

The Preservation of Food: Venison and Salmon

Sealion 2009 Sciences Competition

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Table of Contents

Summary.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Competition.....	3
Supply Train.....	3
Brief Outline.....	3
Venison.....	4
Introduction.....	4
Recipe.....	4
Original Source.....	4
Modern Translation.....	4
Our Adaptation.....	5
Preservation.....	6
Research.....	6
Practical.....	7
Salmon.....	8
Introduction.....	8
Recipe.....	8
Original Source.....	8
Modern Translation.....	9
Our Adaptation.....	11
Preservation.....	12
Research.....	12
Practical.....	14
Final Notes.....	14
Works Cited.....	15

Summary

We have chosen to present two dishes, venison with a ginger and pepper basting sauce, and salmon pie. Both the venison and the salmon have been salted to preserve them and then cooked in different ways. We chose this method of war rations because of the prevalence of supply trains moving with armies. The salting of meat was a common practice in the Middle Ages, and we found several different ways of salting meat and fish. We will be baking the salmon into a pie as another method of preserving it.

We present this entry in support of the Barony of Seagirt.

Introduction

Competition

In war, the need to keep your troops well fed is an important necessity, but the long distances travelled to each battle requires some careful preservation and selections of such foods. As such the science points will be the best representation of period war rations.

Points will be awarded to the rations that provides the best balance of nutrition/energy, best execution, and best documentation.

Supply Train

The supply train seems to have been a key part of medieval armies. The failure to cut off the English supply train during the siege of Orleans in 1429 for example nearly cost the French the city, and without aid from Jeanne d'Arc it would have (Kibler and Zinn). In the 13th century supply trains were so vital to the function of an army that Florence had a special guard unit simply to protect it (Nicolle and McBride). For this reason we have decided to focus ourselves on things that may have been carried in a supply train and cooked along the way.

Brief Outline

We have chosen to present two dishes, venison with a ginger and pepper basting sauce, and salmon pie. Both the venison and the salmon will be salted to preserve them, and then cooked. The venison will show an example of a meal which could be quickly and easily prepared at the end of a day with supplies from the wagon train and the preserved meat. The salmon pie gives us two examples of preserving food. The first of course is the salted fish, the second though is the pastry which could have been cooked in the coals of a fire in the morning and then eaten later that day, the next day, or even several days later if needed.

Venison

Introduction

During the Middle Ages, and into the Renaissance, venison was a major food source for great lords. Fresh venison was often served on special occasions, and salted venison was frequently used as well. On a list of menus in *Le Menagier de Paris* Jerome Pichon lists venison in nearly every menu at least once. Venison seems to have been primarily salted as a method of preservation as it “lends itself well to this method of preserving” (Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron), and some cuts, especially the breast “were at their best when salted”.

It was however a food for those with large reserves and lands as the amount of land required to have several sizeable herds of deer was vast, so for most poor knights it was an occasional food. However for some great lords it was abundant and available at any time. This, combined with the price of salt, made it a luxury. Why then have we chosen to use venison? We decided that as it was a commonly eaten food for the great lords, and they would likely have had it even when traveling, as it travels well (Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron). In addition, it seemed that the methods for salting meat seemed to be approximately the same for all similar meats, and the cooking methods also similar. Our second dish, salmon pie, is our less expensive option.

One example of the amount of venison that great lords would have on hand in their larders comes from Lancaster, where in 1313 there were 51 carcasses, and the following year there were 73 (Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron). It is thus feasible and even likely that the lord would not have forgone his meat while traveling. This being said, in the case of Seagirt being besieged this year the baron, as a great lord, would have had salted venison in excess available to him.

The recipe we chose was a roast of venison with a relatively simple basting sauce which would likely have been used as a sauce when the food was presented as well. The reason we chose this recipe is that it is one which we felt would have been easy to create both while waging war away from one’s home, but also while under siege.

Recipe

Original Source

The syde of a dere of hie grece.

Wesch hem, do hem on a broch.

Scotch hem ovyrwarte & ayenne crosswyse in the maner of losyngys in the flesch syde.

Rost hym: take redde wyn. poudyr of gynger. poudyr of pepyr & salt, and bast hit till hit be thorow.

Have a chargeour undyrneth & kepe the fallyng. and bast hit therwith ayene.

Then take hit of & smyte hit as thu lyst & serve hit forth. (Hieatt)

Modern Translation

Broiled Venison

- 6 x 1-cm/ 1/2-inch-thick slices venison fillet or haunch
- Bacon fat or lard for rubbing

- Pepper sauce for veal or venison to serve
- Basting Sauce:
 - 350 ml/12 fl oz/1 1/2 cups red wine
 - 3 tablespoons oil
 - 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
 - Salt and black pepper

Venison fillet was the most prized cut.

It might be scored in lozenge shapes with a knife point or parboiled and larded with salt pork before being spit-roasted whole. Modern farmed venison, however, seems to be tenderised better by being marinated.

1. Combine all the basting sauce ingredients and soak the venison slices in the sauce for at least 2-3 hours: elderly meat will need longer.
2. Pour off the sauce into a jug when you are ready to cook. Put the meat on a board and pat it dry. Then nick the edges of the slices and rub them all over with the fat.
3. Thread the slices on skewers or lay them on a greased grill grid.
4. Heat the grill to medium-high and grill the meat like steak until medium-rare or well done, as you wish. (For well-done meat, reduce the temperature after searing both sides and cook slowly)
5. Baste the meat with the reserved basting sauce while cooking and turn it once using a fish slice: do not prod it with a fork.
6. When done, transfer the slices to a warmed serving platter. And serve at once, with the hot Pepper Sauce in a sauce boat.

(Black)

Our Adaptation

The syde of a dere of hie grece.

Wesch hem, do hem on a broch.

Scotch hem ovyrtwarte & ayenne crosswyse in the maner of losyngys in the flesch syde.

Rost hym: take redde wyn. poudyr of gynger. poudyr of pepyr & salt, and bast hit till hit be thorow.

Have a chargeour undyrneth & kepe the fallyng. and bast hit therwith ayene.

Then take hit of & smyte hit as thu lyst & serve hit forth. (Hieatt)

Venison spitted (broch)

Slice lozenge shapes in the meat to tenderize

Mix red wine, powdered ginger, salt, and pepper for basting

Roast it over fire and baste it frequently

Carve it (smyte) as you would like and serve

We had to make several adaptations to this to suit our purposes. First we are using salted venison (see section on preservation of venison). As we are using salted venison we must first parboil it in water and wine vinegar (also see section on preservation of venison). Second we are using pre-cut pieces of venison. This is being done for a few reasons. We didn't want to roast an entire venison haunch, as we didn't know about the competition in October, and it is prohibitively expensive to purchase that amount of venison. Also we wanted to salt the venison ourselves, which decreased the

amount of venison we would be able to use as we lack barrels. And finally, although it would be amusing to feed a large number of the Seagirt forces, we opted to only make enough for the completion, and ourselves.

- Salted Venison
 - Pork/Bacon Fat or Lard
 - Wine Vinegar
 - Water
 - Basting Sauce
 - 2 cups of Red wine
 - Powdered Ginger
 - Pepper
 - Salt
1. Take the salted venison and parboil it in 1 part water and one part wine vinegar for 1-2 hours until soft, but not cooked
 2. Remove, pat dry
 3. Mix together basting sauce ingredients
 4. Marinade venison in the basting sauce for 2-3 hours
 5. Grease grill with pork fat or lard
 6. Sear meat for 30-60 seconds
 7. Decrease temperature of grill and cook, basting frequently and turning as needed
 8. Serve with remaining basting sauce

Preservation

Research

The salting of meat was a common practice in the middle ages. This allowed for the preservation, storage, and transport of meat without refrigeration. According to *Food in Medieval England* "it was a routine procedure on big estates for deer to be hunted according to season, when the meat was at its best, and the venison prepared and stored in larders till needed, and in this case heavier salting would be necessary" (Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron). The salting of venison, as we talked about earlier, was common in great households, so much so that there were quite often men whose sole job was the preservation of food. They would accompany the huntsmen so as to make sure that the deer were treated properly and would be preserved properly (Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron). Salted venison was stored in casks, or more specifically doliis (Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron) which is the same word used for wine casks. From this we assume then that they mean waterproof casks such as would be used for wine.

We found several different ways of salting meats: lightly coating in salt, temporary packing in salt, partial packing in salt and long term packing in salt. The short term salting process seems to have been lightly coating the meat in salt, just enough to cover it, and then hanging it by a fireplace to fully dry, then it may be consumed (Pichon). According to Nkixwstn James this is a form of drying using the salt to draw the moisture out quicker. This leads to a similar end product as dried meat (James).

Temporary packing in salt seems to function as the main method of salting for most meats. In this method the meat is packed in salt in a water tight cask for a period of time running from one day to a month, then removing from the salt and hanging it by a fireplace, or other warm location, to dry. After that it may be hung in a dry place for one to four years depending on the type of meat (Pichon). Partial packing in salt was a method which we only ran across in *Le Menagier de Paris*, translated by Janet Hinson: "it is appropriate to salt it in a wash-tub or bath ground coarse salt, and after dry it in the sun" (Pichon). This seems to imply that covering is not necessary if the meat is immersed in salt. That line of thought is continued by Daniel Myers in his experiments in salting which we used as the first basis of our salting process. You may examine his results at <http://www.medievalcookery.com/recipes/saltvenison.html> (Myers, Salted Venison).

The long term method appears to be packing the meat in salt, ensuring that the meat is fully covered, and in a water tight container. The meat would then be removed shortly before using, perhaps up to a week previous. This may be a method mostly used for travel, as casks would be easier to bring in a supply train, than the individual pieces, and would likely keep longer as they would have no exposure to moist air, which all forms of salting seem to agree is bad for it.

When salting it seems that two different kinds of salt were used: gross salt and white salt. Gross salt seems to have been what we today call sea salt, and appears to have been the cheaper variety (Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron). White salt appears to have been refined salt which cost more, but was of higher quality, and was a better salt for preserving meat. You can find a basic method for creating white salt in *Le Menagier de Paris* (Pichon). It seems to have taken a large amount of salt to preserve a deer, with some records putting the amount at between ½ a bushel and two bushels depending on the size of the deer (Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron). Because of this the better white salt was normally mixed with the coarser gross salt in an attempt to keep costs down.

Before cooking salted venison most cookbooks of the time seem to have recommended parboiling it in a mixture of wine and water (Pichon) or water and vinegar (Redon, Sabban and Serventi), likely wine vinegar, in an attempt to "draw out the salt" (Pichon).

Practical

We chose to preserve two kinds of venison. The first was tenderloin, which we bought frozen from a butcher in Langley B.C. We also got two venison steaks from my family which were left over from our 2006 hunting trip. The steaks were a little freezer burned, and so may not preserve correctly. Traditionally of course fresh venison would have been preserved, but we were unable to acquire it in a timely fashion. We allowed the meat to thaw in the fridge, and used a sink full of water to finish making sure that they were fully defrosted. We patted the meat down with paper towel to remove the moisture, as the meat would have been hung for a day or two, which would have removed most of the incidental moisture.

We prepared our first dish. We are using new glass baking dishes with an air tight lid for this. We decided on this as it was cheaper than buying a water tight cask, and this way we could see how the salt was doing throughout the salting process (Meyers' attempts turned a reddish colour, which we think was a combination of not patting the meat dry enough and the open top, but we wanted to be able to see any change in colour without opening them).

We used two kinds of salt, canning salt as our main salt, and sea salt in order to get a similar salt content to what would have been used during the middle ages. The sea salt (or gross salt) would have been the cheaper of the two in period, but today canning salt is cheaper. Because of this instead of the approximate one to one ratio, or even more gross salt than white salt, in our sources we chose to use a

two to one ratio in favour of the cheaper canning salt. We did this both because the canning salt (white salt) is closer to the good salt that was used at the time and to reduce costs.

We will be leaving the venison in the salt for transportation to Sealion War, as that seems to have been a good method of transporting it without the meat getting moisture on it. We plan on parboiling the venison in one part water one part wine vinegar at the event before marinating it. This should hopefully draw out most of the salt from the venison.

Salmon

Introduction

Salmon was a common food in northern Europe, during the middle ages. In northern England “it was so common that apprentices objected to being served salmon more than three times a week” (Adamson). Salmon was sold fresh, but because it was caught in such quantity most of was dried, salted, or smoked and shipped around Europe. It was also used during lent, as the pink meat would give the proper colour to a dish which would normally require bacon or ham (Adamson). Salmon in all of its forms seem to have been a common meat, served frequently due to its low cost. For feasts salmon was often used as part of decorative dishes, being used in jelly, or baked in shaped dough (Adamson).

We chose salmon because it was such a common food, and would have been easily stored both in a castle and with a supply train, and would have been easy to acquire either by fishing or raiding if the need arose during a campaign. Salmon appears in many recipes of the day, in various forms, and seems to have been a very adaptable fish, being substituted in for many other meats (Pichon) (Atlas).

The recipe we chose was a salmon pie. We chose this recipe for two reasons. Its simplicity would have lended itself to travel food, making it easy to make while on campaign or while under siege. It is convenient to carry if you are baking it in the morning and then you can eat it in the evening with no additional work. We thought that this would be a good item to cook before a long days march so that it could be baked with the morning fire and then eaten without having to wait for the cooks and camp followers to catch up (Nicolle and McBride). And finally we wanted to experiment with a second form of preservation, in this case the pastry. We will discuss the pastry as a method of preservation in the preservation section.

Recipe

Original Source

Diz ist ein gut spise von eime lahs (This is a good food of a salmon)

Nim einen lahs. schabe im abe die schupen. spalde in und snit in an stücke. hacke peterlin selbey. Nim gestozzen yngeber pfeffer enys saltz zu mazzen. mache eynen derben teyk noch der groezze der stücke. und wirf daz krut uf die stücke. und bewirke sie mit dem teyge. kanst du sie gestemphen in ein forme daz tu. so mahtu machen hechde. förheln brasmen und backe eigliches besunder in eime teyge. ist ez aber eins fleischtages. so mahtu machen hünenre, rephünenre, tuben und vasande mahtu machen. ab du hast die formen.

Take a salmon. Scrape off the scales. Split it and cut it into pieces. Cut parsley (and) sage. Take ground ginger, pepper, anise. Salt to mass. Make a dough (possibly freshly made as opposed to sourdough) also the size of the piece (of salmon). And throw the herb on the piece. And surround it with the dough. Stamp it in a form if you can. Thus you may make pike (and) trout. And bake individually in a dough. However, if it is a meat day, then you may make hens, partridge, pigeon and pheasant. If you have the forms, and bake them in fat or boil in the forms. Take from the breasts of the hens or other good meat. So will the art be the better and do not oversalt. (Atlas)

Modern Translation

Salmon Pie

- 1 lb. salmon fillets
- 1 tsp. Parsley
- 1/4 tsp. Sage
- 1/4 tsp. Ginger
- 1/4 tsp. Salt
- 1/8 tsp. Pepper
- 1/8 tsp. Anise

1. Remove any skin from salmon.
2. Roll out half of pastry on a floured surface, and place salmon in the middle.
3. Add remaining ingredients and cover with the rest of the pastry.
4. Seal edges with water and cut to shape if desired. Bake at 350° until golden - about 40 minutes.

(Myers, Salmon Pie)

Pastry

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 4 Tbsp. Butter
- 2 egg yolks
- 1/2 tsp. Salt
- pinch saffron
- water, about 3/8 cup

1. Mix flour, salt, and saffron together in a large bowl.
2. Cut or rub the butter and eggs into the flour mixture until it forms fine crumbs.
3. Add water a little at a time until it just sticks together - too much water will make the dough too soft and sticky.
4. Cover with a towel and allow to rest for 30 minutes.

(Myers, Salmon Pie)

Coffins

- 4 cups flour
- 200g dripping

- 1/3 cup water
 - 2 tblspns salt
 - 2 eggs
 - Some extra flour and water mixed together into a thick paste.
1. Sift the flour and salt into a mixing bowl.
 2. Add the water and dripping to a saucepan and simmer, until the dripping has melted.
 3. Pour this mixture into the flour and salt, and stir until mixed.
 4. Add the eggs, stirring until the pastry forms a heavy dough.
 5. Roll out the pastry and cut a 20cm circle to fit in the bottom of a pie tin.
 6. Cut walls for the pie tin from the pastry and seal the walls to the base with the flour and water paste, making sure that all air gaps are well covered and sealed.
 7. Cut another circle to fit over the top of the coffin, but do not seal the coffin yet.
 8. Blind bake the coffin in the oven at 180C for 20 minutes or so, until the pastry hardens.
 9. Remove from the pie tin.

(Straßburg)

Shortcrust Pastry

- 200g flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 100g margarine or butter
- pinch saffron
- 1 egg yolk
- iced water

If you're using saffron, steep in a tablespoon of hot water for at least half an hour, so the water has time to cool.

1. Sift flour and salt into a basin.
2. Cut chilled fat into the flour, chopping into small pieces.
3. With your fingers, rub the fat into the flour, shaking the bowl at intervals to bring lumps to the top.
4. When you've finished, the mixture should look slightly mealy, like breadcrumbs.
5. Drop egg yolk into a well in the flour mixture, and add a few tablespoons of iced water, and the saffron water if you're using it.
6. Mix with a butter knife.
7. The mix should start to form lumps; if it doesn't, add iced water a little at a time until it does.
8. Form pastry into a ball and wrap in Clingfilm; refrigerate for about half an hour before using.
9. Roll it out on a floured board, use a chilled marble rolling pin if at all possible.

This recipe should make one small covered pie, or a largish tart.

(Medieval Pastry)

Hot water Pastry

- 1 lb(2 cups) Flour
- 1 tsp. Salt
- 1/2 lb. Lard, or the preferred Butter (or 1/4 each)

- 1/4 pint (1/2 cup) Boiling water, or milk and water.
1. Rub a tablespoon of the butter (lard) into the flour and salt with your fingertips.
 2. Take the remaining butter (lard), and add it to the liquid.
 3. Heat the liquid over med. heat until it just breaks a boil, and the butter (lard) is melted.
 4. Make a well in the flour, dump in the liquid and melted fat, and stir quickly with a wooden spoon to combine.
 5. Cover with a cloth to keep it warm, and let the dough rest for 10 minutes or so in a warm place.
 6. Roll out dough

(Finn)

(Note, the hot water crust does not seem to have changed since the medieval period with the exception of the mandatory inclusion of milk which seems to make the pastry lighter and tastier)

Simple Pastry

- 1 cup flour
 - 1/8 cup water
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
 - 1 pinch saffron
1. Grind saffron, place in water, and allow color to diffuse (saffron is optional)
 2. Mix the salt and flour together
 3. Add water a little at a time, mixing with a fork, until it forms a pliable dough
 4. Use additional water as needed.
 5. Roll out dough

(Myers, Chicken Pasty)

Our Adaptation

We found five different pastry recipes while researching this. Our first consideration was for one which would work as a preservative and also would be able to be made while on campaign. As such we removed from consideration those pastries which are designed to be thinner or had items which may not have been easily accessible. This unfortunately meant eggs as well. Though some of our research showed that live animals, including chickens, were general included in a supply train, we decided that we would limit it to things that did not depend on live animals. We were left with the simple pastry and the hot water pastry. The only major differences between the simple and hot water pastries seems to be the amount of water, the use of lard/fat/butter, and that you use hot water in one and not the other. All other ingredients are the same. We chose to use the hot water pastry because we ran into hot water pastry being referred to more often in regards to preserving foods.

As the salmon pie recipe was essentially taken straight from the translation we decided to use their recipe.

Hot water Pastry

- 1 lb(2 cups) Flour

- 1 tsp. Salt
- 1/2 lb. Lard/butter/fat
- 1/4 pint(1/2 cup) Boiling water

1. Sift together salt and flour
2. Rub a tablespoon of the lard into the flour and salt with your fingertips.
3. Take the remaining lard, and add it to the water.
4. Heat the water over med. heat until it just breaks a boil, and the lard is melted.
5. Make a well in the flour, dump in the water and melted lard, and stir quickly with a wooden spoon to combine.
6. Cover with a cloth to keep it warm, and let the dough rest for 10 minutes or so in a warm place.
7. Roll out dough

(Finn)

Salmon Pie

Wash the salted fish in brine, and then soak in water for 10-30 minutes to freshen it before using.

- 1 lb. salmon fillets
- 1 tsp. Parsley
- 1/4 tsp. Sage
- 1/4 tsp. Ginger
- 1/4 tsp. Salt
- 1/8 tsp. Pepper
- 1/8 tsp. Anise

1. Remove any skin from salmon.
2. Roll out half of pastry on a floured surface, and place salmon in the middle.
3. Add remaining ingredients and cover with the rest of the pastry.
4. Seal edges with water and cut to shape if desired.
5. Bake at 350° until golden - about 40 minutes.

(Myers, Salmon Pie)

Preservation

Research

We found five main ways of preserving fish in the middle ages, and they are the same five ways that are used today: drying, cold smoking, hot smoking, salting, and brining.

Drying is the oldest method, and relies on three principles: heat, dry air, and air circulation. The temperature near the fish must be hot enough for the moisture to come out, but not hot enough to cook the food. The air must be dry enough to absorb the moisture. And the air must circulate around it to carry the moisture away. This same method is still used today by the Nlak'pamux First Nations to make Stwen, or dried salmon. The Fraser Canyon is a perfect place for drying fish, as there is normally a brisk wind, and the summers are warm and dry. Once the fish has been prepared, by removing the

bones and slicing across the grain in order to have the fastest loss of moisture, it is put out on high racks to dry in the air (James). This method keeps for a very long time.

Cold smoking is a very similar procedure to drying, but you use a smouldering fire underneath sending smoke up to the fish. This method gives the fish a light smoky flavour, and allows it to dry faster, as there is a bit more heat from the fire and smoke, but still not enough to cook the fish. Fish smoked in this way keeps as long as dried fish.

Hot smoking is what we today consider smoking. In this method the fish is partially or fully cooked by using an enclosed location to smoke the fish. This gives fish the strong smoky flavour we are used to in smoked fish. This is generally done with a smoke house of some variety. While the fish is partially preserved, because the fish cooks instead of dries this is not a good long term preservation technique (James) (Davidson).

The salting of fish appears to be the same method as the long term salting of other meats: packing the fish in salt, ensuring that the fish is fully covered, and in a water tight container. Fish also seems to have been salted in casks or barrels, and so we assume again that they are water tight. The fish was first covered in salt, and then placed in the cask with a layer of salt underneath and a layer of salt above (Michigan State University Extension). The fish was laid out so that the fish was fully covered by salt, and the fish was not touching other fish, which would have decreased the amount of salt in contact with the fish. The other thing to ensure is that the fish does not weigh down unevenly on another fish, as this apparently changes the amount of salt penetration. The fish must be evenly spaced and weighted (James). After about a week the fish can be removed from the salt, scrubbed with brine to remove excess salt, dried, and packed. This method of preservation appears to have been a good long term method as was frequently used for thousands of years.

Brining fish is similar to dry salting, but instead of just salt, brine is made from salt and water and the fish are immersed in it for about an hour. The fish are then drained and coated with salt then packed in a container in a balanced way so there is room for the brine to form around the fish. Salt is used between layers. Once the fish is all in a loose lid is placed on top with a weight to push the remaining brine out of the fish, and this forms the new brine. In one to two weeks you can take the fish out of the brine, wash it in fresh brine with a brush, and repack the fish, adding more brine to it. This should keep for about nine months (Turner).

Another form of food preservation used during the Middle Ages was baking the food into a crust, sometimes known as “coffins” or “pies”. The basic premise is that you bake the food into a pie which has a relatively thick shell, and was made using salt, and anything on the inside is preserved. I found two methods of this: premade shells, and baking the whole thing together. The difference seems to be whether the food is cooked first or not. If the food is first cooked then it can be put into the premade shell (called a coffin), and sealed inside by further baking (Straßburg). If the food is uncooked, then it seems that the shell was baked around it (Pichon).

Although today we feel uncomfortable about baking things into crusts and not refrigerating them it seems to have been a very common practice. Master Delbert von Straßburg has written a fabulous article on pies as preserving methods, including an analysis by the Sydney Pathology Laboratory. If you would like to read her article, it is in Issue 21 of the Cockatrice, which is found online at http://www.sca.org.au/cockatrice/uploads/issue21_pyes.pdf. At the end of the four week testing process it was discovered that:

All 12 pies submitted for testing remained fresh, with no microorganisms isolated within the pie filling, after 4 weeks at room temperature. (Straßburg)

This was done with prebaked coffins, although from our research it seems that the important thing was the thickness and composition of the crust, though the prebaked coffins may last longer (Myers, Chicken Pasty) (Pichon) (Medieval Pastry).

Practical

We chose to dry salt our fish because we felt that it would be a more likely method of preservation for storage in a supply train. We took the fish, removed the head and tail (our sources differed on whether to leave them on or not; we opted to remove them due to space constraints), rubbed salt into the inside of the fish, then lay it on the sated bottom of the tray. We put more salt inside the fish and then put more salt on top. Similar to the venison we used a combination of sea salt and canning salt, and for the same reason.

We are using Atlantic salmon even though we both prefer Sockeye we wanted to use the salmon that would have been used during the middle ages. Also, although Chinook salmon (also called spring salmon) are inappropriate for salting or drying because of their fattiness (James) we were afraid that other Pacific salmon might also be too fatty for dry salting.

We will be leaving the salmon in the salt until it is time for us to bake it, instead of drying and packing. We will be washing it in a brine solution and then soaking it for about 20-30 minutes to freshen it (Turner).

We will be baking the fish into a pie as another method to preserve it. While the research we found showed that a pie will preserve the food for up to four weeks we did not want to experiment on the judges in that way. We will instead be using the crust to preserve the food for three days. The salmon will be baked inside a hot water pastry shell rather than a coffin because we could not find a coffin recipe which did not exclude eggs. Also we felt that this pastry shell would be more versatile. The crust may be eaten, though it is not necessary as we expect it to be very dry.

Final Notes

We would like to acknowledge Daniel Myers (Master Edouard Halidai) for the asset his website, Medieval Cookery, has been during this process. The site gave us some of our first thoughts in this project. We would also like to recognize David Elson (Master Delbert von Straßburg) for his work on medieval pies as a preservation method.

We would also like to declare our support for the Barony of Seagirt, for whom we are competing.

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