RECIPES FROM THE WORLD OF TOLKIEN



INSPIRED BY THE LEGENDS



Robert Tuesley Anderson

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CASSELL ILLUSTRATED

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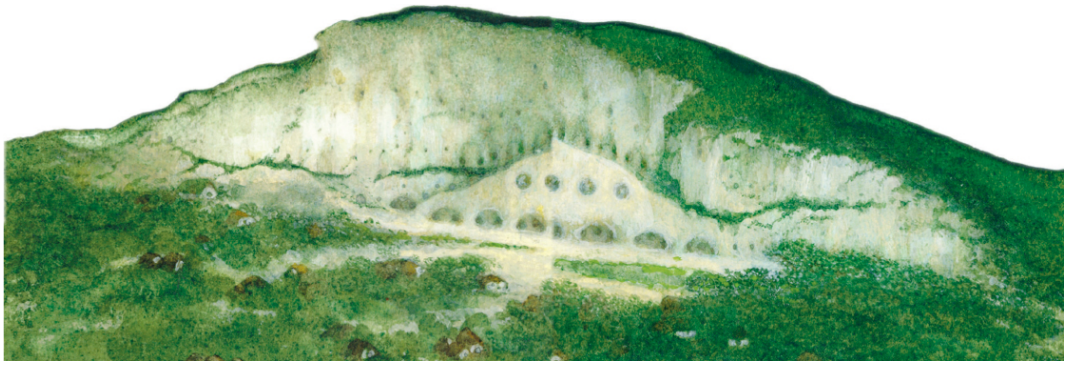
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Drinks in Middle-earth

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



How to use this ebook

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You can double tap images and tables to increase their size. To return to the original view, just tap the cross in the top left-hand corner of the screen.

INTRODUCTION

In both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, warriors and heroes, big and small, Men, Dwarves, Wizards and Hobbits – Hobbits *especially* – are shown to be interested in, even preoccupied with, food and drink. There are dozens of references to breakfasts, second breakfasts, lunches, suppers and feasts – and plenty more to other foodstuffs, from travellers' waybreads to near-miraculous draughts.

Tolkien's concern with food, however, goes far beyond the merely utilitarian. His descriptions of the aforementioned meals are often detailed and loving – suggesting the real pleasure that the characters and their creator take in eating and drinking. Who can forget Sam's comforting rabbit stew, rustled up in the wilderness to sustain his beloved friend and master Frodo? Or the honeyed cakes and mead of Beorn the skin-changer, or the vegetarian feast created by Tom Bombadil and Goldberry? Tolkien's tour de force in this respect, of course, is the unexpected party that opens *The Hobbit*, where delicious cakes, pies and other treats accumulate in a mouth-watering pile.

There is a deeper aspect to the omnipresence of food in Tolkien's stories, however. At one level, it contributes to their narrative structure: *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* both begin with homely feasts before the adventure properly begins. This pattern repeats itself through the books, with a crisis of suspense and jeopardy followed by a respite often marked by a good meal of some kind, and so on, so that the reader constantly moves between breathless excitement and feelings of cosseted charm. At another level still, the food in the stories sometimes has a real emotional punch. Sam's making of the rabbit stew is an act of love for Frodo, offering a hopeful vision of home amid the despair.

Food in Tolkien is about these things: companionship and friendship, love and hope, and – perhaps most importantly of all – home. No surprise, then,

that the Lembas bread of the Elves have a spiritual, even godly, quality about them.

In this book, you will find a rich collection of recipes inspired by the food and dishes in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Some like the Pork Pie as served by Bilbo at his tea party (here), Sam's Coney Stew and Beorn's Honey Cakes are, to some extent, recreations of actual dishes found in the books; while others pay homage, more fancifully, to the characters, peoples and places, like the Roasted Stuffed Pepper Flames, inspired by the flame-clothed Balrogs, or the Grey Havens Garlicky Grilled Mussels, in honour of the Elven port.

The recipes are arranged according to the Hobbits' six daily meals – Breakfast, Second Breakfast, Elevenses, Luncheon, Afternoon Tea, Dinner/Supper – though inevitably quite a few could just as well have been included in one section as another. There is a final section on drinks, too, which like food plays an important role in Tolkien's tales.

With the above in mind, it's time to explore the smells and tastes of Middle-earth. Enjoy experimenting, discovering and, of course, eating all the delicious ingredients found in these recipes, and let whatever you decide to conjure up transport you straight into Tolkien's legendary world.



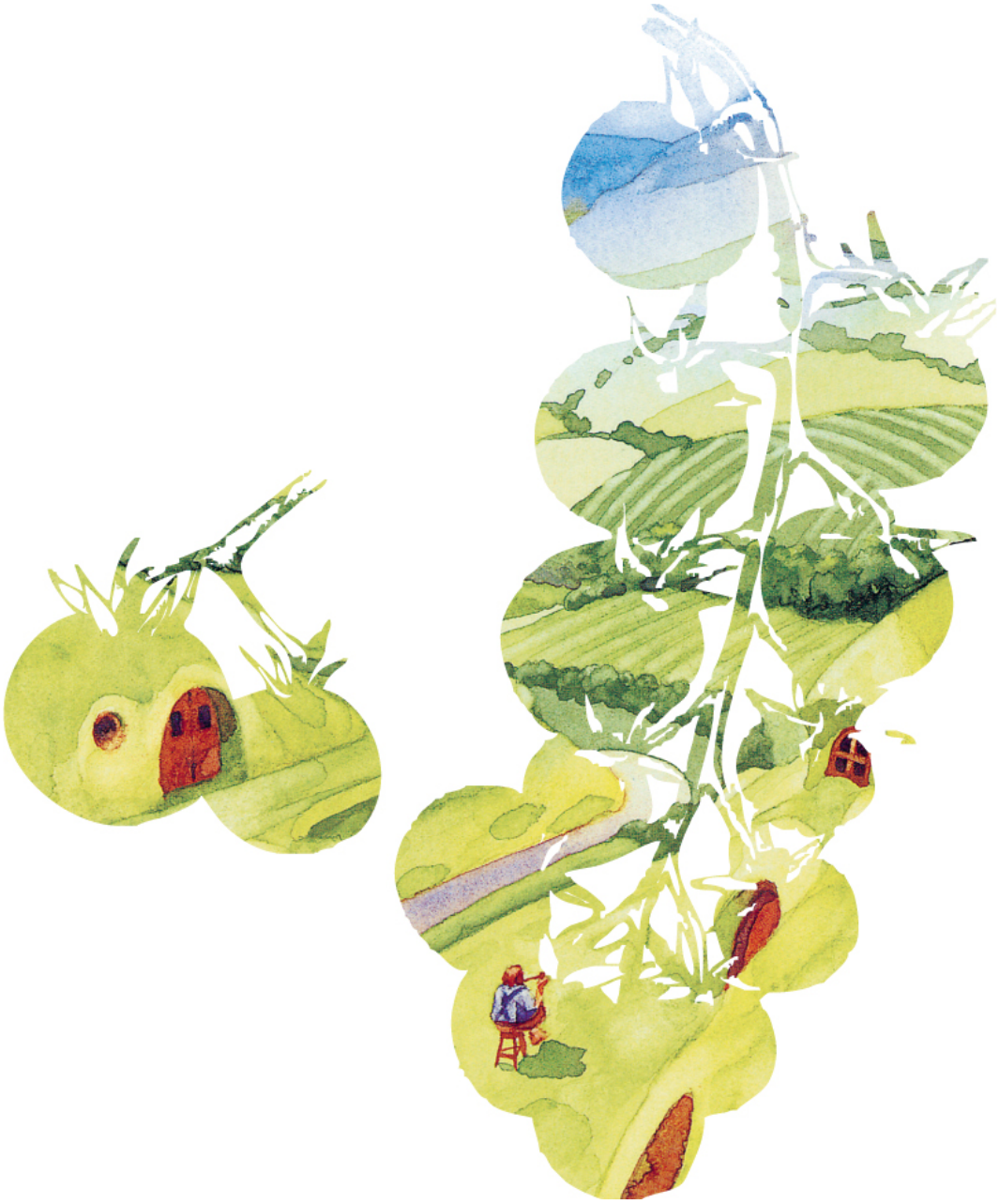
Rivendell



Holman Greenhand, a Hobbit gardener

BREAKFAST

Tolkien's Hobbits like to start their days with a hearty breakfast, and find little more disheartening than setting off on a day's trek on an empty stomach. There is wisdom here, of course, though there are plenty of other, healthier options than Bilbo's favourite of eggs and bacon, and tea and hot buttered toast …



PORRIDGE

Packed with fibre, nutrients and complex carbs, a steaming bowl of porridge is the perfect way to provide your body with fuel for the day ahead. To add extra nutrition and flavour, there's a list of Middle-earth inspired toppings for you to choose from, too.

> *Unlike improvised gruel made from oats and water – the kind of breakfast a weary traveller might make whilst undertaking a long journey, such as the Hobbits did – porridge made at home with full access to milk, honey, fruits, jams and nuts can be a sumptuous feast – fit for Hobbits, Dwarves and Men alike.*

SERVES FOUR TO SIX

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

1 litre dairy or non-dairy milk
500ml water
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
pinch of ground cinnamon
pinch of salt
200g porridge oats

1. Put the milk, water, vanilla extract, cinnamon and salt in a large saucepan over a medium heat and bring slowly to the boil. Stir in the oats, then reduce the heat and simmer gently, stirring occasionally, for 8–10 minutes until creamy and tender.

2. Spoon the porridge into bowls and serve with the topping of your choice.

TOPPING OPTIONS

Beorning-style: Top with a spoon of honey, a scattering of nuts and a handful of berries

Hobbit-style: Finish with a spoonful of "Dumbledor" Blueberry and Honey Jam or Spiced Plum Jam and a dollop of cream

Dwarven-style: Scatter over chopped dried fruit and nuts

Rohan-style: Stew 2 peeled, cored and chopped apples with a little brown sugar and water and spoon over the top

Númenórean-style: Add a drizzle of maple syrup and a roughly chopped fig plus a pinch of cinnamon

Gondorian-style: Stone, slice and lightly grill a peach, and add to the porridge with a dash of cream



TRAVELLER'S OVERNIGHT OATS

Make this easy-to-prep and easy-to-transport breakfast vegan by using dairy-free milk and yogurt – oat and coconut both work well. You can experiment with flavourings to suit your taste; try adding seeds and nuts, chopped apple or pear, or dried fruit.

When travelling long distances, oats and other grains are a practical food to carry with you. They last a long time if kept dry, and can quickly and easily be made into simple yet filling food. On their long journeys, Tolkien's heroes are likely to have been equipped with some quantity of grains, especially to feed their horses and ponies.

SERVES ONE

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES, PLUS OVERNIGHT SOAKING

INGREDIENTS

50g oats
110–120ml milk
1 tablespoon natural yogurt, plus extra to serve (optional)
drizzle of honey or maple syrup
fresh fruit of choice, to serve (optional)

For the optional flavourings
¼ teaspoon cinnamon and a small handful of blueberries
small handful of raspberries and chocolate chips
½ tablespoon cocoa powder and a few cherries
½ tablespoon desiccated coconut and a few strawberries

1 Combine all the ingredients for the base of the overnight oats in a container or glass jar and stir. Add one of the optional flavourings, stir to combine, and leave in the fridge overnight.

2 Add extra fruit or yogurt to serve, if desired.



SMOKY STEWED BEANS

You can eat these comforting and filling stewed beans for breakfast the British way – atop hot buttered toast – or for lunch on a baked potato with a little grated cheese sprinkled over. They freeze well so why not make a big batch?

> *Foods in Middle-earth tend to be simple, filling and delicious. While beans on toast is not very popular in America, it's one of those quintessential British standby meals that have helped define British food culture. Tolkien's mission in creating Middle-earth was to invent an English mythology, and in doing so he wove timeless elements of English and British culture into his work, including its food (the Fish and Chips is another example).*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons rapeseed oil
1 red onion, cut into wedges
400g can chopped tomatoes
2 tablespoons tomato purée
2 tablespoons dark muscovado sugar
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 teaspoon mustard powder
275ml vegetable stock
2 x 400g cans haricot or cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
salt and black pepper

2 tablespoons chopped flat leaf parsley, to garnish

1 Heat the oil in a separate saucepan, add the onion and fry for 3 minutes until just starting to soften. Add the tomatoes, tomato purée, sugar, vinegar, paprika, mustard powder and stock. Bring to the boil, stirring, then reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes until reduced slightly.

2 Add the drained beans to the tomato sauce. Simmer for a further 15–20 minutes, covered, until thick, then season with salt and pepper and serve on toast or as a baked potato topping, scattered with the chopped parsley.



BACON AND MUSHROOM FRITTATA

The smell and sound of sizzling bacon are enough to make any morning feel special. This dish makes a little bacon go a long way and, if there's any frittata left over, you can enjoy it cold for lunch with a side salad.

> *In* The Hobbit, *Bilbo's love of bacon is unparalleled. After sneakily handing over the Arkenstone to Bard the Bowman and the Elvenking to prevent conflict between the Men of Dale, the Elves and the Dwarves, he returns to the sentry post at the Gate of the Lonely Mountain, promptly falls asleep and dreams of eggs and bacon. It seems, then, that even after the thrills of burgling treasure and meeting a Dragon, Bilbo still prizes the simple things.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

8 portobello or flat chestnut mushrooms, about 500g in total
1 garlic clove, finely chopped (optional)
olive oil, for drizzling
4 smoked back bacon rashers
6 large eggs
1 tablespoon chopped chives, plus extra to garnish
1 tablespoon wholegrain mustard
knob of butter
salt and black pepper

1. Put the mushrooms on a baking sheet and scatter over the garlic, if using. Drizzle over a little olive oil, season with salt and pepper and place in a preheated oven, 180°C, Gas Mark 4, for 18–20 minutes or until softened. Leave until cool enough to handle.

2. Meanwhile, lay the bacon rashers on a foil-lined grill pan and cook under a preheated medium-hot grill for 5–6 minutes, turning once or until slightly crispy. Cool slightly, then slice thickly.

3. Put the eggs, chives and mustard in a bowl, beat together lightly and season with pepper.

4. Heat a large nonstick frying pan with an ovenproof handle, add the butter and melt until beginning to froth.

5. Pour in the egg mixture and cook for 1–2 minutes, then add the bacon and whole mushrooms, stalk-side up. Cook for a further 2–3 minutes or until almost set.

6. Place the pan under a preheated hot grill and cook the frittata for 2–3 minutes until set, then cool slightly, and sprinkle over some chopped chives. Cut into slices to serve.





POTATO AND CABBAGE FRITTER

Known as bubble and squeak in Britain – because the cabbage makes bubbling and squeaking sounds while it cooks – this hearty dish makes the most of leftovers. You can add any cooked veggies you have hanging around in the fridge, including peas, carrots, Brussels sprouts and leeks.

Hamfast "The Gaffer" Gamgee is Samwise Gamgee's father and Bilbo's gardener until Sam takes over the role. Just as young Samwise did, who wouldn't love to spend time at Bag End listening to Bilbo's incredible stories? Stories that spurred Sam's father to exclaim that Elves and Dragons are not for the likes of Hobbits, who are better off keeping to cabbages and potatoes!

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon butter
4 rashers streaky bacon, chopped
1 onion, finely diced
1 garlic clove, minced
350g cooked cabbage, shredded
400g cold mashed potatoes

1 Melt the butter in a pan and add the chopped bacon. As it begins to brown, add the onion and garlic.

2 Add the cabbage and cook for 5–6 minutes until it colours slightly. Add mashed potatoes and mix everything together, pushing the mixture down so that it covers the base of the pan.

3 Cook until the underside is golden brown and sticking to the pan a little, then flip it over like a pancake and cook the other side until golden brown.

4 Remove from pan and slice to serve.

TRAVELLER'S ALL-IN-ONE BREAKFAST IN A TIN

This recipe is perfect accompanied by a pot of hot coffee. Cook this fuss-free vegetarian breakfast in one roasting tin and place in the middle of the table for everyone to help themselves.

Tolkien's stories are full of long journeys and meals eaten on the road (here). This breakfast recipe is inspired by camping and cooking over an open fire. Made with only one pan but packed with hearty and filling ingredients to fuel a day of trekking, this breakfast will satisfy all manner of travellers for the road ahead.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

500g cooked potatoes, cubed
4 tablespoons olive oil
few thyme sprigs
250g button mushrooms, trimmed
12 cherry tomatoes
4 eggs
salt and black pepper
2 tablespoons chopped parsley, to garnish

1. Spread the potato cubes out in an even layer in a large roasting tin. Drizzle over the oil, scatter over the thyme sprigs and season with salt and pepper.

2. Bake in a preheated oven, 220°C, Gas Mark 7, for 10 minutes. Stir the potato cubes well, then add the mushrooms and return the roasting tin

to the oven for a further 10 minutes. Add the tomatoes and return the tin to the oven for a further 10 minutes. Make 4 hollows in between the vegetables and carefully break an egg into each hollow. Return the tin to the oven for a final 3–4 minutes until the eggs are set.

3 Scatter the parsley over the top and serve straight from the tin.



The Quest of Erebor

BEREN'S POTATO BREAD

This unusual bread is perfect for mopping up the juices from thyme-flecked tomatoes here, but is also wonderful spread with Spiced Apple Butter or lightly toasted and buttered to accompany the Soup of Story.

> *Among Men, Beren is perhaps the great hero of* The Silmarillion. *He steals a Silmaril jewel from Morgoth's crown, defeats the great wolf Carcharoth, and is the only man to return from the dead. Interestingly, he is also one of the few confirmed vegetarian characters in Tolkien's work. He gives up eating meat out of kinship with the animals who help him survive while he lives as a solitary outlaw.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 4 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

375g potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
1 teaspoon fast-action dried yeast
1 teaspoon caster sugar
1 tablespoon sunflower oil, plus extra for oiling
200g strong white bread flour, plus extra for dusting
100g strong wholemeal bread flour
2 tablespoons chopped rosemary
1 tablespoon thyme leaves
salt and black pepper

For the topping
2 tablespoons olive oil

250g mixed-coloured baby tomatoes, halved
½ teaspoon thyme leaves
½ teaspoon sea salt flakes
pepper

1 Cook the potatoes in a large saucepan of lightly salted boiling water for 15–20 minutes until tender but not flaky. Drain really well, reserving the cooking liquid.

2 Put 6 tablespoons of the cooking liquid into a large bowl and leave to cool until lukewarm. Sprinkle over the yeast, then stir in the sugar and set aside for 10 minutes.

3 Mash the potatoes with the oil, then stir in the yeast mixture and mix well with a wooden spoon. Mix in the flours, herbs and salt and pepper, then turn out on to a lightly floured surface and knead well to incorporate the last of the flour. Knead the dough until soft and pliable, then put in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with clingfilm and leave to rise in a warm place for 1 hour until well risen.

4 Knead the dough on a lightly floured surface, then roughly shape into a round, place on a baking sheet and lightly cover with oiled clingfilm. Leave to prove in a warm place for 30 minutes. Score a cross into the dough with a knife and bake in a preheated oven, 220°C, Gas Mark 7, for 35–40 minutes until well risen and crusty on top.

5 Transfer to a wire rack to cool for 30 minutes. Cut 4 slices of the bread and lightly toast.

6 Meanwhile, heat the oil for the topping in a frying pan, add the tomatoes and cook over a high heat for 2–3 minutes until softened. Stir in the thyme and salt flakes. Season with pepper and serve with the toasted potato bread.





SPICED PEAR AND CRANBERRY MUFFINS

These cranberry-studded muffins are a great grab-and-go breakfast. The secret to airy, light muffins is not overmixing. Resist the temptation to stir your muffin batter vigorously until smooth – the batter should be only gently stirred and lumps are fine, they'll disperse in the baking.

The history of Middle-earth is full of gems and jewels, from the Silmarils to the Arkenstone. One place that is brimming with gems is the Glittering Caves – or Aglarond in Sindarin – that lie behind Helm's Deep in the White Mountains. With their high, domed ceilings, sandy floors and polished walls set with gems, crystals and veins of ore, it's no wonder that Gimli the Dwarf is astounded by the caves' beauty, so much so that he returns there after the War of the Ring to found a new Dwarven kingdom.

These muffins have bright red cranberries scattered throughout, like gems in a mine. Their warm golden colour further echoes the sandy stone of Aglarond.

MAKES TWELVE

PREP AND COOK 35 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

40g dried cranberries
2 tablespoons boiling water
3 small ripe pears
300g plain flour
3 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon grated nutmeg
125g caster sugar, plus extra for sprinkling
50g butter, melted
3 tablespoons olive oil
3 eggs
150g natural yogurt

1. Put the cranberries in a cup, add the boiling water and leave to soak for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, quarter, core, peel and dice the pears.

2. Place the flour, baking powder, spices and sugar in a mixing bowl. Whisk the melted butter, oil, eggs and yogurt together in another bowl, then combine with the flour mixture.

3. Drain the cranberries, add to the flour mixture with the pears and mix briefly, then spoon into paper muffin cases arranged in a 12-hole deep muffin tin and sprinkle with a little extra caster sugar.

4. Bake in a preheated oven, 200°C, Gas Mark 6, for 15–18 minutes until well risen and golden.

5. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack. Serve warm or cold. They are best eaten on the day they are made.



BEORN'S HONEY CAKES

An excellent breakfast or teatime treat, these little honeyed cakes are a good way to use up over-ripe bananas.

> *In* The Hobbit, *Bilbo's party encounters Beorn the "skin-changer", who as well as being a chieftain of the Beornings is also, it seems, an excellent cook. Beorn's name refers not only to his second form as a bear (the Scandinavian name Björn means exactly that) but also puns on his passion for keeping bees (bears love honey!). Honey cakes are a specialty of his, which he gives to Thorin and Company when he hosts them during the Quest of Erebor. He also has a twice-baked, or biscuit-like, version (here).*

MAKES TWELVE

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

125g plain flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
75g unsalted butter, melted
75g light muscovado sugar
2 eggs, beaten
2 small, very ripe bananas, mashed
4 tablespoons clear honey

1 Line a 12-section muffin tray with paper cake cases.

Sift the flour, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda into a bowl.

3 Mix together the melted butter, sugar, eggs and mashed bananas in a separate bowl. Tip in the dry ingredients and mix together gently until evenly combined. Divide the cake mixture between the paper cases.

4 Bake in preheated oven, 160˚C, Gas Mark 3, for 20–25 minutes or until risen and just firm to the touch.

5 Transfer to a wire rack and drizzle each cake with 1 teaspoon of honey. Serve warm or cold.



Beornings

HOBBITS AND FOOD

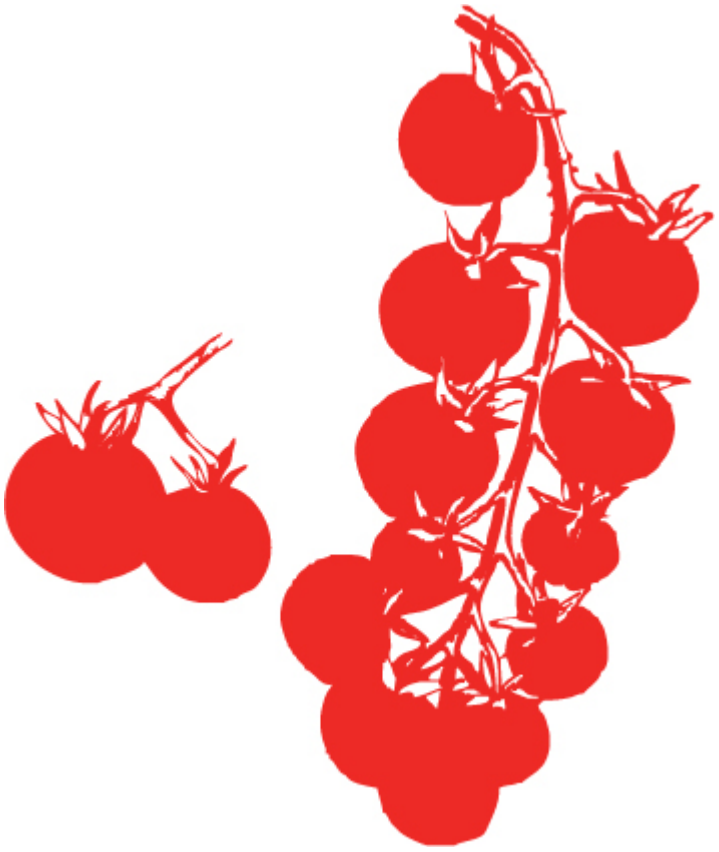
Hobbits like their food – indeed, their concern with having a full stomach is almost as characteristic of their race as their short stature and hairy feet. Not only are they good at eating, they are good at cooking too, an art they learn even before they learn to read and write (if they manage to do that!). Sam appears to be the best Hobbit cook we meet, able to rustle up a feast out of the most rudimentary ingredients (see the famous Coney Stew), though Bilbo also seems to be a more than competent baker.

Tolkien famously drew attention to the close association between Hobbits and food in his Prologue to *The Lord of the Rings*, where he informs us of their love for both laughter and food and their partiality for six meals a day "when they can get them". By the end of the Third Age, the author tells us, plenty is the norm in the Hobbits' homeland, the Shire, and memories of the Days of Dearth (TA 1158–60) – a famine that followed an outbreak of plague – are but a folk memory.

And, if the representatives we meet in Tolkien's tales are anything to go by, the Hobbits do get their regulation six meals: all are a little chubby – some more so than others (Fredegar "Fatty" Bolger is a fine example) – and they spend a lot of their time eating, talking and thinking food. Tolkien peppers *The Hobbit* itself and *The Lord of the Rings* with references both to his Hobbit heroes' delight in hearty food and, when cast adrift in the wildernesses of Middle-earth, to their worries about where their next meal might come from.

The typical fare of the Hobbits is homely. Bilbo's unexpected tea party gives us the full flavour of the Hobbits' customary diet (as well as an inkling of just how well-stocked a Hobbit's larders – note the plural – could be). To meet his guests' requests, Mr Baggins successively brings out seed-cakes, buttered scones, raspberry jam, apple tart, cold chicken, eggs, pickles, salad and "an extra cake or two", all washed down with ale, porter, wine, and tea and coffee.

This is the food of Tolkien's own childhood in the 1890s and 1900s and of late Victorian and Edwardian England, at least of the moderately prosperous – solid, unfussy, filling. Even in today's multicultural Britain, Bilbo's tea-cum-supper party remains a richly nostalgic feast. It also sets the standard against which all other meals in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* will be judged.



SECOND BREAKFAST

Near the beginning of The Hobbit, *Bilbo Baggins – finally rid, so he thinks, of the large party of Dwarves who have been eating him out of house and home since the previous afternoon – is just about to relax by having "a nice little second breakfast" when he is interrupted by Gandalf, calling him away on his adventure … In our world, second breakfast may be little more than a snack, to get us through a mid-morning energy dip, but in its heartiest form – especially at the weekend – it can take the form of "brunch".*



FARMER MAGGOT'S WILD MUSHROOMS ON TOAST

These delicious mushrooms, which are rich in antioxidants as well as being one of the few food sources of essential vitamin D, are perfect as part of a healthy morning meal.

Frodo and his companions' traipse through the Shire countryside near the beginning of The Lord of the Rings *provides the reader with a gentle, pastoral vision of Hobbit life – despite the gathering threat of the Black Riders. The iconic moment here is the supper at Farmer Maggot's house in the Marish, where the Hobbits are served a massive dish of the farmer's famous (and delicious) mushrooms.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

25g butter
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
750g mixed mushrooms, such as oyster, shiitake, flat and button, trimmed and sliced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tablespoon chopped thyme
grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
4 slices of sourdough bread
100g mixed salad leaves
salt and black pepper
Parmesan cheese, to serve

1 Melt the butter with the oil in a large frying pan. As soon as the butter stops foaming, add the mushrooms, garlic, thyme, lemon zest and salt and pepper, and cook over a medium heat, stirring, for 4–5 minutes until tender. Scatter over the parsley and squeeze over a little lemon juice.

2 Meanwhile, toast the bread, then arrange it on serving plates.

3 Top the sourdough toast with an equal quantity of the salad leaves and mushrooms, and drizzle over a little more oil and lemon juice. Scatter with Parmesan shavings and serve immediately.

DRAGON EGGS

The fascinating streaky and mottled appearance of these "dragon eggs" make them a truly exciting morning snack. With their Chinese-inspired flavours, they taste great too!

> *Dragons are the among the most ferocious beasts of Middle-earth. From the wily Glaurung to the mighty Ancalagon the Black, to the golden-red Smaug of the Lonely Mountain, Tolkien's dragons have the ability to wreak unparalleled destruction. Triumph over their dark might by eating them before they hatch.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 2 ½ HOURS, PLUS COOLING 8–12 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

8 eggs
750ml water
1 tablespoon light soy sauce
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce
2 tablespoons black tea leaves
2 star anise
1 cinnamon stick
1 tablespoon finely grated
rind of 1 orange
salt
crisp lettuce leaves, to serve

1 Place the eggs in a large saucepan with 1 teaspoon salt and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 12

minutes. Remove from the heat, drain and leave to cool. When cool, tap the eggs with the back of a spoon to crack the shells all over, but don't remove the shells.

2 Combine the measured water, soy sauces, ¼ teaspoon salt, tea leaves, star anise, cinnamon stick and orange rind in a large saucepan. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 2 hours. Remove from the heat, add the eggs and leave to stand for at least 8–12 hours.

3 Shell the eggs and cut in half, then serve with crisp lettuce leaves for a dragon-inspired brunch dish.

SPINACH AND SWEET POTATO CAKES

Liven up weekend brunch with these crispy sesame-crusted cakes and serve with soft-poached eggs for dipping them into. For a spicy version, add a little chopped red chilli to the potato mixture.

Similar to classic potato hash browns, this variation makes the most of some of the first fresh green vegetables of the spring. Bilbo's gardener, Hamfast Gamgee, "The Gaffer", would have raised a good crop of spinach almost all year round, we imagine.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR

INGREDIENTS

500g sweet potatoes, cut into chunks
125g spinach leaves
4–5 spring onions, sliced
125g mangetout, finely shredded
75g sweetcorn
3 tablespoons sesame seeds
4 tablespoons flour
olive oil, for frying
salt and black pepper

1 Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil, add the sweet potatoes and cook for about 20 minutes until tender. Drain the potatoes, then return them to the pan and place over a low heat for 1 minute, stirring constantly to evaporate any excess moisture. Lightly mash the potatoes with a fork.

2 Meanwhile, put the spinach leaves in a colander and pour a pan of boiling water over. Rinse the spinach with cold water and squeeze the leaves dry. Stir the wilted spinach into the potatoes, then add the spring onions and mangetout. Season well with salt and pepper and set aside to cool.

3 Use your hands to form the potato mixture into 12 little cakes. Mix the sesame seeds and flour together and sprinkle the mixture over the cakes.

4 Heat a little oil in a large nonstick frying pan until hot but not smoking, and cook 4 of the cakes over a moderate heat for 4–5 minutes. Once a crisp crust has formed underneath, carefully turn them over and cook for a further 4–5 minutes on the other side. Keep warm while you repeat until all the cakes are made. You may need to add more oil to the pan to cook each batch.



POTATO AND SPRING ONION RÖSTI

Rösti is a delicious way to enjoy potatoes and, here, is given a contemporary twist with a fresh and zingy salsa. For a simpler option, skip the salsa and serve the röstis with grilled tomatoes and mushrooms.

Tolkien famously excised any mention of tomatoes in later, revised editions of The Hobbit, *on the grounds that they were a New World crop. He did not, however, apply the same logic to another American species, the potato. Sam speaks very fondly of "taters", seeming to expect them to be growing wild (along with carrots and turnips) in Ithilien, the once-fair land between Gondor and Mordor. Sam would have loved this dish, then, even if he might have been surprised by the strictly "non-canonical" tomato and avocado salsa!*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

875g boiled potatoes (King Edward or Maris Piper)
6 spring onions, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, very finely chopped
1 large egg, lightly beaten
4 tablespoons sunflower oil

For the salsa (optional)
2 plum tomatoes, deseeded and roughly chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped

1 small red onion, halved and very thinly sliced
4 tablespoons finely chopped fresh coriander
2 avocados, peeled, stoned and roughly sliced
juice of 2 limes
1 tablespoon avocado oil
salt and pepper

1. Peel and coarsely grate the potatoes. Add the spring onions, garlic and egg and use your fingers to combine the mixture evenly.

2. Heat a large, nonstick frying pan over a high heat and add half of the oil.

3. Working in batches, divide the potato mixture into 8 portions. Spoon 4 of the portions into the oil and pat down to form röstis about 8–10cm in diameter. Cook for 3–4 minutes on each side and then carefully transfer to a large nonstick baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining oil and potato mixture to make 8 röstis.

4. Make the salsa, if desired, by mixing all the ingredients together in a bowl. Season well and set aside until ready to serve.

5. Serve the röstis accompanied by the salsa.







The Fellowship Arrive at Rivendell

BANNOCK

Bannocks are griddled flatbreads that originated in Scotland. Serve this version, which includes fragrant cumin seeds, with butter and the Gooseberry and Rosemary Jelly or, for a sweet version, omit the cumin seeds and add a handful of raisins or currants to the dough instead.

> *Tolkien's conception of the Elven diet seems to change somewhat over time: we may well get a very different idea of it from reading* The Hobbit *than from reading* The Lord of the Rings. *In* The Hobbit, *just before the company reaches the house of Elrond in Rivendell, Bilbo, Gandalf and the Dwarves come across a party of Elves, who tease this unlikely party of visitors with a mocking song. The Hobbit and the Dwarves must be after some supper, the Elves sing, as there are faggots roasting and bannocks baking up at the house. Earthy, un-Elvish food indeed, we may think – though a non-Scottish reader may be more puzzled by just what exactly bannocks are!*

MAKES EIGHT

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR, PLUS RISING

INGREDIENTS

450g strong white bread flour, plus extra for dusting
50g polenta
7g sachet fast-action dried yeast
1 teaspoon salt
350ml warm water

75ml olive oil, plus extra for brushing
1 teaspoon cumin seeds, plus extra to serve
sea salt flakes, to serve (optional)

1 Place the flour, polenta, yeast and salt in a bowl and mix together. Add the measured water, 3 tablespoons of the oil and the cumin seeds and mix together to form a dough.

2 Knead the dough in an electric mixer for 5 minutes, or by hand on a lightly floured surface for 10 minutes, until the dough is soft and springy. Place in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with clingfilm and leave in a warm place for about 1 hour until the mixture has doubled in size.

3 Tip the dough out on to a lightly floured surface, then punch it down and knead a couple of times until the air is knocked out. Divide the mixture into 8 equal-sized balls and keep loosely covered with lightly oiled clingfilm. Roll out each ball until 5mm thick.

4 Heat a griddle pan until smoking hot. Brush over the bannocks with a little oil, then cook, in batches, for 3–5 minutes on each side until lightly charred and cooked through. Tear into large chunks and serve warm, scattered with some cumin seeds and sea salt flakes, if preferred.



FOREST FRUIT BRUSCHETTA

These sing of summer, and the sweetness of the berries, contrasted with salty feta and bitter watercress, makes for a refreshing brunch option. If in season, use 4 peaches, halved, stoned and sliced, instead of strawberries.

One of the iconic scenes in The Lord of the Rings *is the Hobbits' encounter with the mysterious Tom Bombadil and his wife, Goldberry. The couple give the Hobbits a warm, safe place to recuperate after Tom rescues them from the clutches of Old Man Willow in the Old Forest, and for their supper they serve them "bread, butter, cheese with herbs, and ripe berries gathered".*

Here we have reimagined these ingredients together in a beautiful and delicious way: berry bruschetta, an elegant and unexpected variation on the more traditional tomato style.

SERVES SIX

PREP AND COOK 20 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

2 sourdough baguettes, sliced
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
200g strawberries, hulled and roughly chopped
large handful of blueberries
125g feta cheese, crumbled
a few watercress sprigs
balsamic glaze, to serve

1 Cut the baguettes into 1.5cm slices. Place the slices on a baking sheet and drizzle with the oil. Bake in a preheated oven, 200˚C, Gas Mark 6, for 10–12 minutes until golden.

2 Remove from the oven and top the toasts with the strawberries, blueberries and the feta cheese and top each with a few watercress sprigs if desired.

DATE AND SESAME BARS

Easily transportable, these bars are ideal for breakfast on the run or a mid-morning snack. You can change things up by swapping the dates for an equal quantity of other dried fruit – try apricots, cherries, cranberries or blueberries.

We might imagine these delicious bars, packed with dates, eaten by the nomadic peoples of the Harad as a pick-me-up as they journey through the desert and debatable lands to the south of Gondor.

MAKES SIXTEEN

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

125g unsalted butter
75g golden caster sugar
1 tablespoon clear honey
150g stoned dates, chopped
125g self-raising flour
125g medium oatmeal
50g sesame seeds

1. Grease a 28 x 18cm shallow baking tin.

2. Put the butter, sugar and honey in a saucepan and heat gently until the butter has melted, then remove from the heat and stir in the dates.

3. Put the flour and oatmeal in a bowl. Add the sesame seeds, reserving 2 tablespoons, pour in the butter mixture and mix until combined.

4 Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and level the surface. Scatter over the reserved sesame seeds.

5 Bake in a preheated oven, 180˚C, Gas Mark 4, for 20–25 minutes or until golden and just firm to the touch. Leave to cool in the tin, then transfer to a board and cut into 16 bars.

SPICED APPLE BUTTER

A truly versatile recipe, this can be enjoyed spread on toast, scones and muffins, as a condiment with cheese and crackers, dolloped on top of pancakes and waffles, stirred into Porridge or added to Traveller's Overnight Oats.

> *This recipe takes its inspiration from the scene in* The Lord of the Rings *where, as the Hobbits and their new companion, Strider, leave Bree, Sam chucks an apple at the odious Bill Ferny, who is lurking behind a hedge. A waste of a good apple, indeed – so here is something better to do with this fruit!*



MAKES THREE TO FOUR JARS

PREP AND COOK 2 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

1.25kg cooking apples, roughly chopped
1 cinnamon stick
1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1 lemon, chopped
600ml water
about 625g granulated sugar

1. Add the apples, spices, chopped lemon and water to a preserving pan. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 1 hour, or until the fruit is reduced to a pulp.

2. Puree in small batches in a food processor or liquidizer.

3. Press the mixture through a fine sieve, then weigh the resulting purée and put it into a clean pan. For every 500g of purée add 375g sugar and cook over a low heat, stirring continuously, until the sugar has completely dissolved. Increase the heat to medium, then cook for about 30 minutes, stirring frequently, until the mixture is reduced by half and is thick and glossy and falls slowly from a wooden spoon.

4. Ladle into warm, dry, sterilized jars, filling to the very top. Cover with screw-top lids, or with waxed discs and cellophane tops secured with elastic bands. Label and leave to cool.





GOOSEBERRY AND ROSEMARY JELLY

The savoury hint that gooseberry and rosemary adds to the sweetness of the apple makes for a full-bodied jelly that is excellent on toast for breakfast and works equally well as a condiment to serve with oily fish.

This jelly is inspired by Samwise Gamgee's love of herbs. When cooking his Coney Stew on the journey to Mordor, Sam asks Gollum/Sméagol to find some herbs to add some flavour (though he ends up foraging for them himself). A skilled gardener, it is likely that the resourceful Hobbit would have had fresh herbs handy in the kitchen garden at Number 3, Bagshot Row, and would doubtless use them at every opportunity.

MAKES THREE TO FOUR JARS

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR, PLUS STRAINING

INGREDIENTS

1.5kg gooseberries, no need to top and tail (if gooseberries are unavailable, substitute for a tart fruit such as fresh cranberries, red currants or rhubarb)
1 litre water
4–5 stems fresh rosemary
about 875g granulated sugar
15g butter (optional)

1 Add the gooseberries, measured water and rosemary to a preserving pan. Bring to the boil, then cover and simmer gently for 20–30 minutes, stirring and mashing the fruit from time to time with a fork, until soft.

2 Leave to cool slightly, then pour into a scalded jelly bag suspended over a large bowl and allow to drip for several hours.

3 Measure the clear liquid and pour back into the rinsed preserving pan. Weigh 500g sugar for every 600ml of liquid, then pour into the preserving pan. Heat gently, stirring from time to time, until the sugar has dissolved.

4 Bring to the boil, then boil rapidly until setting point is reached (10–15 minutes). If there is scum on the top of the jelly, skim it off with a slotted spoon or stir in the butter to disperse it.

5 Ladle into warm, dry, sterilized jars, filling to the very top. Cover with screw-top lids, or with waxed discs and cellophane tops secured with elastic bands. Label and leave to cool.



ELEVENSES

There is some debate among Tolkien fans about whether elevenses is a different meal from second breakfast and quite how to account for the Hobbits' six meals a day. Elevenses is certainly a common English term for a late-morning snack, but Tolkien makes use of it just once, in his description of the "long-expected party" (it's at elevenses that the day's feasting begins). Moreover, Bilbo eats second breakfast as late as ten-thirty, just half an hour before, so the two meals seem to all but coincide time-wise. All that matters, perhaps, is that Hobbits like their food … and plenty of it.



MUSHROOM PASTRY CAULDRONS

These delicious mouthfuls of pastry with a savoury filling are a perfect late-morning treat. You can vary the herbs, depending on what you have to hand, but mushrooms and tarragon go especially well together.

In some of Tolkien's drafts for what eventually became The Silmarillion, *during the Ages of the Trees, the Valar gather the dewy light of Telperion, the Silver Tree, and collect it in the cauldron Silindrin. Eventually the contents of the cauldron are used in the creation of the sun after the destruction of the Two Trees by Melkor and Ungoliant.*

These little pastry cauldrons are inspired by this great cauldron from which the sun was born. Delight in their warmth and reflect on the sun's powerful light.

MAKES SIXTEEN

PREP AND COOK 30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

100g butter
6 ready-made filo pastry sheets
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, chopped
250g mixed mushrooms, trimmed and thinly sliced
125g mascarpone cheese
2 teaspoons chopped herbs, such as tarragon, chervil and chives, plus extra to garnish (optional)
salt and black pepper

1 Melt half the butter. Brush over 3 sheets of filo pastry and sandwich together. Repeat with another 3 sheets, then cut each into 6 squares. Grease a 12-hole muffin in, place a filo square into each hole and gently push down. Bake in a preheated oven, 180˚C, Gas Mark 5, for 8–10 minutes until crisp.

2 Meanwhile, melt the remaining butter in a frying pan and cook the onion and garlic over a medium heat for 6–7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened and golden. Add the mushrooms and fry for a further 3–4 minutes, until softened.

3 Stir in the mascarpone and herbs, add a pinch of salt and pepper, then remove from the heat. Spoon the filling into the pastry cases, top with snipped chives and serve warm.

CRAM

Dense and filling, these seeded flatbreads are the perfect vehicle for all kinds of toppings from pickles and cheese to smoked salmon and cured meats. Experiment with your favourite toppings and take these with you on your next picnic. Stored in an airtight tin, they will keep for up to a week.

> *Cram is a type of travelling bread made by the men of Dale both for their own use and to sell to the Dwarves of Erebor.*

MAKES TWENTY

PREP AND COOK 40 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

125g medium oatmeal
75g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
4 tablespoons mixed seeds, such as poppy seeds, linseeds and sesame seeds
½ teaspoon celery salt or sea salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
50g unsalted butter, chilled and diced
5 tablespoons cold water

1. Put the oatmeal, flour, seeds, salt and pepper in a bowl or food processor. Add the butter and rub in with the fingertips or process until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the measured water and mix or blend to a firm dough, adding a little more water if the dough feels dry.

2. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to 2.5mm thick. Cut out 20 rounds using a 6cm plain or fluted biscuit cutter, re-rolling the

trimmings to make more. Place slightly apart on a large greased baking sheet.

3 Bake in a preheated oven, 180˚C, Gas Mark 4, for about 25 minutes until firm. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

LEMBAS BREAD

With the hint of spiciness from the chilli, this bread is delicious warm from the oven alongside the Smoky Stewed Beans or simply accompanied by a few rashers of crispy bacon. It's also very good with mature Cheddar and a few Sweet Pickled Cucumbers for lunch.

> *Lembas bread feeds the soul even more than the belly, helping travellers maintain the willpower to overcome tremendous obstacles and intimidating distances. Galadriel gifts the Fellowship a stock of Lembas breads, each wrapped in mallorn leaves to sustain them during the hardships ahead.*
>
> *According to* The Silmarillion, *Lembas is first made by Yavanna, the Valarian queen responsible for all things that grow on the earth, using a special corn that grows in Aman. It is therefore likely that Lembas would have been similar in texture and appearance to a deliciously comforting cornbread.*

MAKES SIXTEEN SQUARES

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

150g plain flour
150g polenta
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 tablespoon caster sugar
3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese or vegetarian equivalent

handful of fresh parsley leaves, chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 eggs, beaten
300ml buttermilk

1. Oil a 20cm square cake tin.

2. Sift together the flour, polenta, salt and baking powder into a large bowl. Stir in the sugar, Parmesan, parsley and chilli.

3. Mix together the oil, eggs and buttermilk in a separate bowl, then gently stir into the dry ingredients until combined.

4. Pour the mixture into the prepared tin and place in a preheated oven, 190°C, Gas Mark 5, for 30–35 minutes until golden.

5. Remove from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool slightly, before cutting into 16 squares. This bread can be eaten warm or cold and is best eaten on the same day.



Yavanna

ELVISH WHITE BREAD ROLLS

These rolls are ideal as an accompaniment to soups and stews, and would be perfect alongside the Lake-town Beef Pot Roast. For a cheese and onion variation, replace the seeds with 5 spring onions, very finely chopped and lightly cooked for 1 minute in 1 tablespoon olive oil. Once glazed, sprinkle with 3 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

> *Lembas may be the most famous Elvish bread, but it does not appear to be something that's eaten on a daily basis because, we are told, a single bite can fill a Man's stomach for a whole day. In their normal daily lives, Elves enjoy a delicious light and airy white bread, as discovered by Frodo and his companions when they come across a party of High Elves in the Green-Hill Country of the Shire.*

MAKES TWELVE ROLLS

PREP AND COOK 2 HOURS, INCLUDING RESTING TIME

INGREDIENTS

5g active dried yeast
300ml warm (not hot) water
500g strong plain flour, plus extra for dusting
1 teaspoon salt, plus a pinch
25g butter, cut into cubes
4 tablespoons sunflower seeds
2 tablespoons poppy seeds
2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds
1 egg yolk

pinch of salt
1 tablespoon cold water

1 Sprinkle the yeast over the measured warm water, stir well and set aside for 10 minutes until it becomes frothy. Sift the flour and salt into a large bowl and add the butter. Rub the butter into the flour until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add all the seeds and stir.

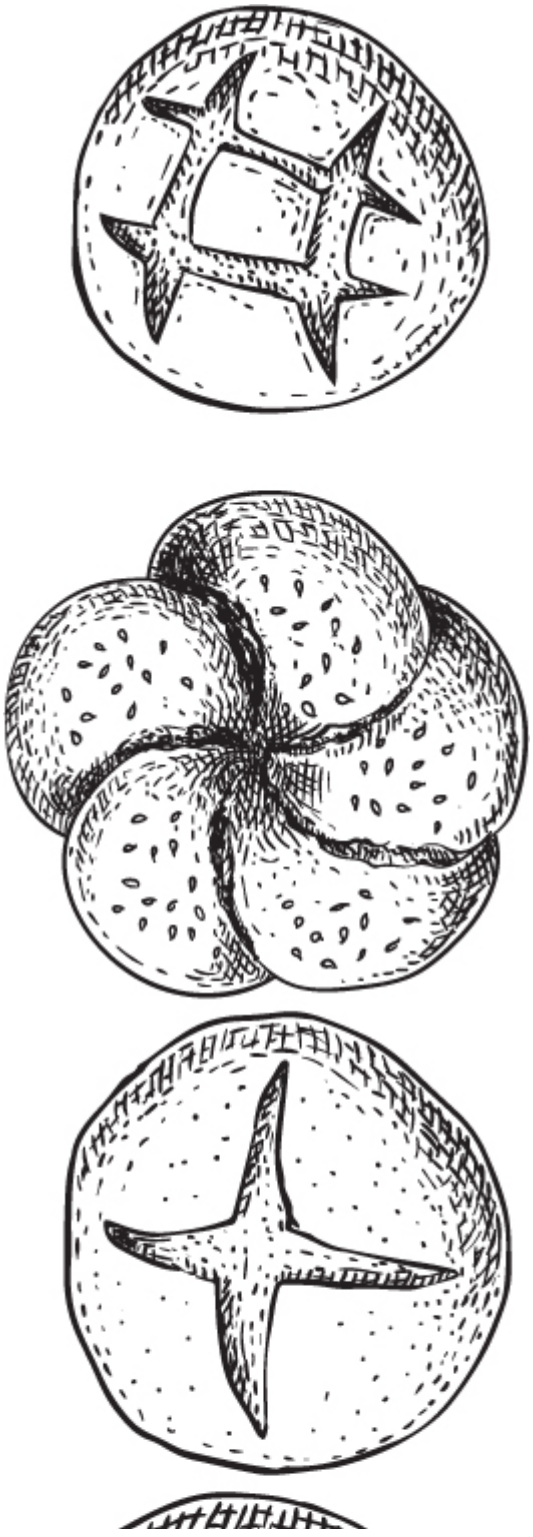
2 Make a well in the centre and add the yeast mixture. Stir well with a wooden spoon, then use your hands to mix to a firm dough.

3 Knead for 5 minutes until the dough feels firm, elastic and no longer sticky. Return to the bowl, cover with clingfilm and set aside in a warm place for 30 minutes until the dough has doubled in size.

4 Turn out the dough and knead again to knock out the air, then divide into 12 pieces. Knead each piece briefly, then form into a roll shape, or roll each piece into a long sausage shape and form into a loose knot. Place the rolls on a lightly greased baking sheet, cover with a clean tea towel and set aside in a warm place for 30 minutes until almost doubled in size.

5 Mix the egg yolk in a small bowl with a pinch of salt and the measured cold water and brush over the rolls to glaze. Bake in a preheated oven, 200°C, Gas Mark 6, for 15–20 minutes until golden and sounding hollow when tapped lightly on the base. Remove from the oven and allow to cool a little.





SWEET PICKLED CUCUMBERS

Just the thing to perk up all kinds of sandwiches with their piquant taste, these are also great with beef and hot-smoked trout and as an addition to a cheeseboard. Add 2 teaspoons of mustard seeds for a spicier version.

Pickling and preserving were a key skill of the Victorian housewife and cook, but also, it seems, of Hobbits. Bilbo, certainly, must have a good stock of pickles in his larders, as Gandalf seems to know when he asks the beleaguered Hobbit to bring some out along with the cold chicken. Being a Wizard has to have some advantages!

MAKES THREE JARS

PREP AND COOK 30 MINUTES, PLUS 4 HOURS SOAKING AND 3–4 WEEKS MATURING

INGREDIENTS

2 large cucumbers, thinly sliced
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
50g salt
450ml white wine vinegar
375g granulated sugar
½ teaspoon turmeric
2 teaspoons fennel seeds
½ teaspoon dried crushed red chillies
¼ teaspoon peppercorns, roughly crushed

1 Layer the cucumbers, onions and salt in a bowl, cover with a plate and weight down, then leave to soak for 4 hours.

2 Meanwhile, pour the vinegar into a saucepan, add the sugar and the remaining ingredients and heat gently, stirring from time to time, until the sugar has dissolved, then leave to cool.

3 Tip the cucumber and onions into a colander and drain off the liquid. Rinse with plenty of cold water and drain well. Reheat the vinegar mixture until just boiling, add the drained cucumber and onion, cook for 1 minute, then lift out of the vinegar with a slotted spoon and pack into warm, dry, sterilized jars. Boil the remaining vinegar mixture for 4–5 minutes until syrupy, then leave to cool. Pour the cold vinegar mixture over the cucumber slices to completely cover and to fill the jars to the top (adding a little extra vinegar if needed).

4 Screw on lids, label and leave to mature in a cool, dark place for 3–4 weeks.



Gandalf

DWARVEN SPICED PICKLED BEETROOT

Homemade pickled beetroot is a classic accompaniment to cold meats and cheese. This spicy, punchy version can be served sliced into salads and sandwiches or as topping for Cram.

> *Living in their underground mines means that Tolkien's Dwarves would probably have needed to rely on preserved foods between deliveries from the surface. This recipe takes a vegetable that can be stored a long while in a cellar and extends its life by an extra 3–4 weeks. These pickled beets can be a much-needed flavour injection at the end of a long winter.*

MAKES THREE JARS

PREP AND COOK 1–1 ½ HOURS, PLUS 3–4 WEEKS MATURING

INGREDIENTS

1kg beetroot (about 10), leaves trimmed to about 2cm from the tops
600ml malt vinegar
125g granulated sugar
3.5cm piece of root ginger, peeled and finely chopped
4 teaspoons allspice berries, roughly crushed
½ teaspoon black peppercorns, roughly crushed
½ teaspoon salt

1. Cook the beetroot in a saucepan of boiling water for 30–60 minutes, depending on their size, or until a knife can be inserted into the largest one easily. Drain, leave to cool, then peel off the skins with a small knife.

2. Meanwhile, pour the vinegar into a saucepan, add the sugar and remaining ingredients. Heat gently, stirring from time to time, until the

sugar has dissolved. Increase the heat and simmer for 3 minutes, then remove from the heat and leave to cool.

3 Cut the beetroot into chunks and pack into warm, dry, sterilized jars. Pour over the cold vinegar mixture, covering the beetroot so that the vinegar comes to the top of the jars (adding a little extra vinegar if needed).

4 Screw on lids, label and leave to mature in a cool, dark place for 3–4 weeks.

PICKLED PEACHES

Enjoy the flavour of summer in colder months with these quick and easy pickled peaches. Pair with roast pork, chicken, duck or strong cheese.

The real-world peach originates in China and first came to Europe via Persia, which country gives it its name (from the Latin for "Persian apple") in many European languages. While they are unmentioned by Tolkien in his books, we might well imagine peaches growing in the Mediterranean climate of Gondor, perhaps in the green and well-watered region of Lebennin, which in Middle-earth sits at a similar latitude to the south of Italy which is also famous for its peaches.

MAKES ONE LARGE JAR

PREP AND COOK 2 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

300ml white malt vinegar
500g granulated sugar
1 teaspoon whole cloves
1 teaspoon whole allspice berries
7cm piece cinnamon stick, halved
1kg small peaches, halved and stoned

1 In a large saucepan, gently heat the vinegar, sugar and spices until the sugar has dissolved Add the peaches and cook very gently for 4–5 minutes until just tender but still firm. Using a slotted spoon, pack the peaches tightly into a large warm, dry and sterilized jar.

2 Boil the pickling syrup for 2–3 minutes to concentrate the flavours, then pour over the fruit, filling the jar to the very top. Top up with a little extra warm vinegar if needed.

3 Add a small piece of crumpled greaseproof paper to stop the fruit from rising out of the vinegar in the jar. Screw or clip on the lid, label and leave to cool.

4 After a few hours, the peaches will begin to rise in the jar, but as they become saturated with the syrup they will sink once more; at this point they will be ready to eat. A properly sealed jar should keep for 6 weeks.

PORK PIE

A recipe for all occasions, this pork pie, though it takes a while to make, is great as part of a buffet, goes down well as a late-morning snack, and is perfect for picnics and lunch with sliced tomatoes and pickles – try it with the Sweet Pickled Cucumbers.

> *At the beginning of* The Hobbit, *Bombur, the fattest of the 13 Dwarves who make up Thorin and Company, puts in an order for pork pie and salad from Bilbo shortly after arriving at Bag End. Both pigs and boars appear occasionally in Tolkien's Middle-earth books – notably the monstrous Boar of Everholt slain by King Folca of Rohan – though it's mostly in the form of bacon that we get to meet them!*

MAKES TWELVE PIES

PREP AND COOK 1 ½ HOURS

INGREDIENTS

1 bunch spring onions, finely chopped
Pinch of chilli flakes
225g pork loin, finely chopped
100g bacon, finely chopped
Small bunch chives, chopped
Small bunch parsley, finely chopped
Salt and black pepper
12 quail's eggs, soft-boiled and peeled, or 1 egg, cut into slices
1 egg, beaten

For the pastry
200g plain flour

Pinch of salt
100g butter, cubed
2–3 tablespoons water, to mix

1. First make the pastry. In a large bowl mix the flour with the salt. Using your fingertips, rub the butter into the flour until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.

2. Add the water gradually while using a knife to mix. Lightly knead the dough to bring it together into a ball, then wrap it in clingfilm and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, make the filling. Mix together the spring onions, chilli, pork loin, pancetta, herbs and seasoning.

4. Lightly grease a 12-hole muffin tin and line each with a strip of greaseproof paper.

5. Remove the pastry from the fridge. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the chilled pastry and cut 12 x 9cm rounds for the pie cases and 12 x 7cm round for the lids. Carefully press the larger rounds into the holes of the greased muffin tin.

6. Half fill each case with the filling, top with a soft-boiled quail's egg, then add another layer of filling.

7. Brush the top edge of each pie with a little beaten egg and place a small round of pastry on top, pressing together to seal.

8. Make a small hole in the top of each to allow steam to escape, then brush each with more beaten egg to glaze. Bake for 20 minutes in a preheated oven, 200˚C, Gas Mark 6, then reduce the temperature to 160˚C, Gas mark 3 and cook for a further 25–30 minutes until the pastry is golden.

9. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.



Dwarves

BEORN'S WARM BAKED CHEESE

What could be nicer than warm, oozy cheese, enhanced with sweet honey, tart cranberries and crunchy pecans? Ideal as a light meal or a starter, all this needs is plenty of fresh crusty bread for scooping and eating.

Honey – along with plenty of cream and cheese – feature heavily in the vegetarian diet of the Beornings, a shape-changing people for whom Tolkien seems to have taken inspiration from the Berserkers, the Viking "bear-shirt" warriors.

To these staples, we have added some dried berries and nuts, which real bears are quite fond of too. This starter will satisfy the bear inside every Man, Dwarf and Hobbit.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 20 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

300g whole baby Brie or Camembert in a box
3 tablespoons honey
25g pecans
handful dried cranberries
thyme sprigs

1 Remove any plastic packaging from the cheese and return it to its wooden box. Place on a baking sheet and drizzle generously with honey. Cook in a preheated oven, 200°C, Gas Mark 6, for 15 minutes.

2 Meanwhile, toast the pecans in a small frying pan for 3–5 minutes until lightly browned, then set aside.

3 Take the cheese from the oven and cut a small cross in the centre. Scatter with the pecans, dried cranberries and thyme and serve with crusty bread.

ALE, APPLE AND MUSTARD CHUTNEY

An excellent and unusual way to use up a glut of cooking apples, this tangy chutney will take your cold beef and ham sandwiches to a new level. It's really easy to make as all it needs is the occasional stir as it bubbles away in the kitchen.

> *Ales and apples both seem quintessentially Hobbitish, so we may well imagine this chutney being enjoyed by Sam's father, Hamfast – known as "The Gaffer" – alongside a chunk of cheese, a hunk of bread and, of course, a pint or two down at the Green Dragon in Bywater.*

MAKES FOUR JARS

PREP AND COOK 2 ½ HOURS, PLUS 3 WEEKS MATURING

INGREDIENTS

1kg cooking apples, quartered, cored, peeled and diced
500g onions, finely chopped
250g celery, diced
250g stoned dates, diced
550ml brown ale
150ml malt vinegar
300g demerara sugar
2 tablespoons white mustard seeds, roughly crushed
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon peppercorns, roughly crushed

1 Add all the ingredients to a preserving pan and cook, uncovered, over a gentle heat for 1 ¾–2 hours, stirring from time to time, but more

frequently toward the end of cooking as the chutney thickens.

2 Ladle into warm, dry, sterilized jars, filling to the very top and pressing down well. Disperse any air pockets with a skewer or small knife and cover with screw-top lids.

3 Label and leave to mature in a cool, dark place for at least 3 weeks.



CRICKHOLLOW APPLE LOAF

Delicious served spread with butter, this will keep for up to a week in an airtight tin – though it's likely to be eaten long before then! If you are making this for children, use apple juice instead of the cider.

Crickhollow is an out-of-the way location in Buckland across the Brandywine River from the Shire proper. It is Frodo's first destination upon leaving Bag End, on his quest to smuggle the One Ring to Rivendell. To help cover his tracks, he buys a house there with a wide lawn, low trees and an outer hedge.

Given Hobbits' love of eating and gardening, it's quite likely that at least some of the "low" trees on Frodo's Crickhollow property were apple trees, which stay small throughout their lives. This apple loaf might have been a treat baked in the Crickhollow house kitchen using fruit from the garden.

MAKES ONE LOAF

PREP AND COOK 1–1 ½ HOURS, PLUS 4 HOURS SOAKING

INGREDIENTS

300ml dry cider or cloudy apple juice
1 large cooking apple, about 300g in total, cored, peeled and chopped
175g mixed dried fruit
150g caster sugar
300g self-raising flour
2 eggs, beaten
1 tablespoon sunflower seeds
1 tablespoon pumpkin seeds

1 Pour the cider into a saucepan, add the apple and dried fruit and bring to the boil. Simmer for 3–5 minutes until the apple is just tender but still firm. Remove the pan from the heat and leave to soak for 4 hours.

2 Mix the sugar, flour and eggs into the soaked fruit and stir well.

3 Grease and line the base and 2 long sides of a 1kg loaf tin with oiled greaseproof paper. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and spread the surface level. Sprinkle with the seeds and bake in the centre of a preheated oven, 160°C, Gas Mark 3, for 1 hour–1 hour 10 minutes until well risen, the top has slightly cracked and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.

4 Leave to cool in the tin for 10 minutes then loosen the edges and lift out of the tin using the lining paper.

5 Transfer to a wire rack, peel off the lining paper and leave to cool completely. Serve cut into slices and spread with a little butter.



WESTFARTHING FAIRINGS

These delicate biscuits are perfect with a cup of tea and will keep in an airtight tin for up to three days. To ring the changes, swap the golden syrup for maple syrup.

The Shire is divided into four regions called Farthings – from the Old English feorthing, *or fourth part. Westfarthing is home to the capital of the Shire, the town of Michel Delving, and Hobbiton, where Bilbo and Frodo's home, Bag End, is located. We think these little biscuits pair perfectly with a cup of tea and are perfect for serving to guests who visit in between those six Hobbit meals.*

MAKES TWELVE BISCUITS

PREP AND COOK 35 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

100g plain flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ teaspoon ground allspice or mixed spice
finely grated zest of 1 lemon
50g butter, diced
50g caster sugar
2 tablespoons golden syrup

1 Mix the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, spices and lemon zest together in a mixing bowl. Rub in the butter with your fingertips until

the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.

2 Stir in the sugar, add the syrup and mix together with a spoon. Squeeze the crumbs together with your hands to form a ball.

3 Shape the dough into a log then slice into 12. Roll each piece into a ball and arrange on 2 large greased baking sheets, leaving space between for them to spread during cooking.

4 Cook one sheet at a time in the centre of a preheated oven, 180°C, Gas Mark 4, for 8–10 minutes or until cracked and golden.

5 Leave to harden for 1–2 minutes then loosen and transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

CHERRY AND ALMOND TRAYBAKE

Use fresh cherries when they are in season, instead of glacé, but you will need to eat the cake up quickly – it will be more moist so won't keep for more than a day or two.

The Ents – shepherds of the trees – are among the most mysterious creatures in Tolkien's works – yet more mysterious still are the Entwives. Tolkien tells us their sad story through the mouth of the Ent leader Treebeard: how, long ago, they left their male spouses to tend to the "lesser trees" – the trees of orchards and gardens – and to teach Men the arts of agriculture and horticulture. This moreish traybake is inspired by the memory of the lost and much-missed Entwives and by their well-tended cherry trees.

MAKES TEN SQUARES

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR

INGREDIENTS

225g self-raising flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
100g unsalted butter, chilled and diced
100g golden caster sugar
1 egg, beaten
125ml milk
1 teaspoon almond extract
200g natural glacé cherries, halved or 400g fresh, stoned
50g flaked almonds
sifted icing sugar, for dusting

1. Grease and line a 23cm square shallow baking tin.

2. Combine the flour, baking powder and butter in a bowl or food processor until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the caster sugar and combine, then tip into a bowl.

3. Mix the egg, milk and almond extract together. Add to the dry mixture with half the cherries and stir until combined.

4. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and spread in an even layer. Scatter over the remaining cherries, then the flaked almonds.

5. Bake in a preheated oven, 180˚C, Gas Mark 4, for 25–30 minutes or until golden and just firm to the touch. Leave to cool in the tin, then transfer to a board and peel off the lining paper. Dust with sifted icing sugar and cut into squares.

BARLIMAN BUTTERBUR'S BLACKBERRY TART

Make the most of late-summer bounty with this tart, which can be served warm or cold as a mid-morning treat or, with whipped cream, as a dessert. The lattice pastry topping looks very impressive but is easy to do.

For almost all the Hobbits of the Shire, The Prancing Pony inn in the village of Bree, out on the Great East Road where it meets the Greenway, represents the limit of their geographic knowledge. It seems that only the most intrepid of Tolkien's Bucklanders occasionally venture through the Hay Gate and make a visit to the inn. Perhaps one of their incentives might have been the promise of blackberry tart, a speciality on the menu of The Pony's forgetful innkeeper, Barliman Butterbur.

SERVES EIGHT

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR, PLUS CHILLING AND COOLING

INGREDIENTS

500g blackberries
juice of ½ lemon
100g caster sugar
2 tablespoons cornflour, mixed with a little water to form a paste

For the pastry
175g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
100g butter, diced
40g icing sugar, plus extra for dusting
40g ground almonds
grated zest of 1 lemon

2 egg yolks

1. Make the pastry. Add the flour and butter to a bowl and rub in with your fingertips or an electric mixer until you have fine crumbs. Stir in the icing sugar, almonds and lemon zest, then the egg yolks, and mix to form a dough. Chill for 15 minutes.

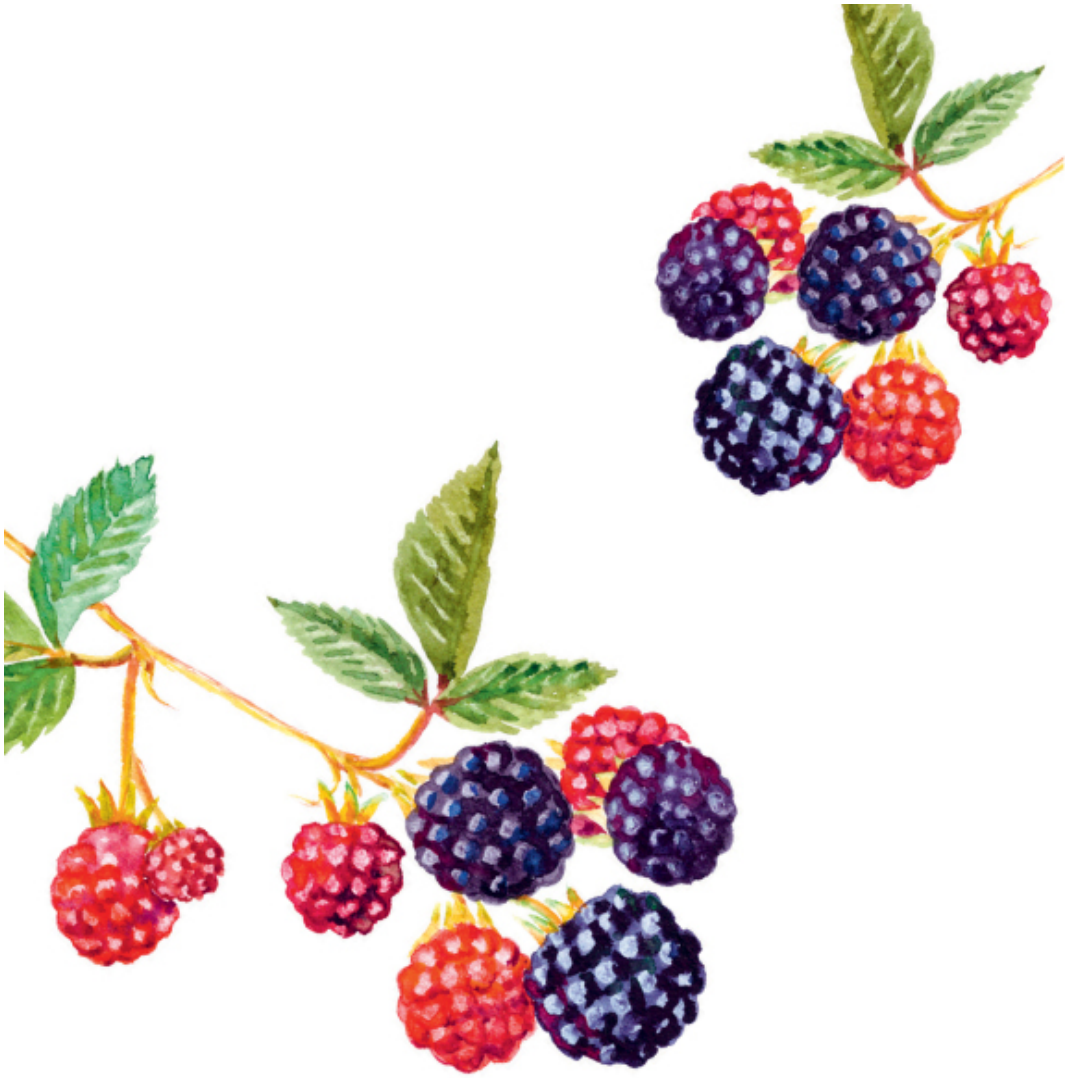
2. Knead the pastry, then cut off and reserve a quarter. Roll out the remainder thinly on a lightly floured surface to fit a buttered 24cm fluted loose-bottomed tart tin. Press the pastry over the base and sides of the tin.

3. Trim off the excess and add the trimmings to the reserved pastry. Chill the tart and trimmings for 15 minutes.

4. Add 200g of the blackberries, the lemon juice and caster sugar to a pan and simmer for 5 minutes until the blackberries are soft. Stir in the cornflour paste and cook over a high heat, stirring until the fruit compote thickens. Leave to cool.

5. Spread the blackberry compote over the tart base, then sprinkle the remaining blackberries over the top. Brush the pastry edge with water. Roll out the trimmings and cut into 1cm wide strips and arrange as a lattice over the tart, pressing the edges but not trimming off the excess.

6. Bake the tart on a baking sheet in a preheated oven, 190°C, Gas Mark 5, for 25–30 minutes until the pastry is golden and the base is cooked. Trim off the excess pastry from the lattice. Transfer to a serving plate, dust with icing sugar and serve.





Food on the Go

In the pre-industrial world of Middle-earth, travel – sometimes undertaken by horse, occasionally by horse and cart, but most often on foot – is painfully slow. Only the Eagles and a quasi-magical horse like Shadowfax are able to cover vast distances quickly. For this reason, while there seems to be the occasional inn offering homecooked fare, for the most part travellers must fend for themselves, carrying vital supplies with them and cooking, where safe and possible, over an open campfire. They also have to carry some basic cooking equipment. Sam's pack, we learn in *The Lord of the Rings*, contains a few precious items: a tinderbox, two shallow pans, a wooden spoon, a two-pronged fork, skewers and "a dwindling treasure" of salt.

Fortunately, there seems to a number of foods specifically made for the long-distance traveller or warrior on the march. The Elves make Lembas, or Waybread (here), which, according to legend, is a kind of cornbread originally made by the Vala Yavanna for the Elves undertaking the Great Journey to Aman. Wrapped in mallorn leaves and left unbroken, we are told that Lembas can stay fresh and sweet for "many many days", and just one of the breads will keep a traveller on his feet for a whole day, even if he is one of the tall Men of Minas Tirith.

Men have their own kind of Waybread, too, even if of a rather less miraculous kind. The Men of Lake-town produce a nourishing, if uninspiring, hard biscuit known as Cram (we have devised a much more delicious version; see here), while the Beorning chieftain Beorn makes, to own secret recipe, twice-baked honey cakes (here), which, he claims, can help sustain travellers during a long march.

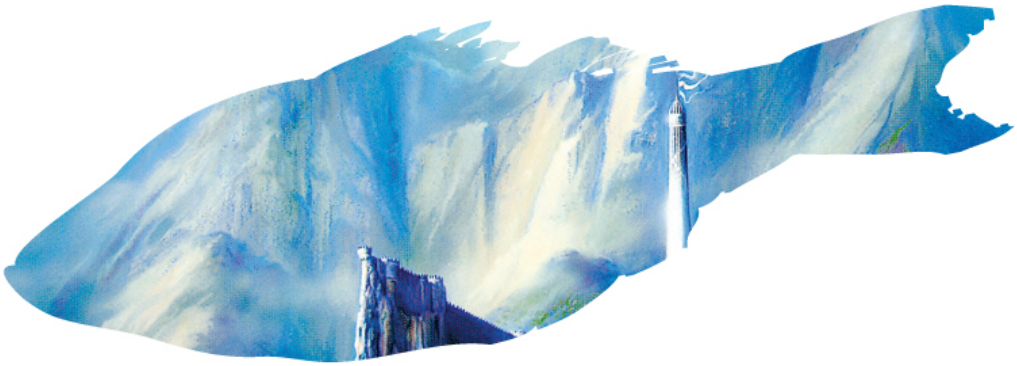
All these are well and good, but nothing can beat a proper, cooked meal, which, even on the most arduous trek, can conjure up comforting feelings of home. The classic campfire meal in *The Lord of the Rings* is the coney stew cooked by Sam (here), after Gollum produces two dead rabbits for his Hobbit masters. Much to Gollum's disgust, Sam sets about using them to

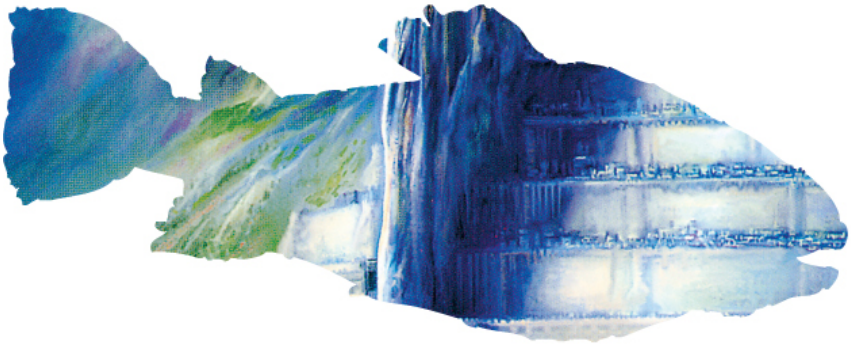
make a stew, for which he finds a few herbs but no stock or “taters” (potatoes). Simple as the dish is, the food seems like a feast to the half-starved Hobbits, reviving their spirits before they continue their journey into Mordor.



LUNCHEON

Lunch is a rather overlooked meal in our real world, often reduced to a quick sandwich and a cup of coffee at a desk. In the Shire, however, lunch is an important meal, as Peregrin Took is quick to point out on the Hobbits' first full day's march after leaving Hobbiton, near the beginning of The Lord of the Rings. *The road may go on for ever—so Bilbo is fond of pointing out—but no one, least of all the rather lazy Pippin, can do without a rest and a proper bite to eat.*







WARM FIG AND PROSCIUTTO SALAD WITH BLUE CHEESE

This salad is perfect for eating al fresco on summer days. It's just as delicious without the prosciutto if you'd prefer a vegetarian option.

Tolkien wrote that his Númenórean civilization was partly inspired by ancient Egypt. You can see that inspiration in the names of some of the Númenórean kings, such as Ar-Pharazôn, and in the "valley of the tombs" at the foot of the sacred mountain at the centre of Númenor, Meneltarma, which resembles the real-world Egyptian Valley of the Kings with its elaborate royal tombs.

In honour of Númenor's spiritual connection to ancient Egypt, this dish features figs, which were popular with the Egyptians.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 banana shallots, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 teaspoons raspberry vinegar
8 small, ripe but firm figs
100g Gorgonzola cheese
100g rocket leaves
8 wafer-thin slices of prosciutto-style ham
salt and black pepper
lightly crushed toasted hazelnuts, to garnish (optional)

1 Heat the oil in a small frying pan over a medium-low heat. Add the shallots and garlic and fry for 4–5 minutes, until softened. Remove from the heat and whisk in the vinegar plus a pinch of salt and pepper.

2 Meanwhile, use a sharp knife to score a cross into the top of the figs. Prise them open and fill with the Gorgonzola. Place on a baking sheet, drizzle with a little oil and slide under a preheated medium-hot grill for 4–5 minutes, until melting and lightly coloured.

3 Arrange the rocket, warm figs and ham on 4 plates. Drizzle over the warm dressing and serve immediately, scattered with toasted hazelnuts, and a pinch of black pepper.

WALNUT, PEAR AND GREEN LEAF SALAD

The Parmesan "croûtes" make this a very elegant-looking salad, though if you are pushed for time you could simply use a vegetable peeler to shave whisper-thin slices of Parmesan over the salad just before serving.

Salad is among the many refreshments requested by the Dwarves who land unexpectedly on Bilbo's doorstep at the beginning of The Hobbit. *They were likely present with other meals, such as at Tom Bombadil and Goldberry's vegetarian table, and at larger feasts where all manner of foods were served. While very few characters in Tolkien's legendarium are strictly vegetarian, vegetables seem to be enjoyed with gusto by the heroes of every one of the Free Peoples, be they Man, Elf, Dwarf or Hobbit.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 20 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

75g Parmesan cheese, grated
2 large ripe pears, halved, cored and cut into thin slices
50g walnut pieces, lightly toasted
125g mixed salad leaves

For the dressing
6 tablespoons walnut oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon grainy mustard

2 teaspoons caster sugar
several tarragon sprigs, roughly chopped

1 Oil a foil-lined baking sheet and scatter the Parmesan over it, spreading it into a thin layer about 25cm square. Cook under a hot grill for 2–3 minutes until the cheese has melted and is pale golden in colour. Leave until cool enough to handle, then peel the foil away, letting the cheese break into pieces to form “croûtes”.

2 Whisk together the dressing ingredients in a large bowl.

3 Add the pears, walnuts and salad leaves to the bowl with the dressing and toss together. Pile on to 4 serving plates and scatter with the Parmesan croûtes.

FORAGED SALAD

For a more substantial meal, thinly slice 3 chorizo sausages diagonally and fry in a hot pan until golden and crispy. Drain on kitchen paper, then add to the salad.

The Rangers of the North are Men descended from the Dúnedain of the lost kingdom of Arnor who patrol its former lands and guard its remaining fragments such as the Shire and Breeland. When we first meet Aragorn at the beginning of The Lord of the Rings, *he is living as a Ranger, wandering Eriador and protecting the country from Orcs and Wolves. As a Ranger, Aragorn has experience living off the land, foraging for food and in finding healing herbs such as Athelas, or Kingsfoil. This salad makes a fresh and vibrant summer dish and uses gathered herbs like those Aragorn may have used to brighten his campfire meals.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

150g frozen peas
150g broad beans
75g snow pea tendrils
small handful each of mint, dill and parsley, finely chopped
150g feta cheese

Dressing

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon chardonnay vinegar
salt and black pepper

1. Bring a large saucepan of lightly salted water to the boil and cook the peas for 2 minutes. Refresh in cold water.

2. Cook the broad beans for 3 minutes, rinse and peel to reveal the bright green inside.

3. Mix the peas and broad beans with the snow pea tendrils and roughly chopped herbs.

4. Make the dressing by whisking the mustard, oil and vinegar. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

5. Crumble the feta into the salad, carefully mix in the dressing and serve.







PIPPIN'S MINAS TIRITH LUNCH

Based on that British favourite – the ploughman's lunch – this is more a matter of assembling than a recipe. Just scale the quantities up or down, depending on the number of people you are feeding, and arrange the ingredients decoratively on a wooden board. Try to vary the height and colour of ingredients to add visual interest. You can also add different cheeses and preserves, crackers, pâté and other seasonal fruit – whatever takes your fancy.

Tolkien depicts Peregrin Took as not only the youngest of the Hobbits and the most foolhardy, but also the hungriest! After Pippin has been introduced to Denethor, the Ruling Steward of Gondor, he is placed under the care of Beregond, a captain of the guard of Minas Tirith. Ever eager for his next meal, Pippin pleads for food and is given a "nuncheon" (noonday meal) of bread, butter cheese and apples, all washed down with a flagon of ale.

This kind of meal would have been common for farmworkers in real-world England from the 14th century onward. Popularly known as the ploughman's lunch, the traditional combination of bread, cheese, pickles and beer was, in the 20th century, reimagined as a popular pub lunch in the United Kingdom.

SERVES TWO

PREP 10 MINUTES

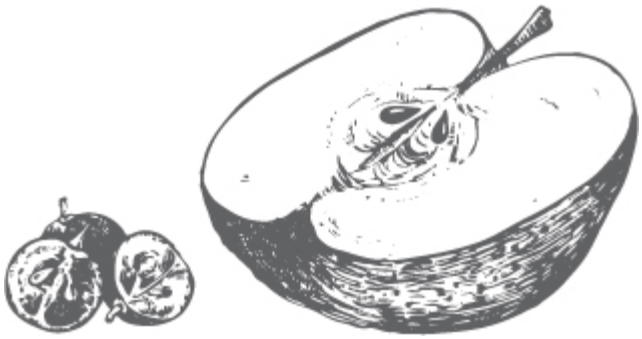
INGREDIENTS

4–6 thick slices of crusty bread or 4 Elvish White Bread Rolls
300g good-quality Cheddar cheese
6 thick slices of cold rare roast beef or ham
2 slices of Pork Pie
2 hardboiled eggs, peeled and halved
4 pickled onions or gherkins
2 celery stalks, preferably still with their leaves
4 radishes
2 apples, quartered and cored
sea salt and black pepper

1. Arrange the bread or rolls in a basket.

2. Arrange the rest of the ingredients decoratively on a large wooden board, scatter salt and pepper over the eggs and place the board in the middle of the table.

3. Spoon some of the Pickled Peaches and the Ale, Apple and Mustard Chutney into small bowls to serve alongside the Pork Pie and the cold meat.





Honey-Spiced Carrot and Parsnip Star

This vegetarian lunch dish is perfect with a side salad of rocket leaves lightly dressed with a tangy vinaigrette and also works well as an accompaniment to the Lake-town Beef Pot Roast. Make it vegan-friendly by using maple syrup instead of the honey.

Stars and Elves have a deep symbolic and poetic connection in Tolkien's work. It is Varda, Queen of the Valar, who, before the appearance of the Moon and Sun, creates a fresh set of stars in the sky to accompany the Awakening of the Elves. The Elves are consequently called the Eldar, meaning "the People of the Stars", though later the name is reserved only for those among them who undertake the Great Journey into the West.

This connection between stars and Elves continues throughout The Silmarillion. *The House of Fëanor – Fëanor being the Elven creator of the Silmarils – has an eight-pointed star as its emblem, and one of the Silmarils ultimately becomes the Star of Eärendil – a divine sign of hope for the Free Peoples of Middle-earth.*

This dish brings the recurring star motif from Tolkien's work to your dining table.

Serves four

Prep and Cook 50 minutes

INGREDIENTS

250g small parsnips, cut lengthways into quarters
250g small carrots, cut lengthways into quarters
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
½ teaspoon celery salt
3 tablespoons sweet chilli sauce
1 tablespoon honey

1. Put the parsnips and carrots in a bowl.

2. In a separate small bowl or jug, mix together the oil, cumin, coriander and celery salt. Add to the vegetables and mix well, turning until they are evenly coated.

3. Scatter in a shallow roasting tin in a single layer and place in a preheated oven, 200˚C, Gas Mark 6, for about 30 minutes, turning the vegetables frequently, until tender and golden.

4. Meanwhile, combine the sweet chilli sauce and honey in a small bowl.

5. Brush the vegetables with the chilli and honey sauce and return to the oven for a further 5 minutes.

6. Serve arranged on a large platter so that the widest ends of the vegetables are in the centre of the dish with the tips radiating outward like the points of a star, alternating between carrots and parsnips.





ROASTED STUFFED PEPPER FLAMES

Serve these as a light lunch with crusty bread or as a side dish to Rosemary Lamb Skewers. It's very versatile – try adding a few sliced black olives, some crumbled feta or chunks of halloumi.

The Balrogs of Middle-earth are Maiar—angelic beings—corrupted by Morgoth, not unlike the fallen angels that were cast down from heaven with Lucifer in Christian theology. These terrifying beings cloak themselves in shadow and flame, arm themselves with swords and whips, and pose a great threat to the Free Peoples of Middle-earth. The Silmarillion *and* The Lord of the Rings *both feature dramatic battles with Balrogs. In* The Silmarillion *the Balrog Gothmog is slain by the Elf-lord Ecthelion in the battle for Gondolin, and in* The Fellowship of the Ring *Gandalf defeats a Balrog named Durin's Bane in the mines of Moria though he himself "dies" in the battle.*

These stuffed red peppers are shaped like the bright red flames that give the Balrogs their physical form. Fortunately, these flames are harbingers of deliciousness rather than of doom and destruction.

SERVES TWO

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

4 large red Romano peppers, halved lengthways, cored and deseeded
2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 ½ tablespoons chopped thyme
4 plum tomatoes, diced
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
salt and black pepper

1. Put the pepper halves, cut-side up, in a roasting tin lined with foil or in a ceramic dish. Divide the garlic and thyme between them and season with salt and pepper. Split the diced tomato evenly between the pepper halves and drizzle with the oil and vinegar.

2. Roast in a preheated oven, 220°C, Gas Mark 7, for about an hour until the peppers are soft and charred.

3. For a fiery effect, arrange on a dark-coloured platter with the wide bases of the "flames" on one end and the fiery points licking upward.

THE PRANCING PONY'S POTATO AND GARLIC SOUP

A mug of this hearty potato soup, with its enticing aroma of smoked garlic, is just the thing to wrap chilled hands around on a blustery day. Serve it with some Elvish White Bread Rolls for a filling meal.

> *After a long day's journey through the Barrow-downs, the roaring fire and pints of ale at the Prancing Pony in Bree reinvigorate the weary, scared party of Hobbits. We like to think that one of the foods waiting to greet weary travelers at this venerable Arnorian institution would have been a comforting bowl of hot soup. Perhaps the soup of the day at the Pony changed with the seasons, but this might well have been one of its more popular winter warmers.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 50 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

50g unsalted butter
1 large onion, sliced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
750g floury potatoes, peeled and cut into small cubes
1 litre vegetable stock
½ teaspoon smoked sea salt
125ml milk
4 tablespoons fresh herbs, such as parsley, thyme and chives, plus extra snipped chives to garnish
black pepper

1 Melt the butter in a large saucepan, add the onion and garlic and cook over a medium heat for 3–4 minutes until softened. Stir in the potatoes, cover and cook for 5 minutes.

2 Add the stock and season. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes until the potatoes are tender.

3 Transfer to a food processor or blender and blend until smooth. Return to the pan, stir in the milk and herbs and reheat gently. Serve garnished with snipped chives and black pepper.



The Barrow-downs

THE SOUP OF STORY

This soup makes good use of all the odds and ends you may have lying around – you can experiment with different flavours by adding whatever you have to hand. If you'd like a chunkier version of this fresh-tasting soup, don't blend it and, if you like, stir through a dollop of Pesto (here) before serving. To keep it vegan, leave out the crème fraîche.

> *Tolkien had a striking metaphor for thinking about how storytelling draws on a wide range of influences. In one of his letters, he compares an author inventing a story to someone making a soup. An author's story is made up of a hodgepodge of all sorts of memories and odds and ends of knowledge, mixed together and blended into something astonishing and new. Even if some of the ingredients can be identified, the ingredients are less important to the soup – or story – than the final flavour.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 40 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

1 teaspoon olive oil
1 leek, finely sliced
1 large potato, peeled and chopped
900ml vegetable stock
450g mixed summer vegetables (such as peas, asparagus, broad beans and courgettes)
2 tablespoons chopped mint
2 tablespoons crème fraîche (optional), to serve
salt and black pepper

1 Heat the oil in a medium saucepan and fry the leek for 3–4 minutes until softened.

2 Add the potato and stock to the pan and cook for 10 minutes. Add all the remaining vegetables and the mint, then bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes.

3 Transfer the soup to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Return the soup to the pan, add the crème fraîche, if using, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Heat through gently and serve with a warm flatbread.



GOLLUM'S RAW FISH

Ask your fishmonger for "sushi-grade" salmon for the best (and safest) results. You could also use smoked salmon for this recipe.

Gollum mentions fish rather often in Tolkien's books – they're the answer to one of the riddles he poses to Bilbo in The Hobbit *and he mentions his love for fish when talking about food with Sam on their journey to Mordor. He's very clear, however, that cooking any food – meat or fish – "ruins" it.*

Raw fish, properly prepared, does have a wonderful and delicate flavour when it is very fresh. This recipe takes its inspiration from Japanese cuisine for a fresh tasty dish that just might convince you that Gollum has a point.

SERVES TWO TO THREE

PREP AND COOK 50 MINUTES, PLUS COOLING

INGREDIENTS

250g sushi rice
6 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
2 ½ tablespoons caster sugar
5g pickled ginger, chopped
½ teaspoon wasabi
½ cucumber
250g skinless salmon, cut into bite-sized pieces
1 avocado, peeled, stoned and cut into small cubes
8 spring onions, finely sliced
3 tablespoons of toasted sesame seeds, to garnish

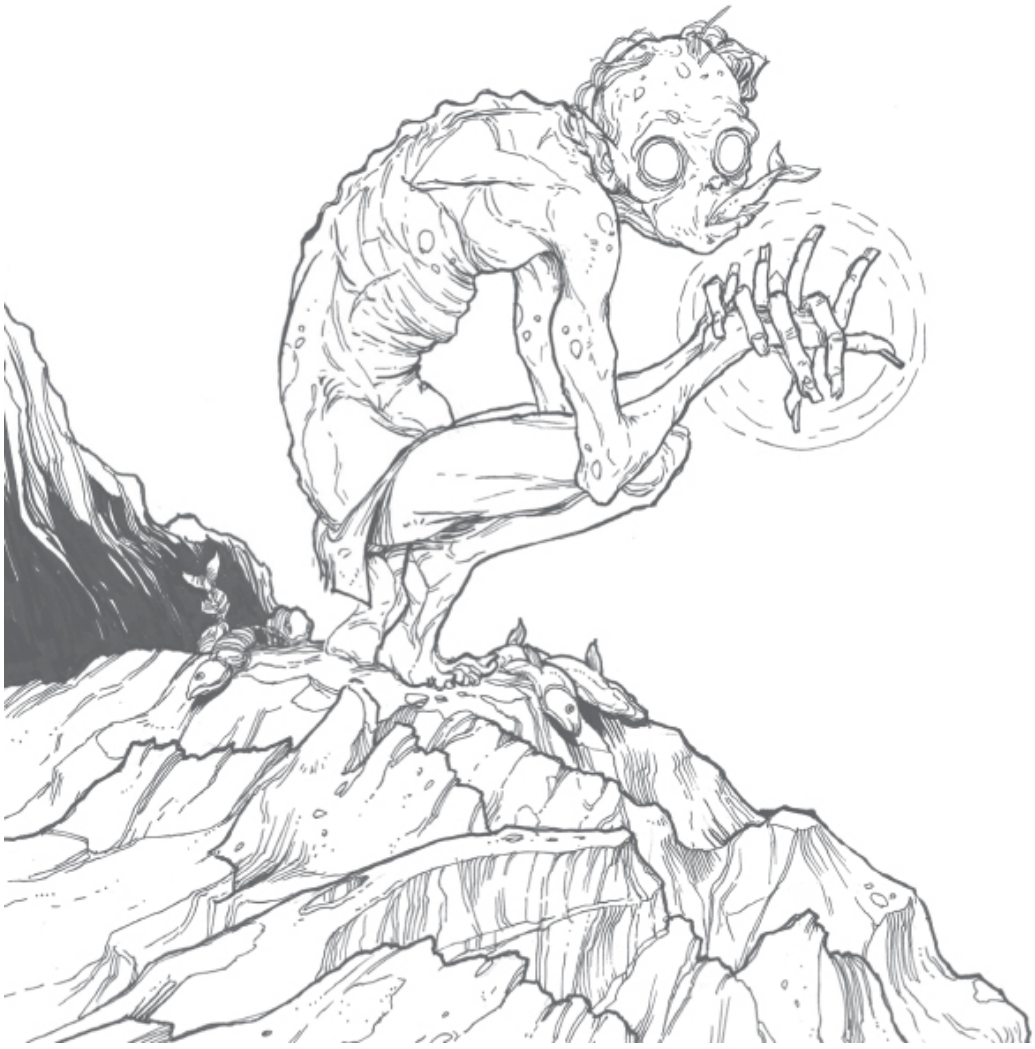
1. Cook the rice according to instructions on the packet.

2. Meanwhile, put the vinegar and sugar in a small saucepan and heat gently, stirring, to dissolve the sugar. Turn off the heat, add the pickled ginger and wasabi and leave to cool.

3. Cut the cucumber in half lengthways and scoop out the seeds. Slice the flesh finely and add to the cooled vinegar mix.

4. When the rice is cooked transfer it to a dish, strain the vinegar mixture over it, reserving the cucumber, stir and leave to cool.

5. Transfer the cooled rice to a large salad bowl and combine gently with the cucumber, salmon, avocado and spring onions. Top with toasted sesame seeds and serve.



Gollum and his fish

EASTERLING TEA-MARINATED TROUT

Kecap manis is an Indonesian sweet soy sauce with a taste that has a hint of molasses. If you don't have kecap manis, you can use ordinary soy sauce, but add a little more honey to the marinade to balance the flavours.

In Tolkien, the name Easterlings is usually given to the peoples of Rhûn, the vast territories in the east of Middle-earth, encompassing both nomadic tribes such as the Wainriders and more settled folk such as the Balchoth. Tolkien provides only vague sketches of these remote cultures – which by the time of the War of the Ring are largely in thrall to Sauron and to the land of Mordor.

This recipe brings in ingredients from the real-world East to help you imagine the world of the Easterlings beyond the page.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 25 MINUTES, PLUS INFUSING, COOLING AND 4 ½ HOURS MARINATING

INGREDIENTS

2 black tea bags (such as Lapsang souchong) infused in 200ml boiling hot water
1 tablespoon peeled and grated fresh root ginger
1 garlic clove, crushed
4 tablespoons kecap manis
2 tablespoons sweet chilli sauce
1 tablespoon clear honey
4 trout fillets, about 100g each

1 tablespoon sesame oil
2 tablespoons groundnut oil
200g baby pak choi, halved lengthways

1. Once the tea bags have infused for 5 minutes, discard the bags. Stir in the ginger, garlic, kecap manis, sweet chilli sauce and honey until well blended. Leave to cool.

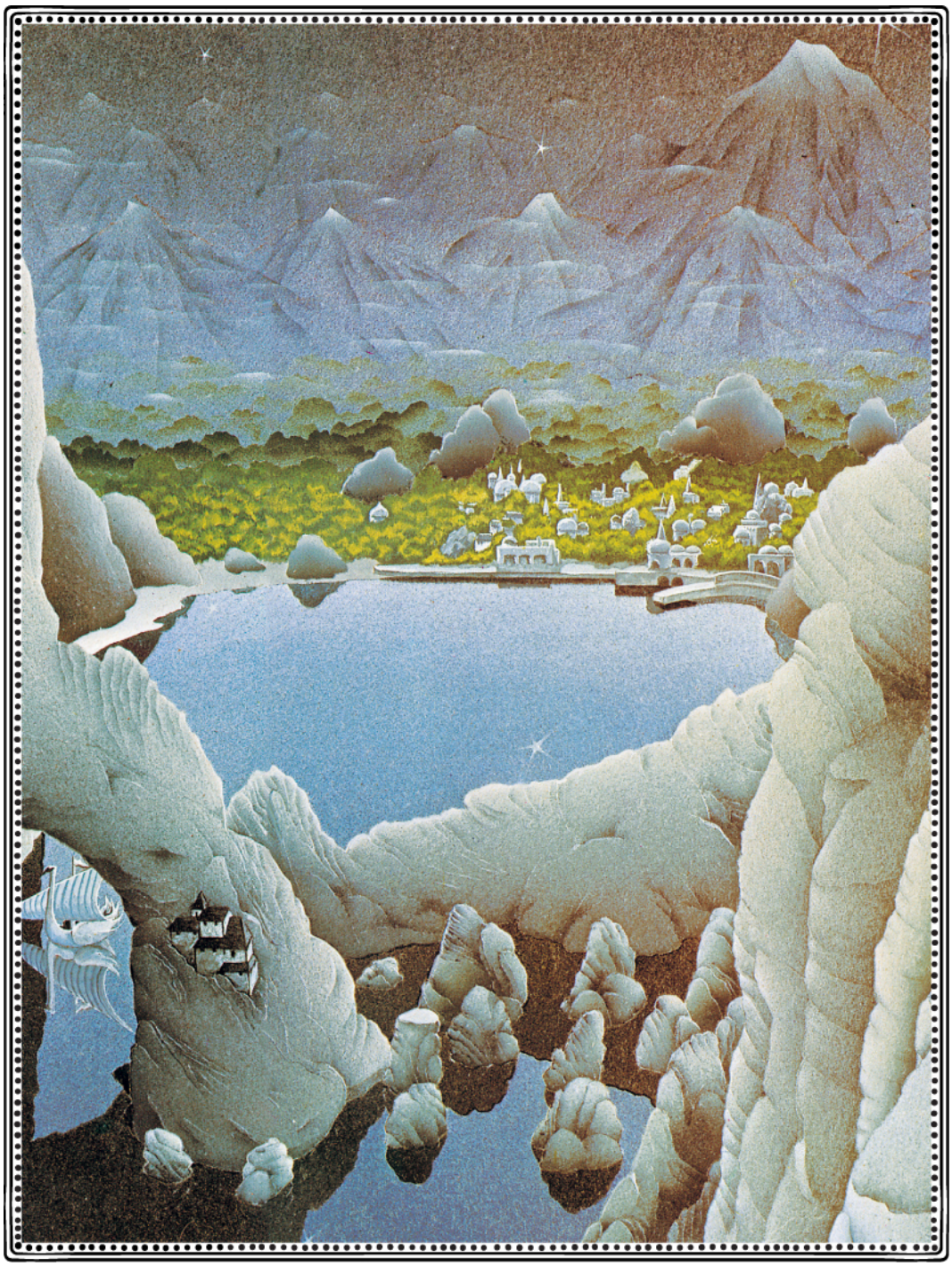
2. Lay the trout fillets in a shallow non-metallic dish and pour over the tea mixture. Cover and leave to marinate in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours, or overnight if time permits, turning the fish occasionally.

3. Remove the fish, reserving the marinade, and pat dry on kitchen paper.

4. Heat the sesame oil with 1 tablespoon of the groundnut oil in a large nonstick frying pan, add the fish, skin-side down, and cook for 2–3 minutes. Turn the fish over and cook for 3 minutes. Remove to a warmed plate and cover with foil – it will continue cooking in its own steam while you cook the pak choi.

5. Heat the remaining oil in the pan over a high heat, add the pak choi and stir-fry until just beginning to wilt. Pour in half the reserved marinade, bring to the boil and cook for 3–4 minutes until most of the liquid has evaporated and the pak choi is tender. Serve with the trout.





The Swan Haven of Alqualondë

ALQUALONDËAN GRILLED SCALLOPS WITH PESTO

Cooking scallops over a hot barbecue or seared in a hot pan until they have a light golden colour will enhance their mild, sweet flavour but take care not to overcook them as this will make them chewy.

Alqualondë is the great Elven city built by the Teleri – one of the three kindreds of the Eldar – on the coast of Valinor. Its very name seems to conjure up a watery paradise. Tolkien tells us the Teleri spend their days diving for pearls, so we might easily imagine them catching the odd scallop as well!

Bring Alqualondë-inspired elegance to your dinner table with these beautiful scallops served in the shell. These beautiful appetizers are surprisingly easy to make and will be the highlight of any lunch or dinner gathering.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 20 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

12 scallops on the half shell (if unavailable, use without the shell)
olive oil, for drizzling and frying

For the pesto
50g basil
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
¼ teaspoon sea salt
6–8 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
black pepper

1 Make the Pesto. Place the basil, garlic, pine nuts and sea salt in a mortar and grind with a pestle to form a fairly smooth paste. Slowly add the oil until you reach the required texture (soft but not runny), then finally add the cheese and pepper, to taste.

2 Season the scallops lightly with pepper. Drizzle with a little oil and cook, shell-side down, on a hot barbecue for 3–4 minutes until cooked. (They will cook through the shell.) Alternatively, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large frying pan. Pat the scallops dry with kitchen paper, season with salt and then fry for 2–3 minutes on each side until golden and just cooked through.

3 Serve topped with a spoonful of the Pesto.

GREY HAVENS GARLICKY GRILLED MUSSELS

When buying mussels, look for ones with tightly closed shells that feel heavy. Store them loosely wrapped rather than in a sealed container so that they can breathe – they're best eaten the same day you buy them.

The sea plays little role in the largely landlocked tales of The Hobbit *and* The Lord of the Rings. *Thus, when it finally makes an appearance at the end of* The Return of the King, *with the departure of the Ring-bearers, including Frodo, from the Grey Havens over the Sundering Sea, it has all the more emotive power. It is as if all our horizons have suddenly opened, dazzling and wide. We might imagine this dish as the meal enjoyed by the party of Elves, Hobbits and the Wizard as they bade farewell to Middle-earth.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

50g butter
2 shallots, chopped
3 garlic cloves, chopped
125ml dry white wine
625g mussels, debearded and scrubbed
50g coarse breadcrumbs
2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 Melt the butter in a large saucepan over a medium-low heat and cook the shallots and 2 of the garlic cloves for 5–6 minutes, until softened. Add the wine and bring to the boil.

2 Add the mussels to the pan, discarding any that won't close when sharply tapped, then cover and simmer gently for 3–5 minutes, shaking the pan occasionally, until the shells are opened. Discard any that remain closed. Set aside.

3 Put the breadcrumbs in a bowl with the parsley, remaining garlic, lemon zest, Parmesan and oil and mix well.

4 Discard the empty half-shell from each mussel and arrange the mussels in a single layer on a large baking sheet.

5 Spoon the breadcrumb mixture neatly over the mussels and slide under a preheated medium grill, for 2–3 minutes, or until the breadcrumbs are crisp and golden.









UMBRIAN PRAWN AND MONKFISH SKEWERS

Give your fish even more flavour by replacing the usual wooden or metal skewers with sturdy rosemary sprigs which will impart a lovely herbal scent and look pretty too. It's important to soak them well before using so they don't burn and ruin the fish.

The Corsairs of Umbar are sworn enemies of Gondor throughout the Third Age, pillaging and terrorizing its southern coasts with their pirate fleets. The Corsairs appear in The Lord of the Rings *when Aragorn captures their ships and rows them to Minas Tirith with reinforcements during the Battle of the Pelennor Fields. The city of Umbar itself lies on the Bay of Belfalas, in the Near Harad, and these simple kebabs of prawns and pieces of monkfish may well be similar to something the Corsairs might have made to fuel their pillaging expeditions along Gondor's rugged coastline.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 20 MINUTES, PLUS SOAKING AND 1 ½ HOURS MARINATING

INGREDIENTS

8 large rosemary sprigs
500g monkfish fillets, cut into 16 large chunks
16 raw peeled tiger prawns, deveined
2 garlic cloves, crushed
grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 ½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

salt and black pepper

For the lemon aïoli
3 egg yolks
2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
2–4 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tablespoon lemon juice
300ml extra virgin olive oil
salt and white pepper

1 Rip the rosemary leaves from the stalks, leaving a few rosemary leaves on the end of each sprig. Cut the other end on a diagonal to form a sharp tip. Soak in cold water for 30 minutes. Finely chop 1 tablespoon of the rosemary leaves, reserving the rest for another dish.

2 Thread the fish chunks on to the soaked rosemary skewers, alternating with the prawns, allowing 2 cubes of fish and 2 prawns per skewer. Place in a shallow non-metallic dish.

3 Combine the chopped rosemary, garlic, lemon zest and some salt and black pepper with the oil, pour over the kebabs and leave to marinate for 1 hour.

4 Make the aïoli. Place the egg yolks, vinegar, mustard, garlic, lemon juice and a little salt and pepper in a food processor and blend briefly until the egg mixture is frothy. Then, with the blade running, gradually pour in the oil through the funnel, until the sauce is thickened and glossy. Thin with a little boiling water if it gets too thick. Adjust the seasoning to taste.

5 Remove the kebabs from the marinade. Cook on a hot barbecue for 2–3 minutes on each side until cooked. Alternatively, cook under a preheated hot grill for 2–3 minutes on each side.

6 Squeeze over the lemon juice and serve with the lemon aïoli.



MIRKWOOD BAT WINGS

Black food gel makes these "bat wings" a convincingly dark and scary hue, but for something a little less frightening you can simply omit the food colouring and still enjoy the Asian-inspired flavours of this dish.

As Bilbo and the Dwarves learned the hard way in The Hobbit, *if you light a fire in Mirkwood at night you will immediately attract thousands of moths with huge black bats hot on their trail. However, we like to think you can use this to your advantage if your supplies have otherwise run low and you catch a few for your supper. When marinated and roasted, your "bat wings" will be crispy and delectable.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 20 MINUTES, PLUS 1–2 HOURS MARINATING

INGREDIENTS

8 large chicken wings, about 100g each

For the marinade

1 garlic clove
5cm piece of fresh root ginger, peeled and chopped
juice and finely grated zest of 2 limes
2 tablespoons dark soy sauce
2 tablespoons peanut oil
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground turmeric
2 tablespoons honey
3 drops of black food gel

salt

1. Soak 8 bamboo skewers in cold water for 30 minutes.

2. Place the marinade ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.

3. Arrange the chicken wings in a shallow non-metallic dish, pour the marinade over and toss to cover. Cover and leave to marinate for 1–2 hours.

4. Remove the chicken from the marinade, thread on to the skewers and cook on a hot barbecue for 4–5 minutes on each side, basting with the remaining marinade. Alternatively, cook under a preheated hot grill for 4–5 minutes on each side, basting with the remaining marinade.



Mirkwood

Non-traditional diets in Middle-earth

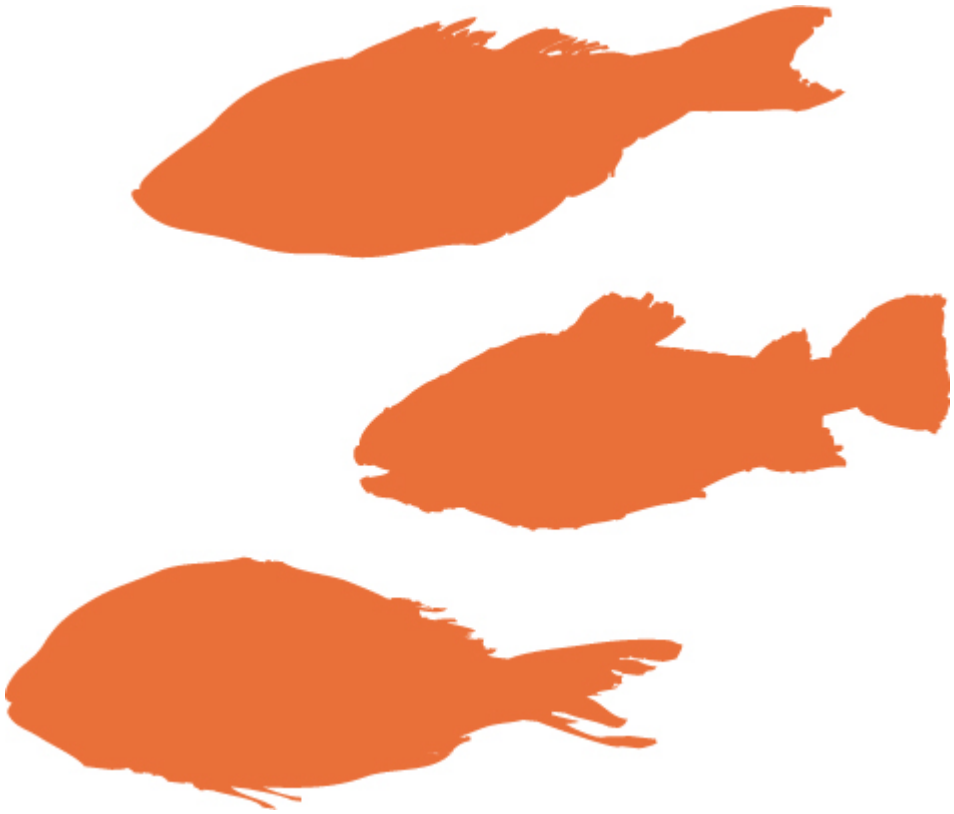
The vast majority of the peoples of Middle-earth – Men, Elves and Hobbits – eat a fairly conventional diet – the meat, vegetables and grains that would have gone unremarked in Europe from the Middle Ages on. A few post-medieval European staples – such as sugar and tomatoes – may be famously missing, but some are notoriously present, such as potatoes, tea, coffee and pipeweed (tobacco).

However, there are some more unusual diets in Middle-earth. Tom Bombadil and his wife, Goldberry, appear to be vegetarian. When they shelter Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin after their ordeal in the Old Forest, they lay the table with cream, honeycomb and white bread, butter, cheese and milk, and "green herbs and ripe berries gathered" – all foods that suggest the diet of slightly hippyish smallholders, the produce of whose dairy and vegetable patch are supplemented by foraging. To drink, the couple offer what appears to be fresh, clear water but whose effect is as heady and merrymaking as wine. As Bombadil and Goldberry bear similarities to nature spirits, we might imagine their vegetarianism to be ethically based – they have an affinity with living things. Another ethical vegetarian is the hero Beren in *The Silmarillion*, who while living in the wild is befriended by animals. The Ents perhaps have the most eco-friendly diet, nourished solely by a miraculous brew that consists of little more than river water.

At the other end of the ethical spectrum are the Orcs – or Goblins, as they are known in *The Hobbit* – whose diet seems to consist largely of raw meat, including that of horses and ponies, and a rough-tasting liquor (here) of the kind intermittently poured down the throats of Merry and Pippin after their kidnapping. There are suggestions that the Uruk-hai – a kind of super-breed of Orcs – eat men's flesh and that they even practise a kind of cannibalism, dining on the flesh of their lesser kindred.

Meanwhile, Gollum, that most Orc-like of Hobbits, supplements his raw meat diet with the occasional blind fish. He expresses disgust at the idea of

cooking anything and even of eating “grasses” (herbs) and roots – he would only resort to such a repulsive thing, he tells Sam, if he were starving. As one doctor has pointed out in a carefully researched paper, both the light-shunning Orcs and Gollum would have suffered from a debilitating lack of vitamin D.



AFTERNOON TEA

There is something quintessentially Hobbitish about afternoon tea – it is hard to imagine the rugged Men of Gondor, let alone the Elves of Rivendell or Lothlórien, stopping to partake in something quite so self-indulgent – and so absolutely delicious! That said, if Bilbo's "unexpected party" – which at least begins as an afternoon tea – is anything to go by, Dwarves are more than partial to a cake or several, while Thorin and Company's encounter with Beorn the Beorning reveal him, too, to be a skilled baker!



BEETROOT TARTE TATIN WITH GOAT'S CHEESE

This showstopper looks smart but is simple to make. Try to cut the beetroot into equal pieces and arrange in a single, compact layer in an attractive way as they will be at the top when you serve the tarte tatin.

The humble beetroot is an under-celebrated vegetable, but, like the unassuming Hobbits of the Shire, it can be elevated to greatness under the right conditions. Rich, filling and with a touch of creamy tanginess, we think this ruby-red tarte is a gem that would've been fit for Elrond's table in the Last Homely House.

SERVES FOUR TO SIX

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 teaspoon thyme leaves
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
500g cooked beetroot (not pickled), sliced or cut into thin wedges
250g chilled puff pastry
flour, for dusting
125g crumbly goat's cheese
thyme leaves or snipped chives, to garnish

1 Place the oil in an ovenproof frying pan over a medium-low heat and, when hot, fry the garlic and thyme for 1–2 minutes, until just softened. Pour in the vinegar and simmer gently for 1–2 minutes, until just sticky.

2 Arrange the beetroot to fit snugly and attractively in the pan, then increase the heat slightly and cook for 4–5 minutes, until the underside begins to brown.

3 Meanwhile, place the pastry on a floured work surface and roll into a circle about 1cm larger than the pan.

4 Lay the pastry over the pan, tucking the edges in neatly to cover the beetroot, and bake in a preheated oven, 200°C, Gas Mark 6, for 15–20 minutes, until the pastry is puffed and golden.

5 Invert the tarte on to a large plate, then crumble over the goat's cheese and serve garnished with the thyme or chives.



WARM MUSHROOM CROSTINI

These light and savoury little mushroom toasts are a lovely alternative to sweet teatime treats. Tarragon and mushroom are a classic pairing but you could use parsley or marjoram instead of tarragon.

> *Mushrooms are dearly loved by Hobbits, especially by Frodo, who as a young lad steals mushrooms from Farmer Maggot's fields. Mushrooms hide in plain sight, blending into the woodland or meadow floor, just as Hobbits blend into their native landscape, having the natural ability to make themselves go unseen by ordinary folks if they see fit. Perhaps this shared capacity to disappear into the landscape is what inspired Tolkien to make Hobbits so fond of mushrooms.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

75g butter
2 garlic cloves, 1 chopped and 1 left whole
1 tablespoon chopped tarragon
250g portobello mushrooms, roughly chopped
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
sourdough or country-style bread, thinly sliced

1. Melt the butter in a large frying pan. Add the chopped garlic and tarragon and heat until the butter just begins to foam.

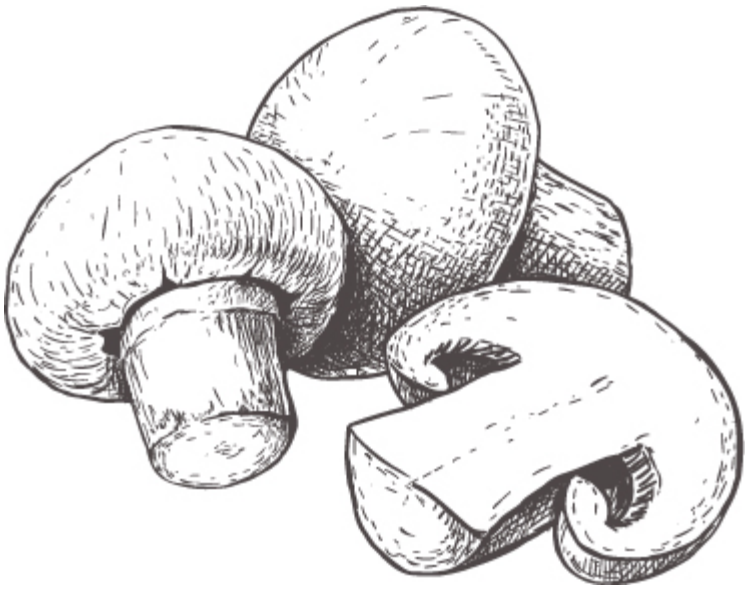
2 Add the chopped mushrooms to the pan and fry over a medium heat for 4–5 minutes, until soft and golden. Generously season with salt and pepper.

3 Meanwhile, lighly brush each slice of bread with a little olive oil. Heat a ridged griddle pan and when hot, toast the bread in it until golden and nicely charred.

4 Once toasted, rub each piece of toast lightly with the whole garlic clove.

5 Arrange the crostini on 4 plates and spoon over the buttery mushrooms.





BILBO'S SEED-CAKE

Seed-cake is distinctively flavoured with caraway seeds. This version has a citrus spin and makes for an elegant and understated teatime treat. Any slightly stale cake left over gives you the perfect excuse to use it up in a trifle.

At the beginning of The Hobbit, *one of his unexpected visitors, Balin – a very old-looking Dwarf – asks, very specifically, for seed-cake. Bilbo has baked a couple of seed-cakes only that afternoon and so he is able to oblige, if unwillingly – his plan was to eat them as an after-supper treat. Seed-cake is a style of cake that was popular in England through the Victorian era and into the early 1900s, which is the period that Tolkien is fondly remembering when he describes the foods of the Shire.*

SERVES TEN

PREP AND COOK 1 ½ HOURS

INGREDIENTS

175g butter, at room temperature
175g caster sugar
3 eggs, beaten
250g self-raising flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 ½ teaspoons roughly crushed caraway seeds
grated zest of 1 large orange and 5–6 tablespoons orange juice
25g granulated sugar

1 Grease and line a 1kg loaf tin.

2 Beat the butter and caster sugar together in a mixing bowl until pale and creamy. Gradually mix in alternate spoonfuls of beaten egg and flour until all has been added and the mixture is smooth. Stir in the baking powder, caraway seeds, orange zest and juice to make a soft dropping consistency.

3 Spoon the mixture into the prepared loaf tin. Spread the surface level and sprinkle with the granulated sugar.

4 Bake in a preheated oven, 160°C, Gas Mark 3, for 1 hour–1 hour 10 minutes until well risen, the top is cracked and golden and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.

5 Leave to cool in the tin for 10 minutes then loosen the edges and lift out of the tin using the lining paper. Transfer to a wire rack, peel off the lining paper and leave to cool. Store in an airtight tin for up to 1 week.



Bilbo Baggins

NIPHREDIL SHORTBREAD BISCUITS

These dainty, buttery biscuits with their delicate flower pattern are perfect for a special-occasion tea party. Keep for up to a week in an airtight tin.

These charming cookies are inspired by the small white flowers that originally grew in the footsteps of Lúthien, the Elven princess of the woodland kingdom of Doriath in Beleriand. In the Second and Third Ages, the flower also blossoms in Lothlórien, where, as long as Galadriel rules there, it is perpetually spring. Both Lúthien and Galadriel are reminiscent of the White Ladies of Welsh mythology – otherworldly figures who rule over beguiling forest realms.

MAKES FOURTEEN

PREP AND COOK 40 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

175g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
50g ground almonds
50g caster sugar, plus extra, to decorate
a few drops of almond extract
150g butter, diced

To decorate
25g whole blanched almonds, halved
2 glacé cherries, cut into small pieces

1 Put the flour, ground almonds, sugar and almond extract in a mixing bowl or a food processor. Add the butter and rub in with your fingertips

or process until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.

2 Squeeze the mixture together with your hands to form a ball. Knead lightly then roll out on a lightly floured surface until 1cm thick. Stamp out 6cm circles using a fluted round biscuit cutter. Transfer to an ungreased baking sheet. Re-knead the trimmings and continue rolling and stamping out until all the mixture has been used.

3 Prick each shortbread biscuit 4 times with a fork to make a star shape then add an almond half to the space between each fork mark to make a small white flower. Decorate the centre with a small piece of glacé cherry. Sprinkle with a little extra caster sugar and bake in a preheated oven, 160°C, Gas Mark 3, for about 15 minutes until pale golden.

4 Transfer the biscuits to a wire rack to cool.



STRAWBERRY AND LAVENDER SHORTCAKES

The scents and tastes of summer come together in edible form in these gorgeous shortcakes. They are best eaten on the day they are filled, but the plain biscuits can be stored in an airtight tin for up to 3 days.

Nothing evokes the bliss of summer better than strawberries and cream, and it is to strawberries and cream that Tolkien turns when he imagines the 'eucatastrophe' (happy catastrophe) with which – save for the departure of the Ring-bearers – The Lord of the Rings *closes. During the miraculous year of 1420 (Shire Reckoning) – a time of bumper harvests in the Shire, in part at least due to Sam's ministrations – the young Hobbits are said to be almost floating in strawberries and cream!*

These strawberry and lavender shortcakes embrace the abundance of strawberries and cream born from a good season. They make a delightful sweet course for tea or a charming summer dessert.

MAKES EIGHT

PREP AND COOK 40 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

150g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
25g ground rice
125g butter, diced
50g caster sugar

1 tablespoon lavender petals

To decorate
250g strawberries (or a mixture of strawberries and raspberries)
150ml double cream
16 small lavender sprigs (optional)
sifted icing sugar, for dusting

1. Put the flour and ground rice in a mixing bowl or a food processor. Add the butter and rub in with your fingertips or process until mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.

2. Stir in the sugar and lavender petals and squeeze the crumbs together with your hands to form a smooth ball.

3. Knead lightly then roll out on a lightly floured surface until 5mm thick. Stamp out 7.5cm circles using a fluted round biscuit cutter. Transfer to an ungreased baking sheet. Re-knead the trimmings and continue rolling and stamping until you have made 16 biscuits.

4. Prick with a fork, bake in a preheated oven, 160°C, Gas Mark 3, for 10–12 minutes until pale golden. Leave to cool on the baking tray.

5. To serve, halve 4 of the smallest strawberries, hull and slice the rest. Whip the cream and spoon over 8 of the biscuits. Top with the sliced strawberries then the remaining biscuits. Spoon the remaining cream on top and decorate with the reserved halved strawberries and tiny sprigs of lavender, if liked. Dust lightly with sifted icing sugar.



BEORN'S TWICE-BAKED CAKES

As biscotti are dry, they are traditionally served with something to dunk them in. Enjoy these honey and pistachio biscotti with strong coffee, Athelas Tea or, Italian-style, after dinner with a glass of Marsala.

> *In addition to the honey cakes Beorn gives to Bilbo's party for their supper (see Beorn's Honey Cakes), Beorn also gives them twice-baked honey cakes for them to take on the road. We imagine these would have been a little bit like biscotti or hardtack – cooked twice to make them a bit crunchier, longer-lasting and easier to carry on a journey.*

MAKES APPROX. TWENTY-FOUR

PREP AND COOK 60 MINUTES, PLUS COOLING

INGREDIENTS

25g unsalted butter, softened
50g caster sugar
finely grated zest of 1 lemon
125g self-raising flour
½ teaspoon baking powder
1 tablespoon honey
1 egg yolk
1 tablespoon egg white
65g shelled pistachio nuts, skinned and roughly chopped

1 Beat the butter, sugar and lemon zest in a bowl until pale and fluffy. Sift in the flour and baking powder, then add the honey, egg yolk and white and pistachios. Mix to a soft dough.

2 Divide the dough into 2 pieces and shape each into a sausage about 15cm long. Place the pieces, well spaced apart, on a greased baking sheet and flatten each to a depth of 1cm.

3 Bake in a preheated oven, 160˚C, Gas Mark 3, for 20 minutes until risen and turning pale golden.

4 Remove from the oven and leave to cool for 10 minutes, leaving the oven on. Using a serrated knife, cut the across into 1cm thick slices. Return to the oven, cut-sides up, for a further 10 minutes to crisp up. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

"DUMBLEDOR" BLUEBERRY AND HONEY JAM

This recipe combines the delights of summer berries with the rich sweetness of honey in a jam to enjoy all year round. Serve with Wholewheat Treacle Scones or spread lavishly on toast.

> *In Middle-earth, honey seems to be the sweetener of choice, just as it was in the medieval world. One of the characters, the skin-changer Beorn, is a keen beekeeper, and the foods he makes and serves to his guests are often enriched with honey. Honey is also included in the food served to the Hobbits by Tom Bombadil and Goldberry. The long Hobbit poem* Errantry, *composed by Bilbo and collected in the* Red Book, *alludes to a kind of monster-bee called the Dumbledor, a word derived from an old English word for bumblebee.*

MAKES TWO TO THREE JARS

PREP AND COOK 35 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

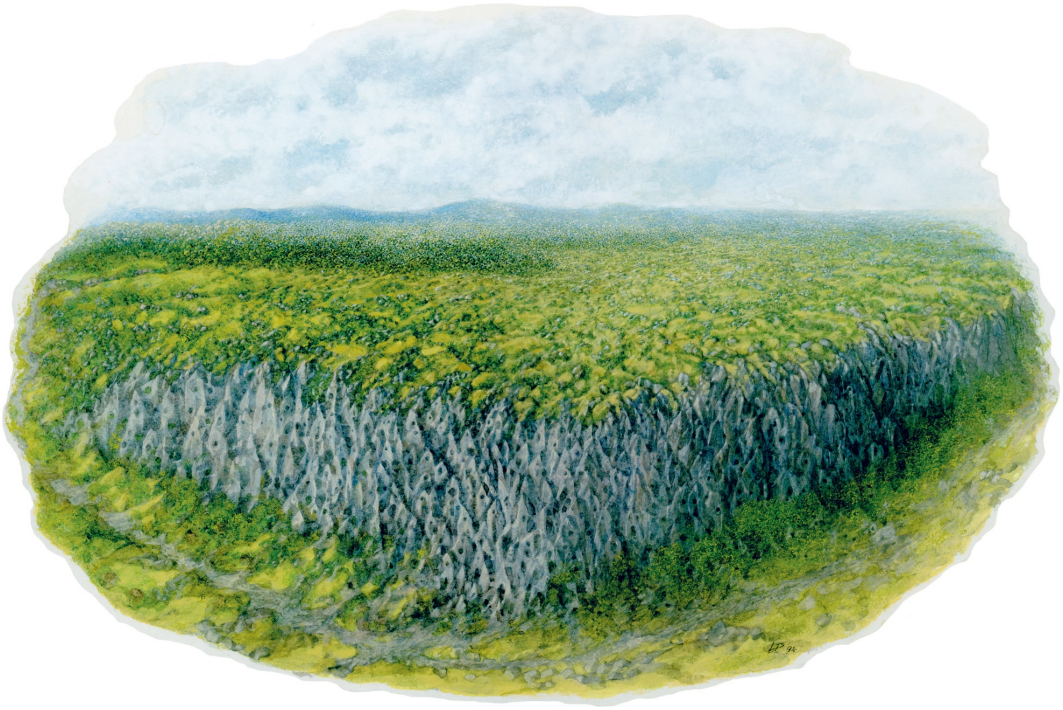
600g blueberries
150ml water
375g jam sugar with pectin, warmed
125g clear honey
juice of 1 lemon
15g butter (optional)

1 Add the blueberries and water to a preserving pan and cook gently for 10 minutes, until softened, crushing from time to time with a wooden spoon.

2 Add the sugar, honey and lemon juice and heat gently, stirring from time to time, until dissolved. Bring to the boil, then boil rapidly until setting point is reached (10–15 minutes).

3 If there is scum on the top of the jam, skim it off with a slotted spoon or stir in the butter to disperse it.

4 Ladle into warm, dry, sterilized jars, filling to the very top. Cover with screw-top lids, or with waxed discs and cellophane tops secured with elastic bands. Label and leave to cool.



Great Smials

SPICED PLUM JAM

This jam, with its flavour of Christmas spices, makes a great edible gift. Top each jar with a pretty square of cloth tied with a co-ordinating ribbon and add a gift label with some serving suggestions.

> *At the end of* The Lord of the Rings, *Tolkien describes the year following the end of the War of the Ring – 1420 in the Shire Reckoning – as a time of golden plenty. In terms that may remind us of the carnivalesque paintings of the Netherlandish painter Hieronymus Bosch, he evokes – among other things – young Hobbits who are virtually swimming in strawberries and cream or who sit under plum trees stuffing themselves with ripe fruit until they have made little pyramids of the discarded stones.*

MAKES FOUR TO FIVE JARS

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

1.5kg just-ripe plums, halved and stoned grated zest and juice of 1 orange
300ml water
1 cinnamon stick, halved
1 teaspoon whole cloves
1.5kg granulated sugar, warmed
15g butter (optional)

1 Add the plums, orange zest and juice and water to a preserving pan. Tie the cinnamon stick and cloves in muslin, then add to the preserving pan.

Cover and cook gently for 30 minutes, until the plums are softened.

2 Pour the sugar into the pan and heat gently, stirring occasionally, until dissolved. Bring to the boil, then boil rapidly until setting point is reached (20–25 minutes). If there is scum on the top of the jam, skim it off with a slotted spoon or stir in the butter to disperse it.

3 Discard the bag of spices.

4 Ladle into warm, dry, sterilized jars, filling to the very top. Cover with screw-top lids, or with waxed discs and cellophane tops secured with elastic bands. Label and leave to cool.

STUFFED "BUCKLEBURY FERRY" PEARS

Packed with healthy fruit and nuts, this easy, low-fat dessert is perfect to finish off an autumnal midweek meal. You can ring the changes by using honey in place of the maple syrup and dates to replace the prunes.

The Bucklebury Ferry carries Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin across the Brandywine river into Buckland, narrowly escaping the mysterious dark horse rider who is hot on their heels. Inspired by the Bucklebury Ferry, these stuffed pears carry a delicious morsel of hazelnuts and fruit and are served with a pool of sweet juice, just like the little ferry carrying the Hobbits across the Shire's great river.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

4 ripe pears, preferably a pale-skinned variety
3 ready-to-eat pitted prunes, roughly chopped
25g roasted hazelnuts, roughly chopped
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
4 tablespoons maple syrup
75g blackberries, halved
25g butter
ice cream or yoghurt (optional)

1 Halve the pears and then scoop a small slice from the back of each of each so that they sit level in a roasting tin. Scoop out the core and seeds, leaving the stalk intact.

2 Mix the prunes and hazelnuts with the cinnamon and maple syrup in a bowl, then fold in the blackberries. Pile into the pear cavities and top each with a small knob of butter. Cover the roasting tin with foil and bake in a preheated oven, 200°C, Gas Mark 6, for 25 minutes. Remove the foil and roast for a further 10 minutes.

3 Serve with the juices spooned over and around the pears along with a scoop of ice cream or yogurt, if desired.

WHOLEWHEAT TREACLE SCONES

Serve these scones warm or cold, split and topped with crème fraîche or thick cream and "Dumbledor" Blueberry and Honey Jam or Spiced Plum Jam. They are best eaten on the day they are made.

> *Scones among the many delicious foods that Bilbo serves to Thorin and Company when they stumble into Bag End at the beginning of* The Hobbit. *This recipe makes 14 delicious scones – enough for all 13 Dwarves, plus one left over for a late Wizard, and the perfect teatime treat when sliced in half and topped with heaps of cream and jam. You might choose to serve them as Bilbo did, accompanied by a big pot of piping-hot coffee.*

MAKES FOURTEEN

PREP AND COOK 30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

400g malted bread flour, plus extra for dusting and sprinkling (optional)
50g butter, diced
50g light muscovado sugar
3 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
8 tablespoons natural yogurt
2 tablespoons black treacle
1 egg, beaten

1 Put the flour in a mixing bowl or a food processor. Add the butter and rub in with your fingertips or process until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar and baking powder.

2 Stir the bicarbonate of soda into the yogurt, then add to the flour mixture with the treacle. Gradually mix in enough of the beaten egg to form a soft but not sticky dough.

3 Knead lightly, then roll out on a lightly floured surface until 2cm thick.

4 Working quickly, cut out 5cm circles using a plain biscuit cutter. Transfer to a greased baking sheet. Re-knead the trimmings and continue rolling and stamping out until all the mixture has been used.

5 Add to the baking sheet and sprinkle the tops with a little extra flour or leave plain if preferred. Bake in a preheated oven, 220°C, Gas Mark 7, for 6–8 minutes until well risen and browned.



Bag End

BIFUR'S JAM AND APPLE TART

These individual open tarts look really impressive but are easy to make. They are best served warm with a splash of cream or some crème fraîche, and are also lovely with vanilla ice cream as a dessert.

Bifur is yet another of the 13 Dwarves of Thorin and Company who show up unexpectedly at Bilbo's door at the beginning of The Hobbit. *His request is for jam and apple tart, which Bilbo is able to quickly conjure from one of his pantries. This flan, a baked tart, uses apples and apricot jam.*

MAKES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 50 MINUTES, PLUS 30 MINUTES CHILLING

INGREDIENTS

375g ready-made puff pastry
flour, for dusting
2 crisp green dessert apples (such as Granny Smith), peeled, cored and sliced
1 tablespoon caster sugar
25g unsalted butter, chilled
cream or crème fraîche, to serve

For the apricot glaze
250g apricot jam
2 teaspoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons water

1 Divide the pastry into quarters and roll each out on a lightly floured surface until 2mm thick. Using a 13cm plate as a guide, cut out 4 rounds – make a number of short cuts around the plate rather than drawing the

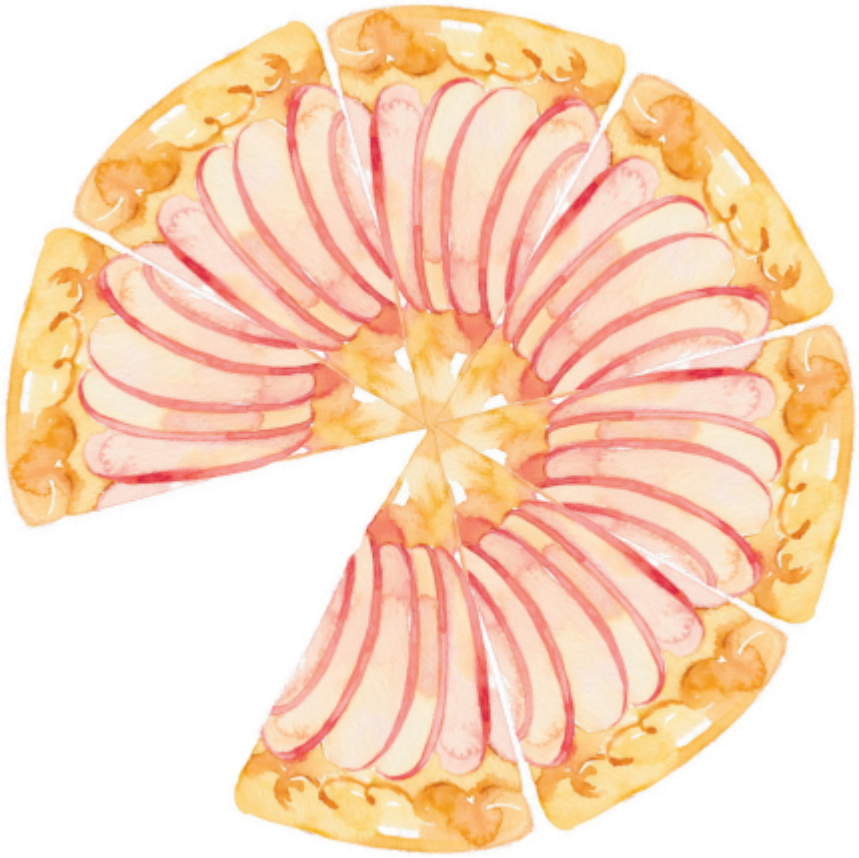
knife around, which can stretch the pastry. Place the rounds on a baking sheet.

2 Place a slightly smaller plate on each pastry round and score around the edge to form a 1cm border. Prick the centres with a fork and chill for 30 minutes.

3 Arrange the apple slices in a circle over the pastry rounds and sprinkle with the sugar. Grate the butter over the top and bake in a preheated oven, 220°C, Gas Mark 7, for 25–30 minutes until the pastry and apples are golden.

4 Meanwhile, make the apricot glaze. Put the jam in a small saucepan with the lemon juice and water and heat gently until the jam melts. Increase the heat and boil for 1 minute, remove from the heat and press through a fine sieve. Keep warm then brush over each apple tart while they are still warm. Serve with cream or crème fraîche.





APPLE AND BLACKBERRY CAKE

Apples and blackberries reach their peak in early autumn and what better way to enjoy them than in a cake? Enjoy at teatime or with a cup of coffee after dinner. Store in an airtight tin for up to 2 days.

This crumble cake evokes the fruitfulness of late summer in the Shire – and by extension the Warwickshire of Tolkien's youth – when the trees are laden with apples and the blackberries are bursting with juice. One of Hobbits' chief pastimes is calling on one another – and, to that end, we don't think any Hobbit larder would have been complete without several nice cakes ready to serve to guests or to enjoy alone while writing thank-you letters to friends for their unwanted birthday gifts.

SERVES SIXTEEN

PREP AND COOK 1 ¼ HOURS

INGREDIENTS

175g butter, at room temperature
175g caster sugar
3 eggs, beaten
200g self-raising flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
grated zest of 1 lemon
500g cooking apples, cored, peeled and thinly sliced
150g frozen blackberries, just thawed

For the crumble topping
75g self-raising flour
75g muesli

50g caster sugar
75g butter, diced

1. Line an 18 x 28cm roasting tin with nonstick baking paper.

2. Cream the butter and sugar together in a mixing bowl until pale and creamy. Gradually mix in alternate spoonfuls of beaten egg and flour until all has been added and the mixture is smooth. Stir in the baking powder and lemon zest then spoon the mixture into the prepared tin. Spread the surface level than arrange the apple slices and blackberries over the top.

3. Make the crumble topping. Put the flour, muesli and caster sugar in a mixing bowl, add the butter and rub in with your fingertips until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Sprinkle over the top of the fruit.

4. Bake in a preheated oven, 180°C, Gas Mark 4, for about 45 minutes until the crumble is golden brown and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.

5. Leave to cool in the tin then lift out using the lining paper. Cut the cake into 16 bars or wedges and peel off the lining paper.



BILBO'S ELEVENTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY CAKE

For chocolate lovers, make a chocolate and raspberry version of this cake by replacing 25g of the flour with 25g of cocoa powder, swapping the strawberries for raspberries and using raspberry jam for the filling. For an even more indulgent birthday treat, grate dark chocolate over the cake to finish.

The Lord of the Rings *opens with a magnificent feast – a party to celebrate Bilbo Baggins' eleventy-first birthday. Hobbits come from near and far to attend the party and Gandalf puts on a firework show featuring a dragon in his honour. The big surprise of the night is Bilbo's farewell speech and sudden disappearance as he slips on the One Ring and secretly leaves Bag End for his last adventure and retirement to Rivendell.*

The birthday cake recipe here can be made in various versions to please a crowd of even the most demanding Hobbits or humans. Experiment with using different jams and berries to further customize this cake for your own long-awaited party.

SERVES TWELVE

PREP AND COOK 1 ½ HOURS

INGREDIENTS

175g slightly salted butter, softened
175g caster sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
300g self-raising flour
2 teaspoons baking powder

3 eggs
50g ground rice
150ml natural yogurt
175g strawberries, hulled and cut into wedges

To finish
300ml double cream
3 tablespoons strawberry jam

1. Grease and base line two 20cm cake tins.

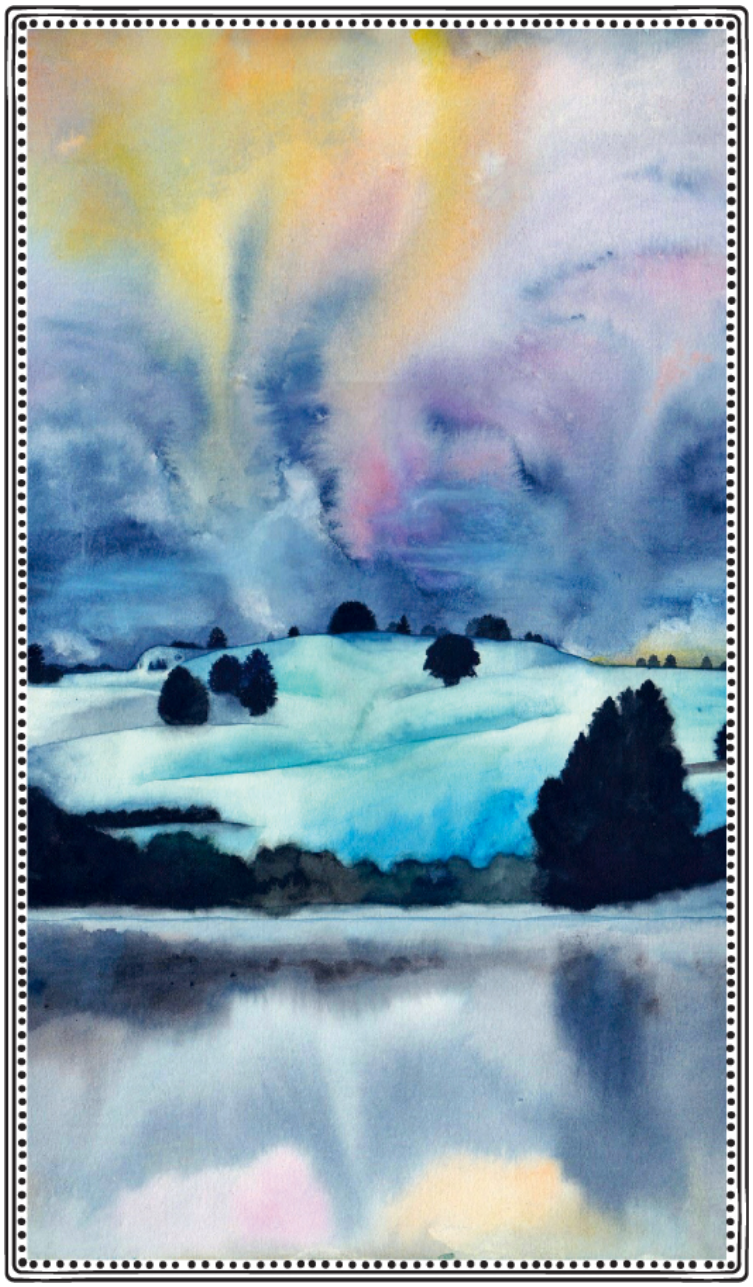
2. Put the butter, sugar and vanilla in a food processor and blend until smooth. Sift in the flour and baking powder, add the eggs, ground rice and yogurt and whizz together until creamy.

3. Divide the mixture between the prepared tins and level the surface. Bake in a preheated oven, 180°C, Gas Mark 4, for 35–40 minutes until risen, golden and springy to the touch.

4. Leave to cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then turn out on to a wire rack and peel off the lining paper. Leave to cool completely.

5. Whip the cream in a bowl until soft peaks form. Cut the top off one of the cakes to level it, then spread with the jam and then half of the cream to the edge. Scatter with two-thirds of the strawberries. Place the second cake on top and spread with the remaining cream.

6. Decorate the top with the remaining strawberries. Add candles.



The Day of Bilbo's Party

FOOD AND THE ELVES

Like the Elves themselves, Tolkien typically describes their food and their consumption of it in ethereal terms. While Hobbits, Dwarves and Men are often shown in the gross act of eating and drinking, feeling hungry or being greedy, Elves are rarely so depicted. When we do hear about Elvish eating habits, it is generally in vague, somewhat elevated terms. In contrast to the almost food-obsessive Hobbit and *The Lord of the Rings*, the Elven-dominated *Silmarillion* is much shorter on references to food, with references to generic feasts rather than to specific foodstuffs or dishes. The overall impression we gain, then, is that for the Elves food is somehow divorced from their bodily needs. They are immortal, after all.

That said, Tolkien's conception of the Elves and their appetites seems to have gone through something of an evolution between the writing of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. In *The Hobbit*, Bilbo's first encounter with Elves during the Quest of Erebor takes place in Rivendell where, up at the Last Homely House, faggots are being roasted and bannocks baked – quite earthy foods, to say the least. And in his second encounter, deep in Mirkwood, the starving Bilbo and the Dwarves stumble across a woodland feast at which meats, with enchanting smells, are being roasted over open fires. The Elvenking of Mirkwood, moreover, is depicted as a wine connoisseur, importing fine vintages from as far away as the Sea of Rhûn and coveting his wine cellar like a Dragon guarding its hoard of gold.

By contrast, our first encounter with Elves in *The Lord of the Rings* provides a very different impression of Elvish appetites, though in part this may be explained by the distinction Tolkien makes between the super-civilized High Elves and the more rustic Wood-elves shown in *The Hobbit*. At Woodhall, Frodo, Pippin and Sam enjoy a rarefied, seemingly vegetarian meal courtesy of the Noldorin Elf Gildor, featuring bread "surpassing the savour of a fair white loaf" and "fruits sweet as wildberries", washed down by a "fragrant draught, cool as a clear fountain". The foods, it is noticeable, are described in

the vaguest terms, as *like* something else – as strange, exotic and even otherworldly, contrasting strongly with the Hobbits' own robust diet.

Later, much longer encounters with the Elves provide us with even less detail. In Rivendell, there is much feasting but the primary occupation at such feasts seems almost to be singing and storytelling rather than eating. Similarly, we learn little about food in Lothlórien – except that it is, inevitably, better than the food the Fellowship has been habitually eating. The sole exception is the near-miraculous Lembas bread and the reviving cordial Miruvor.



DINNER AND SUPPER

Dinner/supper is the most often mentioned meal in The Lord of the Rings, *with breakfast a close second – closely reflecting the importance they have in the Hobbits' daily routine. As the heartiest and merriest meal of the day, supper is much looked forward to and is often accompanied by supper-songs, an example of which is sung by Frodo at the Prancing Pony. The Men of Gondor accord the same importance to supper – which they call the "daymeal" – a time of mirth and relaxation after a hard day's work broken only by a relatively light breakfast and "nuncheon" (noontide lunch).*





HARADRIM TAGINE

This veg-filled tagine will prove a winner for meat eaters, vegans and vegetarians alike. For added nutrition, you could serve it with protein-rich quinoa rather than the traditional couscous and dried apricots work well in place of the figs.

The Haradrim are a proud, warlike people who live in the dry sunny lands to the south of Gondor. They are ancient enemies of Gondor due to their historic oppression by Númenórean colonizers and fall under the influence of Sauron during the War of the Ring. Tolkien describes them as fond of scarlet and gold, which they use in their jewellery, body paint, armour and decorations for their war Oliphaunts.

This recipe imagines a Haradrim meal of rich red tomatoes and golden couscous with spices to evoke their bright sunny homeland.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR

INGREDIENTS

100ml sunflower oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 teaspoons each ground coriander, cumin, cinnamon
400g can chickpeas, drained
400g can chopped tomatoes
600ml vegetable stock

¼ teaspoon saffron threads
1 large aubergine, trimmed and chopped
250g button mushrooms, trimmed and halved if large
100g dried figs, chopped
2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander
salt and black pepper

For the couscous
350g couscous
½ teaspoon sea salt
400ml warm water
1–2 tablespoons sunflower oil
25g butter, cut into small pieces

1 To make the tagine, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a frying pan, add the onion, garlic and spices and cook over a medium heat, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes until golden. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a saucepan and add the chickpeas, tomatoes, stock and saffron. Season with salt and pepper.

2 Heat the remaining oil in the frying pan, add the aubergine and cook over a high heat, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes until browned. Add to the tagine and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, cover and simmer gently for 20 minutes.

3 Meanwhile, tip the couscous into an ovenproof dish. Stir the salt into the measured water and pour over the couscous. Stir once to make sure all the grains are submerged in the water, then cover with a clean tea towel and leave to stand for 10–15 minutes.

4 Stir the mushrooms and figs into the tagine and simmer gently, uncovered, for a further 20 minutes. Stir in the fresh coriander and adjust the seasoning.

5 Meanwhile, rake a fork through the couscous to break up the grains. Then, using your fingers, rub the oil into the grains until light, airy and any lumps are broken up. Scatter over the butter and cover with a piece

of damp greaseproof paper. Place in a preheated oven, 180°C, Gas Mark 4, for 15 minutes until heated through.

6 Divide the couscous between 4 plates and spoon over the tagine.



PUMPKIN AND GOAT'S CHEESE BAKE

Roasting vitamin-rich beetroot and pumpkin really brings out their sweet, mellow flavours. Serve this with a pile of peppery, aromatic rocket leaves for a delicious contrast in taste and texture. And, if there's any left over, keep it as a colourful topping for tomorrow's lunchtime salad.

The Shire is meant to be a mythical representation of England rather than a direct copy of some medieval historical reality. Thus, the foods that Tolkien mentions so freely in his tales are inspired primarily by the cooking of his youth, evoking a sense of Englishness that stands outside of time. In this spirit, this recipe combines a vegetable from the New World, pumpkin, with one from the Old World, beetroot, to create a dish that is both filling and vegetarian-friendly.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 50 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

40g raw beetroot, peeled and diced
625g pumpkin or butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into slightly larger dice than the beetroot
1 red onion, cut into wedges
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 teaspoons fennel seeds
2 small goat's cheeses, 100g each
salt and black pepper
chopped rosemary, to garnish

1 Put the vegetables into a roasting tin, drizzle with the oil and sprinkle with the fennel seeds and salt and pepper. Roast in a preheated oven, 200˚C, Gas Mark 6, for 20–25 minutes, turning once, until well browned and tender.

2 Cut the goat's cheeses into thirds and nestle among the roasted vegetables. Sprinkle the cheeses with a little salt and pepper and drizzle with some of the pan juices.

3 Return the dish to the oven and cook for about 5 minutes until the cheese is just beginning to melt. Sprinkle with rosemary and serve immediately.

THE GREEN DRAGON'S MUSHROOM AND LEEK PIE

These individual pies make a great vegetarian main course. You can also make one large pie, in which case increase the baking time to 20–25 minutes or until the pastry is beautifully puffy and golden brown.

Pies don't need to have meat to be warm and comforting. This vegetarian pub classic will make you feel like a Hobbit settling down to a hearty supper in the Green Dragon in Bywater – Sam and his father's local – gossiping all the while about that odd Mr Baggins up at Bag End and his fabulous hidden treasure. Whatever – you ask your companion, Andwise Roper – will he do next?

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 45 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

25g butter
2 leeks, trimmed, cleaned and thinly sliced
300g chestnut mushrooms, trimmed and quartered
300g button mushrooms, trimmed and quartered
1 tablespoon plain flour
250ml milk
150ml double cream
100g strong Cheddar cheese, grated
4 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
2 sheets of ready-rolled puff pastry
beaten egg, to glaze

1 Melt the butter in a large saucepan. Add the leeks and cook over a medium heat for 1–2 minutes. Add the mushrooms and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the flour for 1 minute, then gradually add the milk and cream and stir constantly until the sauce boils and thickens. Add the Cheddar and parsley and stir for a further 1–2 minutes. Remove from the heat.

2 Cut 4 rounds from the pastry sheets to cover 4 individual pie dishes. Divide the mixture between the dishes. Brush the rims with the egg, place the pastry rounds on top, press down slightly and crimp the edges. Cut two slits in the top of each pie to let the steam out. Brush the pastry with the remaining egg.

3 Bake in a preheated oven, 220°C, Gas Mark 7, for 15–20 minutes until the pastry is golden. Serve hot.

FELL WINTER ROOT VEGETABLE STEW

This flavoursome vegan stew is packed with health-giving veg and is perfect for feeding a crowd. The flavour improves on keeping so it tastes even better the next day, gently reheated. Serve with crusty bread or garlic mashed potatoes.

In 2911–12 TA Eriador is struck with a long, cold winter in which food runs short and White Wolves come south, even crossing over the frozen Brandywine river into the Shire. The beleaguered inhabitants of the Shire are only able to survive with the help of Gandalf and the Rangers of the North.

This stew makes use of winter vegetables and dried herbs, conjuring a taste of what we think Hobbits might have eaten during that long cold winter while eagerly awaiting the spring. With each bite, imagine sitting by the hearth as the snow falls down outside, grateful for the warmth and comfort of your well-appointed Hobbit hole.

SERVES EIGHT TO TEN

PREP AND COOK 2–2 ½ HOURS

INGREDIENTS

1 pumpkin or large butternut squash, about 1.5kg
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 small red chilli, deseeded and chopped
4 celery sticks, cut into 2.5cm lengths

500g carrots, cut into 2.5cm pieces
250g parsnips, cut into 2.5cm pieces
2 x 400g cans plum tomatoes
3 tablespoons tomato purée
1–2 tablespoons hot paprika
250ml vegetable stock
1 bouquet garni (a bundle of parsley, thyme and bay leaf)
2 x 400g cans red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
salt and black pepper
4 tablespoons finely chopped parsley, to garnish

1 Slice the pumpkin or butternut in half and discard the seeds and fibres. Cut the flesh into cubes, removing the skin. You should have about 1kg flesh.

2 Heat the oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat, add the onion, garlic and chilli and fry until softened but not coloured. Add the pumpkin or butternut and celery and fry gently for 10 minutes.

3 Stir in the carrots, parsnips, tomatoes, tomato purée, paprika, stock and bouquet garni. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, cover the pan and simmer for 1–1 ½ hours or until the vegetables are almost tender.

4 Add the beans and cook for 10 minutes. Remove and discard the bouquet garni. Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle with the parsley.



SPINACH AND TOMATO DAHL

Cheap, filling, tasty and healthy too, this vegan dahl with its fragrant Indian-spiced oil, is sure to become a regular supper favourite. Serve with naan bread or steamed basmati rice.

> *Tolkien tells us that among the Istari, the five Wizards sent to Middle-earth by the Valar in 1000 TA, are the two Blue Wizards – Alatar and Pallando – who travel to regions in the east of Middle-earth, lands loosely inspired by ancient India, Persia and China. Tolkien tells us almost nothing of the Blue Wizards' fate, but perhaps they simply fell in love with the cultures of the East, including their richly spiced cuisines.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

250g dried red split lentils
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
2 green chillies, deseeded and chopped
2 teaspoons peeled and grated fresh ginger
1 litre water
400g can chopped tomatoes
250g baby spinach leaves
salt

For the spiced oil
1 tablespoon sunflower oil
1 shallot, thinly sliced
12 curry leaves

1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 dried red chilli, broken into pieces

1 To make the dahl, rinse and drain the lentils. Place them in a large saucepan with the turmeric, chillies, ginger and measured water. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, for 40 minutes or until the lentils have broken down and the mixture has thickened.

2 Add the tomatoes and cook for a further 10 minutes or until thickened. Stir in the spinach and cook for 2–3 minutes until wilted.

3 Prepare the spiced oil. Heat the oil in a small frying pan, add the shallot and cook over a medium-high heat, stirring, for 2–3 minutes until golden brown. Add all the remaining ingredients and cook, stirring constantly, for 1–2 minutes until the seeds start to pop.

4 Tip the spiced oil into the dahl, stir well and season to taste with salt.

TÚRIN TURAMBAR TARRAGON CHICKEN

With its delicate, liquorice-like flavour, tarragon is the perfect flavour pairing for chicken. Serve with a green salad, if you like. The chicken can also be served on top of creamy mashed potato, instead of pasta.

Tolkien's hero Túrin Turambar lives a life of valiant deeds that culminate in his defeat of the dreaded dragon Glaurung. His tragic story, told in part in The Silmarillion, *finds its fullest rendition in Tolkien's posthumously published* The Children of Húrin, *edited by Christopher Tolkien. We like to think the delicious dish here might well have given this stern, grief-stricken hero a few moments' respite during his hapless struggle to overcome the doom laid on his family by the evil Morgoth.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 20 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

250g penne pasta
salt
4 tablespoons olive oil
500g skinless chicken breast fillets, cut into thin strips
500g courgettes, thinly sliced
1 large onion, thinly sliced
2 teaspoons crushed garlic
4 tablespoons pine nuts
finely grated zest and juice of 2 lemons
8 tablespoons chopped tarragon
200ml crème fraîche

grated Parmesan cheese, to serve

1 Cook the penne in a large saucepan of lightly salted boiling water for 8–10 minutes or according to the packet instructions.

2 Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large frying pan, add the chicken and cook for 3–4 minutes until starting to turn golden. Add the courgettes and onion and cook for a further 5 minutes until golden and the chicken is cooked through.

3 Add the garlic and pine nuts and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes, then add the lemon zest and juice, tarragon and crème fraîche and stir well until hot but not boiling.

4 Drain the pasta, then add to the sauce and toss well to coat. Serve with grated Parmesan.

FISH AND CHIPS

This quintessentially British dish is given a healthy twist as both the chips and the fish are oven-roasted, rather than deep-fried, and is enhanced by the addition of a creamy dip bursting with citrus flavour for dunking your chips.

We encounter fish and chips in The Lord of the Rings *when Sam reminisces on the good food he could have back home and promises to make the dish for Gollum if he's good. This food might seem anachronistic given the swords and great halls that lend the rest of the book a very medieval feel, but its presence is part and parcel with Tolkien's project of creating a mythology for England. There's nothing more quintessentially English, or indeed British, than fish and chips, and this classic comfort food feels like an element of Britishness that transcends time.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 1 HOUR

INGREDIENTS

1.5kg large floury potatoes, cut into thick chips
2 tablespoons olive oil
150g wholemeal breadcrumbs
finely grated zest of 1 lemon
3 tablespoons chopped parsley
4 chunky white fish fillets, about 180–200g each, each cut into 4 chunky pieces or goujons
75g plain flour
1 egg, beaten

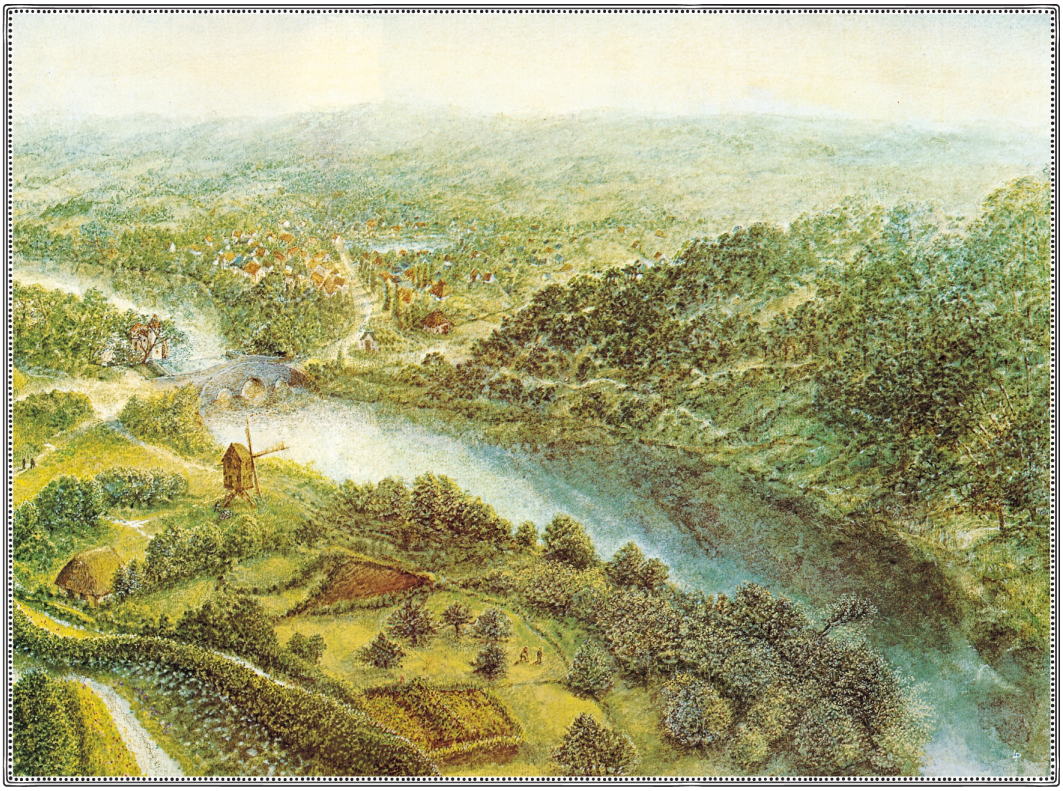
For the lemony mayonnaise dip
1 egg
150ml olive oil
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
grated zest of 1 small lemon, plus 2 tablespoons juice
2 tablespoons chopped parsley

1 Toss the potato chips with the oil, then roast in a preheated oven, 200°C, Gas Mark 6, for 30–40 minutes, turning occasionally until golden and crisp.

2 Meanwhile, toss the breadcrumbs with the lemon zest and parsley on a plate. Lightly coat the fish goujons in the flour, then the beaten egg, and finally the breadcrumbs. Place on a baking sheet and roast alongside the chips for the final 20 minutes of the chips' cooking time, until the fish is opaque and cooked through.

3 For the lemony mayonnaise dip place the egg, olive oil and white wine vinegar in a jug and whizz with a hand blender until a thick mayonnaise is formed. Fold in the lemon zest and juice, along with the parsley.





Brandywine River

BRANDYWINE FISH PIE

A good fish pie is one of the greatest comfort foods. Packed full of the flavour, this creamy pie needs nothing more to accompany it than a simple tomato salad or some crunchy steamed green veggies.

Most Hobbits, Tolkien tells us, can't swim. (Long before The Lord of the Rings *begins Frodo's parents have tragically died in a boating accident.) But the author also tells us there is an exception: those Brandybucks across the river in Buckland, who dabble about in boats and are consequently considered a bit odd. The pub in Stock, the Golden Perch, is named after such a fish as the intrepid, weird Brandybucks might have caught from the river nearby.*

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 1 ½ HOURS, PLUS INFUSING

INGREDIENTS

300g peeled and deveined raw prawns, (thawed if frozen)
300g white fish fillets such as haddock, skinned and cut into small pieces
2 teaspoons cornflour
2 teaspoons green peppercorns in brine, rinsed and drained
1 small fennel bulb, roughly chopped
1 small leek, trimmed, cleaned and roughly chopped
15g dill
15g flat leaf parsley
100g fresh or frozen green peas
750g baking potatoes, thinly sliced
75g Cheddar cheese, grated
salt and black pepper

For the cheese sauce
500ml milk
1 small onion
1 bay leaf
50g butter
50g plain flour
125g Cheddar or Gruyère cheese, grated

1 Make the cheese sauce. Put the milk, onion and bay leaf in a saucepan. Heat until just boiling, then remove from the heat and leave to infuse for 20 minutes. Strain the milk into a jug. Melt the butter in another saucepan, tip in the flour and stir in quickly. Cook, stirring, for 1–2 minutes, then, off the heat, gradually whisk in the milk mixture until blended. Bring gently to the boil, stirring, and cook for 2 minutes. Off the heat, stir in the grated Cheddar or Gruyère.

2 Dry the prawns, if frozen and thawed, by patting between sheets of kitchen paper. Season the cornflour with salt and pepper and use to coat the prawns and white fish.

3 Lightly crush the peppercorns using a mortar and pestle. Put the peppercorns in a food processor with the fennel, leek, dill, parsley and a little salt and blend until very finely chopped, scraping the mixture down from the sides of the bowl if necessary. Tip into a shallow ovenproof dish.

4 Scatter the prawns and fish over the fennel mixture, and mix together a little. Scatter the peas on top. Spoon half the cheese sauce over the filling, and spread roughly with the back of a spoon. Layer the potatoes on top, overlapping the slices and seasoning each layer with salt and pepper as you go. Spoon the remaining sauce over the top, spreading it in a thin layer. Sprinkle with the cheese.

5 Bake in a preheated oven, 220˚C, Gas Mark 7, for 30 minutes until the surface has turned pale golden. Reduce the oven temperature to 180˚C, Gas Mark 4, and cook for a further 30–40 minutes until the potatoes are completely tender and the fish is cooked through.



NÚMENÓREAN RED MULLET AND VINE-LEAF PARCELS

A taste of the Mediterranean, this is a meal that will wow guests. The vine leaves will add a lovely astringency to the fish but, if you can't find them, use baking parchment. If you struggle to find red mullet, your local fishmonger or fish counter should be able to advise on a replacement.

In the Second Age, Númenor is a great island-kingdom located in the Sundering Seas, west of Middle-earth, created as a reward for the Men who joined the Elves and the Valar in the struggle against Morgoth. The Númenóreans are granted long lives and became known for their great craftsmanship and prowess as seafarers.

These red mullet and vine leaf parcels are inspired by the calm, warm waters that surround this "isle of the blessed". They are the perfect grilled main for a warm summer's day. Enjoy them with a Warm Fig and Prosciutto Salad with Blue Cheese for a Númenórean-inspired feast.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

6 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons chopped dill
2 spring onions, chopped
1 teaspoon mustard powder

8 vine leaves in brine, drained
4 red mullet, about 350g each, scaled and gutted
4 bay leaves
4 dill sprigs, plus extra to garnish
salt and black pepper
lemon wedges, to garnish

1 Put 4 pieces of string, about 30cm long, into cold water to soak for 10 minutes.

2 Put the oil, lemon juice, chopped dill, spring onions, mustard powder and salt and pepper in a bowl and mix well. Wash and dry the vine leaves and arrange them in pairs, overlapping them slightly.

3 Make several slashes on both sides of each fish and rub them all over with a little of the oil and lemon mixture. Stuff each of the belly cavities with a bay leaf and a dill sprig. Lay each fish on a pair of vine leaves and wrap securely. Brush with a little of the oil and lemon mixture and fasten with the wet string to secure the leaves in place.

4 Cook the fish on a hot barbecue or under a preheated hot grill for 4–5 minutes on each side, brushing them with a little more of the oil and lemon mixture if necessary, until lightly charred.

5 Leave the fish to rest for a few minutes, then discard the string and vine leaves and dress the mullet with the rest of the oil and lemon mixture. Garnish with dill sprigs.



ROSEMARY LAMB SKEWERS

For a Middle Eastern take on this recipe, make the lamb skewers as here and stuff inside warmed pitta breads, along with some shredded lettuce, sliced tomatoes and a drizzle of sauce made by mixing natural yogurt, tahini and a little lemon juice.

The House of Marach (later known as the House of Hador) is the third kindred of Men (or Edain) to migrate into Beleriand during the First Age. They are the most warlike of the Edain, the most numerous, and the tallest and fairest – most of the great heroes among Men in The Silmarillion *belong to, or are descended from, this house.*

These grilled lamb skewers are inspired by the House of Marach's long journey into Beleriand out of the east, bringing their sheep, goats and horses with them. The Men would have cooked over open fires in their campsites, which we here approximate with a barbecue. A grill pan on the stove top will give you similar results.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES, PLUS CHILLING

INGREDIENTS

500g boneless leg of lamb, minced
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tablespoon chopped rosemary
6 anchovies in oil, drained and chopped

olive oil, for brushing
salt and black pepper

For the tomato and olive salad
6 ripe tomatoes, cut into wedges
1 red onion, sliced
125g pitted black olives
a few torn basil leaves
salt and black pepper
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
a squeeze of lemon juice

1 Combine the lamb, onion, garlic, rosemary, anchovies and some salt and pepper in a bowl and use your hands to work them together. Divide into 12 and shape into even-sized, sausage-shaped patties. Chill for 30 minutes.

2 Thread the patties on to metal skewers, brush lightly with oil and cook on a hot barbecue or under a preheated hot grill for 3–4 minutes on each side until cooked through.

3 Meanwhile, make the salad. Combine the tomatoes, onion, olives and basil in a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with oil and squeeze a little lemon juice over. Serve the skewers with the salad.







JUNIPER ROAST LAMB

Mouthwateringly succulent, this roast lamb adds junipers to the classic Italian trio of garlic, rosemary and anchovies for the paste. Make sure you really pound the paste as the smoother it is, the deeper it will penetrate into the meat.

One of the first adventures that Bilbo has after leaving the Shire with Thorin and Company is an encounter with three ill-tempered Trolls, humorously named William, Bert and Tom. The trolls are "toasting" mutton on a spit and drinking ale, all the while complaining about the monotony of their diet. Perhaps the recipe here might have convinced the Trolls otherwise, and what's more, it needs just a plain old oven, not a tricky-to-handle spit!

SERVES SIX

PREP AND COOK 2 HOURS

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 leg of lamb, about 1.5kg, trimmed of excess fat
10 juniper berries, 6 crushed and 4 whole reserved
3 garlic cloves, crushed
50g salted anchovies, boned and rinsed
1 tablespoon chopped rosemary, plus 2 rosemary sprigs
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
300ml dry white wine
salt and black pepper

1. Heat the oil in a roasting tin in which the lamb will fit snugly. Add the lamb and cook until browned all over. Leave to cool.

2. Pound 6 of the juniper berries, the garlic, anchovies and chopped rosemary with the end of a rolling pin in a bowl. Stir in the vinegar and mix to a paste.

3. Make small incisions all over the lamb with a small, sharp knife. Spread the paste over the lamb, working it into the incisions. Season with salt and pepper.

4. Put the rosemary sprigs in the roasting tin and put the lamb on top. Pour in the wine and add the remaining juniper berries. Cover the roasting tin with foil and bring to the boil, then cook in a preheated oven, 160°C, Gas Mark 3, for 1 hour, turning the lamb every 20 minutes.

5. Raise the temperature to 200°C, Gas Mark 6, uncover and roast for a further 30 minutes until the lamb is very tender.

6. Serve with the Honey-spiced Carrot and Parsnip Star and a helping of roast potatoes.





Trolls

LAKE-TOWN BEEF POT ROAST

This will fill the house with mouth-watering aromas as it cooks and the slow-cooked brisket will be melt-in-the-mouth tender. Serve with some crisp green beans and buttery mashed potato or sweet potato to mop up the delicious gravy.

Bilbo is the Odysseus of Tolkien's world, his heroism defined not so much by his bravery or skill in arms, but by his cunning, even duplicity. One of Bilbo's greatest feats of cunning in The Hobbit *occurs when he helps the Dwarves escape their imprisonment by the Elves of Mirkwood by hiding them in the Elvenking's empty wine barrels.*

These wine barrels get sent up and down the river from Mirkwood to Lake-town, where the Men of Lake-town refill them with wine and mead to sell back to the Elves. As the Elves obliviously push the Dwarf-carrying barrels down into the river, they sing them on their way, out into the open pasturelands where the Lake-men's cattle feed. Here we have a smuggling operation as wily as Odysseus' Trojan Horse!

This recipe is inspired by Lake-town's exports to Mirkwood and combines both beef and wine in a slow-cooked roast. Prepare this dish to warm up after a crisp, cold day. It is perfect for feeding a crowd or creating leftovers to eat during the week.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 2 ½ HOURS

INGREDIENTS

875g brisket of beef, cut into 5cm pieces
1 celery stick
2 bay leaves
750ml bottle full-bodied red wine
300ml beef or chicken stock
2 carrots, cut at an angle into 3.5cm slices
20 baby onions, peeled but kept whole
salt and black pepper

Horseradish dumplings

150g self-raising flour
75g shredded suet
2 teaspoons creamed horseradish
3 tablespoons snipped chives
5–7 tablespoons water
salt and black pepper

1. Season the beef with salt and pepper and put in a large, flameproof casserole with a tight-fitting lid. Add the celery and bay leaves, then pour in the wine and stock. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a barely visible simmer and cook, covered, for 1 ½ hours, stirring occasionally.

2. Meanwhile, make the dumplings. Mix the flour, suet, horseradish, chives and salt and pepper in a bowl. Stir in enough water to make a soft but not sticky dough. With floured hands, shape into 8 balls.

3. Add the dumplings, carrots and onions to the stew. Re-cover and simmer gently for a further 45 minutes, until the dumplings are light and fluffy, adding a little water if the sauce becomes too thick. Remove the beef from the heat and serve.



Lake Town

SAM'S CONEY STEW

Rabbit can be a bit dry if not cooked the right way, but braising it slowly in a richly flavoured sauce will guarantee tender, juicy meat. Chicken thighs would work well here as a substitute for rabbit.

Samwise's campfire rabbit stew provides one of the most iconic moments in The Lord of the Rings, *providing a scene of comfort and a whiff of home for Frodo and Sam before the final stage of their journey across the mountains into Mordor. Sam bewails the lack of a good stock and "taters", but he does manage to gather up a few herbs to add some flavour. Fortunately, here in the real world we have more ingredients at our disposal than poor Sam has in Ithilien.*

In honour of Master Samwise's stew we have devised this rich and comforting stew that calls upon the flavours of herbs to complement the rich and tender rabbit meat.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 2 ¾ HOURS

INGREDIENTS

½ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon ground allspice
2 teaspoons finely chopped thyme or sage leaves
3 tablespoons olive oil
750g rabbit pieces or skinless chicken thighs
3 large onions, sliced
2 teaspoons caster sugar

3 garlic cloves, crushed
75ml red wine vinegar
300ml red wine
50g tomato purée
salt
2 bay leaves
flat-leaf parsley, to garnish

1. Mix together the pepper, allspice and rosemary and rub over the rabbit or chicken pieces.

2. Heat the oil in a large, flameproof casserole and fry the meat in batches on all sides until thoroughly browned. Drain the meat to a plate.

3. Add the onions to the pan with the sugar and fry, stirring frequently, for about 15 minutes until caramelized. Stir in the garlic and then cook for a further 1 minute.

4. Add the vinegar and wine to the pan. Bring to the boil and continue to boil until the mixture has reduced by about a third. Stir in the tomato purée and a little salt, return the meat to the pan and add the bay leaves.

5. Cover with a lid and place in a preheated oven, 150°C, Gas Mark 2, for about 2 hours for rabbit and 1 ½ hours if using chicken thighs, until the meat is very tender and the juices thick and glossy. Check the seasoning and sprinkle with the parsley.





FEASTING IN TOLKIEN

It is no coincidence that both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* begin with feasts, albeit of two somewhat different kinds – an informal, impromptu one in *The Hobbit* when the impeccably hospitable but increasingly flustered Bilbo finds himself forced to cater for a growing number of ravenous Dwarves; and the grand, highly organized one of *The Lord of the Rings*, for which an enormous open-air kitchen is set up and cooks employed from all the inns in the neighbourhood – mass-catering on an Oliphaunt-ine scale!

Both of these feasts, different as they are, serve the same basic narrative function. Each conjures up a world of cheerful plenty, with associated feelings of warmth and security, peace and happiness – all the ingredients, in short, that we associate with the word "home". This is the safe place which the comfort-loving Hobbits of both books must leave behind as they set out on their quests into the perilous outside world and begin their transformation into heroes.

Importantly, too, feasting fosters a sense of community: the wily Gandalf knows that the best way to get Bilbo and the Dwarves together is to trick them into eating and drinking together – even if Bilbo is a somewhat unwilling host in his own cosy version of a feasting hall, Bag End!

In *The Two Towers* we encounter an actual feasting hall where Tolkien underlines the Golden Hall's societal function by having Legolas describe it as a light shining over the land. Ironically, when Gandalf, Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli first come to Meduseld, they find it gloomy and unfriendly, the very antithesis of festive and hospitable. The absence of feasting here symbolizes the rot that has set in at the heart of the kingdom and in the heart of the prematurely aged king, Théoden.



AND TO DRINK...

Think of Middle-earth and drinking, and flowing tankards of ale come to mind, probably enjoyed in one of the many hospitable inns of the Shire or Bree-land. But the many peoples of Tolkien's world consume a much wider range of beverages – both alcoholic and non-alcoholic – from the refreshing Ent-draughts of Fangorn to the hot spiced wines loved by the Dwarves.





ATHELAS TEA

With its heady scent of mint and lemon verbena, this clean-tasting tea is refreshing and reviving. It's a good aid to digestion after dinner, as an alternative to coffee.

Tolkien imagined his Middle-earth in almost every aspect and in astonishing detail – right down to the smallest herb. Athelas, or Kingsfoil, is a long-stemmed leaf that is used by Aragorn to help heal Frodo after he is wounded by a Nazgûl blade on Weathertop. The plant has a clear, clean and revitalizing scent that strengthens both body and mind.

Here the flavour of Athelas is imagined as a combination of mint and lemon verbena, offering both comforting warmth and refreshment.

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 20 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons Chinese gunpowder green tea leaves
2–3 sugar lumps, plus extra to taste
large bunch of peppermint and garden mint leaves and stems
small bunch of lemon verbena leaves and stems

1 Place the green tea and sugar lumps in a teapot. Pour over a little boiling water and leave to steep for 5 minutes.

2 Add the mint and lemon verbena leaves to the pot, packing them in as tightly as you can. Add more sugar to taste and top up the pot with boiling water.

3 Place the teapot over a pan of boiling water or over a low heat on the hob, or simply cover with a tea cosy. Leave to brew for 10 minutes.

4 Place 4 tea glasses on a tray. Pour some of the tea into a glass, then tip it back into the pot. Hold the pot high above the glasses and pour slowly so that bubbles form on top of the tea. Serve immediately.

MIRUVOR

Fragrant rose water is the key to this refreshing cordial. Serve it on a hot summer day over lots of ice cubes and with a sprig of mint or slice of cucumber. A dash added to a gin and tonic transforms it into a cocktail full of Eastern promise.

Miruvor is an Elvish reviving cordial made from Yavanna's flowers and used in Elvish festivals. In The Lord of the Rings, *Elrond gifts Gandalf a flask of Miruvor. It comes in handy for the Fellowship when they drink it to revive themselves after braving the treacherous snowy mountain crossing of Caradhras.*

This fragrant drink will warm you up in a pinch and prepare you to overcome the next challenge on your journey – even if it's an abandoned mine hiding a Balrog.

SERVES SIX TO EIGHT

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

450g granulated sugar
225ml water
juice of ½ lemon
100ml rose water

1 Place the sugar and measured water in a heavy-based saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring continuously until the sugar has dissolved.

2 Add the lemon juice and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in the rose water and simmer for 4–5 minutes. Leave to cool in the pan, then pass through a sieve into a sterilized bottle or jar.

3 To serve, put a few ice cubes into a glass, add 2–3 tablespoons of the cordial and top up with cold water. The cordial can also be stored in the refrigerator for 3–4 weeks.

THE OLD TOOK'S HOT CHOCOLATE

A decadently grown-up take on hot chocolate, this chilli-spiked toddy is the perfect antidote to a cold and grey winter day. The chilli can be omitted, if you prefer, but it brings a welcome hint of extra heat to the chocolate and rum combination.

The Old Took – properly named Gerontius Took – is the 23rd Thain of the Shire and a venerable ancestor of both Pippin and Merry. We can imagine him, in his very ripe old age, tucked up in a cosy armchair in the Great Smials – the ancestral seat of the Tooks in Tuckborough – sipping this warming hot chocolate with its kick of chilli and alcohol. (We should note that, perhaps surprisingly, Tolkien never mentions chocolate in his stories, perhaps because of its New World origins.)

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 25 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

50g cocoa powder
4 teaspoons instant coffee granules
1 litre boiling water
150ml dark rum
100g caster sugar
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 large dried or fresh red chilli, halved

1 Put the cocoa and instant coffee in a bowl and mix to a smooth paste with a little of the measured boiling water.

2 Pour the cocoa paste into a large saucepan. Add the remaining boiling water, the rum, sugar, cinnamon and red chilli and mix together. Simmer for at least 20 minutes until piping hot.

3 Stir well, then ladle into heatproof glasses.



NON-ALCOHOLIC VARIATION

SERVES FOUR

PREP AND COOK 10 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

400ml water
4 cardamom pods
3 teaspoons very finely ground Arabica coffee
1 teaspoon cocoa powder
4 teaspoons granulated sugar

1 Place the measured water and cardamom pods in a small saucepan and carefully spoon the coffee, cocoa powder and sugar on top. Gently stir

the mixture into the surface of the water, making sure you don't touch the bottom of the pan with the spoon.

2 Bring to just below boiling point over a medium heat, gradually drawing in the outer edges of the mixture to create a froth. Just as it is about to bubble, spoon some of the froth into 4 coffee cups and pour in the chocolatey coffee. Leave to stand for 1 minute before drinking to let the coffee grains settle at the bottom of the cups.

ORC-DRAUGHT

This honey-laced classic winter warmer really packs a punch and it's a great choice for when you are entertaining.

> *Orc-draught is a burning yet revitalizing drink that the super-breed of Orcs known as the Uruk-hai force on Merry and Pippin while taking them to Saruman at Isengard. Our reimagining of this drink will numb pain and keep you marching under the banners of darkness for as long as it takes.*

SERVES SIX

PREP AND COOK 25 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

1 litre dry cider
125ml whisky
125ml orange juice
4 tablespoons set honey
2 cinnamon sticks
orange wedges and curls, to decorate (optional)

1. Add all the ingredients to a large saucepan, cover with the lid and simmer for 20 minutes, until piping hot.

2. Stir, then ladle into heatproof glasses. Add orange wedges and curls to decorate, if desired.



Orcs

THE MULLED WINES OF MORIA

The delicious smells of spices, fruit and wine will fill the air when you make these decadent mulled drinks. For something a little different from the usual red mulled wine, try the white wine variation. These drinks are perfect for celebrations on a cold winter's day.

Caves, even beautifully carved and decorated ones, can be rather cold. Of course, the Dwarves of a kingdom like Moria (Khazad-dûm) would have made their cavernous realm comfortable with warm hearths, but still a warm, hearty drink would hardly go amiss after braving the blizzards of the Misty Mountains to reach one of its gates. Here we have two recipes that can be used to liven up even an average bottle of wine imported from the lands of Men.

RED MULLED WINE

Warming and cheering, with an extra kick from some added brandy.

SERVES SIX

PREP AND COOK 25 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

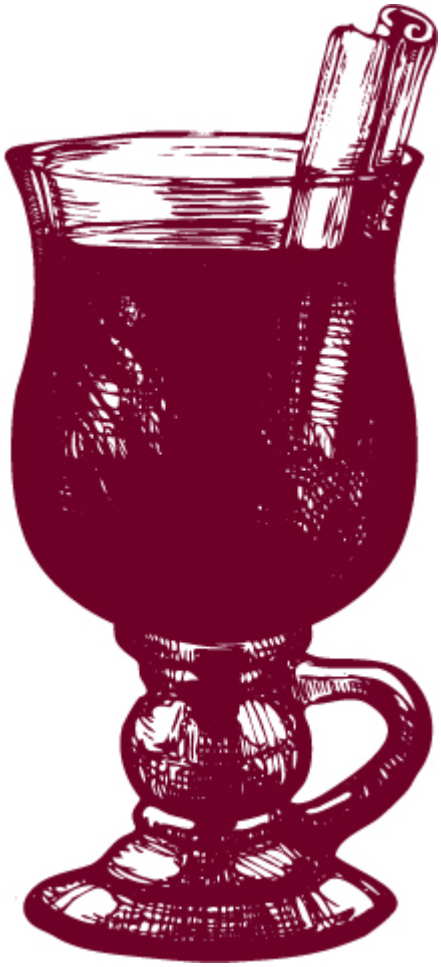
1 bottle inexpensive red wine
300ml clear apple juice
300ml water
juice of 1 orange

1 orange, sliced
½ lemon, sliced
1 cinnamon stick, halved
6 cloves
2 bay leaves
125g caster sugar
150ml brandy

1. Pour the wine, apple juice, water and orange juice into a large saucepan.

2. Add the sliced orange and lemon, the cinnamon stick, cloves and bay leaves, then mix in the sugar and brandy.

3. Cover with the lid and simmer for at least 20 minutes, until piping hot. The longer it simmers the more the flavours will develop. Ladle into heatproof glasses.



WHITE MULLED WINE

Spiced with “Rhûnic” (Eastern) flavours of cardamom, ginger and star anise this is lighter-bodied and fresher than red mulled wine.

SERVES SIX

PREP AND COOK 15 MINUTES, PLUS 20 MINUTES STANDING

INGREDIENTS

750ml white wine
225ml water
2.5cm piece fresh root ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
2 star anise
1 cinnamon stick
3 cardamom pods, bruised
2 tablespoons honey
4 cloves
2 strips orange peel, studded with 4 cloves

1. Add the white wine and measured water to a large saucepan. Then add all the remaining ingredients and heat slowly over a medium heat until just simmering.

2. Remove from the heat and allow to stand for 20 minutes to mull.

3. To serve, gently reheat the mulled wine and serve warm.



MEAD

Mead is enjoying a revival among artisan brewers and bartenders in the know. Either make your own, or find it at specialist shops and online and enjoy it the contemporary way with the cocktails here.

> *Mead, also known as honey wine, is one of the oldest fermented beverages in the world, found throughout Europe, Asia and Africa. You'll also find it everywhere in Middle-earth: Beorn serves mead to Thorin's company in* The Hobbit; *Frodo, Sam and Pippin meet a company of High Elves while still in the Shire in* The Lord of the Rings *and drink a honeyed beverage that sounds very much like mead; and when Celeborn and Galadriel bid farewell to the Fellowship of the Ring they share a drink of white mead to mark the occasion.*

MAKES APPROX. FIVE LITRES

PREP 2 HOURS PLUS 1 YEAR MATURING

INGREDIENTS

5 litres water
1.2kg honey
juice of 1 lemon
1 vitamin C tablet
1 teaspoon wine yeast

1. Put the water, honey, lemon juice and vitamin C tablet in a large, heavy-based saucepan and bring to the boil to kill the natural yeasts. (You can sterilize the mixture with the appropriate number of proprietary sterilizing tablets if you prefer.)

2 Leave the liquid to cool, then transfer it to a sterilized demijohn. Add the wine yeast and close with a sterilized airlock. The fermentation will take place for around 2 weeks and then the lees will start to settle.

3 Rack (siphon) off the liquid into another sterilized demijohn and store in a cool, dark place. (If you can manage to store it on a heavy stone floor the sediment will fall more easily.) Rack off the mead again.

4 When the liquid is clear, transfer it to bottles and store for at least a year – if you can manage to resist it!

MEAD MULE

Fiery ginger beer, sweet mead and fresh lime combine in this twist on the classic Moscow Mule.

SERVES ONE

PREP 5 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

50ml mead
2 teaspoons lime juice
150ml ginger beer
ice cubes

To decorate
sprig of mint
lime wedge

1 Add the mead, lime juice and ginger beer to a mixing glass and stir.

2 Pour into a tumbler over ice cubes and top with the mint and lime wedge.



MEAD FIZZ

Perfect for a celebratory brunch or lunch, this recipe adds a dash of mead to enhance the more traditional Buck's Fizz.

SERVES ONE

PREP 5 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

50ml freshly squeezed orange juice
2 tablespoons mead
100ml chilled Champagne

1 Add the orange juice and mead to a Champagne flute, mix briefly, then slowly top up with the Champagne.

DRINKS IN MIDDLE-EARTH

There is quite a drinking culture in Middle-Earth, with each of its peoples most closely associated with a particular kind of beverage, usually of the alcoholic kind.

It will come as no surprise that Hobbits – whose culture broadly reflects that of late Victorian and Edwardian England – have a great liking for beer. The Shire has a large number of inns, and beer flows freely at every meal, feast and celebration. The very best beer in the Eastfarthing, so Pippin claims, is brewed at The Golden Perch in Stock, but the Prancing Pony out at Bree, frequented by both Hobbits and Men, also has an excellent reputation. In the early Fourth Age, an especially good beer would be routinely compared to the superlative beers of 1420 in the Shire Reckoning – the year after the end of the War of the Ring when the Northfarthing barley crop (among many other crops) was so fine.

Men, too, are partial to beer, but mead – made by fermenting honey with water – also seems to be widely drunk, especially by the nobler Mannish peoples such as the Beornings and Rohirrim, for whose cultures Tolkien took inspiration from the mead-drinking Anglo-Saxons. In *The Hobbit*, Gandalf drinks at least a quart of mead while breakfasting under the roof of Beorn, the Beornings' chieftain, and this sweet, golden beverage must also have been served at the Meduseld, the Golden Hall of the Kings of Rohan, whose very name is derived from the Old English word *maeduselde*, or "mead hall".

While we know there are vineyards in the Southfarthing of the Shire (among Hobbits, Old Winyards is an esteemed *appellation*), wine is most closely associated with the Elves. In *The Hobbit* the Elvenking of Mirkwood is very fond of wine and keeps a prodigiously well-stocked cellar as well as a butler to look after it: his favourite wine is a strong, heady vintage from Dorwinion on the shores of the Sea of Rhûn, hundreds of miles away. We might well imagine that the ultra-civilized Númenóreans and the Gondorians after them are also inveterate wine drinkers.

Not every drink in Middle-earth is alcoholic. The Ents – the guardians of the trees – rather than eating in any conventional sense, take sustenance and refreshment from Ent-draughts which are made from river water and kept in large stone jars. The draughts seem to have an almost supernatural power to promote growth – Pippin and Merry grow two or three inches taller after consuming Ent-draughts during their time in Fangorn Forest. The Elves, too, have Miruvor, a sustaining herbal cordial (here).



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  porridge
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pot roast, Lake-town beef
potatoes
  Beren's potato bread
  fish and chips
  potato and cabbage fritter
  potato and spring onion rösti

the Prancing Pony's potato and garlic soup
prawns
Umbrian prawn and monkfish skewers
prosciutto: warm fig and prosciutto salad with blue cheese
puff pastry
beetroot tarte tatin with goat's cheese
Bifur's jam and apple tart
the Green Dragon's mushroom and leek pie
pumpkin and goat's cheese bake

R

rabbit: Sam's coney stew
roasted stuffed pepper flames
rolls, Elvish white bread
rosemary lamb skewers
rösti, potato and spring onion

S

salads
foraged salad
walnut, pear and green leaf salad
warm fig and prosciutto salad with blue cheese
salmon: Gollum's raw fish
salsa
Sam's coney stew
scallops: Alqualondëan grilled scallops with pesto
scones, wholewheat treacle
seafood
Alqualondëan grilled scallops with pesto
Grey Havens garlicky grilled mussels
Umbrian prawn and monkfish skewers
seeds
Bilbo's seed-cake
sesame, date and, bars
shortbread biscuits, Niphredil
shortcakes, strawberry and lavender
skewers
rosemary lamb skewers
Umbrian prawn and monkfish skewers
smoky stewed beans

soups
  the Prancing Pony's potato and garlic soup
  the soup of story
spiced apple butter
spiced pear and cranberry muffins
spiced plum jam
spinach
  spinach and sweet potato cakes
  spinach and tomato dahl
spring onions
  potato and spring onion rösti
stews
  Fell Winter root vegetable stew
  Sam's coney stew
strawberries
  Bilbo's eleventy-first birthday cake
  forest fruit bruschetta
  strawberry and lavender shortcakes
stuffed "Bucklebury Ferry" pears
sweet pickled cucumbers

T

tagine, Haradrim
tarte tatin, beetroot, with goat's cheese
tea, Athelas
tomatoes
  salsa
  smoky stewed beans
  spinach and tomato dahl
traveller's all-in-one breakfast in a tin
traveller's overnight oats
traybake, cherry and almond
trout, Easterling tea-marinated
Túrin Turambar tarragon chicken

U

Umbrian prawn and monkfish skewers

V

vine-leaf parcels, Númenórean red mullet

W

walnut, pear and green leaf salad
warm fig and prosciutto salad with blue cheese
Westfarthing fairings
whisky: Orc-draught
wholewheat treacle scones
wine: the mulled wines of Moria

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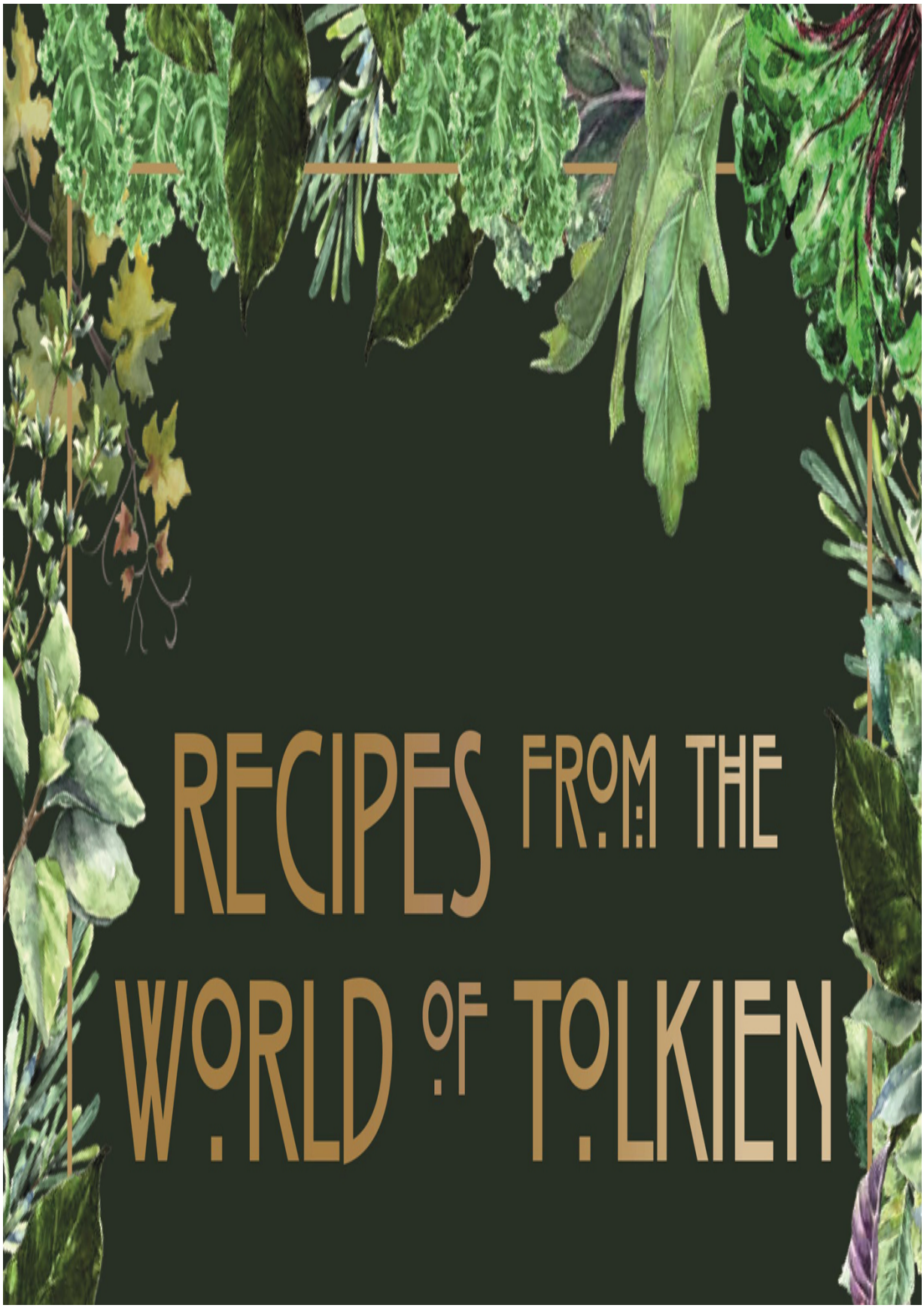
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Recipe Development: Jane Birch
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