



SHH

Sustainability, Heritage & Health

RECIPE BOOK

Co-funded by the
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ŽINIŲ KODAS



Project "Sustainability. Heritage. Health"

Project No. 2020-1-UK01-KA204-078914

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Introduction	5
Starters	8
Bannock Bread	9
Acorn and Spelt Bread	11
Acorn and Maize Talos (Flatbreads)	13
Nettle and potato omelette	15
Potatoes with forest mushrooms	17
Beet and white bean salad	19
Fried bread with cheese and garlic	21
Spinach pie (spanakopita, σπανακόπιτα)	23
Soups	25
Nip Nip Soup	26
Kail Brose (Kale Broth)	28
Scotch Broth	30
Pumpkin Purée	32
Cold Beet Soup (Šaltibarščiai)	34
Lentil soup (fakes soupa - φακές σούπα)	36
Chickpea soup (revithosoupa - ρεβυθόσουπα)	38
Main Courses	40
Shepherdess Pie (Shepherd's/Cottage Pie)	41
Toad in the Hole	43
Vegetarian/Vegan Haggis	46
Venison Stew	49
Mountain stew (Cocido montañés)	52
Stewed red beans (caricos)	54



TABLE OF CONTENTS:


Tuna hotpot (Sorropotún)	56
Courgette burgers	58
Laredo Turnip Greens (Respigos de Laredo)	60
Pearl barley porridge with green peas	62
Roasted Carrots and Mushrooms	64
Potato Pancakes	66
Potato Meat Dumplings – Cepelinai (Zeppelins)	68
Green peas (arakas – αρακάς)	71
Baked giant beans (gigantes founou-γίγαντες φούρνου) ..	73
Spinach rice (spanakorizo - σπανακόρυζο)	75
Stuffed tomatoes & peppers (gemista - γεμιστά)	77
Desserts	80
Scones with jam	81
Welsh Cakes	83
Apple and Blackberry Crumble	85
Quince Jelly with Walnuts and Cheese	87
Cantabrian Cheesecake (Quesada Pasiega)	89
Cranberry Kissel (jelly made with potato starch)	91
Lazy Cake – Tinginys	93
Halva of Farsala (halvas Farsalon - χαλβάς Φαρσάλων)	95
Walnut pie (karidopita - καρυδόπιτα)	98
Must-flour sticky mousse from Paros (moustalevria)	100



INTRODUCTION

"Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es." ("Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are.")—Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, 1826





Food connects us. In our infancy, the act of breastfeeding forges the bond between a baby and its mother. Throughout our lives, traditions around growing, preparing, and eating food link people to their communities, to their ancestral cultures, and to the rhythms of the natural world. This has been true since prehistory and, for most people, continues to the present day.


The "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" recognised by UNESCO includes twenty-five different culinary practices. One is "The Mediterranean Diet" of Cyprus, Croatia, Spain, Greece, Italy, Morocco and Portugal, which:

"...involves a set of skills, knowledge, rituals, symbols and traditions concerning crops, harvesting, fishing, animal husbandry, conservation, processing, cooking, and particularly the sharing and consumption of food. Eating together is the foundation of the cultural identity and continuity of communities throughout the Mediterranean basin."

These 25 formally recognised practices, of course, are just the tip of a much bigger iceberg. All over the world, culinary traditions continue to be a source of health, economic stability, and communal identity to this day.

But this is not to say that these traditions are either static and unvarying, or secure and unthreatened. In fact, since the Industrial Revolution, and at an accelerating rate since World War Two, new ways of producing and preparing food have gradually supplanted these traditional human ways of relating with the land, food, and each other.

Under the industrial model, food is grown and processed for uniformity, appearance, and durability, not taste or nutrition, with the liberal use of oil for energy, fertilizer and pesticides, and with an eye for economies of scale and an extended shelf life. It is packaged in plastic (again made from oil) and shipped around the world (more oil) following the demands of the global market. Highly processed foods, which form an increasing share of our global diet, are typically high in sugar and salt, but lack essential nutrients and dietary fibre. Meanwhile, unprecedented material wealth has led to rising consumption of meat and meat-based products.



These trends, obviously, aren't just bad for our health as individuals, and for the survival of culinary traditions: they are also profoundly damaging to planetary health. In case anyone is still unaware, we are now living through a global ecological emergency, a mass extinction comparable to the one that wiped out the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. Collapsing biodiversity and climate chaos are just two of many symptoms of this global crisis, and the food we eat is partly to blame.

Food production is at the heart of human beings' impact on the environment, accounting for a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions, half of land use, and 70% of freshwater use.

Agriculture is a factor in the threats to 85% of all endangered species; while 94% of the world's biomass of mammals, excluding humans, is domesticated animals.

By far the biggest climatic impact comes from grazing by ruminants (i.e. cows and sheep) because of the methane gas they produce. On the other hand, grazing is a widespread traditional land use with very strong associated cultural traditions, especially in environments where farming is difficult, such as mountains or semi-arid lands.

There is much to learn from traditional cultures that respected the land and lived in harmony with nature, provided we bear in mind that traditions are never static, and food traditions in particular need to adapt to a rapidly evolving world. We can't keep traditional practices "preserved in aspic" (a type of jelly that was once used for preserving cold meat, but now only exists as an appropriate metaphor.)

To address the ecological crisis, every aspect of our lives needs to change. The choices we make as individuals are important, but insufficient: we need systemic change at every level from neighbourhoods to cities, nations, and the globe. Yet even the longest journey begins with a single step—or, we might say, a single recipe.

This book collects a diverse range of traditional recipes from four European countries—Greece, Lithuania, Spain, and the UK—including starters and side dishes, soups, main courses, and desserts, together with notes about health, sustainability, and cultural heritage. Some are presented exactly as prepared traditionally over centuries, while others have been adapted to fit in with our current awareness of what a healthy and sustainable diet means, such as by substituting alternatives for meat and/or dairy ingredients.

We hope that you enjoy preparing some (or, if you're very ambitious, all!) of the recipes yourself. But, more importantly, we hope the book inspires you to research your own culinary traditions—those of your ancestors, or of the places you've lived, or both—and prepare healthy, sustainable versions of those recipes. Why not invite your friends to a sustainable cookery party, or even start a local food festival? However you use the book, we look forward to hearing about your experiences and any recipes you want to share.

Enjoy your meal!

Buen provecho!

Καλή όρεξη!

Skanaus!

SHH Editors

June 2022

STARTERS



Bannock Bread

(UK)

Vegan



Ingredients:

200g brown flour
2 tsp sugar
½ tsp salt
4 tsp baking powder
50g wild blueberries (optional)
50g cup vegetable shortening
1 egg beaten
75ml soya milk

Instructions

Measure flour, salt, and baking powder into a large bowl. Stir to mix. Pour melted butter and water over flour mixture. Stir with fork to make a ball.

Turn dough out on a lightly floured surface, and knead gently about 10 times. Pat into a flat circle ¾ to 1 inch thick.

Cook in a greased frying pan over medium heat, allowing about 15 minutes for each side. Use two lifters for easy turning. May also be baked on a greased baking sheet at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 25 to 30 minutes.

About the Recipe

History

The word "bannock" comes from Northern and Scots dialects. The Oxford English Dictionary states the term stems from *panicum*, a Latin word for "baked dough", or from *panis*, meaning bread. It was first referred to as "bannuc" in early glosses to the 8th century author Aldhelm (d. 709), and its first cited definition is from 1562. Its historic use was primarily in Ireland, Scotland and Northern England.

The original bannocks were heavy, flat cakes of unleavened barley or oatmeal dough formed into a round or oval shape, then cooked on a griddle (or girdle in Scots). They were evidently a staple food as early as the Iron Age: a bannock-like loaf was the last meal of Lindow Man, whose preserved body was discovered in a peat bog in Cheshire, northern England and dated to the first or second century.

In Scotland, before the 19th century, bannocks were cooked on a bannock stane (Scots for stone), a large, flat, rounded piece of sandstone, placed directly onto a fire, used as a cooking surface. Most modern bannocks are made with baking powder or baking soda as a leavening agent, giving them a light and airy texture.

Health and Sustainability

Whole grains such as those present in whole grain flour are a source of multiple nutrients and dietary fiber. Whole grains are associated with improved micronutrient intake and lower risk of several diseases.

Blueberries contain anthocyanins, other polyphenols and various phytochemicals under preliminary research for their potential biological effects.

Sustainability

In the recent past, blueberries were little known in the UK and the blueberries that were sold came from overseas. As the popularity of the berry grew rapidly, growers started to plant blueberry bushes to meet the demand with home-grown fruit. As a result, production has grown from 281 tonnes in 2008 to 2,666 tonnes in 2018. These changes have reduced the environmental impact of blueberries due to transport from overseas.

Blueberry production is relatively sustainable since there is no known significant damage to air, water, land, soil, forests, etc., if pesticides have not been used.

The environmental impact of blueberries is further reduced when they are harvested from the wild. Wild blueberries, also known as bilberries, have evolved in extreme growing conditions, with harsh winters and infertile acidic soils. Therefore, they need less intense management in order to thrive. Because pests cannot survive well in these harsh conditions, there is less need for pesticides and chemicals than there are warm-climate crops. Lastly, wild blueberries have evolved over centuries in areas where there is less than one inch of rain per week, and therefore, they don't need as much water as other crops.

Acorn and Spelt Bread

(Spain)

Vegan; low in gluten



Ingredients:

6 cups leached acorn meal*
6 cups spelt flour (or other bread flour)
1/2 tablespoon salt
fresh yeast
water
sesame, poppy or sunflower seeds

*see below for how to make leached acorn meal

Instructions

Mix the acorn meal, flour and salt in a large bowl. Dissolve the yeast in 1/2 cup of water and add this. Knead the dough well, adding water (or more flour) until it is a good consistency, not too stiff and not too sticky. Cover the bowl with a cloth and leave to rise overnight. Knead again and shape into loaves, scoring the top of the loaf with a knife to prevent splitting and make it easier to slice later. Brush the top with water and sprinkle with seeds. Bake for 45 minutes at 200°C. Makes two large loaves.

About the recipe

Heritage

This and the following recipe are reinventions of two traditional acorn bread recipes, as eaten in villages all over the northern Iberian Peninsula up until the 1950s. In the maritime climate of the north coast, spelt (an ancient variety of wheat) was widely grown until the arrival of maize from the New World, and to this day in some areas. Both types of bread are delicious with either sweet or savoury dishes.

For many thousands of years, wherever oaks grew, acorns ('oak-corns') were a staple food for people. Balanophagy, the eating of acorns, can be seen across a wide range of cultures since earliest prehistory.

If you live near oak trees, or your ancestors did, anywhere in the world, then at some point in the past, acorns were part of your culinary heritage. Acorn bread is your birthright, but it's one that you've likely never tasted. At some point, the idea of eating acorns seems to have dropped out of Western culture like a millstone. They may be unique in this regard, as a staple food in vast areas of the world that's been almost entirely forgotten.

In many parts of Spain, "until a few decades ago, many people in rural areas would habitually eat acorns, raw (if they were sweet or only slightly bitter), toasted, as soup or stew, roasted as 'coffee', or as bread mixed with maize flour (as talos, like Mexican tortillas) or with wheat flour (as bread)... using immersion in streams and rivers, heat, ashes, and other processes to remove the tannins... and drying as the most important method of preservation, which meant they could be kept for up to two years." (César Lema, "Cocinar con Bellotas en la Era Post-Petrolera.")

Health and Sustainability

Acorns and maize are, in principle, gluten-free, while spelt is considerably lower in gluten than modern wheat. Nuts are one of the lowest carbon-emission foods; oak trees also support the highest biodiversity of associated species (insects, fungi, etc.) of any tree. In the UK, up to 2300 species are known to be associated with oak, of which 320 are found only on oak trees and a further 229 species are rarely found on species other than oak. Using traditional crop varieties such as spelt also contributes to preserving crop biodiversity.

Acorn and Maize Talos (Flatbreads)

(Spain)

Vegan, gluten free



Ingredients:

2 cups leached acorn meal*

2 cups hot water

2 cups maize flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

* See below for how to make leached acorn meal.

Instructions

Put the acorn meal, hot water, and salt in a saucepan and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring now and then to prevent sticking. Take off the heat and blend with an electric mixer to get rid of any lumps. Add the maize flour, mixing well until you have a stiff dough that is not too sticky. You may need to adjust the amount of flour. Leave to stand until cool. The dough can be kept overnight in the fridge.

Roll the cool dough into small balls between your palms, then either pat it into flat cakes by hand or, for thinner talos, roll it out between two sheets of plastic, or use a tortilla press. The talos can either be toasted in a hot pan with no or a very little oil, or baked in the oven for 15 minutes at 200°C. Serves four.

How to prepare leached acorn meal

Unless you can obtain sweet acorns from special varieties of holm oak (widely grown across southern Spain and Portugal as food for pigs and, traditionally, for humans), you will need to remove the bitter tannins from your acorns before they can be eaten. This involves a certain amount of work, though much less than is involved in growing any kind of annual grain. There are a range of traditional methods to do this, but most involve variations on the same basic steps:

- 1. Gathering:** Collect acorns in autumn from under any species of oak, discarding those that are very discoloured, squishy, lightweight, or with holes.
- 2. Drying:** Spread your acorns out to dry in a single layer, in a well-ventilated place out of direct sun. You can use stackable plastic baskets, lined with newspaper. The acorns can be left there until you're ready to process them.
- 3. Planting:** When you help yourself to acorns, you should also help the tree to reproduce. As you spread the acorns to dry, select the very biggest and best to plant immediately (acorns germinate quickly and don't keep well), in spots where they'll be protected from grazers and grass-cutters, e.g. among thorny bushes.
- 4. Shelling:** After a few days of drying, you can easily remove the shells with your fingers, or with a nutcracker or penknife.
- 5. Grinding:** Put the shelled acorns, a couple of handfuls at a time, into a blender with water and grind them to a coarse meal.
- 6. Leaching:** Pour the meal into a cloth bag and place this in a saucepan or bowl. Fill the bag and pan with water and leave to soak, removing the bitter tannins. Change the water about five times over a 24-hour period.
- 7. Baking:** Now your acorn meal is ready to use immediately, store in the freezer, or dry in the oven.



Nettle and potato omelette

(Spain)

Vegetarian, gluten free



Ingredients

2 ½ cups extra virgin olive oil
3 medium potatoes (about 1kg),
peeled and thinly sliced (about
0.5cm thick)
1/4 kg fresh stinging nettle leaves,
washed
1 yellow or white onion
6 eggs, beaten
2 teaspoons crushed sea salt

Instructions

Steam the nettles for 1 minute, drain and set aside to cool.

Add olive oil to a large skillet over medium heat.

Add the potato and onion; they should be mostly covered with olive oil (add a little more oil if needed). Season with 1 1/2 teaspoons of sea salt. Cook on a medium-high heat, maintaining a gentle boil, for 8-12 minutes, turning occasionally, until the potatoes are just fork-tender. Don't overcook.

Drain the potatoes in a colander, reserving the oil. Taste and season with more salt, if needed. Allow to cool for a few minutes.

Meanwhile, crack the eggs into a bowl and season with about ½ tsp salt. Beat the eggs together. Add the potato, onion and nettle and toss to coat.

Add a little bit of oil to the bottom of a 10-inch non-stick skillet over high heat. Once hot, pour the potato mixture into it and cook on high heat for 1 minute. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook for about 5 minutes.

Run a rubber spatula along the outer edges of the tortilla to make sure it's not sticking and to help it form its shape.

Once it starts to firm up around the edges and in the center (although it will still be a little runny) place a large plate (larger than the size of the pan) over the pan and flip the omelette onto the plate. At this point, the cooked side of the omelette should be facing up.

Now gently slide the omelette back into the pan. Aim the back of the omelette to slide into the back of the skillet and use the spatula to help slide the rest of it off the plate and into the pan. Then use the spatula again to press the sides of the omelette in and under, to keep that rounded edge.

Cook on high heat for 1 minute, and low heat for 2-3 more minutes or until done. It's done when it feels set in the center and a knife or toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Flip the finished omelette back onto a plate, and serve. Serve warm or at room temperature.

About the recipe

This recipe uses nettles, an unprocessed, wild food which contain up to 25% protein by dry weight. They are a complete protein, with a good mix of essential amino acids, and the protein is very easily digestible. Nettles are a widely available wild food that can be gathered for free with near-zero environmental impact.

The human use of nettles as a food source stretches back at least 4000 years, and likely much further back into prehistory than that. Nettle stems also contain a very strong bast fiber that can be used to create very high-quality linens.

After potatoes were brought back from the New World, it took more than 200 years for them to become an everyday staple of Spanish cuisine. People likely started preparing primitive tortillas not long after. Spanish texts from the mid- to late 18th century describe potatoes as a useful ingredient in “stews and omelets.” In Madrid and much of northern Spain, it's common to start your day with a pincho de tortilla for breakfast.

Root vegetables such as potatoes are also among the lowest-emission food types. Potatoes are a rich source of fiber, iron, vitamin C and vitamin B-6.

Potatoes with forest mushrooms

(Lithuania)

Vegetarian, gluten free



Ingredients

600 gr of potatoes

3 onions

60 gr of butter

300 ml of sour cream

50 g of greens

1 kg of mushrooms (preferably seasonal, from the forest).

salt

Instructions

The washed and cleaned mushrooms should be dried and sliced into smaller pieces.

Fry the chopped onions in half the butter, add the mushrooms, and fry while stirring.

Peel the potatoes, cut them in straws (or otherwise), fry in the remaining butter until almost baked, add the mushrooms with onions, sprinkle with salt, add sour cream, stir, cover, and fry.

When serving sprinkle with chopped greens.

About the Recipe

Heritage

The tradition of collecting mushrooms is widespread in Lithuania. From August to September, people often travel to the forests to search for and collect about 30 different species of edible mushrooms. The mushrooms collected later are used for main dishes, soups, and sauces, also they can be canned, dried, marinated, or sold at roadside markets. Due to this tradition, many national Lithuanian dishes are seasoned with mushrooms.

A mushroom picking championship is held in Lithuania every year, during which participants compete for the title of mushroom champion in order to collect as many valuable mushrooms as possible within the set period.

One of the most popular and valuable mushrooms found in Lithuanian forests is boletus, also known as the “King of mushrooms”.

The recipe of potatoes with forest mushrooms is often used in Lithuania for the Christmas Eve table when 12 dishes without meat are traditionally prepared for the whole family and relatives.

Health

According to experts, mushrooms are equated with vegetables and are extremely nutritious, which means that eating them is indeed very healthy. Generally, mushrooms contain iron, manganese, cobalt, lead, as well as amino acids. Boletus, considered to be the best species of mushroom in Lithuania, in nutrition is equivalent to even meat or fish.

Sustainability

In Lithuania, mushroom picking is a very popular and at the same time sustainable way to get ingredients for various dishes. This way, people spend more time in nature, while not wasting food packaging and transportation resources. The processing of collected mushrooms - boiling, frying, drying, marinating - is mostly done at home, with family members and friends, which strengthens the community. In addition, local forest mushrooms are sold in the local markets without packaging.

Beet and white bean salad

(Lithuania)

Vegetarian, gluten free



Ingredients

4 boiled beets
2 cups of boiled beans
3 boiled eggs
1 onion
10 small, pickled cucumbers
One small apple or half a large apple (around 60g)
5 tbsp of mayonnaise
1 teaspoon of salt
1 small pinch of black pepper

Instructions

Grate the beets, chop other vegetables and eggs, mix everything with a spoon, season with spices and mix with mayonnaise. If you like a milder taste, you can skip the cucumber.

About the Recipe

Heritage

The easy-to-make beet and white bean salad evokes nostalgia as it is one of 12 dishes served on the table on Christmas Eve in Lithuania.

The cuisine of Lithuanian peasants has not had a great variety of vegetables and fruits for a long time. Cabbages, carrots, turnips, beets, apples, and pears were mainly grown and used in all traditional dishes.

Health

Beets are usually associated with many health benefits, they are rich in B group vitamins including niacin and betaine, and minerals such as iodine, magnesium, potassium, calcium, iron, and bioflavonoids. Also, beets contain a significant amount of vitamin C, which strengthens the immune system, phosphorus, while their leaves are rich in vitamin A. It is known that beet juice may boost stamina, help lower blood pressure and improve blood flow. It is not surprising that beets are a frequently used ingredient not only in Lithuanian domestic cuisine but also in Lithuanian hospitals and rehabilitation centres.

Among the other main ingredients of this recipe, beans are a good source of protein, fibre, vitamins, and minerals, as well as other valuable substances. Beans are rich in various trace elements and minerals that are good for health, such as iron, phosphorus, calcium, potassium, magnesium, folic acid, and vitamin B6.



Fried bread with cheese and garlic

(Lithuania)

Vegetarian



Ingredients

450 gr of black bread
100 gr of hard cheese, finely grated
75 gr of processed cheese
3 tbsp. of mayonnaise
6 cloves garlic, pressed in a garlic press
sunflower oil
salt

Instructions

Cut the crust from the bread, then cut it into strips of equal size. Place them in a tin lined with baking parchment and sprinkle with oil. Bake in a preheated oven at 200°C for about 20 minutes. Sprinkle the baked bread with salt and rub it with pressed garlic.

For the sauce, melt the processed cheese in a pan or microwave, then mix it with the mayonnaise and 3 pressed cloves of garlic. Take a piece of bread, dip one side in the sauce, then roll in the grated cheese and place on a plate.

About the Recipe

Heritage

In Lithuania bread itself has been used since the first centuries after Christ. Notably, rye bread has a special place in Lithuanian culture – not only as food but also as one of the main symbols of the nation, occupying the most honourable place on the table of ancestors during Christmas Eve. Lithuanian ancestors even believed in the miraculous powers of bread.

In Lithuanian villages, rye bread was the main meal until the mid 20th century, although potato dishes began to spread and became the priority of national cuisine from the mid 19th century. Bread is often mentioned in Lithuanian fairy tales, myths, and poetry as an integral part of the everyday life of peasants.

Currently, baked bread is a very common snack in Lithuania, often sold at concerts, festivals, fairs, and even bars. Notably, baked bread has spread to other countries due to Lithuanians who have gone abroad - this snack can be ordered in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Germany, where it is considered a common beer snack.

Health and Sustainability

Baked bread is a snack that does not take much time to prepare and doesn't need a huge variety of ingredients. Usually, this recipe is great for unexpected guests, as the needed ingredients are usually in everyone's kitchen.

To make the snack healthier, you can replace the mayonnaise with another ingredient, such as curd or Greek yogurt. In addition to cheese, the sauce can also be seasoned with a variety of herbs, garlic, nuts, or other healthier ingredients, according to taste. In addition, you should use quality bread, which should not contain any preservatives, only flour, water, and yeast.

Mayonnaise is not normally vegan, because one of the crucial ingredients is eggs. But you can find several brands of egg-free and dairy-free vegan mayonnaise in grocery shops.

Baking the bread in the oven is a healthier option, however, if you are going to fry the bread in a pan then try not to cover it in oil, a small amount is enough.

Spinach pie (spanakopita, σπανακόπιτα)

(Greece)

Vegetarian



Ingredients

For the pie

1 package of puff pastry sheet (choose rustic, if available)
100g olive oil

For the filling

110g olive oil
230g fresh onion, sliced
600g leek, sliced
900g spinach, washed and cleaned (in season: September – June)
6g mint, finely chopped
25g dill, finely chopped
120g eggs, about 2 eggs
10g Salt

For the pie

Lightly grease the pan and spread the first pastry sheet so that it touches all points, the bottom and the walls of the pan, making sure it protrudes from its surface. Grease it and place two more sheets on top in the same way, oiling them one by one. On the surface of the third sheet, spread the filling evenly and fold in the edges of the sheets. Spread 3 sheets on top, one on top of the other, oiling them one by one and pushing the edges inside.

Using a knife, carve the pie and spread it with olive oil.

Bake in a preheated oven at 160 ° C until it gets a nice and golden color, for about 120 minutes.

About the Recipe

Heritage

Pies are especially famous in Epirus, Thessaly and Central Greece. Especially in Epirus the pie is the bread and the food, because it was the main food of the nomadic cattle breeders, the tents of the Vlachs and the Sarakatsana: a little flour from the exchanges of products with the farmers, the products of the herd and what nature can offer. This explains both the amazing variety and the dozens of pie variations.

In urban centers, pies have been differentiated and evolved according to modern eating habits and preferences. We have pies with one pastry sheet, without a pastry sheet, with two sheets or with many sheets. The filling of the pie varies from region to region depending on the local ingredients and local customs.

Health

While spinach is nutrient rich, the amount found in one slice is not adequate to provide enough nutrients. Still, “spanakopita” is one of the healthiest options when it comes to delicious pies, as it has relatively few calories and little fat. Its fats, mainly monounsaturated, come from the olive oil of the recipe. It does not contain any cholesterol, while its sodium content is very low.



SOUPS



Nip Nip Soup

(UK)

Vegan, gluten free



Ingredients

4 small turnips (no larger than the size of an eating apple)

10 parsnips

1 onion

1 carrot

4 stalks of celery

1 cup of vegetable stock

Spices. Suggested: 1 teaspoon of cinnamon; 2 teaspoon of cumin; crushed black pepper.
(but can be of your choice)

Instructions

Peel and cut up the turnips and parsnips into cubes. Dice the onion, carrot and celery. Saute the onion, carrot and celery dice in vegetable oil until they begin to go soft. Then add the turnips and parsnips and stir until lightly browned.

Add a cup of vegetable stock and a cup of water. Bring to a boil, then simmer until the turnips and parsnips are just soft.

Add seasoning and spices as required to taste, then simmer for 5 more minutes, until the vegetables are cooked.

Use a hand blender, hand masher, or food mill to puree the soup. Bring it back to a boil, adding a bit of water if the mixture is too thick.

Add toasted sunflower and pumpkin seeds to garnish and serve with bread (or bannock bread). Some people like to add a dash of tabasco sauce.

About the Recipe

Heritage

Like carrots, parsnips are native to Eurasia and have been eaten there since ancient times. The archaeological evidence for the cultivation of the parsnip is still rather limited; Greek and Roman literary sources are a major source about its early use. There are some difficulties in distinguishing between parsnip and carrot (which, in Roman times, were white or purple) in classical writings since both vegetables seem to have been called *pastinaca* in Latin, yet each vegetable appears to be well under cultivation in Roman times. The parsnip was much esteemed, and the Emperor Tiberius accepted part of the tribute payable to Rome by Germany in the form of parsnips. In Europe, the vegetable was used as a source of sugar before cane and beet sugars were available.

Health

This recipe uses minimally processed ingredients, which are healthier than processed alternatives.

The parsnip is rich in vitamins and minerals, and is particularly rich in potassium with 375mg per 100g. Several of the B-group vitamins are present, but levels of vitamin C are reduced in cooking. Since most of the vitamins and minerals are found close to the skin, many will be lost unless the root is finely peeled or cooked whole.

The consumption of parsnips has potential health benefits. They contain antioxidants such as faltarinol, faltarindiol, panaxydiol, and methyl-faltarindiol, which may potentially have anticancer, anti-inflammatory and antifungal properties. The dietary fiber in parsnips is partly of the soluble and partly the insoluble type and comprises cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin. The high fiber content of parsnips may help prevent constipation and reduce blood cholesterol levels.

Sustainability

Vegetables are some of the lowest environmental-impact foods, especially carrots, parsnips, and onions, as they can be grown locally using organic techniques and stored easily.



Kail Brose (Kale Broth)

(UK)

Vegan



Ingredients

750ml of good vegetable stock (3 cups)

20g oatmeal (1/3 cup)

Salt and pepper

500g curly kale

Instructions

Bring the stock to the boil. Add the oatmeal and leave it to simmer while you prepare the kale, as follows: Remove all the coarse stems, shred the leaves finely and wash them thoroughly. Drain the kale and add it to the pan, then simmer the broth for about half an hour, or until the kale is tender. Serve piping hot.

About the Recipe

Heritage

During World War II, the cultivation of kale and other vegetables in the UK was encouraged by the Dig for Victory campaign. The vegetable was easy to grow and provided important nutrients missing from a diet because of rationing.

In Northern Germany, there is a winter tradition known as "Kohlfahrt" ("kale trip"), where a group of people will go on a hike through the woods during the day before gathering at an inn or private residence where kale is served, usually with bacon and Kohlwurst ("kale sausage"). Kale is considered a Northern German staple and comfort food.

In Scotland, kale provided such a base for a traditional diet that the word in some Scots dialects is synonymous with food. To be "off one's kail" is to feel too ill to eat.

Health

Raw kale is a rich source of vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin B6, folate, and manganese (100g supplies more than 20% of the daily recommended intake of these) as well as of thiamin, riboflavin, pantothenic acid, vitamin E and several dietary minerals, including iron, calcium, magnesium, potassium, and phosphorus.

Boiling raw kale diminishes most of these nutrients, though values for vitamins A, C, and K, and manganese remain substantial. Steaming, microwaving or stir frying kale does not cause significant loss.

Kale is a source of the carotenoids, lutein and zeaxanthin. As with broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables, kale contains glucosinolate compounds, such as glucoraphanin, which contributes to the formation of sulforaphane, a compound under preliminary research for its potential to affect human health beneficially.

Flavored "kale chips" have been produced as a potato chip substitute, and represent a healthier option.

Sustainability

Kale is usually an annual plant grown from seed with a wide range of germination temperatures. It is hardy and thrives in wintertime and can survive in temperatures as low as -15.0° Celsius. Kale can become sweeter in taste after a heavy frost. The year-long access to the plant and the fact that it can be grown locally make it a good example of a sustainable food.

Scotch Broth

(UK)

Vegetarian/Vegan

Ingredients

(Serves 4-6)

2 carrots (100g)

1 onion (100g)

1 stick of celery (100g)

1 leek (100g)

1 small neep (turnip) (150g)

110g pearl barley (1/2 cup)

70g split dried peas (1/3 cup) – green are the most traditional, but yellow are fine

2.5 litres of vegetable stock

30g butter/oil (2tbsp)

2 tbsp parsley

150g kale (a few handfuls) or cabbage

salt and pepper to taste



Instructions

Finely chop the onion, leek, and celery. Dice the carrots and peel and dice the neep. Try to keep the pieces all the same size to allow for a nice and even cook.

Melt the butter/oil in a large pot. It's always good to start with the fat whenever you make a soup: it helps with the flavour and colours the vegetables.

Add the onion, leek, and celery and allow to sweat for 5 minutes, but not to brown.

Add the carrots, neep, barley, split peas and stock and seasoning.

Bring to the boil before turning down to simmer for 1 hour or until the barley and peas are soft.

If you're using cabbage, add 10 minutes before the end, or 5 minutes for kale. Make sure the Kale/cabbage is soft before serving.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Stir through parsley just before serving.

About the Recipe

Heritage

Barley is a popular cereal grain and one of the first crops to be domesticated by human beings around 10,000 years ago. With a long history of uses in soups, stews, and breads, barley is also a key ingredient in beer and whisky production. In 2017, barley was ranked fourth among grains in quantity produced (149 million tonnes) behind maize, rice and wheat.

A recipe for Scotch broth was first recorded in the 1800s but had been passed down from one generation to the next in Scottish homes for centuries before that.

A vegetarian Scotch Broth recipe isn't a new thing, as many Scottish recipes were adapted due to a lack of meat when times were particularly hard.

Health

Barley is a source of essential nutrients including dietary fiber, B vitamins, niacin, iron, and manganese.

According to Health Canada and the US Food and Drug Administration, consuming at least 3 grams per day of barley beta-glucan or 0.75 grams per serving of soluble fiber can lower levels of blood cholesterol, a risk factor for cardiovascular diseases.

Eating whole-grain barley, as well as other high-fiber grains, improves regulation of blood sugar (i.e., reduces blood glucose response to a meal). Consuming breakfast cereals containing barley over weeks to months also improved cholesterol levels and glucose regulation.

Barley contains gluten and is not suitable for consumption by anyone with a serious gluten-related disorder. If you want to make this soup gluten-free, it is worth replacing the barley with grains such as buckwheat or quinoa, or simply with more dried pulses. For a vegan version, just replace the butter with vegetable oil.

Sustainability

The vegetables in this dish, carrots, leaks, onions, and celery can be cultivated locally and organically.

Barley is more tolerant of soil salinity than wheat, which might explain the increase of barley cultivation in Mesopotamia from the second millennium BCE onwards. Barley has a short growing season and is also relatively drought tolerant.



Pumpkin Purée

(Spain)

Vegan, gluten free



Ingredients

(for 4 people)

800g pumpkin

2 potatoes (400g)

4 carrots

2 leeks

4 tablespoons olive oil

water

salt

parsley

pumpkin seeds

Instructions

Heat 5 cups of water with 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a casserole on the stove.

While heating, prepare the vegetables. To do this, peel the pumpkin and cut it into large dice. Top and tail the carrots, peel them and cut them into slices of about 1 centimeter. Clean the leek well to remove all dirt. Cut a small piece and keep it to decorate the dishes. Cut the rest of the leek into slices. Finally, peel the potato and chop it as for stew, that is, tear it into pieces with the help of a knife.

Once the vegetables are ready, put them in the casserole: pumpkin, carrots, leek and potato. Add salt to your liking. Put the lid in the casserole and let it cook for 25 minutes over medium heat, until the vegetables are soft.

Remove the casserole from the heat and blend everything with the electric mixer until a fine purée is left. Garnish with parsley and a few pumpkin seeds, and (optionally) cream or butter.

About the Recipe

The pumpkin is a variety of squash (genus *Cucurbita*) domesticated in Central America around 10,000 years ago, and brought to Europe by the Spanish colonizers around the 16th century. The flesh, seeds, leaves and flowers are all edible. The fruit has a tough, shiny skin which allows it to be stored through the winter with no processing. It is a very efficient food plant in terms of yield per hectare, especially when grown in combination with climbing beans and maize: the so-called "Three Sisters," one of the best-known examples of companion planting. The maize provides support for the beans, which supply nitrogen to the other plants, while the pumpkin vines suppress weed growth.

Pumpkins, which are harvested in October, are famous for being carved into jack-o'-lanterns at Hallowe'en (All Saints' Eve). This celebration of the supernatural and ancestral spirits is of Celtic origin, and was brought to North America by Irish and Scottish immigrants in the 19th century. In many Celtic-influenced areas of Europe, including Asturias and Galicia in northern Spain, jack-o'-lanterns were traditionally made from turnips, not pumpkins, until the festival was re-introduced from the United States in the late twentieth century.



Cold Beet Soup (šaltibarščiai)

(Lithuania)

Vegetarian, gluten free



Ingredients

500 gr of boiled beets
3 eggs
200 gr of cucumbers
20 gr of dill
30 gr of onion greens
1 l of Kefir
1 small pinch of salt

Instructions

1. Hardboil the eggs (10 minutes), allow to cool, peel and cut into pieces.
2. Cut the cucumbers into small symmetrical pieces. Chop the dill and onion greens (leaves).
3. Separate the liquid from the beets and grate them in a large bowl. Add chopped cucumbers, greens, and pour the kefir on top. If you like more liquid cold borscht, you can dilute it a little with milk or boiled water to the required consistency. Salt according to taste.
4. Serve chilled with hot potatoes.

About the Recipe

Heritage

If zeppelins are considered as the main dish in Lithuanian cuisine, the main traditional soup is undoubtedly cold beet soup. Dating back to the 17th century, cold beet soup is a seasonal soup, usually made and eaten during the summer to cool down.

Recently, in order to increase tourism, Lithuanian chefs came up with a diversified recipe for cold beet soup. At the moment, you can taste as many as 30 Cold beet soup variants by visiting various cafes and restaurants, all of which are listed on the Cold beet soup map: <https://www.lithuania.travel/en/news/lithuania-goes-pink-for-returning-tourists-cold-beet-root-soup-map>

Health and Sustainability

Cold beet soup consists of ingredients - beets, radishes, dill, onions - that are rich in vitamins and minerals, while eggs are rich in protein, and kefir has a great effect on the intestines and helps prevent any illness.

It is a great dish for athletes, because it is rich in protein, and beets help to rebuild muscles after exercise, so it helps the body to recover faster after sports. Cold beet soup is very low in calories because of kefir and other ingredients.

Cold beets perfectly revitalise. When the weather outside is hot, the body itself requires refreshment, so we need something that is the cold, fresh and non-burdensome on the stomach.



Lentil soup (fakes soupa - φακές σούπα)

(Greece)

Vegan



Ingredients

500 gr brown/black/green lentils (not red)
1/2 cup olive oil
2 chopped onions (in season: April – September)
2 small leeks finely chopped (in season: October- April)
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped (in season: May - August)
2 grated/ finely chopped carrots (in season: August- April)
2 medium tomatoes, finely chopped (in season: May – October)
2 tablespoons of canned chopped tomatoes/ tomato paste
2 bay leaves
a little oregano
a little vinegar
a little olive oil for serving
salt
pepper

Instructions

For better iron absorption, let the lentils soak in water with a bit of salt from the night before. Then rinse them well and throw the water away (or water your plants). If you forget to soak them, you can boil them for 10 minutes, throw the water away, give them a good rinse and put them aside.

Heat 3-4 tablespoons of the total olive oil and sauté the onion and leek for 3 minutes. Add the garlic and carrot and stir. Add the tomato paste and rub it on the base of the pot.

Add the lentils, tomatoes, bay leaf and hot water just enough to cover the food. Put on the lid and cook for about 25 minutes on low heat, to simmer the ingredients. Add salt and pepper and the remaining olive oil from the 1/2 cup slowly, stirring with a wooden spoon over low heat to simmer the lentils.

At the end add 2 tablespoons of vinegar and sprinkle with a little oregano. Have a taste and add some more salt and pepper if needed.

Serve the soup hot, with olives and toasted bread.

About the Recipe

History

Lentils were known to the ancient Greeks as a “lentil lens” (fakós esthiómenos). It is one of the first plants that man began to cultivate systematically. It has been cultivated since ancient times (around 2000 BC). The cultivation of lentils was known in ancient Egypt, while Jews, Greeks and Romans cultivated and consumed it.

Health

Lentils are legumes with great nutritional value, rich in iron, phosphorus, carbohydrates, proteins and B vitamins.

Greeks usually eat fakes with bread and sardines or feta cheese. Tip: while sardines and feta cheese are tasty and pair well with lentil soup, they are both calcium-rich foods, which leads to lower iron absorption.

Lentil soup eaten with starchy food, such as rice or bread, provides protein of high biological value, equal to meat.

Sustainability

In Greece, lentils are widely cultivated in almost all parts of the country as they adapt to many climatic types. It is a plant that can withstand drought, but also high and very low temperatures. Two are the most important Greek varieties: Pelasgia and Arachova.

Like green peas, they are a good alternative to meat. Especially when combined with lemon and rice, they provide not only high iron absorption but form a complete protein as well.

They can be easily found package-free in local farmers' markets.



Chickpea soup (revithosoupa - ρεβυθόσουπα)

(Greece)

Vegan



Ingredients

500 g chickpeas
1 large red onion, finely chopped
1/2 cup olive oil
1 bay leaf
2 tbsp. dry oregano (optional)
salt
pepper, freshly ground
1-2 lemons, juiced (in season:
September – March)
2 tbsp. flour

Instructions

For better iron absorption, let the chickpeas soak in water with a bit of salt from the night before (18+ hours). Then rinse them well and throw the water away (or water your plants).

Put the chickpeas in a large pot with water to cover them (at least 4 cm) and boil them. Remove the foam every now and then and continue for 15 minutes.

Strain and put the chickpeas back in the pot with enough lukewarm water to cover them again. Boil and add the olive oil, onion, oregano and bay leaf.

Lower the heat and put the lid on. Let them cook for 1-2 hours, until soft. Regularly check if you need to add water.

Put the flour and lemon juice in a bowl, gradually add 1-2 tablespoons of juice from the pot and mix with a stirrer.

Slowly add the mixture to the pot and season with salt and pepper. Stir lightly for 2-3 minutes until the soup becomes thick.

Serve the soup hot, with olives and toasted bread.

About the Recipe

Heritage

Chickpea cultivation has been known since ancient times in the areas around the Mediterranean. The center of origin is probably located in the Caucasus and the Middle East. Later, it spread west, to the countries around the Mediterranean and east to India. There is archaeological evidence for the cultivation of chickpeas dating from the third to the fourth millennium BC.

The first written reference to the chickpea is found in Homer's Iliad and according to mythology is a finding of Poseidon. In classical Greece its name was erevinthos and it was eaten as a main dish. The "erinthos after streams", ie chickpeas along with pomegranate seeds, refer to the "Deipnosophists", the famous book of the Athenian, which deals with the diet of the ancient Greeks, written at the end of the 2nd century AD. The Byzantines also consumed chickpeas, the "trogalia", which were roasted chickpeas (strangles), sold in the streets. During the German occupation, the lack of coffee imports led to the use of grated roasted chickpeas as a substitute for coffee.

The wide use of chickpeas by the Greeks is also reflected in customs, songs, proverbs and fairy tales.

Health

Chickpeas have great nutritional value, as they are rich in protein, iron, phosphorus, magnesium and zinc. They also contain calcium, potassium, B vitamins as well as vitamin K. The added benefit is that they have a low glycemic index, which means that although they are rich in carbohydrates, they do not tend to raise blood sugar. They are the best plant source of protein of great biological value, rich in carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins and essential minerals. The presence of so many vital nutrients makes them an ideal and complete food offering many health benefits. They accumulate high amounts of fiber that help the proper functioning of the gastrointestinal tract and improve the lipid profile. But what distinguishes chickpeas from other beans is the excellent quality of the proteins they contain, as they provide all the essential amino acids in the excellent proportion that the human body needs and especially the amino acid methionine which ranks them in the complete proteins, such as meat, milk and soy.

Sustainability

Chickpea varieties are divided into small and large, which differ in their resistance to cold. The small chickpeas can withstand down to -10°C while the large ones down to -2°C. Chickpeas are generally considered to be more resistant to drought. In terms of soil, chickpeas are not at all demanding and therefore can be grown in a wide variety of soil types.

Like green peas, lentils and giant beans, due to their nutritional profile they are a great alternative to meat with a much lower carbon footprint. Also, they can be easily found package-free in local farmers' markets.

MAIN COURSES



Shepherdess Pie (Shepherd's/Cottage Pie)

(UK)

Vegan, gluten free



Ingredients

3–4 medium potatoes or about 5 smaller ones
5–6 small carrots
Cauliflower
About 1/4 or a large aubergine (eggplant)
3–4 small zucchini (baby marrows/courgettes)
2 onions
3 cloves garlic
herbs, salt
marmite (optional) or salt
1 can cooked lentils

Instructions

Boil the potatoes, remove the peel and set aside. Chop the onions in fine rings; cut the aubergine into small cubes; cut the cauliflower into small pieces (the smaller stalks are also fine to include, if chopped into small pieces); cut the carrots into small cubes. Dice the garlic finely. Slightly cover the bottom of the pan in oil (about 2 to 3 tablespoons). Heat slightly. Add the onions and cook slightly. Add the courgettes and aubergines and cook for a few minutes. Add the garlic, carrots and other vegetables (which can include peas as well). Add the herbs: 3 tablespoons of fresh herbs or 3 teaspoons of dried herbs such as marjoram, thyme; oregano, a very small amount of rosemary—about 1 sprig if fresh—and a bit of savoury.

Add 1/2 cup of water with 1/2 teaspoon salt (or more to taste) OR 1/2 cup water with 1 teaspoon of marmite. Cook over a medium to low heat, until the vegetables are tender (keep an eye on the water, adding more if necessary to prevent burning.) Add the lentils and stir well. Cook for a further 5 minutes so all the flavours combine.

While the lentil mixture is cooking, cut the potatoes, heat them up with a very small amount of water, remove from the heat then mash with a bit of milk, margarine and vegan cheese.

Put the lentil mixture into a pie dish. Cover the top with the mashed potatoes, score the top lightly with a fork (to create a pattern) and put under the grill or in the oven to lightly brown and crisp the top.

About the recipe

Heritage

The term cottage pie was in use by 1791. The term shepherd's pie did not appear until 1854, and was initially used synonymously with cottage pie, regardless of whether the meat was beef or mutton. However, in the UK since the 21st century, the term shepherd's pie is used more commonly when the meat is lamb.

In early cookery books, the dish is given as a way of using leftover roasted meat of any kind, and the pie dish was lined on the sides and bottom with mashed potato, as well as having a mashed potato crust on top.

The French name hachis Parmentier is documented in French in 1900, and in English in 1898, and is generally defined as synonymous or equivalent to shepherd's pie.

Health

This recipe substitutes the beef of the traditional “Cottage Pie” or the lamb of the “Shepherd’s Pie” with pulses and vegetables which are low in cholesterol and saturated fat.

Cooked lentils (when boiled) are a rich source of numerous essential minerals, including folate, iron, manganese, phosphorus, magnesium, copper and zinc, and other nutrients such as thiamine, pantothenic acid, and vitamin B6.

Lentils have the second-highest ratio of protein to food energy of any legume, after soybeans. Lentils contain the carotenoids, lutein and zeaxanthin, and polyunsaturated fatty acids.

Sustainability

The recipe uses ingredients that can either grow locally or, in the case of lentils, have a low environmental impact, especially if they are organic. As recently as 2017, the British company Hodmedod reintroduced local cultivation of lentils. Lentils can be grown year-long, and therefore, do not need to be imported off-season, reducing the environmental impact of long-distance travel.



Toad in the Hole

(UK)

Vegan



Ingredients

8 vegan sausages

120 g plain flour

30 g gram (chickea) flour

2 tsp Bouillon vegan soup stock (alternatively ½ tsp fine salt and 1 tsp dry herbs)

2 ¼ tsp baking powder

½ tsp turmeric

90 ml aquafaba (chickpea water drained from a 400g tin of chickpeas. Refrigerate the chickpeas for another meal)

150 ml soya or nut milk (unsweetened)

150 ml water

½ teaspoon wet mustard

1 tbsp cider vinegar

4 tbsp sunflower oil

Instructions

Pre-heat the oven to 210°C.

Sieve the dry ingredients (flours, seasoning, turmeric and baking powder) into a bowl and mix well.

In another bowl, whisk the aquafaba (chickpea water) until it is frothy, then add the water, milk, mustard and cider vinegar and mix together.

Pour the liquid into the bowl of dry ingredients, mixing and whisking to form a thick smooth batter. Then chill the batter in the fridge for at least 10 minutes.

In the meantime, pour the oil into a medium size oven dish and place into the oven for 10 minutes until the oil is smoking hot. Carefully remove the dish and pour the batter into the hot oil, then lay in the sausages. Return immediately to the oven and bake for 10 minutes at 210°C, then turn down the heat to 200°C and bake for another 25-30 minutes or until golden brown and crispy on the edges.

Serve with onion or mushroom gravy and your favourite veg.

About the recipe

Heritage

Traditional “Toad in the Hole” (also known as “Sausage Toad”) is an English recipe. It consists of (meat) sausages in Yorkshire pudding batter, and it is usually served with onion gravy and vegetables. Yorkshire pudding is a baked pudding made from a batter of eggs, flour, and milk or water. Historically, the dish has also been prepared using other meats, such as rump steak and lamb's kidney.

Batter puddings became popular in the early 18th century. At this time, people in the north of England tended to use dripping to make their puddings crispier, whereas people in the south of England made the popular Yorkshire puddings, which are softer.

Dishes like toad in the hole appeared in print as early as 1762, where it was described as a "vulgar" name for a "small piece of beef baked in a large pudding". Toad in the hole was originally created as a way to stretch out meat in poor households. Chefs therefore suggested using the cheapest meats in this dish. In 1747, for example, Hannah Glasse's *The Art of Cookery* listed a recipe for "pigeon in a hole", calling for pigeon rather than the contemporary sausages. In 1861, Isabella Beeton listed a similar recipe using rump steak and lamb's kidney, while Charles Elme Francatelli's 1852 recipe mentions "6d. or 1s." worth of any kind of cheap meat. This recipe was described as "English cooked-again stewed meat" (lesso rifatto all'inglese) or "toad in the Hole", in the first book of modern Italian cuisine, which stressed that meat was to be leftover from stews and re-cooked in batter.

This vegan batter uses chickpea (gram) flour and aquafarba (water from cooking chickpeas). The chickpea is a key ingredient in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cuisines, used in hummus (Hummus is the Arabic word for chickpeas), and, when ground into flour, falafel. It also is important in Indian cuisine, used in salads, soups and stews, and curry, in chana masala, and in other meal products like channa. There are different types of chickpeas such as “desi chana”, “garbanzo” and “ceci neri”, a type grown only in Apulia and Basilicata, in southern Italy. *Cicer reticulatum* is the wild progenitor of chickpeas, and currently only grows in southeast Turkey, where they are believed to have been domesticated around 10,000 years ago.

Health

The substitution of meat sausages and other meats with vegan sausages has some health advantages. While meat sausages can be made with any type of meat, rendering it difficult to make a general comparison health-wise, meat products typically used to make sausages will have a higher fat content than in vegetarian or vegan sausages, which are normally made from soya. Sausages, whether meat or vegetarian, are processed products which tend to be less healthy than non-processed alternatives often due to high contents of salt and additives. In the case of “Toad in a Hole”, using healthier meats for the traditional meat recipe can be a healthier option, and so would be the use of vegetarian sausages. Vegetarian or vegan sausages can be a healthier option particularly when they are homemade, including sausages that are not soya-based but made with ingredients such as potatoes or peas. A clear advantage of vegetarian sausages is that the ingredients they are made with are free from hormones and antibiotics, which are present in many meat products but not labelled as part of the ingredients list.

Soybeans are a rich source of essential nutrients, and a good source of protein for vegetarians and vegans or for people who want to reduce the amount of meat they eat, according to the US Food and Drug Administration:

“Soy protein products can be good substitutes for animal products because, unlike some other beans, soy offers a 'complete' protein profile. ... Soy protein products can replace animal-based foods—which also have complete proteins but tend to contain more fat, especially saturated fat—without requiring major adjustments elsewhere in the diet.”

Chickpeas are high in protein, dietary fiber, folate, and certain dietary minerals, such as iron and phosphorus.

Sustainability

The traditional recipe of Toad in a Hole was specifically conceived to make use of leftover pieces of meat, a practice that would be considered sustainable in today's cuisine as it avoids food waste and the environmental effects associated with it.

But the environmental impact of this recipe will largely depend on what ingredients are used in making the sausages, as it would with the meat ingredients in the traditional recipe.

Soya production is linked with deforestation and habitat degradation, particularly in the Amazon rainforest and the neighbouring Cerrado region of dry forest and savannah, which is home to 5% of the world's biodiversity. Soya is Brazil's biggest export by value, but most of the world's soya is fed to livestock; only 6% of it is eaten directly by humans.

Deforestation in the Amazon is at highest in over a decade, and it is an issue that affects us all as an important biodiversity and carbon sink is being lost at a dramatic pace. The national politics of countries such as Brazil also signal that this pace of deforestation will continue and even increase in the near future. It is for this reason that consumers are often advised to buy soya not grown in Brazil and neighbouring countries. Consumers can also include more vegan options in their diets to avoid the need to feed soya to cattle. Within the European Union, soya production in 2018 was highest in Italy followed by Romania and France. Production in the Union follows more strict sustainability practices than other parts of the world.

As it is the case with similar pulses such as lentils, chickpea production has a low environmental impact, especially when they are cultivated organically and as locally as possible. Although India produces 70% of the world's chickpeas, the UK is a net exporter of chickpeas, mostly to its European neighbours, and representing 2.5% of the total world exports in 2019.

Vegetarian/Vegan Haggis

(UK)

Vegetarian/Vegan



Ingredients

- 2 large portobello mushrooms (approx 200g)
- 1 medium-sized brown onion
- 1 large carrot
- 50g salted butter – replace with veg oil to make the haggis vegan; split this in half.
- 1 cup (100g) pinhead oatmeal
- ¼ cup (55g) split peas
- ¼ cup (55g) pearl barley
- ½ tsp mace
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp table salt
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- 1 ½ cup (600ml) vegetable stock (approx. 3 stock cubes)
- 1 ½ tsp marmite (heaped)
- 1 ½ tsp black treacle (heaped)

Instructions

Place the split peas and pearl barley into two separate saucepans and boil: the split peas for 25 mins and the barley for 20 mins (start 5 mins after the split peas).

Grease the baking tin thoroughly.

Once the split peas and barley are boiling take out a chopping board and roughly chop the portobello mushrooms, finely chop the onion, and grate the carrot.

Heat the frying pan, then add 25g of butter or oil and fry the onions in the butter until they begin to soften.

Add the chopped mushrooms. Once the mushrooms and onion are soft, stir in the grated carrot. Stir the mix together over a low heat until well mixed.

Make the vegetable stock then stir in the marmite and black treacle until they both dissolve fully into the stock. Add 400ml of the stock to the frying pan, then add the oats, salt, nutmeg, pepper and mace and continue to stir while gently heating.

Drain the split peas and pearl barley and add both to the frying pan. If they are still cooking, take the frying pan off the heat until they are ready to be added.

Allow the stock to reduce down, stirring gently.

Add 25g butter/oil and the remaining 200ml of stock.

Turn up the stove to a medium heat and cook the mix until the stock has reduced completely, stirring often to avoid it catching on the bottom of the frying pan.

Heat your oven to 180°C / 350°F.

When the mix is cooked through and the stock has reduced, taste to make sure flavour is balanced, adding more spices, marmite or treacle as required. The flavour should be warming and peppery with an earthy undertone and a little sweetness.

Spoon the mix into the well-greased loaf tin and place into the preheated oven for 20-30 mins, or until the top of the mix is crispy and darkened.

Once the haggis is cooked take it out of the oven. Place a length of tinfoil over the top of the haggis and then an upturned baking tray. Then, being careful not to burn your hands, hold the tray, foil and tin and gently turn it upside down so you end up with your haggis, out of the tin, on the foil on the baking tray. Place this back in the oven for 2-5 mins to crisp the outside of the haggis.

About the recipe

Heritage

Haggis is popularly assumed to be of Scottish origin, but many countries have produced similar dishes, albeit with different names. However, the recipes as known and standardised now are distinctly Scottish. The first known written recipes for a dish of the name, made with offal and herbs, are as "hagese", in the verse cookbook Liber Cure Cocorum dating from around 1430 in Lancashire, north west England, and, as "hagws of a schepe" from an English cookbook also of c. 1430.

In her book, *The Haggis: A Little History*, Clarissa Dickson Wright suggests that haggis was invented as a way of cooking quick-spoiling offal near the site of a hunt, without the need to carry along an additional cooking vessel. The liver and kidneys could be grilled directly over a fire, but this treatment was unsuitable for the stomach, intestines, or lungs. Chopping up the lungs and stuffing the stomach with them and whatever fillers might have been on hand, then boiling the assembly – probably in a vessel made from the animal's hide – was one way to make sure these parts were not wasted.

The traditional haggis has a uniquely rich and earthy peppery taste that lends itself perfectly to its most common accompaniments, Neeps and Tatties and suits a creamy whisky sauce. Haggis is invariably served on Burns Night (25th January) at which Robert Burns's poem *Address to a Haggis* is read.

Vegetarian haggis was first available commercially in 1984, and now can account for between 25% and 40% of haggis sales.

Health

Oats are a rich source of protein, dietary fiber, several B vitamins, and numerous dietary minerals, especially manganese.

Oat bran is the outer casing of the oat. Its daily consumption over weeks lowers low-density lipoprotein and total cholesterol, possibly reducing the risk of heart disease. One type of soluble fiber contained in oats, beta-glucans, has been proven to lower serum cholesterol.

Mushrooms are an excellent source of the B vitamins, riboflavin, niacin, and pantothenic acid, as well as phosphorus.

Sustainability

Oats are sustainable crops that benefit the environment when included in a three- or four-year crop rotation, which reduces the amount of fertilizer required within the crop rotation. This rotation is also referred to as a cropping system and it typically includes a pulse (e.g. peas, beans, chickpeas, lentils), a cereal (e.g. oats) and an oilseed (e.g. canola, flax).

Oats also benefit soil health through the production of compounds that nourish soil microbes. Both oats and pulses are minimally tilled. This helps to prevent soil erosion and the resulting release of carbon from the soil into the atmosphere.

Mushrooms are easily grown locally and organically using very little resources. Mushrooms can grow on logs and even indoors on coffee grounds, straw or sawdust.

Vension Stew

(UK)

Gluten free



Ingredients

(Serves 4–5)

1kg haunch of venison
50g dripping or butter
1¼ cups (300ml) red wine
2 tsp vinegar
4 tsp cooking oil
1 carrot, peeled and sliced
1 onion, peeled and sliced
3 sprigs of parsley
3 crushed peppercorns
4 juniper berries
150ml sour cream (2/3 cups)
1 tsp French mustard
150ml stock (2/3 cups)
Redcurrant sauce or rowan jelly

Instructions

Part 1: Marinade

Wipe the surface of the meat.

In a deep casserole mix the vinegar, wine and oil together, then stir in the carrot, onion, parsley, peppercorns and juniper berries.

Add the venison and baste it with the marinade.

Leave the pot in a cool place loosely covered for 12 – 24 hours, basting the meat occasionally.

Part 2: Roasting

Remove the venison from the marinade and wipe it dry.

Place the meat in a roasting tin and cover it thickly with the dripping or butter.

Strain the marinade and pour half of it into the tin.

Cover the tin with foil and roast the joint at Gas Mark 4/350°F/180°C for 25 min for the pound plus 25 minutes.

Half an hour before the end of the cooking time, remove the foil from the tin, baste the joint and increase to Gas Mark 6/400°F/200°C.

Part 3: Serving

When the joint is cooked, lift it onto a large serving dish and leave it in a warm place.

Skim the fat from the surface of the juice in the tin.

Add the rest of the strained marinade and the stock and bring the liquid to the boil.

Mix the soured cream with the mustard, pour in a little of the hot liquid and when it is blended return it to the rest of the liquid.

Heat but do not boil, or the sauce will curdle.

Check for seasoning before serving with redcurrant or rowan jelly.



About the recipe

Heritage

Venison comes from the four wild deer species found in Scotland: roe deer, red deer, sika deer and fallow deer.

Roe deer and red deer are native species; they colonised Scotland naturally after the end of the last glaciation around 10,000 years ago, and wild populations have survived in Scotland since then. The red deer is the largest native land mammal in the UK and is found predominantly in the open hill range, characteristic of much of upland Scotland, also using woodlands and plantations, particularly for shelter.

Sika and fallow deer have become established as a result of deliberate releases and escapes from deer parks. Fallow deer were introduced from the Mediterranean to England possibly during the 11th and certainly by the 12th centuries, and to Scotland by the 13th. They occur in Scotland mostly around areas where they were originally kept in captivity. Sika deer were introduced from Japan and East Asia into UK deer parks in the 19th century and the earliest records of their escape from captivity date from the 1920s. They are more widespread than fallow, with populations spreading in the south, west and north of Scotland.

Health

Venison is considered to be a relatively healthy meat for human consumption, not least because it is only 2% fat (less than chicken muscle) and has no added salt or sugar.

Venison is an excellent source of iron and zinc. It is also high in Vitamins B6 and B12, potassium, phosphorus, riboflavin and niacin.

Meat from pasture-raised animals has some extra benefits including:

- A higher concentration of omega-3 fatty acids

- Slightly higher in fat-soluble vitamins A, D, and K

- A more considerable amount of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA); a potentially beneficial fatty acid found in animal foods.

Sustainability

With no natural predators in the UK since the extinction of the wolf and lynx, wild deer populations have exploded. Populations have doubled since 1999; there are now some two million wild deer in the UK, the highest population level for 1000 years. Deer overpopulation leads to deforestation, more uniform habitats with lower biodiversity, and makes it impossible for native woodlands to regenerate naturally, as well as causing road traffic accidents. Deer are naturally woodland animals yet most of the UK's upland habitats where they live are now bare of trees.

The principal means of deer population control is culling (shooting) the deer for meat. Since the pandemic, however, demand for venison has dropped as restaurants have closed, leading to still more population growth. Eating venison is one way of helping to promote biodiversity and reforest Britain's uplands.

Mountain stew (Cocido montañés)

(Spain)

Vegan, gluten free

Ingredients

(For 4 people)

400g White beans

250g Collard greens (about four leaves)

1 Onion

1 red pepper

1 green pepper

3 garlic cloves

2 carrots

2 potatoes

2 teaspoons sweet paprika

Salt

Olive oil



Instructions

To begin with, in a large pot with a lid, add the soaked and drained beans, the onion peeled and cut in half, the two carrots peeled, and the two peppers peeled and cut in half. Cover everything with cold water, about three fingers above the vegetables. Bring the water to the boil and, with the help of a skimmer, remove the foam that the legume gives off. Add a little salt (later we will season to taste) and cover. Let the beans cook over medium-low heat for an hour and a half.

After this time, add the potatoes, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces. It is good to tear the potato when cutting each piece, not cut it entirely with a knife. Also add the cabbage leaves, washed and cut into julienne (long pieces like chips). Let them cook for half an hour.

After two hours of cooking, the vegetables will be very soft, and the collard greens and beans almost at their point. with the help of tweezers, extract the vegetables (minus the collard greens) and place them in a blender glass.

Now heat some oil in a pan and fry the rolled garlic. When cooked, remove the pan from the heat, add the paprika, stir everything, and pour the garlic over the stew. Test that the beans and potatoes are done (you can fearlessly lengthen the cooking if they are still hard) and add more salt to taste if necessary. When everything is to your liking, turn off the heat and eat.

About the recipe

Mountain stew (cocido montañés) is the typical food of Cantabria, Spain. It is a stew from the mountainous interior of the region, whose essential components are white beans and collard greens (usually of the pitcher handle variety) to which is added the compango (trimmings) composed of chorizo, rib, blood sausage and bacon from the slaughter of the hogs. It is a main course, with high caloric intake, so it is often consumed as a single dish and more frequently in the winter months. Unlike other types of typical Spanish stews such as madrileño, maragato, pasiego or lebaniego, the montañés does not have chickpeas as the main element of the dish and also, unlike in other stews, all the ingredients are eaten at once, without separating the stock from the rest.

It is believed that it arose in the seventeenth century and was preparing to combat the rigors of the wet and cold winter climate. Currently it is famed within the region, the valley of Cabuérniga being the home of the mountain stew par excellence, although it can be consumed anywhere in Cantabria.

The name of "mountain stew" for this dish is recent. José Luis Herrero Tejedor, Delegate of Information and Tourism in 1966, found that in Cantabria there was no regional dish of great fame, so the stew began to be known as cocido montañés.

With the omission of the meat, as in this version, it becomes a vegan dish that scores much higher on both health and sustainability.



Stewed red beans (caricos)

(Spain)

Vegan, gluten free

Ingredients

500g caricos (small red beans)
1 large handful chives
3 cloves garlic
2 green peppers
3 carrots
80 ml extra virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons sweet paprika
2 teaspoon ground cumin
Ground black pepper
Salt



Instructions

Wash the caricos the day before and let them soak with plenty of cold water overnight. Wash the carrot and pepper well, and chop into large pieces, discarding the seeds of the pepper. Peel the scallion and garlic clove and chop.

Arrange in a pressure cooker the caricos, vegetables, spices, oil and a pinch of salt. Cover with water, not too much, and close well. Heat at high temperature until the pot reaches maximum internal pressure, lower the heat and let cook for 25-35 minutes.

Carefully uncover and check the softness of the caricos. Take out the vegetables and blend them with a little broth and some beans, a pinch of salt and a little more paprika. Add them to the pot and mix well, correcting salt. Serve with a tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil.

About the recipe

Caricos are a type of red beans traditionally grown in Cantabria since the seventeenth century, normally on family farms for their own consumption. They were often grown together with maize, which acted as a support for the beanstalk, while the beans fix nitrogen to fertilize the soil. They are very tender with hardly any skin, and are one of the great dishes of Cantabria.



Tuna hotpot (Sorropotín)

(Spain)

Ingredients

(For 6 people)

3 potatoes

1 kg tuna fish (bonito)

1 onion

1 green pepper

1 loaf of bread

water or fish broth

parsley

olive oil

1 tablespoon tomato sauce



Instructions

Start by chopping the onion very finely ("brunoise") and putting it to poach in olive oil over very low heat, as if to caramelize it. It is about cooking very little by little to get a uniform color, not burned pieces and raw pieces.

Once the onion is poached, remove it from the heat and drain it well, removing the excess oil. Chop the pepper into pieces and the potatoes into irregular pieces. It is good to tear the potato when cutting each piece, not cut it entirely with a knife, so that when cooking it releases more starch thus leaving the broth more thickened.

Fry the pieces of pepper, mix them with the onion and add the potatoes, sautéing the whole. Cover with water (or fish broth) a couple of fingers above the potatoes and cook over a low heat, letting everything acquire flavor. Take this opportunity to cut the tuna/bonito into clean chunks. If you want you can add a tablespoon of fried tomato but the original recipe does not require it, although it helps to give a little color.

When the potatoes are already cooked, add the bonito / tuna and a few slices of white bread, let it cook for a couple of more minutes and turn off the heat to prevent the slices of bonito from drying out. Sprinkle with parsley and bring to the table.

About the recipe

Fish has traditionally been a major source of protein in many cultures. The UK National Health Service's Eatwell Guide suggests we should "aim for at least two portions of fish every week, one of which should be oily."

Tuna fish is rich in Omega-3, minerals, proteins and vitamin B12, but the high nutritional value of tuna has led to it being overfished.

Tuna fisheries are associated with major supply chain risks such as overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and the bycatch (part of the catch which is not targeted and is discarded dead) of threatened and endangered species.

Luckily, there are positive signs that point to recovery. In 2011, seven out of 61 species of tuna were placed on the IUCN Red List of endangered species; as of 2021, four of these species (Atlantic bluefin tuna, Southern bluefin tuna, albacore, and yellowfin tuna) are now on the path to recovery, thanks to the enforcement of regional fishing quotas over the last decade. From 2014 to 2019, the number of major tuna stocks experiencing overfishing went down from 13 to five.

Growing awareness of the pressure overfishing puts on tuna populations and ocean life has meant consumers increasingly want to be able to buy and eat their tuna with a clear conscience. Consumers can support sustainable fishing by purchasing fish that has been certified by the Marine Stewardship Council. In 2021, almost 30% of the world's tuna catch by volume is now certified to the MSC's Standard for sustainable fishing, compared with just 14% in 2014.



Courgette burgers

(Spain)

Vegetarian

Ingredients

2 medium courgettes
50g grated Parmesan cheese
120g breadcrumbs
1 medium onion
1 egg
salt
pepper

To give it a special touch, use the herbs and spices that you like best: choose between turmeric, cumin, oregano, sweet paprika, parsley, coriander...



Instructions

Chop an onion very fine and put it to poach in a pan with a little oil.

Meanwhile, wash the courgettes, dry well, cut off both ends and grate them on a piece of kitchen roll or a strainer. As courgettes contain a lot of water, it is good that they lose a little water so that they will combine better with the rest of the ingredients and so that the burgers do not break during cooking. One way to remove some more water is by squeezing the grated courgette with a spoon.

Once the onion is poached and the courgette grated, we put them in a large container. Now mix all the ingredients to form the burgers. It is important to mix them well and add the breadcrumbs little by little. If we see that the mixture is very loose, we add more, until we see that when forming the burgers they do not break.

Once we have the mixture with a good consistency, we take portions and shape them.

On a plate we spread out a few breadcrumbs and coat the burgers on both sides before putting them in the frying pan or griddle, where we will fry them with a little oil over a medium heat, turning them so that they are well done without burning on the outside.

About the recipe

Courgette has abundant fibre and remarkable amounts of essential nutrients: folic acid, potassium, iron, manganese, vitamin A and vitamin C (taking into account that the latter is only used if consumed raw or lightly steamed).

Vegetable and legume burgers are a healthy alternative to traditional meat burgers. They are very tasty and are very simple to prepare. Choosing also the condiments and sauces that we like the most, we can enjoy delicious and healthy burgers. Courgettes are easy to grow and highly abundant in season, although unlike their close relatives, the pumpkins, they cannot be stored over the winter; but if you want you can prepare the burgers and freeze them for later consumption.



Laredo Turnip Greens (Respigos de Laredo)

(Spain)

Gluten free

Ingredients

(For 6 people)

3 bunches of turnip greens
(respigos)

1 dried choricero red pepper

350 gr bacon

4 tablespoons olive oil

4 garlic clove

3 red chorizo sausages

Salt



Instructions

1. Fill a pot with water, add a pinch of salt, and set it to boil. Select the tender turnip greens, discarding any that are dry, ugly or damaged. Cook for 20 minutes. Turn them into a collander and run under the cold water tap until cool. Then squeeze them to remove as much water as possible and leave them to stand.

2. In a frying pan put the 4 tablespoons of oil. Cut the bacon in small pieces and fry until it is well browned without being burned. Set the bacon pieces aside; chop the garlic clove very finely and cut the chorizo into slices. Set them to fry in the pan along with the choricero peppers until everything is done. Keep in mind that garlic and pepper should not be burned; if you see that they begin to brown excessively, remove them. Set the chorizo, garlic and pepper aside with the bacon.

3. Check that the respigos are salted to taste, then sauté them in the remaining oil on a medium heat for about 5 minutes. After that time, turn off the heat, add the rest of the ingredients and mix well while hot. If at any point in the process you notice that there is not enough oil to be able to sauté the respigos you can add a little more.

Serve in a large bowl shared between several people, or spread over toast.

About the recipe

This is a traditional dish from Laredo, a fishing town and former capital of Cantabria.

Turnips are used both for human consumption and for livestock fodder. They are widely consumed in temperate climates, especially colder European regions, as they can be stored for several months after harvest. Turnip greens are gathered around the end of February and beginning of March, just before the flowers appear, when the shoots are tender and very fresh, with a good texture on the palate. They provided a supplement during a season of hunger.

The nutritional value of the dish is incremented by the addition of bacon and chorizo sausage. Pork was an integral part of the traditional Spanish village economy, as it was across Europe. Pigs could be fed largely on waste from the kitchen and vegetable garden, allowed to forage for acorns in autumn, then slaughtered and their meat preserved for year-round consumption.

Of course, this form of subsistence was a world away from the intensive pig farming that is practised in many developed countries today, in which these intelligent animals are kept confined in small spaces, unable to root or forage, and experience considerable stress. Consumers should try to find pork that has been ethically and sustainably produced.



Pearl barley porridge with green peas

(Lithuania)

Vegan

Ingredients

200 gr pearl barley;
150 g peas;
1 onion;
2 tbsp. of shredded thyme;
3 tbsp. of oil;
1 teaspoon of salt, or according to your taste.



Instructions

1. Soak the peas and groats (barley grains) separately overnight. In the morning drain, rinse thoroughly, and cook both together in salted water for about 15-20 minutes on medium heat. Once cooked, drain the water from the top, down to the level of the peas and groats.
2. Chop the onion finely and fry in oil. Then add to the peas and groats, and continue to cook until the groats are soft.
3. Season the porridge with oil & thyme, mix everything well and cook for another five minutes.

To prepare the porridge, you can use your favourite varieties of grain, mixing 2 or more grain crops.

About the recipe

Heritage

Pea porridge was popular all over Lithuania, but especially in the northwest region of Samogitia. The Samogitians were the ethnic group that kept using the open fireplace for the longest time in the whole of Lithuania, and this was a very convenient way for them to prepare various types of porridge at that time.

Nowadays only garden peas are grown on Lithuanian plots, the seeds of which are white to yellowish or greenish in colour, while the flowers are white. It is a vegetable commonly loved by children.

Health and Sustainability

This recipe is perfect for those who miss simple dishes – it is healthy. Pearl barley is high in fiber, especially beta-glucan, which may help in controlling cholesterol levels and reducing blood sugar levels. It may also improve digestion and can be easily added to your diet. Interestingly, pearl porridge is called the porridge of athletes, because it contains phosphorus (twice as much as other porridge!). Phosphorus is considered to be the most important trace element needed by athletes. For this reason, pearl barley porridge is recommended for people who practice a healthy lifestyle and practice heavy physical activities.

Green peas are rich in nutrients, fiber, and antioxidants, and can reduce the risk of several diseases. It is not surprising, that green peas are often used in the diet due to their valuable nutritional properties. In addition, green peas can be easily found with no packaging in local farmers' markets.



Roasted Carrots and Mushrooms

(Lithuania)

Vegan, Gluten free



Ingredients

1.8 kg of forest mushrooms
2 kg of onions
1.5 kg of carrots
1 l of tomato sauce
1 tbsp of salt
2 tbsp of sugar
10-15 black peppers
300 gr of oil

Instructions

Fry the onions first in well-heated oil and then do the same separately with the carrots. It is definitely worth frying these two ingredients separately, in this way the carrots and onions are not stewed, but actually fried and caramelized.

Boil the mushrooms, strain, and place in a casserole. Add carrots and onions, add tomato sauce, salt and spices. Simmer for about 40 minutes, stirring constantly.

Finally, place some of this dish in jars, screw on the lids and keep upside down until it completely cools down. Keep the jars in the fridge.

About the recipe

Heritage

In Lithuania, this recipe is considered a great way to prepare the main course and also to use mushrooms picked in the forest for the winter. This dish is also a popular option for the 12 courses during Christmas Eve.

Sustainability

This homemade dish can be prepared in smaller proportions, however, the presented recipe reflects how mushrooms are traditionally prepared in autumn in Lithuania, in preparation for the upcoming winter. It is this specific conservation of mushrooms that was widespread and often used in our grandparents' villages, and nowadays is commonly used in the cities as well.

Glass jars are usually not thrown away by families. The same jars are washed year after year and used again to ensure sustainability. Some people don't even buy new jars for this dish, but rather use previously bought jars that earlier contained jam or soup.



Potato Pancakes

(Lithuania)

Vegetarian

Ingredients

500 gr potatoes
1 egg
1 onion
1 tbsp of flour
lemon juice
salt
ground black pepper
vegetable oil



Instructions

Peel the potatoes, wash them, and grate them with a fine grater. Drain the resulting liquid (if the potatoes are fresh). Then grate the onion, add the egg, flour, salt, pepper, and mix everything well. You can squeeze a little lemon juice to keep it from turning black. In a pan heated in oil, form pancakes and bake on both sides until nicely browned.

Potato pancakes are served with sour cream or milk-curd sauce.

How to make the milk-curd sauce: place 200 gr of curd (liquid, sachets) in a bowl, break up with a fork and dilute with a dash of milk. Season with salt and mix well.

About the recipe

Heritage

Potatoes are often referred to as the main ingredient of traditional Lithuanian cuisine. This tradition, according to historians, dates back to the 18th century. Potatoes have been used primarily in peasant cuisine, and especially since the 19th-century potato dishes such as zeppelins, mashed potatoes, boiled potatoes, and potato pancakes have spread across the country.

Currently, according to the Lithuanian Ministry of Agriculture, about 100 kilograms of potatoes are consumed per capita per year.

It is worth mentioning that potato pancakes may have spread in the kitchen of Lithuanian peasants from local Jews (Litvaks), as it is one of the main dishes of their culture and the most important dish of the Hanukkah festival, and also known as potato latkes.

Health and Sustainability

In most Lithuanian villages, farming families traditionally grow potatoes. These potatoes supply family members and are also transported to markets and shops where they are sold to the citizens. Thus, the potatoes purchased are mostly local, grown by local farmers. Potatoes grown in Lithuania are also exported and sold in Latvia, Estonia, Balkan countries, and Italy.

Potatoes of Lithuanian selection are special because they are resistant to fungal and bacterial diseases and viral infection in the Lithuanian climate.

As for the health aspect, while using healthy cooking methods, potatoes are a good source of fiber and carbs, as well as vitamin C, vitamin B6, potassium, and manganese.

Potato Meat Dumplings - Cepelinai (Zeppelins)

(Lithuania)

Gluten free



Ingredients

For the meat filling

- 1/2 kg ground pork, or an equal mix of pork, beef, and veal
- 1 medium onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 large egg

For the dumplings

- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 8 large potatoes, peeled and finely grated
- 2 large potatoes, peeled, boiled, and riced
- 1 medium onion, finely grated
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch

For the gravy

- 1/2 pound bacon
- 1 large coarsely chopped onion
- 1 cup sour cream
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 to 2 tablespoons of milk, according to taste

Instructions

Making the Meat Filling

In a large bowl, mix together the ground meat, finely chopped onion, 1 teaspoon salt, pepper, and egg until well mixed. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to use.

Making the Dumplings

1. Add a drop or two of lemon juice to the grated potatoes so they don't turn brown.
2. Place them in a fine-mesh cheesecloth or cotton dish towel, and twist over a large bowl to get rid of the excess water.
3. Pour off the water, reserving the potato starch at the bottom of the bowl.
4. Unwrap the cheesecloth and place potatoes in the bowl with the potato starch you reserved from the bottom of the bowl.
5. Add the riced boiled potatoes, grated onion, and 1 teaspoon salt or to taste. Mix well.
6. Put a large stockpot of water on to boil.
7. To form the dumplings, take about 1 cup of dumpling mixture and pat it flat in the palm of the hand.
8. Place 1/4 cup or more of meat mixture in the centre and, using slightly dampened hands, fold the potato mixture around the meat into a zeppelin shape, sealing well. Continue until both mixtures are gone.

Cooking the Dumplings

Carefully lower dumplings into salted, boiling water to which 1 tablespoon of cornstarch has been added (to prevent dumplings from falling apart). Make sure water returns to a boil and continue boiling for 25 minutes. Remove the dumplings with a slotted spoon or strainer, drain briefly on a clean dish towel, and place on a heated platter.

Make the Gravy

1. While the dumplings are boiling, make the gravy. In a medium skillet, fry the bacon and chopped onion until tender.
2. Drain and combine with sour cream and black pepper. Thin with 1 to 2 tablespoons milk if necessary.
3. Ladle dumplings with gravy or pass the gravy at the table.

About the recipe

Heritage

Lithuanian cuisine has long been characterised by an abundance of potato dishes. Zeppelins are the main dish of traditional Lithuanian cuisine offered in every Lithuanian restaurant, and at the moment, in traditional restaurants, it is considered to be the most popular choice for both local customers and tourists. The name Zeppelins (Cepelinai in Lithuanian) comes from their shape, which resembles a Zeppelin airship.

Zeppelins are usually cooked after harvesting potatoes, which takes place in September and October. The most delicious zeppelins are made from fresh potatoes because then their skin is very fluffy and soft.

Sustainability

Lithuanian zeppelins are traditionally made with meat filling, but recently zeppelins with curd, vegetable, or mushroom filling have become more popular. For the curd filling, you have to season the curd with some salt and pepper, add sour cream, and stir it. If the curd feels too liquid, add a little bit of starch.

The sauce can also be just sour cream with dill, without the meat ingredients.

For a lacto vegetarian version, you can make a sauce with mushrooms.



Green Peas (arakas - αρακάς)

(Greece)

Vegan, Gluten free

Ingredients

500 gr green peas (fresh in season, April–August, or frozen)

2 medium carrots (in season, August–April)

2 medium potatoes cut (in season, late spring–early summer, southern Greece: early winter)

1 onion (in season, April–September)

4-5 spring onions with their leaves

1 tbsp of tomato paste

1/2 cup olive oil

1/3 bunch dill, chopped

salt

freshly ground pepper



Instructions

If you use fresh peas, you must first take the “skin” off and rinse them.

Cut the carrots into slices and the potatoes into 2 cm pieces.

Finely chop the onions.

Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a casserole dish. Leave the rest for the end.

Add the onion and the spring onions. Sauté over medium heat (without getting colored) for 3 min.

Add the tomato paste and rub it on the base of the pot for 1 min.

Add salt and pepper.

Add the potatoes, carrots and peas and stir to oil the ingredients.

Add hot water just enough to half cover the ingredients.

Cover and simmer for 20 min. We measure the cooking time from the time when the peas start boiling.

After the ingredients boil, add the remaining olive oil that we kept at the beginning as well as the chopped dill.

Boil for an additional 10 min on low heat until all the liquids in the pot are absorbed.

About the recipe

Heritage

Peas are one of the oldest vegetables and legumes. There are reports from 12,000 BC in the region of Thailand and from 4,800 BC in the Mediterranean basin.

Health

Peas are a rich source of fiber and protein. They contain a wide range of vitamins and minerals such as folic acid and vitamin K, as well as vitamins A and C. It has also been associated with strong antioxidant activity due to its content of phytochemicals (such as polyphenols), which protect the body from oxidative stress and free radicals. However, peas have a high glycemic index, so they should be consumed in moderation by people with diabetes, pre-diabetes and insulin resistance. Peas contain enough potassium to regulate intracellular fluid, a little sodium, phosphorus, which is important for the proper functioning of the heart, kidneys and nervous system, carotene, which protects the body from free radicals and a lot of fiber to fight of constipation and colon cancer. Specifically, half a cup of roasted peas provides about 80 calories. In “araka” we add even more vegetables, resulting in a very nutritious dish.

Sustainability

Green peas in Greece can be found fresh, in farmers’ markets, or frozen in supermarkets. Both options have their strengths: while fresh peas can be bought with no packaging, frozen packs are easier to stock and have lower chances of going bad or being thrown away.

Peas are very useful for the environment. As they grow, they work with bacteria in the soil to “fix” nitrogen from the air and transport it back to the soil. This reduces the need for artificial fertilizers, the main component of which is nitrogen. Plants can also be grown with little moisture, which makes them the perfect crop to avoid excessive water use.

Baked giant beans (gigantes fournou - γίγαντες φούρνου)

(Greece)

Vegan, Gluten free

Ingredients

500 grams of giant beans
2 onions (cut into thin slices)
4 cloves garlic (sliced)
1/2 cup olive oil
1 sprig of chopped celery
1 chopped carrot
700 g of chopped tomatoes
2 pinches of sugar
salt
freshly ground pepper
1/2 bunch parsley
a little dill
1 cup water
a little baking soda (optional)



Instructions

For better iron absorption and softness, let the beans soak in water with a bit of salt from the night before. The next day, rinse them well, put them in a pot of cold water, and boil them until soft (skimming them), for about 40 minutes. Drain them and put them in a narrow pan (about 37 × 25 cm or round, 35 cm).

Heat half the olive oil in a deep-frying pan over medium heat and add the onion.

Leave it for about 10 minutes, until it becomes transparent.

Add the garlic, celery and carrot and continue sautéing for another 2-3 minutes.

They should not get colored, just wither. Add the sugar, tomatoes, parsley and salt and pepper.

Boil for 10 minutes, and pour everything over the giant beans (in the pan).

Add the rest of the olive oil, as well as 1 cup of water. Bake in a preheated oven at 200°C for about 45 minutes, until the liquids are absorbed.

If baking in air, place the pan on the middle grill, and set the oven to a lower temperature. Also, cover the pan with foil, because the giants will dry quickly on the outside, before melting inside.

About the recipe

Heritage

Peas are one of the oldest vegetables and legumes. There are reports from 12,000 BC in the region of Thailand and from 4,800 BC in the Mediterranean basin.

Health and Sustainability

While large and giant beans require relatively large quantities of water and are sensitive to several bugs and fungi, due to their low price and high nutrition make for a good meat alternative, scoring a much lower carbon footprint overall.

They are rich in iron, phosphorus, carbohydrates, proteins and B vitamins, making a complete meal.



Spinach rice (spanakorizo - σπανακόρυζο)

(Greece)

Vegan, Gluten free

Ingredients

1 kg fresh and cleaned (or frozen) spinach
1/2 cup olive oil
1 chopped onion
1 bunch of spring onions with their leaves
chopped
1 chopped leek
3/4 cup Carolina rice
1/2 bunch dill
the juice of 1 large lemon
salt
freshly ground pepper



Instructions

Heat half of the total olive oil in a saucepan and sauté the spring onions, the onion and the leek for 3-4 minutes until they become transparent.

Coarsely chop the spinach and add it to the pot. Continue sautéing for 2-3 minutes on high heat until the volume drops.

When the spinach withers, add the rice and stir, until it is well oiled.

Add 1 glass of water (spinach and vegetables will also produce enough fluids).

Season with salt and pepper, lower the heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes.

Add the rest of the olive oil at the end of the boiling, and sprinkle with the chopped dill.

Squeeze the lemon, and stir.

Cover the pot with a towel and let it stand for 5-10 minutes to absorb its liquids.

About the recipe

Heritage

Greeks usually eat it with a big slice of traditional, whole-wheat bread and olives or feta.

Health

Spanakorizo is usually cooked with white rice, which is not particularly high in fiber but still offers nutrients such as B complex vitamins.

Spinach is rich in iron, vitamin A and C. Adding lemon to the dish also helps with the iron absorption. Tip: while feta cheese is tasty and pairs well with spanakorizo, the calcium leads to lower iron absorption.

Sustainability

Spinach is quite resistant to extreme temperatures. The ideal temperatures to grow are 5 to 24 degrees Celsius. Spinach withstands frost and does not suffer damage down to -10 degrees Celsius. It also does not require a lot of water.



Stuffed tomatoes & peppers (gemista - γεμιστά)



(Greece)

Vegan

Ingredients

6 ripe and firm large tomatoes
6 green peppers (in season: May – December)
1 zucchini, coarsely grated (in season: May – October)
12 tbsp. Carolina or brown rice
2 chopped onions
1 1/3 cup olive oil
5 tbsp. pine nuts
5 tbsp. black currant
1 small bunch of chopped parsley
1 small bunch of fresh chopped mint
2 tbsp. toasted bread
1 tbsp. sugar
salt
freshly ground pepper

Instructions

Wash all the vegetables. Cut 1 slice (lid) of each tomato (leave it attached to the tomato, do not separate completely) and with a spoon empty the inside, leaving a little flesh in the skin so that they do not open after filling and baking.

Keep the inside of the tomato for the sauce.

Sprinkle each tomato with a little salt and a little sugar.

Turn them upside down on a tray, to let their liquids.

Cut 1 slice (lid) from the top of the pepper and remove the seeds and the white part.

Grind the tomato sauce in the blender.

Keep 1/2 of the ground tomato for the end of the recipe.

In a deep-frying pan, heat 1/2 cup from the total olive oil and sauté the chopped onion for 2-3 min.

Add the zucchini and sauté for 2-3 minutes, until they wither.

Add the rice, pine nuts and raisins and mix.

Pour over with 1/2 of the ground tomato and 1 tbsp. water.

Season with salt and pepper and simmer for 5 minutes.

Remove the filling from the heat.

Sprinkle with the chopped herbs.

The filling should be quite juicy when you fill the vegetables.

Fill each vegetable up to 3/4, because the rice will swell when cooked.

Put the lids back on and place them in a deep pan, close to each other.

In a bowl, whisk the remaining ground tomatoes with the remaining 1 tbsp. olive oil.

Season with salt and pepper and pour over the pan with a spoon.

Finally, mix the toasted bread with the sugar and sprinkle the stuffing.

Bake them in a preheated oven at 180 °C on the heating elements, covered for the first half an hour.

Then, remove and continue baking, which takes a total of 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Serve hot or cold.



About the recipe

Heritage

This traditional dish is believed to have originated in the Middle East and the Mediterranean, with many variations still existing throughout the region.

Health

Tomatoes are rich in antioxidants, vitamin B6, magnesium, iron, zinc and folic acid. They are rich in vitamin C which strengthens the body's defenses and lycopene (an antioxidant). The concentration and availability of lycopene is higher when the tomato is cooked. They also contain selenium, which plays an important role for the immune system, potassium to support heart function, magnesium against the symptoms of stress and muscle cramps, as well as iron, copper and manganese. They are high in vitamin A and carotene.

Peppers are extremely rich in vitamins C and A, which strengthen the immune system and contribute to good blood circulation. In general, peppers of all colors are rich in folic acid, vitamins A, C, lycopene, as well as carotenoids. They have a strong antioxidant effect and their consumption also helps maintain eye health and vision.

Rice (mainly brown) is rich in fiber, essential for proper digestive function and lowering cholesterol. It also regulates blood sugar levels. It is rich in B-complex vitamins, potassium, magnesium, a valuable component of bones and teeth, while it is also responsible for the proper functioning of the heart, nerves, muscles and bones. Phosphorus is also a key component of bones and teeth and in addition contributes to energy production.

Sustainability

The main tomato growing areas in Greece are Thessaly and the Western Peloponnese, followed by small areas in Macedonia. Peppers are cultivated throughout Greece, but are mainly found in Crete, Northern Greece and the Dodecanese.

Tomatoes and peppers can all be easily found package-free in farmers' markets, as well as supermarkets. They are more sensitive than other main ingredients mentioned in this Cookbook, but if bought in the amount needed there is a lower chance there will be any food waste. Unused parts can also be easily composted. Moreover, tomato seeds can be used to grow tomatoes at home, relatively easy.

DESSERTS



Scones with jam

(UK)

Vegan

Ingredients

350g self-raising flour, extra for dusting

¼ tsp salt

1 tsp baking powder

3 tbsp caster sugar

95g vegan vegetable spread

150ml soy milk, plus extra to glaze

jam, to serve

vegan cream alternative, e.g. oat-based
crème fraîche, to serve



Instructions

Mix the flour, salt, baking powder and sugar in a bowl. Rub in the vegetable spread until you have fine breadcrumbs. You can also gradually pulse it in a food processor until it resembles breadcrumbs.

Gradually stir the milk into the flour mixture until you have a smooth dough.

Lightly dust your surface with flour and gently roll out the scone dough until 2cm thick. Transfer onto a baking tray lined with parchment and put it in the fridge for 30 mins to firm up.

Remove the dough from the fridge and using a 7cm cutter, cut out the scones. Put them, top side down, onto another baking sheet lined with paper, leaving a 2cm gap between each one. This gives the scones an even top. Brush with the extra milk, making sure that it doesn't drip onto the sides (otherwise they will rise unevenly). Put the scones in the freezer for 15 mins. Heat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas 7. Remove from the freezer and bake for 15-20 mins until golden brown. Serve with jam and vegan cream, if you like.

About the recipe

Heritage

It is believed that historically scones were round and flat, usually as large as a medium-sized plate. They were made and baked on a griddle (or girdle, in Scots), then cut into triangular sections for serving. Today, many would call the large round cake a bannock. In Scotland, the words are often used interchangeably.

Health

This vegan alternative of the traditional recipe includes oat-based crème fraîche to substitute regular cream, a much healthier option. There are 177 calories in 100g of the oat-based alternative, whereas regular heavy cream has double the amount of calories at 345 per 100g.

Sustainability

Oats are sustainable crops that benefit the environment when included in a three- or four-year crop rotation, which reduces the amount of fertilizer required within the crop rotation. This rotation is also referred to as a cropping system and it typically includes a pulse (e.g. peas, beans, chickpeas, lentils), a cereal (e.g. oats) and an oilseed (e.g. canola, flax).

Oats also benefit soil health through the production of compounds that nourish soil microbes. Both oats and pulses are minimally tilled. This helps to prevent soil erosion and the resulting release of carbon from the soil into the atmosphere.



Welsh Cakes

(UK)

Vegan

Ingredients

225g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting

¼ tsp fine sea salt

½ tsp nutmeg, grated

100g dairy-free butter

50g caster sugar, plus extra to sprinkle

50g blackcurrants

3-4 tbsp dairy-free milk



Instructions

Tip the flour into a large bowl and stir through the salt and nutmeg.

Add the butter and rub it in with your fingertips to make a fine, breadcrumb consistency.

Add the sugar and currants and stir in 3 tbsp milk until it just comes together, add a further 1 tbsp if the dough is a little dry.

Bring together into a ball, try not to overwork the dough as this will make it tough.

Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to a 5mm thickness and cut out rounds using a 6 or 7cm cutter.

Re-roll any scraps and cut out more until you have used up all the dough.

Place a cast iron pan or heavy based frying pan over a medium heat to get really hot.

Cook for 3-4 mins on each side or until lightly golden, you will need to turn the heat down slightly if they begin to catch. Immediately toss in the sugar and set aside on a wire rack to cool down for 15 mins.

About the recipe

Heritage

According to the “Encyclopedia of Wales”, Welsh cakes (Welsh: *picau ar y maen*, *pice bach*, *cacennau cri* or *teisennau gradell*), also bakestones or *pics*, are a traditional sweet bread in Wales. They have been popular since the late 19th century with the addition of fat, sugar and dried fruit to a longer standing recipe for flat-bread baked on a griddle.

The cakes are also known as griddle cakes or bakestones within Wales because they are traditionally cooked on a bakestone (Welsh: *maen*, lit. 'stone' or Welsh: *planc*, lit. 'board'), a cast-iron griddle about ½ inches (1.5 cm) or more thick which is placed on the fire or cooker; on rare occasions, people may refer to them as griddle scones.

The blackcurrant is native to northern Europe and Asia. Cultivation in Europe is thought to have started around the last decades of the 17th century.

During World War II, most fruits rich in vitamin C, such as oranges, became difficult to obtain in the United Kingdom. Since blackcurrant berries are a rich source of the vitamin, and blackcurrant plants are suitable for growing in the UK climate, the British Government encouraged their cultivation and soon the yield of the nation's crop increased significantly. From 1942 onwards, blackcurrant syrup was distributed free of charge to children under the age of two. This may have given rise to the lasting popularity of blackcurrant as a flavouring in Britain.

Health

The raw fruit is particularly rich in vitamin C and polyphenols. Blackcurrants can be eaten raw but are usually cooked in sweet or savoury dishes.

Polyphenol phytochemicals present in the fruit, seeds and leaves, are being investigated for their potential biological activities. Major anthocyanins in blackcurrant pomace are delphinidin-3-O-glucoside, delphinidin-3-O-rutinoside, cyanidin-3-O-glucoside, and cyanidin-3-O-rutinoside, which are retained in the juice concentrate among other yet unidentified polyphenols.

Blackcurrant seed oil is rich in vitamin E and unsaturated fatty acids, including alpha-linolenic acid and gamma-linolenic acid.

Sustainability

As with other wild fruits, blackcurrants have a low environmental impact. Their high vitamin C content make blackcurrants a more sustainable option in parts of Northern Europe to the use of other Vitamin C-rich fruits from southern Europe such as oranges.

Apple and Blackberry Crumble

(UK)

Vegan

Ingredients

This vegan recipe substitutes butter in the traditional recipe for vegan butter

3 Apples (400g approx whilst whole)

300g Blackberries, plus a few extra for decoration

75g plain flour

75g porridge oats

50g vegan butter

100g brown sugar

Blackberry jam to serve (optional)



Instructions

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan/200°C/400°F/Gas 6.

Place the flour, porridge oats and vegan butter in a food processor and blend for 2-3 seconds at a time until the mixture has formed into lumps.

Place the mixture in a bowl and separate some of the bigger lumps, using your fingers. Stir in the flaked almonds and 50g of the sugar. Set aside.

Next core and peel the apples. Cut them into chunks and place in a large saucepan. Cook for 2-3 minutes with a tablespoon of water.

Add the blackberries and the remainder of the sugar. Gently stir in and continue to cook for another 2-3 minutes to slightly soften the fruit, stirring occasionally.

Evenly cover with the crumble mixture.

Place in the middle of the oven, and bake for 25-30 minutes until the fruit is bubbling and the crumble is golden brown.

Serve with blackberry jam.

About the recipe

Heritage

Crumbles became popular in Britain during World War II, when the topping was an economical alternative to pies due to shortages of pastry ingredients as the result of rationing.

Folklore in the United Kingdom and Ireland tells that blackberries should not be picked after Old Michaelmas Day (11 October) as the devil (or a Púca) has made them unfit to eat by stepping, spitting or fouling on them.

Health

Blackberries are notable for their significant contents of dietary fiber, vitamin C, and vitamin K. Vitamin C is an important antioxidant which protects cells from damage and strengthens the immune system. Blackberries also contain numerous phytochemicals including polyphenols, flavonoids, anthocyanins, salicylic acid, ellagic acid, and fiber.

Blackberries help to maintain healthy skin by playing a role in the production of collagen which keeps it smooth and elastic.

Blackberries have also been linked to reducing inflammation, preventing weight gain, keeping hearts healthy and boosting recovery of muscles after intense exercise.

Sustainability

The origins of the dish point to a time when getting local ingredients was the only option. Blackberries and apples are easy to find in the UK. There are about 7000 types of apples in the world, and 2500 of these can be found in the country. Apples are also the most popular fruit item by number of sales, 80% of all fruit production is apples. Some of these varieties are grown organically and close to the shops and farmers markets where people buy food. Further, blackberries grow in the wild and some people forage for them, an activity that has a very low environmental impact.

Blackberries are also a fruit that is often grown locally and nationally. Blackberry sales are on the rise in the UK as new, improved varieties and a growing awareness of the fruit's health benefits drive category growth.

Due to its vitamin C content, blackberries can be a local, more sustainable alternative to the consumption of citrus fruits such as oranges, which are imported into the country. Blackberries are also available throughout the year, which further reduces the need to buy other seasonal fruit from overseas.

Quince Jelly with Walnuts and Cheese

(Spain)

Vegan / vegetarian, gluten free

Ingredients

Quinces

Sugar

Walnuts

Hard cheese or vegan cheese (optional)



Instructions

Wash the quinces well and place in a large pot. Cover them with water and bring to the boil. Turn down to medium heat and let them cook for about 40–45 minutes, depending on the size of the quinces.

Remove them from the heat and let them cool so as not to burn yourself. Then peel them, remove the core and cut the fruit into small pieces.

Weigh the resulting fruit and calculate an amount of sugar equal to 80% of the fruit by weight. So, for example, if you have 1kg of fruit you will need 800g of sugar.

Add the fruit and sugar to a large, flat saucepan. Cook over a low–medium heat, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon (never metallic) for about 10 minutes, when the sugar should be completely dissolved. Use a hand blender to obtain a finer mixture, then cook for about an hour, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. The mixture will thicken and darken as time goes by.

When the spoon stands up on its own, the texture is right. You can blend it one last time for a finer texture, then pour it into a mould, such as a low, rectangular plastic box. Cover and leave to cool, then place in the refrigerator for about 24 hours.

Quince jelly is traditionally served as a dessert with slices of hard cheese (vegan cheese may be used if desired) and walnuts.

About the recipe

The quince tree is native to Western Asia but has been grown throughout Eurasia for thousands of years. The fruit is not edible raw, even when ripe. It can be eaten after bletting (softening through freezing and partial rotting), but it has traditionally been prepared by cooking in a variety of dishes. The Spanish word for jam, mermelada, is originally derived from marmelo, the Portuguese word for a quince.



Cantabrian Cheesecake (Quesada Pásiega)

(Spain)

Vegetarian



Ingredients

200 grams of ricotta cheese (or similar)
2 eggs
70 grams of unsalted butter (at room temperature)
1 cup sugar
1 cup flour
2 cups whole milk
2 teaspoons lemon zest
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Small pinch of salt

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
Cream the butter and sugar and whisk in the eggs and vanilla.
Beat well and add in the ricotta cheese and pinch of salt.
Finally, beat in the milk and then, little by little, the flour.
Stir in the lemon zest.
Pour the mixture into a 9x13 inch baking dish and bake for between 35 and 45 minutes.
The cheesecake is ready when slightly browned and a toothpick comes out clean.
Let the cheesecake cool for at least 15 minutes to set. Enjoy on its own or with a bit of your favorite jam, or fresh fruit in season.

About the recipe

The quesada pasiega is a Cantabrian delicacy that was originally prepared with fresh pasiego cheese (from the Pasiego valleys in central Cantabria). Its first mention dates back to the fourteenth century, when a recipe for quesada is found in the 'Book of Good Love' by the Archpriest of Hita.

Fresh pasiego cheese, the main component of the quesada, was made by curdling milk from the pasiega cows, and is what gives its special taste and personality to this simple dessert. It is difficult to reproduce this at home, but for the most authentic taste you can use fresh milk curdled with rennet.



Cranberry Kissel (jelly made with potato starch)

(Lithuania)

Vegan, gluten free



Ingredients

100 gr of cranberries (preferably fresh, but also can be frozen)

100 gr sugar

1 l of water (and a little more to dissolve the potato starch)

1 tbsp potato starch

Instructions

First, blend the cranberries to a puree with an electric blender. Then pour the berry puree and water into a pot and bring to a boil. Strain the boiled liquid through a dense sieve to remove crushed berry particles, then heat again, add sugar, and heat until the sugar has dissolved.

In a separate small jar, mix about 1/3 glass of cold water about a tablespoon of starch and pour the resulting whitish liquid in a thin stream into a pot of cranberry-flavored water. Pour while stirring and continue to stir while you wait for the resulting liquid to boil and thicken. Then let it cool down.

This cranberry kissel will be moderately thick, but drinkable, not eaten as a dessert with a spoon. Other frozen or fresh berries can also be mixed into the kissel - currants, raspberries, sea buckthorn, according to your taste. All the other berries, like the cranberries, need to be crushed.

About the recipe

Heritage

Cranberry kissel is probably one of the most popular fruit desserts/drinks in Lithuania during the festive period, especially Christmas Eve.

Kissel can be served either hot or cold, in addition to pancakes or ice cream. The sweetness of the kissel can always be adjusted according to each taste.

Health

Kissel is a relatively healthy dessert, usually made at home during the holidays. Cranberries are healthy because of their high nutrient and antioxidant content, also vitamin C and fibre. However, it is recommended to drink kissel in smaller amounts.



Lazy Cake - Tinginys

(Lithuania)

Vegetarian



Ingredients

400 gr of cookies

1 can of condensed milk, sweetened (about 400g in size)

200 gr of butter

5 tbsp powdered, sweetened cocoa (drinking chocolate)

Instructions

1. Crush the biscuits by hand in a deep bowl.
2. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Pour the condensed milk into it and add the cocoa while stirring. Bring to a boil and, stirring, heat for a few minutes until the mixture thickens slightly.
3. Pour the resulting mixture over the biscuits and mix very well with a spoon. All biscuits must be more or less evenly covered with cocoa mass.
4. Turn the mixture onto baking paper and press firmly to form a lazy cake of the desired size and shape leaving no gaps.
5. Allow the lazy cake to cool to room temperature, then cover with cling film and place in the refrigerator for at least 6-8 hours (preferably overnight) to chill.

About the recipe

Heritage

Lazy Cake is one of the traditional Lithuanian sweets, undoubtedly produced in every home, but each hostess cooks it differently, usually by adding the ingredients according to their own taste. For this reason, a wide variety of recipes for this dessert are common, as well as variations in flavors such as caramel, coffee, black chocolate, even berries, and pistachios.

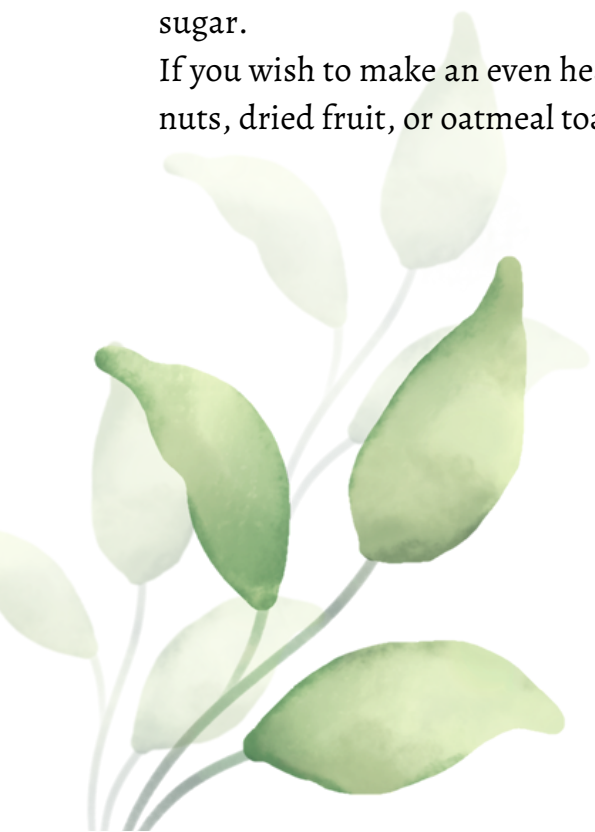
Notably, in Lithuania chocolate and all chocolate products were started to be imported at the end of the 19th century. During this period, the production of desserts with chocolate became popular and various new recipes were developed. At the end of the 20th century, when chocolate desserts were widespread throughout Lithuania, the recipe for Lazy Cake was accidentally created.

The story goes as follows: a woman tried to cook chocolate, but accidentally poured too much sugar into it. Due to the high sugar content, its chocolate mixture thickened. She then tried to correct her mistake because she wanted to reduce the sweetness of the dessert she produced. So, she added cookies to the mixture, breaking them into smaller pieces beforehand. She mixed it all up and left it to cool for a while. That's how Lithuanian Lazy Cake was created.

Health

To make a healthier Lazy Cake, it is very important to choose quality cookies. Not traditional tea biscuits, but rather the simplest rustic butter biscuits that are a great choice for the Lazy Cake. We recommend choosing cookies with lower sugar content and the simplest composition, preferably made with only three ingredients - flour, butter, and sugar.

If you wish to make an even healthier Lazy Cake, instead of cookies you can choose to add nuts, dried fruit, or oatmeal toasted in a dry pan.



Halva of Farsala (halvas Farsalon - χαλβάς Φαρσάλων)

(Greece)

Vegan



Ingredients

4 cups sugar (very fine or crystalline)

4 cups water

2 cups “niseste” or corn flour

3/4 cup sunflower oil

1 cup almond kernels (whole white almonds, without the skin)

vanilla or cinnamon (optional, gives a nice scent)



Instructions

Roasting the almonds: Place the unpeeled almonds in a pan. Bake in the air in a preheated oven at 200°C, on the middle rack of the oven for about 10 minutes until lightly browned. During the cooking, stir so that the almonds are cooked evenly. Leave them to one side.

Keep 1 cup sugar for the caramel and a half cup sugar for the end. In a bowl, pour the remaining sugar (2.5 cups) and stir.

Add the water and the sunflower oil (or the melted pure butter) and mix the ingredients very well at the beginning with a spoon, so that the starch melts well at the base of the bowl.

Then with a whisk, stir for 2-3 minutes to smooth the mixture of liquid materials.

If you want to add cinnamon or vanilla you will add it at this stage.

Make the caramel with the sugar that you kept at the beginning:

In a deep saucepan with a thick base, pour 1 cup. sugar gradually and over medium heat.

Allow the sugar to melt into caramel, stirring whenever necessary, with an oiled wooden spoon.

When the sugar melts evenly and turns into caramel, then carefully add the liquid ingredients with the fat.

Tip: while adding the liquids into the caramel, its temperature drops so it freezes and stabilizes. However, with its constant stirring in the fire, it will take its liquid form again and dissolve.

Stir again and again in the pot, always over medium heat until all the liquid is absorbed and comes off the walls of the pot.

Remove from the heat and continue stirring for a few minutes, until the oil that peaks on its surface disappears completely.

Finally, after homogenizing and becoming smooth, add the roasted almonds and gently stir to go everywhere.

Choose a shallow pan, about 32 or 34 cm.

The mixture should not be high, in order to caramelize nicely on the surface.

Pour the hot mixture into the pan.

Shake the pan so that it spreads and flattens its surface.

Let it cool.

Sprinkle with the remaining fine sugar (1/2 cup), onto the entire surface of the mixture.

Burn the sugar with a flame to caramelize. Alternatively, bake on the grill for a few minutes, placing the cake on the top rack of the oven, until the sugar has melted and caramelized.

Farsala halva is cut into pieces after it has cooled well.

About the recipe

Heritage

Halva is a popular dessert, found in various varieties, in all the Balkan countries, several in the Mediterranean and several in the Middle East (even India and Pakistan). The pronunciation of the word in these countries is about the same. It seems to come from the homonymous Arabic root, which means "sweet".

Halva probably appeared in Greece in the late 12th or 14th century, after the Ottoman invasion of Thessaly. The first confirmed historical data appear in 1446, with the will of the Turkish conqueror of Thessaly Turhan Bey. This document mentions the workshop of the halva maker Khalil in Larissa, while reference is also made to the halva makers Isa, Siahi and Khalili. The existence, in Larissa of 1446, of four halva makers is also pointed out by the Turkologists N. Beldicenu and P. Nasturel.

As early as the beginning of the 19th century, Farsala have become famous for their halva, to such an extent that their name was associated with it and the "soap" halva is now called "halvas Farsalon", meaning the halva of Farsala.

Health

Sesame seeds strengthen the body's defenses, nervous system and protect the skin, due to their high content of antioxidants such as selenium, lignans, vitamin E and B vitamins (mainly thiamine). They also help the body's immune system as well as its bone mass, as it contains precious minerals and trace elements such as calcium, magnesium and zinc. Finally, sesame seeds contain fiber, which helps the heart and the proper functioning of the intestine.



Walnut pie (Karidopita - καρυδόπιτα)

Ingredients

4 cups coarsely chopped walnuts
2 cups toasted bread
1 sachet of baking powder
1 tbsp. cloves
1 tbsp. nutmeg
2 tbsp. cinnamon
200 gr of milk butter
1 cup sugar
1 orange (zest)
½ cup cognac
7 eggs, separated

For the syrup

2½ cup sugar
2½ cup water
1 vanilla
1 tbsp lemon juice
1/3 cup cognac

Instructions

For the syrupy and traditional toasted walnut pie, first put in a bowl all the solid ingredients—walnut, toast, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, baking powder—and mix.

Beat the butter with the sugar in the mixer for 6–7 minutes until it becomes like cream, and one by one add the yolks. Add the zest and brandy.

Pour the mixture into the bowl with the solid ingredients and mix well with a spoon. Beat the egg whites with the salt until they form soft peaks. Add 3 tbsp. beaten egg white in the mixture and stir to dilute. Finally, add the remaining beaten egg whites and gently fold the mixture with a spatula.

Butter a square fireproof dish or a round pan 28 or 30 cm. Bake in a preheated oven at 170°C in air, on the middle grill, for 35'.

Let the walnut pie cool well.

For the syrup

Boil all the ingredients for the syrup for 3 minutes. Cut the walnut pie into pieces and pour the hot syrup over the cold dessert.

(Greece)

Vegetarian



About the recipe

Heritage

Karya, daughter of King Dion of Laconia and priestess of the temple of Artemis, had an adventurous life and gave much to the gods. One of them, Dionysus, fell in love with her, gave her divination skills, but after a tangled story of betrayal, he transformed her into a tree with beautiful fruits, the walnut.

Health

Walnut pie is a dessert, but still offers nutrition. Walnuts are high in protein, contain omega-3 fatty acids, some B vitamins, vitamin E and fiber. They also contain a moderate amount of calcium, magnesium, iron and zinc.

Sustainability

Most walnut trees in Greece are found in the Peloponnese, Central Greece, Thessaly, Epirus and Macedonia and live for around 25 years.

Walnuts can be easily found with no packaging in farmers' markets. They are also quite sturdy due to their shell.



Must-flour sticky mousse from Paros (moustalevria - μουσταλευριά)

Ingredients

5 cups must (from grape juice): grapes' must contain the peel, the seeds and the solid components of the grape seed. The solid part of the must is usually 7%–23% of the total weight. The production of must is the first step for vinification.

3/4 cup all-purpose flour

1/4 cup fine semolina

1 tbsp. thyme honey (in Greece you can easily buy it from small, local producers)

1/2 tbsp. beaten (crushed) mastic

1 cup roasted almonds

For garnish

1/2 cup roasted sesame

Cinnamon



Instructions

Put the cut must in a saucepan over medium heat.

Add the flour and the semolina, stirring with a whisk (not with a spoon) so that the ingredients do not clot.

Add the honey, the whole roasted almonds and the crushed mastic.

Continue mixing on low heat until it boils for about 10 minutes, so that the flour is cooked and the mixture thickens.

Once it boils, pour it into individual shallow bowls, deep dishes or a large fireproof dish. After it cools, it will be cut into pieces.

Sprinkle the moustalevria while it is still hot with roasted sesame seeds and plenty of cinnamon.

Leave it to cool completely and then serve it individually in bowls or in pieces if we put it from the beginning in a large shallow dish.

About the recipe

Heritage

The must was originally used by the Ancient Greeks, who had divided it into 3 stages, the "glefko" (fresh must from ripe grapes), the "epsima" (concentrated juice that resembled the density of honey) and the "epseto" (less dense than "epsima"). Later, the people of Asia Minor used the must a lot for sweets, in Samos on pancakes ("tsaletia"), on the islands in herb pies (tesklopita of Tinos) and especially in the Cyclades in fish dishes (eg "savoro").

Health

Must has many benefits, as it is an important source of energy for our body. More specifically, it contains a number of carbohydrates, vitamins and trace elements. Helps with bone health, helps protect good vision, maintains the proper functioning of the nervous system and contributes to the production of antibodies.

The vine is a plant that offers us many different things. It is grown mainly for its grapes that are eaten fresh as fruit or can be made into wine, tsipouro, raki, liqueur, even a sugary dessert ("sweet of the spoon"), while by boiling of the must we make the nutritious petimezi. The grapes are very nutritious even dried like raisins. From the leaves of the vine, we make the traditional "dolmadakia", one of the most famous dishes of Greek cuisine. Grapes have a high nutritional value, as they contain many vitamins, fiber and antioxidants.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



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