RECIPES

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SPIDER SALAD

There seems to be some aversion to the previously published recipe for Tarantula Pie, and I'll admit, the cooking of arachnids in a pie IS somewhat unusual and apt to ruin their delicate flavor.

That is why I offer this alternative recipe for those with more sensitive palates. In addition to tarantulas, you will want to use as many variety of spiders as are available to you, depending on your geographical area (being careful to watch out for poisonous varieties such as Black Widows, of course).

Steam your spiders live, as this is a safe method of both asphyxiating them and keeping them crisp and fresh. You'll want to chop the legs off the larger spiders and quarter them. Prepare a bed of romaine lettuce, parsley, Portobello mushrooms in season (chopped), radishes, and scallions. Toss in approximately 1 cup chopped spiders, much as you would in a seafood salad, then a generous amount of olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, and fresh ground pepper.

Collected by Bert Christensen
Toronto, Ontario

TARANTULAS

Awhile back I mentioned that I thought that it odd that nobody eats tarantulas because of their close relationship to crabs and the like favorite foods in many cuisines. Last night I was watching a show on a tribe of Amazonian Indians and lo and behold, they were trapping and cooking the big ol' spiders. And I do mean big. These guys were the size of blue crabs. I would guess that they're at least eight inches across the spread legs.

"Take one tarantula..." Not an easy process! First they catch the critters by luring them out of their tunnels with a long strip of grass. The hunter then very deftly grabs the spider by the thorax, folds the legs back and wraps the spider in a leaf for transportation to the camp site.

At the campsite, the spiders are killed. Everything is used. The abdomens are removed and stripped of eggs. The eggs are wrapped in a leaf and roasted over a fire to produce a spider egg omelette. The bodies are tossed directly onto a fire to singe off the hair and to cook the meat. When they're done, the legs and thorax are cracked open and picked just like when you eat a crab. After the meal the fangs--which are a good inch and a half long are used as toothpicks. It was emphasized that the spiders taste very much like crab.

Collected by Smithsonian
Xina, Pequin

LIZARD TONGUES ON CRACKERS

Here is a quick and easy, fanciful h'ors d'oevre sure to please both family and friends alike at your next petite soiree. For this recipe you will need:

1 cup lizard tongues
1 cup grated cheese
1/4 cup red caviar
1/4 cup parsley
Tabasco sauce
Worcestershire sauce
Ritz crackers

Spread the crackers on a greased baking dish. Top with cheese and lizard tongues. Sprinkle a little parsley on top and a drop or two of Tabasco and Worcestershire. Bake for 10 minutes at 325 degrees. Remove from oven and top with red caviar.

Collected by Toro Taqueta
Mongolia, Ulan Bator

LOCUST BISQUE

1 gallon locust shells
2 onions, roughly chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped
1 celery stalk
2 carrots
1/2 tsp. powdered mace
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup whipping cream

Put all ingredients except whipping cream into a large stew pot, and fill with water. Bring to the boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 3 hours. Process in blender or food processor in batches, and strain before returning to clean pot. Add whipping cream, being sure not to allow it to boil.

Serve with animal crackers.

This recipe was prepared especially for Louise's brother, Steve Ripley, who always loved locust shells.

Collected by Bert Christensen
Brasil, Brasilia

MEALWORN FRIED RICE

Ingredients:
1 egg, beaten
1 tsp. oil
3/4 c. water
1/4 c. chopped onions
4 tsp. soy sauce
1/8 tsp. garlic powder
1 c. minute rice
1 c. cooked mealworms
Directions:
Scramble egg in a saucepan, stirring to break egg into pieces.
Add water, soy sauce, garlic and onions. Bring to a boil.

Stir in rice. Cover; remove from heat and let stand five minutes.

(home of some very weird recipes)

Collected by Bert Christensen.
Megico, Ciudad de Megico