



TE(I)ST
the Balkans

Recipes

from Serbia



*"Cookery is not chemistry. It is an art.
It requires instinct and taste rather than
exact measurements"*

Marcel Boulestin



Ajavar - Serbian Eggplant Caviar

Ingredients

1-2 medium eggplants
1 red bell pepper
5 to 6 cloves garlic, still in their peels
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 tablespoon paprika
fresh lemon juice to taste (a teaspoon or two)



Equipment:

Food processor, blender, or immersion blender wand.

Method

1. Place the eggplants, pepper and garlic on a shallow baking sheet (for instance a cookie sheet) and roast at 180 °C for 1 to 2 hours. Every 15-20 minutes or so, turn everything over so that as much surface as possible spends some time in contact with the cookie sheet. The surface that touches the cookie sheet will caramelize, meaning that the sugars in them will break apart and reform into marvellously sweet and deeply flavourful new compounds.
2. The bell pepper and the garlic will certainly be done and need to come out of the oven after an hour; the eggplant might take an hour or so longer. The eggplants are ready when they have totally collapsed.
3. Remove from oven and let cool.
4. When your vegetables are cool, peel them all. Placing the veg in a brown paper bag will make the peeling go easier.
5. Discard the seeds and core of the pepper as well as its peel.
6. Process all this in a food processor, adding the oil, salt and pepper.
7. Add lemon to taste.
8. Serve as a dip.

Torta Praska - Serbian Apricot Torte (12 servings)

Ingredients

1 package active dry yeast
1/4 cup warm water
300 gr softened butter
3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
4 large eggs, separated
1/2 cup sour cream
1 1/2 cups finely chopped walnuts
1 1/4 cups sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
340-400 ml apricot filling or jam
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup chopped walnuts



Method

1. Dissolve yeast in 1/4 cup warm water and set aside. Coat a 33x23 cm pan with cooking spray. Heat oven to 180 °C.
2. In a large bowl, mix together butter and flour. In a separate bowl, mix the egg yolks, sour cream and dissolved yeast. Add to flour mixture and blend until a ball of dough forms. Do not knead. Divide dough into 3 equal parts. On a lightly floured board, roll 1 part into a 33x23 cm rectangle and place in prepared pan.
3. In a medium bowl, mix 1 1/2 cups chopped walnuts, 1 1/4 cups sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over dough in pan. Roll out second piece of dough and place on top. Spread with apricot filling or jam. Roll out remaining piece of dough and place on top. Bake 50-55 minutes or until top is golden brown.
4. In a medium bowl, beat egg whites until foamy. Add cream of tartar and beat until soft peaks form. Add sugar gradually, beating until stiff peaks form. Remove torte from oven and spread egg whites over top. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup chopped walnuts. Bake until meringue is golden and crackly. Remove from oven and cool completely. Cut into squares, dipping knife in cold water and wiping it clean after each cut.

Sweet Serbian Gibanica (6-8 servings)

Ingredients

340-400 ml apricot filling
1 jar (300-340 ml) red raspberry preserves
2 tablespoons honey
230 gr softened cream cheese
450 gr small curd creamed cottage cheese
1/3 cup sugar
Grated zest of 1 lemon
6 large eggs, separated
1/2 cup sour cream
1/2 kg thawed filo dough
115 gr melted butter
Confectioners' sugar



Method

1. In a small bowl, mix the raspberry preserves with honey and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth and blend in cottage cheese, sugar and lemon zest. Beat in egg yolks one at a time. Add sour cream and beat again. In a separate medium bowl, beat egg whites until stiff and fold into the cheese mixture. Set aside.
3. To assemble: Heat oven to 180 °C. Lightly butter a 33x23 cm glass pan. Fold a piece of filo dough in half and place in bottom of pan and lightly brush with butter. Fold a second piece of filo dough in half and place on top and lightly brush with butter. Spread half the cheese mixture on top.
4. Fold a sheet of filo dough in half, place on top of cheese and lightly brush with butter. Fold a second sheet of filo dough in half, place on top and lightly brush with butter. Spread half the apricot filling on top and repeat with 2 more folded sheets of buttered filo dough, followed by the raspberry filling and 2 more folded sheets of buttered filo dough. Continue in this manner until all the fillings are used. End with 2 folded sheets of buttered filo dough on top. Brush any remaining butter on top of dessert.
5. Bake 55 minutes or until golden. Allow to cool. Cut into squares and sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.

Pogaca - A simple, staple Serbian bread.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 1/2 teaspoon yeast
- 6 to 8 cups flour (can be 2 cups of whole wheat)
- 1 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup olive oil or other fat
- Beaten egg (for brushing over top)



Method

1. Dissolve yeast in warm water. Add remaining ingredients. Mix to a medium dough.
2. Knead for 5 minutes.
3. Let rest 15 minutes.
4. Divide in thirds. Roll to size and shape of layer cake pans. Lightly grease the pans. Place dough inside.
5. Brush dough with beaten egg. Dock (prick all over with a fork.) Bake 20 to 25 minutes at 220 °C, or until golden brown and done. Serve hot, or whenever you please.

*"Ask not what you can do for your country.
Ask what's for lunch."
Orson Welles*

Serbian Moussaka (Musaka)

Ingredients

450 gr of beef/pork mince meat
2 medium onions, chopped
7 medium potatoes
2 cups of milk
3 eggs
10 tablespoons oil
0,5 cup of water
salt and pepper to taste



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 250°C.
2. Fry finely chopped onions on 5 tablespoons of oil at high temperature. After a few minutes add a ground meat. Add a little bit of salt and just enough pepper to taste. Make sure you don't over salt it. Continue to fry it for another 5 minute pressing the meat with your spoon to make pieces smaller. The mixture is done when the water from the meat evaporates and when the meat browns.
3. Peel the potatoes and cut them up into thin round slices, but not as thin as chips. Place the first layer of potatoes into the baking dish (usually the glass one is used) making the surface even. The first layer is made of about 2-3 potato slices. Now, add meat/onion mixture evenly over the potato layer. Finally add the layer of the remaining potatoes. Add the remaining 5 tablespoons of oil, trying to cover all the potatoes (oil is not allowing potatoes to change the shape). Add the water.
4. Put into the oven.
5. Break the eggs, beat them until whites and yolks are well mixed and then add the milk and about 2 teaspoons of salt. Set aside.
6. After 30 minutes of baking, poke into the potatoes to see if they are getting tender. If so, pour the egg and milk mixture over the top of the musaka. Put the musaka back into the oven for about 20 more minutes until the top gets brown.