

~ Banquet Menu ~

Medieval feasts could take months of planning, especially if you were entertaining hundreds of guests. Lucky for us we only have to think about entertaining our households. A traditional medieval banquet had lots of different foods to choose from, served in courses.

~ Starter ~

Pottage

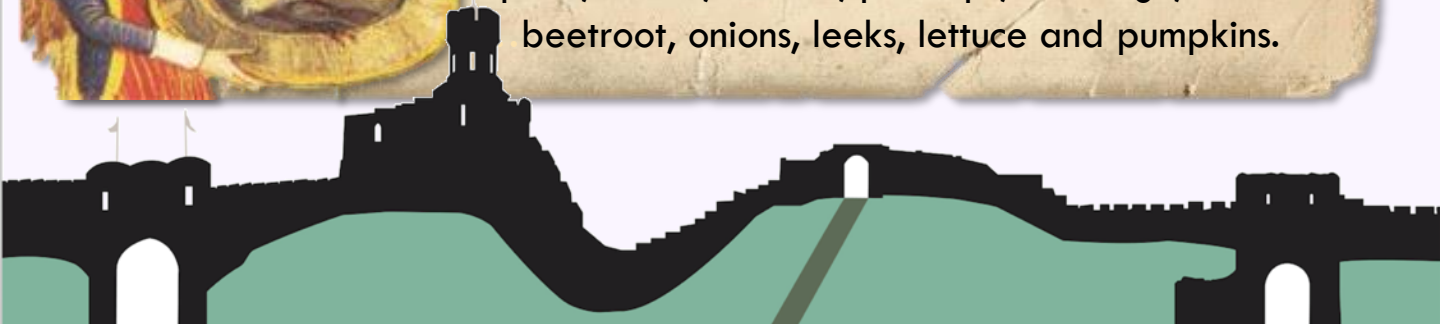
Pottage is a bit like a stew or soup. It was made from boiled vegetables, leftover meat from the previous day, herbs for more flavour and pulses like beans, peas or lentils to make it thicker. The most common ingredients in pottage were: cabbage, leek, onions and garlic.



~ Second, third, fourth and fifth courses ~

Selection of meat, wild birds and fish with vegetables

The following courses were made up of lots of meat and fish dishes. Popular meat dishes included: rabbit, beef, pork, mutton, deer and wild boar. Popular wild birds were: duck, chicken, pigeons, geese, pheasants and partridges. A really adventurous feast may include heron, crane and peacock. Popular fish were: cod, trout, mackerel, salmon and pike. Sometimes even whales and sturgeon would be served. Meat was often served as a whole joint with sauces and spices or cooked in a pie. Pies were gilded in gold or silver to make them look fancy. Vegetables would be served alongside the meat in separate dishes. Common vegetables were: peas, beans, carrots, parsnips, cabbage, beetroot, onions, leeks, lettuce and pumpkins.



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~ Dessert ~

Cheeses, fruit tarts, jams

Dessert was made up of a selection of cheeses, fruit tarts and puddings, honey and fruit jams.

Common fruits in desserts were: apples, pears, plums and wild berries. Very rich lords and ladies would also have dates, raisins and almonds in their desserts. Wensleydale cheese can be

traced back to the Normans. Most castles had bee hives so had lots of honey.

~ Cherry Pudding ~

Here is a 14th century recipe taken from 'Diuersa Seruicia'. We've provided some modern instructions if you want to try it at home!

For to make Cherries, take cherries at the feast of Saint John, and do away the stones. Grind them in a mortar, and after rub them well in a sieve so that the juice be well coming out; and do then in a pot and do there -in fair grease or butter and bread of wastel minced, and of sugar a good part, and a portion of wine. And when it is well cooked and dressed in dishes, stick therein clove flowers and strew thereon sugar

- ❖ Mash some cherries and push through a sieve, saving the juice.
- ❖ Place in a saucepan and add plenty of juice.
- ❖ Blend in soft butter and a little red wine (or use grape juice and a dash of red wine vinegar).
- ❖ Add in some fresh breadcrumbs to make a thick pudding-like consistency.
- ❖ Add sugar to taste - it should be sweet.
- ❖ Bring everything to a simmer, and stir for a few minutes until the wine is cooked off.
- ❖ Place the pudding in bowls, sprinkle more sugar on top and decorate with edible flowers.

