

VIOLET SOUP and ORCHID SALAD



OH WELL—(business of heaving a long sigh of resignation)—why shouldn't we! They're making us listen to paintings and see colors in music, so why instead of only looking at them and smelling them shouldn't they make us eat flowers?

Actually! It's no weather for jokes or to deceive anyone, and we're very serious when we say eat flowers. For that's the very latest thing they have set before us to do in these days when everybody is lighting a Chinese candle in his own or somebody else's head.

It's like this. You go into some extremely exclusive and fashionable hotel or cafe de luxe and calmly ask for their flower menu. You must do it real nonchalantly—like this:

"Garcon, bring me the carte de jour. Oh, no, no, no, not the ordinary menu! The flower menu you know. You must smile in superior manner you know, and carry the whole thing off as if you had done it many times before. If you do the waiter will think you are quite it, and behave toward you in a surprisingly flattering manner. If the cafe or hotel you picked out is a very, very de luxe, you will get your flower menu.

Now is the hardest time of all. It is the worst time in the world to let your nerve go back on you. It is not at all a question of ordering to suit or satisfy your appetite. All your powers—if you still want to keep up the first impression you made upon the waiter—must go to picking out a lunch or dinner of flowers that will be harmonious, both in scents and in colors.

"Now, let me see," you must say to the waiter. "What are the bouillions today? Rose bouillon? No, no rose bouillon? If there's anything I can't stand in the summer time, it's rose bouillon. Better bring me a little cold violet bouillon, waiter."

"The orchid salad is very nice today, sir," the waiter is very apt to say.

"All right, a portion of that, then," you ought to answer, for orchid salad is really some very, very salad, and especially as expenses are not going to worry you in this meal you might as well try it.

"Now the entree. Let's see what you've got here. Candytuft—um—zinnia, no—I tell you what; bring me some of those compressed petals of peas."

"A few French string beans with them, sir," says the waiter.

"All right," you will proceed, not knowing what else to say and having no good reason to dodge them. "And then bring me violet blossom ice cream and dandelion coffee—demi-tasse, waiter," for you don't know what you will be getting into if you order a large cup of dandelion coffee.

Your hardest work isn't yet over by any means. You've got to find out just the proper sort of fablewear that you have to use in getting rid of these flowers. Further, you have to pretend that you like these flower dishes or the obsequious looks of your garcon are going to change to the "Oh, you four-flusher" stare.

Nevertheless, the flower menu is an actuality. The one we have just helped you order is a very good sample of the luncheon you can get from such a menu. You see, we ourselves have never ordered or eaten such a luncheon. All our business of helping was only a bluff. But, nevertheless again, such menus and luncheons are actualities.

London started the floral luncheon just this summer. They have become immensely popular, these floral luncheons have, and have spread from the de luxe clubs and hotels to private homes of the better class and thence to those of the middle. Those who have partaken of a flower luncheon say there is absolutely nothing like it. It is a new sensation in this world, in which there are very few sensations left.

Getting down to the more practical end, the flower lunch or dinner is healthful. In hot weather there is absolutely nothing that can take its place. From time immemorial man has used flowers and plants for curative and alleviative properties. So, why shouldn't meals of flowers be health conservators, especially if the flowers used have been chosen for the properties they contain which will do the eater's particular constitution the most good?

Indeed, flowers and the plants they grow upon have played a bigger part in the life of man ancient and modern than we ordinarily think. We eat and wear and smoke flowers and plants and drink their sap and juices, and find in them not only substance and shelter, but dreams, medicine and death. They sharpen and dull our nerves. They support us when we are weak and refresh us when we are fainting.

We find in them also oblivion and inspiration. There are persons so sensitive that a breath of air blowing from poison ivy will cause them to break out in an unseemly manner. Indians made themselves immune to its outward poison by the occasional eating of its leaf.

The floral luncheon, then, is not near so new a thing as one might think it is. Yet it is something worth trying. For instance it would not be a bad idea to try a chrysanthemum salad this summer. It is made by placing some mayonnaise sauce at the bottom of a bowl and sprinkling it with the petals. The result is a most delicious dish.



Here's a Sample Flower Menu

Hors d'oeuvre
Spiced Clover Blossoms

Potage
Violet Consomme

Salade
Combination: Daisy - mignonette-geranium with sunflower oil dressing

Entree
Nasturtiums with Buttercup Stuffing

Dessert
Sweet Snow Drops
Frozen Apple Blossoms
Cornflower Coffee