

Delicious Christmas treats from SLOVAKIA

DIFFERENT regions, different ethnicities, and different religions in Slovakia traditionally had different Christmas dinners. Some menus shared various courses, but no course appeared on all of them.

After wafers or bread with honey and garlic, most families would start the dinner with kapustnica - cabbage soup (The Slovak Spectator published a recipe in Vol 8 No 49). Some families living near the Hungarian border had fish soup. The west and centre of the country would then continue the feast with carp and potato salad, while the east, mainly the Ruthenian ethnicity, followed with pirohy s kapustou (boiled dumplings with cabbage). The special bobaľky or pupáky s makom (small balls of dough sprinkled with poppy seeds) could also be found on some menus.



Today, the most ordinary Slovak Christmas dinner starts with prípitok, (toast, which used to be the traditional greasy hriatô, but nowadays anything works just as well), followed by wafers with honey and garlic, and optionally the poppy-seed bobaľky. Then come the main courses: kapustnica eaten with potatoes or the special vianočka pastry, and fried carp with potato salad. After a moment of relaxation, a rich palette of various cakes arrives.





Christmas Eve Sauerkraut Soup (KAPUSTNICA)

Ingredients:

1.5 kg sauerkraut,
1 pair of smoked pork sausage,
1 kg smoked meat (pork or beef),
50 g dried mushrooms,
1 chopped onion,
100 ml cooking oil,
150 g finely ground flour
2 garlic cloves, 1 tsp. salt
20 g ground red paprika
black pepper to taste



Directions:

Put the meat, sausage, sauerkraut into water. Add salt and boil it for 2 hours. When the meat is tender, add the drained mushrooms. Cook the soup another 30 mins. Heat the oil in the frying pan and add the chopped onion. Then add the flour stir in the paprika. Slowly mix in approximately 300 ml of water. Add then onion-flour mixture to the soup. Cook another 15 minutes.



Naturally Fried Carp with POTATO SALAD

Ingredients:

300g carp (uncleaned)
10g salt, 1g pepper
20g butter
flour, red paprika
100g vegetable oil

Directions:

Debone, remove skin and clean fish, pat dry. Salt and pepper the filets, then put in mixture of flour and red paprika. Fry slowly in hot oil until done.



Potato salad

Ingredients:

1 lb/500 g potatoes
2 onions
1 pickle
1 hard boiled egg
2-3 tablespoons oil
vinegar to taste, salt

Directions:

Wash, boil, peel and let cool the potatoes. Then slice very thinly and mix with salt, thinly sliced onions, pickle rounds, oil and vinegar. Place in salad bowl and garnish with rounds of hard boiled egg.

Christmas Gingerbread

Ingredients:

2,5 tbs of honey
200 g powder sugar
500 g wheat fine flour
3 eggs
1 mocca spoon Bicarbonate of soda
10 g cinnamon
5 g anise, 5 g cloves
1 mocca spoon juice of lemon
1 tbs cocoa



Directions:

Mix all ingredients together. Dough put to the fridge. After one hour take off from the fridge and roll them thoroughly to 3-5 milimetre thick plates. Cut them out into various shapes /using favourite cutters/. Place them on greasy paper oil. Put them into well preheated oven and bake till golden brown. Brush them with a mixed egg while still hot. Decorate them with white icing when cooled down.



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Slovak Lentil Soup

Ingredients:

1 cup of soaked lentils
2 whole onions
oil
ground red paprika
8 oz of root vegetables (carrots, parsnip)
2 oz smoked bacon
soup seasoning (e.g. Vegeta)
marjoram
parsley



Directions:

Chop one onion and fry it in a pot with oil. Then drop some flour on top and add water. Stir everything and then add pre-soaked lentils. Let everything cook slowly. Clean the vegetables, cut them into small pieces and add to the soup together with whole onion and piece of bacon. Next add salt and spices and cook until the vegetables become soft. Then add parsley, soup seasoning according to your taste, marjoram and oat meal. Bring the soup to boiling once again and let it cool. Before serving take out the piece of bacon and the whole onion.

Fried pork with mashed potatoes

Ingredients:

flour, 2 eggs
breadcrumbs
salt, peper,
oil for frying

Directions:

The escalopes will need to be pounded until the meat is around a 1/4 of an inch thick. Make sure to trim the edges of the meat carefully. Lightly season the escalopes with salt and pepper. You will need three shallow bowls /eggs, flour , breadcrubs/



Dip the escalopes in the flour first, then in the whisked egg and then in the breadcrumbs. Place the escalopes in a hot frying pan, the oil in the pan should be deep enough that the schnitzel's float whilst cooking.

Potatoes:

Put peeled potatoes in a pot with cool salt watter and bring to the boil. Boil the potatoes 20 mins. Then drain and add hot milk. Mix it with hand mixer until smooth mashed potatoes.

SLOVAK CRESCENT COOKIES

Ingredients:

1/2 lb. sweet butter
2 c. unsifted flour
2 tsp. vanilla
1/2 tsp. water
1 c. finely chopped walnuts
1/4 c. sugar



Directions:

Cream butter, add sugar and other ingredients gradually. Blend well by the teaspoon, shape dough into crescents. Place on ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes. Cool, sprinkle or roll in powdered sugar.

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