



EU PIZZA EFFECT

Food Fusion with Recipes

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Pizza Effect

Food Fusion with Recipes

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Pizza

»Originally, pizza was looked down upon in Italy as the poor man's food: it was just simple unleavened bread with a little tomato sauce for taste. Then, accompanying the early emigrants, it made its way to America, where it was garnished with cheese, olives, peppers, various meats, and so on, totally transforming the original into a kind of delicacy. Years later, when it made its triumphant return to the land of its origin, it became a highly respected dish on the menu of even the most eminent restaurants. The new product was eagerly accepted and even given pride of place in Italian cuisine. Lack of confidence in one's own culture, combined with the blind acceptance of all things new and foreign, often results in a phenomenon that social scientists call the "Pizza Effect," a phrase that was coined in as late as 1970 by an anthropologist named Agehananda Bharati.«



About Pizza Effect Learning Partnership

Pizza Effect Learning Partnership is coordinated by The Lotus Trust, an educational, relief and development organization in the UK. The Lotus Trust and six partner organisations from Hungary, Slovenia, Germany, Poland, Netherlands and Belgium implemented this project that connected and united persons through non formal adult education around a common idea of healthy simple food, appreciation of one's own and other's culture, and active social integration into the European community.

Through several cooking workshops we established communication, encouraged peer learning within target groups of adults, as well as intergenerational interaction. Using food as an integrating topic, the project updated the knowledge and skills of participating staff by improving their competencies necessary for managing organizations. Through many international mobilities at six meetings, each partner organisation became familiar with large scale of practical adult training methods; improved their communication, fundraising and team-working skills.

By means of informal learning and self-expressive activities based on relevant topics, the barriers limiting the adults' social integration were reduced, we become friends, expanded knowledge base and adopted to modern circumstances. We promoted healthy lifestyles and cultural diversity. We cooperated with Wave Network and had local workshops and presentations for persons most at risk of social exclusion (women, children, migrants, refugees, elderly, disabled people and those living in rural areas).

As a result of the project this "Receipe Booklet - Pizza Effect Food Fusion" with the descriptions of food culture, history and way of life of participating countries has been prepared.

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Food and Culture

We people are essentially beings of culture, which is engrained in every little aspect of our lives. And when speaking of culture we should understand it in the broadest sense possible: as a totality of beliefs, values, attitudes and practices of a group of people. These are passed on from generation to generation through different phases of socialization, which are a part of process of enculturation. Through this process, one could say, we become humans as it is culture which distinguishes us from other animals. Culture is a binding factor which links together individuals into a community and ascribes purpose to their lives.

Food on the other hand is more often than not considered a product of nature and although this may be true for the foodstuffs themselves as they occur in nature, it is a flawed assumption when we look at what humans actually eat. "A thing not of nature" is how Hippocrates viewed food and he was far from being a lone sheep in the flock of the thinkers of the past. As Montanari puts it: "The dominant values of food system in human experience are, to be precise, not defined in terms of 'naturalness', but result from and represent cultural processes dependent upon the taming, transformation, and reinterpretation of Nature." It is man who culturally chooses his food from a vast array of things suitable for consumption, and not only that, but he produces, transforms, creates and 'performs' it in a way known only to him, something other animals do not do. In this sense food is culture and it is culture when is prepared, cooked by means of fire and modified by other culinary practices. "Through such pathways food takes shape as a decisive element of human identity and as one of the most effective means of expressing and communicating that identity."

A well-known Ancient Greek aphorism 'Know thyself!' comes to mind when trying to understand food in the context of culture or as in the words of Massimo Montanari food as culture. If we truly are what we eat then food as a cultural element can be seen as an entrance into cultural learning and a stepping stone to a greater understanding of human nature. Or as Ken Albala writes in his history and recipe book on Cooking in Europe:

Growing and preparing food has also been the occupation of the vast majority of men and women who ever lived. To understand ourselves, we should naturally begin with the food that constitutes the fabric of our existence. Yet every culture arrives at different solutions, uses different crops and cooking methods, and invents what amount to unique cuisines. These are to some extent predetermined by geography, technology, and a certain amount of luck. Nonetheless every cuisine is a practical and artistic expression of the culture that created it. It embodies the values and aspirations of each society, its world outlook as well as its history. Fluidity is an essential cultural trait and therefore it is impossible to talk about cultures being set in stone: they are ever evolving. Food and cuisine being cultural elements evolve likewise through time. What today seems to be national cuisines or European cuisine is a result of many years of consequent change and improvements. In order to understand why we eat what we eat today is important to at least briefly look at historical background that has shaped the dishes consumed by nobles as well as commoners.

History of European Cuisine

European cuisine of today is in many ways different from what was eaten in ancient times and through the Middle Ages and Renaissance. The techniques and flavourings in ancient Rome for example pose a stark difference to what is considered palatable today by a common European let alone mentioning the absence of the foodstuffs of the New World. Highly seasoned sauces and heavily spiced dishes were a common occurrence in those days:

The Roman comedy writer Plautus decried the habit of some cooks of overflavouring their dishes with sharp herbs and heavy spices, describing their seasonings as like “screech owls eating the entrails out of living guests.” The Romans certainly liked strong flavors, as attested by their love of *garum*, the ubiquitous salty sauce made from fermented fish, which they ate with virtually everything. The recipes of Apicius, probably dating from the first century AD, show how pervasive the Roman love of strong flavors was—for example, his recipe for flamingo includes vinegar, dill, coriander, pepper, caraway, asafoetida root, mint, rue, and dates.

Romans used spices which have been completely forgotten in time such as grains of paradise – pungent peppery seeds with a hint of citrus or asafoetida – a widely used spice with a flavour and smell reminiscent of onions and garlic now still used in Indian cuisine.

Cookery of Middle Ages, Renaissance and Elizabethan Cuisine were still heavily influenced by an extensive use of spices and sugar even in savoury dishes. Many dishes were made sweet and sour with dried fruits and vinegar.

There is a noticeable heritage from Roman style of cookery which continued through Early Middle Ages onwards. “There were of course changes, shifts in taste preference and techniques and many geographical variations. Some ingredients came into fashion or slowly lost favour through this period. But it is nonetheless safe to say that someone eating in the fourteenth century would enjoy much the same basic repertoire of dishes as someone 300 years later.” A major factor influencing the development of cuisine of the time was global travel and trade, which introduced a wide variety of new foodstuffs, however, not many (for example nowadays much adored potatoes) except the spices were welcomed at first. One of the more significant breaks in culinary history was a purely consequential one: due to higher literacy rate people demanded different kinds of recipes: “They could not afford whole porpoises or venison and they wanted recipes for fewer guests and less expensive ingredients. This accounts for many of the changes in European cookery. So too do purely economic factors such as the profitability of dairy cattle and the increasing prevalence of milk products in cuisine after 1500.”

To a great extent this cuisine was inherited from or was an adaptation of Middle Eastern and Persian cuisine. Just as spices, sugar, and dried fruits were bought from Muslim merchants in the eastern Mediterranean, so too were cooking techniques and flavour preferences. This was a cuisine that used many spices together in dense clusters of flavour. Sugar and sour ingredients were often used in combination, along with nuts. Food was often pounded into fine smooth textures. Interestingly, it was this cuisine that was carried with Muslim expansion into India with the Moghuls where it remains today. It was also carried into Spain and flourished under the Abbasid Caliphate of Cordoba after the eighth century. The Muslim settlers brought with them many new ingredients, too; for example, eggplants, spinach, artichokes, rice, lemons, and sugar... The spice repertoire of the average medieval cook was far more extensive than any used today in the West. Along with those mentioned were cassia, which is a relative of cinnamon and is actually what is sold today in the United States [and Europe] labelled cinnamon, cassia buds, as well as grains of paradise or melegueta pepper from the West Coast of Africa, long pepper and what was called tailed pepper or cubebs. Cubebs have a tiny pointy spike, but otherwise look like black pepper. All these have very subtly distinctive flavours and aromas. Ginger, always in dried form and ground, was also a major spice as well as its cousin galangal, which is spicier; some modern cookbook authors describe it as mustard-like and pungent.

What one can easily notice examining the cookbooks of the European past is that the elites feasted on a wide variety of foods, of plant and animal origin alike. Cookbooks tend to focus on meat because it was the most expensive and prestigious of foods, and the most complicated to cook, but there are many recipes for

vegetables and lowly starches as well. These, of course, made up the bulk of ordinary people's diet, but aristocrats and wealthy townspeople, the readers of cookbooks, were not above eating them. Every meal at every level of society included bread and wine, or beer in the north—even in the morning.

The mentioned new foods of the New World appear seldom in the cookbooks until the end of 17th century and we can only guess how they were cooked if they were at all. As noted the rich enjoyed an ample variety of expensive and complicated dishes, however the majority of the population in the Middle Ages and long after as well depended mostly on simple soups – the most popular mainstays of the European diet.

The poorer the family, the greater their dependence on soup—in which could be put any type of vegetable, grain, or meat. In fact, it was often customary to just keep a soup pot over the hearth, continually adding ingredients at hand, indefinitely. Beans could be added, cabbage and leafy greens, practically anything. Soups were also eaten any time of day, in the morning in the rustic farmhouse, or as an evening's supper, made of left over ingredients. Soups also varied according to thickness, and recipes usually distinguish between thin bouillons and broths and thicker pottages—or what in Italian were called minestre, as in the modern word minestrone.

As the years progressed the dishes became less complex in flavour profiles and more clean tastes were preferred more and more. Instead of using up to a dozen spices to flavour a dish cuisine of later 17th century onwards centred more on a single herb or spice or a combination of a few. But it was up until 19th century and in some countries even late 20th century when industrialization of agriculture and mass production of food significantly changed food habits and through cookbooks somewhat standardized the Western cuisine. Most of the once much loved dishes and widely used ingredients were forgotten or replaced by those which in the past only the wealthiest could afford. These recent changes will be presented in more detail in presentation of each countries cuisine in the following chapter.

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Cuisine of Belgium

Throughout Europe bread is a staple food and Belgium is no different in this regard. Until recently most of the land to grow crops was being devoted to wheat, though today most of it is imported. Numerous bakeries sell many varieties of bread most common being plan de ménage a ¾ kg oval loaf. Nowadays hierarchy of bread types is reversed in comparison to the past: darker kinds of bread are much more popular and pricy than white wheat bread of the 1950s rich .

Until modernization of dairy farming butter and other milk products were quite expensive, but today they are very affordable and much liked, especially cheese, which comes in three types: cottage cheese, soft cheese and hard cheese. The former is often mixed with salt and pepper and garnished with thinly sliced radishes . Though most of Belgian dishes centre around meat, vegetables are eaten often. Potatoes are a staple, being prepared in many varieties, pommes frites being very popular, as one can tell by many “fries shacks” where they are sold in paper cones. Interestingly enough “before 1800 potatoes were eaten with reluctance as they were seen as pig fodder ”, but much has changed by 1850. Other commonly eaten vegetables include carrots, turnips and cabbage, which are all base the ingredients of a simple but delicious and well-liked meal hutsepot (hot pot or stew). Other vegetables like asparagus, cauliflower, brussels sprouts and witloof are being increasingly consumed.

Due to its international character Belgium is quick in adapting new trends and cooking is no exception in this regard. Unfortunately this also brings a lot of processed and ready-made dishes like frozen pizza on common Belgian’s menu. However traditional home cooking remains a rule and many home cooks nowadays use cookbooks, which have been published since 1850s, some being extremely successful, such as “Ons Kookboek (Our cookbook), which has the reputation of being present in every Flemish household. ”



Hutsepot – Vegetable hot pot

- o 2 tbsp butter or 1 tbsp refined coconut oil and 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- o 1 onion finely chopped or 1 tsp asafoetida
- o ¼ cabbage minced fine
- o ¼ savoy cabbage head cut into 2 cm squares
- o 250g brussels sprouts halved
- o 4 large carrots diced
- o 2 medium turnips diced
- o 1 celery stalk chopped
- o Bouqe garni of thyme, bay leaf and parsley
- o 12 very small new potatoes whole or 4 medium sized new potatoes skin on diced
- o Vegetable stock or water
- o Salt
- o Pepper

Sauté onion and cabbage for a few minutes with 1 tbsp butter or refined coconut oil until and a pinch of salt translucent. If using asafoetida powder add now and cook for a few seconds. Add the remaining vegetables except the potatoes and sauté for additional 5 minutes on medium heat. Add the potatoes, boque garni and pour over vegetable stock or water so the vegetables are half covered. Season and cook with lid on until potatoes are fork tender (approx. 10 min) stirring occasionally. Adjust the seasoning and add the remaining butter or olive oil. If desired the vegetables can be partially mashed or left whole. Serve hot with a slice of fresh bread.

Belgian fries with mayo

- o 1 kg of floury potatoes (Russet, King Edward or Desiree are good options) peeled and cut in sticks
- o Vegetable oil (peanut) or refined coconut oil for frying – at least 2 liters
- o Salt
- o For the vegan mayo:
 - 1 dcl of unsweetened organic soy milk (can use rice milk but the mayo may eventually separate)
 - ½ tsp of black salt (kala namak – available at Indian grocery stores or health food stores – crucial ingredient because it imparts ‘eggy’ flavour)
 - 1 tsp of salt
 - 1 tsp of pepper
 - 2 tsp of mustard or mustard powder
 - 1 tbsp of apple cider vinegar
 - Juice of ½ of lemon
 - ½ dcl of olive oil
 - Approx. 1 l of vegetable oil (canola or sunflower)

For the mayo put all the ingredients except the vegetable oil in a blender and while blending on high speed slowly pour in vegetable oil to emulsify. When it pulls together stop the blender and mix it up with a spoon. If you are using an immersion blender follow the same process and put everything except the vegetable oil a bowl. Pour in the oil while mixing until it thickens. Continue the process again until it pulls together. Consistency should be quite thick like a normal mayonnaise. Put in a glass jar with a lid and store in a fridge for a day for best flavour. Keeps for a week.

For the fries there are a few ways to do it. A traditional way is a simple double fry where you fry the potatoes for the first time on 140°C until they get a little colour. Then you drain them on paper towels and let them cool. For the second fry you crank up the heat up to 185°C and fry until golden. Dust them with salt as desired.

A more complicated method but with exquisite results is the triple cooked potato chip as developed by a British chef Heston Blumenthal.

Only difference is that you first boil the potatoes until fork tender. Then you drain them and cool them in the freezer in between of each cooking stages. Again you double fry them first on 140°C and then on 185°C. Serve with homemade vegan mayo.

Flemish white asparagus

- o 1 kg of white asparagus trimmed and peeled
- o Sauce:
- o 200g soft tofu (not silken) crumbled
- o 8 tbsp butter or olive oil
- o Pinch of turmeric
- o Handful of flat-leaf parsley finely chopped
- o ½ tsp black salt (kala namak – available at Indian grocery stores or health food stores – crucial ingredient because it imparts ‘eggy’ flavour)
- o 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- o Few drops of white truffle oil (optional)
- o Salt and pepper
- o 800g of new potatoes boiled in skins halved

Steam or simmer the asparagus until fork tender but not falling apart. This may take from 8 to 30 min depending on thickness. Meanwhile prepare the sauce heating the fat in a small saucepan adding the tofu, turmeric, lemon juice, parsley, salt and pepper. Cook on a slow flame for a few minutes to combine the flavours. Lastly add the black salt and truffle oil. Mix and let it sit covered for a few minutes. When the asparagus are done drain them (you can reserve the water for other dishes) and plate with sauce on top and potatoes on the side.

Endive Gratins - Belgian Endive Gratin

- o 2 tbsp butter or olive oil
- o 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- o ½ l milk of your choice (cauliflower cream works great*)
- o 4 Belgian endives halved
- o 6 tbsp breadcrumbs
- o 2 handfuls of French cheese like Gruyere
- o Pinch of nutmeg
- o Salt and pepper
- o * If using cauliflower cream as a component of your béchamel just dice ½ of a small cauliflower and cook with a little water until mushy. Blend until completely smooth, season and adjust the consistency.

Preheat your oven to 180°C. Combine the flour and fat in a small saucepot and make a golden roux. Add the milk of your choice in batches whisking vigorously to avoid forming any lumps. Bring to boil on low heat stirring constantly and cook for a few minutes. Season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Place half of the béchamel in an ovenproof dish, lay in the endives and pour the rest of the sauce over. Sprinkle with breadcrumbs and cheese. Bake for 25 minutes or until the top is golden and the endive is tender. Serve with fresh crusty bread.

Yeasted Waffles

- o 1 packet of active dry yeast or 15g of fresh yeast
- o 300g all-purpose flour
- o 1 dcl warm water
- o 4 dcl milk of your choice
- o 55g melted butter or vegetable oil
- o ½ tsp salt
- o Vanilla bean or vanilla extract
- o 2 tbsp sugar
- o 1 tsp baking powder
- o ½ tsp baking soda
- o Oil for frying
- o Icing sugar
- o Toppings of your choice (for ex. Blueberries, cinnamon and maple syrup; strawberries, Belgian chocolate and whipped cream; etc.)

Dissolve the yeast in the water. Meanwhile combine flour, sugar and salt. Pour in the yeast water mixture, milk and oil or butter. Mix until incorporated and there are no lumps. Let it sit covered in a warm place for an hour, then place it in the refrigerator overnight. Next day whisk in vanilla, baking powder and baking soda and let batter sit until it warms to room temperature. Oil your waffle machine or waffle pan and bake the waffles until they are golden on both sides. Top with your favourite toppings and icing sugar.



Cuisine of Germany

One could say that the most significant of all German foodstuffs is bread, which traditionally comes in all shapes and sizes: based on different grains (wheat or rye, mixed with oats, spelt, buckwheat, different seeds, etc.), strong or finely ground flours, ways of fermentation (whether using yeast or sourdough), seasoned with nuts, spices and fruits and so on and so forth. For many breakfast without fresh rolls isn't a proper breakfast .

Right next to bread stand potatoes, probably most widely consumed staple in many varieties. Though readymade potato products ranging from crisps to dried mashed potatoes are widespread, "Germans still see themselves as potato eaters and distinguish between fest, halbfest and mehlig kochend (waxy, semiwaxy and floury) varieties. " Of all the soups eaten in Germany potato soup is most loved and perhaps most German of all soups .

Dairy farming is heavily industrialized and milk, butter and especially cheese are extremely popular and considered healthy food important for infants and children . Quark, smooth and homogenous cottage-like cheese plays an important role in the daily diet.

Vegetables in general accompany meat or are made into salads or soups. "The proverbial Germanic preference for cabbage reaches back at least to the Middle Ages. Round white and red cabbages are traditional standard fare all over Germany during autumn and winter. Sauerkraut is found throughout Germany. " As well as cabbage, roots such as beets and turnips as well as French beans are very popular. Legumes, on the other hand, are considered hard to digest and time consuming to prepare and have never been as liked in Germany as in for instance in Slovenia. Asparagus, however, is a different story, being a national passion as it is cultivated in all the states, especially white variety. Spices and herbs are used sparingly in comparison to other countries, most common being parsley, chives, dill, horseradish, pepper, caraway, mustard.

Nowadays Turkish minority is the most noticeable one in Germany and its culture has influenced German and European cuisine. Döner kebab a roasted meat sandwich is probably the most well-known Turkish dish throughout Germany.



Kartoffelsuppe Potato soup

- o 4 large floury potatoes peeled and diced
- o 1 onion or ¼ cabbage head and 1 tsp asafoetida chopped
- o 2 large carrots diced
- o 1 celeriac diced
- o 2 tbsp butter or 1 tbsp refined coconut oil and 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- o 1 tsp dried marjoram
- o Pinch of nutmeg
- o Vegetable stock or water
- o Salt
- o White pepper
- o 1 dcl heavy cream or vegan alternative (optional)
- o 2 tbsp fresh parsley chopped
- o 4 sliced vegan frankfurters (optional)

Sauté onion or cabbage with fat and a pinch of salt until translucent then add the carrot and celeriac. After a few minutes add potatoes, marjoram and pour over vegetable stock or water so it covers the vegetables. Optionally you can cook half of the potatoes separately and add them at the end. Season and cook covered until vegetables are completely cooked (for around 15 minutes). Add nutmeg and adjust the seasoning. At this stage add the heavy cream and if desired blend the soup with immersion blender, but still leaving some texture. At the end garnish with parsley and serve with whole wheat or rye bread and sliced frankfurters.

Seitan schnitzel with Kartoffelsalat – Seitan steak with potato salad

- o Seitan:
- o 1 kg all-purpose flour
- o Water
- o 2 l Vegetable stock
- o 2 tbsp caraway seeds
- o 2 heaped tbsp. paprika
- o 4 tbsp salt
- o 1 tbsp black pepper
- o 2 tbsp chickpea flour diluted in 2-3 tbsp water
- o Breadcrumbs for coating
- o Flour for coating
- o Vegetable oil for frying

- o Potato salad:
- o 4 large potatoes
- o 3 tbsp sugar
- o 2 ½ dcl vinegar
- o 1 tbsp mustard
- o Salt pepper to taste
- o 1 medium onion sliced (optional) or 2 tsp asafoetida
- o Coconut bacon:
- o 100 g coconut flakes
- o 3 tbsp tamari soy sauce (preferably low sodium)
- o 3 tbsp water
- o 1 tsp smoked paprika
- o 1 tsp paprika
- o 1 tsp garlic powder or asafoetida
- o 1 tsp black pepper
- o 1 tsp yeast extract
- o 1 tbsp maple syrup (optional)

Seitan: Here is the recipe for seitan from scratch, however, you can use premade store bought seitan and skip this process. The flavour and texture of homemade seitan is far superior though. First make the dough from 1 kg of all-purpose flour. The dough should be smooth and soft. Let it rest covered for 30 minutes. Next you have to wash out the starch from the dough by covering it in cold water and kneading it. The water will turn white and that is a sign that starch is being extracted. Change the water and repeat the process until there are no white spots left and only a ball of gluten remains. This may take up to 20 minutes. Rinse well and form into a log using plastic wrap. Cook in plastic wrap in boiling water for 15 minutes. Take the seitan out of the pot and remove the plastic wrap. Put the seitan in simmering vegetable stock along with the remaining spices and salt. Cook on low heat for at least 45 minutes turning once. The seitan will expand considerably. Let it cool in cooking liquid preferably overnight. Store in cooking liquid in the fridge. The flavour intensifies over time.

To make the steaks slice the seitan in desired thickness (1cm is best) and coat first in seasoned flour then in a chickpea and water mixture and lastly in breadcrumbs. Shallow fry on medium heat until golden on both sides. Drain on paper towels.

Coconut bacon:

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl and let it sit in the fridge overnight. Squeeze out any excess liquid from the coconut flakes and arrange them on a baking tray lined with parchment paper. Bake in a 160°C oven for 20 minutes or until crispy.

Potato salad:

Cook the potatoes in skins in salted water until fork tender.

Mix the remaining ingredients in a bowl so that the sugar and salt dissolve. When the potatoes are done peel them while still hot, dice and add to the vinaigrette. Toss to coat. Before serving add the desired amount of coconut bacon. Good warm or cold.

Döner kebab

- o For the 'meat'
- o Seitan made from 1kg of flour (see recipe above)
- o 1 tsp smoked paprika
- o 2 tsp paprika
- o 1 tbsp brown sugar
- o 1 tbsp soy sauce
- o 1 tsp yeast extract
- o Black pepper to taste
- o 1 tsp ground cumin
- o 2 tsp asafoetida or garlic powder
- o 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- o For the sauce:
- o 1 jar of vegan mayo (see the Belgian fries recipe)
- o 2 tsp paprika
- o 1 tsp oregano
- o 2 tbsp yogurt or soy yogurt
- o Vegetables of your choice (tomato, lettuce, finely sliced cabbage, cucumber, onions)
- o Sandwich buns

Finely slice the seitan and marinate in seasonings for at least an hour. Fry in a non-stick pan with oil until golden. Meanwhile prepare the sauce by mixing in the additional spices and yogurt with the mayo. Toast the sandwich buns. When everything is ready assemble the döner. First a spoon of the sauce followed with the 'meat' and a touch of sauce. Lay over the veggies and pour over more sauce. Serve while seitan is still hot.

Soft Pretzels

- o 650 g all-purpose flour
- o 3 ½ dcl lukewarm water for the dough
- o 1 package active dry yeast or 15 g fresh yeast
- o 1 tbsp sugar
- o 50g melted butter or refined coconut oil
- o 2 tsp salt
- o 85g baking soda
- o 2 ½ l water
- o 3 tbsp of milk of your choice for milk wash
- o Coarse salt for sprinkling
- o Oil for the baking tray

Dissolve sugar and yeast in a bowl and let it sit until it becomes foamy. Add the sifted flour, salt and fat. Bring together in a dough and kneed for 10 minutes by hand or in a mixer for 5 minutes using dough hook attachment. Let it sit in a warm place covered for approx. 1 hour or until doubled in size.

Preheat the oven to 230°C and bring water with baking soda to boil in a pot. Divide the dough into 8 equal balls and roll them into ropes. Holding both ends make an U-shape then twist and press on the bottom of the U. Place them on a tray lined with parchment. Next blanch the pretzels in boiling water and baking soda solution one by one for 30 seconds each. Place them on an oiled baking tray, give them a milk wash, sprinkle some coarse salt and bake for 12 to 14 minutes or until dark golden brown. Transfer to a cooling rack to cool slightly before serving.

Rote Grütze – red berry pudding

- o 500g mixed red berries (traditionally red currants and raspberries are most popular)
- o 60g of sugar or to taste
- o 400 ml water
- o 60g corn starch
- o Vanilla custard (ice cream) or whipped cream or both to serve

Bring the fruit, sugar and water to boil. Then whisk in corn starch dissolved in a few tablespoons of water. Bring to simmer on low heat and remove from heat when it thickens. Serve either hot or cold with vanilla custard, vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.



Cuisine of Great Britain

“British food culture has changed markedly since the 1960s, as interest in dishes and ingredients from all over the world and a vibrant restaurant scene displaced an earlier reputation for plain, bland, poor-quality food. The traditional diet is based on bread, potatoes, dairy produce, and meat. Regional ideas related to food survive but are nuanced and sometimes difficult to detect. ” Diverse variety is a stamp that encompasses what is contemporary British food. Multiculturalism and influence from all over the world largely shape selection of produce and cooking techniques. “The growth of vegetarianism, foreign travel, and the work of chefs and writers inspired by other cultures have influenced choices, as have changes in retailing and an intense media interest in food. ”

There is an old history of reliance on wheat (for many types of bread), potatoes and meat (mostly beef), vegetables playing a side role as is often seen in European cuisine. However, these attitudes have been changing since 1970s, though traditional foodstuffs are still important. Besides wheat oats are commonly eaten for breakfast as porridge. Pulses are used in soups and in ethnic dishes such as Indian dhal or Middle Eastern hummus but most popular are baked beans on toast as a part of traditional English breakfast.

For centuries everybody who could afford eating meat indulged in it, but the importance of meat in the diet skyrocketed 20th century thanks to nutritional theories . Likewise dairy has been equally important. Vegetables on the other hand received little attention in traditional British cookery but beside potatoes, plants from cabbage family as well as peas and asparagus were and still are quite adored. In regards to fruit apples are probably the most British fruit, used in pies and tarts, but pears and different kind of berries, especially strawberry follow closely along. Pink rhubarb is considered a delicacy and is available only in late winter and early spring .

Spices, though somewhat absent in traditional British cooking except for sweet spices such as cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg in baking, are today widely used. An influence from colonial times can be seen in this regard: Indian and Thai cookery have significantly influenced the way British perceive food today, what can be seen from many varieties of curry powders and not the less in something often thought as remarkably British: Worcestershire sauce, which contains many spices, such as cumin, asafoetida, etc.

Cooking itself is not often practiced during the week because of extremely busy lifestyle and readymade food is a popular choice. During weekends, however, many British indulge in cooking often following recipes obtained by “television chefs, magazines or promotional leaflets as from previous generations.”

Garden pie

- o For mash topping:
- o 4 large potatoes peeled and diced
- o 100g butter or 50g refined coconut oil and 50g extra virgin olive oil
- o Few tbsp warm milk or soy milk
- o Salt
- o Pepper
- o For the sauce:
- o ¼ cauliflower diced
- o 2 tbsp butter or extra virgin olive oil
- o Salt
- o Pinch of nutmeg
- o For the filling:
- o 1 tbsp butter or extra virgin olive oil
- o 1 small onion minced or 1 tsp asafoetida
- o 2 celery stalks minced
- o 200g of green peas (frozen and defrosted works well, avoid canned)
- o 4 medium sized carrots diced
- o 1 rutabaga diced
- o 2 parsnips diced
- o 2 celery stalks minced
- o 200g cooked lentils drained
- o 1 tsp fresh thyme
- o Salt
- o Pepper

First cook the potatoes in salted water until fork tender. Then when still mash (preferably with potato ricer) and if desired pass through sieve for silky texture. Add the fat and warm milk stirring constantly with a whisk. Season to taste and set aside. Next prepare the sauce for the pie by cooking the cauliflower with half of the butter or olive oil and 2 dcl of water until soft. Blend in a blender with remaining fat and adjust the seasoning. If necessary add some more water to thin the sauce, which should be moderately thick. Grate a pinch of nutmeg. For the filling sauté finely chopped onion and celery on a tbsp of butter or olive oil with fresh thyme until translucent. If using asafoetida fry just for a few seconds then add carrots, rutabaga and parsnips. Cook with a few tablespoons of water covered until al dente then add the peas and cook for just 2 minutes. Add the lentils and adjust the seasoning. Mix the vegetables together with the cauliflower sauce and put into a casserole dish. Top with mash potatoes and score with a fork or decorate with a palette knife. Bake in a preheated oven at 180 °C for 30 minutes or until golden.

Pav baji Mixed vegetable curry with bread

- o 4 large potatoes cooked and mashed
(can substitute half of the potatoes with carrots and cauliflower)



- o 300g green peas (frozen and defrosted works well, avoid canned)
- o 4 large fresh tomatoes chopped or 400g canned chopped tomatoes
- o 1 tbsp ghee and 3 tbsp butter or 4 tbsp refined coconut oil
- o 1 red onion sliced or ¼ red cabbage head minced and 1 heaped tsp asafoetida
- o 1 tsp cumin seeds
- o ½ tsp turmeric
- o 1 tsp red chili powder or paprika powder
- o 1 tsp mango powder (amchoor)
- o 1 tbsp palm sugar (jaggery) or brown sugar
- o 1 tbsp lemon juice
- o 2 tsp store bought pav bhaji masala powder (available at Indian grocery stores and large supermarkets)
- o Salt
- o Pepper
- o Handful of fresh coriander leaves chopped
- o Soft bread buns or dinner rolls

Heat 1 tbsp of ghee or refined coconut oil in a large pan. Add cumin seeds and fry until aromatic for approx. 20 seconds. Add onion or red cabbage and sauté with a pinch of salt until translucent. If using asafoetida add now along with turmeric and red chili powder or paprika powder and fry just for a few seconds then adding tomatoes. Cook for 10 minutes and add green peas, potato or mixed vegetable mash, mango powder, sugar and pav bhaji masala. Sauté on medium heat for at least 10 minutes. Mash with potato masher, add the remaining butter or coconut oil, lemon juice and fresh coriander. Season and serve with soft bread buns or dinner rolls.

Bubble and Squeak

- o 1 small onion (100g) or white cabbage (+ 1 tsp asafoetida) finely chopped
- o 1 tbsp butter or olive oil
- o 500g leftover mashed potatoes or 4 large potatoes cooked and mashed
- o Any leftover steamed or roasted vegetables like brussels sprouts, carrots, swede, cabbage, etc. or 300g fresh vegetables finely chopped.
- o Flour for dusting
- o Butter or olive oil for frying
- o Salt and pepper

Sauté onion or cabbage and asafoetida with a tbsp of butter or oil and a pinch of salt until translucent. If using fresh vegetables add them at this stage and cook until soft. Mix them together with the mashed potatoes and season to taste.

Wet your hands to form patties and coat them in flour. Shallow fry on medium heat until golden brown on each side.

Pea and mint soup

- o 700g fresh green peas (frozen are also fine, defrosted)
- o 1 shallot finely chopped or 1 tsp of asafoetida
- o 2 tbsp of olive oil or butter
- o 1 small new potato peeled and finely sliced
- o 1 liter of vegetable stock
- o Handful of fresh mint leaves
- o Salt and pepper
- o Cottage cheese for garnish (optional)
- o Olive oil for garnish

Sauté the shallot with fat until translucent or asafoetida just for a few seconds adding the peas and new potato. Optionally you can reserve half of the peas, blanch them separately, cool in cold water and add them at the end. Pour over vegetable stock, add half of the mint leaves, season and cook until the peas and the potato are tender. Blend in a blender adding the rest of the mint and pass through a fine sieve. At this stage you can add fresh peas and cook until they are heated through. Serve hot or cold with a tsp of cottage cheese topped with salt and pepper and a drizzle of olive oil.



Strawberry rhubarb crumble with coconut

- o For the topping:
- o 300g all-purpose or whole wheat flour
- o 100g dried shredded coconut
- o 100g powdered sugar
- o 150g softened unsalted butter or melted refined coconut oil
(can use unrefined coconut oil for a more pronounced coconut flavour)
- o 1 tsp cinnamon
- o Pinch of salt
- o Seeds of ½ vanilla pod
- o 1 or 2 tbsp of water
- o For the filling:
- o 700g fresh strawberries halved
- o 300g rhubarb stalks peeled and diced
- o Seeds of 1 and ½ vanilla pod
- o 200g sugar
- o 1 tbsp all-purpose flour
- o Vanilla custard (optional)

For the topping combine all the dry ingredients and then mix with fat until it resembles bread crumbs. Add one or two table spoons of water so you get a bit bigger crumbs, but the dough should not get sticky. For the filling mix all the ingredients together and transfer into a deep baking tray. Sprinkle with topping mixture so it is completely covered. Bake in a preheated oven on 180 °C for 20 minutes or until golden brown. You can serve it with vanilla custard.



Cuisine of Hungary

Hungary holds a reputation of its people being avid meat eaters and is due to traditional diet high in animal fat, cholesterol, sugar, salt and generally low in fibre, vegetables and fruits one of Europe's unhealthiest countries. There is, however, a turning point in progress because lifestyles and eating habits of younger generation largely differ from older who came of age during Communism. A stark difference is visible also in diets of those living in big cities, especially Budapest, and those in the countryside .

Land allows agriculture to be an important factor in Hungarian economy, the most important products being wheat, corn, sunflower oil, potatoes, sugar beets, meat and dairy. As said the diet is extremely meat-centric and often accompanied by potatoes, though vegetables could be grown in abundance because of fertile soil. Among vegetables some of most frequently eaten are root vegetables, such as carrots, celeriac, rutabaga, parsley root, etc.) used particularly for soups; squash, courgettes, bell peppers and tomatoes. "For many home cooks, particularly older ones, canning fruits and vegetables is still an important part of their cooking routine." Milk products are very important in Hungarian cuisine and sour cream is having a major role as a common addition to soups and salads, stews and as a garnish. Sweet paprika is the most important spice by far and is used in abundance in many of the well know Hungarian dishes, such as paprikás a stew like dish with meat and vegetables. Caraway seeds, nutmeg and cinnamon also frequent many dishes as do flat-leaf parsley, dill and marjoram from the herb family. Beside sour cream roux is often used to thicken stews and vinegar is many times added to soups at the table .



Stuffed peppers in tomato sauce with parsley potatoes

- o 8 large yellow bell peppers (2 per person)
- o 200g long grain rice (jasmine or basmati works best)
- o 250g texturized vegetable protein (soy granules) soaked in hot vegetable stock or water drained or 400g minced seitan or 400g cooked brown lentils drained
- o 1 tsp vegetable oil (sunflower or canola)
- o 1 tsp asafoetida or 1 small onion minced
- o 1 large carrot finely shredded
- o 5 cm celery stalk finely chopped
- o 1 table spoon all-purpose flour
- o 2 table spoon sweet paprika powder
- o 1 table spoon vegetable oil (sunflower or canola)
- o Handful of fresh parsley leaves chopped
- o Salt
- o Pepper
- o For the sauce
- o 1 table spoon vegetable oil (sunflower or canola)

- o 1 heaped table spoon all-purpose flour
- o 1 tsp asafoetida or 1 garlic clove sliced
- o 1 tsp sweet paprika powder
- o 1 bay leaf
- o 700g tomato paste (passata)
- o Water
- o Salt
- o Pepper
- o For the potatoes:
- o 8 medium sized potatoes peeled and diced into 2 cm cubes
- o Handful of fresh flat leaf parsley chopped
- o 2 table spoon sunflower or olive oil
- o Salt
- o Pepper
- o 4 table spoons of sour cream or vegan alternative for garnish

First clean bell peppers and remove the stem and the seeds leaving the bell pepper whole. For the filling first cook the rice in salted water almost completely but it should still have some bite (al dente). Heat 1 tbsp of oil in a pan and sauté the onion with a pinch of salt until translucent or asafoetida for just a few seconds. Add finely shredded carrot and chopped celery and continue cooking on medium heat for five more minutes. Season, add paprika powder and texturized vegetable protein or seitan or lentils and cook on a slow flame covered for another 5 minutes so that the flavours get combined. At the end mix in the rice, fresh chopped parsley and adjust the seasoning. Let the mixture cool to room temperature then mix in a tbsp of flour. Set aside. Meanwhile prepare the sauce and bell peppers. For the sauce first heat up oil in a pot, which should be big enough to hold all the stuffed peppers. Add flour and make a blond roux. Follow with garlic or asafoetida, sweet paprika powder, bay leaf and tomato paste. Heat up to a simmer, season and adjust consistency by adding water. The sauce should be on a thinner side. Cook for at least 15 minutes, then remove bay leaf. Stuff the bell peppers with the filling and place them in the sauce. Cook covered on a very slow flame for at least 45 minutes to an hour. While the peppers are cooking prepare the potatoes by boiling them in salted water until fork tender. Drain and season with freshly ground black pepper, fresh chopped parsley and oil. When the bell peppers are done serve them with the potatoes and garnish with a dollop of sour cream or vegan alternative if desired.

Langos

- o 300g all-purpose flour
- o 1 package active dry yeast or 10g fresh yeast
- o 200 ml lukewarm water
- o 1 tsp salt
- o 1 tsp sugar
- o 2 l sunflower oil for frying
- o Toppings: garlic, cheese, sour cream or soy yoghurt

First dissolve yeast and sugar in water. Wait until it gets foamy then add the sifted flour and salt. Make into a dough and knead for a few minutes until it becomes smooth. If the dough is really sticky add a little more flour. Let it rest covered in a warm place for 1 hour or until doubled in size. When risen form the dough into a log and cut into same size portions. Make balls and stretch them with your hands. Let the dough rest for additional 30 minutes on a floured surface. Heat the oil in a saucepan on medium heat and fry langos on each side until golden brown. While still hot smear with garlic or add the topping of your choice. Serve as soon as possible.

Lesco

- o 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- o 2 medium onion sliced or 4 tsp asafoetida
- o 800g red and yellow bell pepper cut into strips
- o 4 large very ripe tomatoes chopped or 1 of tomato chunks
- o 1 tbsp paprika
- o 1 tsp sugar
- o 1 tbsp of parsley chopped (optional)
- o Salt and pepper to taste
- o Fresh bread or langos

Sauté the onions on high heat until translucent or asafoetida for a few seconds. Add the peppers and cook on medium heat for 15 minutes or until golden and soft. Add paprika followed by chopped fresh or canned tomatoes and simmer for another 10 minutes. Finish with sugar, salt and pepper and parsley if desired. Serve as a main dish with bread or as a topping for langos.

Silvaz gomboc – plum dumplings

- o 5 medium sized potatoes
- o 1 tbsp salt
- o 500g all-purpose flour
- o Pinch of turmeric
- o 18 fresh plums pitted
- o 125g butter or olive oil
- o 300g fine bread crumbs
- o Sugar and cinnamon for garnish (optional)
- o Salt

Cook the potatoes in skins in simmering salted water until fork tender. Drain, peel and puree using a potato ricer then let cool to room temperature. Add flour a pinch of turmeric and a tsp of salt. Knead the potato dough for 5 to 10 minutes. Let it rest for 30 minutes and then roll it out with a rolling pin to a little less than a centimetre thick and cut out circles using a cookie cutter or a glass and a knife. Place a plum on each circle moisten the edge with a little water and carefully seal the dumpling so there are no cracks on the surface. Cook the dumplings in simmering water for approx. 30 minutes or until the plums inside are soft. Meanwhile heat up the fat in a frying pan and toast the breadcrumbs until golden brown. Garnish the cooked dumplings breadcrumbs and serve hot.

Tejberizs – rice pudding

- o 1 l milk or almond milk
- o 100 g short-grain rice
- o Pinch of salt
- o Pinch of turmeric
- o 1 vanilla pod
- o 80 g sugar or as desired
- o 1 tbsp cornstarch
- o 50 g butter or coconut oil

Bring the milk and rice to boil over medium heat stirring constantly. Open vanilla pod and scrape out the seeds with the back of the knife. Add vanilla seeds and the pod, salt and turmeric to the rice. Cook the rice on low heat for 15 minutes or until soft but not mushy. Add the sugar and corn starch dissolved in a few tablespoons of water. Bring to simmer and cook until slightly thickened. Take off the heat and whisk in the fat. Let it sit for 30 minutes covered. Can be served warm or chilled.



Cuisine of Netherlands

There is a lot that the Dutch cuisine owes to the Middle Ages, which left a significant impact on how the foods are prepared even today in spite of international character of the nation. "After World War II the down-to-earth Dutch approach toward cooking changed drastically, and apart from potatoes, staple foods such as rice and pasta started to appear regularly on the dinner table. Vegetables and legumes are commonly boiled in water and remain a more important food choice than meat, fish or meat alternatives. This is reflected in popular language, as dinner is many times referred to as *agv-aardappel, groente, vlees* or potato, vegetables, meat."

In the past, religion influenced the Dutch diet as the two were thoroughly intertwined, and segregation, religious freedom and tolerance resound in Dutch lifestyle. Consequently many dishes were prepared and eaten according to religious calendars, laws and requirements, for example "fish on Friday."

Dairy products are the Netherlands' staple per se and the average consumption is very high. Milk is drunk by everyone and "besides butter, the Dutch are renowned for their yellow cheeses."

The Dutch cuisine mostly follows the seasons and the diet is high in potatoes. Other vegetables are also very popular such as carrots, leeks, cabbages and onions. "Generally, tomatoes cucumber, cauliflower and lettuce are the most consumed vegetables, but in season locally cultivated produce such as carrots, spinach, beans, peas... or one of the various kinds of cabbages is very popular."

Interestingly enough, most Dutch do not eat meat every day, though meat remains for many the most important source of protein. Spices are traditionally used in the Dutch cooking but in moderation. Curly parsley, flat celery leaves, and chives are among the most used fresh herbs. Parsley and chives are finely chopped, and parsley is particularly popular for all kinds of soups, salads and sandwiches. Together with the celery root, celery leaves are primarily boiled and used for erwtensoep, a thick soup of dried peas. "A dash of nutmeg on vegetable dishes is much loved. Suriname, a country which is located in the north-eastern coast of South America, was a Dutch colony until the 1970's. The Dutch brought African slaves during the slavery period and after abolition of slavery, Indian and Indonesian labourers to work on their plantations. These workers made their favourite dishes with locally available ingredients. Their cooking gradually blended with the native and European dishes (there's Chinese influence too), and all of this together became modern Surinamese cuisine. In the 1970's, a lots of Surinamese immigrated to the Netherlands, before the independence of Suriname. In this way the Surinamese cuisine ended up in the Netherlands and gradually influenced the Dutch dishes.

Erwtensoep Split green pea soup

- o 300g dried green split peas washed
- o 1 small onion or ¼ cabbage head finely chopped and 1 tsp asafoetida
- o 1 celery stalk chopped
- o 1 small celeriac diced
- o 2 medium carrots diced
- o 1 large potato peeled and diced
- o Vegetable stock or water (at least 1, 5 l)
- o Salt
- o Pepper
- o Celery leaves chopped for garnish
(use lighter coloured ones from the centre of the plant)
- o Fresh parsley leaves chopped for garnish (optional)
- o Rye bread or toasted white bread
- o Smoked cheese and vegan sausage or frankfurters sliced(optional)

Bring the stock or water with the washed green split peas to a boil and simmer covered on a slow flame for 45 minutes stirring occasionally. Next add all the vegetables and cook for half an hour or until the peas are completely dissolved and the vegetables tender. Season well. The soup should be quite thick but if you want it really traditional the spoon can stand upright in it. To achieve this, cool the soup quickly by placing the pot in a sink filled with cold water. They say the soup is at its best the next day, so place it in the fridge and reheat it the following day. Serve it in bowls and garnish chopped celery

leaves and sliced smoked vegan frankfurters or sausage and on the side with a slice of rye bread or toasted white bread and optionally smoked cheese.

Stamppot – mashed root vegetables

- o 600g potatoes peeled and diced
- o 300g butternut squash peeled and diced
- o 3 large carrots peeled and diced
- o 1 large parsnip peeled and diced
- o 1 medium turnip peeled and diced
- o 400g mixed leafy green vegetables
(savoy cabbage, kale, spinach, Swiss chard, etc.) chopped
- o 80g butter or refined coconut oil and 2 tbsps olive oil
- o Salt and pepper
- o Handful of fresh parsley leaves for garnish chopped (optional)
- o Vegetarian smoked sausage (optional)

Place all the vegetables in a pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil over high heat and let it simmer for 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Drain and mash but leave some texture. Season to taste and add the fats. Serve garnished with parsley alongside vegetarian smoked sausage if desired.

Bara – fluffy green gram fritters

- o 250g green gram (mung bean) flour
- o 125g self-rising flour
- o 1 tsp baking powder
- o 1 small onion chopped or 1 tsp asafoetida
- o 1 garlic clove minced (optional)
- o 1 tsp curry powder
- o 1 tsp cumin powder
- o 1 tsp coriander powder
- o 100g fresh spinach chopped
- o 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- o Water
- o Salt and pepper to taste
- o 2 l vegetable oil for frying

Sift together all the dry ingredients, spices and seasonings. Add onion, garlic and spinach. Next add the oil and enough water to make very thick batter. Let it sit in a warm place for at least four hours to ferment. When you are ready to make Bara heat up the oil to high heat. Always wet your hands before shaping each individual Bara. Take a little more than a golf ball of dough and flatten in on a palm of your hand and make a hole in the middle with your finger to achieve a doughnut like shape. Transfer the Bara to your other hand and carefully slide it into the oil. Fry on both sides until golden brown and drain on paper towels. Serve with Tomato Sambal.

Tomato Sambal – simple tomato sauce

- o 300g very ripe tomatoes skinned and chopped
- o 1 tsp asafoetida or 1 small onion finely chopped
- o ½ bell pepper or chilli finely chopped
- o 1 tbs vegetable oil
- o Salt and sugar to taste

Heat up oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Sauté the onion and pepper for a few minutes until translucent and asafoetida just for a few seconds. Stir in chopped tomatoes, sugar and salt and cook on low for 10 minutes stirring occasionally. Serve hot or cold as an accompaniment for Bara.

Oliebollen Doughnut balls

- o 500g all-purpose flour
- o 30g fresh yeast
- o 200g raisins soaked in hot water and drained and patted dry
- o 1 tsp salt
- o 2 tbs sugar
- o Seeds of 1 vanilla pod
- o 500 ml lukewarm buttermilk or soymilk curdled with little lemon juice
- o 2 l vegetable oil for frying (sunflower or canola for example)
- o Powdered sugar

Dissolve the sugar and yeast in 100 ml of milk and wait that the yeast activates. Combine flour, salt and vanilla seeds in a large mixing bowl then pour over yeast and sugar mixture and remaining milk and mix everything with a wooden spoon until thoroughly combined and you get a smooth batter. Add the raisins and mix to distribute them evenly in the batter. Cover with a damp kitchen cloth and let rise in a warm place for hour and a half or until double in volume. Heat the oil in a pot to 175 °C.



You can also check if the oil is ready by placing a wooden spoon handle in the oil and if small bubbles rise it is perfect. Use an oiled spoon or metal ice cream scoop to fry oliebollen. Be careful when dipping the batter into the oil and make sure you don't overcrowd the pot. Fry for 4-5 minutes or until golden brown rotating them once in between with a fork. Take them out of the oil and drain excess oil on a paper towel. Repeat until you use all the batter. Sprinkle fried oliebollen with powdered sugar and serve hot.



Cuisine of Poland

A wide variety of grains and pulses is a trademark of Polish cuisine, among which most popular are rye, buckwheat, wheat, barley, oats, lentils and millet. Grains are mostly ground into flours, which are used to make different kinds of bread. Sour-dough rye and pumpernickel hold a special place in hearts of Poles as do popular porridge style dishes called kasha (kasza).

Vegetables are important part of everyday meals and kohlrabi, cauliflower, turnips, cabbage, beets, carrots, peas and potatoes are especially loved and a feature of many traditional meals. Due to cold winters pickling was a traditional method of preserving vegetables. "In fact, the taste for the sour flavour pickling brine is so great that Poles actually make a pickle soup. Pickled vegetables accompany many dishes in Polish cuisine. Pickled cabbage, or sauerkraut, is the most common, but Poles also enjoy pickled cucumber, beets, cauliflower, fish and mushrooms. " "Hearty soups play a central role in Polish cooking... traditionally served as an appetizer but may be also eaten as a main course. While Poles enjoy vegetable barley, pea, fermented rye (zurek), beer (zupa piwna), pickle (zupa ogorkowa) and other soups, beet soups are the most popular and common in Polish cooking. Hot beet soup (barszcz) was traditionally made with fermented beet juice, but today it is often soured with citrus or vinegar. "

Traditional Polish cuisine is quite rich and heavy and features lots of meat and dairy. Fermented flavour of milk products is much appreciated, for example "sour cream turns up everywhere in Polish cooking. It is used as garnish to roast meat, dress salads, thicken soups, bind cakes, flavour kasha and more. One would be hard-pressed to find a food that a Pole would not enjoy more with at least a dab of sour cream. A few herbs are central to Polish cooking and flavour many recipes. Dill, commonly found throughout central European cuisines is the most popular. Parsley is considered second best and leaves as well as roots are an important flavouring. Other common herbs and spices are caraway seed, marjoram and juniper berries, which are mostly found in heavier dishes and marinades.

Riding through Poland one can see red fields, where red poppies are grown for their seeds, which are extensively used, especially in desserts .

One can witness an interesting trend of rediscovering traditional or 'old Polish cuisine' (kuchnia staropolska) started after the fall of Communism and ending of suppression of cultural heritage .

Barszcz Beetroot soup

- o 2 large beets approx. 300g peeled
- o 1 medium onion or ¼ cabbage head finely chopped
- o 1 garlic clove or 1 tsp asafoetida
- o 1 celery stalk sliced
- o 1 tbsp butter or refined coconut oil
- o 200g organic mushrooms (optional) sliced
- o Handful of fresh parsley or dill chopped
- o Vegetable stock or water
- o Salt
- o Pepper
- o 2 tbsp vinegar or lemon juice or more traditionally 1 dcl fermented beet juice*
- o * To make fermented beet juice use a few small beets,
1 slice of rye bread and 1 l warm water
- o Few tablespoons of sour cream or vegan alternative

Sauté onion or cabbage on medium heat with fat and a pinch of salt until translucent. Add garlic or asafoetida, celery stalk and beets. If using mushrooms make mushroom stock or even better infuse vegetable stock with mushrooms by bringing to boil and simmering for 5 minutes, then leaving to steep for at least an hour. Pour stock or water over the beet soup base, season and simmer covered until beets are cooked. You can blend the soup using blender or immersion blender or just cut beets into cubes or slices. At the end add vinegar or lemon juice or fermented beet juice, which you can make by dicing a few small beets and fermenting them with a slice of rye bread in warm water covered for 10 days. Transfer the soup into individual bowls and garnish with parsley or dill and a dollop of sour cream if desired.



Pierogi – filled dumplings

- o Dough:
 - 400 g all-purpose flour
 - ½ tsp baking powder
 - 50 ml vegetable oil
 - 1 tsp salt
 - 3 tbsp sour cream or vegan sour cream/yoghurt
 - 120 ml water
- o Potato filling:
 - 2 large potatoes cooked in skin peeled, mashed and cooled
 - 1 small onion minced or ¼ small white cabbage minced and 1 tsp asafoetida
 - 300g curd or crumbled soft tofu and 2 tbsp vegan sour cream with 1 tsp lemon juice
 - 3 tbsp sour cream or vegan sour cream
 - 1 tbsp butter or refined coconut oil
 - Salt and pepper to taste
- o Sauerkraut filling:
 - 500g sauerkraut drained and minced

- 2 tbsp butter or olive oil
- 1 small onion or 1 tsp asafoetida
- 1 tbsp marjoram chopped
- Salt and pepper
- o 3 tbsp butter or olive oil for frying

Potato filling: Sauté onion or cabbage and asafoetida with fat until golden on medium heat. Transfer to a bowl and add all of the remaining ingredients. Season to taste and mix well.

Sauerkraut filling: Sauté onion with fat on medium heat until golden or asafoetida for just a few seconds. Add the sauerkraut and 500ml water. Cook for covered 1 hour or until the sauerkraut is soft. Take off the lid and cook until the water is evaporated. Add the marjoram and season to taste.

Dough: Mix all the ingredients in a bowl and knead into a smooth and very soft dough. Do not overwork the dough. Let it rest for 10 minutes. Roll to a 3 mm thickness and cut circles using a ring cutter. Fill with a table spoon of desired filling and seal the edges. Cook the pierogi in salted boiling water for 3 minutes or until they rise to the top. Drain the pierogi and fry them in butter or olive oil until lightly golden brown. Serve either hot or cold.

Sauerkraut stew

- o 300 g sauerkraut
- o 600 g white cabbage shredded
- o Handful of dry tomatoes chopped
- o 2 tbsp butter or olive oil
- o 5 prunes diced
- o ½ apple peeled and diced
- o 200 g smoked tofu (optional) cubed
- o 2 large bay leaves
- o 3 allspice berries
- o 3 juniper berries
- o 2 cloves
- o 1 tsp caraway seeds
- o 1 tsp cumin seeds
- o 2 tsp paprika
- o 2 tsp marjoram
- o 1 tsp thyme

- o 200 g tomato paste
- o 1 tbsp honey or agave syrup
- o Salt and pepper

Heat up the butter or olive oil in a pot and fry bay leaves, cumin seeds and allspice for 30 seconds. Be careful not to burn the spices. Add the white cabbage, cloves, caraway, juniper berries and cover with water. Simmer until cabbage is tender then add sauerkraut, prunes, dried tomatoes apple, tofu and remaining spices. Simmer on very low heat for 1 hour or until sauerkraut is soft. Add the tomato paste and cook for additional 15 minutes. Finish the stew with seasoning and sweetener. It is best the next or the third day. Serve hot with fresh rye bread.

Sernik – Cheesecake

- o Pastry:
 - 100 g butter or vegan butter or soft vegetable shortening cold
 - 70 g icing sugar
 - 2 tbsp sour cream or vegan yoghurt
 - 1 tsp baking powder
 - 150 g all-purpose flour
 - Water if needed
- o Filling:
 - 1 kg semi-skimmed fine curd or vegan cream cheese
 - Sour cream or vegan yoghurt if needed
 - 100 g caster sugar
 - 125 g butter or vegetable shortening
 - 1 ½ packet of vanilla custard powder (pudding)
 - 1 tbsp semolina
 - 1 tsp baking powder
 - 1 vanilla sugar or 1 tsp vanilla extract
 - Zest of one organic orange
- o Icing:
 - 60g icing sugar
 - 2 tbsp desiccated coconut
 - 2 tbsp water or as needed

First make the dough by sifting together flour, sugar and baking powder. Incorporate the fat with your fingers but be careful that it does not melt. Add sour cream or vegan yoghurt and make into a stiff dough. If needed add a splash of water. Do not overwork the dough – knead just so it comes together. Cover in plastic wrap and let it rest in the

fridge for 30 minutes. Meanwhile prepare the filling. If your curd is not of fine variety blitz it in a food processor until it's very fine. If it's too dry add sour cream or vegan yoghurt. In a separate bowl cream butter and sugar and add vanilla custard powder, semolina, baking powder, vanilla and orange zest. While mixing add the curd and fold it through.

Roll the pastry dough to 3 mm thickness and place it in springform baking pan. Prick the bottom with a fork so it bakes evenly. Next add the filling and tap the pan against the counter to release any air bubbles. Bake in preheated oven at 180°C for 40-55 minutes or until golden brown. Let it sit in an oven for extra 20 minutes. Meanwhile prepare the icing by mixing all of the ingredients together. Pour the icing over baked cheesecake and wait until it hardens. The cake should be served on room temperature.



Cuisine of Slovenia

Until 1960s Slovenia's agriculture primarily shaped by a tendency toward self-sufficiency, where farmers worked to supply for their own families, rather to sell the crops on the market. In that time food variety was still pretty much geographically determined, which was a heritage of long history and extremes in geography. "According to ethnological classification, there were traditionally four major types of food culture in Slovenia." Pannonian type in northeast of the country was shaped mostly by usage of wheat and buckwheat, of which many different types of pasta, leavened pies and breads were made. Sour cream, cottage cheese were important flavouring agents and paprika powder and poppy seeds common spices. Significant was use of excellent pumpkin oil, a speciality of the region. Northern or Alpine type Slovenian cuisine was characterized by a harsh climate and except for corn, buckwheat and maybe cabbage the conditions were not suitable for agriculture but animal husbandry flourished due to many grounds suitable for pasture. Food of this area relied heavily on dairy products such as milk, sour milk, curd and cheese often eaten with corn or buckwheat spoon dumplings žganci. For central Slovenian cuisine usage of root vegetables, especially potatoes and turnips was common. "Buckwheat and millet porridge [kaša], boiled in water or milk, was prepared frequently, as were cabbage and turnips." In the west of the country poor karstic soil influenced the cookery, which is in many regards similar to that of neighbouring Mediterranean countries. Certain foods such as tomatoes, courgettes, chicory, figs, persimmons, beans, corn and olive oil were much loved. "Among the most frequently consumed foods, usually included in most meals, were polenta, which substitutes for bread; thick vegetable soups called minestrone; vegetable and meat sauces.

A lot has changed, however, since 1960s when growing mobility of the rural population and the rising of living standard brought higher amount of consumer freedom. "At present, Slovenes' food culture mainly consist of bread and farinaceous products, potatoes, meat and meat products, and dairy products." Salad made of various types of lettuce is eaten often, though other vegetables, fruit and pulses are less important. However, the latter particularly "broad beans, lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas and green peas" played a crucial role in much of the countries cuisine through history. Also "the once widely popular porridge and žganci, which in the past represented the basic Slovene dishes and were prepared from buckwheat, millet and cornmeal, are now seldom consumed." Spices were already used in the territory in the Roman times and the affluent families used a wide variety all the way through middle ages into modernity. Most people, however, relied on domestic herbs to season dishes such as yarrow, basil, parsley, caraway, marjoram, chives, tarragon, thyme, sorrel, chervil, poppy seeds, etc.

Buckwheat žganci spoon dumplings and pickled turnips

- o For the žganci:
- o 400g buckwheat flour
- o Water
- o Salt
- o Topping:
- o 1 large onion or ¼ cabbage head finely chopped + 1 heaped tsp asafoetida
- o ½ dcl sunflower or canola oil
- o Salt
- o For the turnips:
- o 500g pickled turnips without pickling liquid (reserved)
- o 1 heaped table spoon of all-purpose flour
- o 1 garlic clove chopped or 1 tsp asafoetida
- o 1 table spoon tomato puree
- o 1 tsp paprika
- o 1 bay leaf
- o 1 tsp ground caraway seed
- o 2 table spoon vegetable oil (sunflower or canola)
- o Salt
- o Pepper

In a medium sized pot bring water to a rolling boil. Exact amount of water is not important as long as you use enough – 2/3 of the pot is ideal. Add a little less salt as you would with cooking pasta. Lower the heat so that the water is not bubbling and sprinkle the buckwheat flour on top. Do not stir and cook covered for 15 minutes on very low heat. After 15 minutes make a hole in the middle of the flour and steam the mixture for another 15 minutes on low heat. Meanwhile make the topping by frying the onion or cabbage in oil with a pinch of salt until golden brown. If using asafoetida add at the end for a few seconds. After half an hour drain the buckwheat flour with the help of the lid but reserve the liquid. Stirring vigorously return just enough cooking liquid back to the steamed flour so that it gets wet. That is best done few table spoons at a time. When there is no dry flour left use two spoons to form the žganci by making small dumplings: scoop a dollop of the mixture with one spoon and separate it in little pieces with another in a serving bowl. Pour hot topping over the žganci. For the accompanying turnips heat vegetable oil in a pan and make a blonde roux with flour. Add garlic or asafoetida, paprika and tomato puree and quickly stir. Next follow by turnips and some of the pickling liquid (adjust the amount to desired sourness), ground caraway seeds and a bay leaf. Cook for at least 45 minutes or until turnips have soften a bit (they should still have a little bite). Season to taste.

The consistency should resemble a thin sauce. Serve with žganci.

Bobiči Bean and corn minestrone

- o 4 medium potatoes cut in 1 cm cubes
- o 1 large bay leaf
- o 200g dried brown beans soaked overnight
- o 2 medium carrots cut in 1 cm cubes
- o 200g sweet corn (frozen or canned works well also)
- o 1 small onion and 1 garlic clove or 1 heaped tsp asafoetida
- o ½ celery stalk
- o 4 fresh summer tomatoes or 300g canned tomato chunks
- o Handful of fresh parsley leaves chopped
- o 2 table spoons of extra virgin olive oil
- o Salt
- o Pepper

Cook the beans with a bay leaf in a separate pot until fork tender. In another medium sized pot sauté the onions and garlic until translucent or asafoetida for just a few seconds with 1 table spoon of olive oil. Add the vegetables: carrots, celery, potatoes

and corn. Season and cook until tender, then add the beans with cooking liquid and tomatoes. Cook for another 10 minutes, finish with fresh parsley, remaining olive oil and adjust the seasoning. Serve with bread.

Granadirmarš – Macaroni and potatoes

- o 400g floury potatoes
- o 300g macaroni
- o 1 large onion minced or ¼ white cabbage minced and 3 tsp asafoetida
- o 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- o Salt and black pepper

Cook the potatoes whole with skin on in salted water until fork tender. Peel and dice. Cook the macaroni as per package instruction. Meanwhile heat up oil in a large pot and sauté the onion or cabbage until golden brown. If using asafoetida add when the cabbage is already nice and crispy. Add the potatoes and macaroni. Turn heat to low and let roast for 5-10 minutes stirring occasionally. A thick brown crust should form on the bottom of the pot, however be careful not to burn it. Turn off the heat and let it sit covered for 15 minutes so that the crust softens. Scrape it with a spatula and stir. Season to taste. Serve hot along with green salad.



Štruklji – boiled rolls

- o Dough:
 - 200 g all-purpose flour
 - 1 ½ dcl lukewarm water
 - 2 tbsp vegetable oil
 - 1 tsp salt
- o Filling:
 - 600 g cottage cheese or vegan cream cheese or 550g crumbled soft tofu and 50 g soy yoghurt
 - 5 tbsp sour cream or soy yoghurt
 - 2 tsp salt or to taste
 - 1 tbsp flour
 - 1 tbsp cornstarch
 - 2 tbsp butter or vegetable oil
- o Topping:
 - 4 tbsp butter or olive oil
 - 5 tbsp breadcrumbs

Make the dough by kneading all the ingredients together. Dough should be soft and elastic. Let it rest covered for 30 minutes. Make the filling by mixing all the ingredients together. Oil the working surface and stretch the dough with your hands to 3 mm thickness. You can also use a rolling pin if needed. Spread the filling on two thirds of the dough and smear the last third with butter or oil. Start rolling where the filling is. Place the roll onto the kitchen cloth or a similar cotton cloth. Cover tightly and thigh both ends and in the middle with a rope. Cook in boiling salted water for 20 minutes. Then take it out of the pot and let it rest in the cloth for a few minutes. Meanwhile prepare the topping by frying the breadcrumbs in fat until golden brown. Cut the Štrukelj into individual portions and top each with toasted breadcrumbs. Serve hot.

Potica – nut roll

- o Dough:
 - 600 g all-purpose flour
 - 40 g fresh yeast
 - 100 g soft tofu blended
 - Pinch of turmeric
 - 50 g butter or vegetable oil
 - 50 g sugar
 - 1 tsp salt
 - 2-3 dcl milk of your choice warm
 - Zest of 1 lemon
 - 2 vanilla sugars or 1 tsp vanilla extract
 - Breadcrumbs
- o Filling:
 - 400 g ground walnuts
 - 200 g sugar
 - 2 dcl milk of your choice
 - 40 g butter or refined coconut oil
 - 2-3 tbsp corn starch
 - 50 g raisins (optional)


First make the dough. Dissolve the yeast with a table spoon of sugar and flour in half of warm milk. Leave aside until it becomes foamy. In a separate bowl cream the butter and sugar and then add milk or if using vegetable oil combine together with remaining milk and whisk until sugar dissolves. Add the blended tofu and a pinch of turmeric, salt and lemon zest. Mix together yeast mixture, milk and fat mixture and flour and make a dough. Knead until it is no longer sticky. Set aside covered in a warm place until it doubles in size.

To make the filling bring milk sugar and butter or refined coconut oil to simmer. Pour over the walnuts, mix and let it cool. Then mix in sifted corn starch and raisins. The filling should be easy to spread.

Next roll the dough on a floured surface to 1 centimetre thickness in a rectangular shape. Spread the filling over the dough and roll into a log. Put in a greased and breadcrumb coated baking tray and let it rise for the second time. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Give the cake a nice milk wash with some dissolved sugar and bake for an hour to an hour and 30 minutes. Take out of the tray and transfer to a cooling rack immediately so that the crust does not become soggy. Let it cool completely before serving.

Literature

Albala, Ken ed. 2011. Food Cultures and the World – 1st edition. Santa Barbara: Greenwood.



»Originally, pizza was looked down upon in Italy as the poor man's food: it was just simple unleavened bread with a little tomato sauce for taste. Then, accompanying the early emigrants, it made its way to America, where it was garnished with cheese, olives, peppers, various meats, and so on, totally transforming the original into a kind of delicacy. Years later, when it made its triumphant return to the land of its origin, it became a highly respected dish on the menu of even the most eminent restaurants. The new product was eagerly accepted and even given pride of place in Italian cuisine. Lack of confidence in one's own culture, combined with the blind acceptance of all things new and foreign, often results in a phenomenon that social scientists call the "Pizza Effect," a phrase that was coined in as late as 1970 by an anthropologist named Agehananda Bharati.«



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