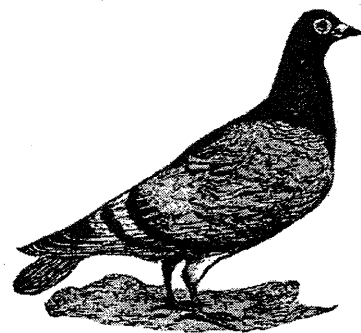


Pirate Nosh

Arrr, matey! So you want to know what to feed your young crew! I must warn you, you may have a mutiny on your hands. Food was one of the least glamorous aspects of pirate life. Pirates did get the opportunity to feast once in a while, when they visited welcoming ports like Port Royal, Tortuga, and Madagascar, but on the high seas their diets were poor. Vegetables and fruit went bad quickly on their ships, while meat rotted, and fresh water turned foul. Even hard tack, the staple of many a pirate diet, was often full of weevils. Pirates often ate the bad food if they could stomach it, because running out of food entirely presented an even scarier idea. There have been accounts, in extreme situations, of pirates resorting to cannibalism. Some were more inventive though. In 1670, members of Sir Henry Morgan's crew decided to eat their leather satchels!

The poor nutrition of pirates resulted in disease for many of them. One of the most common of these was scurvy. Caused by a lack of vitamin C, scurvy was characterized by swollen gums, internal bleeding, and anaemia. Eventually limes were discovered as a cure and prevention for scurvy.

Pirate cooks had to be very creative to make the most out of small amounts of food. Their concoctions often involved pickled foods and food that could be taken from nature, like fish and pigeons. A very popular pirate dish that exemplifies this creativity is salmagundi. It's a stew of sorts, made of various types of meat (including turtle, fish, chicken, and sometimes even pigeon), spiced wine, palm hearts, garlic, oil, hard-boiled eggs, pickled onion, cabbage, grapes, olives, and anchovies. The meal's popularity may have resulted from its convenience rather than its taste.



Pirates were also inventive drink creators. Because water, milk, and other liquids went bad so easily aboard ship, pirates drank a large amount of spirits. Their favourites included rum, wine, beer, ale, port, sherry, and brandy. Creative mixes included Bombo, a

combination of rum, water, sugar, and nutmeg, Rumfustian, made of raw eggs, sherry, gin, beer, and sugar, and Rumbullion, made of rum, wine, tea, lime juice, sugar, and spices. One of the most frightening drinks was Blackbeard's favourite, Kill Devil. It was rum mixed with gunpowder.

Pirates got by on this diet, but if you're looking to feed a group of teenage pirates, a more modern, delicious, and less alcohol-based approach is advisable. Many current day snacks are inherently pirate-like, such as goldfish crackers, chocolate coins, ring-pops. Pirate cooks can also create their own pirate snacks. Recipes for salmagundi and hard tack as well as other pirate dishes and drinks are available at these websites and in these books:



- Pirattitude!: So you Wanna Be a Pirate?: Here's How!, by John Baur and Mark Summers
- The FishesEye Pirate Recipe Book, by FishesEye Publising
- <http://www.talklikeapirate.com/drinks.html>
- http://www.gone-ta-pott.com/Pirate_Recipes.html
- <http://www.katyberry.com/Dorianne/galley.html>
- http://www.cooks.com/rec/search/0,1-0,pirate_food,FF.html

Sources:

<http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/pirates/72165>

<http://piratesoul.com/piratelife>

