OFFICER'S QUARTERS KITCHEN STATION

General

The simple task of preparing a meal was very different at Fort Tejon than it is today at home. The most important lesson for children to understand is that in order to eat a meal one had to work hard to make that meal. Many modern day cooks have no idea what is involved in preparing a 1850s meal.

The goal of this living history demonstration is to show the students how meals were made at Fort Tejon. The adult assistants manning the Kitchen station will help each squad churn a batch of butter, and prepare a part of the stew.

Each squad will use a little less than one quart of cream to churn a batch of butter. The adults working the station will have one gallon of cream to divide equally among the five squads that will visit their station during the course of the day.

STEW MAKING SUPPLIES WILL BE PROVIDED BY FORT TEJON

Flour	Celery	Salt
Meat	Onions	Pepper
Potatoes	Carrots	
Bell Peppers	Basic herbs	

IF YOU WANT PRESERVES YOU MUST PROVIDE FRUIT
(See list of available foods for the period

During the day, each of the five squads will also help prepare one large pot of stew. Start with the ingredients that take the longest to cook. As an example, the first squad through should clean, peal and cut up the potatoes, while the last squad should be adding the peppers and cleaning up.

At the end of the day and the stew is ready to be served, the adults and last squad at the Kitchen will bring the pot of stew, remaining butter and bread and any other leftovers down to the Cook Shed to be served with supper. Remember that all you need to do is bring the food. There are plenty of serving spoons, forks, ladles and bowls at the Cook Shed. The less you carry down from the Kitchen to the Cook Shed, the less you have to carry back.

Kitchen Management Outline

- Get water, use clean tin buckets for water. Do NOT use clean tin buckets for trash or table scraps. Ash bucket is for ashes or table scraps.
- To Make Butter: Cream should be at room temperature –about 60 degrees for 24 hours before churning to begin to sour the cream. Wash the churn in hot soapy water and rinse in cold water.
- Wood pile-wood cutting by adults only.
- Need one person responsible to keep fire burning-not enough coals equals slow cooking
- Read cleanup in handouts for care of cast iron. Keep area clean during program, we ALL want to arrive and not have to cleanup after someone else before we can start our program.
- Water hauling-always keep at least 2 buckets of water in kitchen- one bucket for fire prevention.
- No water in hearth- House is 60 years old and hot bricks crack with cold water.
- At end of day use shovel to clean ashes and all embers, and any wood in fireplace into old bucket and take to fire pit by barrack shed- Sweep hearth. If any sparks on broom take outside and pour water on it!!
- Use old bucket only for ash and garbage. Dump garbage into trash can outside kitchen.
- Keep water heating-use large coffee pot for heating water only.
- Make coffee or tea in small coffee pot.
- Hang large deep pot for stew.
- All pans must have something in them before placing on fire. Tin pots and pans will melt. If water in pans ok in fire. Example; of paper cup in fire with water
- All pans upside down when day finished, to drain all water and keep out the critters
- DO NOT dump water out of the window-it makes a mess outside and melts the adobe!!
- Washing-3 pans –first hot soapy water, second tsp. bleach in hot water, third pan for rinsing. Soap and bleach under sink.
- Pan under sink catches drain water from sink, be sure to dump!!
- Sink- wash with soap and water, dry with towel-do NOT scrub with steel pad!
- Shelf and cabinet-some room to store personals
- Tall cabinet-bottom has room for several ice chests and personals
- Please take home all your leftovers.
- Spices, flour and etc. in cabinet are to use.
- Knives in drawer; Sharpener-adults only
- Adult always in kitchen when children present!!
- Cutting boards, hot pans on table, pan tops fit on top of buckets, mice on floor.
- Food prep-butter start first –remember to divide amount so each rotating group gets to churn
- You can cut meat as stew meat, have one group cut and roll it in flour and brown it and add to stew toward the end.
- The Stew:
  - Vegetables: first group peel and cut potatoes and start cooking. Start with no more than ½ pot of water, can always add more later.-start cooking any extras you may want-breads, desserts.

    - next group carrots

- next group cut onions, garlic
- next meat
- last group cut peppers and adjust spices and final clean up

- Easiest to clean up as you go, each group sweeping and washing what they use, so that the last group only has to wash the butter churn, cover it with a towel and clean out fireplace
- Spices- because of the size of your stew, salt is okay but extra spices make the best broth.
- Extras-bring berries and make cobbler-fresh or canned fruits with juice (apple is good with most fruits) oatmeal with brown sugar and butter to make a crumble on top, into dutch oven, coals around bottom and a few on top to brown, cook to bubbling. Boy Scout stores have great recipes for dutch oven cooking.

Kitchen Use Policies

***a.* Fire:**

Arrive early to HELP start your fire. The secret to successful open hearth cooking is hot coals. Make sure you have a bucket of water next to the hearth fire. The fire extinguisher is located in the bottom of the tall six-door cabinet. If an accident does happen, contact park personnel immediately. The fire must be attended at all times by an adult. Build fire as far to the rear of the firebox as possible. Open the window and keep the door open to allow fireplace to draw properly. Women should remember to tuck the skirts of their dresses between their legs when reaching to stir or move a pot on the fire.

***b.* Non-Period items:**

Keep out of site! All non-period items (such as stainless steel, plastic, coolers, Tupperware and plastic bagged goods) will be stored the tall six-door cabinet. Please label all items with your name or school that you want to keep.

***c.* Inventory:**

All items must be inventoried before starting the kitchen station, and after completion of the station. Let park staff know immediately if anything is missing.

***d.* Clean up:**

In order to maintain the kitchen, it is essential that a thorough cleaning be done. Scrape food scraps into a "slosh" bucket and dispose of scrapes in the trash, DO NOT THROW FOOD SCRAPES OUTSIDE, then wash slosh bucket.

All dishes, bowls, and utensils MUST be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

To clean cast iron items, place the item over heat and scrape out the food with a spatula. Continue to scrape and wipe until clean. Pour in a little oil, wipe out the excess, and be sure to coat the sides and bottom. Wipe off any moisture on the lid, and oil it.

Wipe the kitchen table with hot soapy water, and sweep the floor.

Adult assistants will ensure that the butter churn is thoroughly cleaned after each class. Use plenty of boiling water and soap to clean out all butter residue.

TIP:

SEND YOUR HAND TOWELS OUT TO THE LAUNDRESS STATION TO BE WASHED AFTER EVERY STATION.

The Officer's Quarters Kitchen Station

Instructions for Making Butter

Butter was a luxury that few soldiers could indulge in. The army did not issue butter to its soldiers. Officers and civilians with dairy cows or money to buy fresh cream could make butter.

Butter making supplies provided by Fort Tejon

Heavy cream (8 pints)	Salt & Sugar	Ceramic churn with wooden dasher
Butter paddles	Dish towel to cover chum. (Helps to keep the mess under control.)	Wooden bowls (Use to wash butter.)

PROCEDURE TO MAKE BUTTER

(1.) The cream should be set out a day ahead and allowed to reach room temperature. (If the cream is too cold, set in a pan of hot water.)
(2.) Rinse out the churn with hot water and soap.
(3.) Pour one quart of cream into the ceramic churn. Put the lid on with the churn dasher handle coming out through the center of the lid.
(4.) With a steady up and down twisting motion, not too fast or too slow work the cream until it becomes a heavy lump of solid butter. (Do not let the dasher hit the bottom of the churn, as you do not want to break it.)
(5.) Check inside the churn occasionally to see what is happening. It needs to be steady and constant for approximately 30 minutes to an hour depending on the temperature. (On cold days fill the churn with warm water before churning or place a warm cloth around it.)
(6.) When you have a solid mass of butter, pour the contents of the churn into a large bowl. Pour off the buttermilk, save to cook with or drink.
(7.) Press out excess buttermilk with the butter paddles.
(8.) Wash the butter by pouring cold water over it to get the excess buttermilk out. Keep washing until the water is clear and no longer a milky color. (Milk left in the butter causes it to spoil faster.)
(9.) Salt, sugar or leave plain the butter and shape into a ball or desired shape.
(10.) Use the buttermilk for other cooking or drinking.

NOTE: Butter churning was one of the chores given to the younger children. They spent several hours at the task if the family had several cows and a lot of cream.

SAFETY: An adult should be present at all times.