

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.

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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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.
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Potato Salad

Potato salad is traditionally served with Schnitzel and cannot miss at Czech Christmas dinner table with carp. Every family prepare potato salad by their own recipe according to their taste and customs.

Ingredients

- 2kg of potatoes
- 3-4 carrots
- 1 celery root
- onion
- 5 pickled gherkins
- 4 hard boiled eggs
- canned peas
- 300g of ham
- spoon of mustard
- mayonnaise and tartare sauce (according to your taste)
- salt, pepper

Directions

1. Boil unpeeled potatoes in water with salt and let cool off. Then peel potatoes and cut to small cubes.
 2. Boil root vegetables in water with pinch of salt and vinegar. Let cool off and cut to small cubes and mix with potatoes.
 3. Same way add chopped onion and gherkins, cubed boiled eggs, peas, cubed ham and mix together.
 4. Blend mustard and mayonnaise, season with salt and pepper. You can also pour a little of brine from pickled gherkins.
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Traditional Czech Bread

If you ask the Czech expats, students or simply people who spend a lot of time outside the Czech Republic, what they miss the most, many of them will tell that it is the **traditional Czech bread**. It really is the cornerstone of Czech culinary tradition and cannot be found anywhere else. What makes the **Czech bread** so special? Is it the shape, colour of the crust or its typical sourness? Or is it the caraway which is **traditionally used in Czech bread**? It is all of the above and something more.

Rye flour makes the difference

The basic ingredients used for the Czech bread are rye and wheat flours. Depending on the proportion of the two we then call the bread either **rye-wheat bread** (more rye flour than wheat flour) or **wheat-rye bread**.



The proportion of these two flours in the typical Czech bread varies and depends to a large extent on local customs. The most balanced option is a 1:1 ratio with slight predominance of wheat flour. The difference, when compared to standard white, purely wheat bread is really obvious.

Rye has a long tradition as crop in Central Europe – it dates back to the Middle Ages. Rye has quite different characteristics than wheat. It contains much less gluten which affects the stickiness, firmness and taste. In order to achieve the desired results we need to help the dough a bit and add leaven – preferably homemade. The leaven consists of pre-yeasted flour and water.

Leaven is the secret

The need to prepare bread this way due to the addition of rye flour gave birth to a new tradition. The leaven is in fact a living organism producing CO₂ and making the dough all fluffy which is the reason for its bubbled structure. The **original Czech leaven** which has been a part of the **Czech culinary tradition** for generations is considered a little miracle. It has all you need to make good bread. This, water and more flour depending on the amount of bread you wish to bake. It has the yeast necessary for the dough to rise nicely and lactic acid bacteria giving the classic sour taste. What is more, it is completely natural which contributes to its wonderful typical smell and long lasting freshness.



The credit for this process goes to enzymes, bacteria spores and yeast cells which are naturally contained in flour. The enzymes then simply begin degrading the flour starch into lower sugars. This provides a perfect culture medium for bacteria and yeast cells which start to

reproduce themselves uncontrolledly.

The last thing necessary when preparing this type of bread is to carefully balance the ingredients. Although too much yeast can help the rising, the bread may not be so tasty. The **ratio of rye flour and wheat flour** has also influence on the whole process.

Various ways of preparing the leaven have been developed, because each baker tended to accommodate his own needs and tastes. But proper preparation of good leaven takes some time and since time is money, many baking companies developed quicker but more artificial ways of making the dough rise. This, of course, affects the quality of bread in supermarkets and it is getting still more difficult to find proper bread made in the traditional way. Luckily enough, the number of people baking their own bread is still on the increase, so let's hope that the tradition never dies.

Potato Soup

Potato soup has significant position between soups in Czech cuisine. It's prepared in various ways according to region or family recipes.

Ingredients

- 500g of potatoes
- 2 onions
- 2 carrots
- 1 celery
- 1 parsley root
- parsley sprig
- mushrooms (optional)
- 2 spoons of flour
- marjoram
- 2 cloves of garlic
- bouillon cube
- salt, pepper
- oil

Directions

1. In large pot saute chopped onion in oil and add flour and stir until it has golden color.
2. Pour 1,5l of water stir and bring to boiling point.
3. Add cutted vegetables, potatoes and mushrooms and boil slowly until everything is tender.
4. Add bouillon cube and season with salt, pepper, garlic, marjoram and parsley sprig. Allspice and bay-leaf could be used as well.
5. Let cook for another few minutes and serve with bread.