

Festive
Ukrainian
Cooking

Marta
Pisetska
Farley

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Marta Pisetska Farley

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*In memory of my father
Danylo Pisetsky
who taught me to love and respect my heritage*

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All the help notwithstanding, the responsibility for the book is mine. I am sure there will be readers who will differ with the opinions and interpretations of the material presented here. However, I hope that all will be enriched and entertained by discovering the rich culinary and spiritual traditions of the Ukrainian people.

Introduction

The intention of this book is to acquaint the reader with Ukrainian cuisine as it existed in the preindustrial era, and with modern variations on that cuisine. Ukrainian cooking embodies national and ethnic tastes and reflects the spiritual and social awareness of Ukrainians. This cookbook records these traditions and adapts the old recipes to modern use.

I began with questions. Why do Ukrainians eat what they eat when they eat it? Why do Ukrainians like tart and textured dishes? Attempting to answer these questions led to an examination of Ukrainian traditional, religious, and familial feasts. Preindustrial folk celebrations focused on the table. Food, its abundance and availability, marked the level of importance of an event, because scarcity was a frequent condition of life.

Ukrainian traditional cuisine was basically old home cooking. It evolved. It was tried and tested over centuries, and the patiently gathered knowledge it incorporated was passed on orally. Like all orally transmitted traditions, it was only as strong as the last link in the chain. Not until the nineteenth century were attempts made to document what and when Ukrainians ate and drank. This book is one of the links in that chain. I hope it will not be the last.

The Christian religious calendar superimposed on the folk calendar assured the redemption of the soul and offered to explain the mysteries of the world. Although the Christian church sharply opposed some of the old Ukrainian folk rites and customs as pagan and idolatrous, it softened this opposition by coopting customs, songs, and ritual dishes into Christian celebrations. Christmas thus replaced celebration of the winter solstice, Easter the rites of spring. However, Ukrainians continued to celebrate Christmas with *kutia* (a pudding made from whole wheat kernels, poppy seeds, and honey) that dated to very ancient times,¹ and Easter with *pysanky* (intricately decorated eggs) and *krashanky* (dyed cooked eggs) that also predated Christianity by centuries.

Family feasts marked birth, christening, betrothal, marriage, and burial. These inducted the individual into the family, clan, and nation. Religious rituals tied one to the succession of generations, past and present. Commemoration of the dead, deeply rooted

in antiquity, persists to this day. Twice a year, special graveside services were held that included the traditional sharing of food and *pysanky* with the dead. The individual anniversary of a family member's death was also commemorated.

A banquet was what distinguished a festive occasion, a religious holiday (*praznyk*) or a wedding, from the daily routine. Generous offering of food was a sign of hospitality as well as a token of respect. The degree of hospitality, the importance of a feast, respect toward a superior, or obligation to one's ancestors were all measured by the abundance of fare.² Rituals devised for tilling, planting, and harvesting crops were used to placate if not harness the evil, chancy, threatening elements of nature and to secure abundance.

Thus these elements woven together, as in the traditional braided *kalach* (ceremonial bread), form the basis of this book.

How prevalent are these practices today? Most of these traditions were common throughout the entire Ukraine, with regional variations, until the Second World War. Folk customs persisted in villages and small towns more than in large urban areas. The traditional sequence of holidays was still observed, and family events celebrated in accordance with the old customs, even among Ukrainians who had left their homeland.³ Of course, many agrarian practices, no longer relevant to city life, faded away.

In Soviet Ukraine, traditional religious feasts were officially ignored and their celebration forbidden because they conflicted with the official policy of atheism. New rites invented by Communist party officials reflected the party's history. The First of May and the October Revolution were celebrated instead of church festivals.⁴ Similarly, folk rites were suppressed because they encouraged "nationalistic separatism." That meant that any ties to a Ukrainian past ran counter to the policy of Russification of all Soviet peoples. But these festivals and folk traditions live on in Ukrainian expatriate communities and in their cuisine.

* * *

Bringing these recipes to the modern reader entailed a challenging exercise in ethnological research. In the old Ukraine, there were lists of dishes preserved in folk traditions, song, and stories, but there were no lists of ingredients or descriptions of methods of preparation.

Certain dishes appeared with greater frequency and at specific times of the year, depending on the availability and the seasonal abundance of ingredients. Other influential factors were dietary proscriptions of the Ukrainian Uniate and the Ukrainian

Orthodox churches, ethnic taste preferences and manner of eating, prehistoric pagan traditions, and foreign influences.

A culinary tradition is primarily determined by the productivity of the land. The Ukraine, a vast area the size of France, is bordered by the Carpathian Mountains to the west, the Russian S.F.S.R. to the north, the Caspian Sea to the east, and the Black Sea to the south. Higher-altitude areas, like the Hutsul and Boiko regions, grew corn and barley. The central plains and the steppes were famous for their wheat. Northern regions used buckwheat extensively. Pumpkins and eggplants were favored in the warm south.

Seasonal abundance of foods dictated the menus for celebrations of the time. Ukrainian traditional cooking reflected climate and season, mountain and meadow, plain and forest. For example, the Feast of the Transfiguration of Jesus (Spasa), August 19 of the Julian calendar (O.S.),⁵ was celebrated with the blessing of fruit. This followed the ancient tradition of using whatever was available and securing by proven methods its future use in some form.

Ukrainians, a deeply religious and spiritual people, found it natural to reflect the church's dietary dictates in everyday life. Both the Ukrainian Orthodox and the Ukrainian Uniate faiths called for fasting and abstinence at various times during the year.

The major fasts were those of Advent (Pylypivka) and Lent (Velykyi Pist). Eating meat and dairy products was limited to specific days and certain times of the year. Of course, this dictated the menu for certain feasts. Major holidays were marked by the abundance and variety of meat dishes. Thus, after the long abstinence of Lent, Easter morning was celebrated by a huge breakfast featuring meat in the form of roasts, sausages, smoked hams, and aspics. On the other hand, Saint Andrew's Eve, during Advent, featured meatless dishes.

The Christian faith, imported to the Ukraine from Constantinople at the end of the tenth century, was superimposed on existing pagan beliefs. Over the centuries, church feasts and rituals meshed with pagan rites. Nature feasts, designed to placate and harness the forces of nature, were combined with Christian celebrations. Thus, on the feast of Jordan commemorating Christ's baptism (January 19, O.S.) river waters were blessed to protect the village from floods.

To invoke the help and goodwill of ancestors, their spirits were honored with a special dish. Christmas Eve, that most Christian of celebrations, started with eating the commemorative ancient food called *kutia* or *kolyvo*, whose origin was traced to the ancient Trypilian civilization.⁶

Ukrainians enjoy tart and highly textured foods.⁷ *Kvas*, made of fermented grain or juices of vegetables (usually rye, beets, and cabbage), was used extensively as a base for soups, gravies, and stews. The most popular and ubiquitous source of *kvas* was beets. Borsch, in its many manifestations, had regional variations. However, its dominant ingredients were beet *kvas* and beets. Fermented cabbage, whether due to its storage capability or its refreshing tartness, proved a staple in Ukrainian kitchens. It was both tart and well textured. Some old cookbooks listed over twenty recipes just for *kapusniak*, a cabbage (sour or fresh) broth-soup-stew combination.

Smetana, lightly soured cream, served as a condiment for myriad soft dough dumplings and fritters. Also, it was the chief flavoring ingredient for sweet and savory soups, sauces, marinades, dressings, and desserts.

The dishes that appeared most frequently on a Ukrainian table were farinaceous—that is, dough, dumpling, pancake, and noodle combinations. This use of the most prevalent food grown, wheat in particular, made economic and dietary sense.⁸

Ukrainians took food seriously. Its symbolism, preparation, and consumption were important. Consequently, the behavior of guests and hosts was ritualized. There was no formal seating arrangement, except that the oldest person present or the honored guest (*ridkyi hist'*) was seated at the head of the table. At large feasts, the hosts saw to the needs of the guests, and sometimes stood and hovered over them.

During the meal, each person was modest in partaking of dishes, and the host's duty was to encourage guests to eat more. This encouragement and demurrals went on, back and forth, until everyone was very full.

Guests at a feast, wedding, or other celebration who were not repeatedly encouraged to eat felt slighted. The folk saying, "Davaly iisty i pyty, lyshe prynyky ne bulo!" ("To be offered food and drink yet without grace!")⁹ was considered a deep breach of etiquette.

Guests were obliged to praise the food, marvel at the variety of dishes, and comment on the gracious hospitality of their hosts. The host demurred and apologized for such a meager showing. Stinginess or careless presentation was a deep insult to a guest. Feasts were to be opulent, although of course quality and quantity were in fact determined by the host's economic and social position. Only if a visit were a surprise, not by planned invitation, would the guests be greeted by "Chym khata bohata" ("Whatever the home has") and an impromptu meal.

Ukrainian hospitality was legendary, as a folk saying implied: "Hist' v dim, Boh v dim" ("Guest in the home, God in the home"). Now, imagine the culture shock of a

Ukrainian family invited for an evening in an American home and served beer, potato chips with dip, and peanuts!

After the meal, each guest and family member thanked the host for the repast. There were ritualized thanks and forms of acceptance in many regions of the Ukraine. For example, in Volynia Province, in the late 1870s, the guests in the village households thanked by saying, “Syti-smo Vashym staraniam” (“We are satiated due to your efforts”), and the host replied, “Zdorovo vydykhaite” (“Breathe in health”).¹⁰

In today’s Ukrainian family dining room good manners still hold sway. The same spirit of generosity, by and large, prevails. The give-and-take of encouragement to eat is practiced. Ukrainian mothers still enforce decorous behavior at the table. As children are seated, each awaits a parental “Smachnoho” (a form of “bon appétit”), and answers with “Na vzaimno” (“And to you also”). A firm “Diakuiu” (“Thanks”) from the father or oldest adult to the hostess, echoed by the children, ends the meal. At times, children may excuse themselves before the coffee or tea, but never before “Diakuiu.”

The influence of other cultures on the Ukraine is evident. The ancient Ukraine acquired Hellenic and Roman influences across the Black Sea. For example, the tradition of *koliada* (traditional singing of carols) may be traced to the Roman *Calendae Januariae*.¹¹

Long after the fall of the Roman Empire, in the eighth and ninth centuries, the Varangian people (ancestors of the modern Swedes) settled in Kiev on the Dnieper River, where they were assimilated by native Ukrainians. Could this have been the source of the Ukrainians’ definite preference for dill weed? It was preserved by being salted or dried, and now is frozen. Fresh dill, of course, sets off creamed dishes perfectly. Maybe the Ukrainian love for salted herring (*oseledets*’) was also the contribution of the Varangians.

The Western view of Ukrainian cuisine is somewhat confused. Often it is lumped in the general category of “Russian.” A Soviet economist, I. S. Khymenko, tackled the subject of the influence of Russian cuisine on Ukrainian, and vice versa. He wrote:

The Ukrainian kitchen borrowed several foods from the Russian kitchen, which enriched its assortment. Such dishes were *schi* (sour broth), *solianka* (preserved cabbage soup), and *kolubiak* (fish in pastry).

In its turn, from the Ukrainian cuisine the Russians chose the following: numerous varieties of borsch, *varenyky* (soft dough dumplings), cheese pastries,

vegetables with a variety of stuffings, larded meats, stuffed fish, home cured pork sausages, etc.¹²

It was hardly an even exchange.

Another comparison of Russian and Ukrainian food and drink habits, in a study entitled *Bread and Salt* by R.E.F. Smith and David Christian, includes a quote from an eighteenth-century observer who compared the meals of Russians and Ukrainians:

The . . . food in Great Russian provinces was the same rye bread; the same *kvas*; the same soup made from pickled cabbage, with milk or fat on meat days and groat or nothing extra on fast days; sometimes gruel, sometimes milk, cottage cheese, eggs, potato soup, noodles, lightly roasted peas, turnips. . . .

At the other extreme, in Kherson province on the Black Sea in Ukraine, the inhabitants “generally make fresh food each morning and evening. It consists of borsch, and dumplings or millet gruel. . . . Sometimes they cook peas, *salamata*, potato or pumpkin gruel. . . . As seasoning, they use pork fat and meat, sometimes mutton, rarely beef; and also butter, cottage cheese, sour cream and fresh or fermented milk on meat days; on fast days the flavorings are fish and hemp or flax-seed oil.”¹³

Drinking habits of Russians and Ukrainians differed greatly. Smith and Christian report:

As distillation improved [in Russia], the alcohol content rose and the Russian custom of downing spirits at a go resulted in impressive drunkenness. Spirits largely ousted beer and mead in public taste with great profit for the state and farmer but none for the consumer.

In the Ukraine . . . drinking customs differed sharply. There, wine as well as spirits were drunk in taverns where those drinking could sit and talk as they sipped either drink. In 1787, it was reported that the Ukrainians “drink slowly and in small amounts; they chat, rather. And when they do get drunk, there are few rowdy and quarrelsome brawls among them and few then come to blows.” Even if this is a somewhat partial picture, it would be hard to find a Russian parallel.

The Ukraine might possibly have modified Russian drinking habits had closer links existed, but it seems unlikely; the Russian drink-shop was too well established and the state demand for revenue too great.¹⁴

There was evidence of the influence of the Austro-Hungarian kitchen on the western Ukraine. The development of the torte tradition (most prevalent in the province of Halychyna) may be traced to the Hapsburg court and its elegant chefs. The early modern cookbooks, such as Marja Monatowa's *Uniwersalna ksiązka kucharska*, written and published in Polish about 1900, included many French and Austrian grand recipes. It was used in some Ukrainian households and thus many fancy foreign dishes were assimilated into Ukrainian cooking. Furthermore, a Ukrainian cookbook by O. Franko (1929) showed marked similarities to the earlier Monatowa work.

* * *

Throughout this work, I considered all of the above elements and influences when addressing Ukrainian traditional cooking. Clearly, food consumption reflected the liturgical, agricultural, and pagan calendar of the preindustrial Ukraine. Therefore I have organized the book around the liturgical calendar, beginning with the Christmas season. I have also included current reinterpretations of the traditional calendar as it is followed in modern and expatriate Ukrainian communities.

This cookbook is designed for homemakers, novices and old hands alike, who wish to partake of the rich Ukrainian culinary tradition. The menus presented are authentic and representative, based on historical sources. Recipes have mostly been translated from the Ukrainian, except for a few from Old Russian. I have described the preparation of dishes in the modern mode for the convenience of the cook, and, as necessary, adapted historical recipes to achieve that purpose.

Note on Sources

The material presented in this book is derived from the work of Ukrainian ethnologists of the nineteenth century. Like their counterparts in England, Germany, and elsewhere, Ukrainian scholars turned to the lives of ordinary folk to understand their ethnic soul. Recording the folklore, the customs, and rituals of ordinary life became a scholarly rage.

Mykola Markevych, who published many works in Ukrainian studies, was such a scholar. His *Obychai, poveria, kukhnia i napytky malorosian (Customs, Beliefs, Kitchen, and Drinks of Ukrainians)* was published posthumously in Kiev in 1860. This work was published in Russian, since the use of Ukrainian was forbidden. The derisive term “Little Russians” reflected the colonial political reality for Ukrainians versus the colonizers, the “Great Russians.” As the title suggests, this work was all-inclusive. In it Markevych describes the rituals, beliefs, cuisine, and drinks of “Little Russians,” or Ukrainians. The section on food would be more insightful had Markevych some understanding of food preparation. Some recipes started out with “Take a pig” Quantities were described as “large,” “some,” and “little.” However, the document chronicled specific dishes and their use in central Ukraine in the early 1800s, when the field research took place.

A group of scholars in western Ukraine collected materials for a Ukrainian ethnological encyclopedia, among whom Ivan Franko’s work was paramount. None of these studies, published in the 1870s, focused on food. It was mentioned tangentially as part of ritual or celebration. Dishes were listed, but ingredients and preparation were left to the imagination and skill of the cook.

Ukrainian cookbooks at the turn of the century showed a strong interest in, and adherence to, traditional tastes. Some of these books were intended for beginning homemakers, others as instructions for professional cooks. An example of the latter was *Kukharka Rus’ka (A Ukrainian Cook)* (c. 1900), an extensive two-volume work written by “Florentina” and “Wanda.”

A wonderful cookbook published in Kiev-Lviv at about this time was Z. Klynovets’ka’s *Stravy i napytky v Ukraini v davnyntu (Dishes and Drinks in Old Ukraine)*. According to

Natalia Chaplenko, it was ghost-written by Klynovets'ka's son-in-law, who had been so taken with her culinary knowledge and skills that he compiled and published her recipes.

Some books and pamphlets on cooking were similar to home extension service publications, giving instructions in hygienic food preparation of favored and holiday dishes. *Nasha knyha: Almanakh zhinochoi doli* (*Our Book: Woman's World Almanac*) of 1927, was an example. Others aped the fashionable kitchens of imperial Austria-Hungary. O. M. Franko's *Persha ukrains'ka zahal'no-praktychna kukhnia* (*First Ukrainian Universally Useful Cuisine*) published in Kolomyia, Ukraine, in 1929, included many recipes of foreign origin and probably mimicked Marja Monatowa's work, in Polish, entitled *Uniwersalna ksiazka kucharska*, of an earlier date.

Detailed, sophisticated articles in elegant glossy publications suggested new versions of old favorite dishes. The lavish magazine *Nova Khata* (*New Home*), 1926–39, featured Ukrainian traditional holidays and name days, and included seasonal menus, specific recipes, and food-related features.

After the Second World War, in camps for displaced persons throughout Europe, there appeared brochures and small publications devoted to traditional Ukrainian dishes. Some advised on how to deal with the severe food shortages and how to use “mock” ingredients to produce traditional dishes. *Nashi stravy* (*Our Dishes*) by Olena Savych was one. There followed articles on traditional cooking in women's magazines published in the United States and Canada. Savella Stechishin's comprehensive work in English, *Traditional Ukrainian Cookery*, published in 1963, remains an authoritative source.

Natalia Chaplenko's *Ukrainian Culinary Glossary* (New York, 1980), compiled specific Ukrainian culinary terms, many of which had fallen into disuse. Furthermore, this dictionary listed Ukrainian words for those that had been Russified or Polonized.

The post-Stalin era in the Ukrainian S.S.R. witnessed a surge of publications dealing with traditional feasts, holidays, and cookery. “Officially encouraged” by Communist Soviet ideology, writings of T. O. Hontar, Daria Tsvek, and others reflected this renewed interest.

I found enticing literary references to feasts listing at length the dishes served, but without any clue as to ingredients or proportions or manner of preparation. Some of these were favorites that had remained constant, others totally obscure. Notable feasts, such as cossack banquets, were described in Ivan Kotliarevsky's *Eneida*. A more updated listing of preferred festive dishes was found in Drai Khmara's letters written to his wife from Siberian exile in 1938.

Current sources of traditional, pre-twentieth century Ukrainian eating habits were described in the works of Stephan Kylymnyk and Oleksa Voropai, written from exile in Canada and the United Kingdom, respectively. These scholars focused on traditions, rituals, and customs of the Ukraine; food and its use in rituals entered the picture only tangentially.

A few Ukrainian Soviet sources were rich on secular topics such as family feasts, especially weddings. An impressive two-volume work, *Vesillia*, described historical Ukrainian wedding practices with regional variations. This history of wedding practices was published in Kiev in 1970, under the collective authorship of *Naukova Dumka* (*Scholarly Thought*).

Building on the above sources and many others, this book brings to yet another generation the rich table of festive Ukrainian cooking.

I

Traditional Feasts

Christmas Eve (Sviata Vechera)

The traditional year for Ukrainians started with the great period of abstinence called Pylypivka (Advent). By fasting on certain days and restraining from dancing, Ukrainians prepared themselves for Christmas and its celebration. Until quite recently, Ukrainians celebrated the Christmas season from Christmas Eve (January 6, O.S.) to the Feast of Jordan (January 19, O.S.).

The Birth of Christ (Rizdvo Khrystove) started the church calendar for Uniate and Orthodox Christians alike. As with many great feasts, the eve (*navecherie*) preceding the day marked the beginning of the celebration. Christmas Eve ended with Holy Supper (Sviata Vechera). However, there was much preparation beforehand.

Before partaking of the Christmas Eve meal, the family fasted all day. The house was put to order, but no outside work was done. All members wore festive clothing. This was a holy day. The tone of the supper was that of “festive dignity.” The meal officially began with the sighting of the first star, a task assigned to the children. The male head of the household (*hospodar*) took a bowl of *kutia* (flummery) and invited the souls of all departed family members to partake of the meal. He invited the forces of nature to share in the meal and to protect the family from natural calamities in the coming year.¹ Specific rituals and spells to placate nature’s fury differed regionally.

One important ritual that prevailed in many households was the communal sharing of bread and honey. The *hospodar* took a plate with small pieces of *kolach* and a dish containing honey and salt, and, dipping each piece of bread lightly in honey, approached each member of the household, starting with the eldest, then his wife. He offered the bread with the greeting: “Chrystos razhdayet’sia” (“Christ is born”); he was answered: “Slavite Yeho” (“Let us glorify Him”).

The female head of the household (*hospodynia*) repeated the greeting. After that, the supper began, dish following dish, ending with *kutia* or *uzvar*, depending on which one

began the celebration. Each family in each locality developed its own adaptation of this meal, so that there were many variations on a basic theme.

After the meal, the *hospodar* visited the barn animals and added *kutia* to their feed. This custom reflected the strong belief that this dish had magical properties far greater than the sum of its ingredients would suggest. The animals were believed to be endowed with speech on Christmas Eve, as a gift from God for their service to the Christ Child on the night of His birth. Other ritual activities were important to varying degrees in different regions.

The menu for Sviata Vechera varied from province to province in execution and order of presentation. The number of dishes ranged from twelve (most common) to nine or seven. Each number had magical associations.

The table was set with specific items. The table was strewn with hay, symbol of fertility and abundant harvest, then covered with a cloth. A large *kolach*, flanked by candles, was placed in the center of the table. A dish of salt and a dish of honey were put at the host's place. On a sideboard, a lit candle with a dish of *kutia* commemorated the family's dead. An extra place for the unexpected guest remained set until the end of the meal. A sheaf of wheat, symbol of abundance and nature itself, graced a corner of the room.

Christmastime lasted three days, January 7–9 (O.S.). Guests and neighbors were invited to visit on Christmas Day and on the second and third days of Christmas. Treats were numerous, primarily nuts, sweet cookies, or rolls. Visits were frequent and convivial.

Among all groups of people, caroling was the main outdoor activity. *Koliady* and *shchedrivky* were sung throughout the Christmas season, an ancient practice probably traceable to Roman influence. Every peer group—*hospodari*, *hospodyni*, girls, and young men—went about the village or town and greeted each household with these seasonal songs. Each group had its own appropriate repertory that differed from region to region, but the custom of caroling was all-pervasive. *Koliadnyky* (carolers) were invited into the homes and given treats, food, and drink: *horilka* (whiskey) to *hospodari*, nuts and fruits to boys and girls.

Today, in the United States and Canada, *koliada* is used as a vehicle through which Ukrainian charities solicit donations. The gift now is money. Children and young adults still visit Ukrainian homes and sing the ancient “Boh Predvichnyi” (“God Eternal”) and receive traditional treats.

Christmas was followed by Malanka (New Year's Eve), January 13 (O.S.). This holiday had fused with an old celebration known as Shchedryi Vechir (Generous Evening). Foods prepared for this evening differed regionally. In the Dnipro area, pies with meat filling and buckwheat pancakes with sausages were offered. In southern Ukraine, *bublyky* (small savory rolls) found popularity. In the Hutzul area, in the Carpathian Mountains, *varenyky* were featured.²

One old custom for welcoming the New Year was the practice of *zasivannia* (sowing). A young boy took a sack of wheat and went from house to house, greeting everyone with the New Year, scattering the grain on the floor and reciting appropriate verses of good wishes. For this greeting, he was rewarded with coins. Some housewives hurriedly offered the coins so as not to have an excess of "good wishes" to clean up.

Jordan-Vodokhreschenia (Jordan–Blessing of the Waters) signaled the end of the Christmas celebrations. On the eve of January 19 (O.S.), a scaled-down version of Sviata Vechera was served. This had the popular name of *holodna kutia* (hungry meal). On the feast day (*praznyk*) itself, after the church service, everyone went to the local stream or river where the men had carved a large cross from the river's ice, often stained red with beet juice. There, the cross and the waters were blessed by the priest. This was a combined effort to celebrate the Christian feast of Christ's baptism and to "buy protection" from the forces of nature from spring floods.

Modern Adaptation of Sviata Vechera (Christmas Eve)

The modern adaptation of Sviata Vechera is faithful to some of the old traditions discussed above. The house is cleaned, the table set with the best china and candles. One candle and one dish of *kutia* are placed in the window in memory of the souls of ancestors—or more recently, in memory of Ukrainian soldiers who fought in the war for Ukraine's independence in 1918. An extra place is set for the unexpected guest.

The table is covered by an embroidered linen cloth. A large *kolach* with Christmas greenery (instead of the traditional straw or hay) serves as the centerpiece. A plate with small pieces of *kolach* and a dish of honey is set at the head of the family's place. In the corner of the room, a Christmas tree decorated with handmade ornaments substitutes for the ancient sheaf of wheat (*didukh*).

The same basic dishes are prepared and served in traditional order. Dietary restrictions have been somewhat modified by the church, and many cooks cheat a little by

including ingredients that were formerly banned. These include eggs, butter, and cheeses, which are used primarily in the preparation of *kolach*, *pampushky*, and fillings for *varenyky*.

It is very proper for families to develop personal adaptations of this basic Sviata Vechera menu. Some families dote on fried fish or marinated herring (a perennial favorite). Some prefer the fancy fish quenelles. Some serve two or three fish courses.

Individual interpretations of borsch are also common. Usually, the borsch served is the full-bodied but meatless "Ukrainian" borsch, which includes all the vegetables and is thickened with *zaprazhka* (roux). Some families serve just a clear bouillon of beet broth, *kvas*, and stock, with *vushka* (dumplings) floating on top.

The target number of dishes is twelve, in honor of the apostles, or the magic numbers nine or seven if one is superstitious. The traditional menu adapted usually includes: braided bread (*kolach*) with honey; beet soup or broth (borsch) and dumplings (*vushka*) with mushroom filling; fish in aspic or in other style; stuffed cabbage leaves (*holubtsi*) with mushroom sauce; dumplings (*varenyky*) filled with mashed potatoes and sauteed onions; dumplings filled with cabbage and sauerkraut; compote of dried fruit (*uzvar*); flummery (*kutia*) of wheat kernels with honey, poppy seeds, etc.; tea with lemon; yeast-raised doughnuts (*pampushky*) with rose preserves.

Braided Bread (*Kolach*)

The traditional bread for Sviata Vechera, also featured at various religious and family feasts, is kalach or kolach.³ It is braided and formed into a circle or oblong shape. The top is glazed and sprinkled with poppy seeds. Its round shape gives it its name—kolo, a circle—and may symbolize eternity or the sun.

- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 cup lukewarm water
- 2 envelopes dry yeast
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 2 cups warm milk (about 110°)
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2–4 tablespoons oil or melted butter
- 8–9 cups flour
- 1 egg beaten with 1 tablespoon water for glaze
- 2 tablespoons dry poppy seeds

Dissolve 1 teaspoon sugar in water and sprinkle yeast over it. Add 1 tablespoon sugar, stir, and let stand 10 minutes. Combine yeast with milk, lightly beaten eggs, salt, 2 tablespoons sugar, oil, and 3 cups sifted flour. Beat until smooth. Cover and let rise in a warm place until light and bubbly, about 1 hour. Mix in remaining flour and knead until smooth and elastic and dough leaves the side of the bowl easily.

Or, in processor, add yeast mixture to flour, then add liquids. With machine running, add more flour until a ball forms. Allow to rest for several minutes. Process until dough is smooth and elastic.

Form into a ball and place in lightly oiled bowl, turning once to oil the top. Cover with towel and let rise in a warm place until double in bulk. Punch down and allow to rise again slightly.

Divide dough into 3 parts. (See figs. 1–4). On a floured work surface, divide one part into thirds, rolling each into a rope 8 to 10 inches long and 1½ inch thick. Braid together, starting at the middle, and turn ends under. Repeat to make other two loaves and place on buttered baking sheets. Do not crowd, since loaves will double in size. Cover with damp towel and let rise until almost double. Brush with egg glaze and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Bake in preheated oven at 375° at least 1 hour, until golden. Test by rapping the bottom; there should be a nice hollow sound. Cool on racks.

Makes 3 medium loaves.

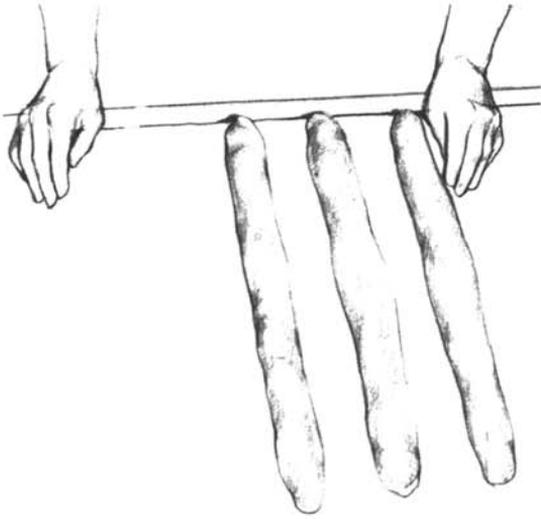


Fig. 1

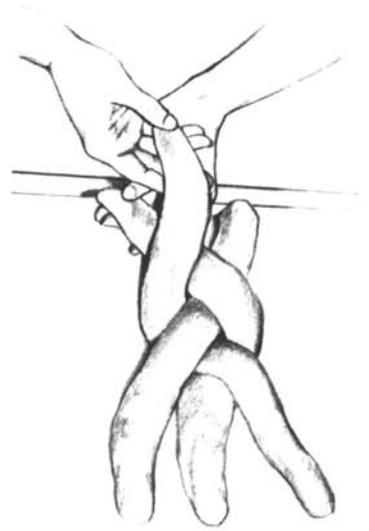


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

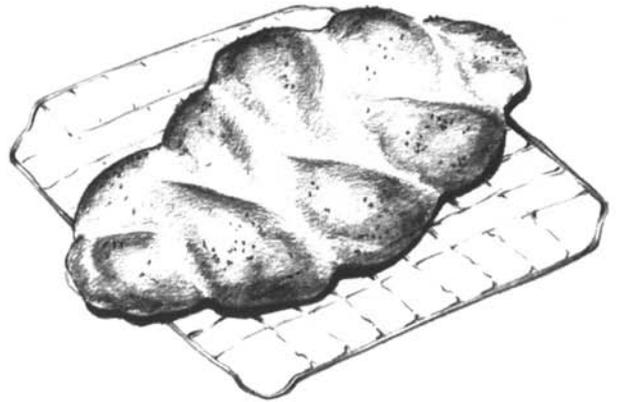


Fig. 4

Fermented Beet Juice (*Burakovyi kvas*)

Beet kvas is an unduplicatable flavoring for borsch. It adds a mellow, mild tartness and imparts a beautiful intense color. Though not at all complicated to make, it takes a little forethought to set it out after Saint Andrew's, December 6 (O.S.), to be ready for Sviata Vechera.

3 pounds beets
**3 tablespoons coarse salt (not
table salt; it has additives)**
1 slice sourdough bread
2–3 quarts water
1 square cheesecloth and string
1 gallon glass jar or stone crock
4 quart jars or 8 pint jars

Scrub beets, pare, and cut in quarters. Place in a clean jar and sprinkle with salt. Boil water and pour into jar. Cool, add bread to aid in fermentation, cover with cheesecloth and tie with string. Set in a cool place to ferment for about 1 week. (Do not ferment *kvas* in hot humid weather; it will decompose, not sour.) Remove mold as it appears. Flavor develops in 1 or 2 weeks. Remove bread, mold, and cheesecloth. Taste; it should be sourish but mild, not brackish. Pour into clean dry jars, cover, and refrigerate. Discard beets. Keeps well in refrigerator.

Meatless Beet Soup (*Pisnyi borsch*)

In Ukrainian cuisine, *borsch* is a national dish. Its numerous adaptations have led to a plethora of forms. It may be a combination of many winter vegetables, with meat and sour cream, or it may be as simple as beet *kvas* with meat stock and shredded beets, garnished with mushroom dumplings, or just the broth from beets, *kvas*, and stock with *vushka*. There are regional disputes as to the most authentic form of *borsch*. This elegant version was popular in the Kievan region in the 1830s.⁴

- 2 pounds beets
- 1 carrot
- 1 parsnip
- 1 turnip
- 2 celery ribs
- 2 medium onions
- 1 bay leaf
- 3–4 peppercorns
- 3 dried boletus or ½ pound
chopped mushrooms
- liquid from cooked mushrooms
(optional)
- 1 quart beet *kvas*; 1 teaspoon
sour salt (crystallized citric
acid) if not using *kvas*
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper or to
taste
- 2 teaspoons fresh chopped dill

Soak boletus overnight. Cook in a little water until tender. Cool, reserve liquid, and chop fine. Scrub beets and cut into quarters. Cover with water and cook over low heat until tender, about 1 to 2 hours. Cool and pour off liquid. Slip off peels. (Wear rubber gloves to prevent purple hands.) This may be done a day in advance.

Peel and cut up the other vegetables. Add bay leaf, peppercorns, and boletus or mushrooms to vegetables, with enough water to cover, and cook in a large non-aluminum pot over low heat until tender. Strain beet liquid into vegetables. Shred beets in a processor or on a medium grater, and add. Simmer for about 10 minutes, and strain into a large pot. To keep broth clear, do not press the vegetables. Add beet *kvas*, mushroom liquid, pepper, and salt. Bring to a gentle boil, then turn heat low. Taste; the flavor should be tart, mellow, and full. For more tartness, add fresh lemon juice or sour salt. Keeps well in refrigerator. Reheat gently; do not overcook or the color will turn brown.

To serve, pour over 3 or 4 *vushka* (see following recipe) in soup plates, and garnish with chopped dill.

Little Ear Dumplings (*Vushka*)

Tiny stuffed dumplings can be found in other cuisines. Italians call a similar pasta tortellini, and the Chinese have their wonton. Ukrainian vushka are served in clear broth and specifically with borsch on Christmas Eve. There is no substitute for them. The dough is a light soft dough and the filling is a mixture of wild mushrooms and onions.

2 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 egg yolk
½ cup evaporated milk or
whole milk
1 teaspoon oil or melted butter

Combine flour and salt. Add milk, egg yolk, and oil, and mix. Allow to rest for 5 minutes. Knead for 5 minutes and form into a ball. (This may be done in a processor.) Cover and set aside for 15 minutes or so. On a floured surface, roll out a third of the dough into a rectangle ⅛ inch thick. (See figs. 5–7.) Turn dough and roll from center, so that all dough is even in thickness. Run a hand under dough to loosen it. Dust with flour, flip over, flour again. With a sharp knife, cut into 1½ inch squares.

Place a teaspoon of mushroom filling (see following recipe) in each square, being careful not to smear edges. Fold diagonally to make a triangle. Pinch together the two bottom corners. (Make sure dough has bonded, or the stuffing will boil out.) Place on cookie sheets covered with towels dusted with flour. Roll out scraps last, as this dough is a little tougher.

Drop 10 or 12 *vushka* into 6–8 cups of rapidly boiling water and stir once with a wooden spoon. Do not cover. When they float to the top, cook 1 minute, then remove with a slotted spoon to a strainer. Cool on a lightly oiled plate without crowding. Repeat until all are cooked. Cover and set aside. These may be frozen and then reheated in boiling water. Do not overcook when reheating.

To serve, place 4 or 5 *vushka* in soup plates and pour hot borsch over them.



Fig. 5

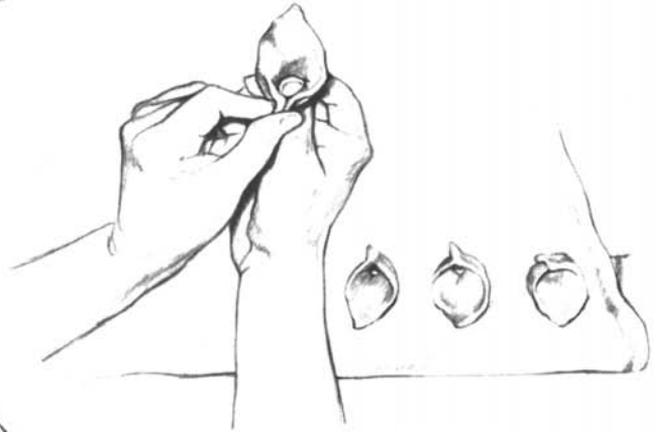


Fig. 6

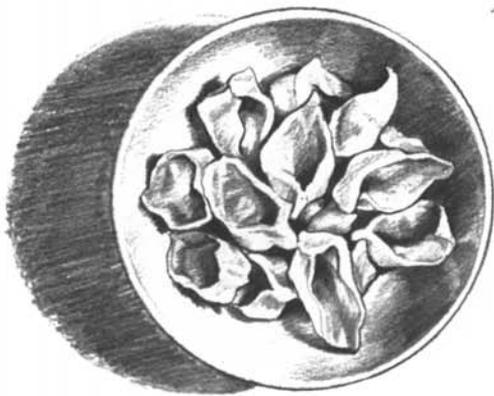


Fig. 7

Mushroom Filling (*Nachynka z hrybiv*)

This mushroom mixture may be used as filling for vushka (see previous recipe) or pyrizky (baked filled pastry used as appetizers or with soup) and as a base for mushroom gravy. It is similar to the basic duxelles. Dried boletus may be found in specialty stores.

¼ pound dried boletus or dried Italian mushrooms (*porcini*)
2 pounds fresh mushrooms, mature if possible
4 medium onions
1 cup oil or ½ pound butter
2 teaspoons ground black pepper
3 teaspoons salt
½ cup dry bread crumbs
juice of 1 lemon

In a saucepan with enough water to cover, bring dried mushrooms to a boil and simmer until tender, about 1½ hours. Do not allow to cook dry; add water as needed. Cool, set aside. Wipe fresh mushrooms with a damp towel, trim stems, chop fine, and set aside.

Chop onions and cook in oil or butter in a heavy skillet until wilted. Add chopped fresh mushrooms and cook over medium heat, stirring. Remove dried mushrooms from the liquid (reserve it), chop fine, and mix in. Cook until mushroom mixture is dry, then season to taste. Add lemon juice and bread crumbs. Stir and remove from heat. Keep stirring while cooling to allow steam to escape.

Yield: 1 quart. May be used to flavor rice for cabbage rolls and to make gravy and soup.

Mushroom Gravy (*Hrybova pidlyva*)

The terrific flavor in this gravy comes from the wild boletus. These mushrooms are very aromatic and therefore in great demand.

1 cup mushroom mixture (see previous recipe)
1 cup stock
1 cup light cream
1 tablespoon cornstarch (optional)
salt and pepper

Heat stock in a saucepan, add mushroom mixture, and bring to a boil. Add cream and heat through. Season to taste. For a thicker gravy, add cornstarch to a little of the cream, and then add to the hot gravy. Note: this gravy is excellent with *holubtsi* (cabbage rolls) and roasts, or over toast points.

Fish in Aspic (*Studynyna rybiacha*)

Fish in aspic is excellent for Sviata Vechera since it may be prepared up to five days ahead and be in peak taste for serving on Christmas Eve.

- 1 firm-fleshed fish (whitefish,
Canadian sole, flounder),
about 2 pounds
- 3–4 fish heads and fish
trimmings
- 2 large onions
- 2 carrots
- 4–5 black peppercorns
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 envelope gelatin

Wash whole fish and fish heads in cold water. Run a knife over fish, scraping from tail to head, to remove any leftover scales. Rinse the gut cavity. Cut off the head at the gills, rinse again, and cut into equal pieces. Rub inside and out with salt and set aside.

Remove gills from the heads. Combine fish heads, tail, fins, and all ingredients in a 4 quart pot, and cover with 6 cups cold water. Bring to a boil, skimming off foam, then reduce to a gentle simmer. Cook for 20 minutes or until heads are cooked through. Using a small sieve lined with a wet towel or cheesecloth, pour liquid into a 2 quart jar. When most is poured off, press lightly on the remains and pour off the rest.

Place sections of fish in about 2 cups of stock. Bring to a gentle boil and simmer for about 10 minutes until fish turns white. Do not overcook or pieces will fall apart. Remove with a slotted spoon, place on a platter, and when cool enough to handle, remove skin and bones. (Try to keep pieces large and not ragged.) Cover and cool. Strain cooking liquid again and add to rest of stock. For a more intense flavor, stock may be reheated and reduced by a third. Dissolve gelatin in 1 cup of fish stock and add. Taste, and add salt as needed. Cool.

Pour in enough stock to cover the bottom of a 6 cup fish mold or glass pan by ½ inch. Refrigerate until set. Remove peel from the cooked carrots and slice into thin rounds. Arrange carrot rounds in an attractive pattern on the aspic, add a little more cooled stock,

and cool. Evenly spread fish pieces over the aspic, cover with more stock, and cool until set. Continue to add stock until fish is completely covered. Refrigerate overnight.

To serve, run a sharp knife around the edge of the mold. Place a platter over the top of the mold, and invert. (A hot damp cloth helps to release it.) Garnish with parsley and lemon slices.

Meatless Cabbage Rolls (*Pisni holubtsi*)

Cabbage rolls are an important part of the Christmas Eve menu. The cabbage leaves are blanched and filled with rice or buckwheat kasha, spiced, and baked. They are served with mushroom gravy.

2 cups rice
 4 cups water
 1 head of firm white cabbage,
 without bruised leaves, 4–5
 pounds
 2–3 medium onions
 ¼ pound butter
 1 cup mushroom mix (see
 p. 13)
 1 tablespoon salt
 1 teaspoon black pepper, or to
 taste
 16 ounces canned tomatoes
 1 bouillon cube or 1 tablespoon
 Maggi sauce
 tomato juice or water as needed

In a medium saucepan, combine rice and water. Bring to a boil, stir gently, reduce heat to low, cover, and cook about 20 minutes. Cool in a large bowl. Core the cabbage and place it in a large pot or dutch oven half filled with water, cover, and bring to boil. Cook about 2 minutes. As outer leaves become translucent and soft, pry off and remove with a wooden spoon. Continue until the head is about 5 inches in diameter, remove, and save for cabbage filling (see p. 22). Trim leaves by paring off the thick part of the rib. (See figs. 8–12.)

In a large skillet, sauté chopped onions in melted butter until lightly cooked. Add onions and mushroom mix to rice, stir gently, but do not mash. Add salt and pepper to taste. Line the bottom of a baking dish with the outer cabbage leaves. Place a large spoonful of filling at the stem end of each leaf, fold over sides, then roll from bottom to top. Do not overstuff, or the results will resemble hand grenades. (Cereal expands with cooking.) Without crowding, arrange in neat layers in the baking dish, covering the last layer with a few cabbage leaves. Coarsely mash tomatoes and pour over rolls. Add bouillon cube or Maggi seasoning, cover, and bake in a 325° oven for about 2 hours. Add tomato juice or water as needed; there should be 2 to 3 inches of liquid at the bottom. Baked rolls will keep hot for about 1 hour.

Yield: about 2 dozen. To freeze, before baking place rolls on an oiled baking sheet and freeze until rigid, then store in heavy plastic bags. Serve with mushroom gravy.

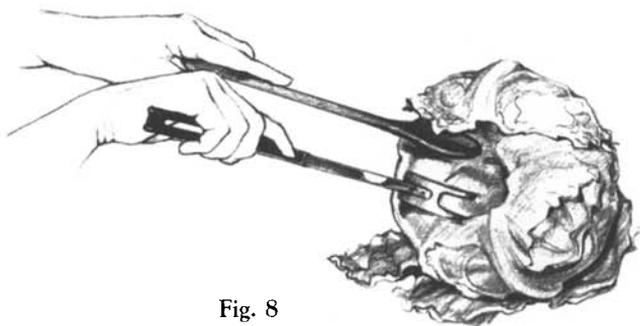


Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

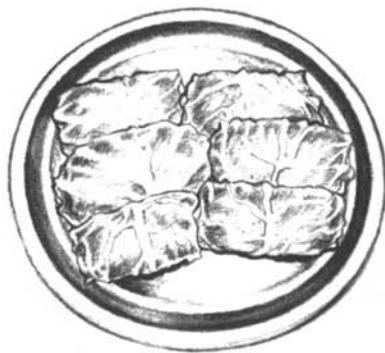


Fig. 12

Filled Dumplings (Varenyky)⁵

Varenyky for Sviata Vechera are special. Whereas these small half moons of soft dough may be filled with a variety of delectable combinations of vegetables, fruits, meats, and cheeses, for Christmas Eve potato and cabbage fillings prevail. The dough should be thin, but not too thin, and resilient to the bite, but not tough; the filling should be distinct, but not overwhelming, in flavor.

There are as many variations on this dough as there are Ukrainian cooks. Old cookery instructions always started out with "Make the dough as for varenyky," implying that everyone knew how to make it properly. Varenyky have their place in Ukrainian folklore. Various tales recount feats of eating large quantities of varenyky. Superstition has it that if one counts as one makes them, they will overcook and the filling seep out, so cooks have devised ways of arranging them in uniform rows so as to avoid counting individually.

This versatile dish promotes individuality. Some cooks like plump varenyky, smaller rounds for different stuffings, and thinner dough for different fillings. Potato-cheese filling (see following recipe) is usually the plumpest, and the rounds are thicker than they are for sauerkraut and cabbage fillings. Fruit-filled varenyky are made with more delicate dough. This recipe omits eggs, since they toughen the dough. However, many cooks do use them.

Making varenyky is fun. Grandparents and children may be enlisted to roll the dough, cut out rounds, or fill them. However, cooking the dumplings should be reserved for experienced cooks.

5 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup evaporated milk
½ cup water, as needed

Combine flour and salt in a large bowl, forming a well in the middle. Add butter and milk and mix lightly until flour is absorbed. (Add a little warm water if needed.) Knead until dough sticks together, cover and allow to rest for a few minutes, then knead until smooth. Cover and set aside. (The dough should be somewhat soft, since more flour is added as dough is rolled out.)

Or, in processor, combine flour, salt, and butter and stir a few times. With machine running, add liquids until a ball forms. Allow to rest a few minutes, then process until smooth.

Place dough in a lightly oiled bowl, turn, and cover for about 30 minutes before rolling out. (It may be wrapped in plastic and refrigerated for a day or so, brought to room temperature, and then rolled out.)

Place a fourth of the dough on a floured work surface; cover remaining dough. Roll into a circle, away from the center, turn over, flour lightly, and roll again to about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thickness (see fig. 13). Run a hand under the bottom to loosen it. With a 3 inch biscuit cutter or wineglass, cut rounds (see fig. 14). Place a tablespoon of filling to one side of each round, flip over other half, and press edges together, sealing in filling (see figs. 15–17). Place dumplings on a floured tray; keep dumplings covered with a towel.

Gently drop 10 to 15 *varenyky* in 3 quarts boiling water in a large wide pot or dutch oven. Do not crowd. Stir and cook 3 to 4 minutes. Drain in colander. Place on lightly oiled tray and shake to coat with a thin film of oil (to prevent sticking). Do not pile dumplings on top of each other, as this distorts their shape. (See figs. 18–20.)

If *varenyky* are to be frozen, remove with a slotted spoon when they float to the top. Do not overcook. To freeze, place in freezer on an oiled cookie sheet while tepid. When they are rigid, store in tightly sealed plastic bags.

To serve: *varenyky* may be poached, pan-fried, or steamed, served as an accompaniment to meats, or served with sour cream, chopped sautéed onions, or fried bacon with a little bacon fat.

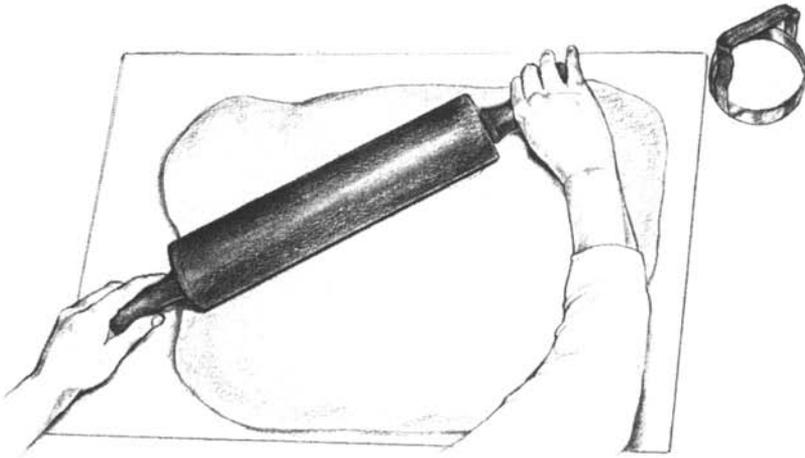


Fig. 13

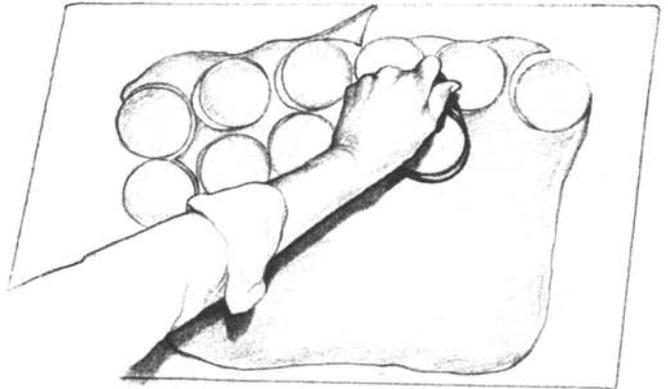


Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 16



Fig. 17

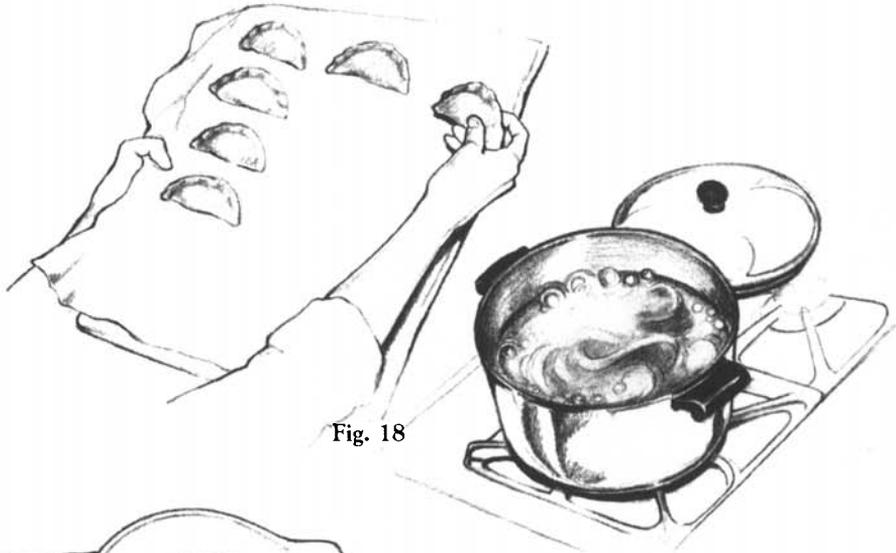


Fig. 18

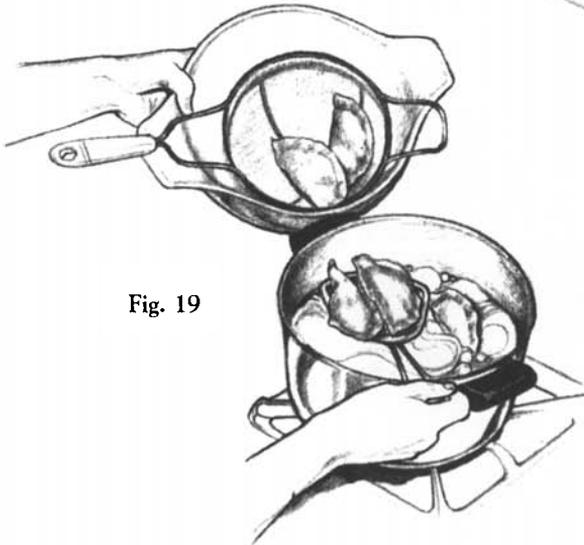


Fig. 19

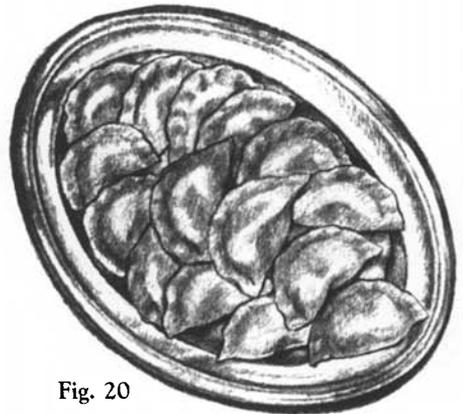


Fig. 20

Potato-Cheese Filling for Varenyky (*Kartopliana nachynka*)

This filling is by far the most popular for varenyky. Many non-Ukrainians are under the false impression that potato is the only filling for varenyky. Before the nineteenth century, however, the potato was scarcely used in the Ukraine; varenyky were filled with a turnip and onion filling.

5–6 medium to large potatoes
2–3 onions
½ cup oil or ¼ pound butter
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
or dry *bryndzia* (sheep's milk
cheese)
2 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons ground pepper

Peel and quarter potatoes, cover with water, and cook until soft. Meanwhile, cook chopped onions in melted butter until golden. Drain and rice potatoes. Shred cheddar cheese or crumble *bryndzia*. Add onions, cheese, salt, and pepper to potatoes and mix well. Allow to cool, stirring occasionally. Filling may be refrigerated for several days. Do not freeze filling.

Note: leftovers may be used to make breakfast cakes or as filling for potato boats or stuffed green peppers.

Cabbage Filling for Varenyky (*Nachynka z kapusty*)

Varenyky stuffed with cabbage and sauerkraut are usually a little darker than the potato ones when cooked, and often family members pick over the platter to fish out either one or the other. (This practice is frowned upon at more formal dinners.) Both fillings have their staunch supporters. Both are delectable.

1 pound sauerkraut
3 cups shredded fresh white
cabbage
3 medium onions
½ cup oil or ¼ pound butter
2 teaspoons fresh ground pep-
per or to taste
1 bouillon cube

Pour off sauerkraut juice and set aside. Sauté onions in oil or butter until golden. Add chopped sauerkraut, cabbage, bouillon cube, and sauerkraut juice. Cook over low heat, uncovered, until liquid evaporates, stirring often. Add pepper, stir, and cool. Chop once or twice in processor, or run through a meat grinder.

Note: this stuffing is also excellent in *pyrizhky* or in crepes. Keeps well in refrigerator.

Dried Fruit Compote (Uzvar)

The Ukraine is known for its beautiful and abundant orchards. Fruit in many forms is eaten fresh and used cooked in dishes. Dried fruit is used year round. This compote, a traditional dish made from dried fruit, included dried legumes in olden times. In some regions, such as Bukovyna, the combination of dried prunes and beans still lives on. This recipe is a standard, widely used nineteenth-century version.

4 ounces dried prunes, pitted
4 ounces raisins
8 ounces dry apple slices
8 ounces dry pear quarters
1 cup honey (clover or wild)
1 stick cinnamon
6 cloves
2 quarts apple cider
juice and peel of 1 lemon

Combine fruit in a large pot and fill with enough cider to cover it by a third more. (The fruit will absorb a lot of liquid.) Add cloves and lemon peel. Simmer until the larger pieces are cooked but not falling apart. Pour off liquid and cook until reduced by a third. To reduced liquid add honey, cinnamon, lemon juice, and fruit. Reheat, stirring. Taste, and add more lemon juice if needed. It should not be cloyingly sweet; the taste of the fruit should dominate.

Serve warm in crystal or clear glass bowls. Keeps in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Flummery (Kutia)

This ancient traditional dish, served at most ceremonial feasts and commemorations, serves as a first or last dish for Sviata Vechera. Its three main ingredients are whole wheat kernels, poppy seeds, and honey.⁶ Some cooks try to better it by adding nuts and raisins. Whatever is added, kutia remains an acquired taste, although children like its sweet taste and crunchy texture. Poppy seeds are hard to break down. In the past, poppy seeds were ground by hand in a special wooden mortar and pestle called a makitra (a poppy bowl) and a makohin (poppy chaser). It took a lot of effort and time. Kutia is high in nutritional value.

Note: This dish should be prepared several days ahead of time for flavor to develop. It keeps very well in the refrigerator for 2 weeks or so.

1 cup wheat kernels
½ cup poppy seeds
1 cup honey
½ cup chopped walnuts
½ cup raisins
pinch of salt

Blanch wheat with boiling water. Cover and let stand for about 1 hour. Pour off water, then add enough cold water to cover by about double, and cook covered over low heat until kernels are soft, about 3 to 4 hours, depending on the type of wheat. Strain and allow to cool.

Blanch poppy seeds with boiling water, allow to rest 15 minutes, then drain. Add enough water to cover and reheat to boiling. Cook a little, pour off liquid again, and squeeze dry in a cotton towel. Then mash seeds in a blender or processor until the mixture changes color from slate to milky. Combine wheat, poppy seeds, and honey. Taste and add salt as needed. Add chopped walnuts and raisins. The consistency should be semiliquid.

Raised Doughnuts with Filling (Pampushky)

These yeast-raised fried rounds of dough have been a part of Ukrainian celebrations for centuries. There are recipes for pampushky (puffs) called stolitni (hundreds of years). This light and delightful food did not start out as a dessert, but as a dish to eat on its own. The dough was fried and tossed with mashed garlic and oil—a version is now used as an accompaniment to soups or as an appetizer. Pampushky for Sviata Vechera are sweet doughnuts dusted with sugar and filled with rose preserve. The dough is light and airy and the rose preserve perfumes bring back memories of summer.

2 tablespoons sugar
½ cup water
2 envelopes dry yeast
¾ cup milk
5–6 cups flour
¼ pound butter
½ cup sugar
2 eggs
3 egg yolks
1 teaspoon salt (if using
 unsalted butter)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
zest of 1 lemon
1 cup rose preserve or any dry
 fruit preserve
powdered sugar

Combine sugar and water, sprinkle with yeast, and let stand until soft. Heat milk to lukewarm, and add milk and ¾ cup flour to yeast mixture. Beat well, cover, and allow to rise until light and bubbly, about 10 minutes. Cream butter and sugar. Beat eggs and egg yolks and combine with sugar/butter mixture, beating thoroughly until eggs are pale white. Grate a lemon on a fine grater until all yellow is rubbed off and add lemon zest, vanilla, and yeast mixture to egg/butter mixture. Mix in 4 cups of flour. If dough seems too loose, add a little more flour; however, dough should be soft. Knead by hand for about 10 minutes. Cover with a damp towel, set in a warm place until double in bulk. Punch down, knead a few times, and allow to rise again until doubled.

Divide dough into 4 parts. On a lightly floured surface, roll one part into a rectangle ¼ inch thick. Turn over once or twice. Dust with flour sparingly. Place 1 teaspoon of rose preserve at evenly spaced intervals on the dough, or with a 2½ inch cutter gently form impressions and place filling in each. Roll out another portion of the dough to the same thickness and gently cover the first, overlapping a little. (Filling will show through.) Cut circles with cutter. Place them on a lightly floured cookie sheet and allow

to rise until double in size. Repeat until all the dough is used, rolling out scraps last.

Heat oil or shortening to 375° in a deep fryer or wide skillet. Test temperature by frying a piece of bread: it should bubble and turn golden quickly. Fat should not be smoking. Fry 5 to 6 *pampushky* at a time. Do not crowd, since this lowers the temperature and doughnuts absorb too much grease. When one side is golden, flip with a spoon to fry other side. Dough will puff up in the frying. Perfect *pampushky* have a white ring around the middle and are light as air. Drain on paper towels. When slightly cooled, sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Serve with tea.

Rose Preserve (*Rozha z tsukrom*)

Rose preserve is made from the wild or rambling rose, the most pungent of roses, often found among old buildings and along country roads in early summer. Red cultivated rose petals may be added, but these generally do not have such a strong flavor. Petals should be picked fresh. The pale yellow tips have to be snipped off, as they are bitter.

2 cups rose petals
4 cups sugar
juice of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons rum

Pick over petals, removing any debris, leaves, stamen, or insects. Coarsely chop 1 cup of petals in processor, add 1 cup of sugar, half the lemon juice, 1 tablespoon rum, and another cup of sugar. Mix for a minute, scraping sides. Repeat with the rest of the petals. Pack into small jars (about 1 cup), rapping lightly to release air bubbles. Cover and keep in a cool place.

Lasts up to a year. It is used sparingly, so small jars are practical.

Christmas (Rizdvo Khrystove)

Ukrainians are unrepentant bakers. The cold weather stimulates the invention or adaptation of yet another roll (knysh) or honey bread (medianyk). No celebration of Christmas is complete without specific cakes and cookies. During this season, baked goods of all types are featured. This chapter includes several “must” items: a spiced honey loaf (medivnyk or medianyk), which may be a bread or cake; honey cookies (medianyky); thin wafers (oblaten) spread with a honey, nut, and egg white filling (nugat);¹ small turnovers of short dough (pyrizhky) with nut or poppy seed filling, glazed and sugared on top; a roll of sweet yeast dough with poppy filling (makivnyk, sometimes called a makovyi perih or makovyi knysh).

The above list for Christmas baking is by no means inflexible. Families expand on it by adding crescents, pinwheels, and other favorites. Those listed above are practical as well as traditional, since all except the *makovyi* torte may be baked ahead, even frozen, ready for guests at any time during the holidays.

Traditional Honey Bread (*Medivnyk*)

This honey bread is redolent with flavor. For a strong honey taste and rich dark color, use buckwheat honey. This recipe makes a solid, dense loaf. It slices well and, refrigerated, keeps for weeks.

8 eggs
6 tablespoons butter
14 ounces honey
2 cups sugar
6 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
zest and juice of 1 orange
1 cup strong coffee
1 cup sour cream
1 cup chopped filberts or
walnuts (optional)

Heat honey to boiling and allow to cool. Separate eggs, reserving the whites. Beat room-temperature yolks with butter until fluffy. Add cooled honey and beat. Add sugar and mix well.

Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and cinnamon. Sift again. Add to honey mixture. Add orange zest, juice, coffee, and sour cream. Mix until no dry flour shows. Whip egg whites until stiff. Fold in a little to the flour mixture, stir well, then add the rest. Stir in chopped nuts.

Pour into buttered and floured loaf pans, rapping them to even the batter. Bake in preheated 325° oven about 1 hour. Do not open door during the first 30 minutes. Cool on racks. Wrap well in heavy-duty foil and store in refrigerator or freezer.

Honey Cake (*Medianyky*)

This cake has evolved from a light bread into a layered, filled cake. It is excellent with a nut filling (see following recipe) and topped with chocolate glaze. Or, more simply, it may be covered lightly with raspberry jam and sprinkled with chocolate shavings.

4 ounces butter
4 eggs
14 ounces honey
3 cups (14 ounces) flour
½ teaspoon ginger
½ teaspoon nutmeg
½ teaspoon cloves
1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 teaspoons baking powder

Cream butter and separate eggs. Add room-temperature yolks one at a time to the butter and beat well. Mix in honey. Sift together flour, baking powder, and spices twice and add to butter mixture.

Whip egg whites until stiff. Fold a little into the mixture, then fold in the rest. Pour batter into a buttered and floured loaf pan. Bake in preheated 350° oven until firm on top and a toothpick comes out clean, about 1 hour. Cool on rack.

Filbert Filling (*Masa z liskovykh orikhiv*)

This makes a good filling for honey cake (see previous recipe).

6 ounces filberts or walnuts
½ cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3–4 teaspoons sour cream
seedless berry or grape jam

Roast nuts in a heavy skillet, rub lightly to remove some of the skin, and grate fine in a processor or a nut grinder. Mix in sugar, vanilla, and enough sour cream to bind. Split cake into two layers and spread one cut surface with jam, then the nut filling. Cover with the other layer and press lightly. Wrap in foil and refrigerate overnight. Glaze with chocolate icing or cover lightly with the same type of jam as used inside, and sprinkle with chocolate shavings.

Mother's Nougat (Mamy nugat)

This delicious, wholesome confection, containing honey, egg whites, and nuts, has been the favorite of many children. Tightly wrapped in plastic and refrigerated, it keeps for weeks. Tortenboden wafers are available in specialty stores.

**6 square 14 inch wafers, or
Tortenboden**
½ cup water
1 cup sugar
1 cup honey
6 egg whites
1 teaspoon cream of tartar
2 tablespoons powdered sugar
1 pound shelled walnuts
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

Cook water and sugar in a heavy-bottomed 2 quart saucepan until syrup moves away from the bottom. Add honey and cook down by a third. Whip egg whites and add cream of tartar. Gradually add powdered sugar. Beat until the whites form peaks, then add by spoonfuls to the honey mixture. Cook in a double boiler, stirring constantly, for 15 to 20 minutes, until it cooks down a bit. Beat until the mixture thickens and appears "dry." Stir in chopped nuts and cool.

On a work surface covered with waxed paper, spread a wafer with a fourth of the honey mixture, about ¾ inch thick. Cover with a second wafer and press down evenly. Spread with another fourth of the mixture, then cover with a third wafer. Repeat to make a second nougat. Wrap tightly in heavy foil and refrigerate.

Trim off edges, and cut into ¾ inch strips, then cut each strip diagonally into 2½ inch pieces. Serve with tea.

Honey Cookies (Medianyky)

These Christmas cookies are a perennial favorite. They may be rolled out and cut into rounds, stars, or crescents. Often they are hung on the lower branches of the Christmas tree as treats for the younger children.

4 cups flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon cloves
½ teaspoon ginger
½ teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup powdered sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 extra large eggs
1 cup honey
**2 tablespoons chopped orange
peel**
**1 egg beaten with a little water
for glaze**
20 blanched almonds
coarse sugar crystals

Sift together flour, spices, sugar, and baking powder. Add eggs, honey, and orange peel to make a stiff dough. On a floured work surface, roll out dough about ½ inch thick. Cut shapes with cookie cutters, place on nonstick baking sheet, and brush with glaze. Place ½ almond in the middle of each, sprinkle with coarse sugar, and bake in preheated 350° oven until done, about 15 minutes. Cool on racks. Store in tightly covered tins.

Baked Turnovers (Pyrizhky)

These short dough turnovers may be filled with myriad stuffings, sweet or savory. At Christmastime, nut, poppy seed, or fruit fillings make a sweet treat. Walnut filling is favored, but other nuts may be used. Savory dainties can also be filled with a mushroom or cabbage mixture and served as accompaniments to clear borsch, beef consomme, or other soups.

2½ cups flour
¼ pound butter
½ cup sour cream
3 egg yolks
½ teaspoon salt
1 egg white beaten with a little water for glaze
½ cup coarse sugar crystals (optional)

Combine flour and cold butter in a processor, or cut in butter with a pastry cutter into coarse crumbs. Add egg yolks, salt, and cream, and process or knead lightly until dough forms a ball. Cut in half, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.

Roll out half of the dough on a lightly floured surface to about ¼ inch thickness. Cut rounds with a 3 inch cutter or wineglass. Place a spoonful of filling to one side of each round, then fold over other half. Seal edges with a little glaze, then press with a fork or pastry cutter for a fancy edge. Place on a nonstick baking sheet, brush with glaze, sprinkle with sugar, and bake in preheated 375° oven about 20 minutes. Cool on racks.

Walnut Filling (Orikhova masa)

This filling is a favorite for pyrizhky (see previous recipe).

¾ cup butter
¾ cup powdered sugar
¾ cup grated walnuts (or almonds)
1 tablespoon whipping cream or evaporated milk
4 egg whites
½ cup flour

Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add egg whites and beat well. Combine grated walnuts, cream, and flour, and mix well. If almonds are substituted, add a drop of almond extract.

Note: use only fresh nuts for baking. Nuts have a high oil content and deteriorate rapidly. To maintain freshness, store a large quantity of nuts in the freezer.

Poppy Seed Torte (*Makovyj tort*)

The queen of Christmas desserts combines the oldest ingredients found in Ukrainian cooking: honey, poppy seeds, and nuts. The rum butter cream and white icing (see following recipes) marry very well with the heavier poppy seed sponge. Decorating tortes is a specialty in itself. Some cooks lay out elaborate folkloric designs and motifs from Ukrainian embroidery or tapestry patterns, using jellied candies or even multicolored hard candy. The white icing serves as a fine background. The only limit to one's imagination is that decorations should be edible.

½ cup poppy seeds
½ cup honey
7 extra large eggs
½ cup blanched grated almonds
zest of 1 lemon

Pour boiling water over seeds, let stand for 5 minutes, pour off water and repeat. Drain well. Grind with steel blade in processor until seeds release milk and turn white. Butter a 9 inch springform pan and dust it with ground almonds. (This may be done in advance.)

Place poppy seeds and honey in a large bowl. Separate eggs. Add room-temperature yolks, one by one, to the mix, beating until thick. Stir in grated almonds and lemon zest. Beat egg whites until satiny but not dry. Fold a little into the mixture, then fold in the rest, until no white shows. Pour mixture into pan, rapping it gently to release air pockets, and smooth the top with a spatula. Bake on the middle rack of a preheated 350° oven for 50 to 60 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean from the center. Do not open oven door or disturb the cake while baking. Cool slowly, not in a draft. Run a sharp knife around the sides, then slowly release the spring. Run a knife under the bottom and cool on rack.

Cover work surface with double sheets of wax paper. With a sharp knife, make a small incision around the torte to mark where it should be cut in half. Make horizontal cuts at four equidistant points, then gently pull a long thread through the cake to cut it into two layers. Sprinkle bottom layer with 2 or 3 tablespoons of rum, and evenly spread rum butter filling (see

following recipe) about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Cover with top layer and press gently. Cover the sides with the rest of the filling. Refrigerate overnight wrapped in foil.

To ice cake, cover work surface or a lazy susan with wide double-strength foil. Apply a third of the icing (see recipe on p. 35) to sides with a spatula, pulling from the bottom up. Wipe spatula occasionally to avoid pulling crumbs, and dip in hot water to smooth out ridges. With the rest of the icing, smoothly cover the top. Refrigerate for at least 2 days. Run a sharp knife around bottom to release icing from paper. Slide the torte onto one hand, pull off the remaining paper and gently place torte on serving platter, taking care not to crack the icing.

To serve, center a 3 inch wineglass on the top of the torte and cut around it into the center. Then make $\frac{1}{2}$ inch radial cuts from the outer edge to the circle and remove with spatula. See fig. 21. Yields about 20 slices. Keeps well in refrigerator. Serve at room temperature.

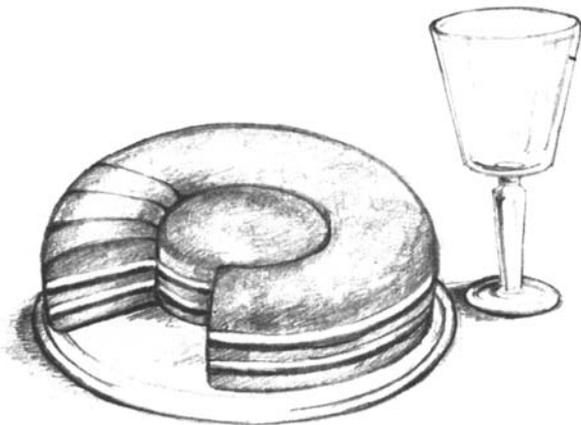


Fig. 21

Rum Butter Filling (*Rumova masa*)

This is an excellent cream, the base of which may be used with different flavors. Here, rum is used. It is used as a filling for the poppy seed torte described in the previous recipe. This filling can also be used as icing.

½ pound unsalted butter
2 cups powdered sugar
2 tablespoons rum or
¼ teaspoon rum extract
1–2 teaspoons heavy cream

Cream butter until light, add sugar a little at a time, rum, and cream. Beat until very fluffy.

White Icing (*Bila shklytsia*)

This hard icing dries quickly and forms a lovely cover for a torte. (See poppy seed torte, p. 33.) It cures hard, not fluffy.

4 cups powdered sugar
¼ cup heavy cream
½ teaspoon vanilla

Place 2 cups sugar in a bowl and add cream and vanilla. Mix well, gradually adding the rest of the sugar. Add a little more cream if too stiff.

Poppy Seed Roll (*Makovyi knysh*)

This treat, a sweet yeast dough filled with the traditional poppy seeds and honey, is characteristic of how homemade pastries used to taste. The sweetness is marked, but not overwhelming or cloying; the poppy seed taste dominates.

1 envelope dry yeast
 ½ cup lukewarm water
 ⅓ cup lukewarm milk
 2¾ cups flour
 4 ounces butter
 2 tablespoons sugar
 1 egg beaten with a little water
 for glaze

1 cup poppy seeds
 milk to cover
 1 tablespoon sugar
 2 tablespoons honey
 1 teaspoon butter
 zest of 1 lemon
 zest of 1 orange
 2 egg whites

Dough for roll

Dissolve yeast in water and milk, add sugar, stir, and allow to rise. Combine flour, chopped butter, and yeast mixture and knead until dough forms a smooth ball. Or, in processor with machine running, add butter to flour, then add yeast mixture. Process until dough forms a ball, adding flour or milk as necessary. Let rest a few minutes, then process 1 minute more. Place in lightly oiled bowl, turn once, cover, and allow to rise until double in bulk.

Poppy seed filling

Pour boiling water over seeds, let stand for 5 minutes, pour off water and repeat. Drain well. Cover with milk in a saucepan, bring to a boil, and strain. Grind with steel blade in blender or processor until seeds release milk and turn white; add sugar, honey, and butter. Cook in a heavy skillet for 1 minute over high heat. Cool. Add egg whites and zest, and mix well.

On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a long rectangle about 1 inch thick. Evenly spread poppy seed filling, stopping 1 inch from one long edge and roll up, making sure that the filling is sealed inside. Place on a nonstick baking sheet, seam side down, cover, and allow to rise double. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 35 to 40 minutes. Brush with egg glaze and cool on rack.

Note: the filling may also be used for *makovyi perih* (poppy turnover) or *makivnyk* (poppy seed roll).

Easter (Velykden')

In the old traditions, spring and Eastertime in the Ukraine were regarded as a new beginning. Spring's arrival was marked by the return of the songbirds. For the feast of the Forty Martyrs, March 22 (O.S.), girls traditionally baked pastry birds and set them out on windowsills to entice the birds to stay.

At this time, spring preparations took place. Most evident was the thorough cleaning of the village. All debris was removed and burned, both cleansing the settlement and releasing the pent-up energies of the villagers. Each home was whitewashed, painted, decorated with delicate folk motifs, and prepared for Velykden', literally, the "great day," Easter.

In ancient times, spring was celebrated on this great day by ritualistic eating, dancing, and singing. Christianity subdued and imposed its ideology upon this animistic past. The church sobered the proceedings of the past by decreeing fasting and atonement of sin during Lent (Velykyi Pist).¹ Yet the folk spirit fought back and incorporated ritualistic eating, dancing, and singing into the celebration of Easter.

The week immediately preceding Lent was called Masliana.² This was the time to say farewell to all the foods restricted during Lent. It was the time to make merry before the austere fast set in. So the Sunday before Lent traditionally included in its menu *kholodets'* (pork in aspic), *varenyky* (dumplings) filled with cheese and dabbed with sour cream, and buckwheat pancakes with bacon. Lamenting the coming fast, a folk proverb wished for seven Sundays of Masliana and one Sunday of Lent, instead of the reverse.³

In central Ukraine, the first day of Lent was called *poloskozub*. This literally meant the rinsing of the teeth with *horilka* (whiskey) so as to remove any traces of the now forbidden meats and dairy foods. In Uman' Province, women baked a heavy bread made only of rye flour; as it was hard to chew, it was called *zhyliavyi*, as in ligament.⁴ Baking

special wheat bread in the form of a cross marked the middle of Lent. It was taken to the fields as a luck totem when farmers sowed the first crop of poppy and wheat.

The last Sunday of Lent was Willow Sunday (Verbova Nedilia). Long sprigs of blossoming pussy willows were blessed and distributed to the faithful at church services, upon which people greeted each other by lightly striking one another on the shoulder with the sprigs, saying:

Be as tall as the willow
And healthy as the waters
And abundant as the earth.

Or:

The willow strikes, not I
In a week's time we
Greet the Great Day.⁵

As Stephan Kylymnyk suggests, the symbolism of this ritual may be the transference of the life energy of the budding sprigs to the recipient of the greeting.⁶ People kept the blessed sprigs of willow for a whole year. One of their many magic uses was to light the fire for baking *babý* and *paský*, special light breads of many varieties, on Holy Wednesday of Passion Week.

At Eastertime, great emphasis was placed on these breads. Of the more than forty types extant in 1891,⁷ some esoteric varieties contained up to 120 egg yolks and when baked reached a meter in height.⁸ Some were colored with saffron to produce the intense yellow reminiscent of the sun.

Ethnographers speculating as to the use and symbolism of *baby* suggest that in very ancient times (the Trypilian period)⁹ *baby* were revered as matriarchic fertility totems. Others, considering more recent pagan rituals when sun worship was prevalent, argue that *babý* symbolized the sun.¹⁰

In the late nineteenth century, there were three general categories of *babý*: yellow, white, and dark. Yellow ones were said to represent the sky and sun, white ones life-giving air, and dark ones the fertile earth.¹¹

After Willow Sunday, all work outside the home stopped. The hub of activity centered on the kitchen, where intense preparations for Velykden' continued. *Pysanky* (elaborately decorated eggs) were finished and set aside.¹²

Hams and sausages were smoked and baked. Pork roasts were stuffed and baked. Ribs and piglets were prepared. Potted cheese for cheese *paska* and *pleskanka* (dry cheese curd formed into a loaf), dyed cooked eggs (*krashanky*), horseradish root, butter, salt, and millet, rounded out the necessities for *sviachene*, the Easter basket (literally, "that which is blessed").¹³

The contents of *sviachene* were assembled in a wicker basket and taken to church for the Resurrection service on Easter morning and blessed immediately afterward. There were certain required foods and items for a traditional basket, each with symbolic meaning: peeled hard-boiled eggs, butter, cheese, salt, *paska* or *baba*, sausage or ham or both, and horseradish root. Included in the *sviachene* was a whole roasted piglet with a piece of horseradish root in its mouth. The piglet was a remnant symbol of the ancient practice of animal sacrifice to the sun god. Horseradish had medicinal and magic properties of its own. Its potency was transferred to the person who ate it, and it was believed to promote good digestion. (After the huge feast, it was needed.)¹⁴

Easter dawn was indeed a sight to behold. The people in their traditional festive clothing, carrying flags, crosses, and icons, attended the service. The church was never large enough to hold everyone, so the faithful spilled out onto the square (*maidan*) around it. The baskets themselves were decorated with myrtle and covered with embroidered linen cloths.¹⁵ All foods were placed around a lighted candle and surrounded by beautifully decorated *pysanky* and *krashanky*. The women stood watch, occasionally spelled by their husbands. Then they too participated in the Resurrection service, after which the priest, with his acolytes, incense, and the ringing of Easter bells, blessed the people and their food.¹⁶

After the service, the faithful exchanged three embraces and greeted each other by saying, “*Khrystos voskres!*” (“Christ is risen!”) and receiving the answer, “*Voistynu voskres!*” (“He is risen indeed!”). This was practiced throughout the land and assured that grudges not last over a year, since *khrystosovania*, as this greeting was called, was mandatory for everyone. At this time, an active exchange of Easter eggs followed that indicated friendship and good wishes. To refuse a gift of *pysanka* was a grievous insult. The exchange of *pysanky* was practiced among Ukrainians of all walks of life.

Sviachene was consumed by the family at home immediately after the service. The head of household took the blessed sliced egg and after bowing toward the icons, shared the egg with each member of the family, starting with the eldest, then his wife and the other family members. The traditional greeting, in many areas of the Ukraine, was akin to this one: “*Dai Bozhe y na toi rik dochekatysia svitloho praznyka Voskresinnia Khrystovoho v schasti i zdorovi*” (“God willing, let us live until the next feast of Christ’s Resurrection in happiness and health”).¹⁷ This practice was reminiscent of the shared breaking of Christmas *kolach* at the Christmas Eve supper.

Easter Celebration Today

Modern customs at Eastertime, as practiced in North America by Ukrainians and their descendants, preserve the general principles of the past. Today no one burns bonfires and houses need not be whitewashed, although spring cleaning survives. But from the first day of Lent, for example, many hours are spent over a flickering candle, as *pysanky* are created from ordinary hens' eggs, as well as duck, pigeon, and, sometimes, ostrich eggs.

The religious celebrations remain intact. Willow Sunday still evokes memories of a verdant spring, and the faithful greet each other. Easter baskets are prepared with the same ardent desire to outdo one's neighbor. Children are just as keen on winning at *krashanky* games, similar to Easter egg hunts.

It is common to abstain from meat during Verbovyi Tyzhden' (Holy Week), some also abstain from dairy products. Among other things, fasting assures a heightened anticipation of good Easter eating. The severe fast is broken on Easter morning. As in the old days, the breakfast must include: Easter bread (*paska*), yeast-raised, sometimes decorated with a cross or birds; a very delicate and exquisite egg-rich yeast bread (*baba* or *babka*); hard-boiled eggs; an egg dish with horseradish sauce; fresh pork sausage (*kovbasa*); smoked and cured pork sausage (*kovbasa vudzhena*); baked ham; roast piglet, roast pork, or smoked pork ribs; country pate (*pashtet*); mayonnaise made with hard-boiled egg yolks, oil, mustard, and horseradish (*maionez*); relishes such as pickled apples, beets with vinegar and horseradish (*tsvikly*), and green onions; cheesecake made from dry farmer cheese (*pleskanka*); cheesecake with dried fruit (*syrynk*) and other tortes, sweets, and pastries; tea and coffee.

Some families add to this menu, and some omit some of the dishes. However, the *paska* or *baba*, eggs, cheese, horseradish relish, and *kovbasa* are considered essential. Even during the hardships of war-torn Europe, the procurement of staples for these dishes was attempted.¹⁸

Specific recipes and instructions for a traditional *sviachene* menu follow.

Grandmother's Easter Bread (*Babusi paska*)

Paska is the traditional Easter bread. In eastern Ukraine it was cakelike, baked in tall cylinders, sweet, and iced on top. In western Ukraine, paska had a more breadlike consistency, was round, not so tall, and decorated with dough forms on top.

The taste and texture of paska, whether a light bread or cake, have made it a favorite for generations. In many families, each member was represented by a paska of his own. The family paska was larger than most and usually topped off by a scrolled cross. Children were invited to pick one of the small breads; the trick was to choose the best before it was baked. The winner, blessed with the rest of sviachene, served as the centerpiece for the Easter table. It was an honor to have your paska chosen.

This recipe is representative of western Ukraine. It is a light bread, delicately perfumed by cloves. The best pans for paska are 3 pound coffee cans, 1 pound and 3 pound shortening cans, or even large juice containers. A large, wide metal or ceramic pan may be used for the family paska.

2½ cups very warm water
2½ cups warm milk
3 ounces fresh yeast or 3 envelopes dry yeast
4 tablespoons sugar
5 pounds (about 18 cups) flour
1 cup oil
½ pound butter
12 large eggs
1 tablespoon crushed cloves
1 tablespoon salt
1 egg beaten in a little water for glaze
shortening for baking cans and pan
1 cup fine dry bread crumbs

Wash and dry 6 shortening or coffee cans of varying heights and widths (4 inches high, 6 inches wide; 6 inches high, 3 inches wide) and a large metal or ceramic pan about 5 inches high and 8 inches wide. Be sure they fit in the oven without touching the sides or each other; if they do not, bake in two batches. (All dough may be formed at the same time, with the second batch placed in refrigerator to retard rising. Mark in advance which cans should be baked second.) Butter cans very well, especially sides and grooves, and sprinkle with fine dry bread crumbs, shaking out excess.

Combine water, milk, and sugar, and sprinkle with yeast. Mix in 1½ cups flour. Allow to rise until double in bulk. Beat eggs until foamy. Put all but ½ cup flour in a large wide bowl, pour yeast mixture in center, and add oil, butter, eggs, cloves, and salt. Mix until no dry flour is left (add a little more flour if mixture is too wet). Knead 2 to 3 minutes, allow to rest for 10, then knead for 30 minutes or until smooth.

Allow to rise, covered with a damp towel, in an oiled bowl in a draft-free place until double in bulk. Punch down and divide into thirds. Set one third in bowl and cover. Divide the remaining two-thirds into parts according to the size and number of prepared cans. Shape each into a smooth ball less than half the can's volume. Fill cans without disturbing bread crumb coating, and allow to rise. Remove the second-batch cans to a cool place for slower rising. (No door slamming or hard running through the kitchen by children, or the dough may fall.)

From the reserved third of dough, pinch off an orange-sized piece (to make the straight-armed cross). Knead the rest into a smooth ball, flattening the top, and place in large pan. Divide the small piece in half and form two ropes about the width of the pan. With a floured rolling pin, roll each rope into a ribbon and cut into each end about 1 inch. Place one piece across the *paska*, curling the split ends away from each other. Cover it with the other at right angles and curl the ends. Allow to rise. (See figs. 22–25.)

When dough has risen 1 inch over the top, bake *pasky* in preheated 350° oven 45 to 60 minutes or until done, not opening the door for the first 30 minutes. Brush with glaze after about 40 minutes. Remove smaller cans first. Run a knife point around the edge, allow to cool slightly. Remove breads very gingerly, shaking them out. Cool on racks on their sides, turning often.



Fig. 22



Fig. 23



Fig. 24



Fig. 25

Easter Bread Podil'ia Style (*Podil'ska paska*)

This recipe for Easter paska, from the northwest province of Podil'ia, is at least a hundred years old. It may be an example of the golden paska, reminiscent of the sun. Its texture most closely resembles that of sponge cake.

1 cup dry white bread crumbs
½ cup cake flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves
zest of 1 lemon
zest of 1 orange
10 eggs
2 cups sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ cup powdered sugar
(optional)

Line bottom and sides of a 10 or 12 inch springform pan with buttered paper cut to fit or use lined muffin tins. Sift bread crumbs until fine, then sift again with flour, baking powder, and spices. Add grated lemon and orange zest.

Separate eggs. Mix egg yolks with sugar until thick and pale, add vanilla, and beat again. Fold bread crumb mixture into egg yolk mixture. Beat egg whites until they form peaks and fold in gently. Pour into pan and bake in the middle of a preheated 350° oven until set or a toothpick comes out clean, about 1 hour; cook muffins in tins less, according to size. Turn off heat, open door a bit, and allow to cool slowly. (Cake may fall slightly.)

Place *paska* upside down on platter, carefully lift off paper, and sprinkle the top with sugar. Serve with smoked meats.

Easter Bread Chyhyryn Style (*Chyhyrynska paska*)

The region of Chyhyryn, in Kiev Province, was embroiled in many historical events. A famous Cossack fortress once stood there, and it was a seat of power and controversy. Chyhyryn developed a white paska, thought to symbolize the spirit or soul. The original recipe called for potato flour, but cake flour is an excellent substitute. The texture resembles a soft sponge. It may be served with raspberry or cherry syrup as dessert.

1½ cups cake flour
1⅔ cups sugar
12 egg whites
1½ teaspoons cream of tartar
1 teaspoon vanilla
½ teaspoon almond extract
¼ teaspoon salt
powdered sugar

Line the bottom and sides of a 10 inch tube pan (or 2 tall cans, to be traditional) with buttered brown paper, or use lined muffin tins. Sift flour and sugar separately, then sift flour with ½ cup sugar. Beat egg whites with wire whip until foamy. Add cream of tartar, fold in vanilla, almond extract, and salt. Whip until glossy and stiff, but not dry. Gradually whip in remaining sugar a little at a time. Sift some of the flour-sugar mixture over egg whites, fold gently, and repeat until all flour is used. Pour into prepared pan or cans and bake in preheated 350° oven. Note: the tube pan requires 45–50 minutes, the cans about 30 minutes; cook muffins in tins less, according to size. When done, hang tube pan upside down or invert cans on rack for 1 hour, until set. Remove, place on platter, and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

To serve, spoon fruit syrup over each portion.

Cossack Baba with Vanilla (*Kozats'ka baba z vanilii*)

Because of the great variety of recipes for a baba or babka, it is difficult to choose one that best represents this genre of baking. Kozatska baba is sweet but not cloying. All those yolks simply shine. In some years when eggs were scarce, saffron was used to impart an intense yellow color to babý. (Now saffron is very expensive.) This recipe was modernized by Luba Osmak of Toronto.

4 envelopes dry yeast or
equivalent fresh yeast
½ cup lukewarm milk
1 tablespoon sugar
6 cups flour
1 cup heavy cream
30 large egg yolks
2 cups sugar
zest of 1 orange
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
½ pound unsalted butter
½ to ¾ cup milk
1 cup golden raisins (optional)
1 egg beaten with 2 tablespoons
water for glaze

Dissolve yeast in milk and add 1 tablespoon sugar. Stir and set aside until bubbly. Mix in heavy cream and ½ cup sifted flour. Beat egg yolks until thick, and gradually add 2 cups of sugar, orange zest, and vanilla extract. In a large bowl combine yeast mixture with egg yolk mixture. Add 4½ cups sifted flour and raisins. Knead, alternately adding milk and cooled melted butter until dough is satiny. It will be loose, as for very rich yeast rolls. Cover and allow to rise in a warm, draft-free place. Punch down and allow to rise again.

Butter 3 or 4 cans (about 6 inches in diameter) and dust with dry bread crumbs. Divide dough into parts and form each into a smooth ball a little larger than a third of the volume of a can. Fill cans without disturbing crumb coating. Cover with plastic wrap and allow to rise until dough reaches the rim. Bake in preheated 350° oven 15 to 20 minutes, not allowing cans to touch oven sides or each other, then reduce heat to 325° and bake about 1 hour. Brush with egg glaze about 10 minutes before babas are done. Gently remove from cans and cool on their sides on a pillow covered with tea towels, rotating every so often.

Easter Ham (*Velykodna shynka*)

Ham is an important ingredient of sviachene. The Ukrainian hams of old were akin to the country hams of the American South, dried and smoke cured, and needed special soaking and cooking. Today instructions usually come with the product. Modern curing methods produce a wetter, heavier ham that needs added preparation despite the “ready-to-eat” label. A wit once described eternity as a ham between two people. In practice, this means buy less to enjoy it more. A half ham, the loin, provides enough for several meals. Ham is tastier when offset by a tart-sweet combination, sweet and sour or tangy and sharp. Cautionary note: do not use too “goopy” a glaze, for the taste will last and make the use of the rest of the ham less versatile.

6–7 pounds semiboneless ham
½ cup honey
2 tablespoons dry mustard
2–3 tablespoons vinegar
2–3 tablespoons pan drippings
or fat

Remove covering from ham and wipe with a wet paper towel, then dry ham. Trim fat to ½ inch. Score the surface in a diamond pattern to let the glaze penetrate and stick to the surface better. On a wire rack in a large open pan, bake at 350° for 45 to 60 minutes. This removes excess water and makes the ham crunchy rather than slippery. Baste several times with glaze during the last 20 minutes until ham is well coated. Remove from oven and baste again. When cool, store loosely covered in refrigerator.

Serve thinly sliced with mayonnaise and sharp mustard. The traditional relish is *tsvikly* (beets with horseradish) as well as *maionez* with horseradish.

Ukrainian Sausage (*Ukrains'ka kovbasa*)

Kovbasa, a neglected food, is subject to gross humiliation in the United States. Many commercial processors simply do not understand the enticement of a well turned-out sausage. Those commercial products available in supermarkets are generally gristly, stuffed with additives, and bereft of character. Look for specialty markets that turn out quality products, or better yet, dispense with the mediocre product and make kovbasa at home. It need not be smoked to make a fine showing. This recipe, by Olena Kysilevs'ka, was published in Zhinocha Dolia in 1927.

- 5 pounds pork shoulder**
- 2 pounds beef chuck or arm**
- 1 pound pork fat**
- 4–6 ounces coarse salt**
- 2 tablespoons freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 tablespoon allspice**
- 1 small head of garlic**
- 3½ cups water**
- 2 teaspoons *peperivka* (spiced whiskey, see below) or to taste**
- 3 yards natural hog casing (or as needed)**

Grind pork coarsely, once. Bone and chill beef. With a very sharp knife, dice into ¼ inch cubes. Dice ½ pound fat similarly and grind the rest. Mix meats and fat in a large bowl. Mash peeled garlic with salt in a mortar, and add pepper and allspice. Mix all ingredients. Add 1 cup water for each 2 pounds of meat, then add whiskey. Cook a small sample in a little boiling water. Taste and adjust seasoning (be conservative with the salt).

Wash casing in cold water, rinsing several times. Carefully thread 1 yard of casing over a sausage funnel and stuff, taking care not to leave air pockets. Do not pack or sausages will burst while cooking. Tie ends with string. Repeat until all meat is used. Refrigerate, loosely covered with towel, for 48 hours. Sausage may be smoked (following smoker directions) or cooked fresh. To cook, simmer gently in a wide pot one-third full of water until cooked through, about 30–45 minutes. Drain, cool, and refrigerate loosely covered.

Alternatively, divide meat and roll into 4 cylinders about 10 inches long. Seal tightly in lightly greased foil and refrigerate (for up to a week) or freeze. To cook, poach sausage rolls until done, about 1 hour.

To serve, sauté in a little fat for color. Or serve cold in thin diagonal slices.

Note: *peperivka*, cayenne-flavored whiskey, is made by soaking 10 whole red cayenne peppers in a pint of blended whiskey or bourbon for at least 48 hours.

Sausage from Lviv (Lvivs'ka kovbasa)

This is another version of homemade sausage. It is tasty, economical, and full of flavor.

**2¼ pounds boneless pork,
about ¼ fat**
**¾ pound lean boneless beef
chuck**
1 medium onion
3 cloves garlic (or to taste)
1 tablespoon oil
½ teaspoon ground marjoram
½ teaspoon crushed coriander
2 bay leaves
⅓ cup water
1 teaspoon coarse salt
**½ teaspoon freshly ground
black pepper**
**3 yards natural hog casing (or
as needed)**

Grind pork coarsely, once. Bone and chill beef, removing ligaments. With a very sharp knife, dice into ¼ inch cubes. Mix with pork in a large bowl. Chop onion, peel and mash garlic, and sauté in oil until onion turns clear. Add marjoram, bay leaves, coriander, and water. Cover and cook several minutes, then turn off the heat and steep for 15 minutes. Remove bay leaves. Mix with meat, add the salt and pepper, mixing all ingredients thoroughly.

Wash casing in cold water, rinsing several times. Carefully thread 1 yard of casing over the funnel, stuff, and tie off, leaving a length of string. Do not pack; sausage will expand in cooking. Tie off every 16 inches for sausage rings, or every 6 inches for links. Repeat until all meat is used. Refrigerate, loosely covered with towel, for 2 days. Sausage may be smoked, cooked, or frozen. To cook, simmer covered in a shallow pan half filled with water for 20 minutes. Pour off water, add a little oil, and sauté on both sides until golden.

Serve warm or cold, thinly sliced, with *paska* and *maionez*.

Festive Pork Roast (*Pyshna pechenia*)

Ukrainians have a penchant for stuffed meats, especially pork.¹⁹ This recipe is an elegant entrée for any feast. Leftovers are prized.

2 large eggs
 4 twigs fresh parsley
 2 teaspoons chopped dill
 1 teaspoon basil flakes
 1 tablespoon salt
 ½ teaspoon freshly ground
 black pepper
 2½ pounds boned loin of pork
 1 pound lean pork
 1 cup fresh bread crumbs
 1 clove garlic
 4 strips bacon
 ½ cup honey
 2 tablespoons *peperivka* or
 sherry

Beat eggs. Add chopped parsley, dill, basil, salt, and pepper, mixing well. Grind pork fine, add bread crumbs, and mix. Wipe pork loin dry and trim all but ¼ inch fat. Rub garlic in the inside “pocket” where meat was boned. (If using another cut of meat, make a pocket.) Fill with stuffing, keeping thickness as uniform as possible, but do not pack down. Cover with bacon strips. Roll and tie with string, tucking in bacon strips.

Bake on rack in a shallow pan at 350° for about 2 hours (25–30 minutes per pound). When roast is golden brown, baste with honey mixed with *peperivka* (see note, p. 48). Return to oven and baste after 5 minutes, and again after 10 minutes. Remove and allow to rest for 20 minutes, away from draft.

Serve on a platter garnished with parboiled new potatoes, carrots, and small onions. May be sliced and served as a cold entrée.

Nastusia's Paté (*Pashtet Nastusia*)

Pashtet, a meat loaf similar to a country paté, is popular among Ukrainians. This combination, probably named after a young girl who favored it, consists of several meats, cooked vegetables, and spices mixed, baked, and served cold with relishes and mustards. It was published in the Ukrainian magazine of the 1930s, Nova Khata.

1 pound boneless pork shoulder
1 pound veal
1 veal knuckle, cracked
1 carrot
1 parsnip
1 onion
4 ribs celery
1 head garlic
5 peppercorns
5 allspice
2 bay leaves
1 pound calf's liver
3 dry hard rolls
3 beef bouillon cubes
4 egg yolks
8 ounces fresh pork fat
1 tablespoon salt
2 teaspoons fresh ground black pepper
1 cup fine dry bread crumbs
4 egg whites
2 tablespoons lard or shortening

Place pork, veal, and veal knuckle, and chopped vegetables in a large pot. Add spices, bay leaf, and garlic tied in a little cheesecloth. Cover with water and cook until the meat is very tender. Or cook in pressure cooker half filled with water at 15 pounds pressure for 30 minutes. Clean liver, removing large tubes, and cook with meats until it is browned but tender. Discard spices and garlic. Soak rolls and bouillon cubes in a little cooking liquid. Cool meat in stock, then drain off stock and reserve. Bone meat and grind with vegetables, twice. Or make into a smooth paste in processor. Beat egg yolks, and add chopped pork fat, softened rolls and bouillon, salt, and pepper. Mix well and combine with meat. Poach a spoonful in a little water, taste, and adjust seasoning.

Grease bottom and sides of 1 large or 2 small terrines with lard and sprinkle with bread crumbs. Whip egg whites until stiff and fold in. Pour into pan(s) and cover with greased foil, tucking in edges. Place pans in larger pan half filled with water. Either bake in 325° oven 1½ hours or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean or cook, covered, on top of stove until done. Cool, run a sharp knife around edges, and remove. Wrap in foil and refrigerate for at least 24 hours before serving.

Serve in ½ inch slices. This *pashtet* is excellent with *paska*, horseradish, and *tsvikly*.

Mock Mushrooms: Eggs in Aspic (“Mukhomory” v zheliatyni)²⁰

This is one of the more fanciful ways to present an egg dish for Easter sviachene. It combines two favorite forms in Ukrainian folk art: eggs and mushrooms. Ukrainians are enthralled by wild fungi. This dish portrays the mushroom of storybooks: the red cap flecked with white and a large white stem (Amanita muscaria). The dish is a little involved, but simple to assemble and may be prepared ahead of time. It makes a fine showing on any buffet table.

6 small eggs
4 small tomatoes
¼ cup mayonnaise
1 tablespoon prepared horseradish
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
2 cups lean chicken stock
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 envelope gelatin
fresh sprigs of dill or parsley

Beginning with cold water, boil eggs 15 minutes and rinse in cold water. Slice tomatoes into quarters and remove seeds. Drop into boiling water, remove immediately, peel off skin, and set aside. Peel eggs, slice lengthwise, and remove yolks. Mix yolks with mayonnaise, horseradish, and mustard. Stuff eggs, leveling them off.

Sprinkle gelatin into 1 cup hot chicken stock and stir. Add sugar, salt, and lemon juice. Boil remaining stock and add. Stir, taste, and adjust seasoning. Pour about ¼ inch of gelatin mixture in a large nonmetallic platter about 1 inch deep. Refrigerate until set. Cool remaining aspic. Arrange egg halves, yolk side down, wider end to the bottom, in a row about 3 inches apart (mushroom stems). Place tomato wedges at narrow end (top) to make a “cap.” Arrange dill plumes along the bottom to simulate moss. Add the rest of the cooled aspic, cover with plastic wrap, and chill for at least 8 hours or overnight.

Before serving, dot tomatoes with flecks of mayonnaise to resemble the cap of the Amanita mushroom.

Tartar Sauce (*Tatars'ka pidlyva*)

This sauce has been around the Ukrainian kitchen for hundreds of years. Its name is intriguing. For centuries, Ukraine had a long and sorrowful encounter with the Tartars, yet this sauce has survived with its name intact. It may have been introduced into Ukrainian cuisine by Tartars who settled in the Ukraine and were assimilated; many villagers had Tartar surnames. Tartars may have been good cooks; it is speculated that they introduced pasta to Italy as early as the thirteenth century.²¹ So why not this sauce to the Ukraine, where it is often served with roasted and smoked meats, as well as fish?

6 egg yolks, cooked
2 tablespoons oil
1 teaspoon prepared mustard
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
1 tablespoon prepared
horseradish (see following
recipe)
3 tablespoons sour cream
1 teaspoon sugar
2 tablespoons chopped dill
pickles

Mash egg yolks, add other ingredients, and mix well.
Pour into a glass jar and cover. Keeps in refrigerator
for 1 week or so.

Easter Mayonnaise (*Velykodnyi maionez*)

This mayonnaise is different from the classic version in using hard-cooked eggs. The texture is thicker and sticks to the meats. Sour cream is the chief binding element, so this mayonnaise has fewer calories than the oil-based variety.

12 large eggs
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
 (Dijon)
1 tablespoon oil
2 cups sour cream
1 tablespoon horseradish
1 tablespoon sugar
2 teaspoons salt
juice of 1 lemon
1 cup chopped chives or green
onions (optional)

Cook eggs until hard, about 15 minutes. Cool in cold water and peel. Chop coarsely, then put through a fine sieve or process until very fine. Add mustard, oil, horseradish, sugar, salt, and lemon juice. Mix until smooth. Stir in sour cream and mix thoroughly. Store in refrigerator, covered. Keeps refrigerated about 1 week.

To serve, add freshly chopped chives or onions just before serving. (Onions and chives lose flavor after a day or so.)

Fresh Ground Horseradish (*Tertyi khrin*)

Horseradish root has long played a very picturesque role in Ukrainian folk tales as well as cuisine. Often grown along the fences as a hedge, it was so ubiquitous it was the cheapest vegetable on the market. Grating the root in a home grinder was a burdensome task; the processor has made it much simpler. (However, be careful not to allow the fumes to burn eyes or skin. Wear rubber gloves for protection. Do not breathe vapors; ventilate kitchen well.) This prepared horseradish is used to flavor beets, hot white sauce, and many other bases as a condiment to eggs and meats.

1 fresh horseradish root, 6 to 8
inches
½ cup white vinegar
2 teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon sugar

Scrub horseradish, peel, and cut into 1 inch chunks. Grate chunks with a steel blade in processor, with feed tube covered. Heat vinegar with salt and sugar. With machine running, add to horseradish. Spoon into small glass jars, rapping gently to remove air, and seal. Refrigerated, horseradish stays fresh and pungent for 2 weeks or so.

Uncooked Horseradish Sauce (*Smetana z khronom*)

This simple yet piquant sauce accompanies cold smoked meats and roasts. Its success lies in the use of freshly grated horseradish (see previous recipe about grating). The commercially prepared kind usually loses its potency and does not do justice to the flavor of this sauce.

- 3 tablespoons fresh grated horseradish**
- 1 cup sour cream or clabbered cream**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar or lemon juice (or to taste)**

Mix ingredients in a nonmetallic bowl. Taste and adjust seasoning. Allow to ripen at room temperature for about 1 hour before serving.

Note: clabbered cream is of lighter consistency than sour cream and is comparable to the French half-clotted cream. It is made at home by mixing 1 cup of heavy cream with 2 tablespoons of yogurt and left overnight in a warm place.

Beet Horseradish Relish (*Tsvikly*)

This very popular concoction is welcome at any festive table, not only for its tart and tangy taste, but also for its refreshing color. It accentuates roasts, smoked meats, pashtet, egg dishes, and casseroles.

- 9–10 medium beets**
- 3 teaspoons salt**
- 1 cup fresh grated horseradish (see p. 54)**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- 1 cup cider vinegar**
- 1 tablespoon dill seeds or caraway seeds (optional)**
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper**

Cut off beet tops to ½ inch. Scrub well. Cook covered with water over low heat until peel slips off easily, about 2 hours. Or cook on rack in pressure cooker, half covered with water, at 15 pounds pressure for 30 minutes. Cool in liquid. Drain and reserve liquid for borsch. Slip off peel, and cut off taproot, and grate in processor. In a large bowl, mix beets with other ingredients. Taste and adjust seasoning. (Relish should be piquant. Some beets are sweeter than others; for more tartness, use more vinegar.) Pack in jars, cover, and refrigerate at least 3 days.

Yield: about 2 pints. Keeps well in refrigerator.

Cheesecake with Raisins (*Syrnyi pyrih*)

Fresh, simple cheese is synonymous with Easter baking. Syrnyk, or syrnyi perih is a must for family desserts at Eastertime. The very traditional version consisted mainly of farmer cheese, eggs, sugar, and lemon zest wrapped in a short pastry dough, and flavored with dried fruit such as raisins. This recipe is an elegant version of the traditional cheesecake.

1 cup flour
 ½ cup sugar
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 4 ounces butter
 2 egg yolks
 2 tablespoons sour cream
 zest of 1 lemon
 1 egg white beaten with a little
 water for glaze
 2 tablespoons coarse sugar

1 cup white raisins
 ½ pound farmer cheese
 4 egg yolks
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 juice and zest of 1 lemon
 4 egg whites
 6 tablespoons sugar

Pastry

Combine flour, sugar, and baking powder in processor and mix. Add butter in bits and process a few times. Mix egg yolks, sour cream, and lemon zest, and add. Process just until dough forms. Press into a ball, then divide into 2 parts, one twice the size of the other. Chill in plastic wrap for at least 2 hours before rolling out.

Butter the bottom and sides of a tart form. Roll out the larger piece of dough about ¼ inch thick and line pan, trimming edges with pastry cutter or sharp knife. Refrigerate. Roll out remaining dough to ¼ inch thickness and cut into ½ inch strips the width of the pan. Refrigerate.

Cheese filling

Plump raisins in hot water and drain. Mix cheese and egg yolks. Add vanilla, lemon juice and zest, and raisins. Beat egg whites with sugar until stiff and fold in. Fill the prepared pastry, spreading evenly. Arrange pastry strips on top, weaving them for a fancy effect. Crimp ends and edges together. Bake in preheated 350° oven until done, about 45 minutes. Brush with egg white glaze and sprinkle with coarse sugar. Bake 5 minutes more until top is golden.

Serve at room temperature.

Modern Cheesecake (*Modernyi syrnyk*)

Ukrainian cooks were always willing to adapt a favorite dessert. Cheesecake was no exception. Many added pineapple chunks to the basic cheese mixture. Others experimented with the very American cream cheese to produce a smooth, delicate cheesecake. This recipe is such an adaptation.

2 cups sugar
cookie crumbs
¼ cup grated almonds
4 tablespoons butter
zest of 1 lemon
24 ounces cream cheese
1 cup sugar
6 egg yolks
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3–5 teaspoons lemon juice
6 egg whites

Mix cookie crumbs and almonds in processor and grate fine. Add lemon zest, mix lightly. Melt butter and add. Press about ½ inch of crumb mixture in a 9 by 4 inch springform pan, gradually pushing up sides. Beat cheese and sugar until fluffy. Add yolks one at a time, vanilla, and lemon juice, and beat well. (For a sweeter taste, use less lemon.)

Whip egg whites into peaks and fold into cheese mixture. Pour into crust and level off top. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 1 hour. Turn off heat, open door carefully, and allow to rest in the oven for 1 hour. Cool on rack. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate.

To serve, run a sharp knife around edges before releasing spring. Run a knife under the cake and place on cake server. Place a 3 inch diameter glass in the middle, cut around it to the bottom, and then make ½ inch radial cuts. (See fig. 21, p. 34.)

Note: almond toast crumbs may be substituted for cookie crumbs and almonds.

Short White Torte (*Krukhyi tort*)

This torte, an all-around favorite, is composed of three parts: short dough layers, filling, and icing. It is elegant, delicious, and keeps well. It is made in stages, a day at a time, and it must cure for at least two days to allow the flavors to intermingle, so it is made about a week before serving. Traditionally, this torte is white, with a glaze of hard sugar. At Eastertime the top is lavishly decorated with folk motifs from pysanky. Colored candies and nuts are cut and arranged as in a mosaic. Variations on this recipe are numerous, and many serious hospodyni have their own "secret" versions.

3 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
¼ pound butter
6 large egg yolks
1 cup sugar
½ cup milk
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Torte layers

Sift flour with baking powder and cut in small pieces of chilled butter with a pastry cutter or in processor. Beat egg yolks and sugar until thick and pale, and add to flour. Add milk and vanilla. Knead lightly and form 4 balls of dough (for 4 layers). Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight. (Dough may be frozen, thawed, and formed later.)

Between two sheets of waxed paper, roll out dough less than ½ inch thick. Peel off top paper. Place a 9 inch cake pan on dough and with a sharp knife cut a circle. Remove scraps. Slide wax paper and dough onto a cookie sheet and prick with fork. Repeat with rest of dough. Roll scraps last; they are baked and used as decorative crumbs. Bake in preheated 350° oven until golden but not brown, about 10 minutes. Allow to cool. Handle carefully, because layers are brittle.

½ pound unsalted butter
1 cup powdered sugar
2 large egg yolks
**12 ounces seedless strawberry
preserves or apricot jam**
juice of 2 oranges
juice of 1 lemon

Butter cream filling

Cream butter with sugar until fluffy. Add egg yolks one at a time with mixer on high speed. Beat 5 minutes. Place 1 baked layer on doubled wax paper and sprinkle lightly but thoroughly with juices. Spread jam over top of layer, just enough to cover, pulling to edge. Spread ½ inch butter cream on top, to ¼ inch from edge. Add another layer, press lightly, and repeat with jam and filling until all 4 layers (except the "scrap" one) are stacked. If a layer comes out imperfect or split, use it in the middle. Cover sides with butter cream and sprinkle with coarsely crumbled scraps. Cover lightly with wax paper and refrigerate overnight.

2 cups powdered sugar
¼ cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

White icing

Mix sugar with a little cream, adding vanilla. Add more cream to form a moderately thick frosting. Using a wide spatula, spread icing on top, from center to edge. If a very smooth surface is desired, dip clean spatula in hot water, shake off excess, then lightly smooth the top. Let dry and harden before decorating. Carefully transfer to cake platter. Decorate with candied fruit, jellied and hard candies, and nut meats, all cut into bits. These may be used to form a folk design or mosaic.

To serve: place a 3 inch diameter glass in the middle, cut around it to the bottom, and then make 1 inch radial cuts. (See fig. 21, p. 34.) This method produces elegant slices, not "slabs," which are frowned upon. Keep chilled and bring to room temperature before serving. However, repeated warmings cause the taste to deteriorate, so when serving only a few slices, do not warm up the whole torte. Serves 15 to 20.

First Sunday After Easter (Provody)

In every parish in pre-Soviet Ukraine, the Sunday after Easter was celebrated with the congregation's visit to the cemetery and a communal repast. This was the time to commemorate the dead, a cult that flourished in the Ukraine's pagan past. Much was retained from this period and was incorporated into Christian ritual.

At the cemetery, a wooden chapel housed all the necessities: utensils, candles, tables, ovens, and hearths. Its main room was decorated with icons donated by members of the village. The icons, draped with *rushnyky* (embroidered ritual cloths), were the chapel's aesthetic and religious focus. Here many communal activities took place. Here the priest recited the *parastas* to commemorate the village dead. (Today the parish hall fulfills some of the functions of this chapel.)

The community worked as a unit: the women busied themselves with food preparation; the men hauled water, firewood. They also provided drinks such as mead, *horilka* (whiskey), wine, and beer. Single younger men, together with the older boys, cleaned the graves and brought the cemetery to order. At gravesites, girls planted flowers and shrubs. Ukrainians favored the *kalyna* (cranberry tree, *Viburnum opulus*) and the *topolia* (poplar, *populus alba*) as ornamental plantings.

All adult women, especially those renowned as "communal" cooks, that is, those who cooked for special social occasions, organized the feast. Every *hospodynia* (housewife) contributed a cooked dish or ingredients for the meal.

On Sunday, each family brought to its graves *mysochky*, that is, three small *kalachi* (breads), *krashanky* and *pysanky* (colored and decorated eggs), sausages, salt, and *horilka* (whiskey). The head of the family offered prayers and food to the dead souls, believing that the departed protected the living family members from harm.¹ Some families invited the priest to say individual *parastas* at the graves.

When the religious ceremonies were concluded, everyone joined the communal feast. Existing descriptions and listings of foods and dishes suggest gargantuan feasts.² A sample menu³ included: wheat grain cooked in honey water (*kolyvo* or *kutia*); meats in aspic (*studynyna*); varieties of baked and filled pastries such as *pyrohy*, *knyshi*; roasts, sausages, head cheese, hams; roast fowl (duck, geese, wild birds); green borsch; braised cabbage; cabbage rolls (*holubtsi*); fried yeast balls with garlic butter (*pampushky*); varieties of kasha (buckwheat, millet, rice); *varenyky* (dumplings) with cheese, squash, cabbage, potatoes; and honey horns.

There was symbolism, superstition, or both, in many old customs. For example, seating was formalized. The old, the homeless, and orphaned children had places reserved for them at tables where the village hierarchy and notables sat. These guests were served first, honored in the belief that the souls of the dead sometimes returned in the bodies of these unfortunates.

The able-bodied and young people would spread out and picnic on linen tablecloths (*obrusy*) on the green. The first dish eaten was *kolyvo*,⁴ which was considered the food of the dead. Why this food remained so powerful in relation to the dead for centuries is not known. Following *kolyvo*, the rest of the dishes were presented.

In the Ukrainian diaspora, today's celebration of *Providna Nedilia* has been truncated to a communal breakfast at the parish hall and a visit to the parish cemetery. The custom of visiting graves continues to be observed communally. On this day, some cemeteries favored by a large number of Ukrainians resemble fairgrounds, with the faithful paying respects to their family graves as well as visiting and chatting among the living.

A suggested menu developed on the basis of the traditional lists is as follows: white borsch (*bilyi borsch*); vegetable and meat pastry (*pyrih z yarynoi i miasom*); Savoy cabbage rolls (*holubtzi z miasa*); millet carter's style (*chumats'ka kasha*); grandmother's roast (*babusyna pechenia*); chicken and pork paté (*pashtet z drobu*); puffs with garlic (*pisni pampushky z chasnykom*); honey horns with almonds (*rohalyky z medom i migdalamy*); and lemon kvas (*tsytrynovyi kvas*).

White Borsch (*Bilyi borsch*)

In late spring, only small beets are available, so the traditional borsch takes on a guise of "white" borsch. It is a fine example of adaptability to seasons. This soup is a very excellent first course. It turns into a light supper when served with new potatoes (which is traditional).

2 celery ribs
2 onions
2 carrots
2 parsnips
2–3 beets with tops
1 cup shredded cabbage
4 fresh mushrooms
1 tablespoon oil
2 tablespoons flour
4 cups chicken broth or water
with 2 chicken bouillon
cubes
1 cup buttermilk
½ cup sour cream
1 teaspoon fresh chopped dill
2 cloves garlic (or to taste)
1 teaspoon salt
2 small new potatoes per
person

Peel and shred vegetables. Wash beets and tops well, then shred beets and chop greens. Place vegetables in a large pot with broth or water and bouillon. Cook until soft. Wipe mushrooms with damp towel, slice thin, and cook in oil. Stir in flour to make a paste. Add a little broth, bring to a light boil, then add to vegetables.

Mix buttermilk and sour cream and add to soup. Do not boil; the borsch may curdle. Taste and adjust seasoning. Garnish with dill and garlic mashed with salt.

Scrub potatoes and boil 10 minutes or until cooked through. Place in a serving bowl and serve separately.

Vegetable and Meat Pastry (*Pyrih z yarynoi u i miasom*)

In the old days, this filled pastry and others like it, was carried into the fields to the workers for lunch (poludenok). It was washed down by clabbered milk or buttermilk. Now, it is a favorite of children and grownups alike and a fine dish to serve for a buffet supper or as the main course for luncheon. With a short dough similar to pie pastry, it may be formed into cylinders or individual turnovers. The filling consists of vegetables and meat. Pork was a Ukrainian favorite; beef was rare, and when available, tough and stringy. However, today's cook may use beef if preferred.

Pastry

4 cups sifted flour
1 teaspoon salt
½ pound butter
½ pound vegetable shortening
½ cup ice water
1 egg beaten with a little water
for glaze

Combine flour and salt, cut in pieces of chilled butter and shortening. Dough should look like coarse meal. Add enough ice water to form a ball. Knead together lightly. Flatten out on a piece of plastic wrap. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight before rolling out.

- 1 medium turnip
- 2 carrots
- 2 large potatoes
- 2 cups water
- 2 onions
- 2 tablespoons bacon fat or oil
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons fresh ground black pepper
- 2 beef bouillon cubes
- 1 pound lean pork or beef,
minced or coarsely ground
- 2 teaspoons spiced whiskey
(*peperivka*) or good spiced
bourbon (optional)

Vegetable and meat filling

Peel and dice vegetables. Combine with water, bring to a boil, and cook 5 minutes. Drain and reserve liquid. Sauté chopped onions in fat until golden, combine with vegetables, add salt and pepper. Dissolve bouillon cubes in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooking broth, add spiced whiskey, and add mixture to vegetables. Stir lightly with wooden spoon, but do not mash. Taste and adjust seasoning. Add meat to vegetables, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate overnight for flavor to develop.

For turnovers, roll out dough $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick and cut 4 inch rounds. Place filling to one side of each and fold over other half, sealing edges with fork. Arrange on baking sheet. Bake in preheated 375° oven for 20–25 minutes or until golden. Brush tops with glaze and bake a few more minutes.

For cylinders, roll half the dough into a 10 by 16 inch rectangle about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, arrange filling a serving spoon at a time along one long edge. Roll up, pinching dough to seal. Place carefully onto a greased baking sheet, seam side down, and chill. Repeat to make other roll. Bake in the middle of a preheated 375° oven for 40–45 minutes. Brush with glaze and bake 5 more minutes. With spatula, loosen rolls from baking sheet and cool.

Cut diagonally into 2 inch slices and serve as part of a buffet or with a green salad for supper.

Savoy Cabbage Rolls (*Holubtsi z miasa*)

In Ukrainian kitchens, cabbage leaves are often used as cases for soft fillings. These rolls are a little different, because the leaves are filled with a meat stuffing and not primarily a cereal mixture. This makes them “holiday” fare.

¾ pound lean pork, minced or ground once
½ cup fresh bread crumbs
1 large egg
1 large onion
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
1 medium Savoy cabbage
1–2 cups chicken stock or tomato juice
1 tablespoon flour
1 cup sour cream
1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill

Sauté chopped onion in butter until wilted, and cool. Mix meat, crumbs, egg, salt, and pepper, and add onion. Core the cabbage and bring to boil in a large pot half filled with water. Cook about 2 minutes. As outer leaves become translucent and soft, pry off and remove one by one with a wooden spoon. Trim leaves by paring off the thick part of the rib. (See figs. 8–12, p. 17).

Grease the bottom of a large baking dish and line it with outer cabbage leaves. Place a large spoonful of filling at the stem end of each leaf, fold over sides, then roll from bottom to top. Arrange in baking dish or pressure cooker, pour just enough stock to cover, place extra cabbage leaves on top, and cover with lid. Bake at 325° for 1 hour or in pressure cooker for 20 minutes at 10 pounds pressure.

Mix flour and cream and gradually add broth to make a sauce.

Arrange on platter, cover with sauce, and sprinkle with chopped dill. Serve with homemade noodles (*lokshyna*) or with millet (*pshono*) kasha.

Millet Carter's Style (*Chumats'ka kasha*)

This food was often prepared in an iron kettle over a wood fire, out in the open. It may have been a favorite of carters who crisscrossed the steppes of southern Ukraine, so this dish bears their name. Millet may be purchased in nutrition stores. It has been rediscovered recently as an excellent source of protein. Its mild taste blends well with that of meats and sauces.

1 pound millet
 ¼ pound bacon
 ½ pound fresh mushrooms
 1 medium onion
 1 teaspoon fresh mint
 (optional)
 1 teaspoon salt
 pepper to taste

Rinse millet thoroughly, bring to boil in enough water to cover, and cook covered over slow heat for 30 minutes. Dice bacon and fry until crisp. Wipe mushrooms. Chop onions and mushrooms and cook with bacon and bacon fat. Combine millet with bacon mixture and add salt and pepper.

Serve as a cereal or with Savoy cabbage rolls (see previous recipe) or as a starch with roasts.

Grandmother's Roast (*Babusyna pechenia*)

This old recipe features a favorite Ukrainian vegetable: beets. This gives the roast an unusual red color. This recipe was recorded in Nova Khata (1930) as an example of the nutritional value of "old" and unfashionable recipes.

4 pound boneless pork or pork
 shoulder
 3 tablespoons flour
 2 tablespoons oil or lard
 2 onions
 2 teaspoons salt
 4 medium beets
 1 pound pitted prunes
 1 cup sour cream
 1 teaspoon paprika

Pat meat dry with paper towel, rub with 2 tablespoons flour and salt. Brown meat on all sides in oil or lard in a heavy dutch oven. Add thinly sliced onions. Cover, reduce heat to low, and cook about an hour. Add a little water when dry. Turn meat twice while baking. Cook fresh beets in water until tender, reserving liquid. Chop into cubes and add to roast. Add prunes, beet liquid, cover, and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove roast to platter. Mix 1 tablespoon flour with sour cream, pour in roasting pan, and mix well, scraping sides. Simmer until sauce thickens. Taste and adjust seasoning. Add paprika for zest.

Serve with any kasha or *lokshyna* (noodles).

Chicken and Pork Paté (*Pashtet z drobu*)

This paté is delectable because of its subtle and mild flavor. This loaf may be served with chopped spiced aspic for a fancy presentation. A loaf of crusty home-baked bread is the desired accompaniment. Beer or wine completes the feast.

1 whole chicken breast
¼ pound lean cooked ham, dry
cured if possible
5 slices bacon
¼ cup spiced whiskey
(*peperivka*)
½ teaspoon ground thyme
2½ teaspoons salt
2 pounds chicken or turkey
½ pound ground pork
½ pound fresh pork fat
½ teaspoon ground allspice
1 teaspoon rubbed thyme
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
⅓ cup medium dry sherry or
mead
½ cup hulled sunflower seeds
or pine nuts
¾ pound fresh pork fat or
cured bacon

Paté

Skin and bone chicken breast and cut into long thin slices. Dice ham and bacon. Marinate above ingredients in whiskey mixed with 1 teaspoon ground thyme and 1 teaspoon salt. (Do not use plastic container.) Refrigerate at least 4 hours. Skin and bone turkey or chicken, removing ligaments. Mince or process fine (but not into a paste) and mix with ground pork. Add pork fat, allspice, rubbed thyme, 1½ teaspoon salt, pepper, sherry, and sunflower seeds, and mix well.

Remove chicken breast strips, reserving marinade. Add dry ham, bacon, and marinade to meat. Line the bottom of a 4 to 5 cup loaf pan (or terrine) with fresh pork or bacon slices placed crosswise, overlapping slightly. Pack in a third of the meat mixture, rapping pan to release air and fill corners. Add a layer of chicken (about half), pressing a little. Add more meat, repeat with the chicken and the last of the meat mixture, smoothing the top with a knife. Rap pan to release air. Cover with bacon slices, wrap in foil, and refrigerate overnight, so that the flavor develops. Repeat to fill other pan.

Cover with foil and place in a pan half filled with water. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 1½ hours or until loaf shrinks away from sides of the pan. Remove, allow to cool. Loosen foil and pour off some of the juices and fat. (Reserve for gravies, etc.) Place a brick

or other weight on top to compress the paté and chill for 8 hours. Keeps refrigerated up to 2 weeks.

To serve: invert pan on cutting board. Some cooks prefer the white rim of the bacon slices; others remove bacon, dry the sides of the paté with paper towel, and serve plain. Or serve in aspic (see below).

1 envelope gelatin
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup hot water
 $\frac{1}{4}$ spiced whiskey (*peperivka*)
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt

Aspic

Dissolve gelatin in water and add whiskey, lemon juice, and salt. Wash baking pan, then return paté to pan, pour aspic around it, and chill. Chill remaining aspic in a shallow pan to be used as garnish.

To serve: place $\frac{1}{2}$ inch slices of paté on a bed of lettuce, garnish with gherkin fans, diced aspic, lemon slices, and capers.

Fritters with Garlic (*Pisni pampushky z chasnykom*)

Today, fried dough pampushky are very well known in the sweet form—that is, sprinkled with powdered sugar. This recipe, a much older version, is appropriate as an appetizer or accompaniment for clear borsch, consomme, and other dishes. These fritters make a delicious and different snack because of their final roll in garlic.

2 envelopes dry yeast
2 cups milk
1 teaspoon sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon salt
4–5 cups flour
garlic salt, garlic powder, or
garlic oil

Sprinkle yeast in 1 cup lukewarm milk, add sugar, and allow to foam. Beat eggs with remaining milk and salt. In a large bowl, combine yeast and egg mixture and mix until thick. Let stand for 30 minutes. Heat at least 3 inches of oil in heavy skillet or deep fryer to 375° until hot but not smoking. Drop small spoonfuls into the fat, turning when golden. Remove when puffed and place on paper towels. Sprinkle with garlic powder or, for more bite, drizzle with garlic oil.

To make garlic oil or paste, peel and mash 2 heads garlic with 1 tablespoon salt and 1 cup oil. Keep refrigerated in covered jar.

Honey Horns with Almond Filling (*Rohalyky z medom i migdalamy*)

These yeast dough crescents are simply terrific for a brunch, for afternoon tea, or as an after-school snack for children.

1 envelope dry yeast
 1 cup evaporated milk
 4 large eggs
 1½ cups sugar
 4 cups flour
 ½ pound butter
 ¼ cup honey mixed with 1
 tablespoon sherry for glaze

½ cup unpeeled almonds
 1 cup blanched almonds
 1 cup sugar
 2 tablespoons heavy cream or
 evaporated milk
 ¼ teaspoon almond extract

Dough

Dissolve yeast in ½ cup warm milk, add 1 tablespoon sugar, and allow to foam for a few minutes. Beat sugar and eggs until thick. Alternately add milk, yeast mixture, and flour to form a soft dough. Roll out into a rectangle 1 inch thick, brush surface with melted butter, and roll tightly. Cut into thirds, and refrigerate covered in plastic wrap for 4 hours or overnight.

Almond filling

Roast unpeeled almonds in heavy skillet until brown but not burned. Grate or process all almonds fine. Add sugar, cream, and almond extract, and mix until thick. Add a little more cream if too thick.

Roll one-third of the dough into a rectangle ½ inch thick. With a sharp knife cut 4 inch squares. Place 1 tablespoon filling in each square, fold to make a triangle, and roll up. Place on greased baking sheet and shape into crescents or "horns." Repeat with remaining ingredients. Allow to rise double. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 25 minutes or until golden. Brush with honey glaze and return to oven for 5 more minutes. Cool on racks.

Lemon Kvas (*Tsytrynovyi kvas*)

Before the invention of soft drinks, people created marvelous natural beverages. The Ukrainian favorite was kvas, a simple fermented liquid. It came in many flavors, depending on its base: rye bread, beets, cranberries, maple syrup, and so forth.⁵ Rye kvas and beet kvas were used in soups, while fruit and berry drinks were beverages. Lemons were highly prized, so lemon kvas is an excellent example of this delicacy.

1 envelope dry yeast
10 quarts water
6 large lemons
2 cups sugar
1 cup raisins
12 ounces beer
large stone crock
cheesecloth
bottles or jars
corks or lids
muslin

Dissolve yeast in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup warm water. Boil remaining water and pour into crock. Add pitted halves of lemons, sugar, and raisins and mix until sugar dissolves. Cool to lukewarm. Add beer and yeast mixture. Cover with cheesecloth and ferment at room temperature for 24 hours. Strain liquid through muslin. Store in sealed glass jars or bottles. Keep for 3 to 4 days before serving.

Serve cold. Keep refrigerated or in a cool, dark place.

Feast of Saint George (Sviato Iuriiia)

Ukrainian cuisine rose out of the earth, was earth- and hearth-centered. A new planting season, marked by the feast of Saint George, was celebrated by ritualized sharing of food. The feast of the patron of spring, Saint George (known as Iuri in the Ukraine, Jerzy in Poland, Juraj in Yugoslavia, and Georgii in Russia), was commemorated on May 6 (O.S.). Of course, Saint George was world-famous for his “sally with the dragon,” but Ukrainians revered him for performing more direct services.

There were variations on the celebration of Iura (as it was colloquially called) throughout the Ukraine. However, two responsibilities were universally assigned to this patron: he opened the gates of heaven to allow spring with its life-giving force to descend to earth, and he protected horses and domestic animals from harm.

Saint George was viewed as a very useful patron. So, in meadows and fields, communal picnics were organized in his honor. Bonfires were set, linen cloths spread. Eating, feasting, games, and general merrymaking was in order.¹

Picnic menus included provisions at hand and timely, such as *krashanky* (dyed eggs) and pastries called *pyrohy* with a variety of fillings. Of course, the ubiquitous sausages and smoked meats were perfect for grilling.

Here is a sample menu:² turnovers with cheese (*pyrohy z syrom*); pastry with cabbage, eggs, and mushrooms (*pyrih z iarynoiui*); pastry with buckwheat and bacon (*pyrih z kasheiu*); small raised rolls (*kalachyky*); homemade fresh sausages for grilling; smoked ribs heated over the fire; and drinks such as beer, spiced whiskey (*peperivka*), and cherry brandy (*vyshniak*).

Turnovers with Cheese (*Pyrohy z syrom*)

Turnovers are a great invention: a soft filling in an edible case. It is very handy packaging. These turnovers are favorites with young and old alike. Since they can be eaten by hand, no fork is necessary. *Bryndzia* gives the cheese filling its tangy taste. This filling is also used in *varenyky*.

2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
4 ounces butter
¼ cup sour cream
1 egg white beaten with 2
teaspoons water for glaze

4 ounces dry farmer cheese
4 ounces crumbled *bryndzia* or
dry feta cheese
1 tablespoon butter
1 large egg
1 tablespoon fine dry bread
crumbs
1 tablespoon fresh chopped dill
or chives (or both)

Turnover dough

Mix flour, baking powder, and salt. Add chopped butter and mix until mealy. Or, in processor, combine dry ingredients and pulse once. With machine running, add chopped butter and mix.

Add sour cream and mix until dough forms a ball, firm but not stiff. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate 2 to 3 hours.

Cheese filling

Force cheeses through a sieve or mix well in processor. Mix in butter, egg, and bread crumbs. Add chives and/or dill. Taste and adjust seasoning, depending on the saltiness of the *bryndzia*.

Roll dough ⅛ inch thick between 2 sheets of plastic wrap or on floured surface. Remove top sheet and cut 4 inch rounds. Roll out scraps last. Place 1 tablespoon of filling to one side of each round, fold over, and seal edges with fork. Place on a greased baking sheet, and with a sharp knife cut a diagonal vent in each. Bake in preheated 375° oven 20 minutes, until golden. Brush with glaze and bake 5 minutes more.

Turnover with Cabbage, Eggs, and Mushroom Filling (*Pyrih z iarynoi*)

Pyrih, a versatile food, pleases the palate by combining the crisp texture of dough with soft filling. The casing keeps the filling moist. (It may be yeast-raised or short pastry, depending on preparation time available to the cook.) This elegant pyrih makes a grand presentation as a first course or a luncheon entrée; it can grace a buffet table as well. The yeast-raised dough may be prepared a day before baking, and everything may be assembled 2 hours before serving. Without eggs, the filling may be used in varenyky as well as in short-dough pyrizhky.

Turnover dough

- 2 cups flour
- 1 package dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup lukewarm milk
- 1 teaspoon oil
- 1 egg beaten with a little water
for glaze
- 1 tablespoon poppy or caraway
seeds

Mix flour, yeast, sugar, and salt. Cut in chopped butter and mix until mealy. Add milk and turn until dough forms a ball. Knead several times. Oil top lightly, cover with plastic wrap, and allow to rise about 1 hour. (Dough may be refrigerated overnight before rolling out.)

- 4–5 dry boletus or other dry wild mushrooms or 8 mature brown cultivated mushrooms
- 1 small cabbage
- 1 large onion
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon fresh ground pepper (or to taste)
- 2 tablespoons dry bread crumbs
- 3 hard-boiled eggs
- 2 tablespoons melted butter or oil

Cabbage, egg, and mushroom filling

Cook dry mushrooms in water to cover until soft, about 1 hour. Drain, reserving liquid, chop fine, and set aside. If using cultivated mushrooms, wipe with damp towel, slice, and sauté in a little oil until wilted. Core and shred cabbage fine. Heat oil in a large skillet, add cabbage and thinly sliced onions, and cook, stirring, over medium heat until wilted. Add mushrooms, salt, pepper, mushroom liquid, and cook 5 minutes, stirring. Mix in bread crumbs, taste, and adjust seasoning. Mix filling several times while cooling to allow moisture to evaporate. Finely chop eggs to use between layers of filling. Allow to cool.

Roll dough into a rectangle ½ inch thick. Place half of the filling along one long side of the dough, stopping 1 inch from the edge. Cover with chopped eggs, melted butter, and remaining filling. Carefully fold over dough and pinch edges together. Place on greased baking sheet, lightly oil top, cover loosely with plastic wrap, and allow to rise 30 minutes. Bake in the middle of a preheated 350° oven for 30 minutes or until golden. Brush with glaze, sprinkle with seeds, and bake for 5 more minutes.

Serve hot or cool, and slice diagonally.

Turnover with Buckwheat and Bacon Filling (*Pyrilh z kashoiu i solonyoiu*)

This pyrih is popular among Ukrainians. The nutty flavor of buckwheat kasha blends very well with that of smoky bacon. Buckwheat, undervalued in most modern diets, is an excellent source of protein, trace minerals, and fiber. Ukrainians enjoy its versatility as a cereal and as flour. In the past, this dish, flavored with bacon and onion, was served for breakfast or late supper. It may be baked as one turnover or individual pyrishky.

2 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
¼ pound butter
1 beaten egg
¼ cup ice water
1 egg white for glaze
2 tablespoons dry cornmeal

½ cup fine or medium
buckwheat groats
1 egg
1 cup hot water
1 teaspoon salt
6 strips lean country bacon
2 tablespoons bacon fat or oil
1 medium onion
1 teaspoon ground black pepper

Turnover dough

Mix flour and salt, cut in chopped butter, and mix until mealy. Or combine above ingredients in processor and mix 3 times. With machine running, add egg. Mix twice and add water until dough forms a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill 2 hours before rolling out. (Dough keeps well refrigerated or frozen.)

Buckwheat and bacon filling

Mix buckwheat with egg until well coated. Cook in heated saucepan until dry, mixing well. Stir in water, add salt, cover, and cook 20 minutes until fluffy. Cut bacon into small pieces and fry until crisp. Remove bacon and sauté chopped onion in the fat. Mix in buckwheat, bacon, and pepper. Taste and adjust seasoning. Filling keeps refrigerated for several days.

Roll dough into a rectangle ¼ inch thick. Cover one side with cooled filling, stopping 1 inch from the edge. Fold over the other half and press edges with fork. Place on baking sheet sprinkled with cornmeal and bake in preheated 375° oven for 30 minutes. Brush with glaze and bake for 5 to 10 minutes more.

Serve with sour cream, the traditional accompaniment.

Small Yeast Rolls (*Kalachyky*)

These rich and tasty little rolls are fine as snacks in themselves or as dinner rolls.

2 packages dry yeast
2 tablespoons lukewarm water
3 tablespoons lukewarm milk
6 tablespoons sugar
4 egg yolks
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
zest of 1 lemon
7 cups flour
1 cup heavy cream
4 tablespoons butter
1 egg for glaze
sugar or coarse salt (optional)

Combine yeast, water, milk, and 1 tablespoon sugar and let foam for 5 minutes or so. In a large bowl, mix egg yolks with 5 tablespoons sugar until pale. Add yeast mixture, vanilla, and lemon zest. Alternately add flour and cream and knead until dough leaves the hand. Add melted butter and knead a little longer until dough is shiny and pliable. Cover and allow to rise in a warm place until double in bulk.

Divide dough into quarters, then divide each into 5 parts, rolling into smooth balls. Place on lightly greased baking sheets at 2 inch intervals and allow to rise until double in bulk. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 20 minutes. Brush with glaze, sprinkle with sugar or coarse salt (optional), and bake 5 more minutes.

Serve warm with tea or coffee.

Pentecost (Zeleni Sviata)

This “green festival,” a particular celebration of woods and meadows from the Ukrainian pagan past, probably became associated with Pentecost because both feasts were celebrated in the spring. Or maybe the symbolism of the descent of the Holy Spirit merged in the minds of early Ukrainian Christians with the commemoration of the spirits of the woods. The origin of the relationship is uncertain.

This feast falls fifty days after Easter and is the official end of the Easter or spring cycle. In old Ukrainian custom, there was an order of action for the celebration. First, home and hearth were cleaned. Second, festive dishes were prepared. Third, households were decorated with greenery.

This “green festival” was aptly named. Tree boughs, flowering bushes, herbs, and wildflowers were used to decorate the doorways and interiors of churches, schools, homes, barns, and outbuildings, as well as gates, fenceposts, and rails. Greenery was everywhere.

Certain trees were favored: oak, maple, ash, and linden. Others were not used, such as birch, larch, and poplar, although the reasons for these preferences remain unknown. Of course, the linden tree is very aromatic when in bloom and the oak symbolizes strength, but these are just guesses as to their significance for this festival.¹

Decoration of public buildings was the responsibility of the community and executed by prominent and more affluent *hospodari*. Food preparation was the women’s responsibility. Ritual again was defined. Before the evening meal was served, the *hospodynina* sprinkled the home with holy water and the *hospodar* did the same to the yard, stables, barn, and bee keep. The head of the house recited a prayer such as this one:

“Gracious Lord, sun of truth, stars of beauty, moon of light, wind ferocious, rain bountiful, weather beautiful, ancestors’ fathers, we feast with you and greet you in summer.”²

This prayer epitomized the three main elements of Ukrainian belief: reverence of God, supplication to the elements of nature, and deference to dead ancestors.

At present, in the Ukrainian diaspora, this feast combines the Christian commemoration of the Holy Spirit with the tradition of decorating Ukrainian churches with greenery. The dead are remembered by visits to cemeteries and the recitation of *parastas*.

Oral reports from elderly people recorded at the turn of this century suggest that a traditional seven-course meal was served on the eve of Pentecost.³ The menu consisted of Ukrainian favorites, since during this season no dietary proscriptions were in force. The meal (as described by Stephan Kylymnyk) started with the obligatory *kolyvo* (cereal and honey). Recipes for the following are adapted here: sauerkraut soup (*kapusniak*); roast fowl or pork; meat aspic of pork, chicken, or veal (*drahli* or *kholodets'*); buckwheat cakes with cheese and eggs (*blyntsi*), baked kasha; rice or millet with milk; chicken broth with hand-formed noodles (*iushka z zaterkoiu*); and cheese turnovers (*pyrizhky z syrom*).

Sauerkraut Soup with Meat (*Kapusniak z miasom*)

Kapusniak is a term applied to any type of soup made with sauerkraut or its juice. It comes in many variations. Often it is a hearty meal-in-one. When it serves as an opener for a Sunday dinner, it is presented in a lighter version. To Ukrainian tastes, kapusniak is second to borsch in popularity. It contains a favorite Ukrainian characteristic: tartness.

**½ pound boneless pork
shoulder**
4 tablespoons bacon fat or lard
2 medium onions
1 carrot
2 celery ribs
1 parsnip
1 pound sauerkraut
3 cups water or stock
½ pound smoked sausage
½ teaspoon caraway seed
½ teaspoon dill seed
1 clove garlic
3 tablespoons flour
8 new potatoes
1 cup diced bacon

Cut pork into small cubes. Heat 2 tablespoons fat in a heavy dutch oven and brown pork, turning often. Add chopped onions, carrot, celery, diced parsnip. Cover and cook over very low heat for 1 hour or until meat is almost tender.

Rinse sauerkraut in cold water (squeeze out juice if a milder taste is preferred) and chop coarsely. Add to meat and cover with water or stock. Cut sausage into small pieces and add. Season with caraway seed, dill, and garlic. Cook 30 minutes.

Heat 2 tablespoons of fat, add flour, and brown lightly. Mix in a little broth, add to soup, stir, and cook until soup thickens. Scrub but do not peel potatoes. Cook covered in water for 10 minutes or until tender. Pour off water, and leave on low heat for 1 minute to dry out. Fry bacon crisp and sprinkle over potatoes and toss lightly.

Serve with 1 or 2 potatoes in each soup bowl.

Sauerkraut Soup with Buckwheat (*Kapusniak z kashoiu*)⁴

This kapusniak is very simple to make and yet provides much nutrition, plenty of fiber, and few calories. It is tasty, keeps and freezes well.

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 2 large onions
- 1 quart lean meat stock
- 1 pound sauerkraut
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper
- 2 cups cooked buckwheat
kasha

Heat oil in a heavy pot, cook chopped onions until clear, and add stock, sauerkraut (squeezed out if a milder taste is preferred), and pepper. Bring to a boil and simmer for 30 minutes. Add cooked kasha, taste, and add more pepper as desired.

Tart Village Soup (*Kvasivka selians'ka*)

This soup, a change from the heavy consistency of the usual kapusniak, makes a thrifty use of the sauerkraut juice that would otherwise be left in the barrel. It seems appropriate for Pentecost celebrations, since by late spring the supply of last year's sauerkraut would probably have run low. This recipe originated in the village of Piatkova in the province of Dobromyl' and was recorded by Osypa Zaklyns'ka in the monthly magazine Nova Khata in the early 1930s.

- 2 cups sauerkraut juice
- 2 cups meat stock
- 1 cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup mashed potatoes
- 1 teaspoon fresh chopped dill
- rye bread or croutons

Bring juice and stock to a boil. Mix well sour cream, flour, and egg. Add a little hot broth, mix, and add to the pot and simmer 3 minutes. Add mashed potatoes and sprinkle with dill.

Serve with diced rye bread or croutons.

Turkey Roast à la Markevych (*Pechenyi yndyk Mykola Markevycha*)

This recipe appears in Mykola Markevych's Obychayi, poveria, kukhnia, y napytky malorosian (Customs, Beliefs, Kitchen and Drinks of Ukrainians, Kiev, 1860).⁵ See Note on Sources for more information about this remarkable publication. This recipe is unchanged, only updated. An interesting question is how and why did the turkey, an American bird, become so popular so far from home? Or what kind of bird did the Ukrainians call a turkey?

12–13 pound turkey
3 medium onions
½ cup melted butter
3 tablespoons flour
3 tablespoons fat from the bird
or butter
2 cups sour cream
1 tablespoon tarragon vinegar

Dry turkey with paper towels, and rub cavity and skin with salt. Allow to rest 2 to 3 hours at room temperature. Stuff with peeled and quartered onions, tie legs together, and tuck in wings. Bake at 350° for 1 hour, breast side down, basting with drippings or melted butter. With breast covered with aluminum foil to avoid overcooking, roast on back for 2 hours or until juices run clear when pricked; uncover for the last 30 minutes to brown. Baste at 30 minute intervals. Remove from the oven and set aside for 20 minutes.

Combine flour and fat, adding drippings from roaster, sour cream, and vinegar. Bring to a light simmer. Cut string, remove onions, pour gravy over the whole bird, and bake 10 minutes in hot oven for a “crusty” bird. Or carve into major pieces, cover with gravy, and bake 10 minutes.

Serve with fresh spinach and young beet greens scalded with bacon-vinegar dressing (see p. 150).

Meat in Aspic (*Kholodets' zvychainyi*)

Kholodets' is highly esteemed in Ukrainian cookery. It deserves this respect because it is very nourishing, easy to digest, and an excellent source of protein. There are many refinements in this dish. Some make it entirely of chicken, others use veal and beef, still others believe that pork and pigs' feet are de rigueur.⁶ This excellent recipe combines fowl, pork and veal. It makes a delicious first course or luncheon dish, and goes well with rye or sourdough bread.

Much of the uncertainty in preparing aspics has been removed by the use of unflavored gelatin. Once knuckles, bones, and other parts were needed to produce the desired congealing quality. However, it would be a poor product if the bones and pigs' feet were totally omitted; gelatin should be looked upon as "insurance" for jelling. The pressure cooker saves time, but the aspic still requires at least 2 days to set and for the flavor to ripen.

1 pig's foot, split
2 pounds pork neck bones
½ pound boneless veal
½ pound dark turkey meat
2 onions
2 carrots
2 ribs of celery
6 peppercorns
1 bay leaf
3 cloves garlic (or to taste)
1 tablespoon salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 envelope gelatin

Scrub pig's foot in cold water and scrape off any bristles. Combine meats, vegetables, peppercorns, and bay leaf in large kettle or pressure cooker. Cook covered in water until very well done (about 3 hours in kettle or 45 minutes at 15 pounds pressure in pressure cooker). When meat is loose from bones, uncover and cool.

Pour off broth, skim off fat, and reserve broth. Remove meat from bones, discarding turkey skin and fat and vegetables. (Some cooks remove the pig's foot too.) Chop meat into bite-size pieces and place in an oblong pan. Add peeled and crushed garlic, salt, and pepper. Soften gelatin in 1 cup hot broth and add to meat. Pour enough remaining broth to cover meat by at least ½ inch. Taste broth and adjust seasoning. Cover with plastic wrap and chill overnight. Keeps refrigerated up to 1 week.

Serve in 1 inch slices sprinkled with flavored vinegar or lemon juice. Garnish with parsley and lemon slices.

Buckwheat Cakes Baked with Cheese (*Hrechani blyntsi zapikani z syrom*)

Pancakes are an "old" food since they required only a flat surface and heat. These thin blynts'i or nalysnyky are made of buckwheat flour which imparts a nutty flavor. The overall taste is set off by the bryndzia or other sheep's milk cheese. Dry feta may be substituted.

2 cups buckwheat flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons sugar
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup milk
1¼ cups water
2 eggs

½ pound farmer cheese
½ pound *bryndzia* or other
sheep's milk or feta cheese
2 eggs
1 tablespoon chopped chives
2–3 tablespoons melted butter
½ cup dry bread crumbs
½ cup Parmesan cheese

Batter for pancakes

Sift flour and baking powder, salt, and sugar. Add lightly beaten eggs, milk, and water, and mix. Let stand for 10 minutes. Heat a 9 inch skillet. Oil lightly, pour in enough batter to cover half of pan, then tilt to cover the entire surface. When top looks "dry," turn over with spatula and cook for 1 minute. Remove to a large plate. Repeat; there should be at least 4 cakes. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside. (These may be done 2 or 3 days in advance.)

Cheese filling

Using a wooden spoon, mix cheeses and press through a sieve. Add lightly beaten eggs and chives. Butter an ovenproof dish or 9 inch iron skillet and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese or dry bread crumbs. Place a pancake in the bottom and spread with cheese mixture. Continue, alternating pancakes and cheese, ending with a pancake or (if none is left) dry bread crumbs sprinkled with Parmesan cheese and melted butter. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Cut in wedges.

For breakfast, serve hot with blackberry syrup. For luncheon or as first course, serve warm with a green salad.

Feast of Saints Peter and Paul (Petra)

Traditionally, this feast, which falls on July 12 (O.S.), marked the height of summer in the Ukraine. Though both saints were given equal billing for this commemoration, the people colloquially called it Petra, thus “robbing” Paul.

A very special celebration of this feast occurred in the Hutsul region, in the Carpathian Mountains of western Ukraine. The high mountain plains were not suitable for farming, so sheep and cattle herding were principal livelihoods.

On this holiday, the villagers of Carpathian Ukraine gave special thanks to the head shepherd and his assistants for keeping the communal flocks healthy and safe.¹ To celebrate the shepherds' day, each household presented clothing, tools, and foods to those who provided this vital function for the village.

The flocks were mobile and the shepherds' quarters in the hills were primitive. As their lives were simple, so was their food. It was comprised of those staples that kept well, provided enough nourishment for a hardy life, and (not incidentally) mixed well with milk. Therefore, milk, cheese, and grains were the basis of most meals.²

The celebration for the shepherds consisted of preparation of those foods that were plentiful in the region during the season. There was a ritual scrambled egg fry called *banush* by the Hutsuls. Other dishes were *liapuny* (pancakes), and of course *pyrohy* and *varenyky* with meat or cheese fillings. *Hospodari* provided beer and mead to drink.

There was no celebration of Petra without special baked rolls called *mandryky* (from the word *mandruvaty*, to wander). According to a story, Saints Peter and Paul were sustained by certain rolls baked with eggs and cheese while traveling on their apostolic missions. So, to commemorate the Feast of Petra, people baked and ate these rolls.³

Another story related to *mandryky* concerned the cuckoo, which usually stopped singing in mid-July (probably due to nesting habits). To the simple folk, the lore was that a cuckoo snatched a roll from Saint Peter, and, as punishment for thievery, the bird

choked on the roll and could no longer sing. If the cuckoo was heard singing afterward, it was considered a bad omen. This was a charming explanation for an observed phenomenon.⁴

Recipes that evoke these celebrations are: yeast rolls (*mandryky*) with different toppings; grandfather's soup (*didivs'ka iushka*); barley porridge with vegetables (*iachminna kasha z iarynoiui*); and pancakes (*liapuny*) with vegetables or meat fillings.

Yeast Rolls with Toppings (Mandryky)

In some parts of the Ukraine, mandryky were called perevertanyky (as in the Hutsul region) or banyky (as in the Bojko region). In all instances, these rolls were made from flour, eggs, milk, and yeast dough. They were often placed on fresh cabbage leaves and baked on the hearth. These rolls may be topped with cheese and onions or fresh shredded cabbage, or sweet cooked fruit. The choice is up to the cook and the rolls' intended use.

- 1 package dry yeast**
- 2 tablespoons warm water**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- 3 cups flour**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 cup warm milk**

Dissolve yeast in water, add sugar, and mix. Beat eggs with milk and add. Add yeast mixture and knead about 5 to 10 minutes until dough is soft but not sticky. Or, in processor with machine running, add beaten eggs to flour, yeast mixture, and milk until flour forms a ball. Allow to rest a few minutes, then process a few more pulses.

Form dough into a smooth ball, place in a lightly oiled clean bowl, turning once, cover with plastic wrap, and allow to rise until double in bulk, about 30 to 40 minutes.

On a floured surface, roll out dough about ½ inch thick. Run a hand under dough to loosen it, dust with flour, flip over, and dust again. Cut 3 or 4 inch circles with a cookie cutter or wineglass, cover with topping (see following recipes), and turn up edges to form a rim. Place on lightly greased (or nonstick) baking sheet, allow to rise again until double, about 30 minutes. Bake in preheated 350° oven about 30 minutes, until golden.

Note: when baking rolls with cheese topping, cover with lightly buttered brown paper or foil.

Cheese Topping for *Mandryky*

2 cups dry farmer cheese
 1 egg
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 tablespoon chopped dill
 1 medium onion
 (optional)

Mash farmer cheese, add beaten egg and salt. Mix well and add dill. For a more robust flavor, add chopped onion sautéed in 1 tablespoon oil until clear.

Cabbage Topping for *Mandryky*

2 cups finely shredded fresh
 cabbage
 1 medium onion
 2 tablespoons oil or butter
 1 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
 1 teaspoon freshly ground black
 pepper (or to taste)
 1–2 teaspoons dry fine bread
 crumbs

In a large heavy skillet, cook cabbage and chopped onion in oil or butter until wilted. Add salt and pepper and mix well. Cool. Put cabbage mixture through meat grinder or pulse a few times in processor (to remove “strings”). Return to skillet and cook over low heat, stirring. Cook dry, then add enough bread crumbs to absorb any additional moisture. Cool before using as topping.

Note: cabbage may be made more zesty with the addition of 2 serving spoons of sauerkraut to the first cooking.

Cherry Topping for *Mandryky*

juice of 1 lemon
 water to cover
 ½–1 cup sugar (depending on
 tartness of cherries)
 1 pint pitted fresh cherries or
 1 pound can of cherries
 2 tablespoons cornstarch
 2 tablespoons cold water

In heavy saucepan, heat lemon juice, sugar, and water to boiling. Add cherries and toss lightly. Dissolve cornstarch in cold water and add to cherries. Cook until cherries are coated and sauce is clear. If using canned cherries, drain very well, and use cherry liquid instead of water; adjust sugar to taste. Cool before using as topping.

Grandfather's Soup (*Didivs'ka iushka*)

The name of this simple soup is ambiguous: it may mean that it is a very old form of soup, or that it is favored by old folks, or both. This light, delicious, and quick soup makes an appearance both at breakfast or supper. Children like the fresh taste. It finds favor with the older generation for its easy digestibility. The cook likes it because it takes minimum preparation, and the ingredients are always on hand. The drop noodles called zatirka or styranka are as old as this soup.

2 medium potatoes
2 cups water
2 teaspoons salt
½ cup flour
3 tablespoons butter
¼ cup milk
1 medium onion
1 cup light cream

Peel and dice potatoes. In a saucepan combine potatoes, water, and salt and cook until clear, 5 minutes or so. Mix flour and 1 tablespoon butter and enough milk to make a firm dough. Drop pea-size balls of dough into the cooking potatoes and cook 5 minutes. Sauté chopped onion in 2 tablespoons butter until golden. Add cream and onions to potatoes and serve. Note: ½ cup fine egg noodles may be substituted for drop noodles.

Barley Porridge with Vegetables (*Iachminna kasha z iarynoi*)

Porridge has gone the way of the trolley: out of fashion and use. It somehow evokes memories of fairytales and thus disuse. This is a loss. This porridge "sticks to the ribs," so to speak. It takes slow and prolonged cooking, but is not labor-intensive. It freezes well. Served for breakfast, it provides a good base of energy for the day and satisfies many nutritional requirements. For lunch or supper, it is a meal when accompanied by crusty bread and a green salad.

- 1 cup pearl barley, fine or medium grain
- 1 large onion
- 2 carrots
- 2 ribs celery (including leaves)
- 2 parsnips
- 2 small turnips
- 2 pounds chicken (neck, back, giblets, and thighs)
- 3 dry mushrooms (boletus preferred) or 1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms
- 6 cups stock or vegetable water (other than from the cabbage family), or half water and half stock
- 3 medium potatoes
- salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 1 bouillon cube
- 1 teaspoon Maggi sauce or soy sauce
- chopped fresh dill

Rinse barley in cold water and drain. Combine with peeled and chopped vegetables, chicken parts, and mushrooms in a large heavy-bottomed pot. Cover with stock and bring to boil. Stir, cover, and cook over medium heat for about 1 hour, stirring occasionally, until barley is soft. Add cubed potatoes and cook 30 minutes more. Remove chicken and separate meat from skin and bones. Chop meat and return to porridge. If dry mushrooms are used, dice fine and return to soup. Add salt and pepper to taste, and bouillon cube. If porridge is too thick, add a little water or stock. Add Maggi seasoning or soy sauce.

Serve in deep bowls and garnish with dill. Often Maggi sauce is placed on the table for individual use.

Pancakes with Fillings (*Liapuny z nachynkoiu*)

Pancakes make excellent casings for soft fillings. Ukrainians call them mlyntsi, nalysnyky, and liapuny; Russians call them blyni.⁵ These pancakes are similar to crepes in preparation, yet without the heavier egg content. Batter handles more easily if allowed to rest after mixing for a couple of hours or overnight. The pancakes are made first, then the filling is prepared. Pancakes are filled, rolled, and briefly baked or sautéed. They are served with sauce or sour cream.

¼ cup milk
¼ cup water
1 cup flour
2 eggs
½ teaspoon salt

Combine liquids, add other ingredients, and mix with wooden spoon until well blended. Or in processor, combine flour, eggs, salt, and milk. Process until smooth. Scrape down sides. With machine running, add water.

Batter should be a little thicker than heavy cream. (Add a little water if too thick.) Refrigerate for a couple of hours before cooking.

Heat a little oil in a heavy 8 or 9 inch skillet, tipping the pan to cover entire surface. Oil should be hot but not smoking. Pour about 3 tablespoons of batter into the skillet and quickly tip the pan so that it covers the bottom, leaving no gaps. Cook until edges pull away from sides. Loosen with spatula, flip over, and cook other side until set, less than 1 minute. Stack pancakes on a large plate. If not using immediately, cover tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate.

Place a large spoonful of filling (see following recipes) in the middle of each pancake. Fold up the edge nearest you, then fold from sides to center, like an envelope. Roll over remaining edge. Place seam side down on a plate. Rolled pancakes may be refrigerated or frozen, then baked. Place pancakes in one layer in a buttered baking dish, seam side down. Cover and bake at 325° until heated through. Or, cook in skillet in a little butter about 5 minutes until golden, then cook other side.

Serve with mushroom gravy with vegetable filling and horseradish sauce with meat filling.

Vegetable Filling for Pancakes (*Iarynova nachynka z iaitsamy*)

- 2 ribs celery
- 2 carrots
- 1 medium onion
- 2 hard boiled eggs
- 2 tablespoons butter or oil
- 4 fresh mushrooms
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon fresh ground
pepper
- 1 tablespoon fresh chopped
parsley

Thinly slice celery and carrots and cook in a little water until soft. Cook chopped onion in butter until golden. Add sliced mushrooms, salt, and pepper, and cook 5 minutes or until wilted. Add drained vegetables. Add chopped eggs. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and mix lightly. Cool before filling pancakes.

Meat Filling for Pancakes (*Nachynka z miasa*)

- 1 onion
- 1 carrot
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 cups cooked chicken, beef,
pork, or veal
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg, freshly
grated
- 1 tablespoon *peperivka* (spiced
whiskey, optional)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- salt and ground black pepper to
taste

Finely chop onion and carrot. Cook in melted butter until soft. Chop meat fine. Mix all ingredients and season to taste. *Peperivka* adds a more assertive flavor. (See note, p. 48.)

Feast of the Transfiguration (Spasa)

Summer culminated with the celebration of the feast of Christ's Transfiguration, or the folk feast of Spasa, August 19 (O.S.). The community celebrated the harvest of fruit, honey, and new grains. Special harvest wreaths braided from leavings in the wheat fields were used as decoration. These, with an assortment of fruit, honeycombs, and sheaves of grains, were taken to church for blessing. These offerings of gratitude for the bounty of the summer were then distributed among the less fortunate members of the community as well as used at home.

Very traditional old people, according to documents written in the early 1900s, refrained from eating that year's fruit until after this blessing. Also, women whose children died in infancy or early childhood abstained from eating fruit until after Spasa.¹ Neither the origin of these customs, nor the reasoning behind them, has been fully understood or recorded.

After the blessing of the harvest, families celebrated with favorite seasonal dishes, including *varenyky* (dumplings) with fruit or berries, crackers with poppy seeds, *lokshyna* (egg noodles) with apples, and doughnuts glazed with honey. For the main course, freshwater fish, as well as roasts of lamb or game were favored. Ukrainians' love for cereal dishes in the form of assorted dumplings was not ignored. These dishes reflected the bounty of the summer as well as the tastes preferred by Ukrainians.²

A menu mirroring these dishes includes the following: dumplings with cherries or plums (*halushky z ovochamy*); noodle-apple casserole (*lokshyna z iablukamy*); crayfish sausage (*kovbasa z ryby i rakiv*); carp with honey (*korop z medom*); lamb roast with buckwheat rolls (*pechena iahniatyna z hrechanykamy*); wheat fritters (*slast'ony z krupiv*); cheese dumplings (*halushky z syra*); and dumplings with meat filling (*halushky z miasom*).

These dishes were usually served around the family table and all helped themselves. These dishes also lend themselves to buffet service and may be prepared ahead of time, allowing the host and hostess to relax with guests.

Dumplings with Fruit (*Halushky z ovochamy*)

These halushky are made of a light dough mixed with wheat flour and milk. Round dumplings, made of soft dough, sometimes are filled and sometimes "blind." Any seasonal fruit may be used as filling. Halushky are served warm with a light syrup and sweetened whipped or sour cream. The results are lightly sweet and are an excellent accompaniment for fish or roasts.

2½ cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup evaporated milk

1 quart cherries or plums
1 cup of sugar (or to taste)
½ cup water
1–2 cups light sour cream or
2 cups whipped cream
½ cup powdered sugar

Dough for dumplings

Sift together flour and salt, and add milk and enough water to make a light dough. (This may be done in food processor.) Sprinkle lightly with flour, knead a few times, form into a ball, and allow to rest, covered, for 15 minutes.

Fruit filling

Pit fruit, sprinkle with sugar, and let stand 30 minutes. Halve larger fruit. Strain juice from fruit into a saucepan, add water, and bring to boil. Cook until sugar dissolves and syrup thickens. (Add more sugar if fruit is very tart.)

Roll out half of the dough into a rectangle ⅛ inch thick. Cut 3 inch rounds with cookie cutter. Form each round around a tablespoonful of fruit in a ball. Seal edges, roll in floured palms, and place on floured towels. Roll scraps last. Gently drop 10 or 12 dumplings in 3 quarts boiling water and stir lightly. Cook uncovered until *halushky* come to the surface. Drain in colander and place on platter.

Serve warm with light fruit syrup and sweetened sour cream. (Mix 1 cup sour cream with 1 cup whipping cream and set out at room temperature for several hours. Mix again lightly before serving.)

Noodles Baked With Apples (*Lokshyna z iablukamy*)

This dish was an ever popular entrée on those days when the church prohibited eating meat or dairy products. Its main ingredients were noodles and apples with spices and sugar. Traditionally, it was served on Good Friday and Spasa.

- 6 large tart apples (golden delicious recommended)**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon**
- 8 ounces flat noodles**
- 3 tablespoons oil**
- 3 tablespoons fine bread crumbs**

Peel, core, and grate apples. Add sugar and the cinnamon and let stand 10 minutes. Boil noodles in 3 quarts water until opaque or *al dente*. Rinse in cold water and drain. Sauté 2 tablespoons bread crumbs in 1 tablespoon oil until golden. Mix with noodles in a large bowl.

Use 2 tablespoons oil to cover bottom and sides of a soufflé pan or casserole and sprinkle with remaining bread crumbs. Cover bottom with a layer of noodles, then with alternate layers of apples and noodles, finishing with noodles. Press down lightly. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 45 minutes or until done.

Loosen edges with a sharp knife, invert onto a platter, and sprinkle with sugar. Serve in wedges.

Fish and Crayfish Sausage (Kovbasa z ryby i rakiv)³

In late summer, crayfish, once abundant in Ukrainian creeks and streams, were considered a culinary delicacy. Dishes of fish or meat paste were very exceptional, "refined," gracing only the more opulent tables. One reason was that pounding the flesh into a paste was very laborious, so such dishes were not made frequently. Now the processor has made these dishes easily accessible to the ordinary household. Pike and perch were often used. Crayfish give this sausage its pink color. If crayfish are not available, shrimp are a good substitute. Sausage should be made in advance and chilled.

2 medium onions
 3 tablespoons butter
 2 pounds mild fish fillet
 ½ pound crayfish meat or
 shrimp
 2 teaspoons chopped dill
 salt to taste
 1 cup heavy cream
 natural pork casing
 milk for poaching

Sausage

Chop onions, sauté in butter, and cool. Pick over fish for bones and cut into 1 inch cubes. Dice crayfish or shrimp. In processor, combine fish, onions, dill, and salt and process 2 to 3 minutes, gradually adding ½ cup cream. Add crayfish or shrimp and process 2 pulses. Whip remaining cream and fold lightly into mixture. Stuff casing as for sausage (see p. 48), leaving no air holes. Tie with string at the bottom and top. In a shallow pan, heat milk to simmer, reduce heat, and poach sausage 20 minutes. Remove, cover, and allow to set.

This sausage may be served cold as an appetizer, or with a cream sauce (see below) as a first course.

2 tablespoons flour
 2 tablespoons butter
 1 cup cream
 ¼ cup fish stock
 1 teaspoon tomato paste

Sauce

Heat butter and flour until lightly colored. Add cream and fish stock, mixing well to avoid lumps, and cook for a few minutes, stirring. Add tomato paste.

To serve, sauté sliced sausage in butter until heated. Pour a little sauce in heated platter, arrange sausage slices, and pour sauce around them. Garnish with dill. Serve with new red potatoes or apple-noodle casserole, with remaining sauce in sauce boat.

Carp with Honey in Aspic (*Korop z medom*)⁴

Ukrainians held carp in great esteem for its succulent flesh. This recipe combines a light honey taste with the sweetness of the fish. The flavor of honey remains, although most of the sweetness is cooked out.

6 slices of carp, cut crosswise
3 cups fish and vegetable stock
 (or enough to cover fish)
2 eggs
1 envelope gelatin
1 cup honey
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup wine vinegar or to taste
1 teaspoon salt or to taste
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white raisins
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup blanched almonds

In a large shallow pan, lightly poach fish in simmering stock. Cover with waxed paper and cool. Reduce stock by $\frac{1}{3}$. Beat eggs and add, bring to a boil, and simmer until stock is clear. Strain through a fine linen napkin or paper coffee filter. Dissolve gelatin in a little stock. Cool. Heat honey and cook until dark, but do not burn. Add vinegar, salt, raisins, and almonds, bring to boil, and cook for 5 minutes. Combine with reduced stock and dissolved gelatin and mix.

Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of aspic in a platter, chill, and allow to set. Arrange fish on platter and decorate with lemon slices. Add more aspic and chill carp until set. Chill remaining aspic in shallow pan to be diced and used as garnish.

Lamb Roast (*Pechena iahniatyna*)

Lamb has not often been considered a typical Ukrainian food preference. Yet, in the past, it was highly sought-after. In the early nineteenth century, with the settlement of the steppes and the Black Sea coast to the south, sheepraising reached its zenith. The export of merino wool was even more important to the Ukrainian economy than wheat. Wool exports were not surpassed by wheat until the second half of the 1800s.⁵ Sheepherding was widespread in the Carpathian region, where sheep's milk, bryndzia (similar to the Greek feta cheese), and huslianka (clabbered milk), were staples of the diet.⁶

Lamb was considered a treat fit for banquet or festivities that required a proper showing. It was served at commemoration of family ancestors (pomenky) and was so mentioned in literature.⁷ Lambs used in Ukrainian kitchens were between 5 and 6 months old. They were killed in the early fall, after a summer of feeding on grass, perhaps supplemented by oats or peas. This recipe was adapted from the magazine Nova Khata.

4–5 pound leg of lamb
5 garlic cloves
4 tablespoons flour
salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 carrot
1 onion
1 turnip
2 tablespoons caraway seeds tied in cheesecloth
2 cups meat stock
3 tablespoons oil

Dry meat and trim excess fat. Peel and sliver garlic and insert slivers into the meat with a point of a sharp knife. Dust meat with 2 tablespoons flour and rub with a little salt and pepper. Brown meat on all sides in 3 tablespoons oil to seal in juices. Place in a roaster, surround with diced vegetables, cover, and bake 25 to 30 minutes per pound at 325°.

Remove roast to platter. Pour a little stock in pan, then strain out vegetables. Add remaining stock and caraway seeds and simmer a few minutes. Discard seeds. Mix 2 tablespoons flour with a little cold water and add to gravy. Bring to a boil and cook until thickened. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Serve sliced on platter and cover with hot gravy. Serve with *hrechanyky* (see following recipe).

Buckwheat Yeast Rolls (*Hrechanyky*)

These hearty rolls with a light nutty flavor are excellent served warm with roasts. Be sure to use fresh stone-ground buckwheat flour; old flour has a bitter taste. This recipe was adapted from Ukrainski Stravy.

2 teaspoons sugar
½ cup lukewarm milk
1 envelope dry yeast
1 cup stone ground buckwheat flour
1½ cup wheat flour
2 teaspoons salt
2 tablespoons butter
1 large egg
1 teaspoon water
oil for glaze
coarse salt (optional)

Sprinkle yeast on milk, add sugar, stir, and allow to foam. Mix flours with salt, butter, and egg. Add enough water and yeast mixture to knead into a ball. Or, in processor, add salt and butter to flours, pulse a few times, add egg, and pulse again. With machine running, add yeast mixture and water until dough forms a sticky ball.

Place in lightly oiled bowl, turn once, cover with plastic wrap, and allow to rise 1 hour. (It will not rise as much as wheat dough.)

Butter a baking sheet and dust with cornmeal. Knead dough lightly on floured board. Divide into thirds, making ropes 12 inches long and about 2 inches thick. Place ropes on baking sheet 3 inches apart. With a sharp knife make diagonal cuts 1½ inches apart without quite cutting through (making about 8 rolls each). Brush with oil, cover with plastic wrap, and allow to rise about 1 hour. Bake in preheated 350° oven about 30 minutes, brushing again with oil after 20 minutes. If desired, sprinkle tops with coarse salt.

Serve warm. Makes 24 small rolls.

Cream of Wheat Fritters (*Slast'ony z manykh krupiv*)

As in many other cuisines, fritters were a favorite among Ukrainians. They were quickly prepared, hot, and filling. In old times, slast'ony made from cooked beans, millet, or wheat were sold at markets and bazaars, and the women who made and sold them were called slast'onnytsi.⁸ This adaptation, using Cream of Wheat, produces fritters that are very delicate in texture. With a heavy fruit syrup, they excel as dessert. Children and adults love them.

½ cup “quick-cooking”

Cream of Wheat

1½ cups milk

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon baking powder

2 eggs

**2 tablespoons vanilla sugar or
sugar with ½ teaspoon
vanilla flavoring**

2 tablespoons butter

**whipped cream or half whipped
cream and half sour cream**

Heat 1 cup milk to boiling and add Cream of Wheat while stirring. Simmer until thickened, then cover and cook for 5 minutes. Cool. In a bowl, combine porridge with salt, baking powder, and ½ cup milk and stir.

Separate eggs. Beat yolks with vanilla sugar until well mixed. Add melted butter and mix with porridge. Whip egg whites until stiff and fold in. In a large skillet, drop batter by spoonfuls into hot butter, turning to cook both sides. Keep cakes warm in oven.

Serve with whipped cream and cherry syrup for breakfast or a light luncheon or supper. Makes about 8 cakes.

Cheese Dumplings (*Halushky z syra*)

Halushky (dumplings) of all kinds were very popular throughout the Ukraine. Maybe the variety was stimulated by the ease of preparation, or perhaps the clean, simple taste of a light dough with a little garnish captivated the people.

2 cups farmer cheese
2 teaspoons salt
3 large eggs
¼ cup flour
3 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons fine dry bread crumbs
2 tablespoons crumbled *bryndzia* or feta cheese or grated Parmesan

Mix cheese, salt, and egg yolks. Whip egg whites until stiff, gradually adding flour. (Add more flour for a stiffer batter.) Fold into cheese mixture. Drop a few spoonfuls at a time into a large pot of boiling water. Do not crowd, as dumplings will expand. Turn down heat and simmer, covered, for 3 to 5 minutes. Drain in oiled colander. Melt butter until bubbly and add crumbs.

Serve dumplings sprinkled with buttered crumbs and *bryndzia* or other cheese.

Potato Dumplings with Meat (*Kartopliani halushky z miasom*)

This is another version of the ubiquitous halushky. This dish makes good use of leftover mashed potatoes, and the filling may also be made of leftovers. The meat filling may also be used to make halushky, varenyky, and stuffed mushroom caps.

3–4 potatoes (about 2 pounds)
4 tablespoons butter
3 large eggs
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup flour
2 teaspoons salt

1 medium onion
1 tablespoon butter
 **$1\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked lean pork, beef,
 or chicken**
**1–2 tablespoons cream or
 evaporated milk**
1 teaspoon salt
 **$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fresh ground black
 pepper**
**1 tablespoon chopped fresh
 parsley**
2 teaspoons chopped fresh dill

Dumpling dough

Peel and cook potatoes, rice, and allow to cool. Separate eggs. Add butter and egg yolks to potatoes. Whip egg whites until stiff and add to mixture, alternating with flour. Add salt and knead a little.

Meat filling

Sauté chopped onion in butter until clear. Process or finely mince meat, and mix with all other ingredients. Taste and adjust seasoning.

With hands dusted in flour, pinch egg-size amounts of dough and place filling in center, shaping dough around it. Set on towels dusted with flour. Drop about 6 dumplings at a time into a large pot of boiling water and cook until dumplings float to the top. Drain in colander and drizzle a little oil on top so they don't stick. Repeat until all are cooked.

Serve sprinkled with bread crumbs cooked in butter.

Feast of Saint Demetrios (Dmytra)

By ancient tradition, the Ukrainian community was obligated to commemorate the souls of ancestors (*pomenky*) three times a year: on Provody the first Sunday after Easter, on Zeleni Sviata or Pentecost, and on the Saturday before the feast of Saint Dmytro or Demetrios.¹ The main difference between the first two commemorations and the last was that Dmytra was celebrated not at the cemetery but at home with a supper that started at dusk and lasted into the night.

It was believed that the souls of the family's departed members would help safeguard the family's fortunes. The souls of the dead were believed to appear at times in this world in the guise of beggars, orphans, and wanderers. So, as on other holidays, these were desired guests and were invited from the street to partake of this ritual supper.

Dmytra fell on November 26 (O.S.). By that time, the garden harvest was in and the celebration reflected its bounty. The extent of the preparations depended on the wealth of the family. There was an obligation to provide variety as well as a quantity of food.

At the center of the main table, covered with linens, were *knyshi* (pastries with fillings) and *palanytsi* (bread baked from the best wheat flour). By custom, *kolyvo* (the food of the dead) was served first. Other dishes followed. Dmytra preceded the pre-Christmas fast, *pylypiwka*. A fairly representative menu would include: fish, fowl, *kasha*, *halushky*, breads, and vegetables.

Recipes for these dishes are included: fish with horseradish (*ryba z khronom*); duck in aspic (*studynets' z kachok*); cutlets with mushroom gravy (*kyivs'ki halushky*); bagels (*bublyky*); dill pickles (*kvasheni ohirky*); eggplant "caviar" (*kaviar z baklazhanu*); bread with turnips (*knysh z brukvoiu*); and crescents with poppy seed filling (*ukrains'ki rohalyky*).

Fish with Horseradish (*Ryba z khronom*)

This recipe is a fine variation on plain baked fish. This dish is piquant, blushing pink, and nutritious.

**2 pounds mild fish fillets (fresh
cod or perch)**

1 tablespoon salt

1 tablespoon lemon juice

3 tablespoons flour

3 tablespoons butter

1 cup fish stock or water

2 teaspoons sugar

2 tablespoons tomato paste

**2–3 tablespoons fresh ground
horseradish (if using
commercial bottled brand,
drain vinegar well)**

1 cup sour cream

chopped parsley for garnish

Lightly salt fish fillets and sprinkle with lemon juice. Cut into portions and refrigerate 30 minutes. Dust fish with a little flour and place in a single layer in buttered baking dish. Cook flour in melted butter until lightly golden. Add fish stock and sugar and cook until thickened. Pour over fish and bake at 350° for 15 to 20 minutes. Mix tomato paste, horseradish, and sour cream and heat just to hot.

Serve over rice, millet, or kasha. Pour warm sauce over fish and garnish with chopped parsley.

Duck in Aspic (*Studynets' z kachok*)

Studynets', whether made from fish, fowl, veal, or pork, is a favorite dish in Ukrainian homes. In the past, the meat had to be cooked a long time, but a pressure cooker cuts that time appreciably. Unflavored gelatin assures good results. Some ambitious cooks set the aspic in fancy forms with artistic garnishes. It is prudent to prepare this dish at least two days in advance, since it needs time to firm.

3 pounds veal bones (preferably knuckles)
2 ducks, dressed
2 onions
2 parsnips
2 ribs celery
2 carrots
1 teaspoon salt
4 peppercorns
1 bay leaf
1 cup dry sherry or white wine juice of 2 lemons
1 envelope gelatin
salt and ground pepper to taste
lemon slices, carrots, greens, parsley for garnish

Roast veal bones at 350° for about 1 hour. Quarter ducks or separate thighs and leave breasts whole. Combine bones, ducks, chopped vegetables, salt, peppercorns, and bay leaf in a large pot. Cook in water, covered, for several hours until meat is falling off the bones but still whole. Or, in pressure cooker, cover above ingredients with cold water. Cook at 15 pounds pressure for 45 minutes. Allow to cool, then pour off stock (there should be about 4 cups). Pour off most of the fat.

Dissolve gelatin in 1 cup stock. Add wine and lemon juice to 3 cups boiling stock, combine with gelatin mixture, and mix well. Taste and add salt and pepper as desired. Separate duck meat from bones and skin. Discard bones, skin, and vegetables (reserving a few sliced carrots for garnish). Dice meat. Pour 1 inch of stock into a loaf pan, add carrot slices, and refrigerate until set. Arrange duck pieces on aspic, and cover with remaining stock. Chill until firm, 8 hours or overnight.

Serve either unmolded on a bed of greens and garnished with parsley and lemon slices, or cut 1 inch slices in the pan and serve on individual plates garnished with greens. Serve with thinly sliced bread.

Cutlets Kiev Style with Mushroom Gravy (*Kyivs'ki halushky z pecherytsiamy*)

These cutlets are delicious and different because the mashed potatoes give them a firm and light texture. Herring or anchovies add a subtle but distinct flavoring, making an excellent match with the mushroom flavor. Cutlets may be prepared a day or so ahead and reheated, and may also be frozen without loss of flavor. The mushroom gravy is also delicious with meats, noodles, rice, buckwheat, or other kasha.

1 pound lean ground beef
1½ pound lean ground pork
1 medium herring fillet,
skinned and boned, or 4
ounces anchovies
½ cup milk
1 large egg
1 tablespoon bread crumbs
1 tablespoon melted butter
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground pepper
1 medium onion
1 cup mashed potatoes
½ cup flour
¼ cup oil
2 cups meat stock
2 bay leaves

Cutlets

Place beef and pork in a large bowl and add finely chopped herring or anchovies. Add milk, egg, bread crumbs, butter, salt, pepper, chopped onion, and potatoes; mix well. Lightly form meat into 2 inch balls, roll in flour, and flatten into ovals. In a deep skillet, brown cutlets in oil, turning once. Pour stock over the cutlets and add bay leaves. Cover and simmer 15 minutes.

Mushroom gravy

½ pound fresh cultivated mushrooms
1 tablespoon oil
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon sugar
½ cup meat stock
1 cup light cream
salt and ground black pepper
to taste

Wipe mushrooms with a wet paper towel and slice. Sauté lightly in oil. In skillet, heat butter until bubbly, stir in flour, and cook until golden. Add stock and mushrooms and cook, stirring, until the gravy thickens. Add cream. Add salt and pepper to taste. Pour gravy over the cutlets and simmer uncovered about 15 minutes.

Serve with buckwheat kasha, millet, or *kulesha* (cornmeal mush). (See p. 166.) Yield: about 30 medium cutlets.

Dill Pickles (*Kvasheni ohirky*)

Pickles soured with vinegar and spices differ appreciably from those fermented naturally with salt, garlic, and dill weed. The natural taste is mellow, yet tart. Because fermentation is a process that depends on airborne bacteria, do not set out pickles in very hot and humid weather; chances are, the cucumbers will rot, not pickle.

**5 pounds small cucumbers,
unwaxed and unwashed**
½ head garlic
**3 dried sprigs of dill weed with
heads**
**3 grape leaves or cherry leaves
or ¼ teaspoon alum**
1 cup coarse salt or kosher salt
3–4 quarts water
6 peppercorns
1 gallon glass jar or crock

Soak (but do not scrub) cucumbers in very cold water for 5 minutes. Scald a very clean glass jar with boiling water. Place a grape leaf at the bottom and arrange cucumbers vertically in layers, inserting garlic cloves and dill weed here and there. Do not pack tightly. Add salt to boiling water and stir. Pour brine over cucumbers and add peppercorns. (If not using leaves, add alum for added crispness.) Cover with leaves and a plate and place in a cool, dark place to ferment. In the old days, dry rusks of rye bread were put on top to aid the fermentation process and keep the cucumbers from floating up. After 4 or 5 days, the cucumbers will be semicured; some gourmets prefer them that way. After a few more days, fully cured pickles will become a lighter green.

Pickles may be placed in smaller jars that are more convenient for storage. Scald 3 or 4 quart jars, pour off and strain pickling juice (discarding garlic and dill weed). Transfer pickles, fill quarts with strained liquid, cover, and refrigerate. The juice, or *kvas*, is never thrown out; it is used as a base for soups, borsch, or drunk cold as an eye-opener.

Eggplant "Caviar" (*Kaviar z baklazhanu*)

This spread, which has its fierce adherents, is used on bublyky (see following recipe), bread, toast, or crackers. Some cooks have their own special recipes with secret ingredients that stay in the family.

- 1 large eggplant
- 1 large onion
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice or apple vinegar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 1–2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon hot chili sauce or relish (optional)

Bake whole eggplant in a moderate oven until soft. Cut in half, scrape out pulp, and mash with a fork. Sauté chopped onions in oil until wilted. Add to eggplant, sprinkle with lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Add tomato paste and chili (as desired) and mix well. For more smoothness, add more oil. Pack in a crock or jar; refrigerate at least 4 hours, or until flavor develops. Keeps well.

Bagels (*Bublyky*)

These small rolls, favorites among children, were sold at bazaars and markets as snacks. Their charm lies in their round form; they also keep well. A bublyk makes an excellent snack.

4³/₄ cups flour
4 tablespoons sugar
3 teaspoons salt
2 packages dry yeast
1¹/₂ cups water
2 tablespoons oil or butter
1 egg white beaten with 1
tablespoon water for glaze
coarse salt or poppy seeds

Combine 1¹/₂ cups flour with 3 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon salt, and yeast. Heat water with butter to 120° and add to dry ingredients. In mixer, beat 2 minutes at medium speed. Add ¹/₂ cup flour and beat at high speed 2 more minutes. Add enough flour to make a stiff dough.

On floured work surface, knead for about 10 minutes. Set in lightly oiled bowl, turn once, cover with plastic wrap, and allow to rise in warm place for 1 hour. Punch down and allow to rest, covered, for 15 minutes.

Simmer 1 inch of water in wide skillet and add 2 teaspoons salt and 1 tablespoon sugar. Divide dough into 12 parts. Shape into balls and with a floured finger, poke a 1 inch hole in 3 balls, and drop into simmering water. Cook 3 minutes, turn and cook 2 minutes, then turn again and cook 1 minute. Repeat shaping and cooking, draining bagels on towels. Place on greased baking sheet, brush with glaze and sprinkle with coarse salt or poppy seeds. Bake in preheated 375° oven for 20–25 minutes. Cool on racks.

Bread with Turnips (*Knyshi z brukvoiu*)

This bread form was very popular for centuries. *Knyshi* are mentioned as an essential everyday food, as well as a festive dish, in many literary as well as culinary sources.² However, no details are given as to their shape or contents. Yet, other recipe directions give instruction for making breads “as for *knyshi*.” By this century, the popularity of *knyshi* had subsided.

Z. Klynovets'ka's turn-of-the-century book *Stravy y napytky na Ukraini* lists recipes for *knyshyky*, the diminutive form of *knyshi*, made of a yeast dough that included butter and eggs. The most common fillings were onion, cabbage, or cheese. In some regions of the Ukraine (*Hutzul*, *Bukovyna*), *kasha* was used as filling.

1 envelope dry yeast
 ¾ cup milk
 1 tablespoon sugar
 3 cups flour
 3 egg yolks
 ¼ pound butter
 1 egg white beaten with a little
 water for glaze

4–5 small to medium turnips
 1 onion
 2 tablespoons butter
 1 tablespoon oil
 1 teaspoon salt
 ½ teaspoon white pepper

Dough for *knyshi*

Sprinkle yeast on warm milk. Add sugar, stir, and allow to foam. Mix flour, egg yolks, and melted butter, then add yeast mixture. Or in processor, with machine running, add egg yolks one at a time, alternating with melted butter. Add yeast mixture to form dough. (Add a little more flour if needed.) Form a ball, place in lightly oiled bowl, turn once, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for about 1 hour.

Turnip filling

Peel turnips and onions and slice very thin. In skillet, cook until just cooked, but not mushy. Add salt and pepper. Cool before filling *knyshi*.

On floured work surface, roll out half of the dough into a rectangle ½ inch thick. Place half of the filling in the center, spreading toward edges. Fold up sides lengthwise to meet in the center, leaving a vent. Place on greased baking sheet sprinkled with corn meal. Repeat to make second *knysh*. Allow to rise in draft-free place until double in bulk. Bake in the middle of a preheated 350° oven for 20 minutes. Brush with glaze. Bake 5 or 10 more minutes.

Serve at room temperature.

Ukrainian Crescents (*Ukrains'ki rohalyky*)

Small rolls with sweet fillings, traditionally shaped into crescents or horns, were favored as a convenient snack. The fillings for this dough varied. Poppy seed and fruit preserves were favorites. Note that, in general, Ukrainian baked sweets have a much lower sugar-to-flour ratio than American baked goods.

Dough for crescents

2 envelopes dry yeast
½ cup lukewarm milk
1 tablespoon sugar
5 cups flour
½ cup sugar
1 cup butter
3 large eggs
1 cup sour cream
1 tablespoon lemon juice
zest of 1 lemon
1 egg beaten with a little water
for glaze
1 tablespoon poppy seeds for
top (optional)

Sprinkle yeast on milk, stir in 1 tablespoon sugar, and allow to foam. Combine flour and sugar, and cut in chopped butter. Beat eggs and add sour cream, lemon juice, and lemon rind. Add yeast mixture and egg mixture to flour and knead lightly into a medium soft dough. Or, combine flour, sugar, and butter in processor and pulse a few times, then with machine running add yeast mixture and egg mixture until a ball of dough forms. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 to 2 hours or overnight.

½ pound poppy seeds
½ cup sugar
2 tablespoons heavy cream
1 egg
zest of 1 lemon

Poppy seed filling

Pour boiling water over seeds and let stand for about 1 hour. Drain and repeat. Place seeds in a damp towel and squeeze out water. Grind in processor until seeds release milk and turn light gray, then add sugar, cream, egg yolk, and lemon rind.

On a lightly floured work surface, roll half of the dough into a 10–12 inch circle less than ½ inch thick. With a sharp knife cut 8 wedges. Spread 1 teaspoon filling at the wide edge, spreading almost to the edges. Roll up toward point. Place on greased or nonstick baking sheet and shape into crescents or “horns.” Repeat with remaining ingredients. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 20 minutes or until brown. (This dough browns quickly.) Brush with glaze and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Cool on racks.

Serve with tea or coffee. Note: strawberry or prune preserves may be used instead of poppy seed filling.

Feasts of St. Catherine and St. Andrew (Kateryny i Andriia)

Traditionally, late fall was free from major field work in the Ukraine. The harvest was in, preparations for Pylypivka (the Advent fast) had begun. The two feasts, Kateryny i Andriia, one following on the heels of the other, were opportunities for young people to become better acquainted. And this was carried out in prescribed fashion.¹

Vechernytsi (evening socials) were sponsored by the young unmarried women as well as the young men. These formally organized events took place in a home with a gracious hostess called the *pani-matka*. The young women's leader was called *otamansha*; the men's equivalent, *otaman*. The men brought firewood, mead, and *nastoianky* (fruit-flavored spirits) for the parties, while the young women brought food. Decorous behavior was expected from both groups. Miscreants were evicted and had to apologize publicly to *pani-matka* if they wished to return to the party.

Young unmarried women started their *vechernytsi* on the feast of Saint Catherine on December 7 (O.S.). As the patron saint of girls and women, Kateryna was believed to be responsible for their fortune. Many practices of divining fortunes were directed to Saint Catherine, as well as superstitions and rituals to reveal the future.

For example, girls would cut a bough from a fruit tree and place it in water. If it sprouted leaves or blossoms by New Year's Day, a girl's fortune would be bright and full of happiness. If the bough dried up, the reverse would be true. Girls spent much effort guessing who their beloved might be. Late that night, they listened to hear from which direction a dog would bark, believing that from that direction their future husband would come. Or, early that morning, from whatever part of the village the first cock crowed, her future husband would appear.

Food offerings to Saint Catherine were borsch and kasha.² There is no explanation why these two types of dishes were thought to be most pleasing to her, except that they were favored by the people themselves.

The feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle followed on December 13 (O.S.). Saint Andrew was revered as the saint who blessed the Kievan hills for the first Ukrainian kingdom established in Kiev in the ninth century. But, more important for folklore, Saint Andrew's day was combined with the more ancient celebration of the sun god, represented by a *kalyta*.³ This was a flat, round bread with four holes at each quarter, glazed with honey and sprinkled with poppy seeds.

Many ritualized games were associated with the *kalyta*. The most popular version was the following. The *kalyta* was suspended from a ceiling beam by a red ribbon, out of easy reach. The goal was to "ride" on a stick (as on a horse) or vault up and bite it. The boys were the "riders" and the girls the appreciative audience. Losers were swatted away. Whoever succeeded first was the winner and made an honorary "Andrii," serving as master of games for the rest of the evening. Afterward, all ate the sweet bread. Other games followed.

A late evening supper was included. Since these feasts occurred during Pylypivka (Advent), no meat dishes were featured. The menu listed by Stephan Kylymnyk included kasha, peas, cabbage rolls, *varenyky* stuffed with cabbage, fish, and dried fruit.⁴ Each pair of young people was presented with a *knyshyk* (little bread with filling). Favorite drinks were *nastoianky*, prepared when wild berries were abundant during that fall's fruit harvest.

Today, few Ukrainian communities in North America continue these traditions. The divination of the future and *kalyta* games belong to the past. However, the memories of that quiet and simple life may be evoked by the favorite foods served at these celebrations honoring two patrons of youth.

Included here are recipes for the following dishes: borsch with carp (*borsch iz karsiamy*); garlic bread puffs (*pampushky z chasnykom*); buckwheat kasha (*hrechana kasha*); fish pudding with horseradish sauce (*babka z ryby iz khronom*); fish and vegetable salad (*ryba z iarynoi*); bean fritters (*slasti'ony z fasoli*); fruit- and herb-flavored spirits (*nastoianky*).

Borsch with Carp (*Borsch iz karasiamy*)⁵

This borsch is a fish soup combining two favorite qualities for the Ukrainian palate: tartness and texture. Rich in vegetables, like most borsch preparations, this soup is given an added dimension of flavor by the fish.

4 dried mushrooms
5 fresh beets or 2 cans beets
3 ribs celery
2 carrots
2 parsnips
4 allspice berries
1 bay leaf
7 olives, dry cured or green
 pitted
2 cups shredded white cabbage
1 large onion
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 tablespoon mild white vinegar
salt and ground pepper to taste
½ teaspoon sour salt (citric
 acid)
carp fillets or other firm-fleshed
 fish (¼ pound per person)
1 cup sour cream
1 cup beet kvas or tomato juice
2½ teaspoons chopped fresh
 dill

Soak mushrooms in boiling water until soft, about 30 minutes. Remove and chop coarsely, reserving water. Scrub beets in cold water and cook, covered with water, until tender. Cool, peel, and shred beets, reserving cooking liquid, or shred canned beets, reserving juice. Coarsely chop celery, carrots, and parsnips, place in a large, heavy pot, with cold water to cover.

Add allspice, bay leaf, mushrooms, and olives and cook until vegetables are soft. Remove bay leaf. Combine cabbage and beets and add to vegetables. Add mushroom water, beet cooking liquid or juice, and enough water to cover vegetables. Bring to boil and cook over low heat until cabbage is soft.

Sauté chopped onion in butter until cooked through. Add flour and cook until golden, adding vinegar and enough cooking liquid to thicken. Pour into soup and simmer, stirring, for about 10 minutes. Taste and add salt and pepper as desired. For more tartness, add a little sour salt. Mix sour cream and *kvas* and add to borsch.

Cut fish into serving portions, sprinkle with salt, and allow to rest 10 minutes. Flour each piece and fry in a little butter until crisp, turning once.

Serve soup with a piece of fish in each bowl and sprinkle with chopped dill. Serve with garlic puffs (see following recipe).

Garlic Bread Puffs (*Pampushky z chasnykom*)

Fried dough has an established place in many cuisines. Ukrainians like all types of dough in many forms: boiled, baked, fried. This is simply a yeast-raised bread dough fried in oil and flavored with garlic salt or oil. These little puffs are excellent served in baskets as appetizers or with soups.

- 1 cup warm water**
- 1 envelope dry yeast**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- 3 cups flour**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 2 tablespoons oil**
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and
mashed with salt, or prepared
garlic salt**

Dissolve yeast in water, add sugar, and allow to foam. Combine flour, salt, oil, and yeast mixture and knead into dough. Or, in processor, combine flour and salt; with machine running, add yeast mixture and oil and process until dough forms. Allow to rest for a couple of minutes, then pulse a few more times.

Place in a lightly oiled bowl, turn once, cover with plastic wrap, and allow to rise until double in bulk. Punch down. Pinch off small pieces of dough, roll between lightly oiled palms into 1 inch balls, and place on floured towel.

Heat at least 2 inches of oil in a skillet until hot but not smoking. Drop in dough balls, fry on all sides, remove, and drain on paper towels. Roll in or sprinkle with garlic salt.

Serve warm.

Buckwheat Kasha (*Hrechana kasha*)

In Ukrainian, kasha means cereal. In American usage the word is associated solely with buckwheat groats. High in potassium and phosphorus and containing twice as much vitamin B as wheat, buckwheat is the best source of biological protein among edible plants, having more than 90 percent of the protein value of nonfat milk solids and over 80 percent of whole egg solids. Moreover, it is low in calories, like other grains.⁶ Because of its full, rich, nutty flavor, nutritional value, and versatility in preparation, buckwheat warrants wider acceptance in the American diet.

**1 cup fine or medium
buckwheat groats**
1 large egg
2 cups water or stock
1 tablespoon oil
1 teaspoon salt

Mix buckwheat with beaten egg. In a heated 2 quart pot, cook buckwheat, stirring with a wooden spoon, 3 to 4 minutes until grains separate and there are no lumps. Do not scorch. Bring water or stock to a boil. Pour boiling water or stock into buckwheat and stir well. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook 20 minutes. Stir in oil and salt.

Fish Pudding with Horseradish Sauce (*Babka z ryby iz khronom*)

This recipe is excellent as a buffet or supper dish. The mild fish taste is set off by tangy horseradish sauce.

2 cups whitefish, cooked,
boned, and skinned
4 eggs
½ cup sour cream
1 stale hard roll, soaked in a
little warm milk
1 onion
2 tablespoons butter
2 hard-boiled eggs
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 tablespoons fresh dill or
parsley, chopped fine
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground white
pepper

2 tablespoons flour
2 tablespoons butter
¾ cup cream
2 egg yolks
½ cup milk
½ cup fresh ground horseradish
or prepared horseradish, well
drained
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons sugar
1 tablespoon lemon juice or
mild vinegar

Fish pudding

Flake the fish and check for and remove bones. In a large bowl, beat egg yolks with sour cream and add fish. Squeeze milk from roll, mash, and add. Saute chopped onion in butter and cool. Add onion and chopped hard-boiled eggs. Add remaining ingredients and mix lightly. Lightly grease an ovenproof bowl. Whip egg whites until stiff, gently fold into fish mixture, and pour into prepared bowl. Seal with greased foil and place bowl in a large dutch oven ⅓ filled with hot water. Cover and simmer until fully set, about 1 hour.

Horseradish sauce

Cook flour in melted butter until golden. Add cream and stir until thickened. Beat egg yolks with milk and pour into cream. Cook, stirring, until thickened. Add remaining ingredients. Heat to boiling. If too thick, add a little more cream.

Unmold fish pudding onto a platter and serve hot or warm with tangy horseradish sauce poured over it and served on the side.

Fish and Vegetable Salad (*Ryba z iarynoi*)

Salads are uncommon in Ukrainian cuisine. This one is a medley of texture and taste.

2 cups cooked firm-fleshed fish
or light chunk tuna
2 boiled potatoes
1 cup cooked or frozen green
peas
1 medium onion
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon fresh ground black
pepper
1 teaspoon lemon juice
4 tablespoons oil
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
¾ cup sliced marinated
mushrooms

Cube fish or drain tuna. Peel and cube potatoes. If using frozen peas, rinse but do not cook. Place chopped onion in bowl and sprinkle with sugar, salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Add fish, potatoes, and peas. Mix mustard and oil until thickened (emulsified). Pour over salad and toss lightly just to coat. Add mushrooms.

Serve on lettuce leaves for luncheon or supper.

Bean Fritters (*Slast'ony z fasoli*)

Cookery with beans and lentils predates the use of grains. The addition of beans increases the nutritional content of this batter appreciably. The texture is surprisingly smooth. These fritters may be served with syrup or preserves. They are also excellent accompanied by creamed cottage cheese or sour cream and chives.

½ envelope dry yeast
¼ cup warm water
¼ cup warm milk
4 tablespoons sugar
**1½ cups navy beans, cooked or
canned**
1 cup flour
5 tablespoons oil
1 large egg
1 teaspoon salt
**1 cup cottage cheese or sour
cream**
3 green onions

Sprinkle yeast over water, add milk and sugar, mix, and allow to foam. Drain beans well. Puree beans and add flour, 2 tablespoons oil, and egg. Mix in yeast and salt. Let rise for about 30 minutes. Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a large skillet. For small cakes, drop in 2 tablespoonfuls of batter and fry until set, turning to cook other side. Keep cakes warm in oven.

Serve with cottage cheese sprinkled with chopped onions.

Spiced Home Brew, or Stumbler (*Spotykach*)

This old brew, one example of nastoianky, made even the least skilled home brewer's results potable, that is, mozhna pyty (literally, "drinkable"). This recipe makes a liqueur with a strong infusion of alcohol and a plethora of spices.

- 2 pints grain alcohol or vodka**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 tablespoon cloves**
- 1 nutmeg**
- 2 small pieces of cinnamon bark**
- 2 small pieces of vanilla bean**
- 1 teaspoon saffron**

Warm the alcohol, dissolve sugar in it, and add spices. Pour into a clean gallon jar or crock. (Do not use a plastic vessel.) Cover with doubled cheesecloth and tie with string. Let stand in a cool, dark place for 2 weeks. Pour through a paper filter into scalded bottles or jars. Seal and cool.

Serve in chilled liqueur glasses.

Old World Cherry Whiskey (*Starosvitka vyshnivka*)

The cherry flavor is very popular in the Ukraine. To this day, cherry orchards are very well established everywhere. Ukraine's bard, Taras Shevchenko, in his "Sadok vyshnevyyi kolo khaty . . ." ("A cherry grove beside the cottage stands")⁷ epitomizes the Ukrainians' love of this fruit. This cherry whiskey is another example of nastoianky.

- 4 pounds unpitted ripe cherries**
- 2 pounds sugar**
- 2 small pieces of cinnamon**
- 1 nutmeg**
- 2 cups heavy sugar syrup**
(about equal portions of
sugar and water)
- 2 cups grain alcohol (optional)**

Scald a large crock. Wash cherries, place in crock, pour sugar over cherries and add cinnamon and nutmeg. Cover with cheesecloth and let stand in a warm place for 2 weeks or so until liquid begins to clear. Strain through a fresh piece of cheesecloth, pour off into a large glass container and add syrup (as desired). Add grain alcohol for a stronger drink. Pour into scalded bottles, cork, store in a cool, dark place, and allow to ferment 4 to 6 weeks. The yield depends on the water content of the fruit and the rate of evaporation.

Serve in liqueur glasses.

II

Family Celebrations

Weddings (Vesillia)

For Ukrainians, fall consisted of August, September, and October. (November belonged to winter.) After the whirl of harvest and the last sowing of winter grains (around the first of September), heavy field work was over, and there was time to enjoy the earth's bounty. Traditionally, fall was the time for family and community feasts.

Fall was one of the major seasons for courtship and weddings; the other was directly after Christmas. An old custom cast an amusing light on these two periods and suggested how family peace was maintained. A young married couple was obligated to entertain the bride's mother during the Christmas holidays and before Masliana (the last week before Lent). The son-in-law had to fetch her, driving through the village so all could see him fulfilling his filial obligations. If she was good to him, he picked her up on the second day of Christmas; if she was a nag, he paraded her through the village on the third day of Christmas. Couples who married after Christmas invited the bride's mother for the Friday before Masliana. Of course, other family members were included, but she was honored by the first toast offered by the son-in-law, who wished that her throat would never become "dry" (a sly reference to her talkativeness or nagging).¹

Like all other important matters, courtship and marriage followed ancient, well-established customs. The prescribed forms differed from province to province, but a general pattern prevailed.²

The matrimonial ritual was set in motion by the groom. He chose his bride at the many social activities for courting, such as *vulytsia* (street festival) or *vechernytsi* (evening social), and then informed his parents of his intent. They in turn invited two respected older male friends to act as *starosty* (emissaries) to the girl's parents to convince them of the benefits of the union. As a token of their good faith, they brought with them a loaf of bread and a bottle of whiskey. If the girl's parents felt the suitor was her equal in social position and desirable to the girl herself, they expressed their

“humble” surprise and joy at the proposal. (It was deemed bad manners to be too forward.) An exchange of breads followed, sealing the contract. Only then was the girl invited to join the meeting. She presented the *starosty* with embroidered ritual cloths, which they tied diagonally across their chests as emblems of the agreement.³ *Horilka* (whiskey) flowed as various toasts were proposed in honor of the union and all present.

If the girl refused, or her parents were not keen on the union, her parents demurred by saying that she was too young for marriage, being careful not to embarrass or insult the *starosty* and the suitor. Folk songs, however, made fun of a refused suitor, saying that instead of being given *rushnyky* (ritual cloths), the *starosty* received pumpkins, that is, nothing.⁴ Clearly, there must have been a preliminary sizing-up strategy among the couple themselves and the two families; the *starosty*, if they were shrewd, discouraged an uneven or inappropriate match.

An interesting variation on this practice was observed by a Frenchman, de Beauplan, circa 1650. He noted that a girl could initiate a proposal of marriage by simply “planting” herself in the home of her beloved, entreating his parents to observe her virtues and thus convince their son of her desirability as a faithful wife.⁵

Following this ritual, the period of courtship, called *zasvatania*, constituted a formal engagement. The betrothed could see each other as often as they desired, even in the evenings. A strong taboo against premarital sex ensured the preservation of the girl’s honor. Gifts were not exchanged as yet, and the groom did not discuss the dowry because this was considered unseemly or grasping.⁶ The dowry was negotiated by his *starosty* with the bride’s parents. Both sets of parents gave equal value as their means permitted, so that the new couple would have a good start in life.⁷

After the initial agreement, the groom invited the bride, her parents, the *starosty*, and the bridesmaids to a formal dinner hosted by his parents. The groom presented the bride with a beautiful kerchief (the symbol of her womanhood) and she, in turn, gave him an embroidered linen shirt.⁸ The bride’s parents reciprocated this hospitality by increasing the bride’s dowry. After these proceedings, the couple ate a special *korovai* (wedding bread) in which two eggs (symbols of fertility) were baked. With this, the engagement was official, the date set, and wedding preparations went into high gear.

In some provinces, the bride and her matron of honor went from door to door to invite guests to her wedding. *Starostyny*, older female relatives of the bride, gave her small embroidered linen ritual cloths as well as copious verbal blessings.⁹ The day before the Sunday wedding ceremony, the bride, with her helpmates, braided two wreaths (usually myrtle) for the wedding rite.

On that day, the *divych vechir* (maiden evening) was celebrated by the bride, her bridesmaids and *starostyny*, and other female relatives and guests. According to H. Kalynovsky's reports on Ukrainian weddings, circa 1777, this evening had a charm all its own. In an elaborate ceremony, a wedding tree—sometimes made from real fir or fruit tree boughs, sometimes baked from dough—was decorated with colorful ribbons, wheat stalks, periwinkle, and herbs.

A special girl who served as *svitylka* monitored the candles on a complex decoration which consisted of a three-part candelabrum mounted on a pillar in the shape of a sword, entwined with *kalyna* boughs. In Ukrainian folklore, this shrub (*Viburnum opulus*), commonly known as the cranberry tree, symbolized maidenhood or virginity;¹⁰ the sword-pillar was an obvious male symbol. The women sang folk songs, told stories, played games, gave advice to the bride, and joked about the wedding in general. Later Saturday evening, the groom came with his attendants and gave gifts to the bride's mother, her attendants, and all other guests.

On Sunday, around noon, the principals separately received blessings from their respective parents using the revered household icons. Then, with their respective parties, each set out for church. Their parents often did not accompany them. The bride gave herself in marriage, as did the groom. Afterwards, each group returned to their respective parents' homes, where they were greeted with bread and salt.

The groom and his attendants dined with his family. He then asked first his mother's, then his father's, permission to leave for the bride's home. His parents blessed him with a loaf of bread and wished him Godspeed. When the groom's wedding party reached the bride's yard, there followed mock ransom appeals—a custom that harkened back to the primeval times when some grooms actually kidnapped their brides from distant villages.¹¹

The bridal parties, with their parents, finally sat down to preside over the wedding festivities. Gifts were distributed by both families to guests and relatives; favorite gifts included embroidered ritual cloths (*rushnyky*) and kerchiefs. "Finger foods" such as *krendli* (pretzels), *bublyky* (bagels) and of course *shyshky* (small rolls in the shape of pinecones) were given as favors.¹²

After these ceremonies, *skrypali* (fiddle players) and other musicians played and everyone danced. When dinner was announced, all gathered at table. The main table was covered with a large kilim (flat woven rug) and then with a linen cloth. The great *korovai* (wedding bread), covered with two crossed *rushnyky* (ritual cloths) upon which a large pine bough was laid, served as a centerpiece. In the corner, under the icons, stood the three-part candelabrum and its guardian, the *svitylka*.

The chief *starosta* asked for God's blessing on the newlyweds, who did not eat the wedding meal. The feast was opulent, and dishes were accompanied by whiskey, mead, wines, beer, and *kvas* or *sytra* (a fermented fruit juice). Toasts were offered to the health of the couple by every adult relative, starting with the couple's parents. As the meal progressed, the first *druzhka* (groomsman), with the permission of the chief *starosta*, offered the "Our Father." He then removed the ritual cloths from the *korovai* and tied one across his chest and the other across the chest of another groomsman. After reserving the decorative dough sculptures for the newlyweds, he cut the *korovai* and offered pieces to all the guests. They, in turn, contributed coins to the bride's pocket fund.¹³

It would be amiss not to point out the obvious celebration of fertility and sexuality at Ukrainian weddings of the past. After all, these were agrarian people, intensely tied to the soil, and the process of propagation in all its forms occupied their entire lives. Much of the symbolism in feasting was centered on ritual breads. The *kalach*, with so many uses on so many occasions (as a pledge of contract, given at baptism, used to greet important guests, as a centerpiece at many feasts) also very specifically symbolized procreation. One *kalach*, "Vasyl i Malanka" (Basil and Melanie), was made of two twisted circles of dough, one placed on top of the other. Its symbolism was quite unambiguous.¹⁴

The round *korovai*, made of wheat flour and eggs, also underlined sexuality through its intricate symbolic decorations that included birds, cones, moons, suns, and other forms. Favorites were doves, which symbolized love and fidelity, and cones, which symbolized fertility.¹⁵ Although cones were given to guests as good luck charms, and have been given a "cute" interpretation by modern bakers, courting songs and jests strongly suggest that they were phallic symbols.¹⁶

An ancient type of wedding bread called a *dyven'* is described as a large round roll with a hole in the middle, girdled with a saw-toothed decorative row.¹⁷ Its ceremonial use has remained speculative; however, its symbolism as a female counterpart to the cones is self-evident.

The *korovai* had no mandatory form, and various regions created their own versions. Some were large, round breads covered with acorns, others with birds. Some had hollow centers and were intertwined with gilt and periwinkle. A widely prevalent *korovai* incorporated a "wedding tree" in its design. This consisted of actual twigs decorated with dough forms and colorful streamers, or a variety of herbs: rue, basil, and others.¹⁸

Traditional menus for wedding feasts, as recorded by H. Kalynovsky, included: borsch, thin egg noodles with pork or chicken, roasted meats, and braised cabbage. A wedding menu from Pokutia Province enumerated these dishes: eel in aspic, pork in

aspic, rabbit in aspic, cabbage with pork (*bigos*), chicken with buckwheat kasha, cabbage rolls (*holubtsi*), fried fish, and *pyrizhky*.¹⁹ *Korovai* was considered an indispensable ritual bread, and so, was not listed.

Ukrainian Weddings Today

A modern Ukrainian wedding, in the diaspora, incorporates some elements of the ancient customs. Invitations are issued by both sets of parents on behalf of their children. Often, the invitation displays specific Ukrainian folk wedding motifs such as *korvai*, *rushnyky*, periwinkle wreaths, or doves and is printed in Ukrainian as well as English.

Dyvych vechir (maiden evening) has been merged with the bridal shower. Now it is the guests and not the groom who bring gifts to the newlyweds. A modern interpretation of the gift-giving ritual is to pledge a contribution toward a specific Ukrainian institution or charity. Usually the groom's family offers such a pledge in honor of the marriage.

Before going to church to be married, the contemporary pair are still blessed by the parents with icons, often especially commissioned for them, that will grace the new family's home.

The *korovai* has been revived as a unique Ukrainian wedding bread, and little birds and pinecones formed from dough are given as favors to guests. The baking of the *korovai* is entrusted to an expert, a return to the old tradition of *korovainytsi* (bakers of *korovai*)—however, without most of the magic rituals.²⁰

The wedding feast now takes place in a commercial establishment. Upon entering, the bridal pair may be greeted by both sets of parents with salt and bread presented on the traditional embroidered ritual cloths. Toasts to the couple are offered by a *starosta* who serves chiefly as master of ceremonies and has nothing to do with arranging the marriage. Some weddings feature specially flavored whiskeys, such as cherry, *kminkova* and *tsytrynova horilka* (caraway and lemon infused whiskey). Mead, an ancient favorite, is made by many a modern Ukrainian father or grandfather and used for the wedding toasts.²¹

Of the traditional menus little is left, although many people still serve *holubtsi*, *varenyky*, and roasts. Gone are the multiple fish dishes except for herring canapes or seafood.

The *pièces de resistance* at a modern Ukrainian wedding feast are the tortes. These complex confections were originally developed by chefs at the Viennese court.²² How-

ever, Ukrainians from the western provinces have not only adapted them to their liking, but have expanded the genre in many directions. It is common, as a courtesy, for every close woman friend of the family to contribute a special torte for the wedding feast. Often, the result is dozens of different tortes set up on a separate table, to be viewed and admired before being served.

Since the wedding dinner is now rarely prepared at home, those who would like to try some of these traditional recipes might follow this menu suggested for *divych vechir* (maiden evening, or bridal shower): canapes with smoked fish (*perekusky z vudzhenoi ryby*); cabbage with smoked meats (*kapusta z vudzhenynoiu*, or *bigos*); buckwheat groats and liver sausage (*hrechana kyshka*); potato pancakes (*deruny*); beet and pickle salad (*taratuta*); black and white sheet cake (*chorno-bilyi korzh*); honey mocha cream torte (*mediivnyk z kavovoi masoiu*); wedding bread from the Peremyshl region (*korovai z Peremyshlia*); and tea with rum.

Canapes with Smoked Fish (*Perekusky z vudzhenoi ryby*)

Perekusky means light snacks or small bites, which is exactly what canapes should be. A well-baked half rye or wheat bread assures a fine base for perekusky. Cream cheese makes this an easy spread to prepare. Toppings are varied and colorful.

8 ounces cream cheese
6 ounces smoked boneless sardines
¼ teaspoon paprika
sliced rye bread and/or *kalach*
2 hard-boiled eggs
dill pickles
radishes
sardine fillets
parsley

Cream softened cream cheese, sardines, and paprika into a smooth paste. Cover and let stand 2 hours. Cut bread into fancy shapes as desired. Cut eggs, pickles, and radishes into various shapes: rounds, wedges, and strips. Spread mixture on cut bread, place a small sardine fillet with assorted garnishes on top. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until needed; they remain fresh for several hours, but if kept too long, become soggy.

Serve on platter, garnished with parsley.

Buckwheat Groats and Liver Sausage (*Hrechana kyshka*)

This sausage, kyshka, is another Ukrainian favorite. Because it was made only at butchering time, it was anticipated as a treat. Now it is available from good butchers and may be made at home with a little effort.

1½ pounds pork or beef heart
1 pound beef liver
½ pound cooked tripe
 (optional)
½ pound coarsely ground pork
shoulder
1–2 cloves garlic
2 teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper or
to taste
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
½ pound buckwheat groats
1 egg
2 cups boiling water
1 pint blood (optional)
large sausage casing

Remove veins and other ligaments from the heart and the liver. Cut into cubes and grind in processor or in a meat grinder using a fine blade. Blanch tripe several times in boiling water. Cool and cut into small cubes. In a large bowl, combine heart, liver, tripe, and pork with finely chopped garlic, salt, and peppers to taste.

Mix beaten egg with buckwheat, coating all grains, and cook in a heated heavy-bottomed pot, stirring, until groats separate. Add water and stir well. Cover, reduce heat, and cook 15 minutes or until done. Cool and mix with meat mixture. Add blood if desired. Rinse casing and stuff, using a sausage funnel, being careful not to pack too densely or the sausage will burst when cooking. Tie ends with string.

Chill overnight, covered loosely with cloth. In a large skillet, brown sausages in several tablespoons of lard, then bake at 325° for 30 minutes, turning once. Or, poach the sausages in a little water, and then brown in lard.

Serve in 3 inch slices.

Cabbage with Smoked Meats (*Bigos: Kapusta z vudzhenyoiu*)

Bigos, at its best, may be served to the most "important" guests. It consists of two types of cabbage, sweet and sour, and an assortment of smoked meats as well as fresh pork. It is especially fitting for fall. The best accompaniment is good bread and potatoes in any form. This dish may be prepared up to a week in advance.

- 1 pound boneless pork shoulder**
- 2 tablespoons bacon grease or oil**
- 2 cups sauerkraut**
- 3 medium onions**
- 4 cups shredded cabbage**
- 2 bay leaves**
- 4–6 peppercorns**
- 2 allspice berries**
- 1½ pounds smoked sausage or kovbasa**
- 1 pound dry cured boneless ham**
- 3 tablespoons flour**
- 2 tablespoons lard**
- 1 cup ham stock or water**

In a large dutch oven, brown the pork shoulder on all sides in bacon grease. Remove to a plate. Drain sauerkraut and reserve liquid. Cook chopped onions until clear, and add cabbage and sauerkraut. Mix well, add bay leaf, peppercorns, and allspice. Return pork shoulder to pot, cover, and cook over low heat for 1 hour or until pork is tender. Skim off fat. Add sausage, ham, and sauerkraut juice. Cook 30 more minutes. In a saucepan, cook flour in lard, stirring until golden. Blend in ham stock or water, and pour into the *bigos*, mixing again. Heat to boiling and simmer until sauce thickens.

Slice pork and cut sausage diagonally into 2 inch pieces. Arrange pork, ham slices, and sausage over the cabbage mixture (with bay leaves removed) in a large deep platter.

Potato Pancakes (*Deruny*)

These pancakes made of coarsely grated potatoes are also known as terchenyky. In the old days, grating a large amount of potatoes by hand was daunting, and many a finger was scraped. Today the food processor makes the whole preparation very simple.

- 6 large potatoes**
- 1 large onion**
- 2 large eggs**
- 2 tablespoons flour**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper**

Peel potatoes and cover with cold water. Cut potatoes and onion into cubes and grate in processor. Remove some of the potatoes and process the rest with the metal cutting disc. Add eggs, flour, salt, and pepper. Pulse a few times. (Potatoes should not be pureed; shards of potatoes should be left.)

Heat enough oil or lard to cover the bottom of a heavy skillet. When oil is hot, drop in spoonfuls of batter without crowding and flatten lightly. Brown, then cook other side. Keep warm in oven.

Serve with sour cream in a bowl, on the side. Pancakes are best served fresh; however, they may be reheated.

Beet and Pickle Salad (*Taratuta*)

Taratuta was a traditional salad served during the first week of Lent in eastern Ukraine. Cooked beets, pickles, and onions make a colorful presentation.

- 8 medium beets**
- 3 dill pickles**
- 1 large onion**
- 2 tablespoons prepared horseradish**
- 3 tablespoons oil**

Scrub beets, trim off tops, cover with water, and cook until just tender. Cool and peel. (Or use drained canned beets.) Slice beets, pickles, and onions thinly into uniform rounds. Mix drained horseradish with oil, pour over vegetables, and toss.

Serve on a bed of lettuce.

Black and White Sheet Cake (*Chorno-bilyi korzh*)²³

The cake consists of two white layers and one of dark chocolate. It looks very elegant and requires less preparation than the usual tortes.

3¾ cups flour
1½ cups sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
9 ounces butter
4 extra large eggs
4 ounces baker's chocolate
**1 cup rose preserve or other
dense preserve**
zest of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 cups finely chopped walnuts
1 cup powdered sugar

Combine flour, sugar, and baking powder, and cut in butter as for pastry dough. Separate eggs and add yolks to dough, mixing lightly. Divide dough into 3 parts, one slightly smaller than the others. Grate chocolate and mix with one of the larger parts of dough. Chill all dough, wrapped in plastic, 4 hours or overnight.

Cover bottom of baking pan with well-buttered wax paper. Grate lemon zest and squeeze juice. Using a chilled hand grater, coarsely grate the two white portions of dough, keeping them separate. Refrigerate the smaller portion and spread the larger in the baking pan. Grate the chocolate dough and spread over the white layer. Spread the preserve by spoonfuls and sprinkle with 1 cup chopped walnuts and lemon zest.

Whip egg whites lightly, add ½ cup powdered sugar, and beat until stiff. Fold in lemon juice. Spread over preserves and nuts. Cover with remaining dough. Mix remaining walnuts and powdered sugar and sprinkle over top. Bake in preheated 350° oven for about 1 hour or until done. Cool, wrap in foil, and refrigerate. (Do not cut until set.)

Cut into 1 inch by 2 inch slices. They look elegant served in colored paper baking cups on a silver platter.

Honey Mocha Cream Torte (*Medivnyk z kavovou masoiu*)

The sponge base of this torte is flavored with honey, evoking the traditional Ukrainian honey cakes. However, it has come a long way from the traditional version of honey bread. This recipe yields two tortes, one of which may be refrigerated for future use.

**butter and fine dry bread
crumbs for pans**
6 extra large eggs
1½ cups sugar
½ cup vegetable oil
1½ cup honey
3½ cups flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup strong coffee
1 cup apricot jam
**½ cup sherry (oloroso, medium
sweet)**
6 cups mocha custard cream
 (p. 175)

Thoroughly butter 2 springform pans (9 inches diameter), covering sides. Sprinkle with dry bread crumbs, including the rim, and shake out excess. Separate eggs and beat egg yolks with sugar until fluffy. Add oil and beat until pale. Add honey and beat again.

Combine dry ingredients and sift once. Add to yolk mixture by thirds, stirring. Mix in coffee. Whip egg whites until stiff and fold into mixture. Pour into two prepared pans and bake in preheated 350° oven for 1 hour or until cakes spring back at the center. Cool slightly, remove from pans, cool on rack.

Cut one torte into 3 layers. Place bottom layer on 2 crossed pieces of waxed paper on a platter, sprinkle with a little sherry and spread with a thin layer of jam, then mocha custard cream. Add the middle layer and repeat again with sherry, jam, and cream. Cover with the top layer. Sprinkle with sherry, cover with foil and refrigerate until set, at least 4 to 6 hours. Ice with remaining mocha cream and allow to set. Top may be decorated or left plain. Repeat for second torte.

To serve, slice as for torte (see fig. 21, p. 34).

Wedding Bread from the Peremyshl Region (*Korovai z Peremyshlia*)²⁴

This yeast-raised wedding bread is representative of the *korovai* baked throughout the Ukraine. The bread includes eggs and butter and may be flavored with rum, lemon zest, and vanilla. A *korovai* may be adorned with a variety of decorations; presented here are directions for making doves (symbolizing the newlyweds), other birds, and an optional tree. Some *korovainytsi* fashioned cones and swirls as ornaments. Often, a small replica of the *korovai* is made for the newlyweds to keep as a memento. Glazed with egg wash, it keeps indefinitely. Decorations may be baked in advance and the *korovai* assembled the day before use. They require a little patience, yet are not difficult to make. (See figures 26–38.)

1 cup evaporated milk
½ cup lukewarm water
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons sugar
2 cubes fresh yeast or 2
packages dry yeast
10 cups flour
6 ounces butter
6 extra large eggs
½ cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon rum extract
(optional)
zest of 1 lemon (optional)
1 egg beaten with a little water
for glaze

Combine milk, water, salt, and 2 tablespoons sugar in a large bowl. Add crumbled yeast and 5 cups sifted flour. Mix well and allow to rise until double in bulk. Beat eggs with ½ cup sugar until frothy, and add vanilla, rum, and lemon zest, as desired. Add remaining flour to yeast mixture and mix in melted butter and egg mixture. Knead until dough is smooth and leaves the hand. Allow to rest 5 minutes.

Or, in processor, combine milk, water, salt, and 2 tablespoons sugar. Pulse once, add crumbled yeast, and pulse again. Set aside. Beat eggs with ½ cup sugar until frothy, and add vanilla, rum, and lemon zest, as desired. Melt butter and cool. In processor, combine 5 cups of flour with ½ the yeast mixture, ½ the egg mixture, and ½ the melted butter. Process until a ball of dough forms, 2 to 3 minutes. Allow to rest, process 1 more minute. Repeat with remaining ingredients.

Knead all dough for several minutes on a lightly floured surface. Divide into 3 parts: one about 3 pounds for the main *korovai*; one about 1 pound for the memento *korovai*; the balance for decoration. Place in lightly oiled bowl, turn once, cover loosely with plastic wrap, and allow to rise until double in bulk. Butter and sprinkle with flour a 10 inch diameter dutch oven and a glass pie dish. (Butter the rims, too.) Keep dough covered when it is not being worked.

Large *korovai*

On a floured work surface, knead the larger portion of dough, removing bubbles. Cut into the following pieces:

- 3 pieces, 12 ounces each
- 2 pieces, 4 ounces each
- 1 piece, 3 ounces



Fig. 26

Roll the 12 ounce pieces into 3 strands 28 inches long and more than 1 inch thick. Braid as for a *kolach* (see p. 8) and arrange in a circle around the bottom of the dutch oven, overlapping ends. Roll the 4 ounce pieces into 2 strands about 29 inches long. Twist tightly (about every inch), and place on top of the braid, on its outermost rim, overlapping ends. Roll the 3 ounce piece into a small ball, flatten the top, and place in the center (fig. 26). Cover lightly with plastic wrap and let rise until double in bulk.

Small *korovai*

Repeat above instructions to make a smaller replica of the *korovai* in the pie dish.

- 3 pieces, 4 ounces each
- 2 pieces, 2 ounces each
- 1 piece, 1½ ounces each



Fig. 27

Brush both breads with egg glaze and bake in preheated 350° oven, with pans not touching, for 15 minutes, then lower oven to 325°. Remove the smaller *korovai* after 30 more minutes (total 45 minutes), glaze again, allow to rest for several minutes, then remove from pan and cool on rack. Bake the larger one 15 minutes more (total 1 hour), or until the bottom sounds hollow when rapped. Glaze again, allow to rest, remove from pan, and cool on rack (fig. 27). Wrap in aluminum foil and refrigerate or freeze.

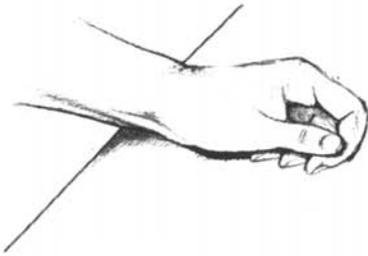


Fig. 28

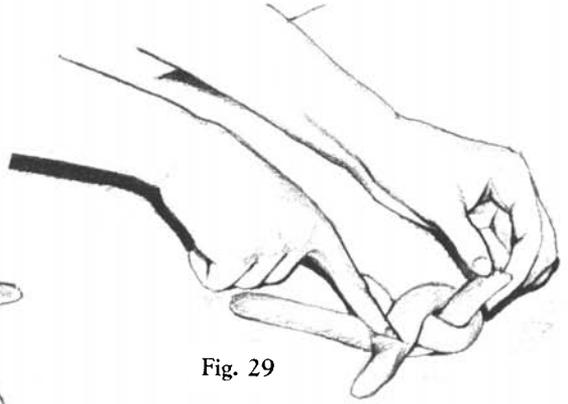


Fig. 29

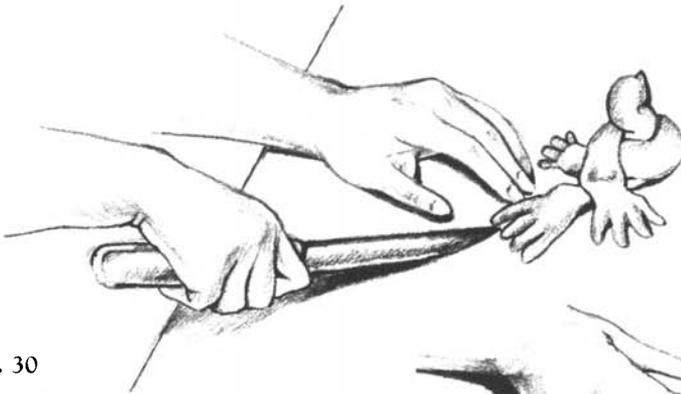


Fig. 30



Fig. 31

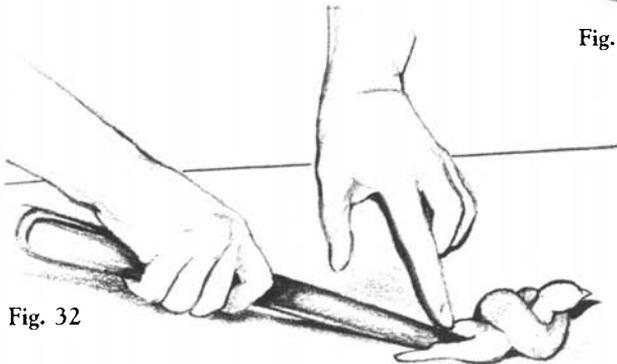


Fig. 32



Fig. 33

Birds

Roll 2 snippets of dough (about 1 ounce each for small birds, more for doves) into 4 inch ropes. Lay one horizontally and mark its midpoint, then cross it vertically with the other at about a third of its length (fig. 28). Crisscross wings over the body, lifting the head (fig. 29). Flatten wingtips and tail with fingers, and make cuts for feathers, cutting off any pieces that are too long (fig. 30). With a little egg white, glue 2 peppercorns onto the head for eyes. Pinch the end of the head to make a beak. Place on nonstick baking sheet. Smaller birds are made of a single rope of dough looped into a knot, with a head and beak shaped at one end, the other end cut into tail feathers (figs. 31–33). Brush with egg wash, bake in a preheated 325° oven until done. Repeat brushing for a high glaze.



Fig. 34

Cones

Roll out a 2 ounce piece of dough into a ribbon 2 by 10 inches. With a sharp knife cut a fringe at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch intervals, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ inch uncut at one edge. Cut strip in half. Roll each into a cone, holding it by the uncut edge. With a toothpick, separate the “petals,” place on a baking sheet, brush with egg glaze, and bake in a preheated 325° oven 5 to 10 minutes until golden. Glaze again and allow to dry (fig. 34).

Branches

For the large *korovai*, strip the bark from 2 twigs (preferably from a fruit tree) about 16 inches long. For the smaller bread, cut smaller twigs. Roll 4 ounces of dough into a long ribbon about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Cut a fringe at $\frac{1}{2}$ inch intervals, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ inch uncut at one edge (fig. 35). Twist the ribbon



Fig. 35

around the twig, adding more ribbon as needed (fig. 36). Flip leaves alternately right and left. Place across rim of a baking pan, not allowing leaves to touch anything (fig. 37). Brush with egg glaze and bake in preheated 325° oven until golden. Glaze again and cool.



Fig. 36

Assembling the *korovai*

Small birds are attached with toothpicks around the outer edge, two doves in the center. Branches are arranged to meet in an arch over the top (fig. 38). Myrtle or periwinkle may be used for added contrast, as decided by the newlyweds or the baker.

Decoration of the memento *korovai* is similar but less elaborate.

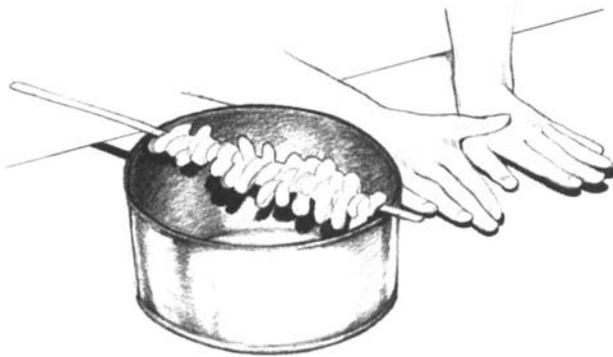


Fig. 37



Fig. 38

Name Days (Imenyiny)

In the Ukraine, name day celebrations overshadowed birthday celebrations. One's name day simply was the day of the saint whose name one bore, or sometimes the day on which one was named. Traditionally, at baptism, a child was given the name of the saint whose day was closest to the child's birthday. The hope was that the child would adopt some of the virtue and strength of the saint, and emulate him by example. Saints were traditional role models, so to speak. Sometimes parents consented, then called the child by a more "exotic" variation, or by a derivative. Thus, Oksana was acceptable because it derived from Xenia, the name of a Greek saint. However, Zirka (Star) had no religious connotation and was relegated to a second name or just a nickname.

Biblical names were heavy favorites for both sexes. Since the Ukraine adopted its Christianity from the Greeks in Constantinople, a strong Greek influence showed itself in names such as Zenon, Zena, Darian, Daria, Alexander, Alexandra (among others). Of course, some were adapted to the Slavic lilt: Alexander became Oleksa, Alexandra was changed to Lesia. Among boys, names of the church fathers, especially those of the Eastern Church, were well represented. There were many a Gregory (Hryhoryi, Hryts'), Basilius (Vasil'), John (Ivan), and Ireneus (Irenei). The apostles to the Slavs, Methodius (Metodii) and Cyril (Kyrylo), were honored, too. Of course, Boris and Hlib, martyred at the hands of the pagan Slavs, became part of the saints' roster. The favorite Ukrainian saints, Michael (Mykhailo), Andrew (Andrii), and George (Iuri), had armies of namesakes.

Girls were called Anna (Hanusia), Catherine (Katia), and myriad variations on the basic Mary (Maria, Marusia, Marichka). The virtues were prominent in names such as Faith (Vera), Hope (Nadia), and Charity (Kharytia, Liubov, Luba). Helen (Olena, Olenka), Christine (Khrystia), and Irene (Iryna) were also favorites.

Very historic names such as Ihor, Sviatopolk, Sviatoslav, Radoslav, Roksoliana, Svitliana, or Lubomyra again became popular in the nineteenth century. Of course, Volodymyr and Ol'ha were never out of vogue.

Families marked the name days of its members. This applied to the extended family and friends. The local patron, teacher, and pastor were honored by clerks, students, and parishioners. In business relationships, one's boss was remembered on his name day. Among peers, such as students, name days were observed no matter how humble the surroundings. (It also gave occasion to get together and "drown" sorrows or disappointments as well as honor the celebrant.)

One's name day was celebrated with family, godparents, and grandparents. Token gifts were given. The high point of the festivities was a feast, the responsibility of the young celebrant's family. Adults were responsible for their own name day party.

The level of celebration depended on the means of the household. Whether simple or intricate dishes were served, there was variety and plenty. Name day dinners were a very important and common community practice.

An excellent description of a name day feast was preserved in a letter of Mykhailo Drai-Khmara, written from exile in Siberia to his wife, recalling better times.

Burnt into my memory are name day celebrations. Picture a large, heavy oak table, covered in white linens on which sat, in symmetrical order: whiskeys, beverages flavored with lemon, orange, or cinnamon or clove, saffron or vanilla bean . . . liqueurs of cherry, plum, currant. . . . Sweet wines, and dry, and white!

First served were the cold *zakusky*. Oh, Danube herring with onions, pepper, garnished with small tomatoes; or eggplant "caviar" or marinated wild mushrooms, smoked fish, pickled fish. . . . Roast veal, sausages, aspics of pork, chicken, with horseradish sauce.

After a short respite, the glasses were refilled with whiskey or wine and hot dishes were served: broth with *perizhky*, puree of pea soup with toasted croutons, roast turkey with baked apples, sausage links with sauteed cabbage and mustard; beefsteak with pan-fried potatoes and of course, fresh cucumber; poached carp in cream, pudding of rice or tapioca, baba with sugar or fruit syrup. . . .

After another pause come *pyrih* with nuts or fruit and, tea. Tea was served with lemon; and Swiss cheese, Gouda; truffles of chocolate and vanilla rum. Cookies and tortes followed. All this was washed down with cider or *kriushun* (sangria).

For finale: ices, tutti-frutti and apricot. I acknowledge I wasted a lot of paper on enumerating all these dishes, but at one time I lived this way. Now it has passed. I return to reality, receive a dole of the fifth category and am concerned to pass to at least the third. . . . Today is the tenth of June, 1937.¹

In Soviet Ukraine, Drai-Khmara's Siberian reality prevailed. Since saints were officially abolished and the sacrament of baptism banished, there were no name day feasts. There was a feeble attempt to introduce something called *zoryny* to mark the birth of a child,² but this practice met with very limited acceptance by the Ukrainian people.

In the Western world, Ukrainians still observe name days in the old traditional way. Families and friends celebrate name day dinners. At Ukrainian youth camps, schools, and recreational resorts, greetings are offered to namesakes, sometimes collectively. Ukrainian radio programs greet namesakes on their saint's day, too. This tradition remains well entrenched in the fabric of Ukrainian community life. Most popular Ukrainian name days are listed in Appendix 2.

The recipes for name day celebrations presented here were adapted from articles and suggested menus published in the magazine *Nova Khata*, which devoted much attention to culinary art as well as other aspects of good living. These dishes—tart, textured, and rich—emphasize the taste preferences of Ukrainians.

The menus reflect the seasons, and the seasonality of ingredients heightened their appreciation. This was especially true in the old days when highly perishable foods or those with a short growing season could not be preserved beyond a brief period. Anticipation of the first fresh salad, new potatoes, or the first tomato is half the pleasure. In the West, where most foods are available year round, there is still a difference in taste between farmer's market or home-grown products and those of the agroindustrial complex.

Spring Name Day Dinner (*Vesniani imenyiny*)

A spring name day dinner menu might include the following: canapes with radish and chives (*zakusky z horodynoiu*); sorrel soup (*shchavlevyi borsch*); turnovers with mushrooms (*pyrizhky z hrybamy*); veal tongue with mayonnaise (*tefiachyi lyzen' v maionezi*); crepes with veal brains (*nalysnyky z mozgom*); greens with bacon dressing (*salata z solonyoiu*); torte Irene (*tort Iryna*); spirits and tea. Recipes for these dishes follow.

Canapes with Radish and Chives (*Zakusky z horodynoiu*)

Radishes and chives, the first products of a spring garden, are most welcome after the long winter. These simple canapes combine cheese, radishes, and chives. Serve on firm and thinly sliced textured breads.

**1 cup farmer cheese or cream
cheese mixed with 2
tablespoons butter**
½ cup chopped red radishes
**½ cup chopped chives or green
scallions**
½ teaspoon salt
**thinly sliced rye or whole
wheat bread**

Bring cheese to room temperature and cream with fork. Add chopped radishes, chives or scallions, and salt, and mix. Keeps for several days in refrigerator in a sealed container. Spread a fourth inch of the mixture on bread. Make sandwiches, press firmly, and cut into triangles or rectangles, trimming crusts. Make some sandwiches open-faced.

Arrange on a serving plate and garnish with fancy cut radishes and scallion "brushes." Alternate type of breads for visual effect.

Sorrel Soup (*Shchavlevyi borsch*)

This soup is made with young, tender leaves of sorrel, a weed gathered from meadows in early spring and known for its sour taste. Sorrel is available in bunches at better markets.

- 2 cups young sorrel leaves**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 2 tablespoons flour**
- 6 cups chicken or beef stock**
- 1 cup clabbered cream (or ½
fresh cream and ½ sour
cream)**
- 1 cup cooked rice**
- 2 hard-boiled eggs for garnish**

Trim stems from leaves. Wash, drain, and chop. Sauté flour in melted butter until golden. Sprinkle with salt, add sorrel, and cook, stirring, until wilted. Add stock and cook until thickened. Add cream, bring to a light boil, then simmer for several minutes.

Serve with a spoonful of cooked rice in each soup plate. Garnish with slices of boiled egg.

Turnovers with Mushrooms (*Pyrizhky z hrybamy*)

These savory pastries sometimes masquerade under the name pashtetyky. The filling and even the finished pastries may be made ahead and frozen. For filling use a mushroom (duxelle) mixture (see p. 13), or a dry cheese and herb mixture (see p. 88), or a cabbage and onion mixture (see p. 88). Pyrizhky are traditionally served with soups or as zakusky (appetizers) with drinks.

**3 cups plus 1–2 tablespoons
flour**
2 tablespoons sugar
½ teaspoon salt
8 ounces butter
1 cup sour cream
**1 egg yolk beaten with 2
tablespoons of water for glaze**

Combine dry ingredients and add cold chopped butter. Mix until mealy, add salt and sour cream, and turn several times until dough forms a ball. Or, in processor, mix dry ingredients several times. With machine running, add butter until mealy. Add sour cream and turn several times until dough forms. Knead briefly on floured surface, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate for several hours.

Prepare desired filling. Roll out a third of the dough into a 10 by 12 inch rectangle. (Keep remaining dough chilled.) Fold into overlapping thirds, and roll out again. Repeat 4 times. (Many claim that the more the dough is folded, the lighter the final product will be.) Roll dough ¼ inch thick. Cut 3 to 4 inch rounds with cookie cutter or wineglass. Place about 2 tablespoons of filling to one side of each round, fold over, and seal with fork or fingers. Roll scraps last. Place *pyrizhky* on greased baking sheet, prick tops, and brush with glaze. Place in oven preheated to 375° and reduce heat to 350°. Bake about 20 minutes until brown. Cool on rack. Store in tightly sealed plastic bags.

Veal Tongue with Garlic Mayonnaise (*Teliachyi lyzen' v maionezi*)

This dish serves as an excellent first course, a main supper dish, or a fine presentation for a buffet.

3–4 pound fresh veal tongue
1 onion
1 parsnip
1 turnip
1 carrot
2–3 ribs celery
1 bay leaf
4–5 peppercorns
1 tablespoon vinegar
2–4 cloves garlic
parsley sprigs and lemon
wedges for garnish

Rinse tongue in cold water. Place in a large kettle, cover with cold water and bring to a boil. Pour off the first cooking water and rinse again in cold water. Combine meat and vegetables in a large pot, cover with cold water, add remaining ingredients, and simmer for about 3 hours until meat is cooked. If using a pressure cooker, add vegetables toward the end of the cooking time. Cool meat in liquid, peel off skin, and trim fat or gristle. Strain liquid and reserve for sauce or soup. Wrap tongue in foil and chill.

Serve chilled in thin slices, cut across the grain, with garlic mayonnaise on the side (see following recipe). Garnish with parsley and lemon wedges.

Garlic Mayonnaise (*Maionez z chasnykom*)

This is a simple, yet piquant dressing for any boiled meat, especially pork and beef.

2–4 cloves of garlic (or to
taste)
1½ cup mayonnaise
juice of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons ketchup
2 teaspoons salt

Peel garlic and mince fine. Combine all ingredients. Keeps chilled for several days in a sealed container. Serve over sliced meat or on the side.

Crêpes with Veal Brains (*Nalysnyky z mozgom*)

This dish has different versions; sometimes, veal brains are encased in a short dough as for pyrizhky. Its main characteristic is elegant presentation. The brains are nutritious, easily digestible, and protein-rich.

Batter for crêpes

3 large eggs
½ cup water
½ cup milk
1 cup flour
1 teaspoon salt

Beat eggs, water, milk, and flour until lumps dissolve. Or, in processor, combine ingredients and beat for 1 minute, scraping down sides. Chill batter for 2 hours. Heat a little oil in a 9 inch skillet until it separates. Pour in about ¼ cup of batter, tilting skillet until the bottom is thinly covered. Return to high heat until edges pull away from sides. (Spoon a little batter into holes.) Flip onto a large plate. (If batter is too thick, thin it with a little water.) Cover crêpes with plastic wrap. Crêpes keep well and when filled may be frozen and used later.

1 pair veal brains (1 pint)
1 tablespoon white vinegar
1 onion
2 tablespoons butter or oil
1 tablespoon flour
2–3 tablespoons meat stock
2 egg yolks
salt
ground white pepper

Veal brain filling

Cover brains with cold water and add vinegar. Bring to a boil and simmer 10 minutes. Pour off liquid and rinse with cold water to set brains. Cool, remove as much membrane as practical, and chop coarsely. In a large skillet, sauté minced onion in butter and cook until clear. Add chopped brains and cook a few minutes. Mix in flour. Add stock and cook until thickened. Add beaten egg yolks and season with salt and pepper. Taste and adjust seasoning. Stir and cool.

Spread evenly 2 or 3 tablespoons brains over half of each crêpe. Starting with the spread side, roll into cylinders. Or simply fold in quarters, making pie wedges. Filled crêpes may be covered and cooked several hours later. Fry lightly in 2 tablespoons of butter in a large skillet. Turn to other side, cover, and cook over low heat until heated through.

Greens with Bacon Dressing (*Salata z solonynoiu*)

The greens for this salad were usually a mixture of leaf lettuce such as boston or bibb, a sprinkling of young nettle leaves for flavor, endive, or beet greens.

**4–6 cups washed lettuce or
 other leaf greens**
**1 cup rugula or other tough
 greens or young beet leaves**
8 slices bacon
2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons vinegar
2 teaspoons salt

Remove stems of greens and chop leaves. Cut bacon into 1 inch pieces and fry until crisp. Pour off all but ½ cup fat, add vinegar, sugar, and salt, and bring to a boil.

To serve, pour dressing over greens, toss once, and serve.

Torte Irene (Tort Iryna)

This torte was a favorite in the spring, probably because of its light color as well as meringue taste. The coffee flavor is pronounced in the butter cream.

5 large egg whites
¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
1½ cups sugar
¾ cup ground hazelnuts
raspberry or strawberry jam

8 ounces unsalted butter
5 large egg yolks
1 cup powdered sugar
¼ cup very strong cool coffee

Torte meringue layers

Line 2 buttered springform pans with waxed paper. Whip egg whites until stiff, sprinkling with tartar. Beat in 1 cup sugar, a tablespoon at a time. Beat until thick. Mix ⅓ cup sugar with ground hazelnuts and fold in gently. Pour batter into pans. Bake in preheated 275° oven 25 to 30 minutes until almost dry. Cool and gently peel off paper.

Coffee butter cream

Cream butter until whipped. Add egg yolks one at a time. Add sugar and beat until fluffy. Gradually add coffee, mixing well. Place one layer on doubled wax paper and spread lightly with jam. Spread with at least ½ inch butter cream, pulling to edge. Cover the second layer with jam and place it jam side up on first layer. Spread top and sides of torte. Cover and refrigerate.

To serve, gently lift torte by wax paper sheets, partially remove paper, slip hand under that part of torte, then pull off remaining paper. Carefully place on a cake platter. Decorate top with fresh raspberries.

Slice as for torte (fig. 21, p. 34).

Summer Name Day Buffet (*Litni imenyiny*)

Ukrainians ate at table. The modern and probably American invention of eating standing up has not caught on with Ukrainians; it is still in its trial period. Eating standing up is very practical and convenient for the hosts, since few households engage a cook and a maid. A buffet arrangement is another solution. Guests help themselves and seat themselves where they like.

The recipes offered here, mostly for cold dishes, are very suited to buffet service, and all may be prepared in advance. The egg patties and noodles with cabbage may be served warm, but not piping hot. Except for the cucumber salad, each dish may be used as a main course for a family dinner.

A summer name day menu might include: cold soup with crayfish (*kholodnyk z rakamy*); herring and vegetables vinaigrette (*oseledets' i horodyna v otsti*); stuffed carp with dill sauce (*nachyniuvanyi korop z kropom*); cucumber salad (*mizeria*); noodles with cabbage (*lokshyna z kapustoiu*); egg patties (*pisni sichenyky*); ribbon torte (*tort strichka*); tea and white wine.

Cold Soup with Crayfish (*Kholodnyk z rakamy*)

This recipe calls for two unusual ingredients: crayfish and clabbered milk. The latter may be made by mixing milk, buttermilk and sour cream. Since fresh crayfish are rarely available, shrimp are an adequate substitute.

2 cups light cream
2 cups buttermilk
1 cup sour cream
6 small beets, with 2 inch tops,
or canned beets
6 small hard-boiled eggs
12 medium to large shrimp or
24 crayfish
¼ cup fresh dill
¼ cup flat parsley
¼ cup chives
1 medium cucumber
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon sweet paprika
pinch of nutmeg

Mix cream, buttermilk, and sour cream. Let stand at room temperature for at least 4 hours, then chill. Boil beets until soft. Cool, peel, and cut into thin rounds. Cover eggs with cold water, bring to boil, then turn off heat. Cover and let stand 20 minutes. Cool and peel. Cook shellfish in a little water until they turn red. Cool and peel; cut large shrimp in half lengthwise. Chop greens and add salt. Peel cucumber, if waxed, and cut out seeds, if very mature. Grate coarsely.

Pour cream mixture over greens, cucumber, shellfish, eggs, and beets. Stir lightly and season with spices. Serve with white toast rounds.

Herring and Vegetables Vinagrette (*Oseledets' i horodyna v otstí*)

This recipe, colorful, refreshing, and very convenient, features an unusual melange of tastes. It should be prepared a day or two before serving.

2 medium carrots
2 parsnips
2 ribs celery
6 small pearl onions
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1½ teaspoons salt (or to taste)
1 pint herring fillets (or herring packed in wine vinegar)
¾ cup vegetable oil
½ cup wine vinegar
¼ teaspoon celery seed
¼ teaspoon coriander seed
5 peppercorns
2 tablespoons sugar
1 bay leaf

Peel carrots and parsnips and slice into thin rounds. Slice celery and peel onions. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet and sauté vegetables until lightly cooked but still crunchy. Sprinkle with salt and cool. Skin and dice herring into 1 inch pieces.

Mix oil, wine vinegar, celery seed, coriander seed, peppercorns, and sugar. Line the bottom of a large jar or crock with vegetables, add a layer of herring, then finish with vegetables. Pour marinade over all. Stick bay leaf to one side. Press with spoon to release air pockets. Refrigerate overnight.

Serve on a bed of greens with fresh crusty bread.

Stuffed Carp with Dill Sauce (*Nachyniuvanyi korop z kropom*)

Freshwater fish was once very plentiful throughout the Ukraine. Because Ukrainian cooks liked a complex medley of tastes, it is not surprising that stuffed fish is an old and favorite recipe. The fish was cooked whole, but if the head is offensive to anyone, it can be removed and replaced with garnish. Of course, gourmets appreciate the carp's cheeks.

Fish preparation

**1 fresh carp (about 3 pounds),
dressed**
2 teaspoons salt
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon oil
2 tablespoons flour
**lemon and sprigs of dill for
garnish**

Rinse fish with cold water and remove any remaining scales or fins. Pat dry with paper towel. Rub with salt inside and out and let stand for 20 minutes.

- 1 medium onion
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 3 dry boletus
- 5 fresh small mushrooms
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 dry hard roll
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 egg whites
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg

Stuffing

Sauté chopped onion in 2 tablespoons butter until golden. Cook dry boletus in a little water until soft. Pour off (and reserve) liquid. Finely chop boletus and add to onion. Wipe fresh mushrooms with damp towel, chop, add to onion, and cook until soft. Add 1 teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon pepper. Stir and cook for 1 minute or so.

Soak roll in hot water for 10 minutes or until soft. Squeeze dry and rub through a coarse sieve. Beat 2 tablespoons butter with egg yolks. Beat in pulp of roll, then add onion-mushroom mixture. Or, in processor, chop squeezed roll, mix in butter, and add yolks one at a time. Combine with onion-mushroom mixture.

Whip egg whites stiff and fold into mixture. Stuff the fish, using a large spoon. Sew up cavity with coarse white thread, stitching every inch or so.

Pat fish with flour. In a large oblong pan or roaster, lightly brown the fish in 2 tablespoons butter, turning it carefully. Place a greased rack under fish, cover with aluminum foil, and bake, covered, at 325° for 30 minutes or until fish is opaque. Insert a sharp knife into the thickest part to see if the fish is cooked through. Do not overcook.

To serve: gently place fish on platter, cover, and cool. Remove thread. Garnish with lemon wedges and fresh sprigs of dill. Serve with dill and lemon sauce on the side. (See following recipe.)

Piquant Dill Sauce (*Kropova pidlyva*)

Dill weed, an old favorite in the Ukrainian kitchen, has been recently discovered by many fashionable cooks. Its clear, easily identifiable soft taste marries well with cream.

2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup fish stock or chicken stock
½ cup light cream
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon finely chopped dill
juice of 1 lemon

Melt butter and mix in flour, but do not let flour turn color. Cook for 2 minutes or so. Add stock and mix until smooth. Cook several minutes, until thickened. Remove from heat. Mix in cream, salt, dill, and lemon juice.

Cucumber Salad (*Mizeria*)

This salad, although not restricted to the Ukrainian kitchen, is a Ukrainian favorite.

4–6 medium cucumbers
1 teaspoon salt
1 onion or 3 scallions
½ cup sour cream
¼ cup vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
chopped parsley

Wash and score fresh unwaxed cucumbers lengthwise with a fork, or peel cucumbers. Slice into thin rounds, sprinkle with salt, and let stand for 10 minutes or so. Slice onion or scallions into thin rounds. Mix sour cream, vinegar, and sugar. Pour off liquid from cucumbers, add onion, pour dressing over all, mix, and chill.

Sprinkle with parsley before serving.

Egg Noodles with Cabbage (*Lokshyna z kapustoiu*)

Nothing equals the taste of fresh homemade noodles. Making them is not as much work as is usually thought; the food processor kneads the dough in minutes. Fresh noodles are available at some specialty markets, and commercial noodles may be substituted in a pinch. The cabbage flavoring is delicate and weds well with the dough taste.

- 1 cup flour**
- 3 large eggs**
- 1 tablespoon water**
- 1 teaspoon salt**

Noodles

Add eggs, water, and salt to flour until a ball forms. Knead until smooth (about 10 minutes). Or, in processor, add eggs, water, and salt to dough and mix until dough forms. (Add a little more water if dough is very stiff.) Allow to rest a moment or two. Then knead again several times and allow to rest again.

On a floured work surface, roll out dough into a very thin sheet. Gently loosen dough from surface from time to time with a floured hand. Flip over and roll again several times. Place on a cloth to dry. Turn and allow other side to air dry, about 10 to 15 minutes.

On work surface, roll into a loose roll and with a very sharp knife cut into strips of desired thickness. Spread noodles on cloth and allow to dry, 5 to 10 minutes. Toss a bit, so they do not stick together. Drop noodles into a large pot of rapidly boiling water and mix lightly. Cook, uncovered, until done, about 4 minutes. Do not overcook. Drain and rinse with cold water.

2 cups shredded cabbage
1 onion
½ cup butter or ¼ cup oil
½ cup sauerkraut (optional)
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
3 tablespoons dry bread crumbs
1 tablespoon butter

Cabbage

In a large heavy skillet, sauté shredded cabbage and chopped onion in ½ cup melted butter until cooked lightly. Add sauerkraut for a robust flavor. Season with salt and pepper. Toss drained noodles into cabbage mixture and heat through.

Serve sprinkled with bread crumbs browned in 1 tablespoon butter.

Egg Patties (*Pisni sichenyky*)

This dish, used as an entrée for fast days, has many fans since it is both high in protein and tasty. The traditional method of preparation was to stuff eggshell halves. This recipe calls for oval-shaped patties, which are less work and just as tasty. The choice is the cook's.

8 large eggs
1 onion
½ cup diced green pepper
2 tablespoons oil
½ teaspoon dry mustard
1 tablespoon cream
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
1 tablespoon chopped dill
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
dry bread crumbs
butter or oil for frying

Cover eggs with cold water and bring to boil. Cover, turn off heat, and allow to stand 20 minutes. Drain, cover with cold water, and cool. Sauté chopped onion and green pepper in oil until wilted. Dissolve mustard in cream. If stuffing egg shells, cut boiled eggs lengthwise with a sharp knife, not leaving a ragged edge. Scoop out egg and save shells. Or, peel eggs and chop fine.

In a large bowl combine onions, green pepper, dill, and parsley, and mix lightly. Add mustard-cream mixture, salt, black pepper, and mayonnaise. Taste and adjust seasoning. Stuff eggshells with mixture, making a domed top, like an egg. Roll top in fine dry bread crumbs and set on rack to dry for 5 minutes. Or mold egg mixture into ovals by using two spoons, roll in crumbs, and allow to dry. Heat ¼ inch butter or oil in skillet. Fry patties or stuffed eggshells (bread side down) for a few minutes. Turn and fry other side. Cover and cook over low heat 5 minutes or until cooked through.

Serve on a warm platter and garnish with dill or parsley sprigs.

Ribbon Torte (*Tort strichka*)

This confection is a favorite in warm weather because it requires no baking. It is constructed of six wafers, or tortenboden (available in specialty markets), and three fillings: cherry butter cream, chocolate butter cream, and almond paste. The torte is covered with chocolate glaze and sliced, the colored fillings resemble ribbons, hence its name. This showy torte makes an excellent name day gift.

1 pound unsalted butter
1 pound sifted powdered sugar
2 cans tart cherries (32 ounces)
½ cup white raisins plumped in a little hot water
4 ounces unsweetened chocolate
4 ounces milk chocolate

Butter creams

Cream butter and sugar a third at a time, beating after each addition. Beat until fluffy and divide in half. Drain pitted cherries and raisins well. Grind or chop fine (but not puréed). Add to half the butter cream and set aside. Coarsely grate chocolate, mix with half the butter cream, and set aside.

9 ounces blanched almonds
1 cup powdered sugar
3 tablespoons heavy cream
2 teaspoons almond extract

Almond paste

Toast half the almonds in a heavy skillet until browned on all sides. (Toasting intensifies the flavor.) Cool. Grate all almonds finely (like fine dry bread crumbs). Add enough cream to form a paste. Mix in almond extract and more cream as needed until paste can be spread easily.

Place a wafer on doubled wax paper on a flat board. Using a long spatula, evenly spread wafer (to the very edge) with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of chocolate cream (using about half the mixture). Gently press another wafer on top and spread with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of cherry cream. Press a third wafer on top and spread with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of almond paste. On another piece of waxed paper, spread a fourth wafer with cherry cream. Cover with a fifth wafer and spread with chocolate cream. Cover with the last wafer. Place the second half of the torte over the first and press. Cover with waxed paper and weigh down the top with a flat plate or board. (Wafers tend to curl at the edges when moist.) Refrigerate overnight.

- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 4 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 2 teaspoons water
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Chocolate glaze

Heat all ingredients in double boiler until chocolate melts. Remove from heat, beat with a whisk until smooth, and cool. Using a long spatula, cover side of torte with chocolate, pulling from bottom to top. (A lazy susan is convenient but not essential.) Dip spatula in hot water occasionally. Proceed until sides are smoothly covered. Place a dollop of glaze on top and spread toward edges with even strokes. Again dip spatula in hot water, shake off excess, and lightly and quickly even out ridges. Refrigerate uncovered for 3 to 4 hours until glaze is set.

Run a sharp knife around the bottom of the torte. Slide torte and waxed paper from board onto one hand. With the other hand, partially pull away paper. Place a hand under the uncovered half, then pull off remaining paper. Carefully transfer the torte to a platter. It now may be decorated with slivers of almonds or candied cherries.

To serve: cut around the edge of a wineglass down into the center of the torte, then cut wedges. (See fig. 21, p. 34.) Remove the first one carefully; others will be easier. Cut a square torte into strips.

Note: the torte may be refrigerated unglazed, well wrapped in aluminum foil, for several weeks. This is a great convenience. In a pinch it may be served unglazed. Then it is not presented at table, but simply sliced in strips and cut into rectangles or wedges and served on a platter.

Fall Name Day Celebration (*Osini imenyny*)

Fall is a fine season. With its cooling temperatures, it brings the fresh harvest of the field and forest. Most delightful are the wild mushrooms that become plentiful in the fall (see chapter 13).

This menu offers the “desired” Ukrainian ingredients: *hryby* (cepes), herrings, barbecued meat, kasha, and fried dough. A fall name day dinner might include the following dishes: herring canapes (*zakusky z oseledtsia*); young mushroom soup (*iushka z molodykh hrybiv*); field roasted lamb (*pol’ova iahniatyna*); cornmeal mush (*kulesha*); tomato salad (*salata z pomidoriv*); fried twists (*verhuny*); cranberry liqueur (*spotykach z zhuravlyny*); and cherry whiskey (*vyshniak* or *vyshnivka*).

Canapes with Herring Spread (*Zakusky z oseledtsia*)

In September and October, the Baltic herring are at their best. Not so long ago, herring had to be soaked, skinned, and boned before serving. Now marinated herring may be purchased in jars.

1 pint herring fillet pieces in
wine sauce
1 medium onion
1 small apple
2 hard-boiled eggs
2 tablespoons sour cream
1–2 tablespoons dry bread
crumbs
ground black pepper to taste
thin sliced dark rye bread or
rounds of whole wheat bread
apples for garnish
hard-boiled eggs for garnish

Drain herring well and chop fine. Peel and chop onion and apple and place with the herring in mixing bowl. Peel eggs, finely chop whites, and add. Mash yolks and mix with the sour cream, adding enough bread crumbs to bind the spread. Pepper and taste. (Salt is usually not necessary.) The consistency should be spreadable, but not pasty. Pack in small crock, cover, and cool several hours before serving.

Serve on small slices of rye bread garnished with apple and egg slices. Or place on a bed of greens surrounded by whole wheat bread rusks.

Young Mushroom Soup (*lushka z molodykh hrybiv*)

In early fall, when field mushrooms (pecherytsi) become abundant, this soup was greeted with glee. The seasonal nature of its ingredients heightened the pleasure of eating by adding anticipation. In most markets, fresh young mushrooms, the cultivated cousins of the Agaricus campestris, are available year round and may be substituted.

Soup

1 pound fresh mushrooms or
Agaricus campestris
2 medium onions
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
2 medium potatoes
1 parsnip
1 turnip
8 cups meat stock or broth
salt and pepper to taste

Wipe mushrooms with damp paper towel, trim ends, and slice. Sauté mushrooms and chopped onions in butter, stirring frequently, until onions turn clear. Sprinkle with flour, mix, and set aside. Peel and chop potatoes, parsnip, and turnip. Cook in stock until vegetables are done (but do not overcook). Add mushroom-onion mixture, stir, and bring to a boil. Season to taste.

½ cup flour
1 tablespoon butter
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ cup water

Drop dough garnish (*zatirka*)

Mix flour, butter, and salt, and add enough water to make a stiff dough. Pinch off pea-size balls and drop into simmering soup. Cook for several minutes, or until dough floats to the top and is cooked.

Field Roasted Lamb (*Pol'ova iahniatyna*)

This recipe from the steppes originally called for young mutton to be roasted over open charcoal-filled pits. Lamb is preferred now. Marinated in buttermilk, garlic, and dill, the lamb may be cooked on a barbeque grill or roasted in an oven and then charred lightly over an open flame to give it the fire flavor.

5–6 pound leg of lamb
1–2 tablespoons cracked black pepper
4–6 cloves garlic
buttermilk or plain yogurt
(enough to cover meat)
¼ cup oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice or white vinegar
2 bay leaves
2 teaspoons chopped dill or 2 stalks dill weed

Bone lamb so that the meat lies flat. Mix remaining ingredients in a crock or glass container large enough to hold meat with a little room to spare. Coat meat with mixture, place in crock, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate at least overnight. It may held 2 or 3 days. Turn occasionally.

Prepare a very hot charcoal fire or preheat oven to 475° (use a wire rack in roaster). Wipe excess marinade from meat. Sear meat on each side for 6 to 8 minutes, basting with marinade when meat is turned. Reduce heat by raising grill, spreading out coals, or turning down oven to 325°. Cook 20 more minutes (10 minutes each side) for medium-rare meat. Allow to stand 10 minutes.

Serve sliced across the grain with strained buttermilk/yogurt mixture as a dipping sauce.

Cornmeal Mush (Kulesha)

Corn was introduced to Ukraine in the early nineteenth century. It became very popular and a staple in the Western Ukraine, especially in the Carpathian Mountains. The meal was ground, mixed with water until thick, then baked in a covered clay pot in the oven. Sometimes it was pressed in a loaf, cooled, then reheated as needed. A favorite accompaniment was farmer cheese or bryndzia. It was served with clabbered or sweet milk for breakfast.

Today, kulesha is an excellent break from the usual starches. Best for "old country" flavor is stone-ground cornmeal, which is delectable with roasted meats. It is also convenient since it may be cooked ahead of time and then reheated with no loss of flavor.

1 cup stone-ground cornmeal
1 quart water
1 tablespoon salt
1 teaspoon sugar
**3 tablespoons oil, butter, or
 bacon grease**

Mix cornmeal and water into a paste. Heat until boiling in a nonstick saucepan (be careful not to scorch). Add salt and sugar. Reduce heat to low and mix with wooden spoon. Cover and cook 30 minutes, mix again, and cook another 30 minutes. Stir and remove from heat, continuing to stir. Beat in bacon grease (for a little smoked flavor).

Serve as an accompaniment to meats, or store in refrigerator until needed. Reheat in an oiled skillet and steam, covered, until hot.

Tomato Salad (Salata z pomidoriv)

Tomatoes did not gain universal favor in the Ukraine until the early twentieth century. However, fresh tomatoes are now prized for salads.

6 large fresh tomatoes
1 large onion
½ cup sour cream
1 teaspoon sugar
salt
ground black pepper
1 teaspoon chopped fresh dill

Core tomatoes and slice into thin rounds. Slice onion into rounds. Mix sour cream, sugar, and a little salt and black pepper to taste.

Serve tomatoes and onions covered with dressing and sprinkled with dill.

Fried Twists (Verhuny)

These fried light and crisp dough twists are very popular and easy to make, especially with helpers. Children not only love to help, but are delighted to see the final shapes take form as they puff up. One person may form the strips, while the other one does the frying. Verhuny are best served the same day.

3 large egg yolks
2 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons sour cream
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 tablespoons dark rum or
bourbon
1½–2 cups flour
⅛ teaspoon baking powder
oil for frying
powdered sugar

Beat egg yolks with sugar until pale. Add cream, vanilla extract, and rum. Sift flour with baking powder. Add to yolks and form a soft dough. Allow to rest, covered, for 5 minutes. Knead until smooth for 25 to 30 minutes. Or, in processor, mix flour and baking powder. Add egg yolk mixture to form a ball. Allow to rest a few minutes. Knead until smooth. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill at least 4 hours or overnight.

Divide dough into quarters. On a floured surface, roll one quarter into a rectangle ⅛ inch thick. (Keep remaining dough covered.) With sharp knife or pastry cutter, cut 1½ inch strips, then cut these diagonally into 5 inch bars. Make a 2 inch slash down the center of each. Gently slip one end into the slit, making a twist (fig. 39). Place twists on a lightly floured towel and cover until ready to fry.

Heat oil to 375°. Fry 5 or 6 twists at a time until golden; do not crowd. Turn to cook both sides. Drain on paper towels and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

On serving platter, sprinkle again with powdered sugar. Serve with tea.

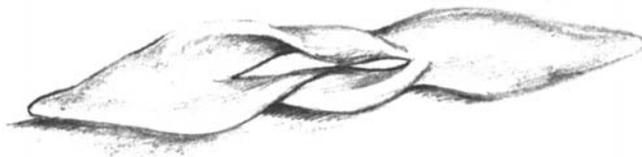


Fig. 39

Cranberry Liqueur (*Spotykach z zhuravlyny*)

The berry called for here is the cranberry or bogberry, which is very tart, colorful, and distinctive in taste. The recipe from which this has been adapted called for bruising the berries and marinating the vanilla beans, etc. The following simplified version produces similar results.

2 pounds cranberries (other edible wild berries may be used)
2 pounds sugar
3 cups water
6 cups grain alcohol
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
jars with sealing tops

Wash and sort berries (fruit must be free from rot). Crush in a french mill or processor; retain juice. Discard pips and skin. In a heavy pot, cook sugar and water into a thick syrup. Add juice and bring to boil, then remove from heat. Cool. Add alcohol and vanilla extract. Over very low heat, reheat mixture slowly, stirring constantly, until liquid starts to evaporate; do not allow it to come to a boil. Pour into clean glass bottles or jars, seal, and store in a dark cool place 3 to 4 weeks.

Serve chilled in liqueur glasses.

Cherry Whiskey (*Vyshniak*)

This flavorful recipe comes as no surprise from a country where most families had a cherry orchard. Many a visitor to the Ukraine commented about the beautiful cherry trees that bloomed around Kiev, in Poltava Province, and other areas. Making cherry liqueur was a special pride of each hospodar. This practice continues today. In other seasons, this whiskey's cherry bouquet brings back memories of summer.

2 pounds cherries
1 pound sugar
glass jar or crock
glass bottles or jars
vodka

Sort cherries; they should be free from rot. In a large crock, layer cherries with sugar in 2 to 1 proportions until crock is full. Add enough vodka to cover cherries, cover tightly with cheesecloth, and store in a cool dark place for 6 weeks. Pour juices into sterilized bottles, seal, and allow to stand another 6 weeks before using.

Winter Name Day Celebration (*Zymovi imeny*)

Winter, a time of rest for the earth as well as its workers, is especially compatible with hearty food and warm celebration. This menu includes dishes that are prized by Ukrainians for their special taste and elegant presentation. A winter name day dinner might include the following: canapes with bacon and ham (*chumats'ke maslo z khlibom*); eel in aspic (*kholodets' z vuhra*); beef broth with dropped dumplings (*rosil z halushkamy*); braised rabbit (*tushkovanyi zaiats'*); pumpkin and rice pudding (*babka harbuzova*); walnut mocha torte Lesia (*orikhovyi tort Lesia*); and lemon liqueur (*spotykach z tsytryny*).

Canapes with Bacon and Ham (*Chumats'ke maslo z khlibom*)

This spread recalls an old tradition, the carters who used to crisscross the steppes. Their food provisions were often meager and had to keep well under less than ideal conditions. Smoked bacon and rye bread were staples, and garlic was ubiquitous. It was well regarded for its flavor as well as its "powers," medicinal or magical. Chumats'ke maslo binds guests together by its sheer potency. It must be served to friends! This recipe is a version of that spread. Originally, the paste was ground in a mortar with a pestle. Now, a processor simplifies the preparation.

2 ounces diced bacon or baked ham fat
8 ounces diced lean dry smoke-cured bacon
2–4 cloves garlic
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper or to taste
thinly sliced rye or dark rye bread

Purée diced fat until smooth. Add bacon and garlic and process until shredded but not fine. Sprinkle with cayenne pepper. Taste; the flavor should be smoky, smooth, and have a little bite. Chill, tightly covered, at least overnight. (This paste keeps for several days.)

Spread on dark rye bread and serve with lemon *spotykach* (p. 176).

Eel in Aspic (*Kholodets' z vuhra*)

The flesh of eel, a highly prized fish, is sweet and buttery. Served in aspic, these qualities are highlighted. This dish makes an excellent first course or a main dish for supper. The arrangement of the aspic may be as elaborate as the skill and imagination of the cook.

3 pounds fresh eel, eviscerated
3 fish heads and trimmings
2 carrots
3 medium onions
1 bay leaf
4 peppercorns
2 tablespoons sugar
1 envelope gelatin
juice of 1 lemon
2–3 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon white pepper or to taste
parsley and lemon wedges for garnish

Rinse eel in running cold water. Make an incision at the base of the head, pry up the skin around the head with a sharp knife, grab loosened skin and, with a gentle but firm tug, skin the fish. (Just like turning a glove inside out.) Rub with 1 teaspoon salt and cut eel into 2 inch portions.

In a large kettle, cover skin, heads, trimmings, carrots, onions, bay leaf, peppercorns, and sugar with cold water and bring to a boil. Simmer over low heat for 30 minutes. Pour liquid into a pan; reserve carrots for garnish.

Poach eel in 2 cups broth until flesh is white and just cooked through. Remove with slotted spoon to a plate and cover. Combine liquids and strain through a fine sieve. If there is more than 3 cups, reduce by simmering. Heat 1 cup of liquid to boiling, dissolve gelatin, and add to broth. Season to taste (seasoning should be pronounced, since cold temperature masks flavors). Add lemon juice. Pour 1 inch gelatin mixture in a glass or enamel platter and chill. When set, arrange eel and cooked carrots and cover with remaining broth. Refrigerate overnight or until aspic is set.

Serve in portions garnished with lemon and parsley.

Beef Broth with Dropped Dumplings (*Rosil z halushkamy*)

The preparation time for this recipe is shortened and simplified by using a pressure cooker. The dumplings are light, delicate, and poach quickly.

- 2 pounds beef chuck
- 1 pound veal bones or chicken necks and backs
- 2 onions
- 2 carrots
- 2 turnips
- 2 ribs celery
- 1 bay leaf
- 6 peppercorns

- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/3 cup plus 1 teaspoon farina
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons chopped dill
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 small chicken liver (optional)
- 1 teaspoon Maggi seasoning or soy sauce

Broth

Brown beef and veal or chicken bones in a heavy kettle or pressure cooker. Peel and halve onions and brown with the meat (to add a rich brown color). Cut vegetables in half and add. Cover with cold water and add bay leaf and peppercorns. Cover, bring to boil, and simmer for several hours, or cook in pressure cooker until meat is soft. Pour off liquid into jars, cover, and cool. (Reserve meat for other use.) Skim off fat when chilled.

Dumplings

Separate egg and cream egg yolk with butter in a 2 cup bowl. Add all other ingredients except egg white and mix well. Beat egg white until bubbly and add. If mixture is too runny, add a teaspoon or more farina. Let stand a few minutes.

Bring 2 cups of broth to a light boil. With the long edge of a soup spoon dipped in cold water, pick up a little batter and drop into broth. Do not crowd; dumplings will rise to the surface and swell. As dumplings are cooked, remove with a slotted spoon to a large soup tureen.

To serve, pour hot broth into tureen and garnish with dill sprigs.

Braised Rabbit (*Tushkovanyi zaiats'*)

Rabbit, a favorite game, is easy to prepare; although exceedingly lean, its rich flavor provides a good change of pace. Dressed rabbits available in markets are excellent prepared in this manner.

4 pounds fresh rabbit, dressed
½ cup vinegar
bay leaf
4 peppercorns
2 tablespoons salt
oil or bacon fat
2 onions
1 cup sour cream
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup broth or stock
salt and ground black pepper to taste
½ teaspoon sweet paprika

Cut rabbit into serving pieces and place in a large glass or ceramic crock. Add vinegar, bay leaf, and peppercorns. Cover with cold water, mix, cover with a cloth and soak overnight.

Remove rabbit from marinade and dry with paper towel. Rub with salt and let stand 10 minutes. Heat enough bacon grease or oil to cover the bottom of a large skillet and brown meat on both sides. Add chopped onions, cover, and braise on top of stove or in oven for 30 minutes or until meat is cooked through. Remove to a platter and keep warm.

Mix flour, sour cream, and broth and add to skillet. Bring to boil and simmer until thick. Taste, add a little salt, pepper, and paprika.

Pour sauce over rabbit pieces and serve.

Pumpkin and Rice Pudding (*Babka harbuzova*)

This dish, which uses a pumpkin as a casing for a rice, pumpkin, and raisin mixture, is a wonderful accompaniment to game or roast meats. It looks festive and highlights the sideboard or table. It is most appropriate for a winter pick-me-up menu.

- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup long grain rice
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups pumpkin puree
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 well-formed pumpkin with 2 inch stem
- 1 cup chopped blanched almonds
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract

In nonstick saucepan, heat milk, add rice and salt, and mix lightly. Bring to boil, reduce heat, cover, and cook 15 minutes. Rice should be a little undercooked and fluffy. Heat butter in a large skillet, mix in pumpkin puree, and add sugar. Plump raisins in hot water, then drain. Mix raisins, chopped almonds, and almond extract with cooked rice.

Cut top of pumpkin to make a lid, remove seeds and membrane, and butter the inside. Fill with half of the rice mixture, then add a layer of pumpkin puree, and finish off with rice. Dot with butter. Bake in a greased heavy baking platter at 325° for about 1 hour, until warmed through.

To serve, spoon out filling.

Walnut Mocha Torte Lesia (*Orikhovyi tort Lesia*)

This torte, a delicious blend of flavors, should be made several days before serving. Because this recipe requires three separate operations, it is best prepared over three days. On the first day, the walnut layers are made. On the second, the filling is prepared and the torte assembled. On the third, it is iced and decorated.

6 large eggs
½ cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup ground fresh walnuts
¼ cup dry fine bread crumbs
1 teaspoon baking powder
zest of 1 lemon

Torte layers

Butter a 10 inch springform pan and sprinkle with bread crumbs. Separate eggs and beat yolks until foamy and light. Gradually add sugar until yolks are thick and pale yellow. Add vanilla. Mix ground walnuts, bread crumbs, baking powder, and lemon zest. Fold dry ingredients into yolk mixture.

Beat egg whites until stiff and fold a little into nuts, to loosen the mix. Then fold in remaining whites, being careful not to deflate them. Pour into pan and smooth top with spatula. Rap the pan lightly to release trapped air.

Bake in the middle of a preheated 350° oven 45 minutes without opening the door. Test with a toothpick inserted in the middle; remove torte when toothpick comes out clean. Cool on rack 5 minutes. Run a sharp knife around edge and remove gently from pan. When torte is cool to the touch, run a knife around the bottom and place on wax paper. Store in refrigerator well wrapped in plastic.

- 1 can evaporated milk (12 ounces)
- 1 package vanilla pudding (4¾ ounces; not instant)
- 2 egg yolks
- ½ cup cold strong coffee
- 2 tablespoons instant coffee
- 4 ounces unsalted butter
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- ½ cup sherry

Mocha custard filling

In a large saucepan, slowly add evaporated milk (reserving 2 tablespoons) to pudding, stirring constantly. Cook over medium heat. Beat egg yolks with 2 tablespoons of milk until frothy and add. Bring to a boil, stirring. Boil lightly 5 minutes, until very thick. Heat coffee, mix in instant coffee, and add to pudding, stirring well. Set aside, cover with plastic wrap, and cool.

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Scrape sides and add several tablespoons of pudding. Mix well, then add the rest of the pudding in two parts, beating after each addition. Cake and filling may be stored for several days before assembly. Bring filling to room temperature before spreading on the torte layers.

To assemble: place torte on doubled wax paper on large cutting board. Mark with toothpicks a third the way down from the top, then two-thirds down. With a sharp knife, make two horizontal cuts around the torte. Gently pull a long stout thread through torte at each cut, making three layers. Place on wire racks.

Lightly sprinkle bottom layer with sherry and spread with half of the filling (about ½ inch), pulling to the edge. Cover with second layer, sprinkle with sherry, and cover with ½ inch of filling. Cover with top layer and sprinkle with sherry. Press down firmly. If any filling is left over, spread on top and smooth out sides. Cover with aluminum foil and chill until solid.

**4 ounces unsweetened
chocolate**
4 ounces semisweet chocolate
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 cup powdered sugar
**¼ cup evaporated milk or
cream**

Chocolate icing

Melt chocolate in double boiler and stir in butter and sugar. Beat with wooden spoon until smooth. Add a little milk, beat again, and, keeping mixture over heat, slowly add remaining milk. It should be thick and glossy.

Using a long spatula, cover sides, pulling from the bottom up. Cover top, beginning from the center and moving to edges. Remove ridges with a spatula dipped in hot water. Refrigerate, uncovered, until icing sets. Decorate with walnuts or leave plain.

To serve: gently lift torte by wax paper sheets, partially remove paper, slip hand under, then pull off remaining paper. Carefully place on a cake platter. Cut around the edge of a wineglass down into the center of the torte, then cut wedges. Remove the first one carefully; others will be easier. (See fig. 21, p. 34.)

Lemon Liqueur (*Spotykach z tsytryny*)

Lemons, highly prized by Ukrainian cooks, are used in many forms. This was considered a lavish recipe since it uses a lot of lemons.

10 lemons
10 coriander seeds
10 whole cloves
6 cups grain alcohol
2½ pounds sugar
6 cups water

Slice lemons and place in a gallon jar. Add crushed coriander and cloves. Pour alcohol over lemons. Cover with a clean cloth and let stand in a cool place for 1 week. Line a large funnel with a wet cheesecloth and strain liquid. In a large pot, cook sugar and water over light heat until syrupy. Add the lemon-alcohol infusion. Pour into bottles or jars, cover tightly, and refrigerate.

Serve in liqueur glasses or over ice.

Gathering Wild Mushrooms (Hryby)

According to many Ukrainians, the best part about fall is that it is *the* mushroom season. Of course, it is wild mushrooms that are under discussion here. These varied and delectable fungi are truly gifts of the gods.¹ For many Ukrainians, it is a toss-up whether hunting the wild mushroom or eating it is more pleasurable. Mushroom gathering is an occasion when the generation gap is greatly reduced. Often grandparents or great-uncles serve as excellent teachers and guides.

Martin Cruz Smith describes this “hunting” mentality in *Gorky Park*:

Rain magically brought from dry ground new grass, flowers, and almost overnight, mushrooms. Many of the trees were great oaks over a hundred years old and arching high over a mossy floor. A mushroom hunt always focuses the eyes on the twist of a leaf, the discolored bark of a tree, freshets of wild flowers, the industry of beetles. Mushrooms themselves took on the aspect of animals; camouflaged, still as rabbits, they waited for the hunter to pass. They popped into view and then seemed to vanish. They were best seen at the corner of the eye, a homely brown one here, among the leaves a stationary herd of orange mushrooms, another with the ruffled gill of a small dinosaur, yet another trying to hide a scarlet head. They were called not so much by name as whether they were best pickled, salted, dried over a stove, fried, eaten plain, with bread, sour cream, washed down with vodka—but what kind of vodka? clear anise-flavored, caraway, cherry pit? A man hunting mushrooms had a whole year ahead to think of.²

This hunting stance, applied to mushrooms as if to game, is reinforced by the Ukrainian phrase that one “moves on” mushrooms (“*Idu na hryby!*”). Just so in the ninth century did Prince Sviatoslav of Kiev warn his enemies before engaging them in

battle: “*Idu na vy!*” or roughly, “I am moving in on you!” The same warning would be applied to mushrooms.

Numerous Ukrainian folksongs portray a mushroom hunt as an opportunity for flirting or secret assignations between girls and boys. Folksongs also mock the braggadocio with which Ukrainians pick and care for their mushroom hoard.³ (Ukrainian mushroom mania is well documented by current Canadian jokes.)

Fortunately, in North America and elsewhere, this lovely, relaxing pastime may be enjoyed with a minimum of cost, albeit a maximum of caution. One must be armed with a mushroom encyclopedia containing colored illustrations for on-the-spot reference.⁴ Before setting out on a foraging trip, read the book. The recommended strategy is to concentrate on the most worthwhile, desirable, edible species, such as boletuses, chanterelles, and clitocybes, depending on their availability.

Since mushrooms vary from one region to another, consult the local mycological society to determine the species prevalent in the area and the best spots to hunt for them. Some serious fungi cognoscenti do not wish to share the specific locations of their sources of mushrooms. Yet few are reluctant to introduce a novice to the pleasures of the hunt.

Early September is a good time for a trip to the woods, preferably after a heavy rainfall. Optimum picking weather is a relatively dry day following a rain. Mushrooms are very perishable and dampness speeds their decay. Gathering equipment is a small paring knife and a large, flat-bottomed basket.

It is best to be indoctrinated in this pastime by a connoisseur mushroom gatherer (not necessarily a mushroom eater). Those on their own should be very cautious about eating wild mushrooms, since some species are highly poisonous. If you are not sure of the species of any fungus, it is prudent to discard them. However, if you can distinguish between a maple leaf and an oak leaf, you can learn the difference between a chanterelle and a boletus.

Ukrainians maintain a hierarchy of edible fungi. The king of the mountain, so to speak, the most desirable one, is the boletus, of two varieties. The *Boletus edulis* (*pravdyvyi hryb* or *bilyi hryb*), is prized for its aroma, texture, and versatility.⁵ The *Boletus luteus* (*masliuk*), or slippery jack, has a viscous coating and a firm texture akin to that of raw oysters. This one is most often prepared in a marinade of vinegar and onions. *Lactarius deliciosus* (*ryzhky*), or milky caps, are used in sauced dishes as well as pickled dishes. The saffron milk cap is eaten raw or grilled. Chanterelles (*Cantharellus cibarus*,

lyzychky) are enjoyed for their crunchy texture and beautiful orange color.⁶ The field mushroom, *Agaricus campestris* (*pecherytsia*), is loved for its firm texture, lovely color, and mild almond scent. It is excellent in salads or sauteed with eggs or potatoes.

Wild mushrooms are abundant for only a short period. Old ones, which may be infested with parasites, are useless and dangerous to consume.⁷ Because mushrooms are very perishable, various methods have been developed to preserve them for later use. These include the following: drying; salting and layering in crocks; cooking and layering in fat (melted butter, pork fat, or oil); pickling in vinegar; blanching and freezing; and sauteeing and freezing.

The species often determines the best method of preservation. For example, delicate and soft mushrooms will not dry well. Those that are very mild or innocuous in taste, such as some russulas (*holubinky*), are not worth preserving. Most of the more textured and substantial species are excellent dried and reconstitute well. They keep for up to three years when sealed and retain their aroma. Salting and layering as well as preserving mushrooms in fats has become obsolete.

Pickling in vinegar and oils is still a predominant method of preserving some species such as the *Armillaria mellea* (*pidpen'ky*) and *Sullius granulatis* (*masliuk*).

Drying best preserves the aroma of *Boletus edulis* (*pravdyvyi hryb*), morels (*smorzhi*), and chanterelles (*lyzychky*). The following method is useful for preserving a large crop. Wipe each mushroom with a damp cloth and trim and cut off stems. Large specimens may be cut in pieces. String caps and stems like beads on a stout cord, leaving breathing space. Dry them against a screen in the sun until the water evaporates, turning them every so often. Bring them inside before sunset to protect them from dampness. This process takes three to four sunny days, depending on the temperature.

Mushrooms may also be dried in a dehydrator or a very slow oven (120° to 130°). (A higher temperature will only shrivel the mushroom, releasing the water too quickly and most of the aromatics.) They should be turned once in a while. When they are completely dry, store them in a tightly closed tin or a heavy plastic bag.

Freezing is another very reliable method of preserving cleaned, blanched fungi. Mushrooms should be prepared as described for pickling (see p. 185), stored in heavy plastic freezer bags with the air removed, and frozen. Some mushrooms may be cooked in butter and then frozen, to be thawed and reheated as needed.

Appendix 1 lists those species that are excellent for a variety of culinary preparations.

Field Mushrooms with *Bryndzia* (*Pecherytsi z bryndzeiu*)

Bryndzia, a white cheese made from rennet of ewe's milk, is common in the Hutzul region of the Carpathian Mountains. It is sharp and salty in taste, dry in texture, and has a fat content of 40 percent.⁸ Feta cheese, originally also made from ewe's milk, is a reasonably good substitute. If field mushrooms are not available, cultivated mushrooms are acceptable. This recipe melds the very defined taste of the cheese with the mild mushroom taste. Both earthy flavors complement each other.

12 large field mushrooms
(2 inches across)
2 tablespoons butter
1 large stale white roll
½ cup milk
1 clove garlic
2 tablespoons chopped dill
½ teaspoon ground black
pepper
½ cup dry farmer cheese
½ cup *bryndzia*
1 egg
1 tablespoon oil
12 short strips of bacon

Wipe mushrooms with a damp towel, gently pop off stems, and trim ends. Grate the crust off the dry roll and soak in hot milk until soft. Squeeze out milk and place ½ cup pulp in a bowl. Sauté finely chopped stems in butter until wilted and add to pulp. Add finely chopped garlic, dill, and pepper. (Because of the cheese, salt is not needed.) Mix cheeses together, breaking up clumps, and add. (For a stronger flavor, use 1 cup *bryndzia* only.) Pour lightly beaten egg over mixture and mix well with a wooden spoon. Stuff each cap with a spoonful of cheese mixture and arrange in one layer in a buttered or oiled ovenproof dish. Top with slices of half-fried bacon. (Mushrooms may be refrigerated and baked later.) Bake at 375° for 20 minutes or until cheese is bubbly.

Serve with toasted triangles of *kulesha* (cornmeal mush, p. 166) as a first course. Excellent for buffet service as an appetizer.

Mushroom Baba (*Hrybova baba*)

This baba, or rounded mold, is excellent as a first course, a cold buffet dish, or luncheon. It is light in taste as well as calories.

**2 pounds field mushrooms or
cultivated mushrooms**
4 ounces butter
2 cloves garlic
¼ cup spiced whiskey or sherry
**1 teaspoon Maggi seasoning or
soy sauce**
**1 teaspoon Worcestershire
sauce**
½ cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons salt
**1 teaspoon fresh ground black
pepper**
juice of 1 lemon
3 egg yolks
**oil and spiced whiskey for
sautéing mushrooms for
garnish**

Wipe mushrooms with a damp towel, trim tips of stems, and slice (saving 4 or 5 well-shaped mushrooms for garnish). Heat butter in a heavy dutch oven, and add finely chopped garlic, spiced whiskey or sherry, sliced mushrooms, Maggi seasoning, and Worcestershire sauce. Cook until mushrooms wilt. Add cream and stir over heat 5 minutes more. Season with salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Mix well.

Place ¾ of the mixture in a processor and chop fine but not soupy. Combine with the remaining mushrooms and reheat slowly. Add lightly beaten egg yolks. Stir, remove from heat, and allow to cool. Sauté whole mushrooms in 1 tablespoon oil with 1 tablespoon spiced whiskey (see following recipe) over high heat until dry, and set aside. Pack the mixture in a 1 quart glass or stainless steel bowl, rapping it once in a while to expel trapped air. Smooth the top, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate overnight. Wash, dry, and chill lettuce leaves.

To serve, unmold on a large platter and garnish with lettuce and sautéed mushrooms. Serve with toasted bread or crackers.

Spiced Whiskey (*Peperivka*)

Spicing whiskey with peppers is a longstanding tradition in the Ukraine. Some claim that spices masked the poor quality of the brew. It may also be that the peppers added a fierce bite to the alcoholic drink, making it even more pungent. This modern adaptation of peperivka is an excellent flavoring for broths, pates, and gravies. A little goes a long way.

**8–10 large dry hot (cayenne)
pepper pods**

**2 cups bourbon or medium dry
sherry**

Place peppers in a clean, dry 1 quart crock, add whiskey or sherry, cork, and let steep for about 1 week.

Peppers may be used for flavoring whiskey more than once.

Baked Chanterelles (*Zapikani lysycky*)

Chanterelles are most sought-after by serious gourmets as well as ordinary mushroom lovers. Although they may be purchased in stores, those packaged in plastic are bereft of their fresh, woodsy qualities. The freshly picked wild fungus is best.

1 pound chanterelles

juice of 1 lemon

1 small onion

8 ounces butter

1 teaspoon salt

**½ teaspoon fresh ground black
pepper**

2 tablespoons flour

2 cups heavy cream

3 egg yolks

**1 teaspoon spiced whiskey (see
previous recipe)**

1 cup coarse bread crumbs

Wipe mushrooms with a damp towel, removing bruised parts. Trim ends of stems. Blanch in boiling water, remove, and cool. Slice lengthwise and sprinkle with lemon juice. Melt 4 ounces of butter, add finely chopped onion, salt, and pepper. Cook mushrooms in mixture, stirring, for about 5 minutes. Add flour and stir until flour thickens.

Butter an ovenproof dish, dust with bread crumbs, and pour in mixture. Combine cream, egg yolks, whiskey, and pour over mushrooms. Sauté bread crumbs in 4 ounces of butter until golden and sprinkle over the top. Bake at 375° for 20 minutes or until golden.

Serve with boiled potatoes for a light supper, or on toast for a luncheon.

Morels in Spring Sauce (*Smorzhi z vesnianoiu pidlyvoiu*)

If one is lucky enough to find a full basket of these splendid mushrooms, one should serve them to very special company. Among Ukrainians, it is a privilege to receive an impromptu invitation to share just such a feast. This light sauce complements the flavor of the fungus without overwhelming it.

2 pounds morels
1 large onion
3 peppercorns
½ cup mushroom liquid or
chicken stock
2 tablespoons flour
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
2 tablespoons chopped dill
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon fresh ground white
pepper
½ cup sour cream
1 egg yolk

Cover with water in a large saucepan, add chopped onion and peppercorns, and cook, covered, until morels are soft. Mix stock with flour until smooth. Add to morels, mixing well. Reduce heat to simmer. Add parsley, dill, salt, and pepper to taste. Beat egg yolk with sour cream and add to morels. Heat gently (but do not boil), until lightly thickened.

Serve with potato dumplings.

Morel Pudding (*Babka z smorzliv*)

This dish is akin to a soufflé. Since it is steamed, it does not form a crust.

6 cups sliced morels
2 tablespoons butter or chicken fat
1 medium onion
1 stale hard roll
½ cup milk
4 large eggs
1–2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper

Butter a 6 cup soufflé dish or other deep ovenproof dish and dust with bread crumbs. Wipe morels with a damp towel, cut off stems and bruised parts, and slice vertically. Cook in a little water until soft, cool, and drain.

Sauté finely chopped onion in butter until soft and lightly colored. Grate the crust from the roll and soak it in warm milk. Squeeze out milk and combine with onions in a large bowl. Separate eggs and add yolks, salt, and pepper to bread and onions, mixing well. Add morels. (The pudding may be refrigerated for several hours or overnight to be cooked later. Warm to room temperature before adding egg whites.)

Whip egg whites until stiff. Stir in 2 tablespoons with the mushroom mixture, then fold in the rest. Pour mixture into prepared soufflé dish. Cover with foil, sealing edges tightly. Place in a pan containing about 2 inches of water and bake in a preheated 350° oven for 45 minutes or until set.

Serve warm, with a green salad for supper or lunch.

Pickled Mushrooms (*Marynovani hryby*)

The best mushrooms to pickle are the most plentiful. Good species for pickling are: *Armillaria mellea* (pidpen'ky, or honey fungus); *Boletus luteus* or *Boletus granulatus* (masliuky, or slippery jack); *Lactarius deliciosus* (ryzhky, or milky cap); the young *Agaricus campestri* and *Agaricus avensis* (pecherytsi, or field mushroom). Cultivated mushrooms are excellent for pickling also.

General instructions are as follows: scald quart jars and lids with boiling water. Sort mushrooms by species and size, discarding all but fresh, firm-textured ones. (Most prized are small caps.) However, maturity is not determined by size; some very young specimens may be large. Slice mushrooms larger than 2 inches in half. Cut off stems and discolored areas. (Because they are sticky, masliuky or slippery jack should be rinsed again in cold water to remove debris. Wear rubber gloves, as masliuky color the skin ochre yellow.) Parboil mushrooms in batches in a large pot of boiling water for 5 minutes and drain in colander. Mushrooms are now ready to be cooked in a marinade.

It is best to use a strong marinade (marynada), as mushrooms absorb some water when parboiled or blanched. Refrigerated, these last for months. After a week or so, pidpn'ky and masliuky will thicken the marinade. Novices may be dismayed by this viscosity, but connoisseurs cherish it. Pearl onions and small 1 inch mushroom caps packed in small jars make elegant gifts.

4–5 cups mushrooms
2–3 cups white vinegar
2 teaspoons coarse salt
½ cup sugar
5 peppercorns
10 cloves
2 bay leaves
1 cup sliced raw onions or
small pearl onions (optional)

Scald jars and lids. Parboil mushrooms in batches in large pot. Drain. Combine vinegar, salt, sugar, peppercorns, and bay leaves in a stainless steel or enamel (not aluminum) saucepan. Cook, covered, for 5 minutes until sugar and salt dissolve. Taste; if flavor is too acid, add a little water. Pack mushrooms lightly in prepared jars, interspersing onions as desired. (Onions add a mellow flavor to the marinade.) Pour hot marinade over mushrooms, releasing trapped air with a spoon. Seal and store upside down until cool.

Serve as a relish with roasts or cold meats or as a salad garnish.

Cutlets from Sheepshead (or Cauliflower) Mushroom (*Sichenyky z baraniachykh rizhkiv*)

Sheepshead fungus, which resembles a head of cauliflower, may grow very large. This fungus is a challenge to the cook because it possesses little flavor of its own. It has a crunchy texture, light color, and takes on whatever flavors with which it is mixed. Thus, it was used as a "stretcher" for meat stews and soups.

2 cups chopped sheepshead mushroom
2 tablespoons oil
1 large onion
2 large dry hard rolls
½ cup warm milk
1 teaspoon Maggi seasoning
2 eggs
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
dash of ground nutmeg
1 cup dry bread crumbs

Parboil mushrooms for 5 minutes. Cook mushrooms and onions until onion is clear. Grate crust off dry rolls, discard crust, and soak roll in milk until soft. Squeeze dry. Add beaten eggs and mix well. Mix in mushrooms, parsley, salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Roll large spoonfuls of the mixture in bread crumbs and pat into cakes. With a dull edge of a knife, form into diamond shapes and gently crisscross the surface. Dry on rack. In a large skillet, heat 1 inch of oil to hot, but not smoking. Brown the cutlets for several minutes until golden, then turn to fry other side. Set in 350° oven about 15 minutes.

Serve with a garnish of lemon slices. Some modern cooks serve cutlets with a fresh tomato sauce and sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese.

Saffron Milky Cap Fritters (*Ryzhky-khriashchi v tisti*)

Lactarius deliciosus and *Lactarius sagufluus* are highly prized fungi on all mushrooms eaters' lists. These fungi are prevalent in coniferous woods in mountainous regions. When one is lucky enough to gather some for a snack or an appetizer, it is indeed an occasion for a special mushroom party. Cultivated mushrooms may be substituted for milky caps, though the taste will not be the same. The batter may also be used to cover vegetables and fruit; use more sugar for fruit, and beer instead of milk for vegetables.

Mushrooms and sauce

**fresh red or greenish spotted
saffron milky cap mushrooms
(or cultivated mushrooms)**
1 cup horseradish
1 cup sour cream

Wipe mushrooms with a damp towel, and cut large ones in half lengthwise. Parboil milky caps for 5 minutes in lightly salted water, drain, and dry on paper towels. Mix horseradish and sour cream.

Batter for fritters

1 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar (or to taste)
1 egg
⅓ cup milk or beer
1 teaspoon oil

Sift flour with baking powder, salt, and sugar. Mix liquids and beat into flour until smooth. Allow to stand for about 1 hour. Chill before using, overnight if possible. Dip mushrooms individually in batter, coating well. Drop into about 2 inches of hot fat and cook until golden. Drain on paper towels.

Place on a platter, sprinkle with salt, and garnish with lemon wedges. Serve with horseradish-sour cream sauce sprinkled with a little paprika for color.

Puffball Fritters (*Smazheni doshchyvyky*)

In the late summer and fall, puffballs are very numerous in larch woods and even in city parks. Pick only young white specimens of Lycoperdon perlatum. The little ones make elegant appetizers.

1 pound puffballs
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground white pepper
2 eggs
½ cup flour
1–2 cups fine dry bread crumbs
2 tablespoons milk

Discard any mushrooms that are not white through the center. Cut off stems and cut larger ones in half or quarters. Sprinkle with lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Beat eggs with milk in a shallow bowl. Dip mushrooms in flour, then in egg, then in crumbs until well coated. Dry on racks for 20 to 30 minutes. (This crust prevents oil from soaking into the coating.)

In a large skillet, heat 3 inches of oil to hot, but not smoking. Drop in mushrooms, but do not crowd. Fry until golden, remove, and drain on paper towels. Keep warm in oven.

Serve garnished with parsley, lemon wedges, and with a dish of horseradish sauce.

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Appendix 1

Habitat and Culinary Use of Edible Wild Mushrooms

Agaricus arvensis, horse mushroom (*pecherytsia pol'ova*)

found in sunny meadows in early fall; may be grilled, sautéed, stuffed, baked, or served raw in salads

Agaricus campestris, field mushroom (*pecheryts'ia zvychaina*)

found in sunny meadows in late summer and early fall; may be prepared as above

Agaricus silvaticus, field mushroom (*pecheryts'ia lisova*)

found in woodlands in fall; may be served raw or grilled, fried with eggs, and in sauces

Armillaria mellea, honey fungus, oak mushroom (*open'ky or pidpen'ky*)

found in woods, at the foot of stumps, in early fall; may be marinated, dried, blanched, or cooked in soups, etc.

Boletus badius (*Suillus*), chestnut bolete (*hryb pishchanyk*)

found in pine woods in fall; may be dried, stewed in soups, or ground for seasoning

Boletus edulis, cep, king bolete (*hryb pravdyvyi, hryb bilyi, borovyk*)

found near oaks, singly or in twos, in early fall; have an excellent, pungent flavor; may be dried, used in soups, sauces, or fillings

Boletus elegans (*masliuk modrynovyi*)

found in larch woods and in large colonies on grassy knolls; may be parboiled, then pickled, sautéed, or frozen

Boletus granulatus (*Suillus*), dotted-stalk suillus (*masliuk zernystyi*)

found in pine and larch woods and in large colonies on grassy knolls; prepared same as *boletus elegans*

Boletus luteus, slippery jack (*masliuk zvychainyi*)

same as *boletus granulatus*

Boletus rufus, aurantiacus (*chrevonoholovets'*)

found under hemlocks, pines, alders, in late summer and early fall; may be dried or cooked in soups; young fungi are best; mature specimens may be firm, with tough stems

Cantharellus cibarius, golden chanterelle (*lysyhka*)

found in deciduous (beech and oak) and coniferous woods in fall; are very prized; need long, slow cooking; may be dried, ground, and used as seasoning

Clitocybe flaccida, red and brown funnel fungus (*pidpen'ka*)

found in rings and clusters in coniferous woods, in fall; caps are prized; may be fried, pickled, or stewed with meat or soup

Lactarius deliciosus, saffron milky cap (*khriashch molochnyi smachnyi*)

gregarious, found under conifers in early fall; best cooked slowly, not eaten raw; may be grilled over coals

Lactarius resimus, milky cap (*khriashch molochnyi spravzhnyi*)

found in beech woods and other light forests; must be eaten cooked; may be scalloped or stewed

Lactarius sanguifluus, milky cap (*ryzhky chervoni*)

found in fir woods and mountain regions; highly prized; may be grilled or stewed

Lepista gilva, golden funnel (*lepista zolota*)

found in clusters in grasslands and pine woods in early fall; have excellent flavor; may be fried, stewed with meats and vegetables

Lepista inversa (*lepista zvorotna*)

same as *lepista gilva*

Lycoperdon perlatum, puffball, devil's tobacco pouch, poor man's sweetbread (*doshchovyk smachnyi*)

found in larch woods near pine stumps; may be fried and used in sauces

Morchella esculenta, morel, sponge (*zmorshchyk [smorzh] iistyvny*)

found in pastures, apple orchards, and other rich soil in spring; may be dried for use as seasoning with poultry; do not use cooking water from morels

Russula decolorans (*holubinka*, *syroizhka*, *vytsvitaiucha*)

found in deciduous woods in fall; have delicate flavor; may be sautéed in butter with eggs or served raw in salad

Russula vesca, bare-toothed russula (*syroizhka istyvna*)

same as *russula decolorans*

Russula virens (*syroizhka luskata*, *tovstiukha*)

same as *russula decolorans*; very prized among Ukrainians

Sparassis crispa, *Clavaria crispa*, *Helwella ramosa*, cauliflower mushroom, sponge fungus, sheephead (*hryb baran*, *baraniachi rzhky*)

found in open woods near pine stumps in fall; serves as meat substitute in stews; use only young specimens

Appendix 2

Calendar of Name Days

This is a partial listing, adapted from *The Almanac of the Ukrainian National Association For The Year 1988*, of the most popular saints in the Ukrainian churches and the days on which they are honored. The list is arranged alphabetically, not chronologically, to encourage the celebration of individual name days. Some names are celebrated on more than one day because sometimes different saints of different places bore the same name. Ukrainian popular names are given in parentheses. For names not listed here, consult other Christian calendar listings.

Most national calendars include "floating" days for celebrating a culture's most favored and prominent saint. Dates are given here in Old Style (Julian calendar). To calculate New Style (Gregorian calendar), subtract thirteen days.

Adrian	September 8	Cyril	February 26
Alex (Oleksa)	March 30	Damian	November 14
Alexander	September 12	Daniel (Danylo)	December 24, 30
Anastasia (Nastia)	January 4	Daria	April 1
Andrew of Crete	July 17	David	July 9
Andrew the Apostle	December 13	Demetrios (Dmytro)	November 8
Anne	February 16, August 7, September 12	Eugene (Evhen)	December 26
Anthony	July 23	Gabriel (Havrylo)	July 13
Aretha (Areta)	November 6	George (Iuri)	May 6
Barbara (Varvara)	December 17	Gregory (Hryhoryi)	February 7
Basil (Vasil')	January 30, April 4	Helen (Olena)	June 3
Bohdan	July 30	Illarion	November 3
Boris	August 6	Irene	May 18
Catherine		Ireneus	July 11
(Kateryna)	December 7	Isidore	February 17
Charity (Kharytia)	September 30	Jacob	December 10
Christina	February 6, August 6	Jeremy	June 13
Constantine	June 3	John (Ivan)	May 21
		John The Apostle	October 9
		John the Baptist	July 7
		John the Golden	
		Tongue	November 26

Josaphat	November 25	Nestor	November 9
Joseph	January 8	Nicholas (Mykola)	December 19
Julia	July 28	Oleksa	March 30
Julian	July 4	Ol'ha	July 24
Justin	June 14	Orest	December 26
Ksenia (Oksana)	February 6	Paul of Thebes	January 28
Larissa	April 8	Paul the Apostle	July 12
Lawrence	August 23	Peter (Petro)	July 12
Leo	March 3	Philip	October 24
Luba, Lubov	September 30	Roman	December 1
Luke (Luka)	October 24	Sebastian	December 31
Magdalene	August 4	Simon	February 16, September 14
Maksim	February 3	Sophia	September 30
Marina	July 30	Stephan	January 9
Mark (Marko)	May 8	Sylvester	January 15
Markian	November 7	Taras	March 10
Marta	July 17	Tetiana	January 25
Martin	April 27	Theodore	March 2
Mary (Maria)	April 7, April 14, August 28	Theodosia	March 16
Matthew	August 22	Thomas	July 20, October 19
Melania	January 13	Timothy	February 4
Methodius (Metodii)	April 19	Vasil'	January 14
Michael (Mykhailo)	November 21	Vera	September 30
Myron	August 30	Victor	November 24
Nadia	September 30	Volodymyr	July 28
Neonilia	November 10	Zenon	September 16

Notes

See bibliography for full reference information.

Introduction

1. See Smith and Christian, *Bread and Salt*, p. 99, for further discussion of *kutia*.
2. Cipola, *Before the Industrial Revolution*, pp. 30–33.
3. *Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia* 1:319.
4. Tsvek, *Do sviatkovoho stolu*, p. 199.
5. The Julian calendar introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. is referred to as Old Style (O.S.). It is still adhered to by the Eastern church. The calendar was reformed under Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, and today the New Style (N.S.), or Gregorian, calendar is in use throughout most of the world. Most often, there is a thirteen-day difference between them; the Gregorian marks a feast thirteen days in advance of the Julian.
6. Pasternak, *Arkheologia Ukrainy*.
7. See Barer-Stein, *You Eat What You Are*, pp. 524–32.
8. In most Ukrainian cookbooks the number of dishes made of flour or kasha far outnumber those for meats. Combinations of flour and vegetables or flour and a little meat were the rule. Grains (such as buckwheat kasha) were flavored with bacon or cooked meat.
9. Hontar, *Narodne kharchuvania*, p. 28.
10. *Materialy do ukrainskoi etnografichnoi entsyklopedii* 2:89.
11. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 1:90.
12. Khymenko, *Ukrainian Dishes*, p. 9.
13. Smith and Christian, *Bread and Salt*, p. 252.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 224.

Chapter 1. Christmas Eve

1. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 1:63–76.
2. *Ibid.*, 1:136.
3. In many families, each member has his own *kolach*, one gracing the dinnertable as a centerpiece. The children pick theirs before they are baked, eliminating competition afterwards.
4. Markevych describes many versions of borsch, including the clear broth version, in *Obychai, poveria, kukhnia i napytky malorosian*.
5. In some regions of western Ukraine these were called *pyrohy*, a term that usually means baked, not boiled, pastries (Chaplenko, *Ukrainian Culinary Glossary*, p. 71).
6. Wheat kernels may be found in nutrition stores and ethnic markets.

Chapter 2. Christmas

1. This is a late nineteenth-century adaptation, probably Austrian in origin, but by now very popular in western Ukraine.

Chapter 3. Easter

1. See Smith and Christian, *Bread and Salt*, pp. 96–99.
2. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 1:201.
3. *Ibid.*, 1:204.
4. *Ibid.*, 1:208.
5. *Ibid.*, 1:356–57.
6. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 3:46.
7. *Ibid.*, 3:59.
8. Savych, *Nashi stravy*, p. 57.
9. “In the opinion of scholars, the Trypilians were the oldest ethnic base from which the Ukrainian people grew. . . . The beginnings of the Trypilian culture go back to the middle of the fourth millennium (Kyrilivsky Vysoty in Kiev) and prevailed for 2,000 years, encompassing the Eneolithic, Bronze, and Hallstatt Iron ages and manifesting many local variations” (*Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia* 1:535).
10. See Pasternak, *Arkheologia Ukrainy*.
11. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 3:60.
12. *Pysanky* are a highly developed Ukrainian art form. See Luciow, *Eggs Beautiful*; Robert P. Jordan, “Easter Greetings from the Ukrainians,” *National Geographic* 14 (April 1972), 556ff.
13. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 1:370.
14. *Ibid.*, 1:370–73.
15. *Ibid.*, 1:401–02.
16. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 3:83–87.
17. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 1:408.
18. See Savych, *Nashi stravy*.
19. Barer-Stein, *You Eat What You Are*, p. 527.
20. This recipe comes from Maria Bulawka of Baltimore, Maryland, an excellent Ukrainian homemaker and friend.
21. Tannahill, *Food in History*, p. 281.

Chapter 4. First Sunday After Easter

1. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 3:225–27.
2. Ivan Kotliarevsky's comic epic poem *Eneida*, appearing in parts between 1798 and 1842, describes many such feasts at great length.
3. This listing of foods may be found in Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 3:229.
4. Chaplenko, *Ukrainian Culinary Glossary*, p. 46.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

Chapter 5. Feast of Saint George

1. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 2:80–82.
2. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 3:328, 334.

Chapter 6. Pentecost

1. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 4:21–32, presents a complete listing of favorite flowers and herbs, their symbolism and use.
2. *Ibid.*, 4:26, author's translation.
3. *Ibid.*, 4:21, 26.
4. Recorded by O. M. Franko, *Persha ukrains'ka*, p. 99.
5. A turkey roast was listed in Kotliarevs'ky's *Eneida*, perhaps prepared as recorded by Markevych, *Obychai* (1860), where this recipe appears. See Note on Sources.
6. Old-country Ukrainians, like the Chinese, loved the taste and texture of the gelatinous feet of ducks, chicken, and pigs, somewhat foreign to modern tastes.

Chapter 7. Feast of Saints Peter and Paul

1. Hontar, *Narodne kharchuvania*, p. 104.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 2:213.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Chaplenko, *Ukrainian Culinary Glossary*, p. 59.

Chapter 8. Feast of the Transfiguration

1. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 3:352.
2. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 2:238.
3. Adapted from Klynovets'ka, *Stravy i napytky*.
4. Adapted from *ibid.*, p. 32.
5. *Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia* 1:669.
6. Mandybura, *Polonyns'ke hospodarstvo*, pp. 115–21.
7. See Kotliarevs'ky, *Eneida*.
8. Chaplenko, *Ukrainian Culinary Glossary*, p. 90.

Chapter 9. Feast of Saint Demetrius

1. See Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 5:192–97.
2. Chaplenko, *Ukrainian Culinary Glossary*, defines *knyshti* as breads with a “soul” (that is, filling); bread with turned-up edges and filling; or Christmas bread (p. 45).

Chapter 10. Feasts of Saint Catherine and Saint Andrew

1. Mazurok, *Traditional Customs in the Village Koniushkiw*, gives an account of young people's merrymaking and courting customs that were practiced well into the twentieth century.
2. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 5:211.
3. Ibid. For other versions, see Roman Harasymchuk, "Andriivs'ke vorozhinia," *Nova Khata*, November 1938, pp. 2–3.
4. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 5:233.
5. Based on Klynovets'ka, *Stravy i napytky*, p. 3.
6. Wolff's *Buckwheat Cookbook*.
7. Andrusyshen and Kirkconnell, *The Poetical Works of Taras Shevchenko*, p. 302.

Chapter 11. Weddings

1. Voropai, *Zvychai nashoho narodu* 2:203–04.
2. These customs were generally practiced, although there were many exceptions. Folk songs lamented the fate of arranged marriages between old, wealthy men and poor but beautiful girls. Many expressed the misery of the bride living away from her family and under a mother-in-law's not so kind supervision.
3. Embroidered linens and ritual cloths developed as high folk art throughout the Ukraine. Each girl prepared her dowry linens for just this important occasion. The Ukrainian Museum in New York has an excellent collection of ritual cloths. See Iwanna Zelska, *Ukrainian Embroidery Designs* (Toronto: Harmony, 1978).
4. See "Mav ia raz divchynon'ku," in *Ukrains'ki narodni pisni* 2:94.
5. Sichynsky, *Ukraine in Foreign . . . Descriptions*, pp. 84–87.
6. Kalynovs'ky, *Vesillia u dvokh knykhakh* 1:69.
7. Kylymnyk, *Calendar Year* 5:106–08.
8. Kalynovs'ky, *Vesillia u dvokh knykhakh* 1:77.
9. Ibid.
10. Chaplenko, *Ukrainian Culinary Glossary*, p. 41.
11. Kalynovs'ky, *Vesillia u dvokh knykhakh*, describes many older and less-known wedding rituals and customs.
12. Ibid., 1:71.
13. Ibid., 2:345–67.
14. Abramiuk-Wolynetz, "Ukrainian Ritual Breads," p. 7.
15. Ibid.
16. Franko, *Materialy do etnografii* 18:130. For the modern interpretation, see "Ukrainian Wedding Bread" in the OKLU picture postcard series.
17. Chaplenko, *Ukrainian Culinary Glossary*, p. 33.
18. Abramiuk-Wolynetz, "Ukrainian Ritual Breads," p. 7.
19. Kalynovs'ky, *Vesillia u dvokh knykhakh* 2:391.
20. *Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia* 1:335–38.
21. Mead is a mild, delicately sweet drink. To make it properly requires not only a large quantity of honey, but also expertise. Veteran mead maker Mykola Sywy of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, recommends Morse, *Making Mead*.
22. See Monatowa, *Uniwersalna ksiazka kucharska*.

23. This is the creation of an excellent baker and cook, Evhenia Pleskacewska-Hunter, of New York, who graciously shared the recipe.
24. Given through the generosity of Anna Polisczuk of Baltimore, Maryland.

Chapter 12. Name Days

1. M. Drai Khmara, "Letters," June 2, 1938, in Klen, *Tvory* 3:181–83, author's translation.
2. Tsvek, *Do sviatkovoho stolu*, p. 99.
3. Adapted from Klynovets'ka, *Stravy i napytky*.

Chapter 13. Gathering Wild Mushrooms

1. Dickinson, *Encyclopedia of Mushrooms*, p. 94.
2. Martin Cruz Smith, *Gorky Park* (New York: Ballantine, 1981), p. 339.
3. Two examples of folk songs featuring mushroom hunts are "Divchynon'ka po hryby khodyla" and "Ishov did na hryby, baba na pidpen'ky: Baba svoi povaryla, Didovi syren'ki"; see *Ukrains'ki narodni pisni* 1:385.
4. Good guides are the Peterson Guide (McKnight and McKnight, *Mushrooms of North America*) and the *Audubon Field Mushroom Guide*.
5. Zerov, *Atlas hyrbiv Ukrainy*, p. 40.
6. Freedman, *Wild About Mushrooms*, p. 45.
7. Zerov, *Atlas hyrbiv Ukrainy*, p. 245.
8. Bryndzia is available from Hungary and some is made in Canada. See Layton, *Cheese and Cheese Cookery*.

Glossary

The following terms are transliterations (or systematic graphemic substitutions that approximate pronunciation) of the Ukrainian words and phrases used in this book. The Ukrainian language, among others, uses the Cyrillic alphabet. In North America the most widely used system of transliteration from the Cyrillic into the Latin alphabet is the Library of Congress (LC) system, which is used here.

- baba* (*baby*) round, light festive bread; at times a reference to any round form pudding or dish
babka the diminutive form of *baba*; small, dainty version of pastry, pudding dish
baklazhan eggplant
banush scrambled egg fry of the Hutsul region
baraniachi rizhky sponge fungus; *Sparassis crispa*
bigos traditional sauerkraut, cabbage, pork, and smoked meat dish
bilyi hryb white bolete, cep
blyntsi buckwheat cakes, pancakes
boletus a type of edible mushroom highly prized by Ukrainians; the French cep
borovyk white boletus
borsch beet soup or beet stew, one of the most traditional Ukrainian dishes
borsch, bilyi white borsch; a spring borsch, prepared with fresh young vegetables
borsch, pisnyi meatless borsch
brukva turnip
bryndzia a semisoft cheese made of ewe's milk and rennet with about 40 percent milkfat used by western Ukrainians and favored by Hutzuls; similar to the Greek feta
bublyky small yeast dough rolls with hole in the middle
chasnyk garlic
chervonoholovets' *Boletus rufus*
chumak, chumaky, chumats'ka carter(s), in the style of carters
deruny, terchenyky grated potato or other vegetable pancakes
Dmytra Feast of Saint Demetrios
doshchovyk smachnyi puffball, *Lycoperdon perlatum*
drib poultry
didukh a sheaf of wheat placed in a corner of the living area; symbol of abundance and nature during the Christmas season
divych vechir maiden evening

- druzhka* groom's best man
dyven' an ancient form of wedding bread
drahli, studynyna, studynets' any form of aspic made with meat or fish
halushky soft dumplings
harbuz, harbuzy pumpkin(s)
holubinka, syroizhka vytsvitaiucha the *Russula* mushroom; *Russula decolorans*
holubtsi cabbage leaves filled with grain, meat, mushrooms
holubtsi pisni meatless cabbage rolls
horilka whiskey
hospodar male head of household
hospodynia mistress of household
hrechanyky buckwheat rolls or dumplings
huslianka clabbered milk
hryb, hryby mushroom, mushrooms, edible usually wild species
hryb baran sheepshead fungus, *Sparassis crispa*
hryb pishchanyk *Boletus badius* (*Suillus*)
imenyny name day celebration
iushka soup
iachmina kasha barley porridge
iushka didivs'ka grandfather's soup
kalach, kolach braided bread, formed in a circle or loaf, and used to mark special occasions, celebrations
kalachyky small raised rolls
kalyna a cranberry tree, *Viburnum opulus*, symbolic of maidenhood, virtue, and beauty, often mentioned in Ukrainian poetry and song
kalyta flat round ceremonial bread used in games on the feast of Saint Andrew
kapusniak soup whose main ingredients are sauerkraut and its juice
kapusta cabbage
kartoplia potato
kartopliana nachynka potato filling
kasha any ground and cooked grain
Kateryny i Andriia Feasts of Saint Catherine and Saint Andrew
khlib bread
khlib i sil' bread and salt; traditional ritual greeting of guests by Ukrainians and other Slavs
khlib zhyliavyi a joking reference to the tough lean bread of Lent
khlodets', drahli, studynyna meat or fish in aspic
khriashch molochnyi smachnyi saffron milky cap, *Lactarius deliciosus*
khriashch molochnyi spravzhnyi milky cap; *Lactarius resimus*
"Khrystos razhdayetsia! Slavite Yeho" "Christ is Born! Let us praise Him!"—traditional Christmas greetings
khrystosovania traditional greetings exchanged by Ukrainians after the Easter service

- "*Khrystos voskres! Voistynu Voskres!*" "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!"—Easter greetings
- khustyna* kerchief, symbol of womanhood
- kmin* caraway seed
- knysh, knyshi* a baked dough in various shapes, with vegetable, cheese, or meat fillings
- kolo* circle
- koliada* traditional singing of carols in the Christmas season
- korop* carp
- korovai* wedding bread
- korovainytsi* women who bake wedding bread
- korzh* tart
- krashanky* dyed cooked eggs used at Eastertime and at other celebrations such as Provody
- krendel'* pretzel
- kriushon* sangría, a drink made with wine and fruit juice
- kulesha* cornmeal mush, polenta
- kutia holodna* falls seven days after Christmas on January 13 (O.S.) or New Year's Eve; the feast of Melania, known as Shchedriy Vechir
- kutia, kolyvo* a dish of cooked whole grain, mixed with honey, poppy seeds, and dried fruit; offering to ancestors
- kvas* fermented infusion of grain, fruit or vegetables used as a beverage, as stock, and as flavoring in dishes
- kvas burakovyi* fermented beet juice used in borsch
- kvas tsytrynovyi* lemon kvas; fermented lemon drink
- kylym* flat woven wool rug; *kilim*
- kyshka* natural pork casing stuffed with grain, organ meat, and blood
- lepista zolota* golden funnel mushroom; *Lepista gliva*
- lepista zvorotna* a funnel mushroom; *Lepista inversa*
- liapuny* pancakes
- liate tisto* batter
- lokshyna* noodles made from wheat flour and eggs
- lysycky* chanterelles, prized mushrooms
- makitra* a wooden bowl primarily for mashing poppy seed
- makohin* pestle for mashing poppy seeds (poppy seed chaser)
- makovyi perih, makivnyk* poppy seed roll
- makovyi torte* poppy seed torte
- Malanka* New Year's Eve, the eve of the feast of St. Melania
- mandryky perevertanyky* (Hutsul region) *banyky* (Bojko region) small baked rolls for Petra
- marynata* marinade
- Masliana* time immediately before the beginning of Lent
- masliuk mondrynovyi* *Boletus elegans*
- masliuk zvychainyi* slippery jack; *Boletus luteus*
- masa orikhova* nut cream or filling

- masa rumova* rum cream or filling
mediynyk honey bread
medianyky honey cookies
mysochky ritual dishes consisting of three small breads with *krashanka* and *pysanka*, and salt brought to gravesite to commemorate ancestors
nachynka forcemeat, filling, stuffing
nachynka z kapusty cabbage filling
nastoianka fermented drink flavored with spices or fruit
nugat thin wafers layered with nut, sugar and egg white filling
oblast' province
obrus embroidered tablecloth
ohirok cucumber
ohirky kvasheni pickles
oseledets' herring
otaman, otamansha leader of men, leader of women
palianychka small flat wheat or rye cakes
palianytsia bread made from high-quality flour; very elegant
pampushky yeast-raised dough balls, fried, sugared or savory flavored with garlic
parastas service to commemorate the souls of the dead
paska, pasky bread or breads, usually round and cylindrical in form baked at Eastertime
pashtet country paté
pashtetyky savory pastries
pechenia roast meat
pecherytsi field mushrooms; *Agaricus campestris* or *Agaricus arvensis*
peperivka spiced whiskey
perekuska, perekusky small bite-sized canapes, appetizers, or snacks
Petra Feast of Saints Peter and Paul
pidlyva sauce, gravy
pidlyva hrybova mushroom gravy
pidpen'ky honey fungus, *Armillaria mellea*, *Clitocybe flaccida*
pidvechirok afternoon snack, tea
poloskozub a joking reference to the stringent fast ahead by rinsing the teeth with whiskey to remove all traces of the meats and dairy dishes that will be forbidden during Lent
pomenky religious commemoration of the dead
pravdyvyi hryb cep, *Boletus edulis*
Provody first Sunday after Easter
pshono millet
Pylypivka Advent
pyrih baked dough turnover with filling
pyrizhky baked turnovers or rolls of short or yeast dough with filling; served as appetizers or with soups

- pysanky* decorated Easter eggs, symbols of rebirth
ridkyi hist' rare or honored guest
Rizdvo, Rizdvo Khrystove Birth of Christ, Christmas
rozha z tsukrom rose preserve
rohalyky small rolls in the form of crescents or "horns"
rushnyky embroidered ritual cloths
ryba, rybiacha fish, or including fish
ryzhky chervoni *Lactarius sanguifluus*, edible mushroom
salata a mixture, usually of vegetables
shchavli sorrel
shchedrivky ancient songs sung to celebrate the winter solstice, subsequently incorporated into New Year's celebrations and Shchedryi Vechir
Shchedryi Vechir "bountiful evening," celebrated seven days after Christmas
shklytsia bila white icing
shyshky small rolls shaped as pinecones used to decorate the wedding bread and given to the guests as wedding favors
skrypali fiddle players
slast'ony fritters
slast'onysi women who made and sold fritters
"Smachnoho diakuiu" "Bon appetit" and "thank you" after a meal
sorochka vyshyvana shirt, usually embroidered by the bride and given to her betrothed
Spasa Feast of the Transfiguration
smetana lightly soured cream
starosty male emissaries, usually associated with engagements and weddings
starostyny women relatives or friends of the bride
stolitna, stolitni centuries old, from time immemorial
styranka drop noodles for broth
sviachene traditional foods blessed at or before the Resurrection service, eaten to break the fast of Lent on Easter morning
Sviata Vechera Holy Supper, Christmas Eve Supper
Sviato Iuriiia feast of Saint George
svitylka handmaiden to the bride at a wedding
sytra fermented fruit drink
syroizhka istyvna *Russula vesca*
syroizhka luskata, tovstiukha *Russula virens*
taratuta traditional salad usually served the first week of Lent in eastern Ukraine
topolia a poplar tree, usually symbolic of unrequited love, a female, maiden symbol
uzvar dry fruit compote
varenyky traditional Ukrainian dish of soft dough crescents stuffed with a variety of fillings
Verbova Nedilia Willow Sunday, last Sunday of Lent, Palm Sunday
Velykden' Eastertime, Great Day

Velykyi Pist Lent, the big fast

vesillia wedding(s)

vushka little ears, small soft dough dumplings in the shape of triangles, filled with a mushroom mixture, used as soup garnish, especially in borsch for Christmas Eve Supper

vyshniak cherry liqueur

zaprazhka roux

zasivania ritualistic sowing of grain in the home on New Year's Day heralding good tidings

zasvatania period of engagement or courtship

zatirka drop noodles

Zeleni Sviata Whitsunday, Pentecost

zhuravlyna cranberry

zhylivyi khlib heavy, tough rye bread

zmorshchyk, smorz *istyvnyi* morel, *Morchella esculenta*

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