

# Cooking: Illusion Foods

## Category Rules

This category includes illusion foods and subtleties (or sotelties) consisting of one or more dishes that imitate or counterfeit another dish, play on symbolism, involve puns or wordplay, and/or foods that might have been served or given as presentation gifts to royalty. These are the special one-of-a-kind (or one of a series of) special dishes that might have a graced a coronation or royal wedding. Certain factors are required for an entry in this category:

- It must be at least 50% edible. All inedible portions must be noted in the documentation. Non-edible parts should be limited to forms or support portions.
- Any herbs and spices used in the dish or decorating a dish must be listed in the documentation with their Latin botanical names and must comply with the Prohibited and Restricted Herbs list.
- 100% food-grade materials must be used in the edible portions. Sanitary methods of preparation and preservation should be strictly adhered to even though they may not be authentic or period in terms of history. Ingredients lists must be provided with the documentation.
- Generally, all ingredients should be consistent with time and place of the entry. Substitutions should be explained in documentation. Do not use non-food-grade materials or ingredients in the edible portions because they are period.
- Commercial molds are allowed, provided they are food-safe or intended for use with food. Molds should be brought to the event to be displayed with the entry if possible. The entrants may develop their own molds using 100% food-grade materials.

Documentation must contain certain elements that address the origins of the dish and development of a modern version. It should:

- Demonstrate an understanding of pre-1600 foods, cooking methods, philosophies, etc.
- Discuss the intended environment for the dish (ex: royal feast, manor house, holiday feast), what occasion the dish is created for, and presentation and serving method appropriate to the period.
- Include the original recipe and translation (if not in English) as well as the modern working recipe. Indicate if it is an original redaction or if was developed by someone else. Provide clear instructions, procedures, and method of working that can be followed.

## Research and Documentation (Score: 0-4 points)

- 0 No documentation provided with entry. Face-to-face judging adds very little information.
- 1 Minimal information is provided for time, place and style. Face-to-face judging adds some background information.
- 2 As in #1, generalized sources are given with no emphasis on primary and/or scholarly resources. In face-to-face judging, no further understanding of the resources is evident. Materials and methods of construction of the entry are described.
- 3 As in #2, there is a good balance of resources: primary and/or scholarly sources well supported by other resources. Documentation and/or face-to-face judging provides well developed discussion of research. Materials and methods of construction are described and the reasons for the choices made are discussed.
- 4 As in #3, in-depth and extensive documentation provides a good balance of resources, emphasizing primary (if available) and/or scholarly resources backed up with a significant selection of other resources. Documentation and/or face-to-face judging provide a good explanation of original research and experimentation related to the research. Face-to-face judging indicates a keen grasp of the research and the entrant can discuss it easily with active engagement. Appendices included in documentation (if any) help provide further pertinent information to subject and time period.

### **Materials and Methods** (Score: 0-4 points)

- 0 Entry is completely modern with no relationship to period elements or practices.
- 1 Use of modern materials and methods to produce an item that would not be accepted in period but either bears some relationship to an authentic work or might be useful within SCA culture.
- 2 Use of **both** modern materials and methods to produce a work that looks, feels, or tastes authentic to the intended time period or culture.
- 3 Use of **either** modern materials **or** methods to produce a work that looks, feels or tastes authentic to the intended time period or culture without explanation of any substituted materials.
- 4 Use of totally authentic materials and methods (hand-prepared materials, etc.) to produce a work that looks, feels, or tastes authentic to the intended time period or culture. Any substitutions and the period materials/methods are thoroughly explained. Substitutions of modern components and embellishment materials which are no longer readily available will not be penalized so long as an effort has been made to substitute materials with a close appearance to the original. For example, the entrant may combine elements from several original contemporary recipes to create a new dish, provided that the documentation and research supports the final product.

### **Scope** (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

Rank the **ambition**, not the success, of the entry for each of the following elements. Entrants who say they cannot physically do something due to handicaps will not be penalized (picking fresh fruit; gardening; hand-grinding if arthritic, etc.)

- Ingredients: source of ingredients, difficulty of acquisition, attempt made to get best heirloom or artisan variety, history and understanding of the ingredient, etc.
- Techniques: number used, level of difficulty (boiling vegetables vs. baking in a brick oven), preparation required.
- Presentation: how complex was the visual effect to achieve? How many elements are there? How hard was it to do what was done?

### **Skill** (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

How well is the entry made? Rank the **success** of the entry for each of the following elements.

- Physical result: execution of technique, taste, smell.
- Structure: do the separate components hold together (is it crumbling, melting, or in imminent danger of falling apart)? Can it survive normal room temperature for two hours?
- Appearance: does the entry look like the intended illusion?
- Appropriateness: is the illusion an appropriate combination of elements and foods for the occasion?

### **Ingenuity** (Score: 0-4 points)

Judge the ingenuity of the entry. Was the entrant resourceful and inventive in the approach to creating their entry? Does the entry reflect the entrant's vision of period context? Is original thought, contemplation, interpretation, and vision evident according to the entrant's period?

### **Judge's Observation** (Score: 0-6 points)

Rank the entry as a whole. How well do all the separately judged parts fit together? The entry's overall effect is judged in this section. This is the only section of the criteria where the judges may allow their personality, private opinions, and personal preferences to influence scoring.