

STARTERS



Initially it was nostalgic visits to Pres. Thomas Jefferson's beloved home, Monticello, and Ash-Lawn Highland, an estate once owned by Pres. James Monroe, that drew me to Charlottesville, Virginia, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As it is my custom to take time to enjoy local culinary specialties when I travel, I dined at the Historic Michie Tavern Museum, one of the oldest homesteads in the state. Rich in folklore and history, it was established in the 1700s by Scotsman John Michie, known as "Scotch John," who left an enduring legacy of hospitality while prospering as a businessman.

Born in Scotland and arriving on Virginia's Eastern Shore as an indentured servant with his friend James Watson, John was able to purchase his freedom and have sufficient funds to acquire land in Hanover County by July 1730. Here he toiled as a farmer. A few years later Michie purchased over a thousand acres of land from another Scot, Maj. John Henry, father of the notable orator and patriot, Patrick Henry, and moved his wife, Mary, and three small sons into a modest but commodious dwelling.

Residing along a stagecoach route with few other settlers in the area, the Michie family began welcoming travelers seeking food and shelter. Along with running an inn, or ordinary, "Scotch John" added a tavern that became a popular meeting place where Virginia statesmen and patriots gathered for political talk and to hear the news.

In later years a man by the name of "Booze" began selling fine liquor in bottles that he had designed. Michie Tavern folklore states, "With the outside bar being readily accessible to those in wagons seeking to refresh body and spirit, it became quite common to hear a booming voice demand, 'Aye, lass! Give ta me a bottle of ye booze!'" The word "booze" has been carried down by generations and is often still used to refer to an intoxicant.

In 1927 the historic tavern was moved to its present site, 683 Thomas Jefferson Parkway, where hospitality continues and little has changed in the converted log cabin that offers a



historical journey through 18th-century life. The Bill of Fare in the dining room or Ordinary features dishes of the colonial period, including those of Scottish origin, served by waitresses in colonial attire. There is also a gristmill, a general store, and an upstairs museum tracing the history of Virginia's wine production from Jefferson's time to the present.

Tasty and appealing starters, or appetizers, are enjoyed with drinks before a luncheon or dinner or at parties. They are tempting to the eye, pleasing to the palate, and stimulating to the appetite. Some of the varied selection can also be served as snacks, for outdoor meals, and at Scottish Games and Gatherings.



Sassy Pecans from Monticello

The sweet, oily, honey-colored pecan, a native American nut belonging to the hickory family, is a symbol of hospitality and a cherished food whether eaten by itself or used as an ingredient in cookery. A friend gave Thomas Jefferson some wild pecans, which he planted at Monticello. Legend says the president liked them so much that he gave pecan seedlings to George Washington, who grew the trees at his home, Mount Vernon, Virginia, to ensure a constant supply of the nuts, one of his favorite snacks.

2 cups shelled pecan halves
1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp. vegetable oil
Salt, to taste

Put pecans in a shallow baking dish. In a small dish combine the Worcestershire sauce and oil. Sprinkle over pecans. Stir to coat all pecans. In a preheated 250-degree oven, bake, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes. Remove from oven. Sprinkle with salt. Cool. Makes 2 cups.



Peppered Pecans from Louisiana

Ever since the Scotsman Edmund McIlhenny introduced his soon-to-be-famous Tabasco in 1868, tempting recipes have been flavored with the hot sauce. Peppered Pecans, a Louisiana tradition, is one of the classics. This recipe is adapted from *The Tabasco Brand Cookbook*. The pecans may be served as starters or taken on picnics.

3 tbsp. unsalted butter
3 cloves garlic, minced
2½ tsp. Tabasco sauce
½ tsp. salt
3 cups shelled pecan halves

In a small skillet, melt butter over medium-low heat. Add garlic, Tabasco, and salt. Cook 1 minute. Toss pecans with the butter mixture. Spread in a single layer on a baking sheet. In a preheated 250-degree oven, bake, stirring occasionally, for 1 hour, or until pecans are crisp. Makes 3 cups.



Benjamin Harrison's Sausage Rolls

Our twenty-third president, Benjamin Harrison, was a grandson of William Henry Harrison, our ninth president, and both claimed Scottish roots. Benjamin and his wife, Caroline Lavina Scott, entertained frequently at the White House, where they served a variety of nourishing fare for official and family meals. A favorite appetizer was sausage rolls. Mrs. Harrison's recipe for them was printed in an 1890 collection entitled *Statesmen's Dishes*. This is one of my favorite versions of the appetizer, whether hot or cold.

24 link pork sausages

1½ cups all-purpose flour

¾ tsp. salt

½ cup vegetable shortening, cut in small pieces

About 4 tbsp. cold water

1 large egg, beaten

In a large skillet, partially cook sausages over medium-high heat to release almost all of the fat. Drain on paper towels; cool.

Into a medium bowl, sift flour and salt. With a pastry blender, cut in shortening until mixture is uniformly crumbly. Gradually add water, enough to make a firm dough. Turn out on a lightly floured surface; roll into a thin rectangle. Cut into 24 strips, each about 2½ x 3 inches. Place a sausage link in center of each strip; roll up, leaving ends of sausage out. Seal pastry edges with a little cold water. Cut 2 small slashes across top of each roll. Brush tops with egg. Place 1 inch apart on a lightly greased baking sheet. In a preheated 425-degree oven, bake for 20 minutes, until crisp. Makes 24.



Scotch Eggs

Following his exploration of Chesapeake Bay, Virginia, in 1631, William Claiborne set up a trading post on Kent Island, the largest of the bay's islands. A colony developed and in 1638 the island became part of Maryland. Claiborne's Landing at the entrance to Stevensville is named after the explorer. One of the best-known American Claiborne descendants is the late notable food writer and cookbook author, Craig Claiborne, who stated that one of his favorite snacks was Scotch Eggs, fried sausage-covered hard-cooked eggs. He described them as being "one of the most basic concepts of cooking." They are favorite pub and picnic fare, enjoyed particularly at Scottish Gatherings, and are also good starters.

6 hard-cooked eggs

All-purpose flour

1 lb. bulk pork sausage

2 tbsp. minced yellow or white onions

2 tbsp. minced fresh parsley

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 eggs, beaten

About 1 cup fine dry breadcrumbs

Peanut or vegetable oil for deep-frying

Shell eggs; wipe dry with paper towels. Roll each in flour to coat lightly. Set aside. In a large bowl combine sausage, onions, and parsley. Season with salt and pepper; mix thoroughly. Divide mixture into 6 equal portions; flatten into thin rounds. Place 1 floured egg in the center of each round; cover completely with sausage, patting it well. Dip in eggs; coat evenly with breadcrumbs. Place on a large plate. Refrigerate, covered with plastic wrap, up to 12 hours.

To cook, heat 3 inches oil in a deep-fat fryer. Fry eggs, 1 or 2 at a time, turning them, in hot oil (325 degrees) until crisp and golden, about 7 minutes. With a slotted spoon, transfer



eggs as they are cooked to drain on paper towels. Serve hot or at room temperature, plain or with mustard. Makes 6 whole or 12 halves.

Stuffed Smoked Salmon Eggs

Scots are very fond of smoked fish, especially salmon, the most luxurious and highly prized. The quality of the North Atlantic fish and the cold smoking technique result in a distinguished flesh. Genuine Scotch smoked salmon is rich and succulent with a distinctly pleasing smoky flavor.

Many Scottish Americans prefer the salmon *au naturel*, without accompaniments. Serve each person a few cold, thin slices (cut diagonally as close to serving time as possible), with a wedge of lemon, a grind or two of black pepper, and thinly sliced buttered or plain brown bread. Or serve thin salmon slices on oatcakes with a garnish of sour cream and chopped fresh dill. These eggs are attractive as well as delicious.

**6 hard-cooked eggs, shelled and cut in half
lengthwise**
6 oz. smoked salmon, minced
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1 tbsp. grated onion
3 tbsp. sour cream or mayonnaise
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Fresh dill sprigs, for garnish

Remove yolks from eggs; mash yolks in a small bowl. Add salmon, lemon juice, onion, and sour cream or mayonnaise. Season with pepper. Mix well. With a small spoon put salmon mixture into egg-white halves, dividing equally and mounding mixture into the shape of an egg. Garnish with dill. Refrigerate, covered, until ready to serve. Makes 12.



Etta MacKay's Salmon Dip

Etta MacKay, a resident of Olney, Maryland, is proud of her thriving business selling imported Scottish smoked salmon and trout that are raised and cured at a family fishery in her hometown of Tobermory, on the island of Mull in Scotland. Silky and succulent, with a unique tang of spices and wood smoke, the salmon blends well with a few ingredients to make this flavorful dip.

8 oz. cream cheese, softened

½ cup sour cream

1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

¾ cup minced smoked salmon

2 tbsp. snipped fresh chives

Salt and freshly ground white pepper, to taste

In a medium bowl combine cheese, sour cream, and lemon juice; blend well. Add salmon and chives. Season with salt and pepper. Blend well. Refrigerate, covered, until ready to serve as a dip for raw vegetables or with oatcakes. Makes about 2 cups.



Ozark Smoked Trout Spread

Many Scottish immigrants moving across the country were captivated by the intense natural beauty of the Ozark Mountains in northwestern Arkansas, where they settled, farmed, and fished. Lyon College, founded in 1872, has celebrated its Scottish connection in many ways, including an Arkansas (Ozark) Scottish Festival. It is one of the premier Scottish events in the south-central United States, held on the last full weekend in April, and its food booths offer a variety of treats from Scotland and the Ozarks. This starter is made with a favorite local food, smoked trout.

1 lb. smoked trout

½ cup sour cream

2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

3 tbsp. minced chives

⅛ tsp. cayenne pepper

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Remove the skin from trout. In a medium bowl mash trout with a fork until smooth (should be about 1½ cups trout). Add sour cream, lemon juice, chives, and peppers. Blend well. Spoon mixture into a 2-cup bowl or crock. Refrigerate, covered with plastic wrap, for 2 to 6 hours. Serve with brown-bread triangles or crackers. Makes about 2 cups.



Ingonish Kipper Pâté

Kippers are herrings that have been split, lightly salted, and then smoked. They have a golden-brown color and a delicate smoky taste. Eaten in a variety of ways, canned kippers make a well-flavored spread that can be easily prepared and served in the home or at picnics. I recall enjoying this pâté at a picnic in Ingonish, a summer vacation center and the headquarters and main entrance to the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, 390 square miles of spectacular beauty situated in the northern part of Cape Breton Island, where Scots from the Highlands and Islands settled and continue to live.

- 2 cans (3¼ oz. each) kipper fillets, drained and cut up**
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened and cut in small pieces**
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice**
- 2 tsp. minced onion**
- 2 tsp. Dijon-style mustard**
- ⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper**

Puree all ingredients in a blender or food processor. Spoon mixture into an earthenware or glass container. Leave at room temperature 30 minutes. Refrigerate, covered with plastic wrap, for several hours to 2 days. Serve with thin slices of brown bread or toast. Makes 1½ cups.



Dunedin Potted Shrimp

Located midway down Florida's west coast, just a few miles north of Clearwater, the quiet community of Dunedin reflects the rich American and Scottish heritage of its founding fathers. The name is Gaelic for Edinburgh and some of the streets have Scottish names. In early spring when the Highland Games take place, Dunedin brings Scotland to this attractive resort center. Here shrimp is a highly prized food, often made into a paste and put in small pots in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

1 lb. tiny shrimp, shelled, cooked, and deveined

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter

1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. cayenne pepper

6 watercress leaves or parsley sprigs, for garnish

Cut shrimp into bits. In a medium saucepan combine 1 stick butter (cubed), lemon juice, nutmeg, and pepper. Cook over medium-low heat until butter melts and is foamy. Stir in shrimp; heat gently until coated with butter. Spoon mixture into 6 small pots, dividing equally.

Put remaining 1 stick butter (cubed) in the saucepan; melt. Pour over shrimp to form a thin layer, dividing equally. At room temperature allow mixture to set. Cover each with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for several hours to 3 days. Leave at room temperature about 1 hour before serving. Garnish each pot with 1 watercress leaf or parsley sprig. Serve with thin slices of brown bread. Serves 6.



Eastern Shore Broiled Oysters

An elegant home and historical landmark, Kerr Place, the finest example of Federal architecture on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, was built in Onancock in 1799 by an immigrant from Scotland, John Shepard Kerr, a prosperous merchant, shipper, and farmer. It is now a museum and the headquarters of the Eastern Shore Historical Society.

Scottish settlers in America became fond of local “sea pearls,” or oysters, and dined regularly on them, especially as starters, served plain on the half-shell or, with a little flavoring, grilled or broiled. The recipe below serves 1 person.

4 to 6 fresh oysters

4 to 6 oyster-shell halves

Melted butter

Worcestershire sauce

Minced fresh parsley

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Arrange oysters on half-shells in a shallow baking dish. Mix remaining ingredients and top each oyster with a spoonful. Put oysters under a heated broiler until the edges begin to curl, just a few minutes. Serve with lemon wedges and buttered thin slices of brown bread. Serves 1.



North Carolina Pan-Roasted Oysters

Scottish Americans living in the North Carolina coastal regions around Cape Fear and Wilmington have long enjoyed convivial outdoor gatherings called oyster roasts. Oysters are placed on racks over a fire built over stones in a hole or roasted in a regular outdoor fireplace. Although not as festive, one may have an indoor oyster roast with the following recipe.

2 pints oysters, drained

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

8 slices hot buttered toast

Arrange oysters in a buttered shallow baking dish. Pour butter over them. Season with salt and pepper. In a preheated 400-degree oven, bake oysters for about 10 minutes, until the edges curl. Serve at once on toast. Serve with lemon wedges and 1 or 2 dashes of Worcestershire sauce, if desired. Serves 8.



Po' Boy Sandwich

An oyster loaf or sandwich that became popular in New Orleans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is made with a long, slender loaf of white bread split lengthwise and filled with various foods, including oysters. It was a favorite inexpensive snack called a po' boy, commonly sold by street vendors. According to Scots who lived in the city, this idea was introduced from Edinburgh, Scotland, where oyster loaves were a specialty.

1 small, thin loaf white bread
¼ cup unsalted butter, softened
Fried oysters, drained

Slice bread in half lengthwise and scoop out some of the crumbs from both halves to form a case. Spread butter inside the case. Brown bread halves in a preheated 400-degree oven. Fill bottom half with oysters. Place the top on the loaf and cut into 4 sections. Garnish with sliced pickles, if desired. Serve at once. Serves 4.



Auld Alliance

This whisky-flavored cheese spread is named for Scotland's long years of friendship with France, known as the Auld Alliance. Served as a favorite starter by Scots living in Canada's Quebec City, it is easy to prepare and can be made in several variations. This one includes the addition of walnuts, if desired.

8 oz. cream cheese, softened
2 to 3 tbsp. Scotch whisky
½ cup minced walnuts (optional)

Place cheese in a small bowl. Add whisky slowly and blend to make a firm cream. Add walnuts if desired. Pack into a small earthenware pot or a bowl and refrigerate for 3 to 4 hours. Serve with oatcakes, crackers, or toast triangles. Makes about 1 cup.

Ha' Pennies

These crisp Cheddar cheese rounds are a specialty at the annual Christmas Walk, a glorious early-December Scottish celebration in Alexandria, Virginia.

1 cup all-purpose flour
⅛ tsp. cayenne pepper
¼ tsp. salt
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cool and diced
2 cups finely shredded Cheddar cheese
4 to 6 tsp. light cream

In a large bowl combine flour, pepper, and salt. With a pastry blender cut in butter until mixture resembles fine crumbs. Stir



in cheese. Add cream, 1 tsp. at a time, using enough to make a stiff dough. Gather into a ball. Put on a flat floured surface. With a sharp knife cut into 2 parts. Shape each part into a long roll about 1 inch in diameter. Wrap each roll in plastic wrap. Refrigerate about 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Put each roll on a flat surface. With a floured sharp knife, cut each roll into 1/4-inch slices. Place on ungreased baking sheets, about 1 inch apart. Bake in preheated oven about 12 minutes, until tender and golden. With a spatula transfer to wire racks. Cool. Store in airtight containers. Makes about 4 dozen.

Oregon's Cheese Toasties

An Oregon Cheddar cheese called Tillamook, one of the finest of all Pacific Northwest cheeses, has been justly famous since Peter McIntosh, a Scottish-Canadian and pioneering dairyman, started making it with a surplus of milk in the 1890s. Known for its bright yellow color and uniquely aromatic flavor, Tillamook cheese is standard fare at many parties and is excellent in this specialty.

- 1 cup grated Tillamook or other Cheddar cheese**
- 2 tbsp. mayonnaise**
- 2 tsp. light cream or milk**
- 1 tsp. minced onion**
- 1/2 tsp. dry mustard**
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- Dash of cayenne pepper**
- 4 slices white toast**
- 2 slices raw thin bacon, cut into small pieces**

In a small bowl combine the cheese, mayonnaise, cream or



milk, onion, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, and pepper; mix well. Remove crusts from toast; spread each toast with some cheese mixture. Cut each toast into 5 strips. Top with bacon pieces. Just before serving, put in a preheated 450-degree oven for 5 minutes. Serve hot. Makes 20.

Hogmanay Herbed Cheese

This is a good starter to serve for New Year's Eve, Hogmanay, a merry gathering of family and friends to celebrate with traditional customs and good fare.

½ lb. (8 oz.) grated Cheddar cheese
Dash of cayenne pepper
3 tbsp. unsalted butter, softened
Pinch of dry mustard
¼ cup Scotch whisky or other liquor
2 tbsp. crushed fresh herbs (parsley, basil, thyme)

Combine ingredients in a medium bowl. Beat until smooth. Spoon into a small pot or crock; cover and refrigerate for 24 hours or longer to blend flavors. Leave at room temperature a short time before serving. Serve with oatcakes or crackers. Makes 1¼ cups.



Virginia Campbell's Pickled Mushrooms

Virginia Campbell's Cook Book is a fascinating collection of handwritten recipes that were served in the 1850s at the Campbell House in St. Louis, Missouri. As the wife of Col. Robert Campbell, famous in the annals of frontier adventure for his exploits with explorers, fur traders, and great mountain men of the Wild West, she was a legendary hostess and the Campbells were known for their hospitality.

The Campbell House Foundation interprets and promotes the Campbell House as a museum that educates and encourages an appreciation of 19th-century art and culture through the Robert Campbell family and its role in the development of St. Louis and the American West.

In her cookbook Virginia Campbell has several recipes for mushrooms, including one for pickled mushrooms. This is an adaptation from St. Louis.

1 small white onion, minced

1 bay leaf

½ cup chopped fresh parsley

½ tsp. dried thyme

2 cups white vinegar

2 cups white wine or water

¼ cup vegetable oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 lb. small fresh mushrooms, cleaned and trimmed

In a large saucepan combine onion, bay leaf, parsley, thyme, vinegar, wine or water, and oil. Season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium low. Simmer, covered, for 10 minutes, until mushrooms are just tender. Cool and then chill in the liquid for 2 to 6 hours. Drain before serving. Serves 4 to 6.

