

# Typical Ingredients in Czech Meals

Czech Republic lies in the moderate climate of Central Europe. The local climate provides a little bit of everything. Because the Czech Republic has all four seasons, the range of accessible local ingredients varies along with the weather.

## Czech evergreens



The most popular and most widely used ingredients and crops are those with the longest durability. Despite the invasion of supermarkets and cheap food from abroad, there are still households which grow their own crops, so they have to stockpile

it in cellars for winter. Almost three quarters of the year, or maybe the whole year around, you can have on your plate potatoes, beetroot, carrot and root vegetables in general. The Czechs are very keen potato eaters. As well as in some other countries, in the Czech Republic potatoes also provided valuable nutrition in the times of food shortage and famine in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Another typical vegetable is cabbage which is similar to other cole crops as broccoli, cauliflower, or Brussels sprouts. Cabbage is a typical vegetable for many East European countries, as well as for China and Japan. Typical Czech ways of preparing cabbage is to stew it with spices, or to put the chopped cabbage in a sweet and sour pickle. Cabbage is used in Czech pastry, as a part of various pickles, soups, as a side dish, in salads and so on. Carrots and other root vegetables are typically used in broths and with roast meat. We also grow and consume quite a lot of legumes as peas and beans and Czech fields provide fertile soil for various types

of cereals which lay foundation for Czech pastry and baking which is also very popular.

No kitchen could do without onion and garlic which are necessary taste boosters in many meals. As for the fruit in Czech cuisine, it is used as preserves, for jams and compotes, as well as typical Czech fruit cakes and other pastry. The most widely grown and used types of fruit are apples, peaches, strawberries, pears, or apricots. In some parts of Moravia plum also is very popular, yet for slightly different reasons than cooking, although cooking is included. Plum is the core of good homemade spirit called slivovice.

## Spices

The traditional spices used in the Czech cuisine are both local and brought from abroad. One of the most universal ones is probably pepper without which it is not possible to imagine a proper sauce or soup, let alone potato pancakes. Another widely used spices are marjoram, which is the main contributor to deliciousness of potato pancakes, paprika which is used in many soups and sauces and, of course, goulash. Many traditional Czech meals are also spiced with a fair amount of garlic, either ground or in a form of garlic powder. A very good friend of sweet pastry then is cinnamon, and combined with aniseed it helps to make delicious mulled wine. Because Czechs are also big fans of various pickled vegetable, mustard seed cannot be missing in any of the Czech households. Needles to add that mustard as such goes very well with popular Czech smoked meat products, such as many kinds of sausages and salami.



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## Traditional Easter Sweets – Boží milosti

Boží milosti (God's mercy) are traditional Easter sweet pastry of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers. It's very fragile crispy delicacy known in the world as *Angel wings* and by many other names. They are excellent right after frying or even on second day, but hardly anyone can resist this temptation and they'll disappear quickly.

## Ingredients

- 250 g of flour
- pinch of salt
- 50 g of butter
- 50 g sugar
- 2 yolks
- 2 spoons of white wine
- 5 spoons of sour cream
- teaspoon of lemon peel
- oil for frying
- powdered sugar and vanilla sugar for coating

## Directions

1. Mix flour with all ingredients and soft butter. Knead a dough and put in fridge for 30 minutes
2. Then roll out the dough flat and carve rectangle or any other shapes (circa 8 x 5 cm/3 x 2 inches). Cut twice in the middle of each piece.
3. Fry shortly in adequate amount of oil. During frying the biscuits should puff up a bit. While still hot gently coat in mixed powdered and vanilla sugar.

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## Potato Pancakes

Potatoes are the most used side in Czech cuisine. Potato pancakes are called *bramborák* or *cmunda* and are very popular. You can either serve it simply as side dish or as main dish,

for example with sauerkraut and salami. Potato pancakes goes well with goulash or katův šleh (“executioner’s whipping”).

## Ingredients

- 1 kg of potatoes
- cup of milk
- 1 egg
- 4 cloves of garlic
- flour
- marjoram
- salt, pepper
- oil for frying
- optional: salami, bacon or ham

## Directions

1. Peel raw potatoes, wash and shred. Pour off some water from shredded potatoes.
2. Season with salt and pepper. Add egg, marjoram and minced garlic.
3. Add milk and flour. Dough shouldn’t be too thick.
4. Panfry in heated oil in shape of pancakes.
5. Potato pancakes serve fresh and hot.

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# Prague Food Festival

**Prague Food Festival** is traditional open-air three-day **celebration of food**. On this 8<sup>th</sup> year it will offer great

dishes, best chefs, top-class businesses, producers of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and delicacies. It will take place in the **Royal Garden of Prague Castle**, the place of original medieval vineyards.

## **Motto of this year: “Don’t eat, don’t drink and don’t live badly”**

This year takes place on 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May and for the first time Prague’s **and top regional restaurants** from national survey Grand Restaurant 2014 partake in PFF. For example restaurant Šupina from South Bohemian Třeboň, the inventor of unique delicacy carp chips. From Prague K0BE with its aged beef, Yasmin Noodles with a 130-pound swordfish.



You can expect to taste catfish goulash from Svět pond, grilled pork from Přeštice, La Pissaladiere – typical French savoury cake, vegan sushi with fresh wasabi, whipped lamb pâté with rosehip jelly, pork cheeks, pork belly, crispy black pudding and many more. In the atmosphere of Royal Garden you’ll also get a chance to experience special menu prepared by **chefs with Michelin Star**.

As for drinks you can refresh yourselves with non-alcoholic beverages from portfolio of Kofola, which started in 1960 as a Czech substitute of Coca Cola. A rich collection of **Moravian wines** from small winemakers but also special selection of foreign wines from Premier Wines company will be ready for visitors. And since this is Czech Republic there will be Bohemian and Moravian regional beers and **beer specialities** from Lobkowicz brewery.

# Tickets

If you want to visit Prague Food Festival you need a valid ticket. Tickets can be bought online or directly at entrance, but since the capacity is limited online ticket for exact time is recommended. Ticket prices are 450 Kč for online ticket and 500 Kč at entrance. Each ticket includes 300 Kč that can be spent in form of Grands (special currency of PFF). One Grand is 30 Kč so it gives you 10 Grands. These coupons can be bought even separately if you want to try more specialities.

More info: <http://www.praguefoodfestival.cz/home>

Come and let your taste buds experience great food. See you there!

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# Cuisine of the Wallachian Kingdom

**Wallachian Kingdom** is a soubriquet for the Wallachian region in the **eastern part of Moravia**. This region is known for its beautiful hilly landscape, its folk architecture and mainly for its famous fruit cakes.

## Welcome to the plumdom



If there is an ingredient which could be considered universal for this region, it would most definitely be **the plum**. If you provide a local with sufficient amount of plums, he will prepare any meal from starters to desserts. And after he is finished, he would probably **distil some slivovitz** (*slivovice*).



Plums are the most plentiful fruit of the Wallachian region. It is no wonder then that our forefathers learned to make the best of it. Apart from the famous **plum frgáls**, which became a cultural heritage protected by the European Union quite recently, you can taste various plum sauces, plum butter, delicious dumplings with plum filling, baked plums in bacon and so on, but also, of course, the **traditional Moravian spirit** called slivovice (*slíva* is one of the Czech words for a plum).

Another typical representative of local cuisine is the traditional **Wallachian cabbage soup** called *kyselica*. The name is derived from the word *kyselý* which is the Czech for sour. **Cabbage** can be found across the whole area of Czech Republic and is one of the most important ingredients which, together with potatoes, is also a necessary ingredient for preparing really good *kyselica*.

This soup is so popular among housewives and cooks that there are competitions for the best *kyselica* in the region and it has been awarded as the best traditional dish of all Wallachia. The winner made this soup with rabbit meat and used a recipe she found in her grandmother's closet. Traditionally, this soup is made with sauerkraut, potatoes, caraway and sour cream. The taste is then enriched by a Wallachian sausage or

smoked meat and spiced with garlic and marjoram.

## Sweet treasure



The famous **Wallachian cake** called *Frgál* is a type of sweet bread with rich fruit topping and streusel. The fruit used for frgáls comes, of course, from the local resources and these cake-like breads are usually made with plums, pears, blueberries or apples. As a variant to fruit we can have also walnut, poppy seed or curd cheese. If you cannot decide

which one to choose, you can have variations of two or four different toppings on one large cake. It surely no surprise that frgál goes so well with coffee.

The region is also known for its **cheese production** by small farmers who make their products the old way in their own households, and for slivovice which has served as a universal cure and spirits raiser for generations. Local cuisine consists of food from people's own resources and the range of fresh goods is quite diverse. Spending time in this region is not only delightful but, thanks to its landscape, vast forests, clean environment and tasty cuisine, also quite healthy.

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## Czech Meatloaf – Sekaná

*Sekaná* is **favourite Czech meal**, but also favourite in other countries across the world. Today we bring classic easy Czech **meatloaf recipe**, but you can come across filled **meatloaf** with

gherkin, sausage and egg.

## Ingredients

- 1kg of ground meat (mixed beef and pork)
- 1-2 onions
- 3-4 garlic cloves
- 2 eggs
- salt, pepper
- marjoram
- 2 old rolls
- 200ml of milk
- breadcrumbs
- oil

## Directions

1. Cut rolls into small cubes and pour milk over them.
2. Chop onion and fry shortly.
3. Mix meat with salt, pepper, minced garlic, marjoram, eggs and fried onion.
4. Also add soaked rolls from milk.
5. Mix all together and add breadcrumbs if needed. Meat shouldn't be too sticky but also not covered in breadcrumbs.
6. Form in 2 loaves and put in greased pan.
7. Put in preheated oven 180°C (356°F) for 75 minutes. Sometimes pour a little water and baste.
8. Serve with potatoes, mashed potatoes or simply bread.