

# IN THE SHADE OF CHERRY TREES



Eastern European Community  
Recipes from Staffordshire





# Introduction

At the core of the Staffordshire History Centre project is bringing together the county's stories and communities, past and present, to showcase people and places that have made Staffordshire what it is today.

In 2022, Staffordshire Archives and Heritage service began its, what was then simply titled, 'recipe book project'. Through wonderful contributions and support of individuals and communities across the county who identify with Eastern European heritage, the project flourished into *In the Shade of Cherry Trees*.

In the pages of this book, the reader will find an array of recipes with origins spanning Eastern Europe, alongside stories of family tradition passed down in the vegetable gardens of Ukraine, foodie friendships formed in the mountains of Czechia, and a lifelong search for the best tasting Papanashi!

Staffordshire Archives and Heritage service would like to extend its sincerest thanks to those who participated in this project for sharing not only their recipes, but theirs and their loved ones' stories and heritage to be preserved and shared for generations to come.



## Vera's Recipe

### Cake Muraveynik (Anthill)

My mum cooked this cake very often in my childhood. When I grew up, I began to cook it for my children too. Now my children are older, they help me to make the cake as well, I really enjoy these times. This cake is traditionally eaten as a birthday cake for friends and family. I have cooked the cake for my British friends and they've really enjoyed it as well, which has been lovely and a great way to share my heritage.

#### Ingredients

For cookies:

Butter - 160 g

Sour cream - 160 g

Flour - 350 g

Sugar - 80 g

Dough baking powder - 10 g

Salt - 0.5 tsp.

Vanillin is 1 pinch.

For the cream:

Boiled condensed milk - 300 g





## The cake "Мурашник"

1. First of all, I'll make cookies. I'll need sifted flour, butter, slightly warm sour cream 20% fat, sugar, salt and vanillin.

I beat the softened butter to white. Then I add a little warm sour cream and whip it again for a couple of minutes. Such a lush, homogeneous cream should turn out. Then I add sugar, salt and vanillin.

2. I combine the flour with baking powder, stir well. In 2-3 stages, I add flour to the oil-sour cream mixture and mix smooth, homogeneous, soft and non-sticky dough.

3. I divide the dough into 2 parts and put it in the freezer until completely frozen.

4. I turn on the oven to heat it up to 180°C.

I rub a piece of frozen dough on a large grater over a baking tray covered with baking paper.

I send the dough to the oven and bake until ready, about 20-25 minutes.

I do the same with the second piece of dough.

Then I gently grind the cookies into crumbs with my hands. The cookies are very tender, fragile and crumble without problems.

5. I boil condensed milk and combine crushed crumbs and condensed cream.

6. I put the mass in a mould covered with food film. Size - 20\*13 cm. Of course, you can just put everything on a slide with a spoon.

7. I level, compact and put it in the refrigerator for 2-3 hours well.

Before serving the cake should be kept warm. You can also decorate it with grated chocolate, poppy seeds or crushed nuts.





# Anna's Polish Sorrel Soup

I remember my Dad cooking this for us when I was little, using ingredients from the garden. My parents were from Poland and came to England after WW2 and this was my favourite dish when I was growing up. My Dad would add chopped up fried bacon, so I've omitted this as I'm now vegetarian. It's a very tangy tasting soup, but that's why I like it so much!

## Polish Sorrel Soup (My Vegetarian Version)

### Ingredients

1 large onion (and 3-4 sliced leaves off an onion if you happen to grow them, rather like big chives)  
1 tbsp vegetable oil  
1 litre vegetable stock  
1 bay leaf  
2 potatoes, uncooked, chopped up into cubes  
salt, pepper  
A couple of bunches of sorrel leaves, chopped  
1 boiled egg, sliced  
1 - 2 tbsp sour cream  
Vinegar or lemon juice

### Method

1. Chop up the onion and fry in oil until softened.
2. Add stock, bay leaf and the chopped potato. Add salt and pepper.
3. Add the sorrel (and chopped onion leaves) and cook for a while.
4. Once all is cooked, let the soup cool down a bit and add the egg and sour cream, stir in.
5. Add a splash of vinegar or lemon juice to taste.



**Cristina's Recipe**

**ROMANIAN FRIED  
CHEESE DOUGHNUTS  
("Papanashi")**

Romanian food is really delicious and mouth-watering! There is such a richness of tastes and colours in Romanian gastronomy, your senses will be absolutely spoiled with amazing and intense flavours.

I don't think there is a Romanian who doesn't like "Papanashi"! It's on every restaurant menu in Romania. It's the best dessert in the world (I know, I'm subjective...); an extraordinary combination between sweet and sour, between donut and blueberry jam.

I order "Papanasi" every time I have lunch or dinner at a restaurant to try and find the best "Papanasi" I've ever eaten! Of all the recipes I've tried, the best is my mother's (again, I'm subjective); only remembering it, it feels like home!

I tried to cook "Papanasi" here, in UK, for my family and my friends, they guaranteed a great meal. That's why I want to share the recipe with everyone in Staffordshire, to make known at least a little part of Romanian gastronomy!



# **ROMANIAN FRIED CHEESE DOUGHNUTS ("Pănași")**

## **INGREDIENTS:**

**500 gr. cottage cheese  
2 eggs  
75 gr. granulated sugar  
lemon zest  
1 sachet vanilla sugar  
vanilla essence  
230-250 gr. all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
cooking oil for frying the doughnuts  
sour cream (to serve)  
blueberry jam (to serve)**

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1). Mix the cottage cheese with the eggs, sugar, lemon zest, vanilla sachet and vanilla essence. Add the flour mixed with the baking powder and let it rest. You will produce a very sticky dough, hard to manoeuvre – but don't worry, that is how it is supposed to be. It is important not to knead the dough too much, as this will release the starch in the flour, making the "papanasi" very hard.
- 2). Flour the working surface and your hands generously. Place the dough onto the floured surface and knead it lightly to form a ball. The dough should still be somewhat sticky yet manageable. Add the remaining flour only if absolutely necessary, only if the dough sticks so much that you will not be able to work it at all.
- 3). Divide the dough into 9 balls. Roll 8 of the balls into thick sausages and unite the sausage ends to get a circle with a hole in the middle. Use the last ball to make 8 little balls, which will be used to top the "papanasi".
- 4). In the meantime, heat the oil in a pot. Use enough oil to have about 10 cm/ 4 inches of it in the pot. To check if the oil has reached the right temperature, insert a toothpick in the oil; if there are bubbles forming around the toothpick, you can start frying the "papanasi".
- 5). Only fry two or three "papanasi" at a time, depending on the size of your pan, do not overcrowd the pan; the "papanasi" should be able to move around freely. Turn the heat down to medium-low. Turn the doughnuts with a slotted spoon a few times in between and fry until the "papanasi" are golden brown.
- 6). Place them on plates lined with kitchen paper and dry them to absorb some excess oil.
- 7). Serve warm topped with sour cream and blueberry jam. Place the little balls on top and top them with a bit of sour cream and jam as well.



# David's Czech Dumpling Recipe

We were invited to the Czech Republic by Marketa, who had stayed with us for over a year whilst she completed her PhD. She and her mother took us on a culinary tour of the country, each evening finishing with a fantastic meal in the log cabin up in the mountains. We sat outside in the warm air looking at the stars, meanwhile, Labushka cooked typical Czech food for us to eat. Dumplings featured a lot, the same basic recipe enhanced with many different herbs, spices, meats and vegetables produced a different meal every evening. It was heavenly.

## Labushka's Basic Dumpling

1 tsp butter, 1 egg, 3tbsp breadcrumbs, 3 tbsp milk, salt, nutmeg and chopped parsley.

Mix eggs and butter until smooth. Soak breadcrumbs with milk, add to egg mixture, pinch of salt, dash of nutmeg, and chopped parsley. Mix well, form into small balls, drop in the boiling soup (or water) and cook for 5 to 10 minutes or until done.

Delicious.





## Hennadii's Borsch

### Борщ

I'm from Ukraine and Borsch is the traditional Ukrainian meal. When the war started last year, our family moved to Chernovci where we lived with other Ukrainian families, our friends. One of the families often cooked very delicious Borsch which they shared the recipe for, and that's how I learned how to cook it.

I love cooking this dish for my children, which I do about once a week, and for my new British friends as well. My mum would cook Borsch on Easter, which I have fond memories of. I wanted to share this traditional meal as it's part of our Ukrainian culture.

Borsch is usually added with sour cream, brown bread and garlic.

# Hennadii's Borsch

## Борщ

### Ingredients

Water -5l.

Medium-sized potatoes - 3 pcs.

Beetroot -1 pcs.

Onions -2pcs

Carrots 2 pcs.

Bulgarian pepper -1 pcs.

Sunflower oil 50 grams

Pork meat shovel 300 grams

Tomato paste 2 tablespoons

White cabbage floor of the head

Laurel (bay) leaf -1 pcs.

Black pepper, salt to taste.



# **Hennadii's Borsch (Борщ)**

- 1. Pour 5 litres of water into the pan and put it on fire.**
- 2. Chop the meat and put it in water in a pan.**
- 3. When the meat is cooked, put the potatoes in boiling water cut into large cubes.**
- 4. Heat the frying pan and pour all 50 grams of oil.**
- 5. Cut the onions into small cubes and put them in a frying pan, fry the onions until golden and add the carrots grated. And fry it slightly.**
- 6. Then add the beetroot grated on a grater, and also lightly fry.**
- 7. Chop one bolgarian pepper in cubes and add it to the frying pan.**
- 8. Put 2 tablespoons of tomato paste on a glass of hot water and stir. Pour the finished solution into the frying pan and let it boil a little.**
- 9. At the moment, the potatoes should be almost ready in a pan, pour everything from the pan into the pan and stir.**
- 10. Cut the cabbage finely and put it in a pan. After boiling, keep it on fire for 6 minutes.**

**11. Add black pepper, salt to taste and one Laurel leaf.**

**Turn off the fire, cover with a lid and let it brew for 10 minutes. After that, add dill to the plate to taste and be sure to take the laurel leaf out of the pan.**

**Serve hot with sour cream and black bread with garlic.**



## Joanna's Rosol (Polish Chicken Soup)

I remember Polish Chicken Soup usually being served on Sundays with all the family gathering around after the busy week. I remember preparing ingredients for the dish as a child and getting tips about the recipe from my dad.

The soup would be eaten on special occasions, like weddings and christenings (usually as a starter), but I like to make it in my home as a traditional remedy for anyone who feels under the weather. I often make this soup in winter, at my son's request, and I love seeing how excited my children are about the dish.

Food is a great way to connect with and share heritage, you don't need words to share food, and it makes you feel proud of where you come from when you see others enjoying your traditional cuisine.



# Joanna's Rosol (Polish Chicken Soup)

## Ingredients:

5 chicken drumsticks

1 small piece of beef

4 -5 Carrots

1 -2 Parsnips

Celery root

Leek

1 yellow onion

Parsley

2-3 Bay leaves

Allspice

Salt and Pepper

If possible spices from Polish shop: "Magi" or "Vegeta"

Polish noodles boiled in a separate pan.

First, boil the chicken pieces, beef piece, allspice, and bay leaves in a large pot. Make sure to skim the foam which accumulates on the surface a few times. Lower the heat and add all your washed vegetables - but not the onion. Keep the pot on the low heat for two hours and to make the "Rosol" clear in colour. Cut the onion in half and burn it over the flame - that is the way my dad does it 15 minutes before the soup is ready. Add salt, pepper and cut fresh parsley at the end and pour the soup over the noodles.



# Martin's Deep Fried Gefilte Fish

My grandmother was taught this recipe by her mother, who taught my mother, who showed my father how to cook when she was ill. I was the washer-upperer and watched parents throughout the years, and slowly absorbed the recipe through osmosis. We ate this dish as a family every week prior to Schule on a Friday evening, with a salad in the summer, but with new potatoes and peas in the winter.

Over the twelve years since my father's death, I have studied old recipe books then taken out what I didn't like and added what I did, so the recipe that I now use is an amalgamation of others, but essentially...mine. Nowadays, I make it for community picnics, or to break the fast after Yom Kippur in a communal meal. I make a large quantity twice a year so I always have some. It takes a whole day!

## **Ingredients:**

**500g White Fish x3 Sorts**

**(Haddock/Hake/Cod/Halibut/Bream/Plaice – your choice will  
change the taste)**

**1 Small Onion**

**50g Matzo Meal (Wheat Flour)**

**Salt**

**1 Egg**

**Chopped Parsley**

**Vegetable Oil**

1. Prepare a large sheet of greaseproof paper ready to place the fish balls on once they have been prepared.
2. Finely dice the onion.
3. Cut your three types of fish into pieces, roughly about two inches wide, and mix them together (removing any little bones and skin as you go) and place them inside your food processor.
4. Combine the onion and fish and add the egg, a pinch of salt and pepper, and any herbs that you like.
5. Depending on the lightness of texture required in your fish, you can add some vegetable oil at this stage – the firmer the mix the more solid and dense the fishcake. This will take longer frying time to cook properly but will hold its shape better in hot oil.
6. Take a spoonful of the mixture (if you use a spoon each time you'll get more uniform sizes) and roll it into a ball. Give the ball a little squeeze to flatten it out, smoothing the edges. If you're making fishballs, golf ball sized is the best.
7. Fill a bowl with breadcrumbs, dip and dust to achieve a golden colour.
8. Add oil (I use vegetable/sunflower/corn/rapeseed oil) to a deep-sided frying pan on a lowish-heat, using roughly two inches of oil and heat until hot. The fishcakes/fishballs should sizzle when you place them in the oil.
9. Once they have turned a light golden-brown in colour, they are ready to remove from the oil. Place on kitchen roll to soak up excess oil. The fish will continue to cook even when it's removed from the oil – so catch them early!

#### Serving Suggestions:

Fish is excellent eaten warm and fresh with Parsley sauce and a crisp salad, tomatoes and pickled beetroot. It can be washed down with Tomato juice and a splash of Worcester sauce. The fishcake is equally good when consumed chilled, accompanied by minted new potatoes, and baby carrots.



# Tina's Beetroot Soup / ŠALTIBARŠČIAI (shal-ti- barsh-chey)

This is my favourite Lithuanian dish; it's colourful, fresh, and very different from the foods I tried anywhere else in the world. I learnt how to make the recipe from my mum and her sisters when I was little. I used to spend a lot of time with my aunty, uncle, and their family on their farm in the summer holidays. The ingredients for the dish would be picked fresh from the vegetables plots or made on the farm, like the kefir and cream. The beetroot would have been pickled the year before.

We would eat it on the veranda and tell one another about our days, for us children we would give updates about the chickens, because looking after the chickens was the children's job! This is a dish that very much reminds me of family. Traditionally, this is an everyday dish, but I don't make it very often, so it's very special when I do.

## **Ingredients for soup (Serves 6):**

**500g jar of pickled beetroot (grated). Ideally pickled in apple juice, but  
cider vinegar will work too.**

**3 eggs (boiled)**

**200g baby cucumbers or gherkins (chopped)**

**20g dill (chopped)**

**30g spring onion (chopped)**

**1 Litre kefir (natural yogurt will work too)**

**6 tbsp soured cream (one spoonful spoon per serving)**

**Salt and pepper**

## **Ingredients for potatoes:**

**200g new potatoes (boiled)**

**1 tbs butter**

**10 g spring onions (chopped)**

**Salt**

**Sprinkle of dill**





Preparation (20 minutes + time for chilling)

Step 1 – hard boil eggs and leave them to cool. Remove shell and chop. I chop one egg into quarters and use it to decorate when soup is served.

Step 2 – chop cucumbers in symmetrical pieces (quarter lengthwise then slice crosswise). If you don't like cucumber skin, it can be removed before chopping. I leave mine on. The same goes for seeds.

Step 3 – finely chop spring onion and dill.

Step 4 – drain pickled beetroot of all pickling liquid. Place them in a large mixing bowl. Sometimes, if I can't find grated pickled beetroot, I buy baby beetroot and grate them myself.

Step 5 – add cucumber, spring onions, dill, chopped egg and kefir to beetroot. Mix everything together. If you like soup consistency to be more liquid add some milk. I like my soup thick.

Step 6 – season beetroot soup with salt and pepper and chill in the fridge for half hour or longer.

Step 7 – boil new potatoes, drain add butter and season with spring onions, dill and salt.

Step 8 – decorate soup with quartered egg add spoonful of soured cream to each bowl and serve with hot potatoes on the side.

Enjoy.





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