

Beyond Your Diner Plate

The Pullman porter has helped you aboard one of the Union Pacific's famous "*City of ... trains*"—the City of Los Angeles— and shown you to your roomette in the sleeping car Pacific Shores, the second to last car in the train. Your personal items arranged in your roomette and decide to wander to the train's last car, a dome-lounge. As the train departs on its journey east from the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal, your plan is to be sipping a beverage in the dome, watching the suburbs roll by in the twilight.

About an hour into the trip, the melodic sounds of a dining car chime gently roll into the dome. A waiter in a sharp white pressed uniform politely indicates that the dining car is open for dinner seating. The train is approaching its first stop— San Bernardino. Feeling hungry and anticipating a grand dining car experience you descend the stairs and make your way six cars forward to another dome. The Union Pacific is the only railroad with dome-dining cars, and you plan to fully enjoy the panoramic view during this evening's meal ...

Seating is light in the diner at the moment. The steward honors your request for a dome seat and escorts you up the stairs. Once seated, the evening's menu is presented. You begin to read as the steward withdraws and a waiter fills your water glass. Deep-fried fish ... a ham steak ... or ... roast top round of beef, Jardinière style (served with a mixture of Spring vegetables, such as peas, carrots, and green beans) ... what will dinner be?

Regardless of your selection, the food will be incredible, the service top-flight, the table setting beautiful and precise and the scenery from the dome spectacular.

This is what you experience aboard the train. While you await your meal, let your mind wander and think what it takes to make this experience so special.

Long before the train turned a wheel this evening, dozens of people worked in the shadows of the dining car to make your experience happen. By different names, the railroads operating dining cars had a Dining Car, Hotel and Dining Car or Commissary Department. A smaller road may have one commissary location along its line. The larger concerns had multiple locations in key cities. It



is the job of this department to ensure that every aspect of the dining car's operation runs as smoothly as possible and loses as little money as can be afforded while keeping passengers happy.

Before the menu was presented to you this evening, the Union Pacific Dining Car and Hotel Department worked extensively to develop the items to be served. Menus on competing railroads were surveyed. Popular food trends were referenced. Ingredient sources were researched. The seasonality of a dish was checked. Then the menu was built, taking into consideration that your train would have service for two breakfasts, two lunches and two dinners before reaching Chicago. Every effort was made to ensure that each menu had enough different items so that you would not tire of the selections. Also, since your train, City of Los Angeles, regularly carried a café car with lunch counter seating, a different set of menus was needed for service here. The café menus needed to be of quality but lower priced than the full dining car. Additionally, the various menus needed to strike a balance so that passengers would not flood the café for economy reasons, forsaking the full dining car.

Once the menu was established, ingredients needed to be purchased. Originally, railroads promoted obtaining food items from the best sources, often from farms and orchards along their lines. Tonight, if you were traveling on the Great Northern's Empire Builder, the menu would have featured salmon for the Columbia River, near its route. On the Texas & Pacific, your dessert choice could have been cantaloupe pie, made with fruit grown along the T&P and shipped by the railroad. Sourcing fresh ingredients in the quantities needed to protect a train like the City of Los Angeles was a costly venture, especially considering fresh ingredients not consumed by the end of the trip were not acceptable for another trip and needed to be disposed of.

As passenger traffic declined following World War II, railroads looked for ways to economize. One economy came from different ingredient types and sources. What was previously stated "Fresh Local Vegetable Du Jour" became "Chef's Vegetable Selection". Although both terms fit the elegance of the dining car, the subtle difference is the former was fresh picked; the later came from a can.

For each dish on the menu, the Dining Car Department also determined portion size, method of preparation and how the dish was to be served. Tonight you selected the ham steak. According to the Union Pacific's cookbook and service manual, your half-pound portion will consist of two "horseshoe cuts" with the bone removed. The whole ham was to be boiled in water for three hours. After slicing from the whole ham, the two-slice portion will be finished under the broiler and then served on a Streamliner dinner plate.

Before you boarded tonight, the commissary staff assembled all the items needed for the trip, assigned them to the dining car steward and then delivered them to the train. The

dining car crew loaded the items as the steward checked the inventory. Everything from packages of clean table linens in the UP's signature soft pink to foodstuffs and even decks of playing cards are accounted for and placed aboard. As part of developing the menu, the exact size of every portion to be served has been calculated. Yes, it is already known how many ham steaks will be carved from the whole hams placed in the dining car coolers. At the end of the trip, the steward will need to reconcile leftover items against every meal ticket from the trip. The totals must match the original inventory or the steward will need to explain the deficiencies.

This same level of accountability held true for the commissaries, as well. Each month the commissary manager was required to present an inventory of his wares. Those items not signed over to dining car stewards had to be accounted for. The manager, like the steward, needed to explain any deficiencies. If a serious loss existed with no explanation, the railroad's police department or a private security service, like Pinkertons, was called to investigate. In such cases, termination and criminal charges could result for the guilty parties.



Tonight your meal was prepared on board the train. However, on some railroads, the commissary would complete a portion of the prep work or cooking. On the Southern Pacific it was found that fresh made mayonnaise spoiled very quickly in the heat of the dining car kitchen. The chef would get one or two portions from a batch and waste the rest. The SP commissaries began making the mayonnaise and placing it aboard already chilled. This cut

waste dramatically, saving over \$500 in olive oil alone in the first month. The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific (Rock Island) commissary made the ice cream served aboard their trains. Both the Canadian National Railway and the SP had bakeries as part of their commissaries. Here bread, rolls, pies and cakes were prepared in more spacious kitchens and in larger quantities than could be done in the dining car.

Your ham steak has arrived. It is perfection awaiting your knife and fork. As you pick up your utensils a glint of light reflects off their highly polished silver finish. Before service, the dining car crew ensured every piece of silverware on board was perfectly polished. The commissary staff made sure any missing pieces of silverware and china reported after the last trip were replaced with the supplies for this trip. On the Union Pacific every piece of silverware is re-plated every two years. The UP's commissary used over 125 pounds of silver annually in this effort.

Your meal complete and check settled; it is time to return to your roomette, but only for a short time. Tonight's sky holds a full moon; and you plan for a nightcap back in the dome-lounge as the City of Los Angeles makes its five-hour sprint across the desert to Las Vegas. The view will be spectacular.

Forward in the dome-diner, other passengers are still enjoying the culinary experience you did earlier. The 11-man dining car crew will finish their day sometime between midnight and 1 a.m.; only to be back on duty around 5 a.m. You, however, can rest assured that breakfast will be just as fine as your ham steak dinner.

Today one can still enjoy a meal traveling across country aboard an Amtrak train. The food, place settings and service will be different from that of 60 years ago, but the scenery will still unfold outside your window as you dine. At the National Railroad Museum you can explore Union Pacific dome-diner #8003, which was assigned to the City of Los Angeles. In the late 1950s, the City of Los Angeles made the Los Angeles – Chicago run in 40 hours, 30 minutes. It was the way to travel.

Written by: Bob Lettenberger, Education Director

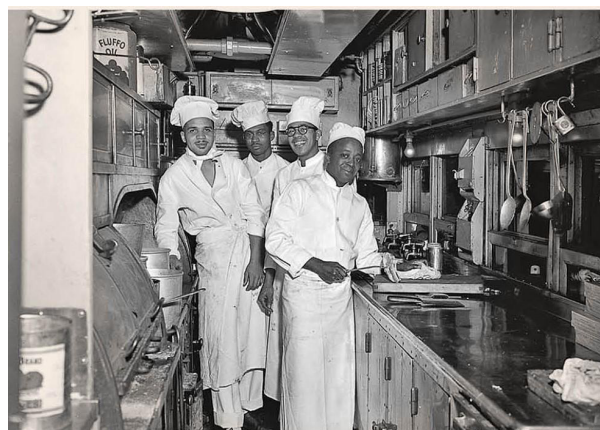
Tidbits from the Dining Car

The Dining Car Is Open

In the beginning of railroads, distances were short, locomotives were feeble; There was no such thing as a dining car. Travelers brought their own provisions or ate quickly at station restaurants during extended train stops.

In the 1850s, some small Eastern roads were reported to have installed food counters in baggage cars. No images exist of these contemporary cars. But, based on their descriptions, its configuration was similar to kitchen cars that the United States Sanitary Commission (equivalent to today's Red Cross) had built for the wounded of the Union Army. A crude counter rigged up against a wall with some provision for heating of beverages or soups can hardly be classified as a dining car.

George Mortimer Pullman built the first true dining car in 1868 where one was served as if in a restaurant. In an act of braggadocio—something always close at hand for any Pullman's enterprises—Pullman christened the car *Delmonico* with the clear idea of tying the reputation of his dining car to the famous New York restaurant. The car was indeed luxurious.



Pullman quickly found out that the car was expensive to operate and expensive to maintain, and then just as quickly turned away from the dining car business, leaving his innovation for the railroads to pursue with their own money. The car was said to have been equipped with fine china, and it seems likely that George Pullman was the first railroad magnate to learn that fine china and a moving train are ill-suited to one another.

One of the most picturesque aspects of dining-car lore is the strange and unique language employed by those who worked the cars. Often a code to enable communication with each other to the ignorance of those outside the service, it is also a perfect example of how jargon can offer succinct summary. Expressions applied to passengers, to the equipment, to each other, and to the food.

The Passengers:

A cook's load: a train with very few people on board, fewer yet of whom ate in the dining car.

Crew's portion: a double order of food.

For Nellie: on some railroads, another name for room service.

Going upstairs: when a waiter goes to serve food someplace other than in the dining car, either room service or to pass through the coaches with a tray of sandwiches and beverages.

A lamb's tongue: a generous tip, usually anything from one dollar up.

The hard way: a signal from the waiter to the steward on how to make change for a troublesome passenger. If fifty cents in change was due, the steward would give the victim a fifty-cent piece, practically forcing the customer to leave the whole fifty cents a tip.

The easy way: when the steward would leave a quarter, two dimes and a nickel as the fifty-cent change for cooperative passengers.

Snake: someone who doesn't leave a tip, as in, "That snake bit me," or "The snakes are eating me up tonight."

Bread: a signal that a woman was around.

Cake: the opinion that the woman is extra fine.

Whole wheat bread: a woman of light brown coloring.

White bread: a white woman.

Burnt toast: an ugly woman or one who is very black.

The Equipment:

Feed box or pie wagon: a dining car.

Struggle buggy: an old dining car.

Smoke wagon: a dining car in a train pulled by a steam locomotive.

Flat: a dining car that is completely filled.

Forty-eight flat and standing: all forty-eight seats in a modern diner were filled and other customers were waiting.

A deuce: table for two.

A large: table for four.

Flattened out: a waiter whose deuce and large were filled with customers.

Top table: the table section nearest the pantry.

Bottom table: the table section furthest from the pantry.

The dresser: the kitchen counter where vegetables were prepared and added to the plates.

The hole: the opening between the kitchen and the pantry where orders were handed to the chef and food was passed to the waiters.

Watching television: doing dishes in a dishwasher with a glass window.

The dog house: the main refrigerator, where beef was stored.

Tin can: buffet-parlor cars.

Eyes: the block signals that control train movements.

Possum belly: an area under the dining-car floor where extra coal for the stove, or bedding for the crew, was carried.

The Personnel:

Attention please: an expression waiters used to warn other waiters they were about to come through with a full tray.

The captain: the train's conductor.

Gone up a tree: A waiter flustered and making errors. This one was immortalized by a training film, "Don't Go Up a Tree," for waiters.

Doggie: a waiter who is not feeling well and is, thus, dragging his chain.

Gold-bricking: taking some time off.

Greased: to get paid.

Get my rug beat: to get a haircut.

Being put on the boss's desk: a waiter who has been written up by the steward for some violation.

Switch: a warning one waiter would issue to another to stop talking, because someone was listening.

Soup run: being assigned to handle a nearby run on a buffet-parlor car, serving soups, sandwiches, coffee, and the like.

Tubbing: what a waiter who refuses to share his tips is doing.

One-stepping: the unique shuffle used by waiters to slide around the three sides of the pantry to pick up bread, butter, and other finishing details of their service. Adapted from traffic cops dodging traffic, it enabled waiters to alternately come in and to go out of the pantry, and to keep out of each other's way while still moving continuously.

Upstairs man, or swing man: a waiter put on heavily traveled trains at mealtime, he did not serve food but generally made himself useful by changing linen, clearing tables, filling water glasses and butter dishes, and the smaller tasks.

Mule: the waiter assigned to also clean up the pantry or do other dirty work, usually the newest man in the car.

Pearl-diver: the fourth cook, whose duties included washing the dishes and pots, pans, and kitchen utensils.

Mr. Green: the newest man on a crew, also referred to as "young blood."

The Food:

Stump: an economy meal.

AP yellow-capped and hot: hot apple pie with cheese.

Society grass: salad.

Hog's hips and cackleberries: bacon and eggs.

Nervous Liz: gelatin.

Poor boy: a ham sandwich. A "poor boy walkin" was a take-out ham sandwich.

Shorty white-capped and juicy: strawberry shortcake with whipped cream.



Bisquick: A Railroad Invention?

Before 1931 there were no instant mixes for baked goods. All that changed in 1930 when Carl Smith, a General Mills executive, discovered an innovative recipe aboard a Southern Pacific dining car. Smith was traveling from Portland, Oregon to San Francisco. He entered the dining car late in the evening, well past normal serving hours. In moments, the waiter presented Smith with a basket of hot, fresh biscuits. How could this be?

The Southern Pacific chef had devised a mixture of lard, flour, baking powder and salt, which he prepared in advance and stored in the icebox. When an order came in, liquid was added and the fresh dough popped in the oven. In minutes, hot, fresh biscuits were ready to serve.

Smith borrowed the idea and, in 1931, General Mills introduced, the now famous, Bisquick.

Nickle Plate Beer

A good, cold beer with your steak dinner in the dining car can be a memorable experience. However, getting a good beer on a train was sometimes difficult.

In the late 1890s, Louis Centlivre, horse breeder and racer, found himself on a Nickle Plate Railroad train heading to his home in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Centlivre had been in Cleveland to watch one of his horses race. In the dining car he ordered a beer. When served it was cloudy, sour and not to his liking.

Centlivre knew his beer, as he was also among the principles of the family owned Centlivre Brewing Co. of Ft. Wayne. After his return, Louis sent two cases of his family's finest brew to the Nickle Plate dining car steward with a note to test the beer on the return trip to Cleveland. The test was a success and shortly thereafter, the Centlivre's signed an agreement to supply the Nickle Plate with beer.

Nickle Plate Beer was served by the railroad until the demise of its dining and lounge car services. Then, due to its popularity, Centlivre continued to produce the recipe and sell it directly to the public.

10 cents for a Two-pound Potato – *The Northern Pacific Great Big Baked Potato*

Hazen J. Titus, Northern Pacific Railway dining car superintendent, was riding the *North Coast Limited* in 1908 when he overheard a conversation between two Columbia Basin farmers. The farmers were lamenting over the enormous potatoes they produced – some weighing as much as five pounds apiece. They could find no one to sell the gigantic spuds to and feared the crop would become hog food.

Titus invited himself into the conversation and when he detrained with them at Yakima, Washington found himself in possession of a large box of the enormous-sized potatoes. After several days of experimenting in Northern Pacific's Seattle commissary, Titus had discovered the big spuds were ideal for baking. When roasted for two hours, a two-pound po

tato emerged from the oven with a delicious, snowy-white center that, when drenched with butter, tasted better than even Idaho Russet potatoes.



In December 1908, Titus returned to the Northern Pacific commissary in St. Paul and promptly ordered all the big potatoes that could be produced. He wanted potatoes that did not exceed two pounds. Then on February 9, 1909 the Great Big Baked Potato made its first appearance on a Northern Pacific dining car menu. The original cost of such a huge potato – 10 cents.

The First Cool Car

As the dining car service became a means for railroads to distinguish their passenger trains from the competition, every effort was made to provide the latest innovations.

On April 23, 1930, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad introduced a new dining car named *Martha Washington*. The car was built by Pullman, but had features that deviated from the standard design regime. The interior was dressed with shield back mahogany chairs, fancy architectural details, and crystal lighting, to mimic a Colonial Chesapeake region tavern.

On the outside, *Martha Washington* looked much like other Pullman cars, except for the unusual roof design. This roof hid a portion of the car's revolutionary new feature: air conditioning. Here was the first air conditioned rail vehicle.

Starting in 1928, B&O engineers, electricians and shopmen, worked in secrecy inside a tin shed added to the rear of Baltimore's Mt. Clare roundhouse. Working with the B&O staff was Willis Haviland Carrier and his team. Yes, this is the same Carrier brand many of us have in our homes today. Using Carrier's technology and the B&O's shop resources, the team fitted *Martha Washington* with a system that could drop the interior temperature 19 degrees in 19 minutes, 30 seconds.

N-B-C Calling For Dinner

The refined world of genteel dining in the early 1900s demanded a soothing, sophisticated means to call one's party to table. This held true for private homes, steamships and railroad dining cars.

In many of these instances, the soothing musical notes that signaled the mid-day and evening meals rang forth from a J.C. Degan chime. Degan, born in Hector, New York in 1853, studied music in London and became enthralled with the science of sound and percussion instruments.

Degan's first instruments, finely tuned bells, became standard equipment for most major orchestras. These were introduced in the 1880. Later Degan catalogs offered everything from tuning forks to tubaphones, a variant of the xylophone. In 1910, he introduced three-, four- and five-note dinner chimes. Producing a beautiful sound, Degan chimes began calling diners to the table at home, on the rails and aboard ships.

On the railroad, a waiter would stroll through the train, starting in first-class, playing the railroad's designated notes and announcing that the dining car was now open for service. Most railroads used the same three notes. The notes generally – G-E-C – became familiar to the American ear in 1927 as the chime for the networks of the National Broadcasting Company (NBC).

While familiar, the notes, when played on a finely tuned Degan chime, were attention-getting yet not disturbingly intrusive to passengers aboard the finest trains.

The Dining Car in its Environment

Outside of the urban centers, country folk found the dining car to be a source of curiosity, pride or anger. For the still largely rural America, a look through the dining car windows was a peek at the curious fads and fashions of urbanites – a sort of three-dimensional Sears catalog of interior design fantasies. Then again, the presence of a dining car on the line was an indication that one's town was on Progress's line of march. That is, all things otherwise

equal, a town with a major railroad line inevitably viewed itself as somewhat more urbane than towns of its hinterland. Finally there must have been envy of the city slicker who could not only afford a rail ticket, but also sat eating his dinner in a diner.

In any case, the dining car and its cache of china was more likely to be found rolling the full length of a limited's run, or coupled to an express train for some practical portion of its run. The car provided the enticement to an increasingly affluent urban middle class traveler. The dining car, therefore, was a fairly cosmopolitan environment, oftentimes strangely out of place in its immediate surroundings—from flaming oil refineries to snow-clad mountain passes and everything in between.



*Milwaukee Railroad Peacock Pattern
Plate from the Jay Christopher
collection*

Bright and Shiny

On the dining car each place setting had to be perfect. Each piece of china and silverware was placed in a precise position on the table and all place settings at a table were identical. Chipped or cracked china was not used. Silverware was polished regularly.

To insure such high standards were met, a railroad would hold a large back stock of china and silverware in its commissaries. Example: at one point, the Union Pacific Dining Car and Hotel Department kept 200,000 pieces of in stock. The U.P. stocked a 48-seat dining car with 1,134 pieces of silverware.

Additionally, on the U.P. all silverware received fresh silver plating every two years. The re-plating program rotated silverware in and out of service. Annually the railroad used approximately 2,000 ounces (125 pounds) of silver to re-plate its flatware.

How To Set The Table

In the Museum's collection is Union Pacific #8003, a dome diner. The U.P. was the only railroad to have dome dining cars. According to the Union Pacific Dining Car Cook Book and Service Instructions issued in the late 1950s, tables on these cars were to be set as follows:

Breakfast Meal –

One Fork to left of napkin

One Table Knife to right of napkin, cutting edge to napkin

One Dessert Spoon adjacent to knife

Two Teaspoons adjacent to dessert spoon

Lunch and Dinner Meals –

Two Forks to left of napkin

One Table Knife to right of napkin

One Bouillon Spoon, adjacent to knife

One Butter Knife, adjacent to bouillon spoon

Two Teaspoons, adjacent to butter knife

Waiter to bring dessert spoon with entrees requiring this service

Dome Round Tables and Dome Duces (*ed.: a duce is a smaller table for two*)

Flower vase adjacent to window

Menu holder adjacent to vase

Cube (of Indv. Pack) sugar bowl, adjacent to Menu Holder to the right when viewed from aisle

Salt and Pepper shakers or coaster, Salt facing aisle, Pepper facing window

Granulated sugar bowl to left, adjacent to menu holder

Water Pitcher on large round tables facing kitchen

Dome Fours and Gold Room (*ed.: The Gold Room was a smaller dining room located under the dome. It could be reserved for up to 10 people.*)

Flower vase adjacent to window and wall of Gold Room

Menu holder adjacent to vase

Cube (or Indv. Pack) sugar bowl in center of table facing aisle

Granulated sugar bowl towards window and wall of Gold Room

Salt and Pepper shakers between bowls, salt to right

Water Pitcher on dome large tables, facing stairway

Fred Harvey's Cup Code

Many of us have heard of Fred Harvey, the British immigrant who civilized the West in the late 1800s with his eating houses along the Santa Fe Railway. A hallmark of these establishments were the Harvey Girls, the young, unmarried waitresses, who worked within a precise system to provide consistent service across the Harvey franchise.

When you visited a Harvey House, the first waitress would seat you and take your drink order: coffee, hot tea, iced tea or milk. She would not write down your selection. After a few minutes, one or two different waitresses would arrive at your table to fulfill your beverage order. The second waitresses had not spoken to the first. To many patrons, this action bordered on some form of black magic. In reality, the Harvey Girls were following a simple, system-wide cup code. The first waitress would adjust the coffee cup at each place to indicate beverage preference. The second girls would read the code and serve the appropriate beverage.

The code:

- Cup upright on saucer: Coffee
- Cup upside down on the saucer: Hot Tea
- Cup upside down; tilted against the saucer: Iced Tea
- Cup upside down; placed away from the saucer: Milk

How Many for Dinner?

Having a dining car that was the right size for the train was important. Too few seats meant a longer wait to be seated. Extra, empty seats indicated wastefulness on the part of the railroad. While dining cars came in a number of configurations, most seated 36 or 48. Some smaller arrangements were used. Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad *Silver Spirit*, now part of the Museum's collection, combines a dinette seating 24 with a round-end lounge observation section.



There were also dining cars that could seat more than 48. One example is the three-unit articulated car ordered by the Southern Pacific for its Daylight trains running between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Measuring 203 feet, 6 inches long, the S.P. had four of this monster rolling restaurants built (two in 1939, two in 1941). Each could seat 152 patrons. The first section was a coffee shop. The second unit was devoted entirely to the kitchen. The last unit held the formal dining space.

Hawaiian Pot Roast

Northern Pacific Railroad

James Porterfield, *Dining by Rail*, p. 251

Ingredients:

- 4 lb. arm or blade cut of beef
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 2 Tbsp. lard or drippings
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup mushroom pieces
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup soy sauce
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sliced celery
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup hot water
- 1 8-oz. can pineapple chunks
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pepper
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. ground ginger

- ¼ cup cold water

Directions:

In large pot, brown pot roast in lard or drippings. Pour off fat. Add soy sauce, hot water, pepper, ginger, and onion. Cover tightly and simmer over low heat approximately 2 hours. Add mushrooms, celery, and pineapple. Continue cooking for 20 more minutes. Celery should remain slightly crisp. Remove meat, vegetables, and pineapple to a platter and keep warm. Blend flour and cold water, then add to cooking liquid, stirring constantly. Cook until thickened, then stir vegetables and pineapple into thickened sauce. Serve beef sliced, with a portion of sauce poured over.

Hot Slaw

Southern Pacific

Jim Loveland, *Dinner is Served: Fine Dining Aboard the S.P.*, p. 229

Ingredients:

- 1 large head cabbage
- ½ teaspoon English mustard
- 2 onions
- 1 bay leaf
- Butter
- 4 cloves
- 2 apples
- 1 bacon rind
- ½ cup sugar
- salt
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar

Directions:

Finely shred cabbage and 1 onion and braise in a covered saucepan in butter until moistened through. Add sliced apples, sugar, vinegar, mustard, bay leaf, and cloves inserted into 1 onion, bacon rind and enough water to fairly cover the cabbage. Add salt to taste, and cook until soft.

Surprise Rice

Southern Pacific

Jim Loveland, *Dinner is Served: Fine Dining Aboard the S.P.*, p. 227

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. pork sausages
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups boiled rice
- 1 cup milk
- 1 bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 small onion

Directions:

Mix rice, bell peppers and onions together, add salt, and cover the bottom of a buttered baking pan with this mixture one inch thick. Brown sausages lightly, arrange on layer in pan, and cover with remaining rice. Pour milk over and dot with butter. Bake covered for 30 minutes in a moderately heated oven, remove lid and continue baking until nicely browned.

Plantation Short Cake

Southern Pacific

Jim Loveland, *Dinner is Served: Fine Dining Aboard the S.P.*, p. 226

Ingredients:

- Corn bread
- 2 mushrooms, medium
- Ham slices
- ½ teaspoon flour
- Chicken breast
- ½ cup cream

Directions:

Bake thin layer of corn bread and cut into suitable squares, figuring 3 squares to 1 order. Place on a slice of fried or baked ham, and cover. On the second layer spread slices of breast of chicken and cover with the third. Wash and peel fresh mushrooms, slice and sauté in butter without browning. Add flour and when well absorbed add cream. Let boil until thick, or about 2 minutes, pour over short cake and serve.

Pennsylvania Club Sandwich

Pennsylvania Railroad

Will Hollister, *Dinner in the Diner: Great Railroad Recipes of all Time*, p. 110



Ingredients:

- 3 slices fresh toast
- 2 pickle chips
- 3 slices broiled bacon
- Sliced breast of chicken from
- 4 heart leaves of crisp lettuce
- 4 lb. chicken
- 1 branch parsley
- 2 slices of tomato
- Mayonnaise

Directions:

Spread a lettuce leaf with mayonnaise; lay three slices of broiled bacon on the lettuce, cover with another lettuce leaf and place on slice of toast. Put the second piece of toast on top and cover with another lettuce leaf spread with mayonnaise. Next put the slices of white meat of chicken on the lettuce and cover with the last leaf of lettuce and then the third slice of toast. Cut in four triangular sections, each section to be pierced with a wooden toothpick to hold it together. Garnish with a leaf of lettuce in the center of dinner plate; place the tomato slices and pickle chips on top of the lettuce. Arrange the four triangular shaped sections in stand-up position around the tomato slices.

Toasted Hot Mexican Sandwich

Santa Fe Railway

James Porterfield, *Dining by Rail*, p. 164

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. cooked roast beef, diced fine
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, chopped fine
- 4 green chilies, parboiled, diced fine
- ½ cup pimentos, diced fine
- 1 celery stalk, diced fine
- ¼ lb. Swiss cheese, diced fine
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- ½ cup chili sauce
- 8 drops Tabasco sauce

Directions:

Warm both sides of bread under the broiler before topping with the sandwich spread. Place diced cooked beef, hard-boiled eggs, green chilies, pimento, celery, and Swiss cheese in a bowl. Add mayonnaise, lemon juice, chili sauce, and Tabasco sauce. Mix thoroughly and spread generously on bread slices. Place on baking sheet and put 5 inches under preheated broiler. Toast until topping is lightly browned and bubbly.

Illinois Central Salad Dressing

Illinois Central Railroad

James Porterfield, *Dining by Rail*, p. 251

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp. celery, chopped fine
- 2 Tbsp. pimento, chopped fine
- 2 Tbsp. green pepper, chopped fine
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, chopped fine
- 1 tsp. green onion, chopped fine
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 2 Tbsp. dill pickle, chopped fine
- 1 cup chili sauce

Directions:

Place celery, green pepper, green onion, dill pickle, pimento, and egg in mixing bowl and mix thoroughly. Add mayonnaise and stir well. Add chili sauce and stir well. Store in a cool place. Serve on fresh green salads.

Rice Cream Pie

Western Pacific

James Porterfield, *Dining by Rail*, p. 296

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cups rice, uncooked
- pinch of salt
- 4 cups whole milk
- 1/8 tsp. lemon extract
- 1 ¼ Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1/8 tsp. mace

- 5 eggs
- 1 Tbsp. butter, melted
- 1 ¼ cups sugar
- 1 pint whipping cream

Directions:

Prepare crust for 2 single-crust pies. Place pie pastry in pie tins and prick bottom and sides frequently to prevent puffing during baking. Place pie pastry in oven until lightly browned, about 15 minutes. Set aside to cool before using. Now, in a small saucepan, steam rice in 2 cups of milk until rice is soft and milk is absorbed. Dissolve cornstarch in 2 tbs. cold water. Prepare custard by beating eggs, sugar, and salt in a large mixing bowl at low speed until lemon colored. Slowly add the remaining 2 cups milk, lemon extract, mace, dissolved cornstarch, and butter. When well mixed, stir in cooked rice with a whisk. When custard has thickened, pour into baked pie crusts 2/3 full and refrigerate until set before serving. Top with a dollop of whipped cream.

Big Baked Apples

Northern Pacific Railroad

William McKenzie, *Dining Car to the Pacific*, p. 123

Only Washington State apples were used on NP dining cars, both for the fruit's superior flavor and appearance and to contribute to the economy of the territory it served. For Big Bakes Apples, the variety specified was Rome Beauty baking apples. When these were not available, Delicious apples were considered a suitable substitute, although they were baked in a slower oven for a longer period of time.

Ingredients:

- 4 large Rome Beauty apples
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons melted butter

Directions:

Core apples; pare 1-inch strip of skin from tops. Place in cake pan. Mix brown sugar and cinnamon. Fill center of each apple with ¼ of mixture. Pour ½ teaspoon butter on sugar. Fill bottom of pan with ¼ inch of water. Bake at 350 degrees until done, about 45 minutes. Baste frequently with juice from pan. Serve warm with cream. Makes 4 servings.