

WORLD CARROT MUSEUM

Extracts from the 13th Century Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook

Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook

**Kitab al tabikh fi-l-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus fi `asr al-Muwahhidin,
li-mu'allif majhul.**

**The Book of Cooking in Maghreb and Andalus in the era of
Almohads, by an unknown author.**

(This book's original title was:

Kitab al tabij fi-l-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus fi `asr al-Muwahhidin, li-mu'allif mayhul.
Or

Kitab al tabikh fi-l-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus fi `asr al-Muwahhidin, li-mu'allif majhul.

It means: *The Book of Cooking in Maghreb and Andalus in the era of Almohads, by an unknown author.*

It is commonly known in English today as: *The Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook.*

The book was compiled by a scribe in the 1400s, whose name appeared on the first page of the text, but the first page has not survived the ages. His work contains recipes copied from a number of works from the 1200s, some surviving and some not surviving independently to today.)

The Great Drink of Roots

Take the skin of the stems of fennel, the skin of the stems of celery, the skin of **carrot** and the stem of chicory and Mecca fig, half a *ratl* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] each; three handfuls each of halhâl [pos. lavender], cilantro of the spring [growing by the water source], dawmirân, tamarisk, pennyroyal, ghâfit, chicory, mint, clove basil and citron basil; two *ûqiyas* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] each of the seeds of celery, **carrot** and roses, fennel, and habba hulwa and nânûkha [two names for, or perhaps two varieties of, nigella seed], and half an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of dodder seed.

The bag [a bag of spices that is boiled in the honey and then removed]: half an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] each of cinnamon, flowers of cloves, ginger, Chinese rhubarb, Indian spikenard, mastic, nutmeg and aloe stems, a *mithqâl* [1 *mithqâl*=5.7g/1tsp] of saffron, [added to] six *ratls* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of honey, cleansed of its foam.

Cook the herbs and seeds in water that covers them until their force comes out; then take the clean part of it [strain it] and throw it in [spiced] honey.

Put this on the fire, and put the spices in the bag [and in the honey and] after they have become mushy, throw them into the drink and macerate them time after time, until their force passes into the drink. Lay it [the spice bag] aside. Take it [the honey] from the fire, let it cool, and keep until needed.

Drink one *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of this with three of water on arising, and see that the water is hot. Benefits: fortifies the stomach and the liver, opens blockages of the liver and spleen, cleans the stomach, and is beneficial for the rest of the phlegmatic ailments of the body.

The Little Drink of Roots: Way of Making It

Take the skin of the stems of caper bush, the skin of the stems of celery, the skin of fennel root and the skin of wild **carrots**, two *ûqiyas* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of each; two handfuls each of halhâl [pos. lavender], cilantro of the spring [growing near the water source], dawmirân, ghâfit, chicory, pennyroyal and euphorbia.

The bag [a bag of spices that is boiled in the honey and then removed]: cinnamon, and flower of cloves and ginger, an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of each; half a mithqâl [1 mithqâl=5.7g/1tsp] of saffron. [Added to] three *ratls* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of honey, cleaned of its foam.

Cook the seeds and herbs, covered with water, until their strength comes out. Then take the clean part [filter it], add to the honey, and take it [all] to the fire, and put the [spice] bag in a kettle [and cook it all] until it forms a well-made syrup. 13 13th Century Al-Andalus Cookbook

Take it from the fire and pour it into an earthenware vessel. The drink is made with two *ûqiyas* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of syrup to three *ûqiyas* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of hot water. Its benefits: it benefits the liver and opens occlusions of it, it is useful for the spleen and cleanses the stomach of its extra phlegm wherever it is found in the body, and it is of profit in diseases of dropsy [swelling from water, edema], God willing.

Syrup of Thistle

Take a *ratl* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of thistle, ground coarsely, half a *ratl* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of *mashashtir*, and an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of bay leaves [this word can also mean myrtle or aloe], a handful of leaves from the interior of an orange tree, half an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] each of anise, seeds of wild **carrot**, and seeds of dodder, an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] each of bitter and sweet almonds. Pulverize all the roots and greens and cover them with three *ratls* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of water in which black garbanzos have been steeped for a night and a day.

Then put it in a new pot and cook until the water is reduced by half. Then cool it and clarify it [filter it] and take the clear part to add to a *ratl* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of sugar and another of honey. The [spice] bag: half an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] each of Indian spikenard, *asârûn* [wild spikenard], and flower of cloves, and cook all this until it takes the form of a syrup. 20 13th Century Al-Andalus Cookbook

Drink an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] and a half of it with three *ûqiyas* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of hot water, and above all, if it is drunk in the bath, it has a greater effect, if it please God the Most High, praise be to Him.

Syrup of Carrots

Take four *ratls* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of **carrots**, after removing the fibers [lit. "nerves"] that are in the centers, and cook them in water to cover until their substance comes out. Then take the clear part of it [filter it] and add it to three *ratls* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of honey, cleaned of its foam.

The [spice] bag: then put an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of cubebs, two *ûqiyas* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] each of ginger and long pepper, and half an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of cinnamon and flower of cloves. Cook until it takes the form of a syrup.

Drink an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] of this with three of hot water: it is beneficial in the lack of urine, increases desire, and dissolves phlegm, heats the kidneys admirably, and likewise the other parts of the body, God willing.

Carrot Paste [carrot jam]

Take a *ratl* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of **carrots**, of which you have cleaned the interior [cut out the tough, bitter core]. Cook them in a *ratl* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of water, some two boilings [mash them after the first boiling], then take it off the fire and let it drain a little, over a sieve.

Add it to three *ratls* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of honey, cleaned of its foam [heated and skimmed], and cook all this until it takes the form of a paste. Then season it with ginger, galingale, cubeb and clove, half an *ûqiya* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp] in all for each *ratl* [1 *ratl*=468g/1lb] of paste.

Eat it like a nut at meals. Its benefits: it fortifies coitus and increases desire beautifully; it is admirable.

Information About Baqliyyat [Vegetable Dishes] and Mukhaddarat [Greened Dishes]

All dishes which one cooks with meat, saffron, vinegar, garden produce, such as turnips, eggplants, gourds, **carrots**, or heads of lettuce without their leaves, are called *muthallath*.

How You Make It

Take tender meat and cut it in small pieces. Put it in a pot with salt, pepper, coriander seed, cumin, saffron, garlic and oil. Cook it until the meat is done.

Then cut up whatever of those vegetables mentioned that you have on hand and boil them and cook them separately in a pot. Throw away their water.

Then put them with the meat in the pot and when it comes to a boil, add strong vinegar in enough quantity to note its taste.

When everything has finished cooking, put it on the hearthstone until the fat rises and serve it.

Some prepare this with eggplant and gourd together. This is the real *muthallath*. According to this recipe, *muthallath* is also made with **carrot** and turnip, and with turnip alone, and thus with the remaining vegetables mentioned.

Preparing Narjisiyya [Narcissus-stew] With Carrots

Take tender fat meat and cut into the pot with salt, pepper, coriander seed and oil. Cook till half done and then cut several peeled **carrots** into stalks smaller than a finger, and throw in with the meat with a little water and a little vinegar and saffron. Then sprinkle with a little washed rice. [Cook all.]

When it is all done, pour in enough eggs beaten with saffron to bind [like an omelet]. Take down [from the fire] and when it has cooled, cut with a knife, as if it were narcissus flower.

Appendix

Editor David Friedman's Notes

This translation has a somewhat complicated history. The original project was to retranslate into English Ambrosio Huici-Miranda's Spanish translation of the Arabic original of the Manuscripto Anonimo, a 13th century Andalusian recipe collection. During a period of several years, almost the entire collection was translated; the translators were Stephen Bloch [Joshua ibn-Elazar ha-Shalib], Elise Fleming [Alys Katherine], Janet Hinson [Mairoli Bhan], and [Habib

ibn al-Andalusi]. The names in parentheses are those used by the translators within the SCA; I unfortunately have no other name for the last translator listed.

After almost all of the translation had been completed and several preliminary versions circulated, Charles Perry offered to redo the translation from Huici-Miranda's Arabic edition of the original manuscript, with the assistance of Huici-Miranda's Spanish translation and the English retranslation. It is that translation that is given here. While he made use of suggested readings by the other translators in deciding ambiguous points, and in some places retained their phrasing, the final interpretation is his, and is based on the Arabic not on Huici-Miranda's Spanish translation.

Weights and Measures

The measures are vague, sometimes bearing a relation to measures used in Greece or Rome, or the Arab regions of North Africa. At times, Al-Andalus has a separate meaning for a measurement.

It is best to try out a recipe first, using your best judgment, noting the quantities you've used. Then you can adjust the recipe on it's second run according to how it turned out.

- 1 *ratl* [$<$ the Greek *litra* $<$ the Roman *libra*]=12 *ûqiyas* [1 *ûqiya*=39g/7tsp]; in 13th century Andalusia, 1 *ratl* =468.75 g, about a pound
 - 1 *ûqiya* [$<$ the Roman *uncia*]=10 *dirham* [1 *dirham*=3.9g/3/4tsp]; in 13th century Andalusia, 1 *ûqiya* =39 g, about 1 1/3 ounces or 7 teaspoons
 - 1 *mithqâl* =10/7 *dirham* [1 *dirham*=3.9g/3/4tsp]; in Andalusia, 5.7 g
 - 1 *dirham* [$<$ the Greek *drachme*]=6 *danaq*; in 13th century Andalusia, 1 *dirham*=3.9 g, or 3/4 teaspoon
 - 1 *thumn* = 1/8 *qadah* [according to Hinz. The word literally means an eighth, and its application to saffron in this cookbook suggests that it may sometimes be an eighth of a dirham [1 *dirham*=3.9g/3/4tsp]] which would make a *thumn* a pinch.
 - 1 *mudd* [$<$ *modius*, the Roman peck]; in the Maghrib=4.32 liters. Some recipes in this book refer to the "small *mudd*," which might have been 1.08 liters.
 - 1 *qadah*=0.94 liters or [the "great *qadah*"] 1.88 liters, by Egyptian measurement, which might be implied in some recipes. In Andalusia, however, the *qadah* was a measurement of wine and very much larger, on the order of 32 liters.
 - 1 *kail* can equal from 6.5 liters to 22 liters. The word literally means "a measure."
 - *Makkûk*: Another vague unit of volume, varying from 7.5 to 18.8 liters.
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