

262. White Onion Soup (French).

4	tblsp. butter	2	tins milk
4	medium onions-diced	1	tin white stock or water
1	tin soft breadcrumbs		Salt and pepper

Heat the butter, add the onions and, to avoid discolouring the onions cover closely and cook gently for an hour. Add the crumbs, milk and stock and cook slowly for three quarters of an hour or longer. Rub through a fine sieve re-heat and season to taste.

Grated cheese may be added to this **if wanted**.

FISH.

Although Baghdad is situated on the banks of the Tigris and within a few hundred miles of the Persian Gulf, the choice of fish available locally is small. The four species used as food are the "biz" (*Barbus esotinus*), the "shabbut" (*Barbus gripus*), the "bunni" (*Barbus punctus Sharpei*) and the "dhakar" (*Barbus anthopterus*) all of which are closely allied to the barbel, roach and tench of European waters and are of the same superfamily as the carp. The "jarri" or catfish is also eaten. There is little variety in this to anyone from the islands of Great Britain or the coasts of Europe and America and the foreigner is all the more amazed when he hears that one of Iraq's exports is her fish—to neighbouring countries bordering on the Mediterranean.

The subtle flavour of the river fish is much appreciated by Iraqis but the fact that most recipes for fish include strong condiments, spices and tasty vegetables suggests that the flavour is not really all that could be desired.

The most famous fish dish of Baghdad is undoubtedly "samak masguf" and particularly at the times of the full moon in summer, the riverside is dotted with the flames of brush wood fires against which are silhouetted the roasting fish. When the heat of the day is over picnic parties set out in high prowed "ballams" with a pile of brushwood in the bow, a good supply of khubz, fruit and chilled beverages and the fish which are towed behind by strings through the gills. The "balamchis" or boatmen, are expert at preparing the fish and when it is finally lifted from the embers and laid before one, the lateness of the hour and the innumerable biting insects are foregotten and, with a round of Arab bread for a plate and fingers instead of forks, one falls to with zest.

263. Children's Fish Dish.

$\frac{1}{2}$	k. fish (Biz) without bones	Salt and pepper
2 $\frac{1}{2}$	tins water	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tblsp. flour
1	small onion	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tblsp. butter
1	large tomato	1 hard boiled egg
2	tblsp. chopped parsley	

Clean and salt the fish and leave in the refrigerator for several hours to become firm.

Bring to the boil $2\frac{1}{2}$ tins of water, add one tablespoonful of chopped parsley, sliced onion and sliced tomato. Put in the fish and simmer tender. Remove the fish, drain well and keep hot.

Melt the butter, mix in the flour and add $1\frac{1}{2}$ tins of strained liquid from the fish to make a sauce. Season if necessary, add a chopped hard-boiled egg and parsley if liked.

264. Fish Mousse.

- 2 tins flaked fish ($\frac{1}{2}$ — $\frac{3}{4}$ kilo of fish)
- 2 tbsp. cream
- 2—3 drops tabasco or chilivinegar
- 1 tbsp. anchovy paste
- 4 tbsp. mayonnaise

The fish, which must have bones in it, should be rubbed with salt and a little lemon juice and baked until well cooked—about three quarters of an hour. Remove the bones, flake the fish and measure. Pound in mortar and pestle perfectly smooth. Add the anchovy and pound till well mixed. Mix with the cream, mayonnaise and tabasco. Rinse a mould with cold water, press in the fish and chill thoroughly. To turn out, invert on a serving dish and cover for a few minutes with a cloth wrung out in boiling water. Serve with mayonnaise thinned with vinegar to the consistency of thick cream.

Gelatine is not needed in this dish as sufficient is obtained by baking the fish its bones.

Two tablespoonfuls of pounded prawns can be substituted for anchovy and the fisher mousse should be garnished with them.

265. Fish Salad-(Greek).

- $1\frac{1}{3}$ tins cold boiled fish
- Salt and pepper
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ tins fried aubergine in slices
- Oil and vinegar dressing
- 1 tin sliced tomatoes

Break the fish into small pieces, mix with the egg plant which should be fried in olive oil, and with the peeled sliced tomato. Press with oil and vinegar.

266. Fish Stew.

- 2 tins bened fish ($\frac{1}{2}$ — $\frac{3}{4}$ k.)
- 2 large potatoes skinned and parboiled
- 2 tbsp. chopped onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tin milk
- 2 tbsp. chopped pork or bacon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tin water or stock
- 1 tbsp. fat

Bake the fish, which has been salted and a little lemon squeezed over it, until it is soft enough to remove the bones. Chop the onion and pork and fry until tender without browning. Slice the parboiled potatoes.

Put alternate layers of potatoes, pork and onion and fish in a saucepan until all the ingredients have been used up. Season. Add the milk and water. Cover closely and simmer for about half an hour.

267. Grilled Fish.

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| 1 | k. white fish (Biz) | 2 | tsp. salt |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ | tin lemon juice | $\frac{1}{2}$ | tsp. black pepper |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ | tin olive oil | 2 | tins mashed potatoes |

Clean, wash and dry the fish and cut in slices about three quarters of an inch thick.

Mix the lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper and pour over the fish, turning the slices to be sure they are well coated. Leave in the ice chest for three to four hours.

Prepare a fire with charcoal and place a fire grate over it. Lay the slices of fish on the grate and grill, turning them from time to time & brushing with the oil and lemon mixture remaining in the dish. (A feather may be used for this).

When grilled keep warm in the oven.

Spread mashed potatoes on a dish and place the slices on the mash.

Serve with tomato sauce.

268. Masquf.

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| 1 | shabbut 2 feet in length or a European fish very rich in fat | 9 | tomatoes |
| | A large bundle or dry brushwood fine twigs without leaves | $\frac{1}{2}$ | tin Worcester sauce |
| 2 | or 3 pointed stickes 12—15 ins. long | 1—3 | tbsp. curry powder |
| | | 2 | tbsp. butter |
| 3 | onions | $\frac{1}{2}$ | tin water |
| | | | Salt and pepper |

Cut the fish down the back at the side of the backbone, cut it and wipe with a clean cloth. Rub with salt.

Make a fire about 2 feet in diameter. Insert two or three sharp pointed stickes into the ground at about 15 inches from the fire and slightly curved in order to be equidistant from it. Hold the fish with the cut surface towards the fire and force it onto the pointed ends of the sticks so that they penetrate the skin and the fish hangs in front of the sticks with the cut surface towards the fire and the skin surface towards any breeze. It is advisable to make the fire in as sheltered a place as possible.

Make a second smaller fire. Chop the tomatoes roughly into a large frying pan. Add sliced onion, water and butter and cook for about five minutes. Add curry powder (1—3 tablespoonfuls according to taste). continue cooking for another ten minutes.

By this time the fish should be fairly well cooked, the fire having been adjusted to provide continuous heat without burning or smoking it. Spread out the embers of the fire to about two inches in depth and allow them to become slightly black on top. Quickly remove the fish from the stakes and lay it skin side down on the embers. Leave for about ten to fifteen minutes till it is well cooked. Meanwhile add the Worcester sauce to the tomato

mixture and heat to scalding. Spread this over the surface of the fish after adding any further seasoning if desired. Prick here and there with a pointed stick or fork to allow the sauce to penetrate and serve on a tray or large dish.

Masquf may be served without the sauce. It may be served with the tomato mixture but without the Worcester sauce or it may be done in the oven the fish first being rubbed generously inside and out with butter, but the flavour is never so good.

269. Mock Lobster.

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| 1 medium sized onion | 2 tbsp. tomato sauce |
| 2 tbsp. salad oil | 2 tbsp. sherry |
| 2 tbsp. vinegar | 2 tbsp. butter |
| 2 tins cold baked white fish (biz) | Pepper and salt |

Slice the onion into a dish. Pour over it the oil and vinegar. Flake onto this the white fish and leave until required—at least an hour.

To cook, put into a saucepan the butter and tomato sauce. Add the sherry and when hot add the fish and vinegar, but not the onion. Cook till hot. Stir gently trying not to break the fish as the appearance is better if it is in large flakes.

Place on a dish or if possible in lobster shells and garnish with a little parsley and paprika or coralline pepper.

270. Prawn Salad in Curry Mayonnaise.

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| 2 tins cooked and shelled prawns | Lettuce |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ medium sized cauliflower (parboiled) | 1 tin mayonnaise to which 1 tsp. curry powder has been added |

Prepare a dish or four individual dishes with lettuce. Arrange sprigs of cauliflower and prawns in the centre. Serve with curry mayonnaise.

271. Saluna.

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| $\frac{3}{4}$ k. white fish without bones | 2—3 tbsp. lemon juice |
| 4 large sweet, green peppers | $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. sugar or dibbis |
| 1 onion | $\frac{1}{2}$ tin water |
| 1 large egg plant | Salt and pepper |
| 2 tomatoes | 5 tbsp. olive oil |

Clean the fish, salt it, cut into 8 pieces, and place on a greased fireproof dish. Cut the peppers in half and slice the onion. Slice the egg plant and salt it. Let it stand for half an hour and then press out any fluid and fry it and the onion in olive oil. Cover the fish with the peppers, then the onions and egg plant and finally the sliced tomatoes. Sprinkle with a little salt and pepper. Mix the lemon juice and sugar in the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water and pour over the fish. Bake in a hot oven for $\frac{1}{2}$ — $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour until the fish is thoroughly cooked and only a little sauce remains. Do not allow the fish to become dry, add a little water or stock if necessary. Garnish with parsley and serve hot or cold.

cooked, remove the bones and lay all the fish on a large serving dish pouring over the oily fluid which remains in the paper and which will later set like gelatine. Season.

While the fish is cooking soak the bread crumbs in water until more fluid is absorbed. Drain. Mince the kernels or nuts at least three times, or pound in a mortar. Dissolve the tartaric acid in the lemon juice. Combine the drained bread crumbs, nuts and lemon juice, and pass them through a collander or coarse sieve to ensure a smooth sauce. Add plenty of salt. The sauce should be like mayonnaise which will just pour. The flavour must be adjusted to taste. If the flavour of nuts or lemon is too strong more bread crumbs may be added.

It is customary to arrange the flaked fish in the form of a fish but this is optional. Cover with the sauce, place two olives for eyes and decorate with parsley, pieces of beetroot or whatever is wanted. The dish should be served cold, but if served hot the sauce should be separate from the fish.

275. Sayadia.

$\frac{1}{2}$ k. white fish (biz) without bones	Salt and pepper
$\frac{3}{4}$ tin olive oil	$1\frac{1}{2}$ tins rice
3 big onions	$2\frac{1}{4}$ tins water from the fish
$\frac{1}{2}$ tin almonds	

The rice should be cleaned, put into boiling water and allowed to soak for 1—2 hours.

Half fry the fish in the olive oil, season and then put it into boiling water until completely cooked. Meanwhile fry the sliced onions and nuts in the fishy oil. When the fish is cooked remove and keep warm. Bring to the boil $2\frac{1}{4}$ tins of water in which the fish was cooked.

If the rice is dry 3 tins of water should be used.

Cook till the rice is tender and the water has evaporated.

276. Smoked Fish.

$\frac{1}{2}$ tin coarse salt	Small fish or fillets of fish
4 tins water	Oak chips or straw

Make a brine with the salt and water. Split open and clean small fish or cut $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick fillets from a large fish immerse in brine for an hour. Construct a fire in such a receptacle that the smoke can be led through a pipe to the smoking box, in order to cool it before it reaches the fish. This is important as if the smoke is slightly warm there is slight cooking of the fish which is undesirable. A tea chest makes a good smoking box. The fish may be hung in wires and should be smoked for 2 to 3 hours, the consistency in winter should be somewhat soft in summer medium hard.

277. Swedish Stromungflundror.

16 small basrah soles	2 tbsp. milk
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4 tsp. salt	Sifted dried breadcrumbs
4 tbsp. butter	Frying fat
2 tbsp. chopped parsley	Lemon slices
$\frac{1}{2}$ egg—beaten	

Select small firm fish. Cut off heads and tails and fillet, removing the back and small bones. Rinse, dry very thoroughly and salt the fish using half the salt. Mix the butter and parsley and divide into eight parts. Arrange the fish in pairs of the same size. Place one fish skin side down, smear with the butter and parsley mixture and cover with the second fillet, keeping the skin side up. Press firmly together. When the eight pairs have been so treated dip into a mixture of beaten egg, milk and salt and coat with dry breadcrumbs. Fry in hot oil. Garnish with slices of lemon.

This dish may be made with the boneless slices of white fish (bizz).

FOWLS AND GAME BIRDS.

Iraq is particularly fortunate in the large number of game birds to be found in her plains and mountains, and the perfectly true stories of enormous packs of sandgrouse are usually sceptically treated by sportsmen of other countries. Black partridge, quail, chukor, wood cock, snipe, bustard, pigeon, geese, duck and many more are to be found. In the north turkeys thrive in the hilly districts. The domestic fowl however, is a miserable creature not much better than a large bantam, and a plump European fowl is comparable to a medium sized turkey.

Turkey is usually cooked with a rice, almond and raisin stuffing and, with chicken, forms the basis of dishes prepared for feasts and special occasions. Nut sauces, too, are popular with fish and fowls and fasinjan and Circassian chicken are delicacies enjoyed as much by the occidental as the oriental.

A roast turkey, or to a lesser extent a roast goose, is the main meat course at an English Christmas dinner, but the stuffing is usually of chestnuts, sausage meat or, in the case of goose, sage and onion, and the bird is served with mushroom, cranberry or other sauce.

The "V" shaped breast bone is coveted by children and is known as the "wish bone". Each arm of the bone is held by a little finger; the children wish for something and then pull. He who gets the larger piece of bone with the apex of the "V" is supposed to have his wish granted. The leg of the bird is commonly called the "drumstick" and the small, fleshy tail the "parson's nose".

278. Brazil Chicken.

1 chicken	2 tins cream
$\frac{1}{2}$ tin Mango sweet chutney	Salt and pepper
6 green onion leaves	

Roast the chicken, cut it into pieces and arrange in a flat fireproof serving dish. Put into the oven until really hot. Cut up the Mango chutney.