on the top will be hard cooked. Baking colored raw eggs is the traditional Greek method of preparing Easter eggs.

## Ratatouille I (A wet version)

Ratatouille is delicious with roasts, particularly lamb,

4 tablespoons olive oil, more as needed  
 Vegetables:  
 2 large yellow onions, coarsely chopped  
 2 medium green peppers, coarsely chopped  
 2 cloves garlic, minced  
 1 medium eggplant  
 2 medium zucchini  
 4 cups (1 two-pound can) Italian tomatoes, undrained

In a large heavy, lidded 11 or 12 inch skillet, 2½ inches deep (preferably enameled ironware), or shallow 2½ or 3 qt. lidded flameproof casserole heat the oil. Cook the onions, green peppers, and garlic slowly until they are tender but not brown. Turn off heat while other vegetables are prepared. Wash the eggplant, cut off the stem, cut in 1-inch cubes. Peeling is not necessary. Wash and lightly scrape and zucchinis, cut off ends, cut in ½-inch slices.

In another skillet, heat more olive oil. Quickly, on high heat, saute the eggplant and zucchini, a few pieces at a time, about 1 minute on each side. (This will require more oil; the eggplant soaks it up.) As each batch is finished, transfer it to the skillet with the onions and peppers. Add the tomatoes to the other vegetables.

## Seasonings:

1½ teaspoons salt  
 ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
 1 teaspoon dried oregano  
 1 teaspoon dried basil  
 1 bay leaf  
 ½ cup finely chopped fresh parsley

Add the seasonings and stir to mix thoroughly. Bring to a simmer. Cover and cook 45-60 minutes over a very low flame, as low as possible, until zucchini and eggplant are tender but not too mushy. Check and correct seasonings, adding any extra salt, pepper or herbs in small quantities to taste. For later serving, cool and refrigerate. To reheat bring slowly to a simmer, and simmer just to heat through. It can also be served cold.

Garnish by sprinkling with ¼ cup finely chopped fresh parsley.

## Ratatouille II (Dry version)

Serves 8-10

Cooking time: ¾ to 1 hour.

This is particularly delicious served cold. It is a refreshing first course when eaten by itself, or spread on bread, or served with slices of Hungarian or Polish sausage. Hot, it is a good accompaniment for a pork roast or chops, for a simply cooked chicken dish, for veal. It is excellent for a buffet as relish, vegetable or salad, hot or cold.

## Vegetables:

2 or 3 small eggplants  
 3 or 4 small zucchinis  
 2 large onions, sliced  
 2 medium green peppers, sliced  
 3 cloves garlic, minced  
 4 cups (1 two-pound can) Italian plum tomatoes, drained  
 2 tablespoons tomato paste  
 4 tablespoons olive oil, more as needed

Wash the eggplants, remove ends, cut in ½-inch slices. If slices are very unequal in size, cut the larger ones in half. Peeling is not necessary. Wash and lightly scrape the zucchinis, remove ends, and cut in ½-inch slices. NOTE: Large eggplants and zucchinis will have more moisture.

To extract it, place the sliced vegetables in a bowl, sprinkle them with salt, put a weight on top and let stand for 30-60 minutes. Drain; wash and dry each piece. Cut the eggplant so that slices of it are about the same size as zucchini slices.

In a heavy skillet, heat the oil and quickly saute the eggplant and zucchini slices, a minute on each side, removing them as they are done to a bowl or plate. (More oil will be needed; the eggplant soaks it up.) In the same skillet, heat more oil (4 tablespoons). Slowly cook the onions, peppers, and garlic until they are tender but not brown. Add the drained tomatoes mixed with the tomato paste.

## Seasonings:

1 teaspoon salt  
 ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
 1 teaspoon dried oregano  
 1 teaspoon dried basil  
 1 bay leaf, crumbled  
 ½ cup finely chopped fresh parsley  
 Salt and pepper for sprinkling

Add the seasonings except the last. Stir carefully to mix well. Check and correct seasoning.

Turn on oven to 325 degrees.

In the bottom of a heavy lidded 4 or 5 qt. casserole put one-third of the tomato mixture. Next add a layer of ½ of the eggplant and zucchini. Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Put ½ of the remaining tomatoes on top, then the rest of the eggplant and zucchini, salt and pepper; finish with the last of the tomatoes.

Cover and place in preheated 325 degree oven for 45-60 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Check occasionally. Tip pot and baste with the juices. If it appears too moist, leave cover off for a while. It can be served either hot or cold. For later serving, cool and refrigerate. To reheat, bring to room temperature, place in preheated 325 degree oven for 30-45 minutes, until it is just bubbling and warmed through.

Garnish by sprinkling with ¼ cup finely chopped fresh parsley.

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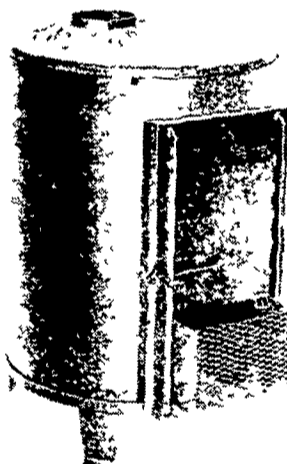
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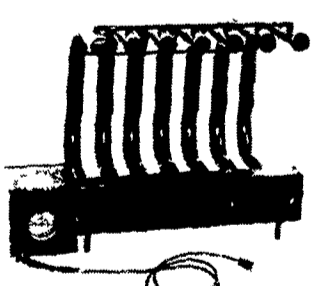
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