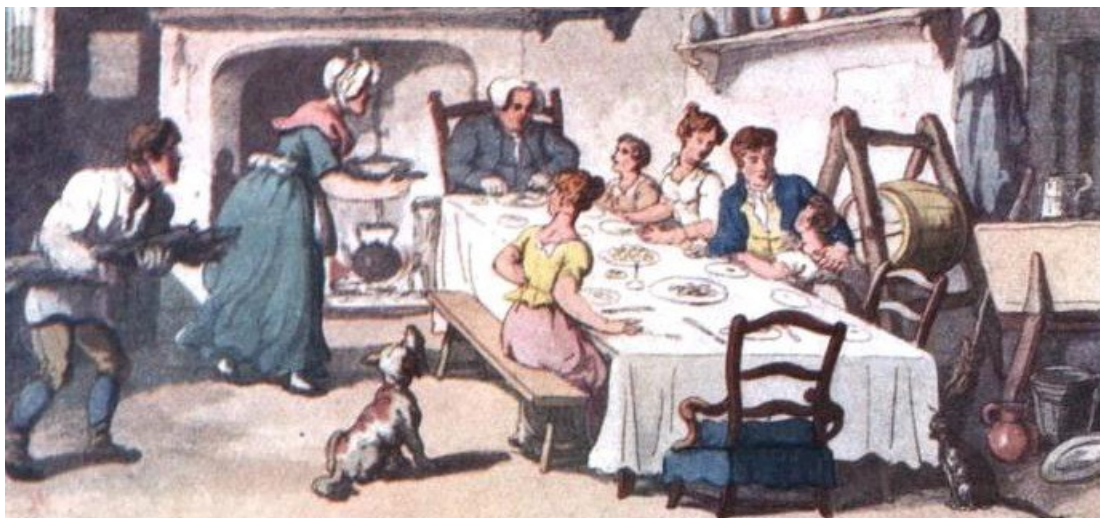


How to Dress a Turtle, or,
Sources of Information about American Cookery
in the British Colonies & Early Republic

Compiled by Stuart and Patricia Wier



Historic Cookbooks and Recipes

Here are cookbooks used in the American colonial period and early republic. Many or most families used recipes from memory or from family manuscript notebooks, rather than from printed books. Note that there were many regional differences in early American cooking, as there are today.

American Cookery. Amelia Simmons. Hartford: Hudson & Goodwin, 1796. Several modern reprint editions are for sale. Dover publishes a facsimile titled *The First American Cookbook*.

The Frugal Housewife, or Complete Woman Cook. Susannah Carter. London 1765; Boston: 1772, to Philadelphia, 1803. *The Frugal Housewife* was the only cookbook published in the United States during the fifty years before publication of *American Cookery* by Amelia Simmons. The 1803 edition adds some American recipes to the London edition. Reprints available, and online at <https://archive.org/details/frugalhousewife00cart>, and at the <http://www.colonialbaker.net/> book page.

The Virginia Housewife. Mary Randolph. Baltimore: Published by John Plaskitt, 1824. Reprinted in 1985 by Karen Hess, and online at the Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/virginiahousewif00randrich>. This is a kind of Tidewater counterpart to the Yankee *American Cookery*. Has some dishes and foods from after the colonial and 1800 period, but still a basic guide to early American cooking from Virginia.

Primitive Cookery; or the Kitchen Garden Display'd ... without either fish, flesh, or fowl." 2nd edition. London: printed for J. Williams, 1767. 82 pages. reprinted 2010. "an excellent resource for anyone, vegetarian or meat-eater alike, interested in understanding what life in the 18th century was like."

The Art of Cookery, Made Plain and Easy. 'by a Lady' (Hannah Glass). London: 1747, 1751, 1755, 1765, 1796; Alexandria, Va., 1805. Applewood Books reprint edition 1998.

The Compleat Housewife or, Accomplished Gentlewoman's Companion. Eliza Smith. R. Ware, London 1727-1758 in 17 editions (and a facsimile reprint of the 1753 15th edition by Literary Services, London, 1968, and a reprint of the 1758 edition, retitled *The Household Companion*, Woodsworth Editions, London, 2006). Includes bills of fare for every month of the year. Many dinner menus have more than eight dishes, so this large book indeed appears to be for the accomplished gentlewomen, the upper crust of society.

Martha Washington's Booke of Cookery and Booke of Sweetmeats, transcribed by Karen Hess. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981. This family recipe manuscript was in the possession of Martha Washington from 1749 to 1799, but many recipes are from the 16th(!) and 17th centuries. An example of the manuscript books of recipes kept by families in the 18th century.

The Housekeeper's Pocket-book and Compleat Family Cook. Mrs Sarah Harrison of Devonshire. London. R. Ware (4th ed.) 1748. online at <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/Complicat/id/433>.

The New Art of Cookery, According to the Present Practice. Richard Briggs. Philadelphia: Spotswood, Campbell and Johnson, 1792.

The Complete Confectionary: Or the Whole Art of Confectionary made Plain and Easy. Mrs. H. Glass. London, West and Hughes, various editions, 1762 to 1800. online at the <http://www.colonialbaker.net/>

The Practice of Cookery, Pastry, Pickling, Preserving, &c. Mrs. Frazer. Peter Hill, Edinburgh, and T. Cadell, London, 1791. Reprinted by Nabu Press 2010.

Cooking in America, 1590-1840. Trudy Eden. The Greenwood Press, 2006. "240 recipes taken from early American primary sources, presented in their original wording. Recipes are arranged by period and are accompanied by explanations of terminology and context, historical information, and descriptions of ingredients, eating habits, and preparation."

Modern Books about Colonial Cooking, with Recipes

This is not a complete list of all books about colonial cooking in print; only the ones I think may have good guidance to help you understand and produce authentic, semi-authentic, or modernized, 'colonial cookery.'

The Williamsburg Art of Cookery. Helen Bullock. Colonial Williamsburg. 1938. "A collection of favorite recipes known to have been used in Virginia households in the 18th and 19th centuries." Mixes historical recipes with modern adaptations.

The Founding Foodies: How Washington, Jefferson and Franklin Revolutionized American Cuisine. Dave Dewitt, Source Books, 2010. And excellent introduction to colonial eating. More than 50 recipes throughout. Chapter 7, "Recreating the recipes of the Founding Foodies" are modernized but the author has "selected these particular recipes because I felt that they are the most representative of what people ate and drank during the times of the founding foodies." Includes a original recipe for Terrapin Soup, or how to dress a turtle.

Recipes from the Raleigh Tavern Bake Shop. Colonial Williamsburg. "In this cookbook, original recipes from rare 18th-century cookbooks are presented side-by-side with their modern adaptations. Thirteen recipes include Queen's Cake, Plum Tarts, Pear Pie and cookies." The original Queen's Cake recipe is better.

Fireside Kitchen Cookbook. Dorothea Connolly. Trenton: New Jersey Public Television, 1976. 32 page booklet. Companion to a Bicentennial TV series, each chapter has a menu for an historical setting from the Revolution. The recipes are updated but quite close to authentic, and very good for use today.

Trammels, Trenchers and Tartlets A Definitive Tour of the Colonial Kitchen. Joyce C. Carlo. Old Saybrook, 1982. 134 pages. Details of kitchens, fireplace designs, utensils, table settings, and customs, with 52 pages with recipes.

The Early American Cookbook: Authentic Favorites. Kristie Lynn and Robert W. Pelton. 3rd ed. 1997. Good introduction and historical notes. Recipes reach 1876. Uses updated recipes. 168 pages.

The American Heritage Cookbook. Helen McCully and Eleanor Noderer. American Heritage Press 1969; Bonanza 1982. 245 pages. More than 500 recipes with historical notes.

Heritage Cookbook. Better Homes and Gardens, 1975. 400 pages with period illustrations and modern photos. From the Indians to the modern period. Updated recipes with historical notes. "each recipe was tested and updated."

Open-Hearth Cookbook: Recapturing the Flavor of Early America. Suzanne Goldenson. Alan C. Hood 2005. 164 pages.

Fireside Cooks and Black Kettle Recipes. Doris Farrington, Bobbs-Merrill 1976. 348 pages.

The American Fireplace. Henry J. Kauffman, Galahad Books 1972, 352 pages, with some recipes.

The Old Farmers Almanac Colonial Cookbook. Clarrisa M. Silitch. Yankee Publications. 64 pages. There are two editions of this title, 1976 and 1982, and oddly some of the same-named recipes differ a lot.

Dining with the Washingtons: Historic Recipes, Entertaining, and Hospitality from Mount Vernon. Stephen A. McLeod. University of North Carolina Press, 2011. "a lushly illustrated and well-researched compendium of historical essays and recipes--just the sort of definitive work I expect from the safe-keepers of Mount Vernon. What I didn't expect, as I turned the pages, was that these images and words would accrue to yield such an intimate portrait of 18th century life. Herein I learned that George Washington preferred breakfasts of Indian hoecakes smeared with butter and honey, and that Martha Washington loved artichokes to distraction."

Dining at Monticello: In Good Taste and Abundance. Damon Lee Fowler. Thomas Jefferson Foundation, 2005. First half is authoritative essays about food at Monticello. "The second half of the book contains recipes from various sources relating to Jefferson's family, some penned by Jefferson himself ... Forcemeat Balls, Mushroom Catsup, Creamed Cod, and Cabbage with Butter Sauce." Many are from *The Virginia Housewife*, Mary Randolph, 1824, so applicable perhaps more to the last decades of Jefferson at Monticello.

From Colonial Williamsburg come several books, *The Williamsburg Cookbook*, *Favorite Meals from Colonial Williamsburg*, *The Tavern Cookbook*, and the *Holiday Fare Cookbook*. The recipes are in general modern adaptations.

The City Tavern Cookbook: Two Hundred Years Of Classic Recipes. Walter Staib. Running Press, 1999; 2nd edition 2009. Highly regarded recipes for near-gourmet modern recipes something like elegant colonial food. Recipes have modern ingredients & methods. Little or no info on original colonial recipes.

City Tavern Baking & Dessert Cookbook: 200 Years of Authentic American Recipes. Walter Staib and David McCullough. Running Press, 2003. 264 pages. With some history as well as modernized recipes. "Some recipes are highly modernized: Dutch process chocolate and baking powder did not exist in the 18th century."

Sweet Taste of History: More Than 100 Elegant Dessert Recipes From America's Earliest Days. Walter Staib. Globe Pequot Press, 2013, 256 pages. modernized recipes.

"Fireside Cooking," *Colonial Homes*, September 1982.

Early American Life magazine has recipes in many issues, going back more than 30 years.

Online Resources and Videos About Colonial Cookery

18th-century Cookery with Jas. Townsend, a 3-DVD set of high quality cooking shows with authentic colonial methods, ingredients, and recipes, from http://jas-townsend.com/cook-books-c-21_22.html

<http://savoringthepast.net/> -- The Savoring the Past Blog. "While producing our video series called "18th Century Cooking with Jas. Townsend & Son," we quickly realized there was simply too much interesting food history and information to share in our 10-minute episodes. So we've started SavoringThePast.net as a means to share authentic recipes, foodie history, and all of the details we found most interesting from our research and experimentation." You may also like Sifting the Past at <http://siftingthepast.com/>.

<http://revolutionarypie.com/> -- The Revolutionary Pie blog. "Historic American cooking in a 21st-century kitchen." Freelance writer and editor Karen Hammonds describes her adventures in preparing historic recipes based on those in old American cookbooks. Including recipes for beverages, breads, breakfast, cakes, condiments, cookies dessert, fish, legumes, meat, muffins, open hearth cooking, pies, poultry and game puddings, sauces, and side dishes, with excellent photographs. Be sure to see Hysterical Water.

A Compendium of Useful Information for the Culinary Historian. Deborah Peterson. from <http://www.dobynsandmartin.com/book.htm>. To "learn more about spices, coffee, tea, chocolate, syrups, hartshorn, leavenings, isinglass, gums, sugar...". With 30 period recipes.

<http://revolutionarypie.com/cookbook-library/> -- The Revolutionary Pie Cookbook Library.

<http://historiccookery.com/tag/deborahs-pantry/> -- "Adventures in Late 18th & Early 19th Century."

<http://www.colonialbaker.net/> -- "Dedicated to the Study of Eighteenth Century Baking in Colonial North America"

<http://www.colonialbaker.net/virtualcookbooks.html> -- "The Virtual Colonial Cookbook Collection: Resources to research and explore the culinary arts of the colonial period in North America." Includes links to more than a dozen historical cookbooks available for reading online.

from Colonial Williamsburg:

http://recipes.history.org/	"History is Served"
http://recipes.history.org/recipeindex/	The "History is Served" recipe index
http://www.history.org/Almanack/life/food/	Selected recipes from Colonial Williamsburg
http://www.history.org/almanack/life/trades/tradefood.cfm	Foodways
http://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Autumn04/food.cfm	Colonial Foodways
http://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Summer07/kitchens.cfm	Kitchens

<http://www.larsdatter.com/18c/cookbooks.html>
18th Century Cookbooks and Recipes (dozens of books), from the "18th Century Notebook" blog.

<http://colonial-american-life.blogspot.com/2009/08/early-american-food-and-drink.html>
Early American food and drink

<http://colonial-american-life.blogspot.com/2009/08/early-american-fireplaces-and-cooking.html>
Early American fireplaces and cooking

http://spec.lib.vt.edu/culinary/CulinaryThymes/2005_07/cookbooks.html
"Understanding Women's Lives through their Cookbooks" web site.

This list is a working list of references. Surely others know more.

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