



ALL PHOTOS D.A. ROBIN / DEMOCRAT

Mission San Luis staffer Pedro J. Matos Silva displays a squirrel roasted on a barbacoa Saturday as the mission opened its doors Saturday for an exhibition of 17th- and 18th-century living. Volunteers demonstrated cooking, blacksmithing and word-working techniques.

Mission highlights old-time Spanish, Apalachee food

Re-enactors demonstrate cooking on the barbacoa

KARL ETTERS
DEMOCRAT STAFF WRITER

Cooking was not always as convenient as it is today.

Saturday, the coals got started early at Mission San Luis as the 17th-century food traditions of the Apalachee Native Americans and Spanish food cultures were showcased.

Utilizing ingredients that would have been grown, ranches or shipped in from Spain, period re-enactors brought together the flavors of old Tallahassee.

Emma Jonas and three other Spanish women put together a picadillo recipe, beef with olives, vegetables and spices.

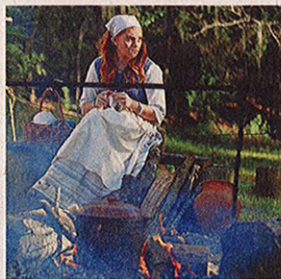
Using hot coals they tempered a clay pot before adding in beef, green pep-

pers and onions to make a broth before adding the olives and a host of other ingredients to finish the dish.

The beef would have been from cattle haciendas in the area, Jonas said; peppers and onions would have been grown on site, but the olives, a delicacy, would have been shipped to Florida.

The amount of daily work that goes into making just one meal, let alone three, leaves an appreciation for the ease of cooking in 2015.

"It really, really does," said Jonas, a museum education specialist. "We take it for granted so easily because we can pick up something and pop it into the microwave. Here, it was every single day,



Volunteer Allison Overholt sews as a pot of a beef stew cooks during a demonstration Saturday at Mission San Luis in Tallahassee.

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Four-year-old Finley Clark pounds a hickory seed in a tree stump during an interactive demonstration at Mission San Luis during Saturday's exhibition of 17th- and 18th-century living at the mission on West Tennessee Street in Tallahassee.

Mission

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three meals a day cooking over a fire."

Some of the meals being made would have been sent to the larger Spanish communities near St. Augustine, where the marshy land limited the grains that could be grown and the amount of cattle farming that could be done.

Pedro Matos and Nicholas Yarbrough were smoking meat — squirrels, fish and deer leg — over a traditional barbacoa.

Situated about four feet above the ground, the meat rests on wooden sticks and the fire is surrounded by palm fronds to help keep the smoke from being blown away in the wind.

Not typical in everyday cooking, the dried meat would be packed for travel, to provide sustenance on raid missions or to other villages or to be sold.

Beth Stills brought her grandchildren to see the culinary display. Having just hosted Thanksgiving dinner

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BETH STILL, VISITOR

Thursday, she too noted how much more time consuming cooking was in the 17th century.

"It took me all day to make one meal with the turkey and everything," she said with a laugh. "I couldn't imagine having to do it over coals."

Seeing young people get a better understanding of techniques and the history surrounding the Spanish colonial time period is important, Jonas said.

"It's so important to impart onto the next generation where our history is, even if they're not Spanish, that this is where Tallahassee began," she said. "It's such an interesting and vibrant part of our history."