



Olivera Grbić

Serbian Cuisine

Translated from Serbian by: Vladimir D. Janković

ALL TRADITIONAL PLATES

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	9
COLD APPETIZERS	11
NISH STYLE ASPIC	12
STERLET ASPIC	13
BEAN ASPIC	15
HOOPLA (URNEBES) SALAD	16
PICKLED PEPPERS STUFFED WITH CHEESE AND KAYMAK	17
SOUPS AND BROTHS	19
DOCK BROTH	21
SOUR LAMB SOUP	22
LEEK AND CHICKEN BROTH	23
POTATO BROTH	25
PEA BROTH	26
BEAN BROTH	27
BEEF SOUP	29
DRIED MEAT SOUP	30
VEAL BROTH	31
FISH SOUP	33
HOT APPETIZERS	35
FRITTERS	36
TSITSVARA	37
CORNBREAD	39
POLENTA WITH CHEESE	40
MANTLES	41





POTATO DOUGHNUT	43
MEAT PIE	44
GIBANITZA	45
SPINACH PIE	47
SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH CHEESE & ROASTED PEPPERS	48
SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH CRACKLINGS	49
SAUERKRAUT PIE	51
POTATOES WITH CHEESE	52
CHEESE STUFFED PEPPERS	53
BREADED FRIED PEPPERS	55
CORN FLOUR PANCAKE	56
UZICE STYLE PUFF PASTRIES	57
LARD MUFFINS	59
MEATLESS DISHES	61
LENTILS WITH RICE	62
BACHELOR STEW	63
BAKED BEANS	65
DRY RED PEPPERS STUFFED WITH BEANS	66
MEATLESS SARMAS WITH FRESH CABBAGE	67
STEWED SAUERKRAUT	69
NEW POTATOES WITH KAYMAK	70
GREEN BEANS WITH MILK AND KAYMAK	71
STUFFED POTATOES	73
MEAT DISHES	75
SAUERKRAUT SARMA	76
LAMB SARMA	77
LITTLE SARMA WITH KALE AND MEAT	79
STUFFED PEPPERS IN TOMATO SAUCE	80





LAMB KAPAMA WITH DOCK LEAVES	81
BEANS WITH DRY PORK	83
STEWED SAUERKRAUT WITH TURKEY	84
WEDDING SAUERKRAUT	85
EGGPLANT MOUSSAKA	87
POTATO MOUSSAKA	88
CHICKEN PILAV	89
CHICKEN IN DOUGH	91
CHICKEN STEW WITH DUMPLINGS	92
VENISON STEW	93
VOIVODINIAN SEKELI GOULASH	95
LESKOVAC JUMBLE	96
SERBIAN DJUVETCH	97
ROASTED PORK	99
TRIFE	100
KARADJORDJE'S STEAK	101
HUNTER'S SCHNITZEL	103
BEEF IN TOMATO SAUCE	104
METOHIAN PAN	105
LAMB COOKED IN MILK	107
LAMB KAPAMA	108
ROASTED LAMB	109
GRILLED DISHES	111
CEVAPCICI	112
PLIESKAVITZA (BURGER) WITH KAYMAK	113
LITTLE SKEWERS	115
LESKOVAC FRITTERS	116
PORK RIB EYE STEAK IN PERITONEUM	117





FRESHWATER FISH DISHES	119
FISH STEW	120
UZICE STYLE TROUT	121
SMOKED TROUT	123
DRUNKEN CARP	124
STUFFED CARP	125
CARP WITH PRUNES	127
PIKEPERCH WITH MUSHROOMS AND GRATED CHEESE	128
PIKEPERCH CHOPS	129
PIKEPERCH CROQUETTES	131
BREADED STERLET	132
ROASTED STERLET	133
CATFISH IN SOUR CREAM SAUCE	135
SALADS	137
COLESLAW	138
SERBIAN SALAD	139
SHOPSKA SALAD	141
ROASTED PEPPERS WITH GARLIC	142
POTATO SALAD	143
SAUERKRAUT	145
MIXED PICKLES	146
AYVAR	147
DESSERTS	149
BOILED WHEAT	150
ORASNITZE	151
VANILITZE	153
NISH STYLE GURABIYE	154
GINGERBREAD	155





SERBIAN DOUGHNUTS	156
LAZY PIE	157
DRY CAKE WITH WALNUTS	158
PUMPKIN PIE	159
SWEET PIE WITH CHEESE	161
STRUDEL WITH POPPY SEEDS AND WALNUTS	162
CHERRY SOURDOUGH	163
NOODLES WITH POPPY SEEDS OR WALNUTS	164
TASHKAS WITH JAM	165
PLUM DUMPLINGS	167
RASPBERRY CAKE	168
VASA'S CAKE	169
BELGRADE CAKE	171
PRESERVES, COMPOTES, JAMS	173
PLUM PRESERVES WITH WALNUTS	174
RASPBERRY PRESERVES	175
QUINCE PRESERVES	177
WATERMELON RIND PRESERVES	178
PEAR COMPOTE	179
QUINCE COMPOTE	181
ROSE HIP JAM	182
PLUM JAM	183







INTRODUCTION


Since ancient times, mores and amenities have played an important role in preserving the identity of a people. Most of the Serbian population in the Middle Ages were *sebri* – farmers with a rich tradition, and all the richness of Serbian cuisine is derived from its geographic, ethnic and cultural diversity, which result from centuries of population mixing. Through the preserved Serbian cuisine recipes, the reader will get to know some ethnic motifs, and only a small part of huge Serbian natural resources. Today we witness many examples of the adjustment of tradition to a completely different, modern way of life. However, the old values and respect for nature have never been entirely suppressed in Serbia.







Cold Appetizers



When it comes to the traditional cold appetizers in Serbian cuisine, the aspic (*pihtiye*) should be certainly mentioned first. This Serbian dish is made from pork legs, head, ears, and other parts that give a good jelly. In some parts of Serbia the smoked meat is added too, so this dish, cut into equal cubes, is simply a must on each slava menu. With aspic, which is prepared mainly during winter, in the time of numerous Serbian slavas, sauerkraut salad and pickles are served, and domestic brandy: strong plum, apricot or quince *rakija*.



NISH STYLE ASPIC



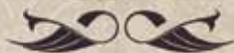
INGREDIENTS:

3,3 lb (1½ kg) of clean porc legs,
meat of leg or ears
1 bunch of greens
1 bay leaf
A few grains of white pepper
1 onion
1 head of garlic
Salt to taste

RECIPE:

Aspic is served as appetizer, and you prepare it this way: take 3.3 pounds (1½ kg) of clean porc legs, meat of leg, and ears (avoid those excessively greasy parts). Wash all thoroughly, put in a larger pot and pour water, until the meat is submerged. Cook over a low heat. When the foam appears on the surface, take the pot off the heat and add a bunch of greens, a bay leaf, a few grains of white pepper, one onion, a head of garlic, and salt, if needed. Cooking should take 4–5 hours, which depends on when the meat softens. When the meat starts falling off the bones, and aspic water becomes sticky, you'll know that the dish is ready. Take off the pot then, and wait until its content settles down. Remove the fat from the surface, then pour the content through a strainer. When strained, separate meat from the bones, chop the larger parts from the leg, and divide it in several deep dishes. Sprinkle with chopped garlic, pour soup over each dish, and then store the plates in a cool place, until the aspic is set.





STERLET ASPIC

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lb (1 kg) of sterlet
- 1 lb (½ kg) of onions
- ½ lb (¼ kg) of mushrooms
- 8.5 fl oz (1/4 l) of olive oil



RECIPE:

Take 1 kg (2 lb) of sterlet, ½ kg (1 lb) of onions and (¼ kg) ½ pound of fresh mushrooms. It is more difficult to clean sterlet than any other fish; the best way is to scald it in boiling water, and then skin it; you should remove its gills and discard them. Chop the onions as finely as you can, salt them and add in a cup (2,5 dl) of olive oil, then fry over a low heat. When the onions are half fried, chop the mushrooms into small pieces, and add them to the onions. While the onions turn to mush, add the chopped fish, and let it simmer for a couple of minutes. Add some cayenne pepper, ground white pepper, and carefully stir with a spoon. Pour the warm water over fish, until it has submerged, and boil for a half an hour. While boiling, do not stir the fish with a spoon, just shake the pot occasionally. Before removing the pot from heat, add some finely chopped parsley, and allow it to simmer a little bit more. Remove the pot from heat, pour the content in the dishes, and put them in a cool place for the aspic to set.







BEAN ASPIC

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lb (1 kg) of pork feet
- 0.9 gal (4 l) of water
- 1 onion
- 10 grains of pepper
- 1 bunch of greens
- 2 lb (1 kg) of Tetovo beans



RECIPE:

One kilo (2 lb) of pork feet, washed in several waters, put in a pot and pour 4 liters (0.9 imperial gallon) of cold water. As soon as the water boils, add a garlic head, 10 grains of pepper, some greens, then salt everything, and boil. The soup should be cooked over low heat. When it boils, remove foam from the surface. In a separate pot place some Tetovo beans, boil them, then change the so-called first water, pour the second one, add some onion, and cook until the beans begin to dissolve. Add salt to taste, and divide equally in deep dishes. Pour the aspic soup, previously strained, over each dish. Arrange the meat over the beans, and leave to cool.

