

Cook Like an Egyptian

Written by Debbi Covington

Tuesday, 28 May 2019 14:33 - Last Updated Wednesday, 29 May 2019 07:49



Back in December 1971, for my birthday, the only thing I really and truly wanted was a Voice of the Mummy game. I'd seen the spooky pharaoh's tomb commercials on television where the ominous voice of the mummy actually spoke from the sarcophagus at the top of the board game pyramid. (Keep in mind that I'm from the "Scooby-Doo, Where Are You?" era, when we'd close the drapes and build a fort out of blankets and pillows to watch our favorite "scary" Saturday morning cartoon. Sort of the same thing.)

Well, my parents came through, that year at least, and at my birthday party I unwrapped the most precious of games. Mama and Daddy even sprung for a pack of the gigantic D batteries that were needed to power the mummy's voice, which was actually a tiny record player ensconced in a gold plastic sarcophagus-looking box. The small record could be turned over and played on both sides. I was beyond over-the-moon thrilled – until I realized that I didn't have anyone to play the game with. It only required four explorers. Back then, it was truly hard to get three friends together to play a game that had actual rules/instructions. So, I played with it by myself – with the jewels, the serpent and the mummy. No matter, it was my all-time favorite birthday gift that year.

So, I grew up, or at least older, and eventually the Voice of the Mummy ended up in Mama and Daddy's attic. I'm guessing it was ultimately given to the Salvation Army or sold at a charity function of some sort. Anyway, it was too late by the time I realized that my precious game was gone forever.

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About ten years ago, back when Ebay actually had good stuff to sell, my husband Vince found a vintage 1971 edition of the Voice of the Mummy – complete with ALL of the parts (jewels, serpent, temples, record and instruction booklet). It just needed to have a tiny wire soldered to the circuit board to make the turntable work. I'm not certain, but I think we paid about \$80 for it. (FYI, these days they're selling for \$250+ on Amazon.) Oh, it was a very happy day when I finally had my hands on a Voice of the Mummy game once again! Vince found someone to repair it for another \$50 bucks. We sent the mummy's sarcophagus off for restoration and it came back in perfect working order. Once again, I was all set to play. But, like in 1971, finding two other friends who enjoyed vintage board games (and had the attention span to play) were few and far between. Imagine how thrilled I was to learn that two of our dearest friends, Ken Davis and Ken Harwell, were interested in helping us let the mummy speak once again. Busy work schedules worked against us, but we were able to come up with a game night last month. I couldn't resist, I went on Amazon and purchased Egyptian headdresses for all of us (Vince, Ken and Ken were good sports). I also researched Egyptian cuisine to come up with the perfect menu for our special game night. The food was delicious and we had a blast! We actually followed the game directions and played it twice. I'm sure the mummy had laryngitis by the time the night was over. Laughter was abundant! I'm hoping we can do something like this again soon. And, I totally recommend Game Night to everyone reading this column. There are so many cool old board games out there. Dark Shadows, Operation, Mystery Date, Twister, Chutes and Ladders — go online and find your favorite from back in the day. You can always resell it (with a profit) when you're done. Vintage Game Night is the BEST!

Ful Mudammas



This Egyptian dish of fava beans topped with tahini is much like what you'll find around the

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streets of Cairo. It's traditionally served for breakfast. Look for fava beans and tahini on the international food aisle of your local grocery store.

For the beans:

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 small onion, diced

½ teaspoon ground cumin

1 (14-ounce) can fava beans, undrained

1 tomato, diced

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons chopped parsley

For the tahini sauce:

3 tablespoons tahini

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2 tablespoons water

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1 clove garlic, minced

Salt, to taste

Garnish:

Chopped boiled eggs

Diced tomatoes

Pita chips

In a frying pan, cook the onion and cumin in 2 tablespoons olive oil until onion is tender. Add the fava beans with liquid. Bring to a boil and simmer for 1 minute. Crush the beans using a potato masher. Add the diced tomato, lemon juice and salt. Simmer for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in parsley. To make the tahini sauce, whisk together the tahini, water, lemon juice, garlic and salt. To serve, pour the mashed fava beans into a bowl. Drizzle with the tahini sauce and garnish with chopped boiled eggs and diced tomato. Serve warm with pita chips. Serves 4.

Mast-O-Khiar

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Stuffed grape leaves are a traditional Egyptian dish, often served with a white sauce. The recipe is a variation of the traditional one, using lamb and rice.



For the bread salad, I used pita bread, panzanella, except that it features pieces of pita. The bread is soaked in a mixture of olive oil, lemon juice, and spices, then combined with the vegetables.



Slow-cooked lamb shank is a traditional Egyptian dish, often served with a white sauce. The recipe is a variation of the traditional one, using lamb and rice.

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Three of the number of steps in this recipe, but they're easy and quick, and totally worth the effort.



And, if you're looking for a dessert, this is a great one to try. It's a southern bread pudding. You can find it in many places, but it's not as common as you might think.



Starting by Debbi Covington, the author of the recipe, is a great way to learn more about the dish. You can find the recipe on her website, www.debbicovington.com.