

POLISH AUTUMN DINNER

APPETIZER

Herring Salad (Salatka ze Sledzia)

Ingredients:

10 herring filets,
1 jar (370ml) of dill pickles,
1 jar (370ml) of beets,
1 jar (370ml) of pickled onions,
3 apples,
½ cup of white vine vinegar,
½ cup of olive oil,
2 tsp. of horseradish; salt and pepper.

Directions:

1. Cut herrings into wide slices. Wash, core, and slice apples. Slice pickles, onions and beets. Mix all the ingredients together.
2. Combine vinegar with horseradish, salt, and pepper. Add oil constantly mixing. Pour mixture over salad, and let stand for 2 hours before serving.

SOUPS

Zurek "Zhurek"



The base for zurek ("zakwas")

Ingredients:

3 cups of rye flour,
small piece of crust from rye bread,
2 minced cloves of garlic,
2 cups of warm water.

Place ingredients in a jar, mix them well, cover the jar with a piece of clean cloth, let the jar stay in a warm place for 4-5 days. If mold forms on top, remove it before using the zakwas. Discard the bread crust and garlic before using.

Zurek

Ingredients:

2 cups of "zakwas"
½ kg of white sausage - chopped (or just use polska kielbasa)
1/4 lkg of bacon,
1 onion - minced
2 cloves of garlic - minced
1/2 cup of sour cream
1 Tbsp of flour
1 bay leaf, 2 corns of allspice, 5 black peppercorns,
1 Tbsp of marjoram

Directions:

Fry bacon (chopped), add onion, add garlic and sausage. Fry a little more. Add 3 cups of boiling water, add bay leaf, black pepper, allspice. Cook for 20 minutes.
Add "zakwas". Mix sour cream with flour, add to soup, add marjoram, mix the soup well. Bring to a boil. You can also add chopped, cooked potatoes and chopped hard boiled egg.

Polish Wild Mushroom Soup (Zupa Grzybowa)

Ingredients:

15 dag dried wild mushrooms
9 cups beef stock
1 cup butter
1 cup finely chopped onion
1 tablespoon cornstarch
salt
white pepper
sour cream
chopped fresh parsley

Directions:

Cover mushrooms with cold water and soak overnight. Drain the mushrooms reserving the soaking liquid, strain the liquid through a fine cloth. Rinse the mushrooms in cold water to remove any remaining sand then slice into strips. Add the mushrooms, 9 cups of of the beef stock and the soaking liquid to a 3 quart saucepan, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer over low heat for 4 hours. Melt the butter in a heavy skillet, add the onion, saute until golden brown then add to the soup. Whisk the cornstarch with the remaining cup of beef stock, add to the soup, stir and simmer until slightly thickened. Season to taste with salt and pepper, ladle into individual bowls, top each with 1 tablespoons of sour cream and sprinkle with parsley.

MAIN COURSES

Golabki (Stuffed Cabbage)





General Ingredients

1 head of white cabbage or 2 heads of green cabbage
6 oz of rice
4 tbsps of butter or margarine
1 large onion, chopped
1/2kg ground pork, veal or beef
Salt and pepper
1 egg

Sauce Ingredients

2 tbsps of butter or margarine
2 tbsps of flour
0,6 l of canned tomatoes
1 clove garlic, crushed
1/2 cup chicken stock
Pinch sugar
Salt and pepper
2 tbsps tomato paste
4 tbsps of chopped parsley

Directions:

1. Cut the core out of the cabbage completely. Place cabbage in boiling salted water and cook for 15-20 minutes for green cabbage and 25-30 minutes for white cabbage. Remove and drain in a colander or on paper towels and leave to cool.
2. Cook the rice in boiling salted water for about 10 minutes or until almost tender. Drain and rinse under hot water to remove the starch. Leave in a colander and make five or six wells with the handle of a wooden spoon to allow the rice to drain thoroughly. Leave to dry.

3. Melt 4 tbsps of butter or margarine in a large frying pan and cook the onion for about 3 minutes, or until slightly softened. Add the meat and cook slowly just until the meat loses its pink color. Break the meat up with fork as it cooks. Add salt, pepper, rice and egg and set aside to cool.
4. Separate the cabbage leaves and trim down the spines with a small, sharp knife. Place all the leaves out on a clean work surface and divide the filling evenly among all the leaves.
5. To roll up, fold in the sides around the filling and roll up from the thick end to the thin end.
6. Place rolls side by side in large kettle, a little melted butter on bottom. Layer if necessary.
7. Add tomatoes and all the remaining sauce ingredients except the chopped parsley and enough water to just cover golabki.
8. Cover & bring to a slow boil. Simmer for 2 hrs. After first 90 minutes, cover golabki with water again. Remove after last 30 min. sprinkle with chopped parsley before serving and enjoy!

Polish Bigos / Hunter's Stew



There are many different ways of making Bigos. The following recipe is the most traditional.

Ingredients:

2 kg fresh white cabbage
2 kg sauerkraut
1 kg red meat (pork or game)
0,25 – 1 kg Polish sausage (zwyczajna, myśliwska or slaska)
0,25 – 0,5 smoked bacon
2 cups of fresh or dried mushrooms
grains of black pepper, salt, bay leaf
0,25 kg onion
smoked prunes

Directions:

1. Chop the cabbage fine and mix with sauerkraut. Add salt, mushrooms and a bay leaf. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Lower heat and simmer covered for 2-3 hours until tender and soft, stirring occasionally and adding liquid as needed to prevent burning.
2. Fry slightly the pieces of bacon and use its fat to fry chopped onion together with small pieces of meat and Polish sausage. You can also stew the meat as a whole and cut it into small pieces later on.
3. Pour off surplus of water (if any), add fried meat, bacon and Polish sausage as well as the bacon fat.
4. Add prunes into the mixture, cover and stew as long as possible (the longer the better). It tastes the best if you do it, with brakes, for several days. You can pour into the mixture some dry red wine while stewing.
5. When ready, the mixture should be dark brown and thick. It shouldn't be too watery. It should be sweet-and-sour as well as a bit spicy.
6. According to the Old Polish tradition, you should add some honey just before finishing the cooking (about 1 spoon for one big pot) or some sweet-smelling wine (e.g. Malaga). The taste depends on the amount, quality and variety of the meat you add. In the Old Polish cuisine they added to Bigos the rests of noble roast and smoked meat, which was giving a boost to the flavour.



DESSERTS

Polish Apple Pie (Szarlotka)



Ingredients:

Dough:

5 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 ½ cup wheat flour
½ cup potato starch
1 ½ teaspoon baking powder
25 dag butter or margarine

Filling:

1 kg apples
1 lemon jelly
3 spoons sugar

Dressing:

icing sugar

Directions:

1. Wash, peel and coarsely chop the apples.
2. Fry apples with sugar for about 15 minutes.
3. Cool, add jelly powder and mix well.

4. Preheat oven to 180°C.
5. Whip egg whites, add sugar, yolks and keep whipping.
6. Mix wheat flour, potato starch, baking powder and add the mixture to the whipped eggs.
7. Add melted butter/margarine and stir the mixture gently.
8. Pour half of the dough on the baking tray. Before spread some margarine on the tray and bake for 15 minutes.
9. Place apples on top of the slightly baked dough and cover with the remaining dough. Bake for around 45 minutes. Top should look fairly browned.
10. Take out of the oven and cool . Spread icing sugar before serving.

Plum cake



Ingredients:

15- 20 dag sugar
12,5 dag butter
4-5 eggs
35-40 dag flour
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon baking powder
plums

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Grind sugar with butter until it is spongy. Add egg by egg and stir (grind) until blended.
3. Mix flour with baking powder and add to the mixture. If the dough is too thick, add some milk. The dough should be creamy.
4. Pour the dough on the baking tray. Place halved plums on top. Sprinkle sugar and cinnamon on top.
5. Bake for around 40 minutes.