

Questionable historic hot dog recipes

By NICK KINDELSPERGER

Chicago Tribune.

CHICAGO — Although the Chicago-style hot dog is arguably the greatest hot dog in the country, for most of the 20th century, Tribune reporters and recipe writers mostly acted deeply embarrassed about the dish.

“Americans in general and housewives in particular are derelict in their duty to the hot dog,” starts a July 6, 1961, article by Thomas Wolfsmith. He then quotes a German chef, Otto Schuetz, who explains that Americans “bury” hot dogs in buns “with no elegance,” unlike Europeans who serve them as a delicacy.

Schuetz recommended serving a dish that combined asparagus, apples, mushrooms, sliced hot dogs and French dressing. Wolfsmith concluded: “Thus does the hot dog gain a place in ‘haute cuisine,’ instead of merely languishing under mustard, relish, chopped onion, and a bun.”

In the mid-20th century, French food was regularly considered fancier and outright better than whatever most Chicago restaurants were serving. This explains an article from March 30, 1960, titled “A Magnificent Hot Dog? This One, Prepared French Style, Is” by Mary Meade. She wrote that chef John Bandera from the Sheraton-Blackstone hotel created a frankfurters bourguignonne “in honor of a 100-year-old Chicago firm whose founder, David Berg, helped bring the hot dog to America.” The recipe, evoking the name of a French beef stew braised in red wine, featured eight frankfurters bathed in a sauce made with butter, shallots, garlic, brown gravy and 3 cups of red wine.

Tribune writer Mary Meade also created her own hot dog recipes over the years, though she almost always read like she was gritting her teeth while doing so. An article on June 25, 1943, by Meade begins: “Mustard and piccalilli covered ‘red hots’ are fine fare for picnics and ball games, but have you figured on the possibilities of frankfurters in your everyday meals?” She then goes on to give a recipe for frankfurters with fried rice and tomatoes.

More than 20 years later, Meade didn’t think much of the hot dog. In an article from June 9, 1966, she starts with this put-down: “A red snapper is a delicate and delicious fish. It says ‘gourmet’ to you when you think about preparing it. That’s not what a wiener says!” Then you can find a recipe called Barbecued Southern Pups, where she recommended covering the sausages in a chili sauce, wrapping them in cornmeal pastry and then baking them.

Not to pick on Meade, but she spent an inordinate amount of time figuring out ways not to use hot dog buns. On June 3, 1958, Meade suggested making “frankfurters in tomato rolls.” “The franks are wrapped in yeast dough — there are seasonings of onion juice, cheese, parsley, and tomato juice. Doesn’t it sound delicious?” On May 30, 1960, she gave a recipe for Ring-a-Rosy Hot Dogs made by “shaping hot dogs like hamburgers,” so they could fit on round buns. To be fair, the April 2, 1971, recipe for frankfurter and sauerkraut skillet sounds like something



Chicago Tribune historical photo
Chicago’s Marion Todd, left, and Marge Kraus were ambassadors during National Hot Dog Month in July 1957 and toured the nation to promote the beloved frankfurter. Here, they posed with a plate of 60 hot dogs, which at the time represented what the average American ate in a year.

I’d enjoy.

(While she certainly had her fair share of questionable recipes with hot dogs, there’s an explanation for her mercurial takes on hot dogs. Turns out Mary Meade wasn’t a real name. Instead, the pseudonym was used by a succession of women writers, a common newspaper practice at the time.)

But it’s still hard to imagine enjoying Meade’s Supper Salad Bowl from June 25, 1943, which combined hot dogs with French dressing, green pepper, cottage cheese, grated raw turnip, raw carrot, mayonnaise, lettuce and coleslaw.

I’m also not sure you could pay me to try a “frankfurter skillet supper” (from May 15, 1964), which combines a pound of hot dogs with green onions, chopped green pepper, lima beans, tomato sauce and a whole cup of sour cream. I also would probably pass on the “franks in sour cream sauce,” which can be found in a July 19, 1957, post by Doris Schacht.

Male recipe writers didn’t fare much better. In a recipe column genuinely called “For Men Only!,” not to be confused with another one titled “Wife’s night out,” Morrison Wood called for making Creole frankfurters. The designation is charitably a stretch; I suppose he got that name because of the dash of cayenne pepper and Tabasco.

Even readers got in on the questionable hot dog action. On July 2, 1958, a reader sent in a recipe for Hot Dog Surprises, which combined 1 pound of “frankfurters, chopped fine” with shredded sharp cheese, grated hard boiled eggs, chili sauce, pickle relish, mustard and garlic salt. This mixture was spread on a foil-lined baking sheet and topped with halved buns.

Thankfully, by the 1980s, writers and readers alike seemed to finally understand that Chicago’s best hot dog dish was staring them right in the face the whole time.

Test out the recipes yourself.

FRANKFURTERS BOURGUIGNONNE

By Mary Meade, March 30, 1960

8 frankfurters
2 tablespoons butter
3 teaspoons chopped shallots, onions or chives
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
3 cups claret or Bordeaux wine

5% potassium (“K” is the Latin abbreviation for Kalium, or potassium). If you suspect your garden soil is deficient, having a soil test done before you start adding amendments is the best way to know what your soil needs are.

And as always, the Oregon State University Extension website has links to everything you always wanted to know

24 cooked pearl onions
1/2 pound whole button mushrooms (fresh)
2 cups brown gravy
24 small potato balls, browned in deep fat

1. Cut frankfurters into thirds and saute in butter for about 5 minutes. Remove meat and add shallots and garlic to fat. Simmer 2 or 3 minutes.

2. Add wine and simmer to reduce liquid to 1 cup, which will take about 8 minutes. Add onions, mushrooms and gravy.

3. Cover and simmer 15 minutes.

4. Add cooked potatoes and frankfurters and serve over fluffy wild rice.

Makes 4 servings.

SUPPER SALAD BOWL

By Mary Meade, June 25, 1943

1/2 pound frankfurters
1/2 cup French dressing
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
1 cup cottage cheese
1 cup grated raw turnip
1 cup grated raw carrot
Mayonnaise and lettuce
Coleslaw

1. Simmer frankfurters in water for 5 minutes and cool.

2. Slice frankfurters and cover with French dressing. Let stand in refrigerator for half-hour.

3. Combine green pepper and cottage cheese.

4. Combine grated turnip and carrot; moisten with mayonnaise.

5. Arrange lettuce in salad bowl. In separate lettuce cups, arrange frankfurters, cottage cheese, grated carrot, and turnip, and coleslaw. Serve with mayonnaise.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

BARBECUED SOUTHERN PUPS

By Mary Meade, June 9, 1966

10 wieners
1/4 cup butter
1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
1 tablespoon chopped onion
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 teaspoons brown sugar
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/2 cup chili sauce
Corameal pastry
3/4 cup flour
1/4 cup corameal
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup lard

1. Make corameal pastry first. Sift together flour, corameal and salt. Cut in lard and add just enough water to moisten, about 3 to 4 tablespoons.

2. Turn onto a lightly floured surface and roll out to about 1/8 inch in thickness. Cut into five 5-inch squares.

3. Melt butter for sauce and add the dry mustard, onion, lemon juice, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce and chili sauce. Simmer 15 minutes.

4. Cut wieners lengthwise, almost to the ends, but not completely through. Place two wieners diagonally on each corameal square. Place a tablespoon of barbecue sauce in each. Fold corners of pastry over the wieners, moistening corners and pressing together.

5. Bake on ungreased baking sheet for 12 minutes at 425 degrees.

Makes 5 servings.

SHRIMP

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That’s the part that could have been heavy cream, but let’s not be ridiculous. The half-and-half made the grits rich and creamy enough, especially once I stirred in some sharp cheddar cheese.

The grits were remarkable on their own, but they are only half a dish. I wanted the other half, the shrimp half, to be as good as the grits.

Naturally, I started with bacon.

I rendered a couple of slices of diced, thick-cut bacon and used the bacon fat to cook minced onion, celery and green pepper. Yes, that is a New Orleans combination of ingredients, not South Carolina, but they know how to cook shrimp in New Orleans, too.

Next, I tossed some shrimp in my own mixture of celery salt, paprika, cayenne pepper and black pepper, and sautéed them with the bacon-scented vegetables.

I sprinkled it all with a couple of tablespoons of flour, and stirred it to make a quick roux. All it needed then was more chicken stock to create a thick and ridiculously delicious sauce.

But don’t just take my word for it. I gave some to my shrimp-and-grits-loving editor. She tasted it and, with a big smile on her face, said, “It’s perfect.”

SHRIMP AND GRITS

Yield: 4 servings

2 1/2 cups plus 3/4 cup chicken stock, divided
2 1/2 cups half-and-half
2 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon salt
1 1/8 teaspoons black pepper, divided
1 cup grits, preferably stone-ground
3/4 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese

2 slices thick-cut bacon, diced
1/3 cup green pepper, diced small
1/3 cup onion, diced small
1/2 cup celery, diced small
1/2 teaspoon celery salt
1/4 teaspoon paprika
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste
1 pound shrimp, shelled and deveined
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1. In a large saucepan over high heat, combine 2 1/2 cups of the chicken stock and the half-and-half. Add butter, salt and 1 teaspoon pepper, and bring to a boil. Stir in grits and return to a boil. Lower heat to a gentle simmer and cook 40 to 50 minutes until done, stirring frequently. Scrape bottom of pot when stirring to keep grits from sticking. Grits are done when bubbles turn big, like volcanic magma or hot mud pools, or when they have the texture of wet mashed potatoes. Remove from heat. Add cheese and stir until thoroughly combined. Cover to keep warm.

2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook bacon until crispy. Remove bacon pieces with a spoon and reserve, leaving bacon grease in pan. Add green pepper, onion and celery to the pan and sauté until onion is translucent, about 3 minutes.

3. Combine celery salt, paprika, cayenne and remaining 1/8 teaspoon black pepper in a small bowl, and sprinkle over shrimp; toss until evenly coated. Add shrimp and vegetable oil to pan and sauté until shrimp is nearly pink and curled. Sprinkle with flour and cook, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes. Add remaining 3/4 cup chicken stock and cook, stirring, until liquid thickens.

4. To serve, spoon shrimp and sauce over grits, and top with reserved crispy bacon.

Per serving: 774 calories; 42 g fat; 24 g saturated fat; 290 g cholesterol; 44 g protein; 55 g carbohydrate; 11 g sugar; 3 g fiber; 1,355 mg sodium; 433 mg calcium

— Recipe by Daniel Neman

BERRIES

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Hybrids, or blackberry crosses, produce berries with slightly different flavors, some more sweet or tart, most are improvements on the original blackberry.

• Olallieberry — a cross of loganberry and young berry.

• Youngberry — a cross of native Pacific blackberry and dewberry.

• Loganberry — a cross of dewberry (R. Ursinus) and raspberry (R. idaeus). Loganberry is named after American horticulturist James Harvey Logan.

• Chehalem blackberry — has native blackberry, Logan, and raspberry in its genetic makeup.

• Marionberry — cross of Chehalem blackberry and olallieberry. Developed in 1945 at Oregon State University, the marionberry was named after Marion County, Oregon, and was first brought to market in 1956.

• Boysenberry — nearly identical to Marionberries, but are composed of larger drupelettes that are big on flavor. They are sweet at first, but have a distinctive earthy undertone which distinguishes them from other blackberry varieties.

• Tayberry — takes its name from the river Tay in Scotland.

Garden Chores for June-July

• Trees and shrubs can still be fertilized before July.

• Apply organic mulches as soil warms. This will retain moisture.

• Check soil moisture daily in hot weather.

• Mow lawns frequently enough to remove no more than 1/3 the total height per mowing.

• Water turf grass as needed to prevent drought stress.

Enjoy the warm weather and happy gardening! Thanks for reading.

■ Wendy Schmidt is a longtime gardener. She lives in La Grande.

FERTILIZER

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Since we are talking about fertilizer, here’s a brief review of ratios and label reading. Just remember that the values given are always a percentage of 100. So a label that read N- 7%, P- 3%, K- 5%, it would have 7% nitrogen, 3% phosphorus, and

5% potassium (“K” is the Latin abbreviation for Kalium, or potassium). If you suspect your garden soil is deficient, having a soil test done before you start adding amendments is the best way to know what your soil needs are.

And as always, the Oregon State University Extension website has links to everything you always wanted to know

about your soil. Our local OSU Extension office does not provide soil testing but recommends the following two links for soil testing information. The first, <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em8677>, will take you to a listing of laboratories that provide soil testing (and other tests, as well), with all their contact information for each lab listed. The second link — <https://cropandsoil.oregonstate.edu/cal/testing-your-soil> — has a video that shows soil collection techniques as well as other information for farmers and gardeners. Both links allow you to view online or download the information. These links can be copied into your browser for quick access.

So Grandma is going outside now to go play in her garden. I hope you

like playing in your dirt as much as I like mine. Enjoy our warm weather!

■ Jennie Hagen is a native Oregonian who has spent 40 years gardening east of the Cascades. She is a member of the Garden Writers Association and has previously written for the Home & Garden section of The Oregonian, and for the La Grande Observer, the Baker City Herald, and the Burns Times Herald.

HISTORY

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Claude was listed in the 1910 Census as a liveryman who lived at 1426 Adams. By 1912 he owned three lots in that area. The 1910 Sanborn map shows his

dwelling beside a very large feed store at 1424 Adams.

At the time of his marriage, Claude had been described as a young man of good character, industrious habits and worthy enterprises. This followed him to La Grande where he ran a livery barn and

was active in many other endeavors. In 1916-17 he served as fire chief, later worked as a postal clerk and by 1930 was the assistant postmaster. He was still assistant postmaster in 1946 when Nora passed away in April of that year.

Claude died in 1951,

but his building on Adams Avenue stands as a tribute to his contributions to La Grande.

Keep looking up! Enjoy!

■ Ginny Mammen has lived in La Grande for more than 50 years and enjoys sharing her interest in the history of people, places and buildings.



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