PART TWO
FOOD AND COMMUNICATION
Cookbooks are not merely instructional texts designed to teach culinary techniques and transmit recipes. They are cultural narratives, and embedded in the stories they tell are certain aspirations and values. Cookbooks entice readers with the implied possibility of an enhanced lifestyle and they often reflect a distinct aesthetic or ethical position, even an entire world view. Modern cookbooks, in particular, seek to suggest that a specific mode of eating will produce a transformational experience of some sort. If you follow their advice, you will reap rewards—weight loss and greater health and vitality, or a happy, well-nourished family, or a conscience relieved of the burden of cruelty to animals, or the sophistication required to impress guests and claim membership in a higher social class. Whatever the angle, cookbooks implicitly promise a better life.

Deciphering the messages, the subtext beneath the recipes, which is not always so apparent, is a matter of setting the cookbook in its social and historical context and then reading between the lines to gauge the intended audience and projected outcomes. Sometimes, what appears to be a simple list of recipes actually contains an entire cultural agenda, complete with social, political, and economic goals. Moreover, the cookbook empowers the individual to express identity, to perform a specific role, whether it involves one’s ethnic or religious persona or national background, or even a particular ideological position.
For example, a cookbook containing traditional ethnic recipes enables the readers to connect with their heritage and recreate the past while cooking and serving foods eaten by one’s ancestors. It thus strengthens social cohesion within a group. Likewise, a cookbook based on fresh local ingredients implies a political stance against industrially produced food processed hundreds of miles away and shipped, wasting fossil fuels and damaging the environment. In other words, cookbooks are almost always about something more than recipes.

With this in mind, this chapter will deconstruct and analyze one particular cookbook: the anonymous *La cuisinière canadienne*, which appeared in Montréal in 1840 and was the first culinary text to be both written and published in Canada.¹ It was an immensely popular book, going through eleven editions well into the twentieth century (Driver 2008, 84–86; Cooke 2009). It is, in part, a book that simply records recipes, but it also aims to preserve a threatened culture by encouraging readers to be proper Montréalais through learning to make dishes unique to Montréal and its French-speaking population. To some extent, of course, it creates a culinary tradition in the very act of setting in print signature recipes that define this culture.

The book therefore functions on one level as propaganda insofar as it attempts to promote one particular culture among many—even at the time of publication, an antiquated culture that may no longer have reflected how most people ate. The work is not only self-consciously French but also Catholic, and Elizabeth Driver’s (2008, 86) contention that the book originated within a nunnery is perfectly plausible. The author of the book is not identified, but the publisher, Louis Perrault, was in the circle of one Mme Gamelin, a founder of the Institute of Providence, a religious order. The Church had a vested interest in preserving French culture and was one of its foremost advocates in these years (86). The explicit aim of *La cuisinière canadienne* was to encourage the preparation of very traditional dishes as a way to preserve identity.

Before delving into these details, allow me to briefly explain the initial allure of this topic for me personally. When I was very young, my mother, before doing her daily chores, would set me up in front of the television to watch cooking shows. My favourite was *The Galloping Gourmet* (filmed in Ottawa from 1969 to 1971), starring Graham Kerr, who would traipse around the studio, wine glass in hand, while executing impossibly rich,
fantastic dishes. In one episode, he cooked a gargantuan tourtière, the historic game pie of Québec, replete with a variety of meats. It stuck in my mind for years as one of the most incredible things I had ever seen. It became such an obsession that, on the day after I got my driver’s licence, my best friend and I drove all the way from central New Jersey to Montréal, at a hundred miles an hour in a Delta 88 Olds, just so we could taste a tourtière. I’m not sure why my parents let us go, but we did find the tourtière, at Les Filles du Roy, a historic restaurant that still exists, with the dish still on the menu. And as we will see, it is featured in *La cuisinière canadienne*, too.

My impression, confirmed by this admittedly limited experience, has always been that Québécois cuisine contains numerous rudiments of seventeenth-century cooking, somehow frozen in time from the point of original settlement, while they disappeared back in France. Most notable is the use of certain spices in savoury dishes, but cooking techniques that are characteristically medieval were also preserved. I also expected to find, as is typical of colonial cuisines, odd substitutions and the use of indigenous ingredients in place of those available in Europe. It is these elements that contribute to the uniqueness of a regional cuisine, the product of history and evolution interacting with a new environment, people, and economic forces.

The frozen-in-time phenomenon is not unusual among emigrant cuisines. Often, a set of classic dishes will become fossilized in a colonial setting and remain as a mark of identity long after the repertoire has changed back in the mother country. This is partly a function of being cut off, as it were, and retaining antiquated usage, as can happen in language and dress. In cuisine, it occurs most frequently among expatriate communities surrounded by a majority culture: examples include the Portuguese in Macao or Goa, the Dutch in South Africa or what is today Indonesia, the Spanish in Mexico and Peru, and, as I will argue, the French in Montréal. The publication of a cookbook naturally aids in the ossification of culinary practices because it can become authoritative, promoting a kind of invented authenticity that people thereafter rarely veer away from in their effort to remain true to what they perceive as the proper way to make a certain dish.

The historical setting is crucial to understanding *La cuisinière canadienne*, because it was written several centuries after settlement. Montréal in 1840 was the biggest city in Canada, the financial and trade hub, and even the capital for a while. It was also in the thick of the Industrial Revolution: the
Lachine Canal had just been built, as had the Victoria Bridge. One might expect that a cookbook would reflect these industrial advances, but in fact, *La cuisinière canadienne* is decidedly traditional. Most surprising is that the recipes all call for cooking in a hearth or wood-burning oven rather than a cast-iron stove with hobs on top. Several recipes call for a tripod or, as it is called in English, a spider, on which a pot is set to cook over hot coals in the hearth. The technology is scarcely different from a century before, and the recipes themselves could easily have been penned in the 1740s, some even in the 1640s.

The absence of any prepared condiments and sauces, which are evident in contemporary British cookbooks, is also immediately striking. Everything is made from scratch and the cookbook’s author insists in the introduction that one must start with good fresh butter, the purest flour, and fresh eggs, the implication being that many people bought stale ingredients in the city. No doubt the booming population made it increasingly difficult to obtain fresh ingredients from the countryside.

It is also important to remember that Lower Canada (what is today Québec) had been conquered by the English in 1763. After seventy-seven years, it was still to some extent an occupied territory under foreign rule. With an influx of English and, especially, Irish in the nineteenth century, its cultural identity was considered threatened. This was also a time of political reactionism following the failed Republican uprisings of 1837–38. The Act of Union of 1840 aimed not only to join Upper and Lower Canada but also to efface the Francophone population and assimilate them into the English population as subjects loyal to the Crown. There were even measures to ban the use of French in the legislature. This turmoil would not begin to settle until later in the decade, so when this cookbook came out, French culture, language, and cuisine were definitely under threat.

Thus, at a certain level, this cookbook can be seen as an act of defiance, for it is written in French and features recipes that are decidedly antiquated. As for the book’s inherent conservatism, a close examination of the recipes is instructive. One for *canards maigres aux épices* (*La cuisinière canadienne* 1840, 37). It is made with wild ducks that are cleaned and stuffed with a mixture of onions and bread crumbs. The ducks are then boiled for two hours in water, which creates a kind of broth. Then, strangely, they are removed and roasted with butter and spices, then returned to the broth before serving with sliced onions or shallots and a splash of wine. The technique of first
boiling, then roasting—or, equally often, half roasting, then braising—is entirely medieval and had largely disappeared from the French repertoire by the eighteenth century. So, too, had the practice of serving duck in a dish of broth. This is a culinary rudiment that had survived, or perhaps revived, in Montréal and was at least several centuries old.

Why would this have survived here, apart from the prevalence of wild ducks in the region? Obviously, the spices had to be imported—in the case of canards maigres aux épices, a typical combination would have included pepper, nutmeg, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger. This was a standard medieval combination called pouldre fort—enjoyed specifically for the heat of its spices and originally intended to counteract the cold phlegmatic nature of waterfowl. It may thus have originally had a medicinal logic. The hot spices were also thought to aid in the passage of tough indigestible flesh—in this case, old thin ducks that are best stewed. Retaining this very old recipe appears to have been a matter of confirming identity. It communicates what it meant to be a member of this culture and thus resists tinkering or evolution entirely. It is something like lutefisk among midwesterners of Nordic descent—a dish that is fairly uncommon in Scandinavia, but is considered to be traditional in the United States. In order to express their background and heritage, Nordic peoples living in the United States cook and eat the dish, even though few people actually admit to liking it. Likewise, the spiced duck recipe in La cuisinière canadienne communicates identity as much as a traditional folk dance, song, or dress does—perhaps even more effectively, because we consume it, it becomes us, and in the act of eating, we express identity.

La cuisinière canadienne contains other very traditional dishes—for example, haricot de mouton (24), in which nubbins of mutton are boiled with turnips, onions, and “farine rotie dans du saindoux,” which is a very early form of a roux using lard instead of butter. In fact, it looks very much like poictrine de mouton en aricot, a recipe found in Pierre de la Varenne’s Le cuisinier françois, published in 1651 (Varenne [1651] 2006, 64). The most interesting thing about this dish is that it derives from the word harigot, meaning a lump or piece, and has nothing to do with haricots—a New World bean. By a perverse etymological mix-up, this dish is now usually cooked with beans in France, but La cuisinière canadienne has the original, essentially medieval recipe. Even the fourteenth-century Viandier of Taillevent has a hericoc de mouton (Taillevent 1988, 280).  

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Another medieval throwback in *La cuisinière canadienne*, though it uses an American ingredient as a substitute and is so familiar today that we scarcely think of it as medieval, is roast fowl—goose served with “compotes . . . d’Atocas” or, as we call it in English, cranberry sauce (1840, 33). Serving a tart fruit-based sauce with wild fowl not only served to complement the gamey flavour but it was also thought to help diners digest the tough meat and to counteract its hot and dry humoral qualities with something sour and humorally cold. It’s a quintessential sixteenth- and seventeenth-century flavour combination that stuck in Canada much as it did in the United States, in turkey with cranberry sauce. La Varenne infamously served turkey with raspberry sauce—something that later chefs mocked as backward after the combination of fruit sauces with meat came to be regarded as obsolete in Europe among fashionable circles.\(^3\) In Montréal in 1840, though, it was still perfectly legitimate, precisely because it was traditional.

Another very ancient dish found in *La cuisinière canadienne* is pork cutlets in Sauce Robert. This sauce, based on onions, underwent a fascinating evolution in France. The version found in Mari-Antonin Carême’s classic, *L’art de la cuisine française au dix-neuvième siècle*, published in the years following his death in 1833, at roughly the same time as *La cuisinière canadienne*, involves onions cooked in butter, a reduction of wine and addition of a demi-glace (in this case, reduced veal stock) and brown mustard (Carême [1833–47] 2005).\(^4\) It is thus a compound sauce based on a *fond* (foundation), which is the base of many different sauces in a professional kitchen. This recipe goes back much further, though, and Carême’s is scarcely different from the version in Massialot’s *Le nouveau cuisinier royal et bourgeois*, the original edition of which appeared in 1691.\(^5\) The version in *La cuisinière canadienne*, is much older, with the onions fried in lard and thickened with breadcrumbs and a little water, which is essentially the medieval version.\(^6\)

**Filets à la Sauce Robert**

Coupez les en quatre morceau d’épaisseur d’un doigt, jettez dessus poivre et sel; faites fondre du saindoux dans la poêle, cuisez votre filets doucement retirez et placez dans un plat. Tranchez les ognons, que vous ferez frire avec poivre et sel, dans un peu de saindoux, une poignée de miettes de pain; faites...
revenir un peu cette sauce et y autant mis un peu d’eau, versez la sur les filets que vous avez dû tenir dans un plat à part. (*La cuisinière canadienne* 1840, 25–26)

Cut them into four pieces the thickness of a finger, sprinkle on pepper and salt; melt lard in a pan, cook your filets gently, remove and place on a plate. Slice the onions, which you fry with salt and pepper in a little lard, a handful of bread crumbs; thicken the sauce a little by adding a bit of water, then pour [the sauce] on the filets that you have set aside on a plate.

One more very antiquated dish that helps prove this point is *La cuisinière canadienne*’s roasted fresh cod.7 The flavouring with cloves is one very old-fashioned element, but, even more importantly, so is a butter sauce made in a *lèchefrite*, a dripping pan, to which port wine and sugar are added. Sugar in sauce, especially for fish, became obsolete in France by the late seventeenth century. This recipe actually fits squarely in the 1540s and looks very much like recipes found in the Livre fort excellent de cuysine (1542), which has a recipe for roasted carp or pike that includes a sauce made of wine spices, sugar, and butter.8 Jacques Cartier would have been perfectly comfortable eating a dish like this.

*La cuisinière canadienne* is traditional, but I don’t want to give the impression that it is staunchly and exclusively French. It actually bears little relation to what people in France were eating at the time it was published. It is, more precisely, Montréalais. Though recipes are categorized as *gras* or *maigre*, meaning containing meat or not—the latter being appropriate for Catholic Lent—there is nothing particularly chauvinistic about this cookbook. Exactly the opposite is true; an entire section is devoted to very English “pouding”—plum puddings—and a variety of other stodgy boiled things that no nineteenth-century Frenchman would touch but that had by this time become common in Canadian cooking among people of all backgrounds.

The most interesting recipe in this cookbook is also, as far as I can tell, uniquely Canadian. *Pouding à la farine de blé d’Inde*, or cornmeal pudding, is neither cornbread nor Indian pudding, which is a kind of slow-cooked mush. Rather, this is a proper English pudding cooked in a cloth, on a tripod for three hours, but served in a uniquely Canadian manner—namely, with
maple syrup: “La meilleure sauce est du sucre d’érable, pour ces sortes de pouding” (“The best sauce for these kinds of pudding is made with maple sugar”; La cuisinière canadienne 1840, 54). It seems significant that Montréalers were willing to embrace the English dishes as integral to their heritage—as well as that of the Native American, at least in terms of the ingredients. In this respect, La cuisinière canadienne is similar to the first truly American cookbook, written by Amelia Simmons and published in the United States a few decades earlier ([1796] 1984). If anything, La cuisinière canadienne is a truly Canadian cookbook, and that’s exactly what it communicates. It doesn’t try to replicate whatever was in fashion in Paris, which would have been very easy to do. Rather, it is proudly local and resolutely backward-looking in its flavour combinations, in a resolute attempt to construct what French-Canadian cooking ought to be.

Another dish with medieval origins is the blancmange or, as it is called in La cuisinière canadienne, Blanc mangé. The original dish was made with a combination of poached capon, which was finely pounded, thickened with rice starch, and flavoured with sugar, almond milk, and rosewater. It still survives in this form in Turkey as tavuk göğsü. In Europe, however, the recipe evolved so completely that it is barely recognizable: it is now a sweet milk pudding thickened with cornstarch (or sometimes gelatin) and flavoured with almond extract. As with most modern recipes, this one is quicker and easier, and uses mass-manufactured ingredients. The recipe found in La cuisinière canadienne (1840, 97–98) falls somewhere around the midpoint of this evolution. It starts with gelatin made scratch, using veal feet and water, a technique that largely vanished after gelatin packets were invented. This version uses milk, bitter almonds, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg, infused and then strained and chilled. It’s not clear whether the author knew anything about the early history of the dish, but if one had to pinpoint this version without knowing the publication date of the cookbook, it would still predate 1840.

Finally, we come to the tourtière. Today, the classic recipe is considered to be the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean version made with a variety of meats, including game, cut into chunks, as well as potatoes and other vegetables. The Montréal version is made with ground pork. Both are traditionally eaten on Christmas Eve as a celebratory dish that intentionally recalls ethnic background and binds the community. La cuisinière canadienne (1840, 61–64) describes several different varieties, made with mutton, veal,
or even potatoes alone, which is not surprising. Nor is it surprising that the supposedly most traditional tourtière, made with venison, is not here; rather, the book features the quintessential Montréal version made with fresh pork, very finely minced and cooked first before filling the pie. It is still made this way.

It is not generally recognized that these grand pies were utterly fashionable in Europe in the early modern period, though they were far more elaborate. *Le patissier français* (1653) includes a pie made of ground veal, pork, or mutton, combined with suet, spices, eggs, pine nuts, and currants, and garnished with artichoke bottoms or mushrooms, slices of ox tongue, pistachios, lambstones, sweetbreads, marrow, chestnuts, and verjuice, then the recipe suggests that it can be baked free-standing or in a tart pan (Marnettè 1656).9 The Québécois version substitutes potatoes and sometimes other vegetables for some ingredients, but it is still very similar to the recipe in *Le patissier français*. Although *La cuisinière canadienne* doesn’t mention it, the green tomato ketchup often served with tourtière also seems particularly antiquated. In medieval France, this condiment would have been made not with tomatoes but with a tart fruit like gooseberries or unripe grapes—but aesthetically, they are equivalent. Again, the medicinal logic of a sour condiment helping to cut through the coarse and difficult to digest meat.

An even more direct connection can be made between the veal tourtière in *La cuisinière canadienne* and recipes from the very earliest days of settlement. According to the 1840 recipe, veal (either cut into thin strips or finely ground) is sautéed with pepper, cloves, and herbs, and then the mixture is put into a pie shell. A recipe for *tourtes de veau à la creme* from Lancelot de Casteau’s *Ouverture de cuisine* (1604) is almost exactly the same, although it includes cream and a few more spices.10 *Ouverture de cuisine* is actually the only cookbook written in French in the early seventeenth century at the initial point of settlement, and if *La cuisinière canadienne* was intentionally targeting this period, consciously or otherwise, one would expect many other direct correlations.11

Significantly, as Jean-Pierre Lamasson (2009) has shown, these kinds of pie had gone entirely out of fashion in France by the nineteenth century.12 But they are still a potent marker of identity in Montréal, a culinary expression that could not be abandoned for the sake of fashion. They remain popular today precisely because they are traditional, and the recipe has been codified and embraced as an integral part of the culture.
The recipe for *Pâtés de Noël*, a kind of mincemeat pie, found in *La cuisinière canadienne* (1840, 65–65) the one recipe most recognizably antiquated. Made of beef tongue, suet, sugar, raisins, apples, a slew of spices, and brandy, it was meant to keep for several months, with the crust functioning as a kind of hermetically sealed container, as was the case with pies in the Middle Ages. Of course, this dish survives in English cuisine as well, but the original version, made with meat, is rarely prepared these days. Despite the name, today’s mincemeat pies usually contain only fruit.

The final chapters of *La cuisinière canadienne* are perhaps the most interesting, because they feature exactly the kind of do-it-yourself old-fashioned recipes that have once again come into fashion recently. There is a whole section on homemade liqueurs made with *frere piquant* (prickly ash) or ratafia, which is made with anise, walnuts, or bitter almonds. Fresh berries are steeped in *eau de vie* or rum. The book also features recipes for pickles—cornichons, little onions, beets in a vinegar pickle, and green beans. These were all products one could have easily purchased, but making them from scratch gave a person social cachet—serving homemade versions was a point of pride.

To understand these recipes, one must situate them in the broader context of the period. In the United States, the Presbyterian minister Sylvester Graham was advocating whole grains and natural foods. Although *La cuisinière canadienne* doesn’t explicitly state so, this aesthetic is a conscious reaction to the industrialization of food. Think also of the Romantic landscape paintings of this era, with their nostalgia for a way of life perceived to be disappearing. Cornelius Krieghoff’s images of rustic life along the St. Lawrence come to mind: they are contemporary with *La cuisinière canadienne*. In the United States, Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper were writing in this same era, in much the same vein. I think this explains the many antiquated traditional recipes in *La cuisinière canadienne*. Of course, people did not eat such food all time: cookbooks are generally more prescriptive than descriptive. But insofar as this cookbook reflects a perceived heritage that the author hoped to preserve, it communicated much more than recipes. It informs the reader how to enact identity as a Montréalais.

The message here so strongly communicates identity that a brief comparison with a cookbook published in Toronto might be instructive. Also appearing in 1840, *The Frugal Housewife’s Manual* was written by one A.B.
of Grimsby (A.B. 1840). In contrast to La cuisinière canadienne, it was never reprinted, and only two copies survive. Many of its recipes were pirated from earlier English cookbooks, and the sections on cultivation were taken from an American Shaker seed catalogue. The recipes represent fairly standard early-nineteenth-century fare: plum cake, sponge cake, pound cake, waffles, custard, bread pudding, mince pie. These were recipes that could be found in most British or American cookbooks of the time. That is, they say practically nothing about identity, and, because they reflect a dominant culture with no need to protect tradition, they communicate very little. That is not to say that cookbooks originating in a dominant culture can’t convey a wealth of information, nor is it to say the recipes here are bad—though sales might be an indication—but in the case of A.B.’s cookbook, the recipes have nothing particular to say. There is no powerful social, political, or cultural message written between the lines. Not every cookbook has a deeper story to tell.

Ironically, the recipes in The Frugal Housewife’s Manual might even have been more practical, fashionable and tasty than those in La cuisinière canadienne. Despite the latter’s overwhelming success, one must wonder how La cuisinière canadienne was first received and, how people used this cookbook years later. It is remarkably backward. Imagine someone trying to cook in a hearth in the early twentieth century, when this cookbook was still in print. At some level, it must have been viewed as a historical piece, something used by Québécois to remember the distant past. But could it have still been used for cooking? Perhaps people adapted the recipes, using modern equipment, and toning down the odder flavour combinations. Or maybe they never used it at all. If the widespread survival of dishes like tourtière is any indication, though, the antiquation of this cuisine was intentional; if anything, it stubbornly resisted change precisely because francophone culture remained under threat. Though today, when the réveillon tourtière enjoyed on Christmas Eve may only offer a brief respite from typical fast food and convenience food, its value lies precisely in the fact that it is time consuming and fairly difficult to make and that as a strange old-fashioned dish, it is all the more powerful a marker of identity. This is a dish that one can bet will not change. Indeed, an Internet search for “tourtière” yields recipes that are scarcely different from these original versions, attesting not only to the homogenizing power of the Internet but also to its profound influence on culture. If anything, the ease with which
information about the dish can now be found will almost certainly assure that the dish will remain unchanged.

NOTES

1 The first cookbook published in Canada, in 1825, was actually a reprint of Menon’s La cuisinière bourgeoise, originally published in Paris in 1746.

2 This Vatican manuscript reads: “Prenez vostre mouton et le mettez tout cru soubzfrire en sain de lart, et soit despecié par menuex pieces, des ongnons menuz meiciez avec . . . et deffaictes de bouillon de beuf; et mettez du vin du verjus et macis, ysope et saulge et faictes bien bouillir ensemble” (Taillevent 1988, 40). By comparison, La cuisinière canadienne flavours the haricot with cloves and parsley rather than mace, hyssop, and sage. In any case, the dish had completely changed in France by the nineteenth century, losing the spices entirely.

3 See L.S.R.’s jibe, in “L’art de bien traiter” (originally published in 1674), at La Varenne, whose larks in hypocras (spiced wine) and turkey with raspberries were seen as brutishly backward: “Ne frémissez-vous point déjà au récit d’un potage de sarcelles à l’hypocras, d’alouettes à la sauce douce? . . . Voyons ensemble, je vous prie, un jarret de veau à l’épigramme, un poulet d’Inde à la framboise farci des manches d’épaules à l’olivier” (L.S.R. [1674] 1995, 23). In other words, recipes such as those found in La cuisinière canadienne were already considered outdated in France by the late seventeenth century.

4 The five volumes of Carême’s L’art de la cuisine française were published posthumously, between 1833 and 1847, primarily under the editorship of Armand Plumerey. Carême’s first name often appears today as Marie-Antoine, but as is clear from facsimiles of early editions of the work, he preferred the Russian spelling “Antonin.”

5 Massialot’s version reads: “Sausse-Robert. Prenez des oignons, & les coupez en dez: passez dans une casserole avec un peu de lard fondu en les remuant toujours; etant demi roux, égoute bien la graisse, & moiulle-les de jus, & laisse mitonner à petit feu, les assaisez de poivre & de sel; etant cuits, liez d’un coulis de Veau & jambon: voyez que la sausse soit du’n bon gout, & y mettez un peu de moutarde, & lui donnez de la pointe, & vous en servez eu besoin” (Massialot [1691] 2005, 322).

6 In the Livre fort excellent de cuysine (1542, fol. 32), the sauce is mentioned with a fricasee of liver. “Coupes voz foyes par lesches & aussi des ongnons par rouelles & saupoudrez de sel puis frises en saing de lart serves tout
chault pouldre blanche dessus, et ainsi pourrez faire de tous aultres foyes comme il[s] ont vue saulce appellee barbe robert.”

7 “Il faut extraire l’intérieur par les Ouïès; faire un farce d’ognon avec mie de pain, persil, sel, poivre et clous que l’on met dans la morue. On poudre de farine la pièce, avec poivre et sel, et on la place sur un gril dans un lèchefrite, avec précaution; on fait une sauce au buerre, avec vin de porte et un peu de sucre” (La cuisinière canadienne 1840, 42).

8 “Pour une carpe fresche pour ung becquet, pareillement pour une plye, prenes des oygnons, & les frises, ayes de la mye de pain blanc, & le frises tresbien, & apres iettes les oignons avec le beurre bouly avec la mye de pain ensemble prenes de la canelle ung peu d’espice ung petit de sucre, de la semence de fenouil, puis frises vostre poisson & si vous le voules encore rostir sur le Gril vous le poves rostir, si vous le voules servir tout sec si le serves, & pour le mettre en saulce vous le mettres en une toille et feres le bouillon de vin vermeil & du vinaigre, pour espices canelle moix muguette & sucre, et le faictes boullir a court boullon et du beurre dedans” (Livre fort excellent de cuysine 1542, fol. 8).

9 This is a translation of the anonymous Le patissier français of 1653.

10 “Pour faire tourtes de veau à la creme. Prenez douze òces de chair de veau, & faiettes cuire, puis prenez demye liure de graisse de boeuf, & hachez tout ensemble, battez trois oeufs cruds, quatre onces de succre, demye once de canelle, un noix muscade, un peu de sel, demye sopine de creme, bien meslé tout ensemble, & fites votre tourte selon notre fantasie” (de Casteau 1604, 35).

11 A more detailed comparison of the two texts would no doubt repay the effort. For example, the Oeufs à la neige recipe in La cuisinière canadienne (92–93) looks rather similar to Lancelot de Casteau’s Pour faire neige (1604, 123). There was actually an even older recipe for this dish, though, called “snow” in England and appearing in the Proper Newe Book of Cookery (1545) and many other works in the sixteenth century. There is also an illustration of someone making “snow” in Scappi’s Opera (1570, 639).

12 Lamasson (2009, 107) quotes Marie Antonin Carême: “This pastry entrée is no longer considered enough of a delicacy to appear on the tables of the wealthy, for its bearing is too uncouth.”

REFERENCES


*Livre fort excellent de cuysine*. 1542. Lyon: Olivier Arnoullet.