

# **‘A Bake Mete’ Redaction and interpretation based on 3 recipes**

Ice Dragon 4/6/2024

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## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Recipe for A Baked Custard Pie of Pears and Marrow.....	4
Pie Shell.....	4
Spiced and colored pears.....	5
Custard.....	6
Pie.....	6
Redaction of A Baked Custard Pie of Pears and Marrow, Doucetes, Wardens in Syrup.....	7
Appendix A.....	8
Referenced Books for recipes.....	8
Appendix B.....	9
Celine’s Redaction, 1995.....	9
Appendix C.....	10
From Renfrow’s Volume 1 - A Bake Mete (original).....	10
From Renfrow’s Volume 1 – Doucetes (original).....	11
From Renfrow’s Volume 2 - Wardens in Syrup (original).....	12

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## Introduction

This pie is a redaction and combination of 3 recipes ‘A Bake Mete’, ‘Doucetes’, and ‘Wardens in Syrup’. They were found in combination to make a compatible pie. The original manuscript is from Harleian 279 that was reprinted in Cindy Renfrow’s 2 volume series of ‘Take A Thousand Rggs or More”

The pie was first redacted many decades ago for the feast of an East Kingdom University in the Shire of Blak Rose, in 1995. At that time there was a little less adventure in some of the baking and tasting, so the ingredient of marrow was left out of the custard. This redaction is included for comparison

Time passed and the recipe was once again reviewed, source materials were unearthed and it was revived for the Magister John Marshall atte Forde Memorial Cooking Competition at the Harts and Horn event in Harthorndale in the East Kingdom on 11/10/2023.

This latest preparation and documentation is edited for a more cohesive voice and clarity in recipe ingredients and instructions.

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## Recipe for A Baked Custard Pie of Pears and Marrow

### Pie Shell

#### Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups white flour
- 1/2 cup butter
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 4 – 6 tablespoons cold water.

#### Method

1. Place flour and salt in a medium mixing bowl.
2. Cut butter into small cubes and place in bowl with flour mixture.
3. Work deftly with hands or pastry cutter until it resembles small crumbs, taking care not to melt the butter.
4. Add water to the mixture. a tablespoon at a time, mixing until a loose mass forms.
5. Rolled out dough into a circle and place in 9-inch pie plate.
6. Crimp edges as preferred.
7. Prick dough sides and bottom with a fork.
8. Place a piece of foil on top of dough, and either fill with dry beans or another pie plate to weigh it down.
9. Bake 10 minutes at 425 degrees F preheated oven. (This is called ‘blind baking’)

**Note:** Use the best butter that you feel comfortable buying, as it will have a lower water content and make a flakier crust. I recommend Kerrygold or Plugra as commercial brands.

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## Spiced and colored pears

### Ingredients

- 2 Bosc Pears
- 3 cups dry red wine
- 1 ½ tsp powdered cinnamon
- 6 TBSP white, granulated sugar
- ¾ tsp powdered ginger
- ¼ tsp saffron threads
- 1 TBSP red wine vinegar

### Method

1. Peel pears.
2. Cut in pears in half symmetrically.
3. Remove core by scooping with a small spoon or knife.
4. Put wine, cinnamon, and sugar in a saucepan deep enough that pears will be covered, and set to boil.
5. Once the wine mixture is boiling add the pears, and immediately lower the heat to a slow boil and cook for 15 minutes.
6. Add the ginger, saffron and red wine vinegar, and cook for an additional 10-15 minutes until pears are soft and red.
7. Let cool, drain the pears, and slice each half in 2 pieces

**Note:** If making more than one pie, just increase the quantity of pears. There should be enough wine mixture to cover 2-6 pears.

Dry red wine should be one that you are willing to drink, not a modern ‘cooking wine’ that may contain additive like salt. For this recipe, a home vinted Syrah was tested as well as a home vinted Meritage.

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## Custard

### Ingredients

- 5 egg yolks, beat with
- ¼ cup white, granulated sugar
- 1 cup cream
- ¼ cup milk
- ¼ tsp saffron threads, bloomed in 2 tsp warm water. (see notes below)

### Method

1. Beat egg yolks with sugar in a medium sized mixing bowl until combined, using a whisk.
2. Add cream and milk and beat until frothy.
3. Add the bloomed saffron and water solution and beat to combine. The yellow color of the mixture should deepen.

**Blooming Saffron:** Placing saffron threads in warm water allows the color to ‘bloom’ and distribute through the liquid. It creates a yellow liquid which will more evenly distribute the color and flavor throughout the custard.

**Notes:** Fresh eggs from on-site chickens were used and the saffron deepened their already dark yolks. The saffron will perk up the color of lighter yolked eggs, as well as lend flavor.

## Pie

### Ingredients

- 8 [spiced and colored pear quarters](#) – 2 pears (above)
- 3 pieces of marrow bone approximately 3-4 inches long
- 1 recipe [Custard](#) (above)
- 1 Recipe [Pie shell](#) (above), blind baked

### Method

1. Remove marrow from bones with a sharp knife. If possible, have a butcher make short pieces, it is easier to push out. Keep marrow refrigerated.
2. Cut marrow into slices or small pieces and place on a plate.
3. Place 8 pear quarters fanned out in the pie shell.
4. Place several pieces of marrow or a slice between each pear.
5. Stir the custard mixture until frothy and pour over pears and marrow.
6. Bake at 400 degrees F in preheated oven for 10 minutes.
7. Reduce oven to 350 degrees F and bake an additional 45-50 minutes. Test by poking the top with a small knife which should come out clean. The top will be risen slightly and browned. Do not overcook and allow the custard to crack.

**Notes:** The marrow appears to act like a gelatin and creates a very smooth custard texture with the ‘snap’ when a spoon goes through it, similar to a commercial gelatin.

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Harts and Horns 11/11/2023 – ‘A Bake Mete’ Redaction and interpretation based on 3 recipes from Volume 1 and volume 2 of Take a Thousand Eggs or More

## Redaction of A Baked Custard Pie of Pears and Marrow, Doucetes, Wardens in Syrup

From Harleian 279

### Notes from 11/10/2023 preparation

Take and make fair coffins – made 2 pies with a pate brisee dough of 3 c. Flour, 1 c. butter, ½ tsp. salt and ¼ – ½ cup water.

Rolled out and blind baked 10 minutes at 425 degrees as per the Doucetes in Harlian 279 - ‘take thine coffins and put into oven empty and let them be hardened’

Prepared pears as per Wardons in syrup – 2- 3 per pie

As pears were softer, they were not boiled before peeling. Later interpreted that this may have been a blanching step to slip the skins. Peeled Bosc Pears, split and cored. Brought 3 cups meritage red wine to boil with 1 ½ tsp. Powdered Cinnamon and 6 TBSP sugar. When boiling added pear halves and cooked for 15 minutes. Then added ¾ tsp powdered ginger, ¼ tsp saffron and 1 TBSP red wine vinegar. Tasted that it was both pungent and sweet. Cooked for another 10 -15 minute until pears were softer and red. Let cool, drain, and slice each half in 2 pieces.

While pears were cooking removed marrow from bones with a sharp knife. The butcher had short pieces, so it was easier to push out. When out, cut into slices or small pieces. Important to keep cold so that it does not melt or become too soft to slice.

Prepare custard as for Doucetes

5 egg yolks, beat with ¼ cup sugar.

Then add

1 cup cream

¼ cup milk

¼ tsp saffron bloomed in 2 tsp warm water.

Place 8 pear quarters fanned in pie shell. Place several pieces of marrow or a slice between each pear.

Stir the custard mixture and pour over pears

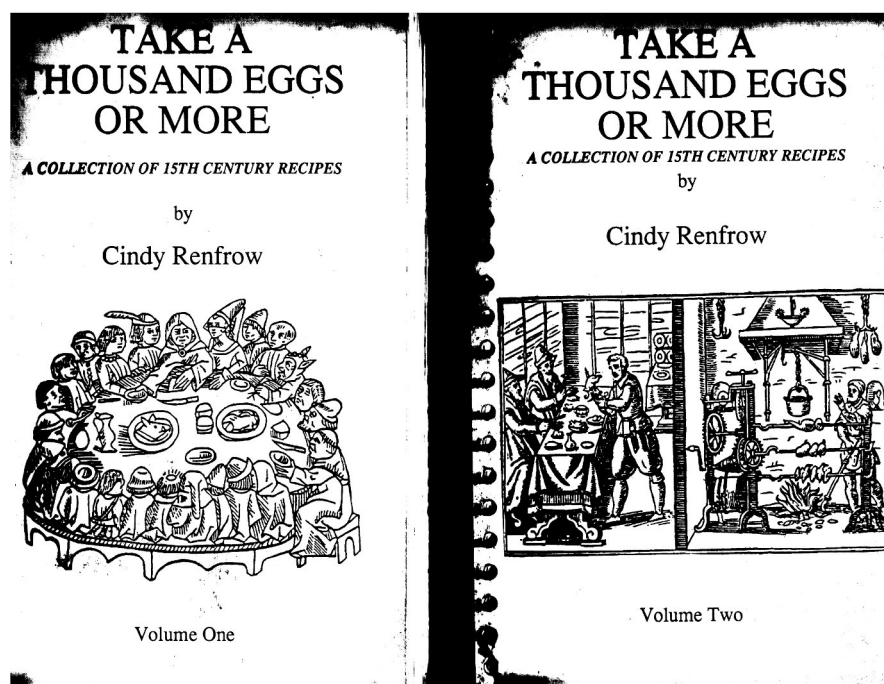
Bake at 400 degrees F for 10 minutes. Then reduce oven to 350 and bake 45-50 minutes more. A small knife will come out clean and the top will be risen and browned. The custard should not crack.

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## Appendix A

### Referenced Books for recipes



...Some bookes are to be tasted,  
others to be swallowed,  
and some fewe to be chewed,  
and digested...

(Sir Francis Bacon)

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#### DEDICATION

This book is humbly dedicated to my family:

To my husband, Richard,  
for keeping me going by telling me to quit;  
to my children, Byrhtwold and Constance,  
for napping and letting me type;

and to my dog, Deneceeta,  
for eating the leftovers without complaining.

*To Kirsten & Jay,*

*Enjoy!*

*Cindy Renfrow*



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## Appendix B

### Celine's Redaction, 1995

Original Redaction was done in 1995 and did not include marrow or saffron. Marrow was a little unnerving to use at the time as an ingredient and the saffron was too expensive for the budget. The tart was on the menu for the event of East Kingdom University hosted by the Shire-Marche of Blak Rose in Spring of 1995 when Timothy and Gabriella were on the EK thrones as their Highnesses.

Below is a scan from those recipes:

#### PEAR CUSTARD TART (A BAKE METE)

2 bosc pears  
2 cups dry red wine  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 cinnamon stick

2 cups cream  
6 egg yolks  
1/4 cup milk  
1/4 cup sugar  
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg  
1 9-inch pie shell

Peel and core pears. Cut into 1/2 to 1/4 inch wedges (as if for apple pie). Boil wine sugar and cinnamon stick. Poach pears until almost cooked. Remove from wine and allow to cool and drain. This can be done a day or two in advance.

Bake shell for 10 minutes at 400 degrees. Mix remaining ingredients for custard. Arrange pear slices on baked shell. Pour custard over pears. Bake 1 hour and 15 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the custard comes out clean at 350 degrees.

Remove from oven and allow custard to set up for 15 minutes.

NOTE: This is a more colorful version of a recipe that I found in Angharad ver'Rhuawn's "A Beginner's Book of Receipts for the Current Middle Ages". I added the nutmeg and I poached the pears in red wine for color. The original medieval recipe actually calls for prebaking of larger pears. I agree with the author's note in the book that you must use cooking pears (bosc) for the best flavor.

## Appendix C

### From Renfrow's Volume 1 - A Bake Mete (original)

#### *FRUIT~~~pears*

...Then came *Autumne* all in yellow clad,  
As though he ioyed in his plentious store,  
Laden with fruits that made him laugh, full glad  
That he had banisht hunger, which to-fore  
Had by the belly oft him pinched sore.  
Vpon his head a wreath that was enrold  
With eares of corne, of euery sort he bore:  
And in his hand a sickle he did holde,  
To reape the ripened fruits the which the earth had  
yold...

(Edmund Spencer, *The Faerie Queene*)

Harleian MS. 279 - Dyuerse Bake Metis

xxxij. A bake Mete. Take an make fayre lytel cofyns; ¶an take Perys, & gif ¶ey ben lytelle, put .iij. in a cofynne, & pare clene, & be-twyn euery pere, ley a gobet of Marow; & yf ¶ou haue no lytel Perys, take grete, & gobet ham, & so put hem in ¶e ovyn a whyle; ¶an take ¶in commade lyke as ¶ou takyst to Dowcetys, & pore ¶er-on; but lat ¶e Marow & ¶e Pecys ben sene; & whan it is y-now, serue f[orth].

32. A baked Meat. Take and make fair little coffins; then take Pears, & if they are little, put 3 in a coffin, & pare clean, & between every pear, lay a gobbet of Marrow; & if thou have no little Pears, take great, & gobbet them, & so put them in the oven a whyle; then take thine mixture like as thou take to *Doucetes*, & pour thereon; but let the Marrow & the Pears be seen; & when it is enough, serve f[orth].

## From Renfrow's Volume 1 – Doucetes (original)

### DESSERTS

Harleian MS. 279 - Dyuerse Bake Metis

xv. *Doucetes*. Take Creme a gode cupfulle, & put it on a straynoure; ¶anne take yolkys of Eyroun & put ¶er-to, & a lytel mylke; ¶en strayne it ¶orw a straynoure in-to a bolle; ¶en take Sugre y-now, & put ¶er-to, or ellys hony forde faute of Sugre, ¶an colore it with Safroun; ¶an take ¶in cofyns, & put in ¶e ovynne lere, & lat hem ben hardyd; ¶an take a dysshe y-fastenyd on ¶e pelys ende; & pore ¶in comade in-to ¶e dyssche, & fro ¶e dyssche in-to ¶e cofyns; & when ¶ey don a-ryse wel, take hem out, & serue hem forth.

15. *Doucetes*. Take Cream a good cupful, & put it in a strainer; then take yolks of Eggs & put thereto, & a little milk; then strain it through a strainer into a bowl; then take Sugar enough, & put thereto, or else honey for default of Sugar, then color it with Saffron; then take thine coffins, & put in the oven empty, & let them be hardened; then take a dish fastened on the Baker's peel's\* end; & pour thine mixture into the dish, & from the dish into the coffins; & when they do rise well, take them out, & serve them forth.

\*a long-handled paddle, similar to a pizza paddle, but having a longer handle. It was used to put dough and pies into a large oven. Sometimes the paddles had a dish fastened to the end for filling pies which were baking in the oven.

1 cup cream

1/4 cup milk

2 eggs yolk

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup Saffron - 1/2 tsp hot water

1/2 cup butter

1/2 cup flour

## From Renfrow's Volume 2 - Wardens in Syrup (original)

### FRUIT~~~pears

...Like many swarmes of Bees assembled round,  
After their hiues with honny do abound..  
(Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*)

Harleian MS. 279 - Potage Dyvers

x. Wardonys in syrpp. Take wardonys, an caste on a potte, and boyle hem till they ben tender; then take hem vp and pare hem, an kytte hem in to pecys; take y-now of powder of canel, a good quantyte, an caste it on red wyne, an draw it forw a straynour; caste sugre ther-to, an put it [in] an erthen pot, an let it boyle: an thanne caste the perys ther-to, an let boyle to-gederys, an whan they haue boyle a while, take pouder of gyngere an caste ther-to, an a lytil venegre, an a lytil safron; an loke that it be poynaunt an dowcet.

10. Wardons in Syrup. Take wardons, and cast in a pot, and boil them till they are tender; then take them up and pare them, and cut them in two pieces; take enough of powder of cinnamon, a good quantity, and cast it in red wine, and draw it through a strainer; cast sugar thereto, and put it [in] an earthenware pot, and let it boil: and then cast the pears thereto, and let boil together, and when they have boiled a while, take powder of ginger and cast thereto, and a little vinegar, and a little saffron; and look that it is poignant and sweet.

(continued on next page)

3 c. meritage (red) wine (1 bottle)  
1 1/2 tsp cinnamon  
6 TBS sugar (10 min)  
3/4 TSP ginger powder  
1 TBS red wine vinegar

3 c. meritage  
1 1/2 tsp cinnamon  
6 TBS sugar  
3/4 TSP ginger powder  
1 TBS red wine vinegar