

Croatia Recipes

Croatian Cabbage Rolls

Ingredients:

5 small heads of cabbage, cored
1 cup white vinegar
2 large onions, quartered
1 pound bacon, chopped
8 cloves garlic, peeled
1 bunch celery, chopped
1 bunch parsley, stemmed
2 ½ pounds ground chuck
2 ½ pounds ground pork
2 ½ pounds ground veal
2 cups uncooked rice
⅓ teaspoon cinnamon
⅓ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 teaspoons paprika
1 tablespoon salt
4 large eggs
3 (32-ounce) jars sauerkraut, drained
56 ounces tomato puree
46 ounces tomato juice
3 tablespoons sugar
8 whole cloves



Directions:

Add vinegar to a large pot of water and bring to a boil. Boil cabbages for about 5 minutes, until leaves begin to release from heads. Peel leaves off and place in a colander to drain and cool. Reserve cabbage hearts.

Place onions, bacon, and garlic in a food processor and finely chop. In a very large Dutch oven or roaster, sauté onion-bacon-garlic mixture.

Meanwhile, finely chop celery and parsley in the food processor and add to onion-bacon-garlic mixture, along with the beef, pork, and veal. Cook until meat is evenly browned. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

Trim the thick center vein of each leaf without piercing it.

Add rice to meat mixture and season with cinnamon, nutmeg, paprika, and salt. Thoroughly mix in eggs. Place a handful of meat filling on each leaf. Flip up the bottom, and then fold the sides in and roll up.

Chop the reserved cabbage hearts and, in a large bowl, mix with sauerkraut and tomato puree. Season with salt and pepper. Place some of this mixture on the bottom of a deep, large roasting pan. Cover with a layer of cabbage rolls, tightly packed. Spoon on more sauerkraut mixture. Add another layer of cabbage rolls at a right angle to the first layer. Continue in this manner until all the cabbage rolls are in the pan. Top with remaining sauerkraut mixture and pour the tomato juice over it.

Sprinkle with sugar and cloves. Cover and place in a 500° F oven. When the mixture comes to a boil, reduce the heat to 350° F and bake 2 ½ hours.

Remove cloves before serving. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and paprika.

Grilled Sardines

Ingredients:

24 medium or large sardines, cleaned
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Salt
Pepper
Fresh rosemary
Lemon wedges



Directions:

Prepare a hot grill, making sure the grill is oiled.

Rinse the sardines and dry with paper towels. Toss with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.

When the grill is ready, toss the rosemary sprigs directly on the fire. Wait for the flames to die down and place the sardines directly over the heat. Grill for a minute or two on each side.

Transfer from the grill to a platter and serve with lemon wedges.

Croatian Walnut Cookies

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar, divided
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon grated lemon peel
2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup finely chopped walnuts
2 tablespoons sugar
1 vanilla bean



Directions:

In a large bowl, cream butter and ½ cup confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla and lemon peel. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in walnuts.

Shape tablespoonfuls of dough into crescent shapes. Place 2" apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° F for 10-12 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.

Place remaining sugar in a food processor. Split vanilla bean and scrape seeds into food processor. Discard vanilla bean. Pulse mixture until combined. Coat warm cookies with sugar mixture. Cool completely on wire racks.

Croatian Easter Bread

Ingredients:

6 cups flour
2 packets dry yeast
½ cup sugar
Pinch of salt
1 tablespoon vanilla
⅓ cup butter
⅓ cup lard
½ cup warm milk
⅓ cup sour cream
3 eggs
1 egg yolk
3 tablespoons rum
⅓ cup raisins
⅓ cup mixed candied fruit
Finely grated zest of 1 orange
Finely grated zest of ½ lemon
1 egg
Sugar



Directions:

Soak raisins in rum.

Sift flour into a bowl. Add salt and sugar.

Dissolve yeast in warm milk and add to the flour mixture. Add vanilla, eggs, yolk, sour cream, and citrus zest. Then add candied fruit and raisins together with rum. Knead for about 10 minutes, until soft dough forms. Cover with clean kitchen towel and let rise in warm place until doubled in size (about 1 hour).

Punch the dough and knead it again, adding melted and cooled butter and lard. Cover with kitchen towel and let rise in warm place until again doubled in size.

Shape the dough into 5 round loaves and place them onto baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Let them rest for 30 minutes. Cut a cross into the surface of each bun. Brush the surface with whisked egg and let stand for 10 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350° F. Bake for 30-35 minutes. While still hot, brush again with whisked egg and sprinkle with sugar.

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- 1 cup rice
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup peas
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley



Directions:

Heat the oil and sauté the onion.

Pour in the rice, stir for half a minute or so, making sure all the grains are covered in oil. Add the water and salt.

Bring to a boil and cook for about 5 minutes on a gentle simmering heat, stirring once. Add the peas, cover, and bring to a simmer again.

Turn heat to low and let sit for 10 minutes. Fluff with a fork, sprinkle with fresh chopped parsley, and serve.