

# Food Technology

## Aboriginal Food Technology

### Ground Ovens

In some areas in Australia underground ovens are made to cook food. In the Torres Strait Islands and in Cape York these underground ovens are called Kup-murri.

Making a Kup-murri



vegetables and meat are wrapped in paperbark and cooked in a ground oven.

A hole dug in the ground and a large fire is allowed to burn down. Large stones are laid over the fire and heated by the coals. Leaves of palm trees or paperbark are used to line the heated pit with meats and vegetables laid in the hollow. These are covered with leaves and dirt and allowed to cook. After many hours the food is removed, and it tastes great!

In the south western region holes were dug out of the ground with clay and rocks found in the ground put to one side. The hole is swept out with some grass and then filled to the top with firewood. Selected pieces of clay and stone are placed on top. The wood is ignited and when burnt the clay is baked red hot. The clay is removed by sticks and the ash in the pit is swept out. Moist grass is laid in the bottom of the pit, possums or other game are laid in the bottom on the grass and covered in more damp grass.

The red hot clay lumps are placed on top with the fire dirt from the hole layered on the top to stop the steam from escaping. The meat takes different times to cook depending on the type of meat used.

European people watched how Aboriginal people made breads. By grinding seeds into flour and adding water, these breads were then cooked in the coals from a fire or under the ground. These were the original dampers from the bush! Today we use flour to make damper that someone else has ground for us and we cook it in the oven.