Light Night 2015

ILLUMINATING THE MIDDLE AGES

recipe book

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The Middle Ages are often characterised as dark, dirty and smelly, but the darkness made the moments of brightness more dazzling.

This Light Night, immerse yourself in the sensations of the medieval period and feel the beauty and brilliance of medieval culture through tactile and sensory experiences: run your hands along the chalky smoothness of parchment, let the warm tang of gingerbread linger on your tongue, and experience the sharp contrast between darkness and light in a medieval shrine.

Below, find the recipes that we prepared for Light Night 2015.

Gingerbrede (Gingerbread)

Take good honye & clarefie it on þe fere, & take fayre paynemayn or wastel brede & grate it, & caste it into þe boylenge hony, & stere it well togyder faste with a skylese þat it bren not to þe vessell. & þanne take it doun and put þerin ginger, long pepere & saundres, & tempere it vp with þin handes; & than put hem to a flatt boyste & strawe þeron suger, & pick þerin clowes rounde aboute by þe egge and in þe mydes, yf it plece you.

125 ml clear honey
1 loaf bread (500 g), at least 4 days old, grated or ground into fine crumbs; if bread is too fresh it will not make sufficiently fine crumbs
1 tsp each ginger, cinnamon
1/8 tsp each ground white pepper, cloves

Bring the honey to a boil and skim off any impurities. Keeping the pan over very low heat, stir in breadcrumbs and spices. When it is a thick, well-blended mass, press firmly into a small layer cake pan (20cm is ideal for this quantity) lined with Teflon or parchment paper. Cover and leave in a cool place several hours or overnight before turning out on a cake plate; sprinkle with sugar. Cut into small slices to serve.
Spiced apple juice

Adapted from a recipe for ‘hippocras’ (spiced wine), 14th century

2 litres apple juice, 3 cinnamon sticks, 10g fresh ginger
1 teaspoon each cardamom, cloves, mace, nutmeg
Optional: spikenard, white pepper, caraway seed, galingale, marjoram

Put the sugar in a large saucepan and stir in the apple juice, heat gently, stirring. Do not boil. Remove from the heat and stir in all the spices (you can use a mulled spice sachet if you don’t have the individual spices). Leave for at least 20 minutes then strain before filtering. Serve at room temperature.

Pottage

2 onions, 4 cloves of garlic, 120 g peas
Mixed vegetables, carrots, celery, etc.
Stock cubes, salt, pepper and mustard seed
Mixed fresh herbs, chives, parsley, thyme, sorrel
Water to boil

Fry onions until soft, add a few cloves of garlic and continue frying. When the garlic is soft, fry off the pepper and mustard seed. Then add green lentils, water and a couple of stock cubes. Bring to the boil. Chop up the vegetables and add to the pottage. Simmer until the vegetables are tender, then add the chopped herbs. Once tender, serve.

Green Sauce

2 handfuls of mixed herbs: mint, parsley, thyme, rosemary, rocket
100 ml white wine or cider vinegar
Handful of wholemeal breadcrumbs
Pinch each of salt, ground white pepper and ginger
Finely chop the herbs and mix with the vinegar and breadcrumbs to make a thick sauce. Add seasonings to taste. Serve with poached, grilled, or sautéed fish.

**Nucato (Spiced honey nut crunch)**

Half a jar of honey  
400 g walnuts, almonds or hazelnuts  
Spices – ginger, pepper, cinnamon, cloves (½-1 tsp of each)  
Half a lemon

Bring honey to the boil slowly and skim off any impurities that rise to the surface. Coarsely chop and add almonds, walnuts or hazelnuts, plus some of the spices. Cook over a low heat, stirring constantly for 30 to 45 minutes. The mixture is done when the nuts begin to ‘pop’ but be careful not to let the nuts burn as they will be bitter. When ready, pour onto a pan lined with grease-proof paper, spread into an even layer with the cut surface of a halved lemon. Cool completely before serving.