

## PRESTO, CHANGE: TINY DINING CAR KITCHENS PERFORM BIG MAGIC

Out of astonishingly small dining car kitchens come Northern Pacific meals, ranging from a simple luncheon to the grand gesture—the complete table d'hôte dinner consisting of five courses.

The prospect of preparing a Sunday dinner for 100 guests, in a kitchen with working space not more than 30 inches wide and seventeen feet long, would fill the average housewife with dismay. But Northern Pacific chefs efficiently turn the trick three times a day. Furthermore the four cooks work smoothly together in one of these compact kitchens at the same time.

The dining car kitchen and its cupboards and closets contain all necessary provisions, an enormous range, a big charcoal burner for broiling, a battery of shining pots and pans, commodious refrigerators, a big sink for dish-washing and general use, space for dishes, glassware and silverware and various other equipment, not to mention more than 400 tablecloths and 1,200 napkins.

It would seem that with well-equipped commissaries in operation at each end of the line the dining-car kitchen cooking would be reduced to a minimum. Nevertheless these tiny kitchens on wheels are obliged to shoulder considerable more responsibility than would appear at first glance. For example, their duties extend into the baking sphere, due to the popularity of hot breads and pies enroute. Guests will insist as much on having their hot biscuits and muffins while speeding through the wilds of the Rocky Mountains as they do in the crowded ways of Manhattan.



Wonders in the culinary art are performed in this compact dining car kitchen.

## STORY OF THE "GREAT BIG" POTATO

Of the dishes which are specially prepared and served on the Northern Pacific, no other is so widely known as the "Great Big" Baked Potato.

Individual lemon cream pies, Pacific Northwest fruit cakes, "Great Big" Baked Apples, etc., all have their following but the "Great Big" Baked Potato stands out in the lead.

The Northern Pacific pioneered in the promotion of the "Great Big" Baked Potatoes when it introduced them in its dining cars on February 8, 1909. At that time Washington and Idaho had astonished agriculturists everywhere by being able to produce immense potatoes. Unfortunately they could find no sale for the mammoth tubers as housewives and chefs the country over declared it impossible to bake such gigantic potatoes satisfactorily.

The Northern Pacific believed the trick could be done, accepted the challenge and posted a notice in all stations offering a premium for truly big potatoes. Two-pound tubers soon were established as a standard and long experience has produced a skillful technique in preparing them for the table.

At digging time, the "Great Big" Potatoes are selected by being run over electric sorting and grading tables. As a general average, about five to ten per cent of the crop qualifies, and a bonus is paid for them. A very thick skin gives these potatoes unusual keeping qualities and this, combined with modern storage which holds them at a temperature of 36 degrees during the warm months, makes it possible to serve these kings of the potato world in prime condition the year around.

To bake the mealy Goliaths, the ovens are kept at even temperature. At first, after being harvested, the potatoes contain their full moisture and two hours of baking is required. Normally one to one and one-half hours of steady baking is necessary. They are served piping hot with a crown of fresh, unsalted butter.



Ordinary seed produces Great Big Potatoes like these on western irrigated land.

## MEALS AT SEATS PLEASE PURSE AND PALATE

When mealtime comes, day coach and tourist car travelers on the North Coast Limited get attention twice from the dining car. The calls for meals are sounded, of course, throughout the entire train and all who respond hie away to the dining car for a famously-good Northern Pacific repast.

But, in addition, a white-uniformed waiter passes a special "tray service" menu to the coach and tourist passengers. A few minutes later he gathers up the menus and takes orders for sandwiches, beverages and desserts—items which can be conveniently served from a tray at low cost.

Sandwiches are priced at 10, 15 and 20 cents, coffee 5 cents, milk per bottle 10 cents, and desserts at 10 cents.



Light luncheons served at the seats are popular in coaches and tourist sleeping cars on the North Coast Limited.



Beautifully appointed dining cars add to the delight of perfect meals.

## Bouquets

The following excerpts of letters from patrons have been selected at random from our files:

"May I compliment you on the cuisine offered in your dining cars? It surpasses by far everything that I have ever tasted on any other railroad, both as to quality and quantity."

"As a pleased passenger, I am writing to tell you of the exceedingly polite and courteous service extended to me in the dining car by your waiter. As meals are an important phase of a trip, his courteous service and gentle manner made my trip a very pleasant one. The quality of the food also impressed me."

"We wish especially to express satisfaction with the dining car service. The crew was excellent, prompt and efficient and the food much better chosen and cooked than one usually finds on diners."

"Mother and I both enjoyed your wonderful 50-cent and 75-cent plate luncheons and dinners. They were the most reasonable and best prepared we found."

"I never tasted better meals. Dining on the N. P. was easily the most enjoyable experience we ever had aboard train."

"We enjoyed especially your dining car service. We had splendid meals and wonderful service, in spite of the fact that the dining car served on Sunday some 400 meals."

"My two and a half month-old grandson received as much attention as if he had been a crown prince traveling on a private train. The steward and his staff were very careful to see that he received the milk fixed just like the doctor had ordered."

"I wish particularly to speak of the dining car service. Not only is the food excellent and the service fine but the price is reasonable and the employees efficient and courteous. I think what pleased me most was the hospitable attitude of the head steward."

"I am delighted to state that in ten years of traveling in the U. S. A., from coast to coast, covering more than 200,000 miles, I never enjoyed such wonderful, delicious and carefully served meals as on this train."

"I write to tell you how satisfactory we found the dining car service. The food was good, well cooked and well served. The waiters were competent, courteous and most attentive. The steward in each case was a credit to the service. It is a pleasure to speak thus unqualifiedly of our experience with your dining car service."



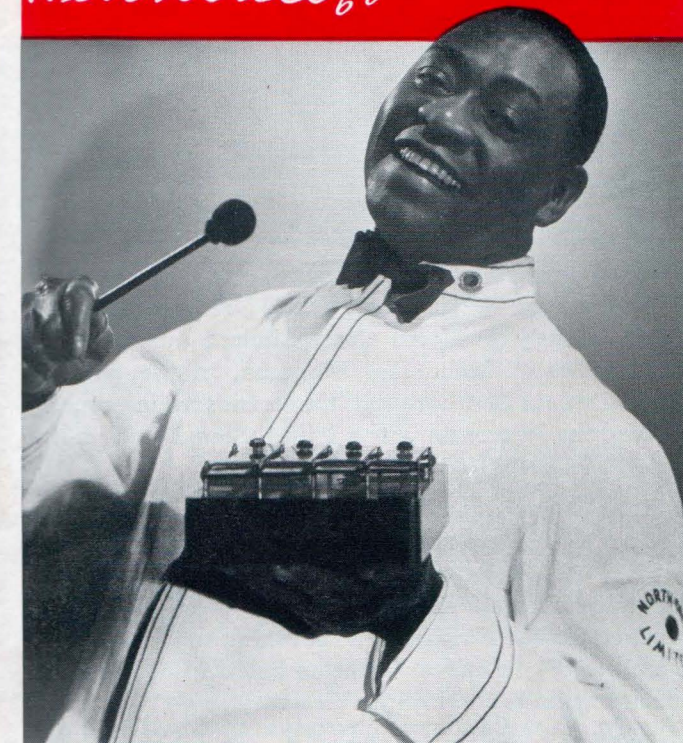
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ON THE

**NORTH COAST LIMITED**



# Meals for Western Miles



**B**REAKFASTING, lunching and dining across the Northwest in smart, air-conditioned railway dining cars takes place aboard Northern Pacific trains among surprising changes of scenery every day.

Every day in the year, meals are served almost simultaneously in North Coast Limited dining cars in the Rockies of Idaho and Montana, in the fantastic North Dakota Bad Lands, in the serene farming country of Western Wisconsin, along Puget Sound and in the upper Mississippi Valley of Minnesota.

It is a Northern Pacific theory that meals are a medium of expression, that they should tell their own story of the service this railroad offers and of the great region it traverses. As expressed by a West Coast newspaper editorial, "Northern Pacific dining cars are veritable chambers of commerce, featuring and serving the products grown in the territory which they serve."

In these pages we are pleased to give a few sidelights on the workings of our dining car department with the hope that travelers will find them interesting in connection with their journeys over the Northern Pacific.

A. W. Thomson, Superintendent of Dining Cars  
E. E. Nelson, Passenger Traffic Manager  
St. Paul, Minnesota

## LUNCHROOM ON FLAT CAR FIRST NORTHERN PACIFIC DINER

Calls for meals have resounded on Northern Pacific trains ever since 1876. Dating back as it does for more than 60 years, the serving of meals aboard train is traditional with this line and the dining car department is one of the oldest and most important departments of the Northern Pacific system.

The Northern Pacific's first meals were spread in a humble lunchroom built on a flat car and the historian who made the only known written record of the fact for future generations was none other than the late Mrs. George A. Custer, wife of the general famous for "Custer's Last Stand".

It was after traveling with her husband via the Northern Pacific to and from his Sioux campaigns around Bismarck, N. D., that Mrs. Custer wrote:

"One of the eating places on the road was kept in a narrow little house, built on a flat car. Two men presided, one cooking and the other waiting on table. We were laboriously spearing our food with two-tined forks and sipping muddy coffee with a pewter spoon when I



One of the Northern Pacific's early diners, from a wood cut published about 1890.

heard with surprise the general asking for a napkin. It seemed as foreign to the place as a fingerbowl. The waiter knew him, however, and liked him too well to refuse him anything so he said, 'I have nothing but a towel, general'."

While the Northern Pacific flat car lunchroom was being introduced in the West, railroad dining car service was just beginning to make its appearance. George M. Pullman had built the first dining car in 1868 and had named it the "Delmonico" after the then famous New York restaurant.

In 1883, upon completion of the Northern Pacific as the "First of the Northern Transcontinentals", a fleet of ten fine dining cars was put in operation between St. Paul and Portland, Ore. From then through the 80's and the "Gay Nineties", the Northern Pacific was advertised as "The Dining Car Line to the Pacific Coast".

## PRIME NORTHWEST FOODS FOUNDATION OF MENUS

It has long been the firm belief of Northern Pacific officials that dining car service has as pronounced an effect on the revenue side of the railroad as have similar patronage-producing services of America's best hotels.

Hence Northern Pacific dining car policy aims at a higher standard of meals and service than is strictly warranted by the immediate monetary return. Regular menus include club breakfasts at only 25 cents and up, plate luncheons and dinners at 50 cents, casserole luncheons at 75 cents and full course dinners at \$1.25.

It has been a rule for many years to feature on the menus prime food products of the Northwest—of the very territory through which the trains pass—in addition to delicacies from far and near. Among the Northwest dishes served are: Rich steaks from the Montana ranches; "Great Big" Baked Potatoes, "Great Big" Baked Apples and mammoth green asparagus from Washington; large juicy Oregon prune plums; prime poultry from North Dakota and other Northwest States; Minnesota dairy products; rainbow trout from Rocky Mountain streams and Royal Chinook salmon, salt water clams, crabs and oysters from the Pacific Coast and Alaska.

Annually the Northern Pacific dining car department serves approximately 600,000 meals. It is one of the most extensive catering organizations, serving meals on the Pacific seacoast, in the Rockies, on the Great Plains and in the upper Mississippi Valley. Approximately 4,500,000 miles of dining and cafe car operation are recorded annually. Its personnel numbers 325 persons, who are engaged in the art of provisioning, and operating cars, depot restaurants and commissaries. Two commissaries, one at St. Paul, and the other at Seattle are the dining car terminals and equip and stock the dining cars. A car is completely stocked in 80 minutes to serve as many as 1,200 meals.



Happy faces presage good things to come.

## GREAT VARIETY AND VOLUME OF FOODS SERVED

Into each dining car before starting its run, goes as much as a ton and a half of materials.

North Coast Limited dining cars serve seven meals westbound and seven eastbound during their transcontinental journey and therefore ample supplies are necessary. The large number of meals served on a single run requires menus of great variety. This is particularly shown in the numerous meat dishes served. Meats of the entire farming and ranching country are represented. Poultry is featured especially throughout November, December, January and February.

On westbound trains, fresh water fish, pike, whitefish and lake trout are served. Traveling eastbound, salt-water fish are featured, salmon, halibut, sand dabs, clams and oysters, as well as shrimp and crab for salads and cocktails.

In the serving of approximately three quarters of a million meals a year, typical requirements of Northern Pacific diners are:



265 tons of Great Big Potatoes  
14 tons of Coffee  
27 tons of Butter  
50 tons of Poultry  
90 tons of Meat  
36,400 dozens of Eggs  
26,400 gallons of Milk  
44,500 quarts of Cream  
85,000 loaves of Bread

## HIGH STANDARDS ASSURE UNIFORMLY GOOD MEALS

Fixed standards assure Northern Pacific dining car guests of the best of foods of constantly uniform quality.

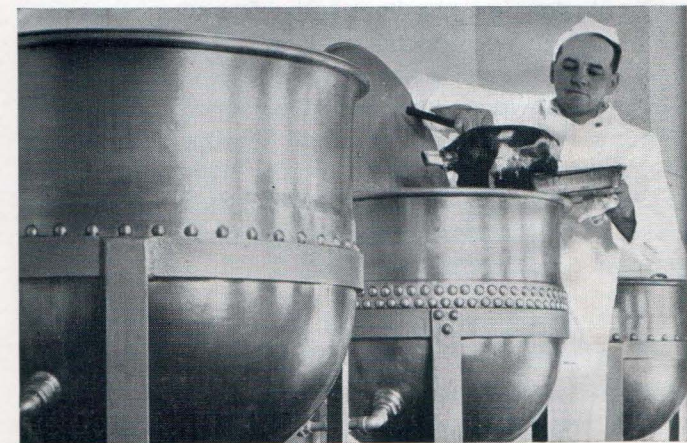
Only the highest quality in meats, produce, seafoods and dairy products are accepted. Through special arrangements with packing houses, choice beef loins of prime stock are obtained. Pork, lamb, and other fresh and smoked meats, as well as poultry, are purchased in the territory served by the Railway.

Butter, milk, cream and eggs used on all cars are of the finest quality obtainable. The butter is churned daily from fresh, sweet cream and is made without salt. A high quality can thus be maintained inasmuch as imperfections are most readily detected in unsalted butter.

Cream must test 32 per cent butter fat and is bottled in quarts. It is carried ice-packed and is fresh in all weather. This pure, rich cream adds much to the popularity of fruits, cereals, coffee and especially the Northern Pacific "Great Big" Baked Apples, which are the 48 size. An equally-high standard is required of ice cream served in dining cars. Eggs are United States Standard No. 1, uniform in color and weighing 54 pounds to the case. Flour used in rolls and bread is from No. 1 Montana and North Dakota hard wheat.

Standards for the "Great Big" Potatoes are: They must be russet blondes, shapely, smooth-skinned, clear-eyed, sound of heart and approximately two pounds in weight.

A rigid rule on the system is that all foods served must be fresh. Foods remaining on dining cars upon arrival at the terminals are removed and are not re-issued. When a diner starts on a run everything aboard is fresh as can be.



Steam-jacketed kettles prepare the Northern Pacific's own nutritious soup stocks by long cooking.



Individual lemon cream pies are prepared by experts in the commissary bake shop.

## TWO MODERN COMMISSARIES PROVISION DINING CARS

The main Northern Pacific dining car commissary is located at St. Paul, Minn., and another at Seattle, Washington. These institutions form the physical backbone of the dining car service.

The St. Paul plant is declared to house one of the most up-to-date food preparation and storage-equipment plants in the country. A bake shop with electrical ovens, linen storage room, meatshop with most modern cutting machines; roomsize refrigerator kept cold at all times by modern chilling machines; vegetable cellar and incinerator in the basement; and the accounting division of the dining car department are all located in a modern fire-proof building in St. Paul.

In the two commissaries, much of the preparatory work for dining cars is done and they are the headquarters for the purchase of supplies. The company's own salad dressing, cocktail sauce, soup stocks, bouillons, etc., are prepared for the cars, according to recipes perfected over 60 years by Northern Pacific chefs. Great 60-gallon steam-jacketed kettles cook the soup stocks and bouillons. This equipment, for large quantity preparation, assures fine flavor and full essence. Long, slow-cooking draws out complete flavor and vitamins from vegetables and meats.

In both commissaries, the Northern Pacific operates its own bakeshops and these make all bread, pastry, rolls, etc., for the first day out. Individual lemon cream pies, plum puddings, fruit cakes, mince meat and other delicacies are also prepared in the commissary bakeshops.

