

A lit candle in a decorative holder with Christmas ornaments in the background. The candle is lit, casting a warm glow. The holder is a light-colored ceramic or metal with a dark band and a small white bead. The background is dark with some Christmas ornaments visible.

Menu

1. Starter: Fisherman's soup (Halászlé)
2. Main dish 1: Serbian Carp (Rácponty)
3. Main dish 2: Stuffed Cabbage (Töltött káposzta)
4. Dessert: Poppy seed pudding (Mákos guba)

Fisherman's soup (Halászlé)

Ingredients

- 2 x 800 g whole perch, filleted, bones and heads reserved (ask your fishmonger to do this for you)
- 60 ml (¼ cup) olive oil
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 1 green capsicum, finely chopped
- 3 tomatoes, peeled, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp Hungarian sweet paprika
- sour cream, flat-leaf parsley and crusty white bread, to serve

Instructions

Cut fish into 3 cm pieces and refrigerate. Heat 1 tbsp oil over medium-low heat, add fish heads and bones and cook, turning once, for 2 minutes. Add 3 litres cold water. Bring to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes. Strain through a fine sieve lined with muslin, discarding solids.

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onions and capsicum, and cook, stirring, for 4 minutes or until softened. Add tomatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, for a further 5 minutes. Add paprika and stir for 1 minute or until fragrant, then return strained stock to the pan. Simmer for 40 minutes and season with salt and pepper. Add fish pieces and simmer for 10 minutes or until just cooked. Season again.

Divide soup between serving bowls and top with sour cream and parsley. Serve with bread.



Serbian Carp (Rácponty)

Ingredients:

- 80 dkg carp fillet
- 3/4 cup smoked bacon
- salt
- 1 kg potatoes
- 2 red onions
- 4 green peppers and tomatoes each
- 4 tablespoons oil
- 1 level tablespoon sweet paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon red cherry paprika paste
- 3/4 cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon flour



Instructions:

Cut the fish fillets into 4 even slices. Place them on a plate with skin down, make incisions close to each other.

Place a thin slice of bacon into each cut, rub lightly with salt.

Cook the potatoes in hot salted water with their skin, peel and cut into slices. In the meantime prepare a lecsó: peel and chop the onions finely, sauté a bit over hot oil.

Remove the stems of the peppers and tomatoes, dice them into largish cubes, add them to the onions and cook over high heat for about 4-5 minutes.

Add salt, paprika and the hot cherry pepper paste.

Mix the flour and sour cream until smooth, add to the lecsó, boil for 2-3 minutes to thicken.

Arrange the potato slices on a baking sheet in an even layer.

Pour the lecsó on the middle and place the larded fish slices around it. Preheat the oven to 200 °C (180 °C in air-convecter ovens) and bake the fish for 15 minutes.



Stuffed Cabbage (Töltött káposzta)

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup rice (rinsed and drained)
- 50 dkg lean ground pork
- 20 dkg ground chuck
- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 2 medium onions (finely chopped)
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon salt (or to taste)
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons sweet (or hot paprika)
- 1 head cabbage (about 4 pounds)
- 1 kg sauerkraut (rinsing optional)
- 1/2 cup tomato juice
- 20 dkg cooked (or uncooked smoked pork butt, thinly sliced)
- 2 tablespoons lard
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup sour cream



Instructions

Cook the rice in 1/2 cup water for 10 minutes, drain and set aside.

In a large bowl, thoroughly mix together ground pork and ground beef with garlic, half the chopped onion, egg, salt, pepper, 1 tablespoon of the paprika, and reserved cooked and drained rice. Set aside.

Remove core from cabbage. Place whole head in a large pot filled with boiling, salted water.

Cover and cook 3 minutes, or until softened enough to pull off individual leaves. You will need about 18 leaves.

When leaves are cool enough to handle, use a paring knife to cut away the thick center stem from each leaf, without cutting all the way through.

Place about 1/2 cup of the meat mixture on each cabbage leaf. Roll away from you to encase the meat.

Flip the right side of the leaf to the middle, then flip the left side to the middle.

You will have something that looks like an envelope.

Once again, roll away from you to create a neat little roll. Cut any remaining cabbage leaves into fine shreds and set aside.

Place sauerkraut in a large casserole dish or Dutch oven (about 15 cm high, 40 cm long and 20 to 25 cm wide) and pour tomato juice on top, followed by slices of pork butt and enough water to just cover. Bring to a boil, lower heat and cook 5 minutes.

Place reserved shredded cabbage in casserole. Nestle cabbage rolls in the sauerkraut. Bring to a boil, cover, reduce heat and simmer 1 hour.

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Heat oven to 180 °C. Melt lard in a small skillet, and add flour and remaining chopped onion to make a roux. Cook slowly for about 10 minutes or until golden yellow. Turn off heat, stir in remaining 1 tablespoon paprika and 1 cup cold water until smooth.

Gently remove the stuffed cabbage from the casserole with a slotted spoon to a warm platter. Take a ladleful of sauerkraut broth and whip it into the roux.

Return this liquid to the main casserole, stirring well. Bring to a boil. Gently replace stuffed cabbages, cover and bake 15 minutes in the heated oven.

Mix some of the pan juices with sour cream and pour over the stuffed cabbages when serving.



Poppy seed pudding (Mákos guba)

Ingredients

- 8-10 kifli (kifli is a crescent-shaped pastry, but you can use any type of roll, baguette or bread)
- 1/2 l milk (about 2 cups)
- 3 tablespoons of butter
- 200 g of ground poppy-seed (about 1 1/2 cup)
- 6 tablespoons of sugar
- 3-4 tablespoons of honey
- 1 vanilla-sugar
- zest of one lemon

Instructions

Dissolve vanilla sugar, 2 tablespoons of honey and half of the butter in warm milk.

Cut the 'kifli' into rolls and put them in a large baking pan. Heat the oven to 170 ° C and bake the rolls for 8-10 minutes.

Pour the sweet milk on the baked 'kifli' rolls in a bowl.

Mix the ground poppy-seed, sugar and lemon zest together and sprinkle the mixture over the rolls. Preheat the oven to 180 ° C.

Brush the baking pan with the rest of the butter and fill it with the poppy-kifli mix. Make as many layers in the pan as you can.

Bake it for 20-25 minutes or until the top turns partially brownish.

Serve it warm with some extra honey on the top.

You may pour the ready dessert with vanilla custard.

