



Feast Coordination for Beginners

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706,

Who am I?

- Da'ud ibn Ali, Kingdom of the West, Principality of The Mists
- Started in SCA 1986. Took a life break for child and career.
- NOT a trained chef. Learned cooking / how to cook for groups from watching and helping my grandmother in family church.
- My view of feasts:
 - Key to success is planning.
 - Provide value to those attending the feast.
 - Don't sacrifice palette on the altar of authenticity.
 - No one goes home hungry.

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So, you want to volunteer for a feast?

- No, you don't need be a chef.
- You DO have to want to work in a team.
- You DO need to be willing to roll up your sleeves and dive in.
- Volunteering to work on a feast team does not always mean working in front of the stove.
 - There are several roles on the feast team; feast steward, lead cooks, support cooks, lead server, server, dish washer, clean up crew, and more.

How do you volunteer?

- Varies by Kingdom, Principality, or Barony
- Can also vary by the type or nature of the feast.
- Best way is to ask the local seneschal or event coordinator.
- If you are looking to volunteer as the feast steward, be sure to ask:
 - Size/headcount of feast (30, 50, 100?).
 - Type of feast (Coronation, annual event, etc.).
 - Budget for event.

(We will talk more about this later in discussion)

What should you expect?

- As feast steward you will have accountability for...
 - Menu coordination
 - Feast Team coordination
 - Shopping coordination
 - Cooking coordination
 - Feast site coordination
 - Clean up coordination
 - Did I mention coordination?

Coordination

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Time is key!

- Try to give your self as much time to prepare as possible.
- Sometimes short preparation times are inevitable.
 - Feast stewards tend to be in high demand. This can result in less-than-optimal preparation time for the feast. Know what you are agreeing to manage and provide.
- My personal preference is no less than 3-4 months for 60 to 70 person, 5 course feast. But you will have to identify your style and preference.
 - This allows me time to assemble feast team, do menu research, control shopping budget through sales, and plan for some advance cooking.

Lets get started! What type of Feast?

- Is this a Coronation/Investiture feast, small local event buffet, or other?
 - This will influence the feast team, menu, and budget.
- What is the estimated number of attendees? 30, 50, 100?
 - Will this be adults only or will there be children in the attendance? This can also affect the menu and planned budget.
 - The number of attendees may influence your on-site cooking plan. It should be taken into account when you visit the site prior to the event to see the kitchen and feast hall.

What about the event site?

- You should review the event site with the event steward.
 - Access to the kitchen and feast hall.
 - Parking for load-in of the kitchen.
 - What does the kitchen look like?
 - What equipment is available in kitchen?
- What does the site contract cover?
 - DOs & DON'Ts in the contract. (dry site; decoration; max occupancy)
 - Kitchen equipment use.
 - Are table, chairs, linens, etc. covered by the contract?
 - Is garbage and recycle covered in the contract?
- What are the local food safety regulation?
 - Site and local government may have specific rules for private events serving food.

What is the feast budget?

- Is the feast a fixed budget or based on number of attendees?
- Consider the type of feast you are preparing. Is it a sideboard luncheon, a boxed lunch, small buffet, or a served multi-course feast?
 - Different types of events will influence budget.
- You will need to discuss the budget with the Seneschal or Event Steward.
 - You should also check if the feast fee is intended to cover the feast cost only or contribute to the overall event budget.
 - Remember, neither you nor your team should be 'out of pocket' for any of the feast costs.
 - You should also review the expected feast 'ticket' costs.

Assemble your team!

- Consider the type of feast. Sideboard or Served?
- What is your experience level and that of your potential team members?
- How many team members can the kitchen and feast hall support?
- The team is more than just the cooks.
 - You should decide on serving staff, support cooks, dishwashers, setup and cleanup support. And I also recommend emergency runners for last minute errands/purchases.
- Make sure the team members are comfortable working together.

Visit the Feast Site.

- I recommend at least two site visits.
 - Try for the first visit as soon as you know what site will be used, and a second within 2 weeks of feast.
 - The first visit allows you to see the site and what you will be working with. The second is to confirm no major changes and that all equipment is working. (no working stoves on day of event is bad)
- When visiting the site, take notes about the facilities.
 - Size and layout of kitchen? How many ovens & range tops.
 - How large is the refrigerator space? Will you need additional coolers?
 - How much storage space will you have? How much prep space will you have?
 - What are the condition & number of pots and pans (if site provides)? What is the dishwashing configuration? What about plating/service staging area?
- I recommend taking picture / video as a reminder. It may be several months before you return.

Visit the Feast Site. *continued*

- Take note of the Feast hall.
 - How many occupants is the location intended to hold? (Look for official capacity plaque)
 - Are there already tables and chairs? If not, do you have access for them to be brought in? Is there space for a Royals High Table?
 - Is there space for sideboard if needed? Is there room for server staging area?
 - What are to Do's and Don't's for decorations? If allowed, is there room for decoration? How can you display?
 - Check the ADA access to hall. Will there be suitable room once tables/chairs are positioned in hall?
 - Is there space for entertainment and/or court?
- Talk to site owner/representative.
 - Confirm the expectations in the contract.
 - Review garbage and recycling requirements.
 - Ask for any local knowledge about kitchen and hall.
 - Confirm access time to the kitchen and hall for day of feast. Is early access allowed for load in?
 - Get contact information for additional questions and for the day of feast.

Let's talk about the menu.

- Consider the season for the feast.
 - The season will dictate what produce will be available, or at a minimum influence the price.
- Theme or not?
 - A time period / theme will also influence the menu.
 - Do you need to accommodate any specific dietary constraints?
 - Check with the Royalty for any specific food issues.
 - Will you solicit dietary limitations from the populace, prior to creating menu? Or will you plan menu to include dishes covering common limitation? (vegetarian, non-dairy, gluten free, etc.)

Let talk about the menu. *continued*

- Keep total portion size in mind when building your menu.

Food Type	Ounces	Grams
Proteins – Beef, Chicken, Fish, Lamb, etc.	6 - 8 oz	170 - 225 g
Vegetable – Cooked greens, salads, etc.	2 - 4 oz	55 - 115 g
Starch – Potatoes, rice, beans, etc.	4 - 6 oz	115 - 170 g
Appetizers & Cheese	2 - 4 oz	55 - 115g
Breads	4 oz	115 g
Desserts	4 oz	115 g
Total Food Per Person	22 – 30 oz	625 – 855 g

- Appetites of attendees will differ. Some will eat more or less of each dish.
 - *This is **my rough** rule of thumb. Adjust as you build your menu.*

Let talk about the menu. *continued*

- How will you build the menu.
 - Will you decide as a group with your feast team?
 - As feast steward, will you decide on menu?
- How large of a menu?
 - That is dependent on budget, type of feast, and you as the feast steward.
 - Again, keep in mind portions. More courses & dishes, means smaller individual serving portions.
 - Start with a larger number of dishes on menu and then cut down.
 - Some dishes may look great but may not work when you review with team or when you try the recipe.
 - Test each recipe by cooking a sample dish. Scaling the recipe down is a good test.
 - How difficult is the recipe? Does preparation time work for the feast? What about complexity? Will the recipe work with modern palettes?
 - During the test record what you learned. Capture tips to remember if the recipe makes it onto final menu.

Let talk about the menu. *continued*

- Review menu with Cook team.
 - Review the draft menu/courses with the cook team.
 - Discuss the dishes and get their feedback. You may want to cut some dishes after this review.
 - Decide who will be assigned each dish.
 - Will you assign each course to a lead cook and support team?
- Have a Proto Feast / dish sampling.
 - Schedule a meeting with the feast team. If possible, have a get together with the Feast team to cook and serve each of the dishes, by course.
 - The intent is to test/sample each dish and finalize the menu.
 - Proto Feast also allows each cook to prepare the dish and get feedback. (comments on flavors, things to consider for plating)
 - Please, never include a dish in the menu that has not been tested. You don't want have your attendees test it for you.
 - Record what you learned from the test of the recipe.
 - Does the recipe scale? Is yield accurate? It is a good use of effort for feast? How much can be done in advance of feast? How will the dish be served?

Building a shopping list for the Feast.

- Upscale recipes for estimates number of portions.
 - Each recipe will produce a specific quantity. You will need to determine how many portions can be produced by the recipe. This is not the normal “feeds 4”.
 - After the recipes are upscaled, calculate how much of each ingredient you will need across all dishes. This helps when purchasing in bulk.
 - Identify where you will purchase or make from scratch. (Stock, pie crusts, bread)
- Use modern tools to assist in scaling and capturing your shopping list.
 - Spreadsheets with formula are a great assist in scaling. Identify how many portions the base recipe will produce and divide ingredient by that number. You can now calculate the ingredients by the number of portions you are targeting.
- Identify what ingredients can be purchased early and which must be purchased near the date of the feast.

Plan your shopping.

- Sales help your budget.
 - When you can, look for sales on your ingredients.
 - Buy pantry items and store them.
 - Watch for meat sales. Buy and freeze proteins.
 - Warehouse stores and bulk shopping may save you considerable money OR for the same cost provide ready to use ingredients.
 - Talk to friends that have gardens or farms and see what you can get at discount.
 - This takes some coordination with you and cooking team but can be a huge benefit to the budget.
- Determine if you will centralize shopping or have each cook shop for their dishes.
 - I prefer to do big shopping trips with a few of the cooking team, then deliver ingredients for any advance cooking.
 - It is also acceptable to have the cooks do the shopping for their assigned dishes. But you will need to support them and make sure receipts are managed.
 - Regardless of how you shop, I can not stress the importance of tracking and managing all receipts. Keep a running ledger of your expenses. Don't be surprised.

Cooking plan for feast.

- Create a plan that counts down to the feast day.
- List what needs to be started and when they need to be done.
 - If dishes are going to be cooked in advance and stored, lay out when they should be started and completed. Also record who will be doing the work.
 - Get a calendar and chart the activities. This way you can easily see what is occurring on any given date.
 - Plan for follow-ups with your cooks.

Cooking plan for feast. *continued*

- Create your detailed plan for feast day cooking. Think about the following:
 - Per course, when do dishes need to be started/cooked.
 - What dishes have priority on range or in oven?
 - When do dishes need to be plated for serving?
 - What plates or serving utensils are needed for what dish?
 - Have a plating plan and inventory of all service items.
 - Know when platters and utensils need to be back in kitchen, washed and ready for next use.

Cooking plan for feast. *continued*

- My personal preferences.
 - My feast day plan starts with time of load into kitchen. This could be the day before feast.
 - Based on course dishes, have time assigned for when dishes should be started and when they should be ready for plating.
 - Plan for multitasking or sharing of ovens. We only have so many ranges and ovens.
 - Start long cooking dishes or things that can rest (for example bread) early in the morning. Get them out of the way.
 - Post schedule on when support team should be in kitchen. (dish washing schedule, serving team, hall decorations team, etc.)
 - Have multiple copies of the cooking schedule & recipes posted at the cooking stations and at plating area. Have extra recipe copies for each cook.
 - I like to have a binder with extra copies of all the menus, schedules and recipes.
 - Clean as you go. And stage for the next dish to be cooking in that area.
 - Organize storage of ingredients for each recipe. Keep ingredients for recipe together, where possible.
 - Cleaning as to go is important. But be ready to clean and return feast site/kitchen in better state than when you arrived.

Things to remember on day of Feast.

- Control who enters your kitchen.
- Check schedule of event with autocrat at multiple points through out day. You may need to slow preparations if activities at event are running slow.
- Post menus outside kitchen and around hall.
- Confirm course schedule with Court or entertainment steward.
- Monitor serving speed and how quickly courses are completed.
- Have table menus with ingredient list.
- Have someone designated as 'runner' to do last minute shopping or retrieval tasks. Always know where your runner is.

Thoughts for day of Feast.

- Stay calm.
 - Things rarely, if ever, go as planned. It may be large or minor issues. Focus on supporting your cooking team and problem solving.
- Feast steward is final arbiter on how and if dish will be served.
- Take care of your cooking team.
 - Get them to take rest breaks.
 - Make sure they eat and drink.
- Plan for first aid. Hope to not need it.
 - Have a good first aid kit with cooking safety items (latex gloves / fingers).
 - Make sure your full team knows where the kit is located.
 - Make sure everyone understands food safety controls.
- Have containers for people to take leftovers.

Post event activities.

- Thank everyone!
 - You didn't do this on your own.
- Confirm kitchen and feast hall close out with event steward.
 - Have this already planned with Event steward.
- Final organization of all receipts and documentation.
 - Arrange for reimbursement of all expenses.
- Insure all borrowed items are returned.
- Talk to the team about the event.
- What went well? What could have been improved?

Examples



Really, Take Pictures!

Feast Menu Sample

Mist Spring Investiture AS 53

Investiture Feast

"No One Expects the Spanish Inquisition"

A Feast Inspired by 13th Century Spanish Foods

V = Vegetarian

First Course / Side Board

Garlic Torte
Cremonese Torte
Andalusian Stuffed Egg
Green Olive Spread
Olives
Labnah w Chopped Greens
Spicy Chard and Fava Bean Dip
Pickled Vegetables
Spiced Dried-Fruit Chutney
Sour Dough Bread
Salted Butter
Honeyed Butter
Fresh Goat Cheese

Second Course

Heathen Cake
Lentil Stew
Lettuce & Radish Salad
Braised Cabbage
Salsa A Bolets

Third Course

Noodle Pottage
Aromatic Couscous with Roasted
Vegetables

Andalusian Chicken Sausage with Apples
Lamb with Honeyed Onions

Fourth Course

Roast Chicken
Roast Pork
Sauces:
Dried Plum ✓
Green Sauce ✓
Spiced Chickpea Patties ✓
Sautéed Aphrodisiac Greens ✓
Rice Lombard ✓

Dessert Board

Tarte of Cherries ✓
Holiday Nougat Candy ✓
Caliph's Favorite Short Bread ✓

Libations

Water
Lemonade
Zesty Mint Drink

Recipe Scaling

Recipe: Tarte of Cherries
 Website/Source: <http://www.godecookery.com/friends/frec09.htm>
 Total Cooking Time:
 Cooking Time at Site:

original yield	24	Recipe makes 2 pies	
New yield	144	Conversion:	6.00
Ingredients	Original amount	Original amount	New amount
2 2/3 lb. cherries, pitted & drained	42		252.0 oz
1/4 oz. rose water	0.25		1.5 oz
1/4 cup ruby port wine	0.25		1.5 cups
1/2 cup sugar	0.5		3.0 cups
3/4 tsp. cinnamon	0.75		4.5 tsp
1/4 tsp. ginger	0.25		1.5 tsp
lemon juice (to taste - 1oz)	1		6.0 oz
3/8 cup finely grated bread crumbs	0.375		2.3 cups
pastry for 2 double crusts	4		24.0 crusts
			0.0
			0.0

Directions:
 Add rosewater and port to cherries. Add enough sugar to sweeten, but not make it cloy, plus the ginger.
 Add a little lemon juice to sharpen. Cook for 45 minutes or until flavors are mingled. If needed, you may thicken with bread crumbs.
 Let cool. Fill shells, close, bake at 425° F for 20-25 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

FEAST NOTES:
 Filling to be made before event. Pies will be assembled and cooked on site.
 Individual small pies will be made on site, not full pies.

Filling cooking note: Reserve a 1/3 of the cherries during cooking of filling. Add them when 5 mins remain in cooking of filling.

Shopping Instructions:
 All filling ingredients will need to be purchased in advance to allow it to be cooked before event.
 Da'ud have pie crust and pans at site..

Recipe: Braised Cabbage
 Website/Source: <http://giveitforth.blogspot.com/2015/12/harleian-ms-279-caboges-1430-braised.html>
 Total Cooking Time: 20 mins
 Cooking Time at Site: 20 mins

original yield	4		
New yield	80	Conversion:	20.00
Ingredients	Original amount	Original amount	New amount
1/4 large green cabbage cut into chunks	0.25		5.0 cabbages
1 cup beef broth	1		20.0 cups
1/2 Tbsp Salted Butter	0.5		10.0 Tbsp
4 tbsp. bread crumbs	4		80.0 Tbsp
Salt to taste			0.0
			0.0
			0.0

Directions:
 Blanch the cabbage in salted boiling water for 2-3 minutes (until it starts to become tender).

Strain the cabbage, and dry (you don't want to water down the stock).

While blanching cabbage, slowly heat broth with the saffron. When the broth has heated (low simmer) and colored to your desire, return your cabbage to it, and let it cook for 5 minutes, until tenderness.

Thicken broth with bread crumbs by slowly adding the breadcrumbs a tablespoon at a time. Allow the crumbs to dissolve into the broth before adding the next bit. Otherwise the crumbs clump together and instead of smooth gravy.

The broth will thicken into gravy. Once it has thickened you can remove it and place it into a bowl. Add the butter and serve.

FEAST NOTES:
 Dish will be cooked fully on site.

Shopping Instructions:
 Da'ud will purchase all ingredients and will have on site.

Feast Day Plan – Course Serving

Mist Spring Investiture AS 53
Investiture Feast

Feast Start Time - Planned 5:30

Check off When Plated and when
Server

	Dish Assignment	Course Lead	Planned		Actual	
			Start Plating	Serve Time	Start Plating	Serve Time
First Course		Conni	4:45p	5:30p		
Garlic Torte	Mercy					
Cremonese Torte	Anne					
Andalusian Stuffed Egg	Irina					
Green Olive Spread	Moira					
Labnah w Chopped Greens	Moira					
Pickled Vegetables	Seraphina					
Spiced Dried-Fruit Chutney	Seraphina					
Sour Dough Bread	Maggie & Da'ud					
Salted Butter	Da'ud					
Honey Butter	Da'ud					
Second Course		Mercy	5:30p	6:00p		
Heathen Cake	Da'ud					
Lentil Stew	Conni					
Braised Cabbage	Anne					
Salsa A Bolets	Mercy					

Feast Day Plan – Recipe and Prep Area Post

Recipe: Garlic Torte

Website/Source: <http://www.medievalcuisine.com/Euriol/recipe-index/torta-d-aqli>

Total Cooking Time: 70 min

Cooking Time at Site: 60 mins

Start Cooking At: 2:30p

Plate At: 5:00p

original yield 1 pie

New yield 12 **Conversion:** 12.00

Ingredients	Original amount	Original amount	New amount
1 lb. Garlic		16	192.0 oz
8 oz. ricotta cheese		8	96.0 oz
1/4 cup Butter		0.25	3.0 cups
3 Large eggs		3	36 eggs
8 oz. Cream cheese		8	96.0 oz
1 pie crust (see recipe for Paest Ro		1	12 pie crusts
1/4 cup Olive Oil		0.25	3.0 cups
			0.0
			0.0
			0.0

Directions:

Bring pot of water to boil. Place 12oz the garlic in water and boil for 10 minutes.

Remove and drain garlic. Chop garlic in food processor.

Mix remaining garlic with the olive oil and roast in 300 degree oven until soft.

Mix garlic puree and remaining ingredients, except roasted garlic, in food processor until smooth.

Turn mixture into pie crust. Sprinkle roasted garlic on top of pie. Bake at 400°F for @ 40 - 50 minutes, until golden brown and pie is set.

Feast Recipe Notes:

12 Pies will be needed for event.

Garlic should be boiled and roasted before event. Filling will be finished on site.

Food processor will be available on site.

Shopping Instructions:

Garlic will need to be purchased to allow it to be cooked before event.

Da'ud will purchase remaining ingredients and will have on site.

Great References on Feasts.

- **Running an SCA feast**

<https://tchipakkan.wordpress.com/arastorm/running-an-sca-feast/>

- **About Running a Feast**

<https://www.florilegium.org/files/FEASTS/Run-a-Feast-art.html>

- **Rob Peter to Feed Paul: Halving Feast Costs**

<http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/recipes/rprf.sca.feasts.html>

- **The Feasting Primer**

<https://tastesfromtournai.wordpress.com/the-feasting-primer/>

- **Introduction to Feast Kitchens in the SCA**

<http://ironbeard.net/cooking/introduction-to-feast-kitchens/>