

The Stilwell Family Cookbook  
Second Edition  
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### **About the Author**

## Forward

A lot can be learned by looking at what meals a family serves at their table. With each generation, recipes are passed down to the next. The best survive while the weaker perish. Making a family meal can be a wonderful way to relive a moment in the past and remember those who came before us.

Every family tree has interesting people who lived in interesting times. The oldest Stilwell recipe (vegetable soup) in this book dates from the 1800's. While not in the direct line, Frank Stilwell was a near contemporary of grandma, mom-mom Stilwell. He was likely to have eaten this recipe or one very close to it.

Frank would have been in his forties when mom-mom was born if he hadn't been gunned down in 1882 by Wyatt Earp and Doc Holiday. Three days earlier Frank had bushwhacked Wyatt's brother thus becoming the cause of the famous Shootout at the O.K. Corral.

Another contemporary of mom-mom was Mary Stilwell, wife of the inventor Thomas Edison. Sadly, she died of typhoid at the young age of 29, in 1884. Mom-mom happily survived into the second half of the 20th century.



*Grandma Stilwell, circa 1915*

Mom and Dad met during World War II. Mom was a college student hunting for a husband. Dad was a dashing young bombardier. They met at a party and married one month later. It was a fast romance but then there was a vast war going on.

After the war dad became a college professor. He was proud of being the one who taught mom to cook. This resulted in the Stilwell recipes being handed to the next generation. As a child, I recall mom making many of dad's favorites. Two of note were liver sausage and pickle sandwiches and the ever horrifying cow heart soup. While the sandwich were pretty good, the nightmarish soup has been deleted with malice from the family legacy, not to be inflicted on the generation.

Mom became a good cook in her own right. She adjusted some of the old and added new recipes of her own. Her contribution was ensuring good yet simple to make meals. At money was often tight, one of the lesser dishes managed to live on. Her trick to get us to eat our "War Steak", liver and onions was to serve it with bacon. Cooked in bacon grease and one of the rare occasions we were served bacon, we looked forward to

the meal. This dish is a legacy of the Great Depression and World War II, something people frequently ate at the time. This was a hard time with starvation sometimes a threat.



Mom, circa 1950's

Of note is Grandpa Gillette. There is only brief advice from him in this book. Grandpa was the nephew of King Gillette of the Gillette razor fortune. Grandpa used to visit his uncle when King was just a barber. Then King invented the disposable razor and history was made. Grandpa eventually tried to found his own glove making business but with no success. However, he did sell popcorn that was so perfect that the movie theaters in south central Wisconsin would buy it from him by the car full. No joke.

With my generation, the cookbook suddenly becomes cosmopolitan. Joey was the family's trained chef. Janet became a professor and moved to Louisiana. She added to the family culture some terrific Cajon recipes. Janet's house was one of the ones were flooded when Hurricane Katrina overwhelmed the New Orleans's levies. Janet was among the missing before she reappeared two weeks later in a refugee camp in Texas.

I became a world traveler adding few recipes of my own. In 2003 I printed the 1st edition of the Stilwell Family Cookbook as a present to my family. The concept was to mix pictures of everybody throughout the cookbook much like a family calendar. The difference is that you throw the out calendar when the year is over.

Janet has asked for a new copy of the cookbook ever since she lost her own when her house was flooded in Katrina. This is finally it. Being now the 21st Century, it is in electronic form with additional recipes.

If you have internet connectivity you can click on links scattered through this book and watch youtube videos that walk you through the instructions. I will likely post additional videos after the publishing of this book. To find them, go to youtube.com and search using the keywords, "[Stilwell family cookbook](#)".



Circa 1963

## **Appetizers & Side Dishes**

### **Bosnian Salad**

This is from my travels. It is great on a hot summer's day with rotisserie chicken!

**2 Pealed cucumbers**

**3 Tomatoes**

**1 Yellow or Vidalia onion.** (Your choice. Vidalia is sweeter.)

**Wine vinegar**

**Feta cheese (optional)**

The goal is even amounts of diced tomato, onion, cucumber with a little feta cheese mixed in.

1. Dice the cucumber, onion and tomatoes into similar small cubes. Add to a big bowl.
2. Add a quarter cup Feta cheese (optional).
3. Sprinkle wine vinegar all over it and mix well. I use a good quarter cup.

### **French Fries** (Oven baked)

**1 large Idaho potatoes per person**

**Olive oil**

**Black pepper.** (Could instead use paprika or diced garlic)

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. Peeling the skin is optional. Using a chef's knife or french fry cutter to slice the potatoes into fries.
3. Coat the fries with olive oil. Sprinkle liberally with black pepper.
4. Spread the fries on a baking pan, one layer thick. Bake at 400 Fahrenheit for twenty minutes. Turn the fries over, halfway through.

### **Gravy**

Sometimes it's nice to make it from scratch the way people used to do.

**The drippings from the cooked meat**

**3 tablespoons all purpose flour**

**Milk**

1. Remove the meat and any soft clumps, skin, etc... from the roasting pan. Put just enough water in the roasting pan to cover the bottom and put the pan back into the oven for 5 - 10 minutes.

2. In a dish, slowly mix the flour in a little water until there are no lumps.
3. Skim off any excess grease from the roasting pan.
4. Slowly add the milk/flour mixture to the hot mixture in the pan while stirring.

### **Honorable mention to Hot Wings**

Buffalo wings are a late 20th century pleasure. Great Buffalo sauce can be poured on chicken sandwiches and tenders. One of the best and easiest recipes for the sauce is merely to mix equal amounts of Texas Pete's hot sauce into melted butter.

### **Italian Vinaigrette Salad Dressing** (Low salt)

If you are on a salt restricted diet, you'll find you can't eat anything! I was there one year.

- ½ cup red wine vinegar**
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion**
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley**
- 1 clove finely chopped garlic**
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**

1. Mix together and pour on salad.

### **Mashed Potatoes**

- 1 large Idaho potato per person**
- 1/3<sup>rd</sup> stick of butter or margarine**
- 1/4 cup Milk**

1. Peel and cut the potatoes into small chunks and boil for 20 minutes. They are done when a fork can easily sink into them.
2. Drain water and remove the potatoes from pot. Place in a mixing bowl.
3. Add butter and mash with a masher or hand mixer. A mixer will ensure the texture is very smooth. Add a small amount of milk until the desired creaminess is achieved.

Note, left over mashed potatoes are great for breakfast the next morning. Shape the mashed potatoes into patties, season with black pepper or Italian seasoning and fry in a pan until crispy brown on both sides.

### **Reubens**

A little party snack.

- 2 package corn beef.** (chop it thin)
- 1 small can sauerkraut**

**Mayonnaise**  
**Party rye bread**  
**Swiss cheese**

1. Mix the corn beef, sauerkraut and mayo together and spread on the rye bread.
2. Top with Swiss cheese and bake at 350 degrees for 10 - 15 minutes.

**Sautéed Shrimp**

This is a great appetizer for your family or dinner guests. Have a glass of white wine with it to start your dinner off in style.



Click on the picture to view the video

- 10 jumbo shrimp**  
**4 table spoons of butter**  
**2 table spoon of extra virgin olive oil**

**Spices**

- 1 tablespoon thyme**  
**1 teaspoon cyan pepper** (season to taste)  
or  
**1 clove of diced garlic**  
or  
**1 tablespoon of Italian seasoning**

1. Remove the shell from the shrimp. Remove or leave on the tail depending on your personal preference.
2. Put the butter into a small frying pan. Melt on a medium heat.
3. Add the shrimp, and spices. Mix so the shrimp is coated.
4. Cook the shrimp one minute on a side or until it no longer looks clear. Overcooking the shrimp with result is a hard flavorless piece of meat.
5. Serve immediately.
6. The sauce is wonderful all on it's own. Add about 2 tablespoon of olive oil to the pan to increase the volume of the sauce. Serve sauce is a dish. Dip pieces of French bread into it.

**Tom Kha** (spicy Thai chicken soup)

Thai cooking is a great experience. There are great soup mixes you can buy. If you don't have one, this recipe I came up with will get you pretty close to the real thing.

**1 chicken breast** - cut into cubes ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $\frac{1}{2}$ "")  
**1 tablespoon cooking oil**  
**3 large mushrooms**  
**1 tablespoon butter**  
**13.5 Oz coconut milk**  
 **$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon chili powder**  
 **$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon ginger powder**  
 **$\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon red pepper powder** (cyan pepper)  
**10  $\frac{1}{4}$  Oz chicken broth**

1. In a frying pan, melt the butter and brown the sliced mushrooms for 4 minutes. Set aside.
2. Cut the chicken into cubes ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $\frac{1}{2}$ ""). In a frying pan, with the oil, sauté the chicken. Cook the chicken all the way, about 5 minutes on medium heat.
3. In a small pot, combine the mushrooms, chicken, coconut milk, chili powder, red pepper and chicken broth. Bring to a boil. Add more pepper & chili powder if you want it really hot!

## Main Dishes

### Barbecue Shrimp (Cajun)

This is a wonderful contribution from Janet that replaced mom-mom's vegetable soup as the traditional Stilwell Christmas-eve meal. It is great with unbuttered French Bread and a glass of wine! The sauce is so wonderful for dipping your bread in, you may want to double it! .

- 1 lb fresh shrimp per person**
- 1/2 lb butter**
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne (red) pepper**
- 2 tablespoon salt**
- 2 tablespoon Italian seasoning**
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce**

1. Melt butter in a flat baking pan.
2. Add the rest of the ingredients. Mix well and bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Stir frequently.



Janet, early 1960's

### Chicken Cream of Broccoli

My favorite was using Campbell's Cream of Dijon. Sadly it is no longer sold.

- 1 lb boneless chicken breasts**
- 1 10 3/4 oz can of Campbell's Cream of Broccoli soup**
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil**

1. Pour the oil into a hot frying pan and brown both sides of the chicken breasts.
2. Pour in the soup and a half soup can of water, and cook on medium heat for 15 minutes. Add more water as needed. If the chicken is cooked too long, it will become hard.
3. Serve the creamy sauce on the chicken. Lightly sprinkle Italian seasoning on top.

### *Chicken Cream of Mushroom*

**1 lb boneless chicken breasts**  
**1 ea 10 3/4 oz can of Campbell's Cream of Broccoli soup**  
**1 tablespoon fresh, chopped parsley**  
**1 tablespoon olive oil**  
**And if you are serious...**  
**1 cup fresh mushrooms**  
**1 tablespoon butter**

1. Slice the mushrooms and sauté in butter for 15 minutes.
2. Pour the oil into a hot frying pan and brown both sides of the chicken breasts.
3. Pour in the soup and a half soup can of water, and the mushrooms on top. Cook on medium heat for 15 minutes. Add more water as needed. If the chicken is cooked too long, it will become hard.
4. Serve the creamy sauce on the chicken. Lightly sprinkle the parsley on top.

### Three Chicken Soups

#### *Quick Chicken Soup*

This is a must when you are feeling sick because you are very hungry, have the flu or a sore throat.

**3 cups water**  
**2 chicken bullion cubes**  
**1 green onion (Scallion)**  
**Tabasco sauce (optional but recommended!)**

1. In a small pot add the water, crumpled bullion cubes and diced green onion.
2. Bring to a boil. Cook for one minute.
3. Serve in a coffee cup. Add a couple drops of Tabasco sauce to give it a kick. This is especially wonderful if you have a sore throat.

#### *Easy Chicken or Turkey Noodle Soup*

This is fast and a great way to reuse leftover rotisserie chicken or roasted turkey.

**1 lbs of raw or leftover rotisserie, roasted chicken or turkey.**  
**2 cups of egg noodles**  
**2 cloves of garlic**  
**2 chicken bullion cubes**  
**2 carrots**  
**1 medium onion**  
**1 stalk of celery**

### **Tabasco sauce (optional)**

1. Fill a pot with water and bring to a boil. Add the chicken bullion cubes.
2. Cut the chicken/turkey, carrots, onion and celery into spoon sized pieces. Add to the water.
3. Finely dice the garlic and add to the pot.
4. Boil for a half hour. Add water as needed.
5. Add the noodles and boil for another twenty minutes or until the noodles are cooked.

Serve in a bowl. If you want to kick it up, add a couple drops of Tabasco sauce.

### **Old Fashioned Chicken Vegetable Soup**

Here is some authentic old fashioned flavor. Canned soup is nothing like this delight. It will take all afternoon. So, have some company and some wine!

- 1 "fryer" chicken**
- 16 oz can stewed tomatoes**
- 2 chicken bullion cubes**
- 1 teaspoon black pepper**
- 1 medium onion**
- 5 cloves (not bulbs) of garlic**
- 5 carrots**
- 5 celery sticks**
- Water**
- Tabasco sauce (optional)**

1. Fill a large pot with water and boil the fryer (remove the bag of giblets first) for 1 hour. It is done when the meat fall off the bone.
2. Meanwhile, cut the carrots and celery into spoon sized pieces. Put aside.
3. Dice very fine the onion and garlic cloves. Set aside.
2. When the chicken is done, remove it from the pot. Keep the broth.
3. Remove the chicken from then bones and dice into spoon sized pieces.
4. Add the chicken, stewed tomatoes, chicken bullion, black pepper, onion, cloves, carrots and celery to the pot. Cook on medium for 1 to 2 hours. Add water as needed.

Serve it in a bowl. Add a couple drops of Tabasco sauce to give it a kick.

### **Curry Chicken**

Shame we didn't grow up with this. Mom and dad oddly didn't bring this back from their trip to India. It had to wait until I grew up and I made the journey myself.

- 1 lb cubed chicken breast**
- 2 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil**
- 2 tablespoon finely diced yellow onion**

**1 clove finely chopped garlic**  
**1/8 teaspoon ginger powder**  
**1 tablespoon curry powder**  
**1/2 cup low fat plain yogurt**  
**1 teaspoon finely chopped cilantro**  
**1 cup water**

1. Brown the cubed chicken in oil on medium for approx 17 minutes.
2. Add the onion and garlic and cook for two minutes.
3. Add the yogurt & cook for 2 minutes more.
3. Add the curry, ginger, cilantro & water. Cook for 15 minutes. Stir frequently.
4. Remove the chicken and boil off most of the water from the sauce.

Good served with rice.

***Dirty Rice (Cajon)***

Good with biscuits.



Click on the picture to view the video.

**1 lb spicy sausage** (such as Jimmy Dean)  
**3 green onions** (scallions)  
**1 cup rice**  
**1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce**  
**1 cup water** (likely will need to add more during cooking)  
**1 chicken bouillon cube**

1. Pan fry the sausage until mostly cooked. Then drain as much grease as possible. If there is no grease to drain then the dish is going to turn out bland. You are going to sprinkle something like garlic salt on the dish when you serve it.

2. Add diced onions and all the rest and cook on medium for a half hour. Stir several once in a while and add water as needed. In general, once the rice is cooked, the meal is done. The water should be all but cooked off before serving.

### **German Pork Chops**

You can't live in Wisconsin without picking up a little German. This is good with mashed potatoes & gravy.

**1 lb pork chops**

**1 tablespoon oil**

**15 oz can of sauerkraut** (drained)

1. Pour the oil in a frying pan. Heat the pan to high. Once it is very hot, brown both sides of the pork chops. Don't cook it all the way through. Over cooked pork is very tough.
2. Reduce the heat to medium low. Add the drained sauerkraut and cook for 15 minutes. Turn the mixture over once in a while to ensure it doesn't burn on the bottom.

### **Flavored Hamburgers** (four flavors)

The flavor of a basic hamburger is very hot or miss. You can guarantee a memorable burger if you mix in some spices before you cook them.

1. Powdered onion soup mix is the most common thing to mix into hamburger meat to make it an impressive burger. It is basically beef bouillon and dried onions. Cook the patties in you favorite fashion.
2. If you want to make the hamburger taste like lamb, mix into one pound of ground beef a heaping handful of diced fresh mint leaves. Cook the patties in you favorite fashion. ([Click here to see the video](#))
3. If you want the burger to taste more like pot roast, , mix into one pound of ground beef a tablespoon each of beef bouillon, rosemary, sage and thyme. Cook the patties in you favorite fashion.
4. For a great blue cheese burger, you'll need equal parts blue cheese and butter. Mix the butter and blue cheese with a blender and form in disks the size of a quarter. Encase one disk inside each hamburger patty. Cook the patties in you favorite fashion.

### **Hawaiian Chicken** (crock pot)

**3 lbs boneless chicken breasts**

**16 oz pineapple slices** (drained)

**15 oz mandarin oranges** (drained)

**8 oz maraschino cherries (drained)**  
**2 tablespoons cornstarch**  
**2 tablespoons brown sugar**  
**1.5 oz stir fry seasoning**

1. Cut the chicken into strips and add all together in a crock pot.
2. Cook on low for 8 hours or on high for 4 hours.

**Jerk Chicken** (crock pot)

**1 red bell pepper**  
**1 yellow bell pepper**  
**1 orange bell pepper**  
**1 small -medium yellow onion**  
**1/4 cup catsup**  
**1.5 lb boneless chicken breast**  
**3 tablespoon McCormick Caribbean spice**  
**1/2 cup water**  
**1 chicken bouillon cube**

1. Cut the chicken, peppers and onions into strips.
2. Pour everything into crock pot and cook on low for 6 hours.

**Lasagna**

**1 lb Italian sausage**  
**1 lb mozzarella cheese**  
**1/8 teaspoon garlic powder**  
**15 oz can tomatoes**  
**2 ea oz cans of tomato paste**  
**10 oz lasagna noodles**  
**3 cups cottage cheese**  
**1/2 cup parmesan cheese**  
**2 tablespoon parsley**  
**2 beaten eggs**  
**1/2 teaspoon black pepper**  
**1 tablespoon basil**  
**1 teaspoon salt**

1. Dice the sausage into very small pieces.
2. Brown the sausage. Drain the grease.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients (not the mozzarella) and mix together.
4. Boil the noodles for 10 - 12 minutes, until soft.
5. Cut the mozzarella cheese into thin slices.

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