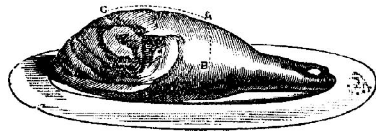
produced and recipes were also included within published advertisements for Hansells essences – recipes such as Sultana Cake (using vanilla and almond essence), Pikelets (with vanilla and lemon essence), Vanilla Biscuits (with variations using other essence flavourings), and Peach Brandy Tart.

"Make-A-Shake" and the Instant Breakfast sachets could be fitted into the category of "Eating Away From Home", and the Quench, Vita Fresh and Jungle Juice products were very suited as drinks in school lunches, on picnics and for camping holidays at the beach.

Popular recipes at the Test Kitchen cooking demonstrations included a baked fish meal which incorporated lemon quench in the herb, cheese and breadcrumb topping, and an easy to make delicious Vita Fresh cheesecake.



The Good Old-Fashioned Kiwi Barbecue (1840-1980)

André Taber

"Beef, mutton, lamb and rabbit were cheap and plentiful in colonial New Zealand, and the climate was conducive to cooking it outdoors. Long, hot summers meant that socialising around the fire over which the meat was being barbecued became a ritual", wrote Graeme Lay in *Cuisine,* one of New Zealand's most highly regarded glossy food magazines, in 2001 (Lay 2001:34).

This quotation retells a commonly held myth that cooking meat outdoors over live fire has been a custom cherished by Pakeha and intrinsic to New Zealand's national identity ever since the days of the first colonists.

Under scrutiny, the myth collapses quickly. The word "barbecue" rarely appears in 19th and early 20th century literature. When New Zealanders in the Victorian period did hear the word "barbecue", they had a different received understanding of it than New Zealanders do today. If barbecue recipes appeared in print, they called for meat baked in the oven, covered with vinegar or tomato-based sauce. Evidence from newspaper archives shows that New Zealanders understood what a "barbecue" gathering was in the context of the American South, but these sources reveal a subtext that barbecues represented American greed, wastefulness and bluster. Use of the word "barbecue" to refer to Maori earth-oven cooking, in a way that words of Amerindian origin were often used generically to refer to items and concepts in aboriginal culture, illustrate the preconception of savagery that Pakeha held of Maori life. While during the period many ingredients and methods from American cookery were taken up in New Zealand, it is clear that barbecue – both the method of slow pork cookery and the idea of a large outdoor gathering – was not.

Before the 1950s, the New Zealand backyard was a utilitarian space given over to horticulture, laundry and storage – hardly the place to entertain one's acquaintances. More importantly, the pioneer spirit meant that settlers preferred to eat inside; they had come, after all, to domesticate their new land, and therefore cooking in a kitchen and eating in a dining room was correct etiquette. However, paradoxically, a cult of the outdoors developed; as social

historian Jock Phillips phrased it, "displaying one's colonial credentials by roughing it on organised camping trips" became de rigueur for polite society (Phillips 1996: 24). Picnics were more manageable expressions of this outdoor culture; anthropologist Margaret Visser describes them as "formally informal" meals with their own set of intentionally relaxed rules, which in turn helped to reinforce normal table manners (Visser 1991: 150). If a fire was lit at picnics, it was to brew tea in a billy suspended from a tripod, but meat was never cooked in situ – the order of the day was pre-prepared sandwiches, cold pies, cakes, biscuits and fresh fruit. Also, there is evidence that potatoes, steaks, chops or sausages were sometimes cooked over a bonfire as summertime family entertainment – either on a camping trip, a day's outing, or in the back garden. This occasion was often called the "campfire grill". Eating outdoors, especially picnicking, was an infrequent yet highly symbolic part of the developing Pakeha culture in their new temperate climate, however, because of this symbolism, historians tend to overemphasise outdoor eating.

The backyard barbecue arrived in the 1950s, copied from North America, where it had become fashionable to grill meat over charcoal in the back garden. "Summer has always meant picnic to New Zealanders, but now it just as deliciously means barbecue", trumpeted the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* in 1958. Conditions were now right for New Zealanders to embrace the concept: New Zealand already had a food tradition of abundance; plain food and meat were the centre of the meal; Western culture in general was becoming more informal; buffet parties were popular and suited the Pakeha concept of egalitarianism; premium cuts of meat suitable for quick grilling were becoming more desirable; men were participating in the kitchen more; the "heroic pioneer myth" meant men believed they were continuing a noble outdoor cooking tradition; the picnic was rendered obsolete by the private motorcar and the increasing tendency for nuclear families to focus inwards on their own private entertainment; and most importantly, they were taking part in an international fashion. Fashion, aspiration and sophistication have played a big part at barbecues ever since, reflected both in the design of grills and in recipes. Barbecue grills developed rapidly from do-it-yourself brick constructions in the 1950s, to specially designed modular concrete block constructions and freestanding kettle grills (or hot-plates) in the early 1970s, to gas-fired tripod or wooden-framed grills in the late 1970s. Garden design has kept pace, from the patio to the barbecue area to the deck.

The earliest known New Zealand cookbook dedicated to barbecuing was published in 1978. Recipes published in New Zealand reflected general food

fashions: American burgers and vinegar-based sauces in the 1950s and '60s; Continental influences in the 1970s and an increasingly eclectic post-modern mix of cuisines from the 1980s onwards – consequently there are no recipes that have survived to become "classics" in the New Zealand barbecue repertoire. However, there is an enduring preference for lamb, incorporated into whatever food fad happens to be passing through; and one "dish" that has maintained a constant presence, not through recipes, but through complaints about its gastronomic inadequacy, is plain, unseasoned (and often burned) grilled steaks, chops and sausages. Despite a bad case of culinary cringe, New Zealanders continue to cook this dish, which can be traced back to the days of the campfire grill, and it survives precisely because it is not serious cooking, but a leisurely escape from everyday life.

While the New Zealand backyard barbecue only had its beginnings in the 1950s, within 30 years it became framed in language of nostalgia and national-identity-building that hid its recent origins and instead ascribed to it a false "tradition". By the 1980s, the backyard barbecue – the "formally informal" event more than the food, now christened the Good Old-Fashioned Kiwi Barbecue – was for New Zealanders an indispensable symbol of casualness, jocularity, hospitality, community, family and outdoor culture.

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