

Feast in the East

Culinary Booklet

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Welcome one and all to my first attempt at cooking a feast.

Within this booklet you will find the Feast Menu in an expanded form, as well as recipes for each dish. I will note any alterations I have made for the night (be it for cost, practicality or to accomodate for allergies/tastes).

Each recipe is scaled down to be cooked at home with family and friends. Should you wish to cook for a large group of people, simply scale it up as required. Please note that an average feast serve is smaller than a home serve - one does not usually have 10+ dishes to choose from at home.

This selection includes a variety of Eastern European Dishes focused mainly on Russian and Polish influence. There is a rather heavy Polish lean to the feast as finding appropriate sources for Russian dishes is rather challenging. However the Russians and Polish had an ongoing history of stealing cusine from each other, making slight alterations and claiming it as better, so the flavours should all be very much of the region.

I have also attempted to create a few simple original redactions based on regional food tastes and available ingredients/techniques.

-Járnskeggi the Mad

Komposjtum z Kapusty, wiklu, Kopru i Grzybów (Compostium of Cabbage, Chard, Dill and Mushrooms)

This recipe is adapted from "Food and Drink in Medieval Poland (Dembińska & Weaver)" and is described as a dish for the Middle to Upper Class, often served on fasting days or with wine on special occasions. In this recipe I have added in celery in replacement of lovage primarily due to difficulty in acquiring enough.

To Serve 4-6

Ingredients:

1 Medium Onion, cut into thin slices
8 cups white cabbage shredded finely
4 cups chard (Silverbeet) shredded finely
1 cup finely minced celery
1 cup chopped dill
125g mushrooms, coarsley chopped
1 clove of garlic, minced
1/4 cup of apple cider vinegar
4 tablespoons salted butter
1 cup water

Method:

Preheat the oven to 190c.

Scatter half of the onion on the bottom of a large baking dish, preferably earthenware. Mix your garlic and vinegar together and set aside. Layer 1/3rd of the cabbage and 1/3rd of the chard over this. Cover this with 1/2 the celery and dill and then all the mushrooms.

Use the remaining onions, chard, celery, dill and another 1/3rd of the cabbage to add more layers. Add 1 cup of water and the vinegar/garlic mix. Cut the butter into fine pieces and place evenly over the top. Cover with lid and bake for approx 45 mins, stir then serve. Salt and pepper to taste.

Rosó á **(Chicken Soup)**

This recipe is an original redaction sourced from one of the oldest known Polish recipe books - "Compendium ferculorum albo zebranie potraw" written by Stanisław Czerniecki, master chef in the noble house of Lubomirski family and published in 1682. While the source is slightly out of our period, I believe that the basics of this dish wouldn't be dramatically new to the 1600's.

Original Recipe (translated):

This is the way to cook polish rosó á take beef meat or veal, hazel grouse or partridge, pigeon and whatever meat that in rosó á can be cooked. Soak it, lay in pot, then strain and pour over meat, add parsley, butter, salt, and skim well. One have to know what to put in rosó á do not stink of water or wind, that is parsley, dill, onion or garlic, nutmeg or rosmarin or pepper to taste. Lime will not spoil any rosó á as well.

To Serve 4-6

Ingredients:

500g chicken meat (or 1 large chicken leg per person)
1 cup finely chopped parsley
1/2 cup chopped dill
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tablespoon salt
1 tablespoon butter
black pepper corns to taste
rosemary to taste
1 fresh lime

Method:

Place your chicken meat in the bottom of a pot and add enough cold water to cover the meat totally. Add in salt and peppercorns and gently raise the tempreture until boiling. Once boiling, reduce the heat to simmer and add a handful of rosemary (or to taste), the garlic, butter and parsley. Allow to simmer at least 3 hours. Add dill in the last 5 minutes of cooking, taste before serving and add salt/pepper if you desire. Serve with fresh limes cut to be squeezed as desired.

Bulki (Wheat Bread Roll)

Wheat rolls were the finest sort of white bread and were commonly served in the Polish Royal Court, with small round rolls being called Bulki. Other shapes were also used, including long rolls with pointed ends. (Dembińska & Weaver). The following recipe is thanks to Baroness Blod.

To Make 4-6 rolls

Ingredients:

3-4 cups of plain flour
1 tsp of yeast
1 tsp of salt

Method:

Mix 2 cups of flour, yeast and salt together with 2-3 cups of water and stir well. Dough should be very liquid based. Leave overnight to rise, pull sections apart and knead in extra flour until of normal bread dough consistency, bake for roughly 30-35 mins at 180 degrees or until the base sounds hollow when tapped. Baste with water or milk for a brown crust.

Pickled Beet Eggs

Pickled Eggs are a staple throughout history not only as a tasty food, but because of the preservation qualities coming from pickling. What I've done is made an attempt at a dish I think is possible to have existed in the 16th century, given the access to materials and tastes in food at the time.

Ingredients:

20 Eggs
2 cups Vinegar
6 Beetroot
1 cup Sugar
2 cups water

Method:

Hard boil your eggs (10 mins at boiling) and set aside to cool. In a pan add the sugar, water and vinegar and bring to the boil, once sugar is dissolved reduce to a simmer. Chop beetroots into slices and add to simmering pot for 20 minutes. Strain juices into a sealable jar halfway and add peeled hard boiled eggs.

Alternative:

For a simpler method (and the one I used for this feast), use canned beetroot instead of fresh beetroot and water. Mix the can juices with sugar and vinegar and boil before simmering and adding the beetroot slices. Continue as above.

Gruszki Duszone z Ogórkami I Figami **(Stewed Pears with Cucumber and Figs)**

This dish comes from "Food and Drink in Medieval Poland" and is a simple and tasty way of presenting a combination of foods I never would have thought of trying on my own. This dish is recorded in the Royal Garrison at Horczyn in 1389. For this feast I am using maple syrup instead of honey to avoid complications with allergies.

Ingredients:

4 cups cucumbers, pared, seeded and diced
1 cup dried figs
1 cup honey
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
4 cups pears, pared, cored and diced

Method:

Put the cucumbers, figs, honey, cloves, cinnamon and 1 cup of water in a pan, gently cooking on medium low until cucumbers are tender. Add the pears, cover and cook for another 5 minutes or until pears are hot. Let it cool to room temperature and serve.

Beef and Cabbage Stew

This is another attempt at making a dish based on the techniques and ingredients available to the region at the time. I've designed this dish to be flexible and simple to allow anyone to try cooking it at most any event, including camping.

Ingredients:

500g beef stewing steak, chopped
2 cups mustard leaves
4 cups cabbage, sliced
1 cup mushrooms
1 tablespoon black pepper corns (or to taste)
3 cups Vegetable stock

Method:

Using your choice of oil or butter, brown the meat. Then add in the vegetable stock along with the rest of the ingredients and allow to slowly simmer for a minimum of 4 hours. For the last 30-40 minutes take the lid off and allow the stew to reduce.

Stewed Vegetables

Like the Beef Stew, this is an attempt at creating a simple dish that could have been possible in period. This dish is aimed towards offering a meat alternative while still sampling fine vegetables from the region.

Ingredients:

2 cups turnips, diced
2 cups carrots, peeled and chopped
1 cup mushrooms, chopped
1 cup cabbage, sliced
1/2 cup dill, finely chopped
black peppercorns to taste

Method:

Add all ingredients except the mushrooms into a pot and just cover with water. Set to boil. Once vegetables become soft and the water has reduced, panfry the mushrooms in your choice of oil or butter and add to the pot.

Beef Pelmeni with Butter Sauce & Sour Cream **(Boiled meat dumplings)**

Pelmeni are a Russian dish, dumplings boiled and filled with various items. They can be made savoury or sweet. I've elected to make a savoury meat variant. Regionally a boiled dumpling dish is quite common with the Polish having pierogi, directly influenced from Russia.

Ingredients:

3 cups plain flour
1 tsp salt
1-1 1/2 cups water
1 tsp vegetable oil
400g beef mince
400g onion chopped
400g mushrooms chopped
1 cup vegetable stock

Method:

Begin by pre-cooking the fillings (meat, onion, mushrooms) in a large pan with oil or butter. Once the meat is brown and onions translucent, add in enough vegetable stock to come up 2/3rds to all the way covering the filling. Then allow to simmer and reduce until only 1/3rd of liquid is left. Set this aside to cool. Once cool, use a food processor to make the filling fine.

Add your flour, salt, vegetable oil and water to a bowl and begin to mix. If the dough remains too sticky, sift more flour, if it is too dry add some more water. You want to break off a section and roll out as thin as will still hold together. Using a cup or circle cutter (sizing of your choice), cut circles of dough and set them aside.

Take a teaspoon of filling, place in the middle of the dough circle and crimp the edges together with your fingers. This is best done while the dough is fresh. Once all pelmeni have been made, bring to the boil a pot of salted water and boil until done (10-15 minutes). Serve with your choice of melted butter or sour cream.

Fresh Fruit with Strawberry Kisiel sauce

Kisiel is a Polish dish made from fruit juices and arrowroot to make either a liquid drink, a sauce or a semi-solid dessert.

Ingredients:

500g Strawberries
5 apples
5 pears
1/2 cup sugar
2 tsp arrowroot

Method:

Wash your strawberries and remove leaves. Place in cheesecloth bag. Meanwhile add sugar to 2-3 cups water in a pot and bring to the boil, dissolving the sugar. Once sugar is dissolved, place the strawberry bag into the water and allow to simmer for 15-20 minutes. Once the strawberries have softened in the bag, gently squeeze it over the pot and drain the fruit juices. Add arrowroot and bring to the boil to thicken then set aside to cool down.

Chop your fresh fruit as desired and pour the warm kisiel over on top to serve.