

Happy 1945th birthday, Hadrian!



*Happy 1945th birthday Hadrian!*

As is tradition, I baked Hadrian a birthday cake. This year, I chose to cook Cato's recipe for *savillum* (a kind of cheesecake), one of my favourite desserts from antiquity.

***Savillum* recipe in Latin** (from [LacusCurtius](#)):

Cato's De Agricultura 84: *Savillum hoc modo facito. Farinae selibram, casei P. Il S una conmisceto quasi libum, mellis P. et ovum unum. Catinum fictile oleo unguito. Ubi omnia bene conmiscueris, in catinum indito, catinum testo operito. Videto ut bene percocas medium, ubi altissimum est. Ubi coctum erit, catinum eximito, melle unguito, papaver infriato, sub testum subde paulisper, postea eximito. Ita pone cum catillo et lingula.*

Translation:

Take  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound of flour,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  pounds of cheese, and mix together as for the libum; add  $\frac{1}{4}$  pound of honey and 1 egg. Grease an earthenware dish with oil. When you have mixed thoroughly, pour into a dish and cover with a crock. See that you bake the centre thoroughly, for it is deepest there. When it is done, remove the dish, cover with honey, sprinkle with poppy-seed, place back under the crock for a while, then remove from the fire. Serve in the dish, with a spoon.

### **Ingredients:**

- 200g plain flour
- 250g ricotta cheese
- honey
- 1 egg
- poppy seeds
- 1 tsp olive oil
- bay leaves

Add the cheese to the flour and combine the two. Beat the egg and add it to the mixture with a tablespoon of honey. Knead into a dough, adding a little more flour if necessary. Use the olive oil to grease a round pan for cake baking. Add the bay leaves over the oil. Press the dough into the bottom of the pan and cover it. Bake in the oven at  $180^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 45 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven, spread 2 tablespoons of honey over the top of the bread and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Replace it in the oven for a further 10-15 minutes. Serve warm or cold.



This savoury cheesecake was served with *Conditum Paradoxum*, an wonderfully sweet and spiced red wine. Propino tibi!



*Conditum Paradoxum, the red wine of the ancient Romans.*

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