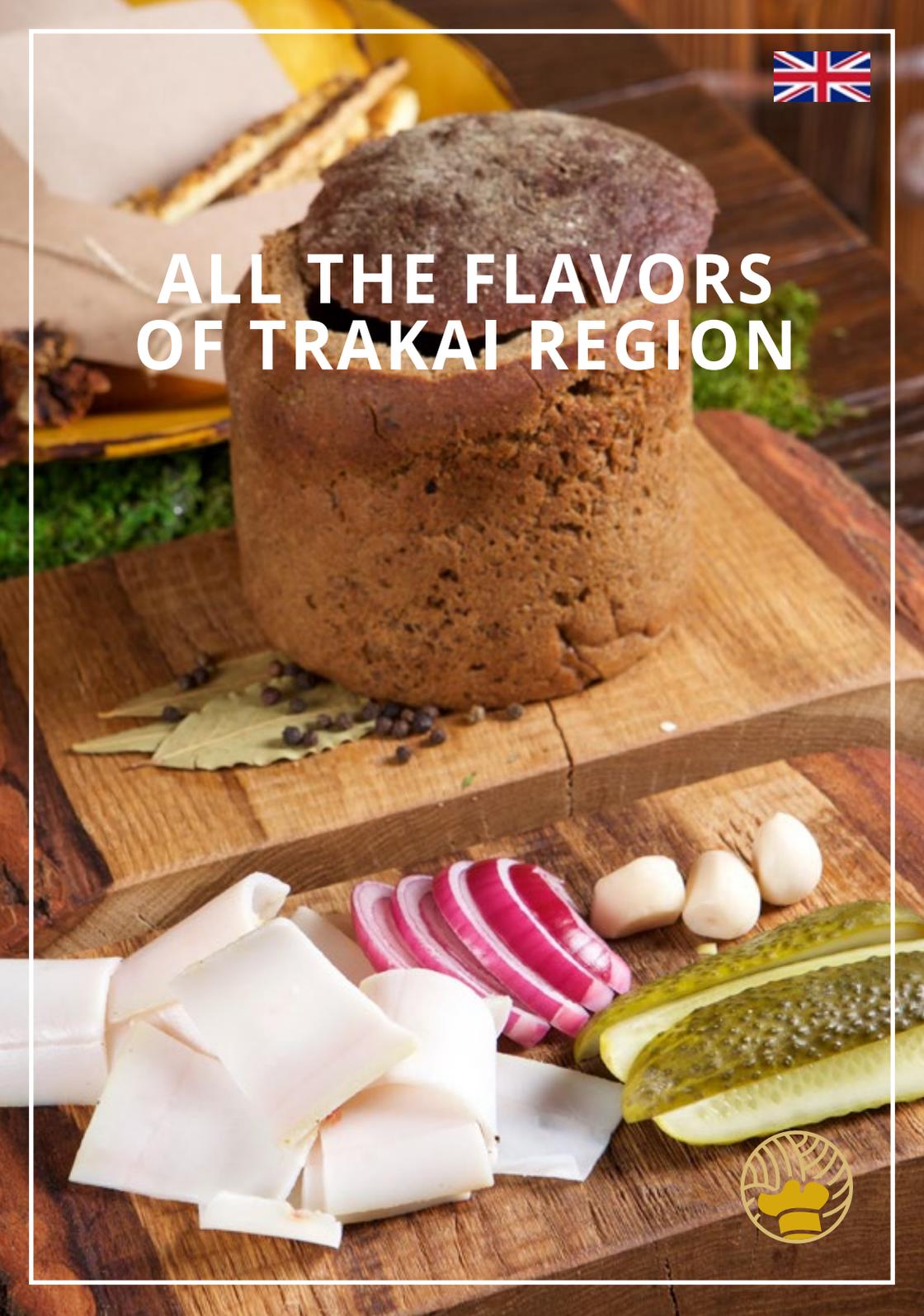




ALL THE FLAVORS OF TRAKAI REGION





There are many ways to explore a country's history and culture, although probably the most pleasant and authentic way is to experience the country's cuisine up close. It would be impossible to fully understand a foreign country without trying its national cuisine or the most popular dishes. Scientists have long proven that food is one of the most powerful memory stimulants. Gastrotourism – learning about a country through its culinary traditions and folk recipes – is becoming increasingly popular for good reason. When we visit small restaurants of local cuisine, serving dishes made according to centuries-old recipes, we seem to penetrate the spirit of the country...

Thus, we traditionally associate Italy with pizza and delicious pasta, when we talk about Spain, we immediately think of delicious paella, French dishes are famous for their sauces, Germany tempts us with fried sausages, and it would be unforgivable to return from Sweden without tasting the unique flavor of pickled herring.

And what flavors of Trakai must be discovered by guests from Lithuania and abroad?

Lithuanian cuisine has been changing and developing under the influence of various historical circumstances. In different regions of Lithuania, there are many unique dishes with different methods of preparing the same dish. Traditional food products survived through the

centuries becoming part of the country's history and culture.

Although cold beetroot soup (*šaltibarščiai*), black bread, fliitch, potato dumplings (*cepelinai*) and more than a few potato dishes are famous traditional fare, they are far from reflecting the entire culinary heritage of Lithuania.

Trakai region is unique due to the intertwining of nationalities and different cultures of the local population. The local culinary heritage has been formed and shaped by the peoples and cultures living here, the different religions, and the migration of people. This is the secret of Trakai region cuisine. Karaites, Tatars, Jews, Greeks, French, Italians, Germans... this simmering cauldron of nations has enriched not only the cuisine of Trakai, but also Lithuania. Today, the menu of the Trakai region will invariably include dishes whose historical origins go far beyond the borders of Lithuania.

Flavors reminiscent of childhood, a particular feast or a special time of year are passed down from generation to generation from grandmothers' handwritten recipe books.

We recommend six divine-tasting dishes from the Trakai region, which you must definitely try at least once in your life!

WWW.TRAKAI-VISIT.LT



CHOCOLATE

"Nine out of ten people like chocolate. The tenth person always lies."

John Q. Tullius

We start the culinary journey of the Trakai region with the presentation of handmade chocolate – milk or traditional flavor, with chili peppers or even with pieces of Lithuanian smoked flitch!

"AJ Šokoladas" manufactory is popular not only throughout Lithuania, and also has its own representative offices in the USA and many other European countries. Its chocolate is produced manually according to the best Belgian traditions. Every visitor will experience sweet and pleasant emotions associated with tasting good chocolate, when visiting their chocolate house.

Many candy recipes are created by the masters of the manufactory or by the owner, Algimantas Jablonskas himself.

We invite every chocolate lover to discover and experience the traditions of chocolate. In a small store located in the old town of Trakai, every customer can choose their favorite from more than fifty types of chocolates. The atmosphere of the retro-style chocolate store, the smell of chocolate, the sentimental music and even the romantic clothing of the

store assistants remind many people of their sweet childhood.

You can even buy precious gifts for your dearest friends, giving them a branded gold-colored "Trakai" box with candies or chocolates with the "AJ" logo, so they can pamper themselves with the highest-quality chocolate and an unearthly blessing... These are the best gifts from Trakai!

Delicious aromatic fresh chocolate and its products are delivered every morning to stores in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai or Mažeikiai.

As the chocolate store expanded its activities, the first Museum of Chocolate Sculptures in Lithuania opened its doors a few years ago, exhibiting more than a hundred sculptures created by masters over the past year. The museum has four rooms with different themes: Mayan, Columbus, movies "Chocolate" and "Fun Life". The majority of the museum's works from the sweet material are life-size. The smallest sculpture is about the size of a human palm. The exhibition will be updated every few years, featuring new chocolate characters.

"AJ Chocolate Capital" can be found at:
Vytauto str. 4, Trakai

WWW.AJSOKOLADAS.LT



KIBINS

History of Kibins in Lithuania

A visit to the historical capital of Lithuania, Trakai, would be incomplete without the charm of stopping for a cup of broth with a traditional Karaite pie, kibin.

Lithuania has been crossed by many roads over the centuries. History has determined that many national communities and ethnic groups have settled in our small country, becoming an integral part of our life and traditions. Along with their cuisine.

The kibins came to Lithuania together with the Karaites in the 14th century. It all started when, about 1398 years after the victorious battle in Crimea in the 14th century, Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania moved approximately 380 families of this nationality to Trakai. The Karaites were given land in the northern part of Trakai, where they could build their prayer houses to profess their religion – Karaism.

When the Karaites arrived in Trakai, they formed two groups engaged in different activities: soldiers and civilians. The soldiers guarded the castles and the bridge to the castle of the island. However, most Karaite civilians worked the land, grew vegetables, engaged in small crafts, trade, kept taverns, rented state customs and engaged in other important activities. The Karaite

community, while creating life in Trakai, has preserved its traditions, faith, customs and language throughout the centuries. It is for these reasons that people maintain that Trakai is the capital of the Karaites of Lithuania and even the whole world.

The Karaites in Lithuania have various national dishes. Some of them belong to the everyday table, others to the festive table, usually related to some religious feast. One of the most famous non-ceremonial dishes in Lithuania, widely known not only to Karaites, is kibins (kybyn, kybynlar). These are crescent-shaped yeast dough pies with chopped lamb or beef stuffing, baked in an oven upon on a tin tray.

Karaite soldiers ate kibins, because the crescent-shaped pies stayed warm for a long time. They were also loved by Lithuanian nobles – kibins often found a place on the tables of dukes. However, Karaite cuisine is definitely not confined to kibins. Karaite women have long been renowned as good hostesses, and there is no doubt that due to their industriousness, the distinctive Karaite cuisine, based on meat and dough dishes, has survived to this day. In addition to kibins, the Karaites also bake chebureks, often cook

Bijaņē da kuvanē
Bu āvdia tohtahejlar.
Kiriuvēiu da čyhuvēu
Birdian ūbijbia
Alhyšly bolhejlar!



Apdzīvotājiem raksturīga ēdiena šķēde.
Sauter and hand working pie.



dumplings, and they are not complete without the national drink – krupnik. The name of krupnik was adopted from the local population, although the recipe is different as it is made using various roots and oriental spices such as cloves and nutmeg.

Today, in Trakai there are not only several restaurants serving Karaite cuisine, but also kibin-making lessons

Recipe:

In order to make Trakai kibins at home, you will need:

350 g of flour, 200 g of butter, 200 g of fat sour cream, 2 eggs for the dough and 1 egg for coating; 400 g of neck (preferably lamb or beef, but other meat will also work), 2 medium-sized onions, salt, pepper to taste.

First, mix the flour together with the butter. The final consistency should resemble wet sand, no large pieces of butter should remain. When the flour and butter have been mixed, add salt, eggs and sour cream. Mix until the dough is smooth and no longer sticky, and there is no dry flour left in the bowl. Cover the bowl of dough with cling film and leave it in the fridge for at least 30 minutes. Prepare the filling while the dough is resting.

and tastings are available. While listening to the story about the traditions of the town of Trakai, we offer you the opportunity to test your finger dexterity in making kibins... This way you can learn the special recipe and interesting cooking process, which creates the unique combination of dough and filling required for an authentic traditional Trakai pie with meat – kibin.

Cut the meat into small pieces (do not mince in any way). Mix with finely chopped onions and spices. That's it – the filling is ready!

Divide the dough, which has rested in the refrigerator, into equal portions, form uniform pancakes and roll them out. Each pancake should be slightly elongated and a little bigger than the palm of your hand. Place the filling on the rolled pancakes, fold the top tightly and brush each one with beaten egg. A few small holes can be poked in the top to allow steam to escape, but this is not necessary.

Bake the prepared pies in the oven at 200 °C for about 30 minutes. After baking, leave for a while, but don't wait for the kibin to cool completely – they should be eaten at least warm. Enjoy your meal!

You can taste kibins in Trakai at:

<https://www.trakai-visit.lt/en/objekto-kategorija/karaimiska-en/>



KIUBETE

Karaite cuisine is not limited to kibins alone. It is also rich in fresh sauerkraut soup, cakes, pies with cabbage, stews, salads and, of course, *kiubete* – a fat dough cake with filling.

Also, you will find many potato dishes in the Karaite kitchen, such as *biok* – this is the alternate name for the Lithuanian grated potato cake (*kugelis*). The dish is cooked in a similar way to Lithuanian *kugelis*, except small pieces of fatty beef or lamb are added to the potato graters. Karaites don't eat pork, so you won't find pork versions of *biok*.

In fact, there are many similarities between Lithuanian and Karaite cuisine– in our culture we eat *cepelinai*, which is known as *kopta* in Karaite. These are potato grater dumplings which are served with a thick soup made from beef or lamb bones, pearl barley, and beans or lots of carrots. When the soup is almost cooked, raw potatoes are grated, finely chopped lamb or beef is added to the grater, dumplings are made and they are added to the soup. The boiled soup is placed in the oven to be heated.

And we will certainly be right when we say that the Karaite nation has been famous for its hospitality since ancient times. They are characterized by such great and sincere hospitality that there are even

legends about it. One legendary story is about the fortress of the city of Chufut-Kale, located near Bakhchisaray, from where the first Karaites are said to have arrived in Lithuania. According to legend, when the fortress was surrounded by the enemy, the inhabitants of the city decided to fight not with weapons, but with hospitality. The hostesses prepared a great deal of food, and the old men opened the gate leading to the fortress and invited the tired and hungry enemy inside. The enemy's soldiers realized that they could not attack a nation that greeted them with bread and salt rather than weapons.

Legends are not only about the hospitality of the Karaites, but also about the deliciousness of the dishes. It is said that a Muslim cleric, after tasting the Karaite stew, was speechless with admiration. This is how *imam bailyd*, the name for eggplant and tomato stew, came about. In Lithuanian, it would mean something similar to "*imamas apspango*".

Kiubete

Kiubete, a floury dish of Karaite cuisine, was usually baked in one large dish for the whole family and eaten on holidays. The cake, just taken out of the oven, drew the family to the table with its pleasant smell.



The upper part of the *kiubete* was cut off at the side braid, and once it was divided into equal parts, all family members ate it with broth, and the rest – as a second dish.

Translated from the Karaite language, kubete means “warrior’s shield”, which symbolizes the roots of the warlike Karaite people in ancient times. Another meaning is that it is a family symbol of unity and harmony, as the cake is shared equally among all family members. In addition, the round shape symbolizes the

sun, which has been worshiped by all nations throughout the ages.

The *kiubete* is always served steaming hot, enticing everyone with a delicious aroma, spreading waves of joy and luck as it turned the day into a feast. It is baked with various fillings: lamb, beef, chicken or fish. The meat is cut into small pieces, seasoned with finely chopped onions, and other ingredients are added: rice, beans, potatoes, etc.

Recipe

The recipe of *kiubete* is not widely spread and to this day it is baked according to the individual family recipe, passed down from generation to generation. If you want to make a *kiubete* at home, you will need: flour, butter, heavy cream and eggs.

For the filling: chicken breast, rice, onions, oil for frying, cream, broth, chicken fat, spices. You will also need eggs to coat the pastry.

To prepare the dough, add warm butter to the flour, and rub well until it turns into small crumbs. Add beaten eggs, sour cream, a little salt. Mix carefully so that the dough is smooth and place it in the refrigerator.

For the filling, cut the chicken breast into large cubes. Cool the cooked rice. Fry the finely chopped onions. Mix all ingredients, then season with spices, broth and chicken fat.

Divide the cold dough into two parts. The bottom part of the cake needs about 2/3 of the total dough, while the remaining dough will cover the top of the cake. Roll out two circles about 0.8-1 cm thick. Place the prepared filling on the rolled out base of the dough, the edges of which you have to raise. Cover with a smaller circle of dough, press the edges nicely, forming a braid pattern. Make holes in the top, brush with beaten egg and bake at 220-250 °C in the oven for 40-50 minutes.

You can taste it in Trakai at:

“Kiubètė”, Trakų str. 2D
“Kybynlar”, Karaimų str. 29



HUNDRED-LAYER CAKE

(Šimtalapis)

Tatar culinary tradition has been passed down orally from generation to generation for many centuries, with adults teaching children and grandchildren how to prepare one or another dish. In this way, the hundred-layer cake recipe, and often even the baking tins are passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, one should not expect that the Tatar hostesses will explain everything in detail as if she were in confession.

Recipe

It takes more than an hour to bake a hundred-layer cake, but the taste of this excellent pastry is definitely worth it.

For the dough, you will need: 335 g of flour, a pinch of salt, 95 ml of milk, 2 tablespoons of sugar, 18 g of fresh yeast, 2 eggs, 30 ml of sunflower oil for applying on the dough and table top.

For the filling: 335 g of melted butter, 225 g of sugar, 1 teaspoon of cinnamon, 130 g of poppy seeds, 250-300 ml of boiling water, 70 g of raisins, 120 ml of brandy.

Let's start!

Place sugar in a bowl, add fresh yeast. Add 1-2 tablespoons of warm milk and mix. Cover with a towel and leave for about 10 minutes in a warm place until slightly foamy.

Beat the eggs in a bowl. Pour in the remaining warm milk and beat with a fork or pastry brush until smooth.

Maja Ščuckienė, a Tatar living in the Trakai region, and a master of baking hundred-layer cakes, revealed one unexpected secret about this dessert: "A hundred-layer cake is a Lithuanian Tatar know-how, there is no such cake in Belarus, Tatarstan, or Crimea". The baker reveals a tiny but difficult subtlety of making hundred-layer cake, which is the thinness of the dough. Maja's great-grandmother used to say that you should be able to read a newspaper through the dough of the hundred-layer cake.

Add the flour and salt to a larger bowl and mix. Pour the egg and milk mixture and foamed yeast into a bowl with flour and salt. Mix until it becomes a smooth dough, then transfer it to the table top. Start kneading manually for about 30-40 minutes. The dough should be soft enough, but not sticky to the table top. Divide the kneaded dough into five parts. Take one part of the dough, stretch it a little with your hands to form a circle, take one side of the circle, stretch a little and fold it to the center of the circle. Press it slightly. Do the same with three sides. Turn the dough over. Shape all sections of the dough in this way. Apply oil on the dough balls. Wrap each ball in cling film. Cover the dough balls with a towel and leave in a warm place at home for about 50-60 minutes.

Meanwhile, prepare the poppies. Place the poppies in a bowl and cover with boiling water. Stir and let stand for about 50-60



minutes. Drain the remaining water from the soaked poppies and grind them with a food processor.

Put the raisins in a bowl and pour the brandy over them. Leave for at least 30 minutes. After the raisins are soaked, pour in the remaining brandy.

Put the sugar in a bowl. Add a teaspoon of cinnamon and mix. It is best to use melted butter for a hundred-layer cake – just melt it to a liquid consistency.

Once the dough has risen, it's time to start stretching the dough. Apply oil to the table top. Place one of the balls of the risen dough on top of it. Apply a little oil on top of it. Start lightly pressing the surface of the dough with your fingers, thus making it thinner and spreading its surface a little. Stretch the dough on the table top so that the dough reaches paper thinness without tearing. Stretch slowly, expanding the dough to the sides a few millimeters at a time. Brush the dough with melted butter and sprinkle with the sugar and cinnamon mixture.

Take the second ball of dough and repeat all the steps, only this time lift the dough from the table top until it is a little thicker and transfer it to the first sheet; then carefully finish stretching the dough. Brush the dough again with butter and sprinkle with the sugar and cinnamon mixture. Repeat this process with

all the dough balls. Spread the butter and sprinkle the remaining sugar on the last, fifth, layer. Place the poppies on the long edge of the dough with a spoon. Sprinkle poppies soaked in brandy over the entire area.

Roll the dough into a stiff roller. Press the ends. Take a larger pot and line it with several layers of baking paper. Position the hundred-layer cake by twisting it into a circle. Insert a heat-proof glass into the cavity left in the middle of the hundred-layer cake. If there is some butter left, brush it over the surface of the pastry. Cover the hundred-layer cake with a towel and let it rise for 50-60 minutes.

Bake the hundred-layer cake at 180 °C in the oven (with fan function) for 55-60 minutes. For the first 15-18 minutes, bake uncovered until the top is browned, and the cover with foil for the rest of the cooking time. After baking, remove the glass and sprinkle the top of the pastry with powdered sugar.

For those who want to learn the secrets of making a hundred-layer cake, we invite you to visit the center of traditional crafts of the Trakai region (Karaimų str. 41, Trakai) or “Karališka senojoji kibininė” (Vilnius - Kaunas highway 23 km, Sausiai Village, Trakai district) and participate in the educational program of making this pastry, which is organized for groups of 10 or more.

Pre-registration is required:
www.trakukrastas.lt trakukrastas@gmail.com
www.kibinas.lt info@kibinas.lt

You can taste this dish in “Senoji kibininė”
Karaimų 65, Trakai



ANTECEDENT'S STEW

Delicious memories of old people!

Lithuania consists of five regions, the inhabitants of which differ both in their character and in their traditional dishes. The Trakai region belongs to the ethnographic regions of Dzūkija and Aukštaitija. Dzūkija is famous for its mushrooms and berries. In Aukštaitija, a hearty lunch is unimaginable without dishes made of potatoes and meat. "Antecedent's stew" ("*Senolių troškiny*s") is one of those dishes that has as many variations as there are cooks. We always eat this dish until the last drop. This is a universal dish that can be

prepared for every taste! It can include meat or seasonal vegetables.

Who wouldn't love to have lunch cooked just for you in a clay pot? Stews are a reflection of home, coziness and warmth. Lithuanians love to cook stews at home on weekends, especially during the cold season.

Cooking in clay pots allows you to preserve all the flavors, the dish is saturated with a rich taste and a unique aroma that cannot be achieved in any other way.

Recipe

Cooking this dish will take you more than 1 hour.

Ingredients (4 portions): 600 g of meat fillet, 6 potatoes, 200 g of chanterelle or other mushrooms, 3 carrots, 1 leek, 0.5 zucchini, 1 stalk of celery, 1 green pepper, 1 onion, 3 cloves of garlic, 2 tablespoons of butter, 200 ml of hot broth or water, salt, ground black pepper, 100 ml of sour cream, greens: dill, onion leaves, parsley.

Cooking method: Cut the meat, potatoes, carrots, zucchini, and peppers into pieces. Meat should be cut into smaller pieces, and vegetables should be cut into larger pieces, as the meat will take longer to cook.

Chop the leek, celery and garlic. The meat can be pre-fried in a pan until golden brown. Place everything in clay, heat-resistant containers designed for stews.

Finely chop the onion and mushrooms, fry them in butter and place them in a bowl on top of the meat. Sprinkle everything with salt and ground pepper.

Pour vegetable or meat broth (if you don't have broth, use water) and stew in the oven at 180 – 200 °C (from above, without fan) for about 45 minutes, covered tightly.

Serve in cooking containers, with finely chopped greens sprinkled on top of the stew, and season with a spoonful of sour cream. Before eating, stir the stew well and let it cool a little. It's a great dish for cold days. Enjoy your meal!

This stew was one of the first in the history and menu of "Senoji Kibininė" and has survived to this day.

You can taste this dish in "Senoji kibininė"

Karaimų 65, Trakai
www.kibinas.lt



ROYAL CABBAGE SOUP

Since ancient times, Lithuanians have been preparing various soups: with meat, milk, sweet soups, which are eaten not only before the main course, but also as dessert. Cabbage could be considered the second most important vegetable in Lithuania after potatoes. It is one of the few greens that can be stored and kept practically until the next harvest. Food experts say that it is not appropriate to call cabbage a simple or ordinary vegetable – it is not only a staple in traditional Lithuanian cuisine, but also an essential ingredient in many sophisticated gourmet culinary experiments.

Did you know that once cabbage soup would be served at a wedding, when it was time to go home? Today, it

Recipe

For 4 portions you will need: 1.5 liters of vegetable broth or water, 4 medium-sized potatoes, 500 g of sauerkraut, 200 g of smoked pork bacon, 200 g of fresh boletus (can be frozen), 1 large carrot, 5 medium-sized scallions, 4 cloves of garlic, olive oil as needed, salt to taste, ground black pepper, rosemary, finely chopped dill and parsley, 100 ml of fat sour cream.

Cooking method: Pour olive oil into a 3 liter pot, add the bacon diced into small (0.5 cm) pieces and fry together with the

would be difficult to imagine cabbage soup at such a feast. Cabbage soup is one of the few dishes that has remained almost unchanged over the centuries. And if there were changes, they were very minor and related to the processing of the ingredients. For example, in earlier times, the vegetables for soup were not fried, now carrots and onions are often added, and these are fried until golden brown.

“Royal cabbage soup” (“*Karališka kopūstienė*”) – sauerkraut soup with smoked bacon and boletus served in a tub of black bread. Crispy bread “container”, filled with rustic cabbage, seasoned with fried smoked pork bacon and mushrooms... Simply amazing!

mushrooms. Chop onions, garlic and carrots, then place them into a pot. Also add sauerkraut and potatoes cut into medium-sized cubes. Pour broth or water over the ingredients. Season with salt, pepper and fresh rosemary. Bring to the boil, then simmer on low heat for an hour.

Season with sour cream and finely chopped greens. Enjoy your meal!

“Royal cabbage soup” (“*Karališka kopūstienė*”) can be tasted in special bread tubes in “*Senoji kibininė*”

Karaimų str. 65, Trakai
www.kibinas.lt

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