

CHAPTER ONE

Appetizers

Fried Eggplant Fingers

This is a great starter. Just be sure not to eat too many or you'll never make it through the entrée.

1 medium eggplant

1 cup flour

Salt, pepper, and Creole seasoning

1 egg

2 tbsp. milk

1 cup breadcrumbs, seasoned

Olive or vegetable oil or a combination

Peel eggplant and cut into 4-by- $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch fingers. Place eggplant pieces on a plate, sprinkle with salt, and cover with another plate. Let eggplant sweat for about 30 minutes, draining the plate several times. Drain a final time and place eggplant pieces on paper towels.

Set out three small flat bowls. Place flour in one and mix in seasonings. Place egg and milk in one and breadcrumbs in the other. With a whisk or fork, beat the egg with milk.

Heat a couple of tablespoons of oil in a large skillet. When medium hot, begin breading the eggplant. First, roll eggplant sticks in the flour and then dip on all sides in the egg wash. Finally, roll eggplant sticks in the breadcrumbs. Place eggplant in the skillet in a single layer and turn as each side browns in order to brown all sides. You may have to reduce heat if eggplant is browning too fast. Take up on paper towels.

The eggplant will soak up the oil quickly so you will have to add a little oil for subsequent batches. Do not overcrowd the skillet.

These are good by themselves or with a marinara dipping sauce that you make yourself or buy in a jar.

Serves 10 as hors d'oeuvres.



Marinated Crabs

This marinated crabs recipe is a takeoff from the famous dish formerly served at Mosca's. The last time I was at the restaurant, the waitress said the dish was taken off the menu because of a lack of requests for it. I could not hide my disappointment because my mouth was set for marinated crabs. Fortunately, we've always made our own at home after a crab boil or just with a few leftover from the seafood store.

1 dozen boiled crabs, well seasoned	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup white wine vinegar
1 cup extra-virgin olive oil	Juice of 1 lemon
2 cups chopped onion	Salt to taste
1 cup chopped celery	Pinch cayenne pepper
12 cloves garlic, unpeeled and flattened with the back of a large knife	3 bay leaves, torn
2 tbsp. chopped parsley	2 tbsp. Italian seasoning
	10 turns on a peppermill
	1 pint jar olive salad, good quality

Buy crabs freshly boiled from a reputable seafood store. Pull off the backs; scrape off the lungs and everything from the cavity of the crab except the fat. Cut off the eyes. Discard everything but the body, legs, and claws. Cut the crab in half with a sharp knife or kitchen shears. Cut off the claws. Do not pull them, or the meat will pull out of the body. Leave small legs on. With a nutcracker, crack both segments of each claw but try to leave them intact. With a sharp knife, cut off the small piece of shell that holds the lump crabmeat in place. Repeat gently with each crab, placing them in a large bowl.

In a medium bowl, mix well all other ingredients except olive salad. Pour over the crabs and stir very gently to coat all without breaking them up. Tightly seal the top of the bowl with a cover or aluminum foil and place in the refrigerator for at least 8 hours or up to 24. Stir gently several times. An hour before serving, add olive salad and stir gently. Serve in bowls with some of the liquid and plenty of French bread.

Serves 4 as an entrée, 8 as appetizers.

Crab-stuffed Mushrooms

Appetizers come and go, but some are here to stay. That is certainly the case with crab-stuffed mushrooms. What two ingredients go together any better than crabmeat and mushrooms? And, if you don't use too much butter, they are amazingly healthful and low-cal.

1 lb. whole mushrooms (about 30)	2 cloves garlic, minced
1 lb. back fin lump crabmeat	1 tbsp. chopped flat-leaved parsley
3 tbsp. butter, divided	¼ cup breadcrumbs, seasoned
3 tsp. lemon juice, divided	Salt and pepper to taste
3 green onions, minced	¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Wipe mushrooms with a damp paper towel to clean them. Remove the stems and reserve for another use. Pick through the crabmeat, removing any shell.

Melt 1½ tbsp. butter in a skillet and add 1½ tsp. lemon juice. Dip each mushroom cap into the butter mixture and place in a 10-by-13-inch baking dish. If there is any left in the skillet, pour it around mushrooms in baking dish. Melt remaining 1½ tbsp. butter and sauté onion and garlic over medium heat for about 2 minutes, stirring. Add parsley, breadcrumbs, salt and pepper, and remaining 1½ tsp. lemon juice. Then gently add the crabmeat, being careful not to break it up too much. Stuff mixture into mushroom caps, mounding them over the top with a spoon and your hand. When they are all stuffed and back in the baking pan, sprinkle them lightly with grated cheese. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for about 20 to 30 minutes. If they are not slightly browned on top, run them under the broiler for 1 or 2 minutes. Serve hot.

Serves 10.

Belgian Endive with Crab Salad

Belgian endive makes a spectacular presentation as an hors d'oeuvre. It is also quick and easy with a dollop of something tasty at its stem. Mixed with cream cheese and seasonings, crabmeat makes a perfect stuffing.

2 heads Belgian endive

4 oz. cream cheese

2 tbsp. mayonnaise

2 green onions, minced

1 tbsp. minced flat-leaf parsley

1 tsp. lemon zest

Dash of Worcestershire sauce

Dash of Tabasco

**Salt and freshly ground black
pepper to taste**

½ tsp. Creole seasoning

½ lb. crabmeat, tail or lump

Pull Belgian endive leaves apart, rinse, and pat dry. Mix well all other ingredients except crabmeat. Add crabmeat and toss gently. Spoon 1 tbsp. crab salad onto the stem end of each endive leaf. Arrange stuffed leaves in a circular pattern around a plate or platter.

Makes about 30 hors d'oeuvres.

Hot Crab Dip

Nothing tastes quite as good at a party as hot crab dip. Wherever you place it, the crowds will congregate until the last smidgeon is eaten. It's not hard to make but can be expensive, depending on the cost of crabmeat, which fluctuates with the seasons. The most important step is getting all of the shell out of the crabmeat, which can be purchased by the pound at seafood stores and supermarkets. Jumbo lump, the most expensive, usually has less shell and is easier to pick through. Try to remove shell without breaking up the crabmeat. You want nice chunks of crab throughout the dip. When serving, use a chafing dish and keep the fire low so the dip will not curdle.

2 lb. crabmeat

1 stick butter

1 medium onion, minced or grated

3 green onions, minced

3 cloves garlic, minced

**2 8-oz. packages cream cheese,
softened**

**Worcestershire sauce to taste,
about 2 tsp.**

Tabasco to taste, about 1 tsp.

**Creole seasoning to taste, about 2
tsp.**

Mayonnaise, about 2 tbsp.

Pick over crabmeat to remove any shells, being careful not to break up crabmeat too much.

In a large skillet, melt butter and sauté onion, green onions, and garlic until soft. Remove from heat. Add remaining ingredients except crabmeat and mix well, adjusting the mayonnaise to reach desired consistency. Gently stir in the crabmeat, again being careful not to break up too much. Place in a chafing dish over low flame and serve with toasts or crackers of choice.

Serves a crowd.

Oysters Bienville

Baked on the half shell, this delectable version of the oyster was named for the founder of New Orleans, Jean Baptiste le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, and the namesake street on which Arnaud's restaurant is located in the French Quarter. It was invented at the ninety-year-old restaurant supposedly by its founder, Leon Bertrand Arnaud Cazenave, also known as Count Arnaud. It is rich with egg yolks and cream and even incorporates shrimp and mushrooms in its long list of ingredients. Here is a somewhat simpler version sans shrimp and egg yolks.

2 dozen oysters, shucked

½ stick butter

1 bunch green onions, chopped

4 oz. mushrooms, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 tbsp. flour

1 cup heavy cream

½ cup dry white wine

2 tbsp. sherry

2 tbsp. minced parsley

Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

¼ tsp. cayenne pepper

¼ cup grated Romano cheese

Drain the oysters, clean the deep half of shells, one for each oyster, and set aside.

Melt butter in a heavy skillet and sauté the green onions, mushrooms, and garlic for about 5 minutes over medium heat. Add flour and cook for 1 minute, stirring. Add cream slowly, stirring, and simmer until thickened. Add all other ingredients and simmer over low heat for several minutes. Cool and then refrigerate until cold.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Just before serving time, place oysters in dry shells and place in a large roasting pan lined with rock salt, or in individual aluminum pans lined with rock salt. Top each oyster with a heaping spoonful of the mixture. Bake for about 15 minutes or until browned on top. Serve with hot French bread and lemon wedges.

Serves 2 to 4.

Oysters Rockefeller

French-inspired spirits are part of the mystique of New Orleans. Herbsaint, Sazerac rye whiskey, and Peychaud Bitters go back to the early twentieth century when they were created in New Orleans. Today the three are distilled at the Buffalo Trace Distillery in Franklin County, Kentucky, a company owned by the historic Sazerac Company of New Orleans.

Spirits are not all just for drinking. Leave it to local cooks to tuck them into recipes. Take Herbsaint, a substitute for the illegal absinthe. It is the distinguishing anise taste in oysters Rockefeller, the legendary dish created at Antoine's.

Herbsaint (erb-sant) was first made after Prohibition in the attic of the Uptown home of J. Marion Legendre. It is a greenish-amber liqueur that when mixed with ice or water becomes an opaque gyrating beverage. It contains no poisonous wormwood as did its predecessor, absinthe. The romantic name, herbe sainte in French or royal herb, was chosen by Chef Susan Spicer as the name for her restaurant on St. Charles Avenue.

Huitres en coquille à la Rockefeller was first served at Antoine's in 1899 by Jules Alciatore. A shortage of snails from Europe required a replacement and oysters were just the answer. It was named after John D. Rockefeller because of its "rich" texture. This recipe differs from the original in that it contains spinach. The original is a secret recipe containing a number of green vegetables other than spinach; however, most recipes have added spinach with great success.

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| 3 dozen oysters | 10 large leaves fresh basil, chopped |
| 1 10-oz. package chopped spinach, thawed and pressed dry | ½ bunch parsley, leaves only, chopped |
| 1 stick butter | ⅓ cup Herbsaint |
| 1 bunch green onions, chopped, green and white parts divided | Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste |
| 3 stalks celery with tops, chopped with tops divided | Several shakes Tabasco |
| ½ bell pepper, chopped | Several shakes Worcestershire sauce |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced | ⅓ cup breadcrumbs, seasoned |

Drain oysters well, reserving liquid for another use such as freezing to use in gumbo. If you are opening live oysters, scrape the oysters off the shells, drain, clean off the flat shell and reserve, and discard the other shell. If buying oysters already shucked, you can place them in a casserole dish and top with Rockefeller sauce, or use clamshells that can be purchased in kitchen stores. Keep oysters and fresh shells refrigerated until time to bake.

Meanwhile, thaw spinach and mash it dry in a colander or large strainer.

In a large skillet or pot, melt the butter and sauté the white part of onions, celery, and bell pepper until limp. Add garlic, green onion tops, and celery tops and sauté for 1 minute. Add spinach, basil, and parsley and sauté 1 minute more. Add Herbsaint, salt, pepper, Tabasco, and Worcestershire and simmer for about 5 minutes. Remove from heat. In a blender, purée half of the mixture until coarsely puréed. Empty into a bowl and coarsely purée the other half. Place in bowl and add breadcrumbs.

If using oysters on the half-shells, place a drained oyster on each shell. Mound the sauce over the oysters on the half-shells, or place oysters in a casserole dish and top with Rockefeller sauce. Sprinkle lightly with a little more breadcrumbs and bake in a preheated 400-degree oven for 15 minutes. If oysters are not browning on top, place under the broiler for a minute or two.

Serves 3 or 4 as an entrée, 6 as appetizers.

Note: This is an easy dish to serve as party food. Bake according to above instructions in a decorative bake-proof dish and serve with bagel chips.



Chargrilled Oysters

It was just over a decade ago that the charbroiled oyster made its debut at Drago's Seafood Restaurant and Oyster Bar in Metairie. Owners Drago and Klara Cvitanovich had a long attachment to oysters, being immigrants from Croatia where the oyster industry serves much of Europe. Croatian oystermen migrated to Louisiana two centuries ago and still dominate the local industry today. Having worked at his brother-in-law's restaurant in Lakeview, also named Drago's, Cvitanovich opened his own in 1970, buying oysters from Croatian friends in the business. However, their son, Tommy Cvitanovich, now owner-manager, is the one responsible for the signature dish of the three hundred-seat restaurant. "I had the idea about fourteen or fifteen years ago," said the namesake for Drumfish Tommy. The sauce on that dish was so good that he wanted to try it on the oysters. He added two cheeses, Parmesan and Romano, and a star was born. On a good day, he said, the restaurant serves more than nine hundred dozen charbroiled oysters.

The good news for home cooks is that charbroiled oysters are easy to prepare in your own back yard.

"Buy the freshest you can buy," says Tommy Cvitanovich. "And get big ones." A real time saver is using the kind of aluminum shells that are used to stuff crabs. Just cut the tips off the shells and put two oysters in each shell, he said.

Then, cook them as fast as you can. "The hotter the fire, the better," he said. At Drago's, cooks spray water onto the roaring fire to create steam. Most importantly, serve them and eat them immediately. "We try to have them hit the table sizzling," Cvitanovich said.

Chargrilled oysters are great to serve at an outdoor or patio party. Guests love to watch them cook. The only problem is that oysters generally are sold by the sack or half sack from a seafood dealer. Therefore, somebody in your group needs to know how to shuck them. Look at it this way. Shucking them is half the fun. Just get a couple of oyster knives, some heavy gloves, and two people who know what they're doing.

4 dozen oysters

2 sticks butter

2 cloves garlic, crushed

Juice of 1 lemon

1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

½ tsp. Tabasco

Black pepper to taste

**Parmesan cheese, about 1 cup,
grated**

Shuck oysters, cutting each loose from its shell. Place oyster in one shell and discard the other. Choose the deepest shell if it sits straight, or the one that sits the straightest. Reserve some of the oyster water in the shell that you are using.

In a saucepan, melt butter and sauté garlic briefly. Add lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, Tabasco, and pepper and stir together.

Light a charcoal fire to its hottest temperature, or, a gas grill can be used. Place a dozen oysters in their shells on the grill and immediately spoon 1 tbsp. of sauce mixture over each oyster. Sprinkle each oyster with a thin coating of Parmesan cheese. Close the grill and cook for several minutes until oysters curl. Serve immediately with cocktail forks. Repeat. If grill is large, several dozen can be done at one time.

Serves 4.

Note: Chargrilled oysters are great to pass as a hors d'oeuvre as they come off the grill.

Shrimp Rémoulade

What makes shrimp rémoulade so appealing to the cook is that it can be served as hors d'oeuvres or as a first course at the table. To pass before dinner, simply place the rémoulade sauce in a bowl in the center of a platter with the boiled shrimp and toothpicks all around it. If serving at the table, mound shrimp over a bed of shredded lettuce and splash the rémoulade on top.

1 bag crab boil
Salt and cayenne pepper to taste
1 lemon, cut into wedges
2 lb. large shrimp
4 tbsp. ketchup
1 tbsp. fresh horseradish
½ cup Creole mustard
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1 tbsp. Tabasco
¼ cup white wine vinegar
½ cup virgin or extra-virgin olive oil
1 rib celery, chopped
2 tbsp. minced parsley
3 green onions, chopped
Lettuce, shredded

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add crab boil, salt, cayenne, and lemon wedges. When the water comes to a boil, add shrimp. Bring back to a boil, boil for 1 minute, turn off heat, and let shrimp soak for 10 minutes. Drain.

To make rémoulade sauce, mix in a blender the ketchup, horseradish, Creole mustard, lemon juice, Worcestershire, Tabasco, and vinegar. Add the olive oil gradually. Add salt and cayenne pepper to taste. Add the celery, parsley, and green onions and blend for about 2 seconds, leaving some small pieces. This sauce can be made a day or two in advance.

When ready to serve, place a bed of lettuce on each plate. Top with peeled, deveined shrimp. Cover shrimp with sauce. This is best served very cold.

Or, serve rémoulade sauce in a bowl, centered on a platter of shrimp. If peeling shrimp, leave tails on for easy serving. Or, serve with toothpicks.

Serves 6 as appetizers or hors d'oeuvres.



Shrimp Wrapped in Bacon

Long ago, I discovered a real barbecued shrimp recipe that never fails to wow a crowd. I say “real” because what many of us call barbecued shrimp is actually cooked in the oven. This one cooks on the outdoor grill. You simply wrap large shrimp in pieces of bacon and grill them over a charcoal fire. Using a hickory-smoked bacon gives all the flavor you could want with no other seasoning necessary. These make great dippers in a cocktail sauce to serve as an appetizer on the patio. Except for peeling and deveining the shrimp, the recipe is simple. The larger the shrimp, the easier and quicker the preparation.

2 lb. large shrimp
1 lb. bacon

Toothpicks

Peel and devein shrimp. Cut bacon into thirds so that each piece is about 3 inches long. Wrap each shrimp in a piece of bacon. Fasten with 2 toothpicks.

Heat a charcoal or gas grill to hot. Place grill about 6 to 8 inches above coals. Place shrimp on grill and cook until bacon is browning on one side. Turn shrimp to brown bacon on all sides. When bacon is done, shrimp will be done. Serve with cocktail sauce for dipping.

Note: Stainless steel skewers can be used instead of toothpicks. Thread 4 to 6 bacon-wrapped shrimp onto skewer and grill, turning as bacon browns. To serve as a first course, remove shrimp from skewers and serve on small plates with individual dipping sauces.

Dipping sauce: Combine $\frac{3}{4}$ cup ketchup with 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce, 1 tbsp. horseradish, 1 tsp. lemon juice, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Tabasco.

Serves 6 as hors d'oeuvres or first course.

Crawfish-stuffed Bread

My daughter Jennifer had to go to Jazz Fest every year if for no other reason than to get the crawfish-stuffed bread. Finally, she learned to make it herself and found it a great dish to serve at a party. Learning to cook some of the fine specialties served at the festival means you can have your own Jazz Fest at home. Put on some Aaron Neville or Irma Thomas and you're rockin' and rollin' whenever you please.

PASTRY:

1 package active dry yeast
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 tbsp. sugar
1¼ cups warm water
3½ cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. salt

FILLING:

6 oz. Monterey Jack cheese, grated
6 oz. extra-sharp cheddar cheese, grated

2 tsp. vegetable oil
⅓ cup chopped onions
⅓ cup chopped green onions, green part only
1 12-oz. package crawfish tails, thawed
½ tsp. garlic powder
¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
½ tsp. salt
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 egg white, beaten

In the bowl of an electric mixer, whisk together the yeast, oil, sugar, and warm water until well mixed. Let it sit for a few minutes until slightly foamy. Attach dough hook to mixer and add flour gradually and salt, kneading on low speed until the dough begins to cling together. Increase speed slightly until dough forms a ball. Remove dough from mixer and place on a floured board. With your hands, make the ball smooth and round. Grease your hands with a little vegetable oil and pat the dough on all sides. Place in a large bowl, cover with plastic wrap and let it rise to almost double in size.

While the dough is rising, grate and mix cheeses and set aside.

In the vegetable oil, sauté the white onions until translucent, add the green onion tops and sauté a minute more. Add crawfish and seasonings and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes. Set aside to cool.

When dough has risen, place on floured board and cut into half. Roll out ½

to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thin and cut into 6 rectangular pieces. Place 2 tbsp. of cheese on one side of each dough piece, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch margin, and place 2 tbsp. of crawfish mixture on top of cheese. Brush edges of dough with beaten egg white and fold over to make a square or rectangle. Pinch edges together. Place on a baking pan covered with parchment paper. Repeat with other half of dough until all pastries are complete. You should have 12 small loaves. Brush tops with egg white and cut 2 slits in the tops of each. Cover loosely with plastic wrap, and let rise again for about 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Bake for about 30 minutes or until loaves are golden brown.

Makes 12 loaves.

Sausage Balls

Casual gatherings such as football parties demand lots of simple food that can be picked up and eaten without fuss. Toothpick food such as sausage balls require little effort to eat or cook. Make them a day ahead of time, and heat them up when ready to serve.

5 green onions, minced

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 lb. Italian sausage

1 egg, beaten

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup Italian breadcrumbs

Salt, pepper, and cayenne to taste

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese

1 jar hot pepper jelly

Finely mince onions and garlic. Remove sausage from casings, if necessary. In a large bowl, mix onions and garlic with sausage. Add remaining ingredients, except pepper jelly, and mix well. Roll into 1-inch balls and place on a baking sheet. Bake in a preheated 400-degree oven until brown, about 20 minutes, stirring frequently. When ready to serve, heat jar of pepper jelly in the microwave. Add a tablespoon or two of water to thin to dipping consistency. Serve on toothpicks with melted hot pepper jelly for dipping.

Serves 15 to 20 as hors d'oeuvres.

Daube Glacé

If ever there were a classic for the south Louisiana Christmas season, it is the daube glacé, a spicy mold of jellied meat. Much like hogshead cheese—except that the meat of choice is beef—it is served in thin slices on toast points, garlic croutons, or crackers. A perfect hors d'oeuvre, it was a favorite of the early Creoles as an elegant way to utilize a small amount of meat, even leftovers. In fact, a beef daube can be served as one meal with leftovers and plenty of additional spices providing the follow-up glacé.

The Creoles also called the dish daube froide à la Creole, or cold meat that has been braised in stock and wine with herbs. A touch of pork, usually pigs' feet, gives the finished dish its gelled consistency although some modern recipes leave them out in favor of dry gelatin.

Old cookbooks mention daube glacé being served traditionally in New Orleans on holidays and specifically at weddings in Cajun country. At lunch, it was often served as an entrée with salad and croutons, but by popular demand, it has evolved as an appetizer for holiday parties or wedding receptions.

The easy part is that it can be made ahead of time and kept for several days. It is best to make the recipe over a period of two days, cooking the daube one day and putting the molds together the next. Pouring it into fancy smaller molds means you can give it as gifts, take it to parties, or use it to entertain on several occasions. If the molds are very small, you will have to chop the meat into smaller pieces.

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| 1 3-lb. beef roast, such as rump or shoulder | 3 carrots, cut into chunks |
| 3 cloves garlic, peeled and cut into slivers | 2 turnips, sliced |
| Salt, pepper, and Creole seasoning (about ½ tsp. each) | 2 lb. pigs' feet |
| 2 tbsp. vegetable oil | 2 bay leaves |
| 4 10½-oz. cans condensed beef consommé with gelatin, plus equal amount of water | Several sprigs thyme |
| ½ cup madeira | Salt and pepper, about ¼ tsp. each |
| 1 large onion, sliced | 1 tbsp. cayenne pepper |
| | 1 envelope gelatin |
| | 8 thin lemon slices |
| | Flat-leaf parsley |
| | Olives with pimento stuffing, sliced |

Cut narrow, deep slits in roast and stuff slits with slivers of garlic. Sprinkle ½ tsp. each salt, pepper, and Creole seasoning all over roast. Heat oil in a large heavy pot or Dutch oven and brown roast on all sides. When browned well, add consommé, madeira, onion, carrots, and turnips, cover and simmer for 4 hours, until the meat is falling apart.

While roast is cooking, simmer pigs' feet in water to cover in a separate smaller pot with bay leaves, 3 sprigs of thyme, remaining salt and pepper, and cayenne pepper, covered, for about 2 hours.

When all meats are cooked and tender, strain stocks into a large bowl or pot and stir in gelatin until well blended. If stock has cooled, heat a little in a bowl and stir in gelatin until it is dissolved. Add it back to stock.

Spray 3 loaf pans, preferably glass, or one large terrine, or several smaller terrines or molds with non-stick spray. When stock has cooled, pour just enough into each mold to measure ¼ inch. Decorate what will become the tops of the molds with thin lemon slices, sprigs of thyme, parsley leaves, and thin slices of pimento-stuffed olives. Place in the refrigerator to set. This should take at least an hour.

Meanwhile, pull roast into shreds and/or chop into cubes. A combination of shreds and cubes is good. Pick meat from pigs' feet and discard the rest. Add the small amount of pork to the beef. Optionally, some of the carrot can be sliced or chopped and added for color.

When topping is set, divide meat equally and place in molds. Skim fat from stock and pour cooled stock into molds within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the top. Save any leftover stock for another use. Cover with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator for 10 to 12 hours until firmly set. Skim off any fat that accumulates on top. This can be made ahead and held for several days in the refrigerator.

When ready to serve, run a sharp knife around edges of molds and set molds in 1 inch of hot water for a few seconds. Place serving platter over each mold and invert. Decorate platter with more parsley or greens and lemon slices and serve with French bread toasts, garlic croutons, or crackers. You can slice mold into thin pieces or let guests slice it themselves.

Note: Another way to make the molds and serve the glacé is to use 9-by-13-inch glass baking dishes. Then the molds can be sliced into small squares with slices placed on serving dishes. For the above recipe, I used one glass loaf pan, one 7-by-11-inch baking dish, and one medium bowl. I served the molds whole on platters to let guests slice their own, and I cut thin squares from the baking dish and placed them on a plate with crackers on the side.

Natchitoches Meat Pies

The town of Natchitoches is known for its meat pies. Many cultures have their meat pies, and Louisiana's are believed to have originated with the Natchitoches Indians. They are much like Spanish empanadas. They are a hot item at Jazz Fest, and many chefs around the state create their own versions.

FILLING:

1 lb. lean ground beef, such as ground round
1 lb. lean ground pork
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
2 tbsp. flour
1 onion, chopped
4 green onions, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. Creole seasoning

¾ tsp. cayenne pepper

Freshly ground black pepper

1 tbsp. chopped parsley

CRUST:

3 tbsp. shortening

2 eggs

6 tbsp. milk

2½ cups flour plus extra for rolling

1 egg white, beaten

To make filling: In a skillet, brown beef and pork, breaking the meat up well. Set aside.

In a medium pot, make a peanut butter-colored roux with the oil and flour. Add onions, stirring for several minutes, and then garlic, stirring for another minute. Remove from heat and add meat and remaining ingredients. Mix well and set aside.

To make crust: Flour a large cutting board. In a mixer, cream shortening. Add eggs one at a time, mix, and blend in milk. Add flour and mix on high until just blended. Mixture should cling together. Place on floured board and form into a smooth ball. Do not overhandle the dough or it will become tough. Place in a large Ziploc bag and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

When ready to fry the pies, heat enough oil to cover 2 or 3 at a time, or use a deep fryer, heating oil to 350 degrees.

On the floured board, cut the ball of dough into six equal pieces. Roll out one piece at a time the size of a saucer, 6 or 7 inches round and about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick. An easy way to do this is to place the saucer down on the rolled-out dough and cut the pastry with a knife.

Use scraps for 1 or 2 more.

To form the pastries: Place $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of the filling on one side of the pastry circle, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch rim. With your finger, brush the egg white around the entire $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch rim of the pastry. Fold over and press the edges together with a fork.

Drop pastries, 2 or 3 at a time, into hot oil and fry, turning occasionally, until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Drain on paper towels and continue frying until all are done. Serve hot.

Makes 6 to 8.

Note: You will have filling left over. Either freeze it for another time, or make another round of pastry to use immediately.