

## SPECIAL COOKING



Here is a program feature for a troop that has gone beyond cooking basics. Scouts will learn how to use the Dutch oven and reflector oven and practice cooking with camp stoves, charcoal, and aluminum foil.

Since good meals are so important in camp, your patrol leaders' council will want to use this feature as soon as most Scouts have mastered the basics of cooking.

If possible, hold troop meetings outdoors where fires are permitted so that you can cook and sample the results. For at least one meeting, use the fuel that will be used to cook your camp banquet, this month's highlight activity.

The banquet should be just that—a real feast, with each patrol taking pains to prepare a full-course dinner, from soup or salad to dessert. Encourage patrols to tackle special dishes that require a Dutch oven or reflector oven.

Some troops have a camping tradition of laying out a real spread for their adult leaders several times a year. They have tablecloths, flowers, china, and silverware, with the Scouts serving as waiters as well as cooks. That may be taking gourmet cooking a little further than your patrol leaders' council wants to go, but it's a fun time.

Whether or not you go that far, consider inviting the Scouts' families to the camp banquet. The banquet could mark the end of a day's outing in the woods or the highlight of a weekend campout.

### SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts

- Considerable improvement in cooking skills
- Increased confidence in their ability to live comfortably in the outdoors
- An opportunity to use new styles of cooking

### ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

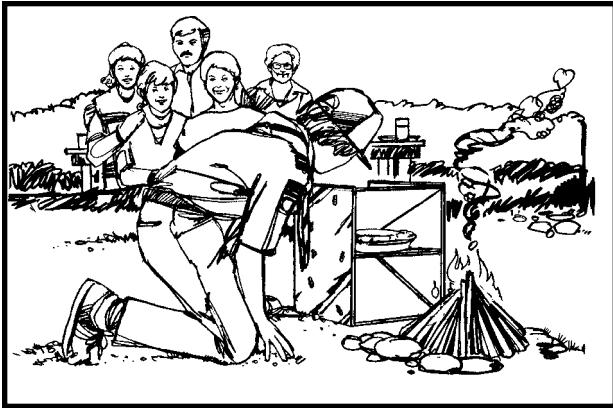
By month's end, all Scouts should meet many of their cooking requirements through First Class rank. Depending on the highlight activities, they may also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

#### *Tenderfoot*

- Outdoor—hiking, camping, cooking, nature
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

#### *Second Class*

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking, nature
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law



### *First Class*

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, nature, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

*Merit Badges.* Older Scouts can concentrate on the Cooking merit badge this month; they should be able to complete many of the requirements. Depending on activities during the month, they may also complete requirements in Hiking, Camping, Backpacking, Wilderness Survival, and other outdoor-related merit badges.

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION**

The patrol leaders' council can involve parents in the program feature this month by

- Asking qualified people to assist with cooking instruction
- Asking people for recipes that could be used for the camp banquet
- Inviting families to the camp banquet

### **PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL**

The patrol leaders' council should meet during the early part of the previous month to plan troop activities for this program feature. If you don't complete all items on the following agenda, continue planning at patrol leaders' council meetings after each troop meeting.

- Choose a site for the camp banquet. Assign someone to secure permissions, if needed.
- Decide whether the camp banquet will be a one-day activity or the highlight of a campout.
- Plan activities for the outing, in addition to preparing and serving a meal.

- Inventory the troop's cooking gear (Dutch ovens, reflector ovens, camp stoves, charcoal burners, etc.). If the supply seems low, ask the troop committee for help in obtaining more. For a homemade reflector oven, see the diagram on page 78.
- Plan details of troop meetings for the month. Consider inviting a Cooking merit badge counselor to help with instruction. Review the use of ovens and stoves.
- Schedule troop meetings at an outdoor site where fires are permitted, if possible.

### **FEATURE EVENT**

#### **Camp Banquet**

Anyone who has ever smelled bacon frying and corned beef hash sizzling on an outdoor fire knows that simple cooking can produce delightful results. But you can't bake a peach cobbler in a thin aluminum pot or an apple pie in a pot over a bonfire. So there is a lot to be said for expanding the Scout cook's horizons.

That's why patrols should be encouraged to use reflector ovens and Dutch ovens in preparing their banquet. Also encourage them to try different heat sources, too, such as charcoal and camp stoves. The skills involved are different, and learning them will help make your Scouts better cooks.

The patrol leaders' council may want to invite the troop's families to the banquet. The serving plan may be for each patrol to have a banquet for its own families, or all dishes might be served buffet-style to all Scouts and families.

#### **Other Activities for the Outing**

Preparation, serving, and cleanup for the banquet will no doubt take several hours, but the patrol leaders' council will want to plan activities, too, particularly if the big event is a campout. One logical tie-in to this feature might be instruction and practice in recognizing edible wild plants in your area and learning how to prepare them for eating. Make sure the instructor is an *expert* in identifying wild plants!

Other possible activities, depending on what's available at your site, include swimming, fishing, wide games, and interpatrol contests requiring Scoutcraft skills. In addition, individual Scouts or small groups might work on various outdoor merit badge requirements.

#### **Dutch Oven Cooking**

Many outdoorsmen claim that a Dutch oven is the most useful and versatile cooking implement in camp. The only drawback for trail cooking is its size and weight, but that is not so for a campout or long-term camp.



A Dutch oven can be used as an ordinary cooking pot, or for baking. When it is used for baking, it's a good idea to set the baking pan on pebbles or an inverted pie pan in the bottom of the oven to prevent burning the food.

A new Dutch oven must be seasoned before it is used. See the *Fieldbook*, No. 33104, for more information about this procedure.

### Drop Biscuits

1 cup all-purpose flour  
 1¼ tsp. baking powder  
 ¼ tsp. salt  
 1 Tbsp. shortening  
 1 Tbsp. sugar  
 ½ cup water or milk

Stir dry ingredients with a fork to work air into them. Put melted shortening into water or milk and stir quickly so shortening does not harden. Then add it to dry ingredients gradually until a thick dough forms—a little thicker than for pancakes.

Preheat the Dutch oven and put a baking pan in the bottom. Drop biscuit mix by tablespoons onto the pan. Put on the lid and place coals on top. The heat is about right if the biscuits have risen and started to brown in 5 minutes. Bake 10 minutes more.

### Pot Roast

4 lb. chuck or round roast  
 Eight medium onions, sliced  
 Eight potatoes, sliced  
 Eight carrots, sliced  
 Cooking oil  
 Salt and pepper

Preheat oven and lid and place on coals. Rub flour on the roast and brown all sides in a small amount of oil in the oven. Add ½ inch of water. Put the lid on the pot and cover with a layer of coals. Simmer 3 to 4 hours. Check occasionally and add water if necessary. After about 2 hours, add the vegetables. Replace the

lid and continue simmering until everything is tender. Serves eight to 10.

### Peach Cobbler

Two No. 2 cans sliced peaches  
 2 cups biscuit mix  
 ½ cup sugar  
 ½ tsp. cinnamon

Preheat Dutch oven slightly over hot coals. Put a baking pan in the bottom and pour in peaches. Reserve some of the juice so the cobbler won't be mushy. Following the instructions for the biscuit mix, mix biscuit mix with milk or water. Pour the dough on top of the peaches and sprinkle with sugar.

Put the lid on the oven and place coals on top. Bake until crust is golden brown. Serves 10.

### Oven-Fried Chicken

Use half of a frying chicken per person. Wash chicken in water. Cut away skin and fat. Discard. Cut the chicken into pieces, dip into cold water, and wipe dry. Shake the chicken pieces in a paper bag with seasoned flour (flour, salt, pepper).

Preheat the Dutch oven. When it is hot, add two tablespoons of cooking oil and the chicken pieces. Brown them on both sides.

Put the lid on the oven and add coals on top. Bake, basting the chicken occasionally, for 15 minutes. Then turn the pieces over and cook until tender—about 15 minutes.

### Reflector Oven Cooking

The reflector oven can be used for baking, too, and is much lighter than the Dutch oven. Most reflector ovens are made with heavy-duty aluminum foil. (See the diagram on page 78.)

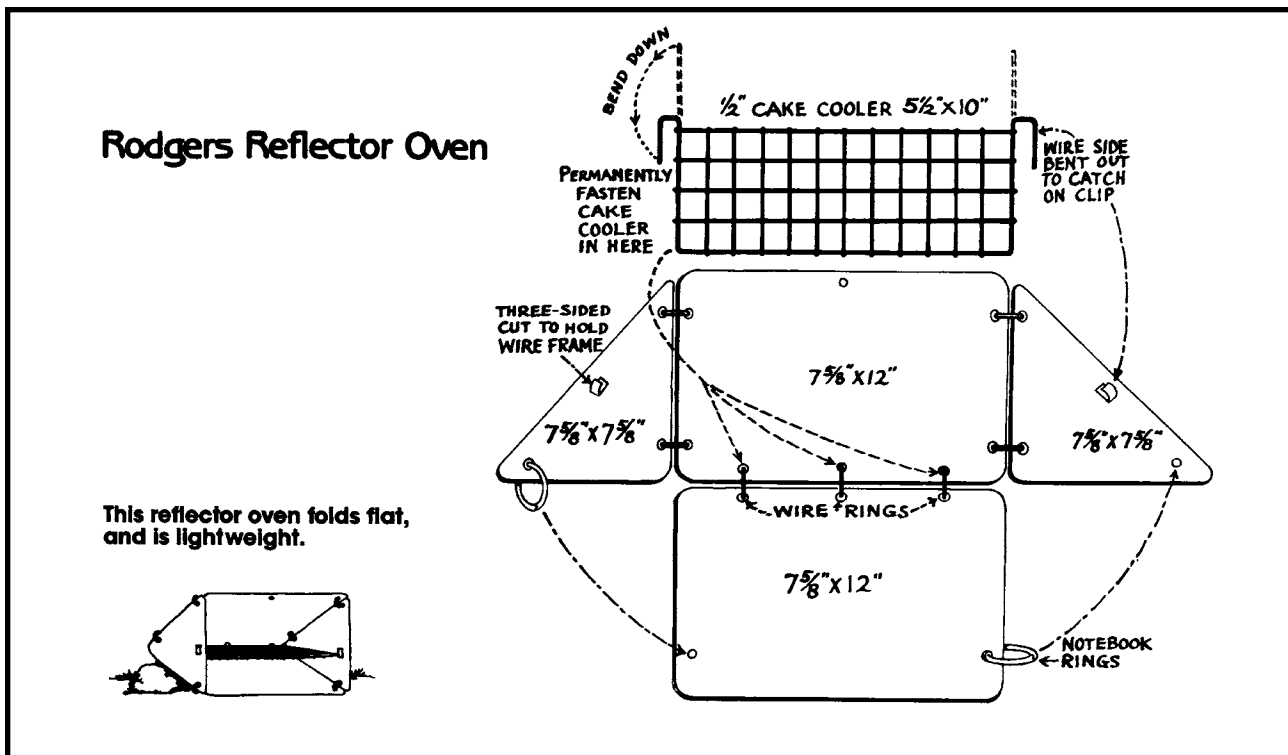
As its name implies, the reflector oven bakes by reflecting heat from a flaming fire onto the food. Because you don't have to wait for coals, baking is faster with a reflector oven.

### Berry Pie

Pie crust mix  
 1 pint berries  
 ½ cup sugar  
 2 Tbsp. flour  
 Cinnamon  
 Rolling pin or substitute

Mix the pie crust mix according to directions on the box. Roll out dough on a little flour to about ¼-inch thickness. Line the baking pan with half of the dough.

Mix berries, flour, sugar, and a dash of cinnamon. Fill crust with this mixture. Add the top crust, making it



an inch wider than the pan. Crimp the edges and use a fork to pierce small holes in the crust to vent steam. Put the pie on the reflector oven shelf in front of a bright fire. Turn it occasionally to bake evenly. Bake until crust is golden brown.

### Sourdough Biscuits

Old-time prospectors carried sourdough mix as a starter for their bread or biscuits. You can make some by dissolving a packet of dry yeast in a cup of water or milk and adding a cup or more of flour to make a smooth batter. A teaspoon of sugar will speed up fermentation, but it's not vital. Let this mix stand in the sun for several hours in a glass or ceramic bowl until it seems to grow and is full of bubbles. (Don't use a metal bowl because the sourdough's acids can eat through metal—but not through your stomach!)

Use this starter mix to make biscuits as follows:

- 1 cup sourdough starter mix
- 1/4 tsp. soda
- One egg
- 1 Tbsp. fat or cooking oil
- Flour

Mix ingredients into a dough that can be kneaded. Roll the dough flat on a floured surface such as foil or plastic. Cut dough into biscuit-sized pieces. Let it rise for an hour or so, then bake in the reflector oven until golden brown.

### Cooking Tricks

Here are some gimmicks for advanced cooks who don't want to use utensils.

**BROWN BAG BISCUIT.** Saturate the bottom and sides of a paper bag with cooking oil. Mix a prepared biscuit mix and put three or four pieces of dough in the bag. Hang the bag over a fire—not too high. When biscuits are golden brown, they should be done. Test with a wood sliver.

**EGG ON A STICK.** Use a knife point to make small holes in each end of an egg. Run a sliver through the egg and heat over coals. Don't overheat or the egg will burst.

**ORANGE OR ONION SHELL EGGS.** Cut an orange in half and remove fruit. Crack an egg into the peel and place directly on coals. Try the same thing with a large onion.

**MUDDY EGGS.** Cover an egg with about 1/2 inch of mud and bury in hot coals for 20 minutes, or less if you like soft-boiled eggs.

**Heat Loss.** When cooking with charcoal, place heavy-duty aluminum foil on the ground. This helps prevent heat loss and makes cleanup easy.