

# American Revolutionary Tea

## Spotlighting

*Independent Dames: What You Never Knew About  
the Women and Girls of the American Revolution*

And

*Chains and Forge*

by Laurie Halse Anderson

- Form a committee. Team up with local Historical Society, library, teen book club and/or community. A committee of 4 -6 people would work nicely.
- Select a Date and location to hold the event. Time: Tea Time, of course!
- Encourage Community Reads Program to select one of Laurie's historical books. Prompt Teen Book Clubs to select books as a monthly read; suggesting that attendance at event count towards meeting. Discuss event with school librarians, English teachers and Social Studies teachers.
- Develop format of tea. Activities could include book discussion, time to eat, readings from books.
- Encourage, but not require, period dress at event. Do you have any re-enactors in your area who interpret the colonial era?
- Create a menu appropriate to the time period. See recipes below
- Divide responsibilities for cooking and tea preparation.
- Borrow china teacups, tea pots, and silver serving pieces.
- Publicize the event in your local newspaper, schools, and libraries. Print flyers and tickets. Media coverage - encourage reservations and/or presale tickets and encourage attendees to wear period clothing. (Especially fun for young ladies!)
- Remember to read the book!
- Purchase *Independent Dames*, *Chains and Forge* from river's end bookstore ([info@riversendbookstore.com](mailto:info@riversendbookstore.com)) to have signed by Laurie Halse Anderson and given away as prizes during event. (river's end will take care of having books signed and mailed to you)
- Have a wonderful event!
- Send photos of event in JPEG format to Queen Louise for inclusion on website!

Sample Menu: \*denotes recipe follows

Tea, lemonade with sliced lemons, water  
Sugar cubes and cream

Lancashire Cheese Scones \*

Almond Biscuits \*

Orange Cranberry Muffins

Cornmeal Muffins with assorted jams and jellies

Walnut Tarts \*

Watercress Tea Sandwiches \*

Molasses Cookies \*

Lemon Curd Tarts  
Gingerbread  
Unsalted Roasted Almonds  
Dolley Madison's Brandied Seed Cake \*

### **Lancashire Cheese Scones**

taken from [\*A Little Book of English Teas\*](#), by Rosa Mashiter - Chronicle Books

1 ½ cups self-raising flour 1 egg  
2tbsp margarine a little milk  
½ cup Lancashire cheese, grated pinch of salt  
pinch of cayenne pepper a little beaten egg

Put the flour and margarine into the food processor and process until the mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Add the cheese, salt and cayenne and process to mix - just a few seconds. With the machine switched on add the egg, together with just enough milk to make a soft pliable dough. Roll out on a lightly floured board and cut into rounds using a pastry cutter. Place on a greased baking tray, brush with beaten egg, and bake for about 20 minutes at 425 degrees.

### **Almond Biscuits**

taken from [\*A Little Book of English Teas\*](#), by Rosa Mashiter - Chronicle Books

¾ cup self-raising flour 1/3 cup butter  
1/3 cup ground almonds 1tbsp caster sugar  
a few flaked almonds

Sieve the flour into a bowl, and rub the butter in with the fingertips until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the ground almonds and caster sugar, adding a little milk, to form a soft dough. Roll the dough out on a lightly floured board, to a rectangle about 7 inches square and place on a greased baking sheet. Brush with a little milk and sprinkle over a few flaked almonds. Bake for 15-20 minutes at 375 degrees. Immediately they come out of the oven cut into fingers, then allow to cool.

### **Walnut Tarts**

Courtesy of the Mexico Historical Society, Mexico, New York

1 recipe for pastry for a double crust pie:  
2 ¼ cups flour ¾ tsp. salt  
2/3 cups shortening 8-10 tsp. cold water

Filling:

3 slightly beaten eggs 1 cup corn syrup  
2/3 cup sugar 1/3 cup melted butter  
1 tsp. vanilla 1 ¼ cups walnuts

Prepare and roll out ½ of the crust, cut into desired round size. Put into tart cups, mold into shape. Bake until dough is partially baked; spoon filling into tart and bake again till done. 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Repeat with other half of dough.

### **Watercress Tea Sandwiches**

Courtesy of the Mexico Historical Society, Mexico, New York

16 ounces cream cheese = enough for 2 ½ loaves assorted breads

Warm cream cheese in microwave to make it easy to spread on bread; top with fresh basil and other slice of bread. Cut into tea sandwiches.

### **Molasses Cookies**

Courtesy of the Mexico Historical Society, Mexico, New York

1 cup shortening or vegetable oil 1 cup brown sugar  
2 eggs 1 cup molasses  
½ cup mild or sour cream 4-5 cups flour  
1 tsp. baking soda ½ tsp. salt  
½ tsp. cinnamon ½ tsp. allspice  
¼ tsp. ginger

Whisk together oil and sugar, eggs, molasses and milk. Sift dry ingredients together; stir into wet ingredients.

Drop by tablespoons on baking sheet. Add 3 or 4 raisins - sprinkle sugar on top. Bake 12 minutes in a 375 degree oven. Cool 2 minutes on baking sheet, then on rack.

### **Dolley Madison's Brandied Seed Cake, Modern Style**

taken from [The White House Cookbook](#) edited by Janet Halliday Ervin - Follett

1 package (1 pound, 1 ounce) white or yellow cake mix  
2 eggs  
1/8 tsp. nutmeg  
1 tbsp. caraway seeds  
½ cup milk  
¼ cup brandy

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Mix cake with nutmeg, add milk, stir until mix is moistened. Beat one minute at medium speed with electric mixer or 150 strokes by hand. Add eggs, stir and beat one minute. Add seeds and brandy and beat one minute. Bake in ungreased nine-inch loaf pan about one and a quarter hours or until golden brown and crust springs back when lightly touched with finger. Let cool in pan on rack thirty minutes. Loosen with spatula, remove cake and place it on rack for complete cooling.