

DAVIS, WYDIE (Mrs.)

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DAVIS, MRS. WYDIE

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Interview with Mrs. Wydie Davis, a Cherokee  
Six miles south of Kellyville, Oklahoma. Indian.  
Rufus George--Field Worker  
May 25, 1937.

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INDIAN COOKING.

Mrs. Wydie Davis is telling of how some Indian foods are prepared and eaten. She says the blue dumplings are made by the Indians this way.

They use the same flour that is made for sour corn bread.

Here is the way they make the flour: They take white corn and shell it. They fill a big iron pot half full of ashes and water and build a fire around it. Then they pour the corn into the pot and cook the corn in the ashes until the corn begins to peel off. Then they use a big dipper and take all of this corn out of the pot and wash it in several clean waters until it is clean. Then they put this corn in a sofkey block and pound it until it is in the form of flour as corn meal. Then this flour can be used for blue dumplings and can be used for sour corn bread.

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This is the way they make the blue dumplings. They take green hulls of blackeyed peas, put them in a bread pan and roast them in the oven. After they have been roasted they take them out and pour boiling water over them and let them set a few minutes. Then they drain the water off of them. The water is colored blue. They use this water to mix with the corn flour to make the dumplings blue. They set a pot of water on the stove to cook the blue dumplings in. They mix the corn flour and blue water together just like making a biscuit dough, then they take a handful of it at a time and roll it around in their hands like making biscuits and drop these blue dumplings into the boiling water on the stove and let them cook until they are done. When the dumplings are cooked they remove them with a fork and place them on the plate or a platter and they are eaten like bread. This is an Indian dessert.

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The Indians in early times did not know anything about eating fancy desserts as they do now. All they knew for dessert were these wild grape dumplings.

Some of the Indians still make this dessert.

Here is the way they make this dessert. They get wild grapes out of the woods and bring them home. They put these grapes in a large cooking vessel and put enough water in it to cover them, and then cook them long enough so that the water is real dark purple. Then they remove the cooking vessel from the fire and drain the water or juice from the grapes. The juice is sweetened with sugar and placed back over the fire. Then they take out about one or two cups full of this juice to mix with the flour for the grape dumplings.

They put the amount of flour they want for the dumplings into a pan and make a dough out of it with the two cups full of grape juice.

When the dough had been kneaded enough, they roll the dough out to about a fourth of an inch in

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thickness and cut it into narrow strips and drop these dumplings into the boiling grape juice and let the mixture cook until the dumplings are done. Then it is set off of the stove to cool and is eaten as a dessert.