

Feeding the Family

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Food Editor

Food of Hawaiian Islands Easily Adapted to Mainland
Not many Americans think of Hawaiian cookery as regional to the United States. Yet this fascinating school of cooking is very much our own and can be so easily adapted by the adventurous cook.

Your foods editor on an Hawaiian Holiday has been reminded that Hawaii was originally settled by Polynesians, the romantic "South Sea Islanders," about 500 A.D. They brought to the uninhabited islands many of their own plants and animals, including hogs and poultry. Strange as it seems, the next emigration took place about 1300 years later when a group of New Englanders landed there to settle and convert the natives to Christianity. In the century following 1819, many varied groups settled the bountiful islands including Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Polynesians, Portuguese, Spanish, Americans, Germans, Puerto Ricans, Filipinos and others.

The names of Hawaiian foods and food customs—lulau, papio, teriyaki, luau (rhymes with moo-cow) have the same usual cadence as their famous songs. This comes about because they have only 12 letters in their alphabet and must repeat syllables to create more words.

Today "native" Hawaiians make up only a small percentage of the population, yet it is their food and decorative food customs that we generally think of as "Hawaiian." Actually, there is probably more varied cookery in the Hawaiian Islands than any place of comparable size in the world. A resident of Hawaii, no matter his national origin, may start his day with a breakfast of cereal, bacon and eggs; have chicken curry, lichee salad and baked papaya for lunch; and Portuguese red bean soup, barbecued spareribs and mango cream pie for supper—and think nothing of the mixture.

Island Reception
The visitor to Hawaii is greeted, as you know, with colorful leis, the famous flower garlands of the native Hawaiian. The greeting given this flying foods editor and her friends, members of Theta Sigma Phi, women's national journalism fraternity, was one of those experiences of a life-time. We were laden with leis of indescribable beauty before being whisked away to our garden cottage hotel right on the beach at Waikiki.

Island Cookery
We've tasted poi, once the mainstay of the native diet and we've tried the famous Kanaka stew and countless other dishes of the islands. We realize that,



LURE OF ISLANDS—The beauty, the magic, the lure of "the islands" is found in their people, foods, gracious hospitality as well as the singing sands and colorful flora. Here Edith Nakai and Marlene Matsuda show your foods editors how to do Teriyaki Kabobs over the hibachi. Many other good things Hawaiian are included in today's food feature.

unless one stays in Hawaii for a long time, and actually studies the tremendous variety of available foods and dishes, the visitor is likely to carry home a jumbled impression of "queer native foods" and is sure to remark that Hawaiians eat octopus and seaweeds.

Hawaiians are aware of the impression that their food makes on newcomers and love to poke fun at the malihini (greenhorns) and do not pronounce them Kamazina (oldtimers) until they have learned to relish many of the native dishes. Actually, many Hawaiian recipes are found exciting and delicious by mainland Americans and deserve a more important role in our daily cookery. Hawaiians are poets in cooking as in most of their endeavors. They associate food with religions and believe that their daily sustenance comes to them as a gift from God.

The Hawaiian Theme

Entertaining the Hawaiian way means putting the emphasis on informality, friendliness and fun. With a background of flowers and greenery; with sweet Hawaiian music playing softly and with simple but oh-so-good things to eat, you have the makings of an Hawaiian style party wherever you live and whatever the occasion.

Decorations. The Hawaiians use hibiscus anthuriums, orchids and other exotic flowers because they have them in profusion. Here we also use whatever is handy. It's the effect you want, so use in profusion whatever flowers you have. Hollyhocks are remarkably like hibiscus. Calla lilies and canas Combine whatever is available somewhat resemble anthuriums. With fruits and/or vegetables to give a lavish look. You can eat the fruits and vegetables later!

Island Menu

When you go to a luau in Hawaii, you enjoy a menu something like this: fruit punch, chopped roasted and salted kukui nuts, lomi salmon, poi, chicken luau, kalua pig, baked or boiled sweet potatoes or breadfruit, baked or steamed bananas, haupia (coconut pudding), fresh pineapple, bananas. Lomi salmon takes the place of salad. To fix it, salted or smoked salmon is soaked, shredded, then mashed with tomatoes, green onions, a little coarse salt and ice water. Poi is a grayish paste made from cooked and fermented taro root, served cold and eaten with the fingers. Chicken luau is a combination of chicken and taro leaves (these are like spinach) cooked in coconut milk. Kalua pig is a large pig roasted whole in an underground pit. The fruit punch is served throughout the meal. Any number of other dishes can be added: oysters, steamed crab, fried shrimp, octopus or squid in coconut milk, fish baked in ti leaves.

Mainland Adaptation

You can, however, have a mighty good Mainland type luau without either poi or whole roast pig. For example: Honolulu fruit punch, salted nuts, relish plate, fried shrimp with catchup and English style mustard, pork and pineapple or barbecued sweet sour spareribs or teriyakis, baked sweet potatoes, coconut layer cake, pineapple sherbet and coffee.

What and How to Do. Plan a menu you can manage. If you and your guests are young and agile, you may decide to serve on the ground if it's a summer affair or on the floor indoors if it's winter. For the floor, just spread down newspapers for a "table" and cover them completely with ferns and leaves. When the luau is over, roll up papers, leaves and all, and into the incinerator.

If guests are not so agile, by all means use the dining table; cover it entirely with fern and leaves; arrange fruits and flowers down the center.

Keep service to the absolute minimum. Put all the food for the main course on plates and platters and have everything in place when the guests are seated. Since most of the foods are to be eaten with the fingers, provide plenty of paper napkins and perhaps several finger bowls. Delegate a couple of "beach combers" to go around with baskets and trays gathering up disposable paper dishes in the baskets, other things on the trays.

Teriyakis, Mainland Style

The Teriyakis are marinated cubes of beef alternated with (Hawaiian, of course) pineapple chunks on skewers and served as appetizers. You frequently find Teriyaki steak and Teriyaki kabobs on the islands.

This is the way Edith Nakai and Marlene Matsuda prepared these kabobs for our picture. These two attractive young women were Dole travel award winners this year and toured the United States during the summer. Students of home economics at the University of Hawaii, we had a good visit on their far-famed sampus.

1 pound tender top round or sirloin of beef, cut ¾ inch thick

1 No. 2 can pineapple chunks, drained

½ cup syrup drained from pineapple

1 clove garlic, chopped fine

¾ teaspoon ground ginger

1 small jar stuffed olives drained (about 22)

22 short metal or wooden skewers about 4 inches long

With a short knife, cut meat into bite-size cubes, about the same size as the pineapple chunks. Combine pineapple syrup, soy sauce, garlic and ginger; pour over meat cubes and set aside at room temperature for at least one hour. Alternate cubes of meat and pineapple chunks on skewers, then finish off with a stuffed olive. Broil three inches from heat, turning once, for 10 to 12 minutes. Serve very hot. Recipe makes 20 to 22 servings, sufficient as an appetizer for eight to 10 persons.

Chicken Barbecue. Favored herb sauce for barbecued chicken is this: Combine and mix well one-half cup salad oil, one-fourth cup olive oil, one-fourth cup lemon juice, one-half teaspoon salt (part garlic salt, if you like), one-eighth teaspoon each of marjoram, thyme, black pepper and monosodium glutamate, a pinch of oregano. Let mixture stand for several hours to blend flavors. Brush chickens lightly with sauce while cooking. Enough for six chickens.



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