

Roasted Goose with White and Red Cabbage and Dumplings

*Once upon a time
there was a cute town
and it's people knew
how to have some fun
when st. Martin's day
finally has come.*

In a town surrounded by Beskydy's mountains, in the town where I grew up we celebrate St. Martin's day every year. He's the patron of the town.

Anyway, eating roasted goose and drinking St. Martin's wine is whole republic tradition. But for us it means whole weekend ritual starting on Friday with something like outdoor alcoholic special drinks market and ending on Sunday with light headache and completely full stomach. But calm down, it's not just about drinking and eating. Mainly it's about meeting friends, spending time with family. Maybe this spirit is common for whole nation during St. Martin's day, but mostly for other people it's about eating something they don't usually eat and drinking special occasions kinds of wine.

But for us it's about meeting on the main and only square, talking to friends you haven't seen for a long time, trying to walk through the crowd and walking from stall to stall... and drinking vařonka, hot wine and warm mead.

Vařonka is north Moravian history leftover. But it's awesome.

You know – very cold winters, tough work, no money. People needed to warm up somehow. Vařonka is combination of caramel, water, spices like clove, cinnamon (it's possible to use badian (star anise) or allspice) and a shot of booze for a cup. You may use vodka, but we use režná (it's made from anise, it has about 35% of alcohol) or rum. In the end you put to the cup just a little bit of butter and perhaps slice of lemon or orange for decoration. It's very sweet. And you get drunk very fast. There is also a competition who made the best vařonka. And competitors really care about it because it is a big pride to win and they will be well known to whole town. In the end of the evening there is lot of drunk people. But they are still capable to get up early next morning so they can see their patron.

On Saturday square looks like a medieval market with different kinds of food, drink and handmade stuff.

And this day is about best roasted goose competition and St. Martin's coming. He is supposed to ride on a white horse which means snow. So he's supposed to bring snow and winter and cover the country with snowy blanket and let it rest to the spring. For the last few years it's not working. No snow. Or more likely no snow in November. Maybe we are going to be content just with movember. Tom0rrow I'm going to buy some moustache. I'll be very pretty girl.

Maybe I could compare our roasted goose and our st. Martin's celebration to thanksgiving turkey or something like that. When it's really about tradition you just want to be with your closest. This year I loved making goose (ok, it wasn't really a goose, but it wasn't a duck, it was a hybrid, something in between – gooseduck. Meat is not so dry as goose use to have and it's not so tough as duck use to have, it's tender and juicy) because it was whole family cooperation. My father made goose, my mother made white Czech cabbage and I made savory red cabbage and awesome butter dumplings. And together – lovely tender meat, tasty moist dumplings and bittersweet

combination of cabbages – together it was heaven.

So bellow it's not going to be just one of the meals recipe but recipe for the whole course.

Of course you can make roasted goose on orange and honey or plums, make savory both white and red cabbage or make red cabbage with apples and cranberries and it's going to be great. But let it be simple and you will know for 100% it's going to be the best.

Roasted Goose

Ingredients

- 1 goose without giblets
- bunch of celery leaves
- 4 sprig of fresh rosemary
- 2 onions, finely diced
- 5 garlic cloves, finely sliced
- salt, pepper, generous amount of whole caraway

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Rinse goose inside and out with cold running water, and pat it dry with paper towels.
2. With the point of the knife make carefully few cuts to the skin of the goose. Generously sprinkle the cavity with salt, pepper and caraway and insert most of the celery leaves and half of the rosemary sprigs (instead of celery you may use parsley).
3. From both sides also sprinkle the goose with salt, pepper and caraway. Put the goose into large roast pan

breast side down, pour there about a cup of water and roast it covered for about 2 or 3 hours, when it's fine and crispy.

4. Then turn around breast side up. Sprinkle goose with salt and caraway again (don't be afraid to use caraway, even a whole package for the goose, it makes the taste) and bake covered. Now it's good during the two or three hours long baking to take the goose out of the oven and pour some juice over the breast. Maybe 3 times during baking.

When the skin is brown and crispy, put to the pan chopped onion, sliced garlic and the rest of leaves and rosemary.

I know, it takes time but it definitely worth it. And you have time to do rest of it.

Cabbage

The most complicated thing is the Czech cabbage. You can cook this cabbage day ahead so it "sits" and tastes even better. I love the smell when my mother cooks it, it simply smell delicious.

Ingredients

- 1 medium head white cabbage (about 2 and half pounds), chopped
- water
- salt
- 1/2 tsp whole caraway
- 1 tbsp pork or goose fat (grease one)
- 1 big onion finely diced
- 1 not even full tbsp of all purpose flour
- 1 tsp sugar

- 1 tsp white vinegar
- generous amount of fresh ground pepper

Directions

1. Put the cabbage into the pot and press it then pour in the water so the cabbage is just slightly covered and braise it so it's just "al dente".
2. It's not supposed to be completely cooked. It's hard to tell how long it takes because it depends on how fresh cabbage is. So it may take 10 minutes but also half an hour. So watch it. Then pour off half of the water of the pot but keep it aside.
3. In pan, add fat. When it's hot add onion and sauté until turned slightly brown and add flour.
4. Now stir with wooden spoon. It's something like the starter for béchamel.
5. Add the mix to the pot with cabbage. If the cabbage is too thick pour in some of cabbage broth. It depends just on you how thick you want to have it.
6. Stirring boil the cabbage for the last ten minutes so it doesn't burn. Finally add sugar and vinegar and fresh ground pepper.

Ingredients

- about 2 and half pound savory red cabbage, the best you can buy (when you buy already made it saves time)
- about a cup of goose juice from the goose roasting in your oven or goose that finished roasting in your oven – juice and fat, but it doesn't have to be a full cup
- 1 medium onion, finely diced

- fresh ground pepper

Directions

1. Add the juice into the pot and heat.
2. When it's hot add onion and sauté until golden brown.
3. Next add the cabbage and let it boil until almost all liquid is gone.
4. Finally add pepper.

Dumplings

And finally... the best dumplings I've ever ate. For now, of course. They are moist, with taste of butter and supper easy to make.



Ingredients

- about 14 oz white toast bread, cubed
- 3 and half oz warm butter
- 2 and half cups milk
- 4 eggs
- 5 and half oz plain whole-wheat flour

- bunch of chopped parsley
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 8 cups greased with butter
- bit pot with a lid for

Directions

1. Add the water into the pot and boil.
2. When you put all the cups to the pot water should reach an inch under the top of the cups.
3. Mix the cubed bread with all ingredients and let it absorb the liquid.
4. Then divide it into the greased cups.
5. Put cups into the pot, cover with a lid and cook for about 45 minutes.