



POLISH-ITALIAN COOKBOOK

• LANGUAGE VERSION: ENGLISH

20 recipes • 10 from Poland • 10 from Italy



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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Cooking is more than recipes – it is memories, traditions and stories passed down from generation to generation. It is also a space where people can meet, get to know one another and learn from each other, regardless of age, language or nationality.

This book was created as part of the Erasmus+ project “Intergenerational Cooking – creative workshops improving seniors' digital skills”, carried out jointly by the Rural Housewives' Circle (KGW) in Dąbrowa Chotomowska and the Italian partner UNIV3 Novara.

Shared cooking workshops, international meetings and the exchange of experience allowed us not only to discover the flavours of both countries, but also to develop new skills, build friendships and break down barriers between generations.

We are delighted to present 20 recipes – 10 Polish and 10 Italian – the fruit of our cooperation, our shared passion for cooking and our wish to preserve culinary heritage for future generations.

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ABOUT THE PROJECT AND THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

How this book came to be

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme supporting education, training, youth and sport. It enables lifelong learning – including for adults and seniors – and cooperation between organisations from different European countries.

OUR PROJECT

“Intergenerational Cooking – creative workshops improving seniors' digital skills” is a small-scale partnership in the field of adult education (KA210-ADU). It was carried out by the Rural Housewives' Circle in Dąbrowa Chotomowska and the Università della Terza Età di Novara.

Seniors and the younger generation met around a shared table in order to:

- cook traditional and modern dishes from Poland and Italy together,
- learn how to use phones, tablets, cooking apps and the internet,
- exchange experiences – seniors passed on family recipes, while younger people helped them get comfortable with technology,
- discover the history, culture and cuisine of the partner country.

HOW WE WORKED

- **Local workshops** in Dąbrowa Chotomowska and in Novara – cooking combined with learning digital tools.
- **International cooking workshops** in Italy – the Polish group was hosted in Novara.
- **Creative workshops in Poland** – our Italian partners were hosted in Jabłonna.
- **This book** – a collection of recipes, memories and good practices, available free of charge in Polish, Italian and English.

SHARED EUROPEAN HERITAGE

At the shared table we experienced what lies at the heart of the European Union: diversity that unites, mutual respect and a common heritage. Polish pierogi and Piedmontese paniscia taste different, but they tell the same story – they are the work of families who shared what they had and passed it on to the next generations.

OUR WORKSHOPS IN POLAND

Halloween workshop · Dąbrowa Chotomowska, October 2025

Seniors taught the young people how to shape pierogi and prepare pumpkin dishes, while the young people showed the seniors how to find a recipe on a phone and follow it step by step.



Shaping pierogi together



A senior teaches how to shape pierogi



Halloween atmosphere in the kitchen

Pierogi at the Jabłonna Palace · 30 November 2025

The chef set a challenge: the filling had to be prepared independently, following recipes found on the internet. The seniors showed how to shape pierogi, and were given a digital task of their own – they took photos and put together a short video report from the workshop.



Participants at the Jabłonna Palace



Filling made from an internet recipe



A senior shows how to shape pierogi

OUR WORKSHOPS IN POLAND

Grandparents' Day · 23 January 2026

The young people made gingerbread cookies with dedications for their grandparents, searching their phones for decoration ideas. The seniors, in turn, showed something you cannot find on the internet – how to quickly cut a large loaf of bread into even cubes.



Group photo of the participants



Mrs Zdzisława Piasecka teaches bread cutting



Gingerbread cookies for the grandparents

Flavours of Asian cuisine · Women's Day, 7 March 2026

In line with the project plan, we explored Asian cuisine. First we looked up on the internet how to cook sushi rice, then professional cooks showed us how to do it properly and how to roll the sushi. For many participants – especially the seniors – it was the first sushi they had ever made themselves.



Participants with their certificates



Demonstration of sushi rolling



Senior women rolling sushi

OUR VISIT TO NOVARA

Pizza from scratch · 1-5 June 2026

During the visit we were hosted by our partners from the Università della Terza Età di Novara. A true pizza master showed us how to prepare and knead the dough, and every participant could try their hand under his supervision.



Welcome by our partners in Novara



Kneading pizza dough



The pizza master with the ready dough

Rice fields and sightseeing

The biggest surprise was the rice fields – the area around Novara is famous for the risotto rice on which the cuisine of the region is based. We also visited Novara with the distinctive dome of the Basilica of San Gaudenzio, and the picturesque town on Lake Orta.



Rice fields near Novara



Novara – the dome of San Gaudenzio in the background



On Lake Orta

GUESTS FROM NOVARA IN POLAND

Pierogi at the Jabłonna Palace · 6–10 September 2026

Our Italian partners stayed at the Jabłonna Palace. During the joint workshops we showed them how to prepare and shape real Polish pierogi – and they eagerly picked up one secret after another from our senior women.



The first tray of pierogi



Learning to shape pierogi from a KGW senior



Poles and Italians in the Circle's aprons

Sightseeing and farewell

We showed our guests the park and surroundings of the palace and Warsaw – the day ended with a shared meal in the Old Town. For the farewell we hosted them in Dąbrowa Chotomowska with a Polish lunch: there was bigos, and the guests fried the potato pancakes themselves.



Poniatowski Arch in the park in Jabłonna



Sightseeing in Warsaw



Farewell lunch in Dąbrowa Chotomowska

OUR WORKSHOPS IN NOVARA

Six intergenerational meetings · November 2025 – May 2026

In parallel with the meetings in Poland, the Italian partner – the Università della Terza Età di Novara – organised six cooking workshops in Novara. Each was attended by 16 people: 8 seniors from the university of the third age and 8 young participants – including young people from various countries (in the pizza workshop from Japan, Thailand and Syria) and students from different regions of Italy. The participants sent photos and videos from the workshops to their families, also abroad – this is how cooking met the everyday use of technology.

We cooked pizza, fresh pasta (orecchiette and trofie, under the guidance of the trainer Alice, a food blogger), Asian gyoza and pizzoccheri – a traditional pasta from northern Italy. The pizzoccheri meeting ended with a shared dinner.



20 November 2025 – pizza: group photo of the participants



19 February 2026 – “Mani in pasta”: fresh pasta



24 March 2026 – “Asian food”: gyoza



14 May 2026 – “I love pizza”



20 May 2026 – pizzoccheri



25 May 2026 – “Impastiamo”: homemade pasta

VOICES OF PARTICIPANTS

What remained after the workshops – statements from participants in Novara

We asked the participants of the project from Italy and Poland what they had learned and what had surprised them. The statements are published with the consent of their authors; statements originally in Italian or Polish have been translated.

What new things did you learn on your phone or tablet?

“Using digital devices has made communication and building relationships between people easier. It is very useful for cultural exchange with people of different nationalities.”

— Vincenza Anselmi · Oleggio (NO) · aged 70–80

What was the most interesting thing about cooking together with younger people?

“Preparing unfamiliar dishes together with people of different ages and nationalities drew me in in a very pleasant and fun way.”

— Serafina Orofino · Novara · aged 70–80

What surprised you about Polish cuisine?

“I was pleasantly surprised by the variety of ingredients used in Polish dishes and the flavour they produce. The recipes learned in the project broadened our gastronomic knowledge – we adapted their preparation to the cuisine of our own tradition.”

— Maria Rita Rosati · Novara · aged 70–80

VOICES OF PARTICIPANTS

Statements from the participants of the visit to Novara

Alutka Mysza (artistic pseudonym) · Dąbrowa Chotomowska · aged 48

What new things did you learn on your phone or tablet?

I improved my skills in using the phone and apps and in searching for information on the internet.

What was the most interesting thing about cooking together?

An interesting experience was preparing floury potato-and-cheese dumplings at an Italian lady's home, and kneading pizza dough in a multigenerational family restaurant in Novara.

What surprised you about Italian cuisine?

What surprised me most was the hospitality, warmth and openness of the Italians and their culinary traditions. I also have fond memories of the warm welcome from the director and the seniors of the University of the Third Age. The whole Erasmus+ experience was beautiful for me, full of kindness and new friendships. I hope we will meet again in this group!

Bożena Wileńska · Dąbrowa Chotomowska · aged 61

What new things did you learn on your phone or tablet?

I learned to make better use of Google Maps, Google Photos and other apps. Now it is easier for me to find my way and share photos. I also learned a few Italian words.

What was the most interesting thing about cooking together?

It was interesting to prepare floury potato dumplings, served with butter and cheese, at the home of one of the Italian ladies. The taste did not entirely suit me, but cooking together was a pleasant experience.

What surprised you about Italian cuisine?

I really liked the trip to the rice fields and the chance to buy local products. I also have fond memories of Lake Orta and the town of Orta San Giulio. The whole trip was a great success. The Italians were warm and hospitable. I hope we will meet again one day.



Fresh homemade pasta – "Impastiamo" workshop, Novara, 25 May 2026

ABOUT OUR REGION: NOVARA

Novara is the second most populous city in Piedmont. It lies in a strategic spot in the western Po Valley, halfway between Milan and Turin. The area between the Ticino river in the east and the Sesia in the west is distinguished by a landscape dominated by rice fields. In the north the plain rises into the Novara hills, famous for their vineyards, and further on into the area around Lakes Maggiore and Orta.

Culinary traditions and regional products

The cuisine of Novara is a direct reflection of the local land. It is based on simple ingredients from local farming and livestock breeding.

1. **Rice:** The foundation of the local economy and cuisine. The Arborio variety originated in this region and is the basis of the regional first courses.
2. **Cured meats:** Notable are “salam d'la duja”, a soft salami preserved in lard in earthenware pots called “duje”, and “fidighin” – a seasoned mortadella made from pork liver.
3. **Cheeses:** The region shares with the neighbouring province of Pavia the tradition of making PDO gorgonzola (sweet and spicy). Novara is today one of the main Italian centres of its production and maturation.
4. **Desserts:** The sweet symbol of the city is “Biscottini di Novara” – light, twice-baked biscuits without added fat, historically linked to the monastic tradition.

Cultural context of traditional recipes

The traditional dishes of Novara arose to meet the energy needs of farm workers, especially the “mondine” – women who weeded the rice fields from dawn to dusk.

The symbolic dish of the region is paniscia – a hearty risotto that reflects the seasonal availability of winter ingredients and meat preservation traditions. Originally it was a simple dish made from whatever was left on the farm.

ABOUT OUR REGION: DĄBROWA CHOTOMOWSKA

Dąbrowa Chotomowska is a village in the Jabłonna municipality, Legionowo county, next to Chotomów. Its landscape is made up of woodland and single-family housing. Today it is mainly residential, but it preserves the memory of the former rural community, based on neighbourly ties and family traditions.

Local traditions and heritage

One of the most valuable elements of the heritage of Dąbrowa Chotomowska is the traditional blessing of Easter food, held in a private home. The priest blesses the residents' baskets, keeping alive the old way of observing Holy Saturday, once widespread in Poland.

1. **Easter tradition:** according to residents' recollections, after the Second World War the ritual took place every year until 1981 at the same family's home, and was then moved to the home of another resident. The custom continues to this day in the oldest part of the village.
2. **Cultural heritage:** on 5 November 2020 the "Traditional blessing of food in Dąbrowa Chotomowska" was entered on the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.
3. **Tadeusz Wenda:** in the 1920s the engineer Tadeusz Apolinary Wenda, chief designer and construction manager of the port of Gdynia, together with his family acquired an estate of about 17 hectares in Dąbrowa Chotomowska.
4. **Historical memory:** his connection with the village is commemorated by a plaque unveiled in 2018. In 2019 he was posthumously awarded the title of Honorary Citizen of the Jabłonna Municipality.

Cultural context of local traditions

The history of Dąbrowa Chotomowska shows how strongly the local community is bound to family, neighbourly cooperation and the handing down of customs from generation to generation.

Food also plays an important role: holidays, preparing dishes and meetings around a shared table help to preserve local memory. The Polish recipes presented in this e-book represent not only flavours and culinary techniques, but also a living, jointly cherished heritage.

DIGITAL KITCHEN

Phone and tablet – our cooking helpers

During the workshops in Dąbrowa Chotomowska and in Novara, seniors and younger participants not only cooked together, but also learned together how to use a phone and tablet in the kitchen. Here is what turned out to be the most useful.

HOW TO FIND A GOOD RECIPE ONLINE

- Type the name of the dish and the word “recipe” into the search engine, e.g. *paniscia recipe*.
- Choose websites that list ingredients with quantities, photos and comments from other people.
- Read a few comments – they often contain valuable tips, e.g. “I added less salt”.
- Instead of copying out a recipe, take a screenshot or save the page in your favourites.

PHONE AS A KITCHEN HELPER

- **Timer** – set the cooking time and the phone will remind you about the cake in the oven.
- **Shopping list** – write down the ingredients in your notes or in a list app and share it with your family.
- **Calculator** – convert the ingredients when you want to make more or fewer portions.
- **Translator with camera** – point the camera at a recipe in a foreign language and the app will translate it into your own. At the workshops this helped us communicate with our partners.
- **Camera** – photograph the successive stages. It is easier to repeat a recipe and show off the result.

DIGITAL KITCHEN

continued

INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS

- On video sites, type the name of the dish and the words “how to make”.
- You can pause, rewind and slow down a video to calmly see a more difficult stage – e.g. shaping pierogi.

COOKING AT A DISTANCE

- Take a photo of the dish and send it to your family via a messenger app.
- Connect with your grandchildren by video call and cook together – even when many kilometres separate you.

SAFE ONLINE

- Do not give card details or passwords on recipe websites.
- Beware of adverts for “miracle diets” and “cures for everything” – ask your doctor about your health.
- Download apps only from your phone's official store.
- If something raises doubts, ask a younger family member – that is exactly how it worked at our workshops.



Young people show seniors how to find a recipe on a phone – October 2025

HEALTHY AT EVERY AGE

Tradition on the plate – in moderation

Many recipes in this book belong to festive and banquet cooking. It is easy, however, to adapt them to an everyday, healthier menu.

SIMPLE RULES

- Let vegetables and fruit fill half of your plate – preferably seasonal and local.
- Choose wholegrain products: groats, brown rice, wholemeal bread.
- Limit salt. Replace it with herbs – marjoram, rosemary, sage or thyme, which you will find in our recipes.
- Drink water regularly, even when you do not feel thirsty.
- Eat smaller portions, more often.

HOW TO “SLIM DOWN” THE RECIPES IN THIS BOOK

- **Potato pancakes** – bake in the oven on baking paper instead of deep-frying.
- **White borscht and mushroom sauce** – instead of 30% cream, use natural yoghurt or 12% soured cream.
- **Bigos** – choose leaner meat, add more cabbage and mushrooms.
- **Risotto** – add more vegetables and less butter and cheese.
- **Desserts** – reduce the amount of sugar by a third; in apple cake use sweet apples and cinnamon.

FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

With diabetes, portion size, the amount of sugar and white flour, and regular mealtimes are particularly important. Treat desserts as an occasional extra. Always agree the details of your diet with your doctor or dietitian.

This chapter is general in nature and does not replace the advice of a doctor or dietitian.

STARTERS

Smalec



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
3 hrs

SERVINGS
approx. 5-6 jars of
300 ml

DIFFICULTY
easy

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Homemade smalec is a traditional delicacy of Polish cuisine, especially popular in the countryside. Made from pork fat and meat, with the addition of onion, apple and marjoram, it has been served for generations with fresh bread and a pickled cucumber.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg fatty pork
- 1 onion
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon marjoram
- 1 kg pork fat
- 1 apple
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the meat: Mince the pork and pork fat through a coarse mincer plate. Add salt and pepper, then mix thoroughly.
2. Rendering the fat: Transfer the minced meat and fat to a hot frying pan or pot. Stew over low heat for about 2 hours, stirring often so the ingredients do not burn.
3. Adding onion and apple: Cut the onion into small cubes and grate the apple on a coarse grater. Add to the rendering fat and stew for another hour.
4. Seasoning the smalec: A few minutes before the end of stewing, add finely chopped garlic and marjoram. Stir everything and keep heating until the fat has completely rendered and the cracklings turn golden.
5. Finishing: Let the finished smalec cool slightly and transfer it to clean jars. After it has cooled, store it in the refrigerator.

TIP / FUN FACT

The secret of good homemade smalec is patience! The pork fat and meat must be rendered slowly, over low heat, so that the cracklings become golden and crisp. An interesting addition is grated apple, which gives the smalec a more delicate taste and cuts through its richness. Onion and apple are added during rendering, while garlic and marjoram are best added at the end to keep their aroma.



Making smalec

VITELLO TONNATO



Illustration generated by artificial intelligence

COUNTRY
Italy

TIME
1 hr 30 min

SERVINGS
6

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Vitello tonnato, called vitel tonn  in Piedmontese, is one of the most characteristic dishes of Piedmontese cuisine. Its origins go back to the 18th and 19th centuries, when it was prepared for important lunches and family celebrations. What makes the recipe special is the combination of thin slices of boiled veal with a creamy sauce of tuna, capers and anchovies.

Over time the dish became one of the symbols of Piedmontese cuisine and spread throughout Italy. It is often served as a starter during the holidays and in the summer months.

The recipe was chosen for the e-book because it excellently represents the culinary traditions of Novara and Piedmont.

INGREDIENTS

- for the veal:
 - veal topside (a single piece) – 800 g–1 kg.
 - dry white wine – 750 ml.
 - bay leaves – 2.
 - celery – 1 stalk.
 - carrot – 1.
 - onion – 1.
 - cold water – as needed.
- for the tuna sauce:
 - hard-boiled eggs – 4.
 - tuna in oil, drained – 250 g.
 - anchovy fillets in oil – 6.
 - salted capers, rinsed – 30 g.
 - extra virgin olive oil – as needed.
 - lemon (optional) – a piece of zest.
 - vegetable stock – 100 ml.

PREPARATION

1. Place the veal in a large pot with the celery, carrot, onion and bay leaves.
2. Pour in the white wine and add enough water to cover the meat completely.
3. Bring to the boil, then cook over low heat for about 90 minutes, until the veal is tender.
4. Leave the meat to cool in the cooking liquid so that it stays tender and juicy.
5. Tuna sauce: blend the tuna, anchovies, hard-boiled eggs, capers and grated lemon zest on high speed.
6. Add the extra virgin olive oil and a ladle of stock. Blend until you get a smooth, creamy sauce of the right flavour.
7. Slice the veal very thinly with a slicer and arrange the slices slightly overlapping on a platter.
8. Cover the meat evenly with the tuna sauce and refrigerate for at least an hour. Before serving, decorate with whole capers.

TIP / FUN FACT

In some recipes the veal is not boiled but roasted in the oven after being browned in a pan.

For a more intense flavour, vitello tonnato can be prepared a day ahead and left overnight in the refrigerator.

It is traditionally decorated with whole capers and served cold. In many families it is an essential holiday and summer dish.

The veal with tuna sauce can be served as a starter or a main course; the most important thing is very thin slices of meat. Fresh, dry white wines or young, light reds go best, e.g. Roero Arneis, Gavi DOCG, Grignolino d'Asti or a young Barbera.



Preparing the tuna sauce

BAGNA CAUDA



COUNTRY
Italy

TIME
1 hr 30 min

SERVINGS
4

DIFFICULTY
easy

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

The origins of bagna cauda go back to the Middle Ages and are closely linked to the “salt road”. To avoid the high taxes on salt imposed by the House of Savoy, Piedmontese merchants travelled to Liguria and hid barrels of salt under layers of salted anchovies, which were taxed less.

At first the dish was rejected by the upper classes because of the intense smell of garlic, considered inelegant. It was, however, the meal of winegrowers and peasants, who on cold autumn and winter days gathered around a single earthenware pot (fojòt), placed in the middle of the table and heated by a small burner.

Everyone dipped seasonal vegetables – cooked and raw – into the hot, aromatic sauce of garlic, oil and anchovies.

The traditional “golden rule” calls for, per person: a head of garlic, about 1 dl of oil and 50 g of anchovies.

INGREDIENTS

- garlic – 4 heads
- extra virgin olive oil – 400 ml
- desalted anchovies – 200 g
- whole milk – 1 cup

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the garlic and anchovies: peel the garlic cloves, remove the green germ and cut the cloves into thin slices. Rinse the salted anchovies under running water, remove the bones and dry thoroughly with kitchen paper.
2. Blanching the garlic (optional): to make it milder and easier to digest, simmer it gently in milk for 10–15 minutes, then drain. In the strictly traditional peasant version this step is omitted.
3. Very low heat: put the garlic in an earthenware dish or a heavy-bottomed saucepan and cover with oil. Cook over minimal heat for about 30 minutes, stirring, until the garlic turns into a soft pulp. The oil must not fry and the garlic must not brown, as it would turn bitter.
4. Adding the anchovies: add the desalted fillets and keep cooking over very low heat, stirring with a wooden spoon, until they dissolve completely and form a smooth, uniform sauce.
5. Serving: pour the sauce into traditional *fojòt* – individual earthenware warmers with a candle – so that it stays warm throughout the meal.
6. Vegetables to serve: traditionally they are divided into raw and cooked:
 - Raw: cardoon from Nizza Monferrato (essential), Jerusalem artichokes, hearts of savoy cabbage, fennel, raw peppers (also pickled).
 - Cooked: roasted peppers, roasted onions, potatoes boiled in their skins and beetroot.

TIP / FUN FACT

Temperature control: the oil should never fry or smoke. When garlic browns, it becomes bitter and hard to digest. So cook over very low heat.

Quality of the anchovies: choose whole salted anchovies in a jar or tin, cleaned and desalted yourself, rather than ready-made fillets in oil – the sauce will have a better consistency.

Egg at the end (the *fojòt* ritual): when the *bagna cauda* is almost finished and a thin layer of aromatic oil remains at the bottom of the dish, traditionally a fresh egg or just the yolk is broken in. It is gently stirred and set by the residual heat.

Vegetables and wine: historically *bagna cauda* was not served with bread, but with curved stalks of cardoon from Nizza Monferrato, which served as a natural spoon for scooping up the sauce. A full-bodied young red wine is traditionally served, e.g. Barbera d'Asti or Dolcetto.



Illustration generated by artificial intelligence

SOUPS

White borscht



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
30 min

SERVINGS
6

DIFFICULTY
easy

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

White borscht is one of the traditional Polish soups, especially associated with Easter and family gatherings around the festive table. In the past it was made on a wheat-flour sourdough starter, which gave it its characteristic, slightly sour taste. Over time various homemade versions of the dish appeared.

INGREDIENTS

- broth 1.5 l
- white sausage - 400-500 g
- smoked sausage - 200-250 g
- cream 30% - 200 ml
- marjoram 1-2 tablespoons
- salt
- pepper
- 1 lemon

PREPARATION

1. Heating the base (the broth):

Pour the strained broth into a pot and heat over low heat.

2. Adding the sausage:

Add the white sausage and the smoked sausage, cut into pieces, to the hot broth. Cook everything over low heat for about 10–15 minutes so that the sausages release their aroma into the broth.

3. Seasoning the soup:

Add plenty of marjoram (ideally rubbing it between your hands to release the scent), plus salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

Pour in the juice of a squeezed lemon to give the borscht a suitable, pleasant sourness.

4. Whitening with cream:

So that 30% cream does not curdle, first temper it: pour the cream into a cup, add 1–2 ladles of hot soup from the pot and stir.

Pour the mixture prepared in this way slowly into the pot, stirring all the time.

5. Finishing:

Heat everything for a while longer over low heat (do not boil vigorously after adding the cream). Taste and, if necessary, season further with salt, pepper or lemon.

TIP / FUN FACT

The secret of an aromatic white borscht is marjoram! Before adding it to the soup it is worth rubbing it between your hands to release the essential oils and bring out its intense scent. To keep the borscht delicate and velvety, the cream should first be tempered with a little hot soup and only then poured into the pot. After the cream is added, the borscht should no longer be boiled vigorously, so it keeps a uniform, creamy consistency.



Pumpkin cream soup



COUNTRY

Poland

TIME

1 hr

SERVINGS

6-8

DIFFICULTY

easy

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Pumpkin cream soup is a popular autumn dish, prepared in many countries. The addition of coconut milk, ginger and Thai curry paste gives it an oriental aroma and a gently spicy taste.

INGREDIENTS

- 800 g Hokkaido pumpkin (weight after peeling)
- 200 g onion
- 400 g full-fat coconut milk
- 1/2 teaspoon hot paprika
- 500 g potatoes, weight before peeling
- 180 g carrots
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 25 g fresh ginger or 5 g ground ginger
- 45 g clarified butter
- 750 ml water
- a pinch of nutmeg

- fresh coriander
- toasted pumpkin seeds
- 1/2 tablespoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 level tablespoon Thai curry paste (red or yellow)

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the vegetables: Peel the pumpkin, potatoes and carrots and cut into cubes. Finely chop the onion and garlic, and grate or finely chop the fresh ginger.
2. Sautéing: Heat the clarified butter or oil in a large pot. Add the onion, garlic and ginger. Fry for 2–3 minutes, until the vegetables turn translucent and release their aroma.
3. Adding the curry paste: Add the Thai curry paste and fry for about a minute, stirring constantly, to bring out its aroma.
4. Adding the vegetables: Add the chopped pumpkin, potatoes and carrots to the pot. Fry for a few minutes, stirring often, so the vegetables absorb the spices.
5. Cooking the soup: Pour in the water, add salt, pepper, hot paprika and nutmeg. Cook covered over medium heat for about 25–30 minutes, until the vegetables are soft.
6. Adding the coconut milk: Pour in the coconut milk and cook for another 2–3 minutes. Take the soup off the heat and blend thoroughly into a smooth, velvety cream.
7. Seasoning: Taste the soup and, if necessary, season with salt, pepper or hot paprika. If you want a creamier consistency, add a little more coconut milk.
8. Serving: Serve the soup hot, sprinkled with fresh coriander or parsley and toasted pumpkin seeds. Optionally drizzle with lime juice.



*Cutting pumpkin together for the soup –
Halloween workshop, October 2025*

MAIN COURSES

Bigos



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
4-5 hrs

SERVINGS
30-35

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Bigos is a traditional Polish dish of cabbage and meat, known for generations. In the past it was cooked for several days to develop a deep flavour. To this day it is a symbol of Polish cuisine and family traditions.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 kg sauerkraut
- 1 large head of white cabbage
- 2 kg pork ribs
- 2 kg smoked sausage
- 1.5-2 kg smoked bacon
- 15-20 allspice berries
- 8-10 bay leaves
- Meat stock concentrate 40-50 g • parsley root 200 g
- 500-600 g onions
- 250-300 g carrots
- 200 g celeriac
- 200-250 g tomato purée • 200-250 g dried plums (prunes)
- 50-80 g dried mushrooms
- 8-10 juniper berries
- water 500-700 ml

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the cabbage:

Cook the sauerkraut separately until soft. Shred the white cabbage and also cook it in a separate pot.

2. Preparing the meat:

Divide the ribs into smaller pieces and parboil until tender. Cut the bacon and fry it together with the onion.

3. Preparing the sausage:

Cut the sausage into slices. Fry part of it in a pan and add the rest directly to the cabbage.

4. Combining the ingredients:

Combine both cabbages in a large pot. Add the ribs, bacon, sausage, chopped carrot, parsley root and celeriac, and the previously soaked mushrooms and prunes.

5. Adding the spices:

Add the bay leaves, allspice and juniper berries. Add a little rib stock or water and cook over low heat for about 1 hour.

6. Seasoning the bigos:

Add the tomato purée and the meat stock concentrate. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

7. Finishing:

Cook the bigos for about 2 more hours over low heat, stirring from time to time. It tastes best the next day after slow reheating.

TIP / FUN FACT

The secret of an excellent bigos is long, slow cooking! Interestingly, bigos tastes best the next day, and even after being reheated several times, because the ingredients have time to blend their aromas. It is worth adding prunes, which give the dish a gentle sweetness, and dried mushrooms, which enrich its flavour. In the past bigos was prepared over several days, and its flavour became more and more intense.



PANISCIA



COUNTRY
Italy

TIME
1 hr

SERVINGS
4

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Paniscia is a traditional dish from Novara whose origins probably go back to the end of the 16th century, when rice became an important part of the region's everyday cooking. Over time beans and other ingredients began to be added to it, creating the dish known today as paniscia. Until the Second World War it was traditionally served, among other occasions, on Good Friday. Today it remains a symbol of Novara's cuisine, which is why it was chosen as the first recipe in this e-book.

INGREDIENTS

- classic Carnaroli rice – 350 g.
- salam d'la duja – 1.
- liver mortadella (fidighin) – 1.
- pork rind – 100 g.
- aged pork fat (lardo) – 50 g.
- red wine – 1 glass.
- butter – 30 g.
- white cabbage – half a head.
- borlotti beans – 250 g.
- shallot – 1.
- celery – 1 stalk.
- carrot – 1.
- leeks – 2.
- cold water for the broth – 2.5 l.
- salt, pepper, a little oil.
- optional spices:
bay leaves – 2.
- cloves – 2.

PREPARATION

1. The evening before, cover the beans with cold water and leave covered at room temperature.
2. Blanch the pork rind for 5 minutes in a large pot of boiling water. Drain, dry and cut into strips.
3. Cut out the hard part of the cabbage core and set aside; cut the leaves into strips.
4. In a tall pot heat a little oil, add the rind and fry for a few minutes. Add the beans, the reserved cabbage core, half of the carrot, leek and celery stalk, and optionally the bay leaves and cloves.
5. Cover with water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat, skim off the scum and simmer the broth over low heat for about 40–45 minutes. Then strain, separating the broth (filtered if needed), the beans and the rind from the vegetables, which should be discarded. Keep the hot broth covered – it is always added to risotto hot, never cold.
6. Meanwhile, finely chop the shallot, celery and carrot, and slice the leek. Set aside.
7. Remove the casings from the liver mortadella and the salami and cut into small pieces. Cut the pork fat into cubes.
8. In a saucepan melt a knob of butter (optional). Add the pork fat and fry over low heat for 5 minutes, until the fat is rendered.
9. Add the shallot, carrot, celery and finely chopped leek. Stir, salt and cook over medium-low heat for 8–10 minutes, until the vegetables soften.
10. Add the crumbled salami, stir and let the ingredients mingle for no more than 2 minutes!
11. Add the Carnaroli rice and toast it for 1–2 minutes, stirring.
12. Pour in the red wine and let it evaporate.
13. Gradually add the hot broth, one ladle at a time, each time waiting until the rice has absorbed the liquid. Cook for about 16–18 minutes, stirring regularly.
14. At the end add the previously cooked beans and pork rind. Stir and heat for a few more minutes.
15. Take off the heat, add the butter and season with salt and pepper. Serve hot.

Pumpkin kopytka in mushroom sauce



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
1 hr 30 min

SERVINGS
6

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Kopytka are traditional Polish dumplings made from potatoes. The addition of pumpkin and forest mushrooms gives them an autumnal character and makes them a contemporary variation of a classic Polish dish.

INGREDIENTS CREAMY MUSHROOM SAUCE

- 400 g fresh mushrooms, e.g. bay boletes or chanterelles
- 1 medium onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 200 ml cream 30%
- 100 ml vegetable stock or water
- fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon clarified butter
- optional: soy sauce, Parmesan, parsley
- salt and pepper to taste

INGREDIENTS PUMPKIN KOPYTKA

- 700 g cooked, cooled potatoes, preferably type B
- 400 g Hokkaido pumpkin purée, baked or boiled and well drained
- 1 small egg – about 50 g once cracked
- 0.5 level teaspoon turmeric
- 1 cup plain wheat flour – about 160 g, preferably type 450 or 500
- 0.5 level teaspoon salt

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the potatoes and pumpkin:

Boil the potatoes in their skins, cool, peel and press through a ricer. Bake the Hokkaido pumpkin at 180°C for about 40 minutes, or boil it, remove the skin and blend into a purée. The pumpkin mass should be well drained.

2. Preparing the dough:

In a large bowl combine the potatoes, pumpkin purée, flour, egg, salt and turmeric. Knead briefly into a soft dough. If it is very sticky, add a little flour.

3. Shaping and cooking the kopytka:

Divide the dough into portions and shape into ropes about 2 cm thick. Flatten them slightly and cut diagonally into kopytka. Cook in batches in lightly boiling salted water for about 1–2 minutes from the moment they float to the surface.

4. Preparing the mushrooms:

Clean the mushrooms thoroughly and slice them. Finely chop the onion and garlic.

5. Sautéing:

Heat clarified butter or olive oil in a large pan. Add the onion and fry for 2–3 minutes, then add the garlic and mushrooms. Fry for about 8–10 minutes, until the mushrooms release their water and brown lightly.

6. Preparing the sauce:

Pour in the stock and cook for about 2 minutes, then add the cream. Season with salt, pepper and optionally soy sauce. Cook over low heat for about 5 minutes, until the sauce thickens slightly. Finally add fresh thyme or parsley and, to taste, Parmesan.

7. Serving:

Place the kopytka on plates and pour over the hot creamy mushroom sauce. Sprinkle with fresh herbs and optionally grated Parmesan.

SAFFRON RISOTTO WITH OSSOBUCO



COUNTRY
Italy

TIME
1 hr 30 min

SERVINGS
4

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

According to legend, risotto alla milanese was created in Milan in 1574, when the assistant of a stained-glass maker, Valerio di Fiandra, added saffron to the risotto served at the wedding of his master's daughter. The golden colour and unique aroma delighted the guests and started a culinary tradition. The dish exists in various versions, including with white wine or beef marrow. It was chosen for the e-book as one of the most recognisable dishes of Italian cuisine.

INGREDIENTS

- for the risotto: Carnaroli rice – 250 g.
- finely chopped onion – 1 tablespoon.
- saffron – 1 sachet.
- meat stock – 1 litre.
- white wine – 50 ml.
- for the ossobuco: veal shank slices – 4. (300 g each, bone-in).
- fresh butter – 60 g.
- large yellow onion – 1.

- fresh butter – 150 g.
- Parmigiano Reggiano – 50 g (freshly grated).
- dry white wine – 30 ml.
- type 00 flour – 50 g (for coating the meat).
- salt to taste.
- meat stock – 500 ml.
- garlic – 1 clove.
 - fresh parsley – 1 sprig.
- zest of 1 lemon.

PREPARATION

1. Prepare the shank slices: lay them on a wooden board and, with a sharp knife, nick the outer membrane so that the meat does not curl during frying.
2. Coat each slice of ossobuco in flour and set aside.
3. Slice the onion, put it in a pan with 40 g of butter and stew over low heat, stirring.
4. In a second pan melt the remaining butter and brown the floured shanks for about 3 minutes on each side. When golden, transfer them to the onion, increase the heat and pour in the white wine. Let the alcohol evaporate, add the meat stock, cover and cook over low heat for half an hour. Then cook for another half hour with the lid slightly ajar.
5. Separately, very finely chop the lemon zest, parsley and garlic clove. Set aside the resulting gremolata.
6. During the last half-hour stage of cooking the ossobuco, start preparing the risotto.
7. In a saucepan sauté the finely chopped onion in butter.
8. Add the rice, toast it briefly, then pour in the white wine. Once the alcohol has evaporated, add a ladle of stock. When the liquid is absorbed, gradually add further portions of hot stock. Carnaroli rice cooks for about 18 minutes in total. Add the saffron halfway through cooking.
9. When cooked, take off the heat, add the Parmesan and a knob of cold butter. Stir.
10. Spoon the risotto into the centre of the plate, place the ossobuco on it, drizzle with a little sauce and sprinkle with some of the gremolata.

TIP / FUN FACT

You can omit the white wine for deglazing the risotto and use bone marrow to toast the rice instead.

Saffron infusion: soak the threads in hot, not boiling, stock (about 60°C) for 40–60 minutes to bring out the aroma and avoid bitterness. Add powdered saffron towards the end of cooking.

Real meat stock: instead of a stock cube use a long-simmered beef and chicken stock. The collagen will give the risotto a silky consistency. The stock should always be hot.

Cold finishing (mantecatura): for a fluid “all'onda” risotto, take the pan off the heat and stir in cold butter and Parmesan.

Wines: Barbera from Alba or Asti, or Nebbiolo from the Novara hills.



Pierogi



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
4-5 hrs

SERVINGS
approx. 80-100 pcs

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Pierogi with cabbage and mushrooms are a traditional dish of Polish cuisine, especially popular at Christmas Eve and family celebrations. Jadzia's and Ania's recipe is a homemade version with sauerkraut and button mushrooms.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg sifted plain wheat flour, type 500
- 6 large tablespoons oil
- a pinch of salt
- 500 ml hot water
- 2 kg sauerkraut
- 1.2 kg button mushrooms
- 2 onions
- clarified butter
- salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the dough: Put the sifted flour in a bowl, add the oil, salt and hot water. Quickly mix with a wooden spoon so the dough is scalded. Then transfer to a pastry board and knead thoroughly by hand.
 2. Kneading and resting the dough: Knead the dough until soft and elastic, with the consistency of plasticine. If necessary add a little flour or hot water. If you have time, leave the dough tightly covered to rest for 1–2 hours.
 3. Preparing the filling: Cook the sauerkraut until soft, for about 1.5 hours. Finely chop the mushrooms and onions, then fry them separately in clarified butter or oil.
 4. Combining the filling ingredients: Squeeze the cooked cabbage thoroughly and chop finely. Combine with the fried mushrooms and onions. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
 5. Shaping the pierogi: Divide the kneaded dough into 4–5 parts and cover so it does not dry out. Roll out each part to a thickness of about 3 mm and cut out circles with a glass or cutter. Put the filling in the centre and seal the edges thoroughly.
 6. Cooking the pierogi: Drop the pierogi in batches into hot, salted water with a tablespoon of oil. Once they float, cook for another 2–3 minutes, then lift out with a slotted spoon.
 7. Finishing: Lay the cooked pierogi separately on plates lined with kitchen paper so they do not stick together. Repeat with the remaining batches of dough.
- Tip: While shaping, keep the remaining dough under a cloth or cling film so it does not dry out and stays elastic.



Rolling out the dough and pierogi ready for cooking – workshop at the Jabłonna Palace, 30 November 2025

TAPULON DA BURBANÈ WITH POLENTA



Illustration generated by artificial intelligence

COUNTRY	TIME	SERVINGS	DIFFICULTY
Italy	1 hr 15 min.	4	easy

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Tapulone is considered one of the oldest dishes of the Novara area, and legend links its origin to the founding of Borgomanero in the 12th century.

According to tradition, hungry pilgrims were supposed to prepare a dish of finely chopped donkey meat, stewed for a long time in wine until it became tender. The name of the dish comes from the Piedmontese word “ciapulè”, meaning chopping, and today tapulone is prepared mainly around Borgomanero, especially at the end of September. The recipe was also chosen for its versatility – it goes perfectly with polenta, mashed potatoes, pasta, rice or croutons.

INGREDIENTS

- coarsely minced beef (or donkey meat) – 400 g.
- juniper berries – 6.
- cloves – 1.
- black peppercorns – 10.
- fresh or dried bay leaves – 2.
- white onion – 150 g.
- finely chopped pork fat (lardo) – 60 g.
- rosemary - 1 sprig
- full-bodied red wine – 1 bottle (750 ml).
- meat stock – as needed.
- salt to taste.
- butter – a knob the size of a walnut.
- for the polenta: cornmeal – 320 g.
- water – 1.5 litres.
- garlic - 2 cloves
- olive oil or oil – a little for frying

PREPARATION

1. In a wide, shallow pan gently fry the finely chopped pork fat (lardo) with a little oil, the onion and crushed garlic. Then add the rosemary and bay leaves.
2. Add the meat, salt and pepper. Fry for a few minutes over high heat, breaking up the meat with a fork, until the excess liquid evaporates.
3. Pour in red wine to cover the meat. When it comes to the boil again, reduce the heat to the minimum, add the juniper, clove and peppercorns and let the wine partly evaporate.
4. Stew for an hour if you are using beef, or from 1 hour 30 minutes to 2 hours for donkey meat.
5. Make sure the meat does not dry out too much. If necessary add a little meat stock.
6. Remove the bay leaves and rosemary, add a knob of butter, stir and serve with hot polenta.
7. Polenta: gradually pour the cornmeal into 1.5 l of boiling, salted water, stirring; cook for about 40 min.

TIP / FUN FACT

In the past donkey meat was used, but today the dish is also prepared with beef or horse meat.
Wines: robust wines go well, e.g. the more tannic Gattinara or the milder, velvety Ghemme from the Novara hills.



Potato pancakes



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
1 hr

SERVINGS
15-20 pcs

DIFFICULTY
easy

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Potato pancakes are a traditional dish of Polish cuisine, especially popular in the past in the countryside. Made from simple, easily available ingredients, they are still found on Polish tables today.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg potatoes
- 1 medium onion
- 1 egg
- 2-3 tablespoons plain wheat flour
- 1 level tablespoon salt
- a pinch of pepper
- oil

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the potatoes: Peel and wash the potatoes and grate them on the fine holes of a grater. Also grate the onion finely and mix it with the potatoes.
2. Draining the mixture: If the potatoes release a lot of water, carefully pour off the excess. Keep the starch that settles at the bottom of the bowl and add it back to the mixture.
3. Preparing the batter: Add the egg, flour, salt and pepper to the grated potatoes. Mix thoroughly until you get a fairly thick mixture that is easy to spoon.
4. Frying the pancakes: Heat the oil well in a pan. Spoon on small portions of the mixture and spread them into thin pancakes. Fry for about 2–3 minutes on each side, until golden and crisp.
5. Finishing and serving: Put the finished pancakes on kitchen paper to drain off excess fat. Serve hot with sour cream, sugar, or as an accompaniment to sauces and meat dishes.

TIP / FUN FACT

The secret of crispy potato pancakes is to squeeze as much water as possible out of the grated potatoes. It is worth keeping the starch that settles at the bottom of the squeezed-out liquid and adding it back to the mixture. This makes the pancakes more compact and crisp. Interestingly, in Poland they are served both savoury, with sour cream or goulash, and sweet, sprinkled with sugar.



The guests from Novara fry the potato pancakes themselves – Dąbrowa Chotomowska, September 2026

RUSTIDA



COUNTRY	TIME	SERVINGS	DIFFICULTY
Italy	3 hrs	8/10	medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

The dish comes from the rural villages around Novara. Today it is usually prepared in winter, for family lunches or meetings with friends. In the past it appeared at the most important holidays and wedding feasts. It was linked to the traditional pig slaughter, which brought together several families preparing cured meats together.

Rustida was chosen because it is still a dish that encourages feasting together. Served with polenta, it can replace an entire meal.

INGREDIENTS

- pork loin, fatty and lean – 800 g.
- sausage – 400 g
- onion – 1500 g
- tomato sauce - 1 tablespoon
- oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- bay leaf, rosemary
- garlic – 3–4 cloves
- dry white wine – 2 glasses

PREPARATION

1. Cut the meat into small, not too thick pieces.
2. Brown the meat over high heat in a little oil with salt, pepper, bay leaf, rosemary and garlic.
3. Add a generous amount of dry white wine and a tablespoon of tomato sauce.
4. Add the previously finely chopped onion – it should weigh twice as much as the meat.
5. Stew over low heat for at least 2 hours. Halfway through cooking add the sausage, cut into pieces 5–6 cm long.
6. Best served with polenta.

TIP / FUN FACT

“Frittura” (rustida) is served with plenty of hot, steaming polenta. Leftovers taste great the next day, e.g. after frying or baking.
It is a meat main course. In the past it was prepared at pig slaughter, also using offal so that nothing went to waste.
Wine: the ideal pairing is Sizzano DOC, a robust red wine from the Novara hills.



PIEDMONTESE FRITTO MISTO



COUNTRY
Italy

TIME
2 hrs 30 min

SERVINGS
6

DIFFICULTY
medium-high

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Fritto misto comes from the old peasant cuisine, in which, during the home slaughter, all parts of the animal were used, especially offal and less noble cuts of meat. At first they were fried in lard or butter, and slaughter day was an occasion for a shared meal for family and neighbours. Over time the dish was enriched with vegetables, fruit and sweet additions such as apples, semolina or amaretti, creating a characteristic combination of savoury and sweet flavours. Today fritto misto is a rich dish served on special occasions and one of the most characteristic examples of the region's traditional cuisine.

TIP / FUN FACT

The old recipe for Piedmontese fritto misto consisted solely of the savoury leftovers from slaughtering veal, plus a few pieces of batter and fruit, and everything was served with fried carrot. Over time the list of ingredients grew to about thirty kinds of meat and accompaniments. Usually, however, there is no shortage of liver, lungs, thymus, brains, sausage and slices of veal, and in the sweet part – semolina, apples and amaretti. Wine: Ghemme DOCG, produced in the town of the same name in the Novara hills, goes very well with the dish.



INGREDIENTS

- veal offal – 300 g (brains, thymus, spinal cord).
- cooked, minced chicken meat – 150 g.
- cockscombs and poultry offal – 6.
- pork sausages – 6.
- amaretti biscuits – 6.
- veal liver – 6 slices.
- apple – 6 slices.
- courgette – 6 slices.
- lamb cutlets – 6.
- béchamel sauce – 5 tablespoons.
- eggs – 4.
- porcini mushrooms – 3.
- artichokes – 3.
- egg yolk – 1.
- milk (for the batter) – as needed
- sage – 1 sprig
- grated Parmesan – 1 handful
- breadcrumbs – as needed
- nutmeg – to taste
- flour – as needed
- olive oil – as needed
- salt to taste
- for the semolina:
- semolina – 80 g.
- butter – as needed
- whole milk – 300 ml.
- butter – as needed
- sugar – 3 tablespoons
- zest of 1 lemon

PREPARATION

1. Soak the brains, thymus and spinal cord in cold water for 2 hours. Drain, then blanch the thymus for 5 minutes and the brains for 3 minutes.
2. Cover the offal with cold water, bring to the boil and drain.
3. Blanch the cockscombs in boiling water and remove the skin.
4. Fry the liver and sausage in a pan with 20 g of butter and sage.

Sweet semolina

5. Bring 300 ml of milk to the boil with grated lemon zest, a knob of butter and sugar. Pour in the semolina and cook for about 10 minutes, stirring, until a thick cream forms. Spread it in an even layer on a tray, let it cool and cut into diamonds.

Croquettes and batter for coating

6. Mix the cooked, minced chicken with a very thick béchamel, egg, Parmesan, salt and nutmeg, then shape into croquettes. Mix 100 g of flour with the egg yolk and milk to make a runny batter.

Frying

7. Put 3 pans on the hob with plenty of oil and a knob of butter in each. Heat well. In the first fry in turn the apples, courgette, artichokes and mushrooms (cut into thick slices), previously dipped in the batter; drain on kitchen paper. In the second fry the amaretti and semolina, previously coated in flour, beaten egg and breadcrumbs. In the third fry in batches the remaining ingredients (croquettes, brains, thymus, other offal, sausage, cockscombs, liver and lamb cutlets), also coated in flour, egg and breadcrumbs.
8. Serve the Piedmontese fritto misto hot.

Illustration generated by artificial intelligence

RISOTTO WITH PIEDMONTESE GORGONZOLA



Illustration generated by artificial intelligence

COUNTRY
Italy

TIME
1 hr 45 min

SERVINGS
4

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Gorgonzola risotto comes from Piedmont, especially from the area around Novara, an important centre of production of this famous cheese. At first it was a simple dish of workers and cheesemakers, who combined rice from the nearby fields with high-calorie, easily available gorgonzola. Over time the dish reached restaurants, where it began to be enriched with, among other things, walnuts, pears and regional wines. Today it is an elegant example of Piedmontese cuisine, based on local products and a creamy consistency.

INGREDIENTS

- Carnaroli rice – 320–350 g.
- PDO gorgonzola – 150 g (sweet or spicy, to taste).
- Parmigiano Reggiano – 30 g.
- onion – 1 small
- butter – 50 g.
- vegetable stock – 1 l.
- black pepper – to taste.
- dry white wine – approx. 50 ml

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the base: finely chop the onion and fry it over low heat in a saucepan with half of the butter (or a little olive oil).
2. Toasting the rice: add the rice to the saucepan and toast for a few minutes over medium heat, stirring, until the grains become slightly translucent and hot.
3. Deglazing with wine: pour in the white wine and wait until the alcohol has completely evaporated.
4. Cooking the rice: add hot vegetable stock one ladle at a time, stirring, for about 16–18 minutes.
5. After taking it off the heat, add the diced gorgonzola, the remaining cold butter (kept in the freezer beforehand) and optionally Parmesan. Stir vigorously to obtain a fluid, creamy consistency.
6. Leave covered for a few minutes, then serve with freshly ground black pepper.

TIP / FUN FACT

Traditional variant: top the risotto with pears caramelised in a pan with a little sugar and butter – the sweetness of the fruit perfectly balances the pronounced taste of gorgonzola.

Crunchy touch: just before serving, sprinkle the dish with a handful of toasted, chopped walnuts or Piedmontese hazelnuts.

Fun fact: Novara is the seat of the gorgonzola protection consortium and one of the main centres of its production in Italy.

Wines: aromatic whites, e.g. Gewürztraminer or Riesling from Alto Adige, or reds with moderate tannins, e.g. Barbera d'Asti or d'Alba.

DESSERTS

BONET



Illustration generated by artificial intelligence

COUNTRY
Italy

TIME
1 hr 20 min

SERVINGS
8-10

DIFFICULTY
easy

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

This dessert has a very long history. It was prepared in the Lower Piedmont (Langhe) during festivals and noble celebrations.

The original recipe did not contain cocoa – the dessert was white. In the 19th century cocoa and other exotic ingredients began to be added.

The dish is linked to the tradition of Piedmont and often appears on the dessert menus of many restaurants.

It was chosen because it is an excellent end to a meal and is easy to prepare.

INGREDIENTS

- amaretti biscuits – 200 g.
- whole eggs – 5.
- sugar – 5 tablespoons + 3 tablespoons (for the caramel).
- cocoa – 5 tablespoons.
- milk – 500 ml.

PREPARATION

1. In an oblong rectangular mould dissolve 3 tablespoons of sugar with a few tablespoons of water and make a caramel, coating the base thoroughly with it.
2. Finely crush or blend the amaretti biscuits.
3. With a whisk, mix the eggs, adding them one at a time, with the sugar and cocoa.
4. Add the amaretti and gradually combine all the ingredients with the milk, mixing with the whisk.
5. Pour the mixture into the mould. Bake for 50 minutes in an oven heated to 180°C in a bain-marie (place the mould in a larger dish half filled with water).
6. Cool to room temperature, then put in the refrigerator (you can prepare the dessert the day before).
7. Before serving, turn the mould upside down over a plate, unmould the dessert, cut into slices and serve. You can add whipped cream.

TIP / FUN FACT

In the Piedmontese dialect “bunèt” means “hat” or “cap”. According to the most widespread hypothesis, the name comes from the shape of the old copper baking mould, resembling a round hat. The dessert goes perfectly with a glass of dark rum or fortified wine, e.g. Recioto della Valpolicella.



Pumpkin tartlets



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
2 h 30 min

SERVINGS
10 pcs

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Tartlets are popular bakes that have also firmly settled into Polish cuisine. The version with pumpkin and crumble topping is especially associated with autumn and home seasonal baking.

INGREDIENTS

SHORTCRUST PASTRY

- 240 g plain wheat flour
- 150 g cold butter
- 60 g icing sugar
- 20 g sour cream 18%

PUMPKIN FILLING

- 500 g baked pumpkin
- 2 eggs
- 150 g ground curd cheese (twaróg)
- 40 g caster sugar
- 40 g sugar-free orange kisiel (instant fruit jelly powder)
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

CRUMBLE TOPPING

- 150 g plain wheat flour
- 100 g sugar
- 100 g cold butter

PREPARATION

1. Making the shortcrust pastry:

In a bowl combine the wheat flour, icing sugar and cold butter cut into cubes. Add the 18% sour cream and knead into a smooth dough. Wrap it in cling film and refrigerate for 1 hour.

2. Preparing the tins:

Lightly grease the tartlet tins with butter. Roll out the chilled dough to a thickness of about 3 mm and cut out discs slightly larger than the diameter of the tins. Line the base and sides with them, prick the bases with a fork and chill for another 15 minutes.

3. Blind-baking the bases:

Preheat the oven to 180°C (top/bottom heat). Put the tins with the bases on the middle shelf and bake for about 15 minutes, until lightly browned. Take out and leave to cool.

4. Preparing the pumpkin filling:

In a blender blend the baked pumpkin, eggs, curd cheese, sugar, orange kisel and cinnamon. The mixture should be smooth and creamy.

5. Adding the filling and crumble:

Put a portion of pumpkin filling into each pre-baked tin, almost to the top. Then prepare the crumble by rubbing the flour, sugar and cold butter between your fingers until fine crumbs form. Sprinkle them over the top of each tartlet.

6. Baking the tartlets:

Put the tins in an oven preheated to 175°C and bake for about 25–30 minutes. The tartlets are ready when the filling has set and the crumble is lightly browned.

7. Cooling and serving:

After taking them out of the oven, leave the tartlets to cool. They taste best slightly chilled, e.g. with a dollop of whipped cream or a spoonful of Greek yoghurt.



Pumpkin tartlets with crumble topping before baking – Halloween workshop, October 2025

PANE DI SAN GAUDENZIO



Illustration generated by artificial intelligence

COUNTRY
Italy

TIME
1 hr 45 min

SERVINGS
8

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Pane di San Gaudenzio is a traditional dessert from Novara whose origins go back to the interwar period. According to legend it was created by one of the local confectioners. In the 1970s Novara's master bakers perfected the recipe, inspired by the medieval tradition of giving out bread to the poor on the feast of the city's patron saint. This is how the fluffy, fruitcake-like cake came about, wrapped in shortcrust pastry and sprinkled with hazelnuts. Today it is one of the culinary symbols of Novara.

INGREDIENTS

- for the shortcrust pastry (outer layer):
- type 00 flour – 200 g
- butter at room temperature – 100 g
- sugar – 80 g
- egg yolk – 1
- salt – 1 pinch
- for the soft inner cake:
- soft butter – 150 g
- grated zest of 1 lemon
- sugar – 150 g
- medium eggs – 3
- type 00 flour – 100 g
- very fine cornmeal – 50 g
- baking powder – 8 g
- raisins, soaked and squeezed out – 50 g
- chopped Piedmont hazelnuts – 50 g
- icing sugar – to taste
- potato starch – 50 g
- for decoration:

PREPARATION

1. Making the shortcrust pastry: quickly knead the flour with the butter, sugar, egg yolk and a pinch of salt. Shape into a ball, wrap in cling film and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
2. The filling: using a mixer, cream the soft butter with the sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing all the time.
3. Sift together the type 00 wheat flour, cornmeal, starch and baking powder. Gently fold them with a spatula into the butter-and-egg mixture, using a bottom-to-top motion. Finally add the well-squeezed raisins and a flavouring of your choice.
4. Roll out the shortcrust pastry to a thickness of 3–4 mm. Line with it a previously greased and floured loaf tin (the kind used for fruitcake, 25–30 cm long), leaving the edges slightly overhanging. Pour in the fluffy mixture, level the surface and gently fold the edges of the pastry inwards.
5. Sprinkle the whole surface with chopped hazelnuts. Bake in an oven preheated to 170°C for about 40–45 minutes; check with a skewer that the centre of the cake is dry.
6. Remove the cake from the tin only after it has cooled completely and dust lightly with icing sugar.

TIP / FUN FACT

Use very finely ground cornmeal of the “fumetto” type, intended for cakes. Ordinary polenta flour would be too coarse.

Creaming the butter: the secret of a fluffy interior is to cream the soft butter with the sugar for a long time before adding the eggs, until a very light cream forms.

In 1977 the Novara Confectioners' Association registered the recipe and the trademark. Only registered and certified pastry shops may sell the cake under the official name and with the guarantee seal.

Variant with chestnut cream (or chestnuts): this is a popular autumn interpretation. A thin layer of cream is spread directly on the shortcrust base before the soft mixture is poured in. The dessert goes well with fresh, aromatic or moderately sweet dessert wines, e.g. Passito Erbaluce di Caluso or Moscato d'Asti.



*Illustration
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Apple cake (szarlotka)



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
2 hrs

SERVINGS
12-16 pieces

DIFFICULTY
medium

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Szarlotka is one of the best-loved cakes in Polish cuisine, made in homes for generations. The shortcrust pastry and aromatic apples make it especially associated with autumn and family gatherings.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups plain wheat flour
- 5 egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 block of margarine
- 2-3 kg apples
- margarine
- breadcrumbs
- icing sugar
- optionally ice cream to serve

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the apples: Peel the apples, cut them into small pieces and stew in a pot until soft. If necessary sweeten to taste and leave to cool. The apples can be prepared the day before.
2. Preparing the dough: Mix the flour with the sugar and baking powder. Add the chopped margarine and the egg yolks. Knead the dough until all the ingredients are well combined.
3. Chilling the dough: Put the finished dough in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes. Then divide it into two equal parts.
4. Preparing the tin: Grease the baking tin with margarine and sprinkle with breadcrumbs. Line the base and sides with half of the dough, then spread on the previously prepared, drained apples.
5. Preparing the top: Grate the other half of the dough on a coarse grater directly over the apples, covering the filling evenly.
6. Baking: Put the szarlotka in an oven preheated to 180°C and bake for about 50 minutes, until the top turns golden.
7. Finishing and serving: Let the baked szarlotka cool slightly and dust with icing sugar. Serve plain or warm with a scoop of ice cream.

TIP / FUN FACT

The secret of a perfect szarlotka is slightly tart apples, preferably Grey Reinette or Antonovka, which balance the sweetness of the cake perfectly. A little cinnamon brings out their aroma, and chilling the shortcrust pastry before baking makes it delicate and crisp. Interestingly, in Poland szarlotka is served both cold and warm, often with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.



COOKING WITHOUT WASTE

Wise cooking then and now

Our grandmothers and grandfathers – in Poland and in Italy – did not know the term “zero waste”, but they lived by this principle. The recipes in this book show it.

IN OUR RECIPES

- **Apple cider vinegar** is made from whole apples – with the skin and cores. It can also be made from the peelings left over from apple cake.
- **Bigos and rustida** taste best reheated. Leftover rustida can be fried or baked the next day.
- **Paniscia and fritto misto** come from a cuisine in which all parts of the animal and everything left in the pantry were used.
- **Pumpkin seeds** from the pumpkin soup can be toasted and sprinkled over the soup. The skin of the Hokkaido pumpkin is edible.
- **Stale bread** grate into breadcrumbs – it will come in handy even for the apple cake.
- **Smalec in jars** and **pierogi and kopytka frozen in portions** are tried-and-tested ways of keeping food for later.

SIMPLE HABITS

- Check the fridge before shopping and make a list – also on your phone.
- Place products with a shorter expiry date at the front of the fridge.
- Cook only as much as you will eat, and freeze any excess straight away in portions.
- Keep the vinegar mother, vegetable stock or leftover rice – each of these can become another dish.



Guests from Novara learn how to start apple vinegar – workshop on the village square in Dąbrowa Chotomowska

OUR OWN PRODUCTS

Homemade apple cider vinegar



COUNTRY
Poland

TIME
4-6 wks

SERVINGS
1 l

DIFFICULTY
easy

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISH

Homemade apple cider vinegar has been made for generations from apples left to ferment naturally. It was a simple way of using the autumn harvest and keeping it for longer.

INGREDIENTS

- Apples – enough to fill about 1/4 of the volume of a 2 l jar
- 5 heaped tablespoons of sugar per 1 l of water
- 1 l boiled water

PREPARATION

1. Preparing the apples:

Wash the apples thoroughly and cut them into smaller pieces together with the skin and cores. Put them in a large, clean jar.

2. Preparing the brine:

Dissolve the sugar in the boiled and cooled water – 5 heaped tablespoons per litre of water. Pour the solution over the apples so that they are covered with liquid.

3. Starting the fermentation:

Cover the jar with gauze or a clean, breathable cloth and secure with a rubber band. Put it in a warm, shaded place.

4. Stirring the mixture:

At the start of fermentation stir the contents of the jar every day so that the apples are regularly submerged in the liquid.

5. Formation of the vinegar mother:

After some time the apples will begin to sink and a vinegar mother will start to form on the surface of the liquid. From that moment do not stir the mixture and leave it in peace.

6. Checking that the vinegar is ready:

The vinegar is ready when the apples have sunk to the bottom, the liquid has a distinct vinegar smell and a firm, strong vinegar mother has formed on the surface.

7. Pouring off the vinegar:

Pour off the finished vinegar, strain it carefully and transfer it to clean bottles. Store in a cool, dark place.

TIP / FUN FACT

The vinegar mother can be kept and used to start the next batch.



Preparing to start the apple vinegar – joint workshop with the guests from Novara in Dąbrowa Chotomowska

THANK YOU



Farewell with the guests from Novara – a Polish afternoon with bigos and potato pancakes, Dąbrowa Chotomowska, September 2026

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Polish-Italian Cookbook. Virtual Gallery of Recipes

Result of the Erasmus+ project “Intergenerational Cooking – creative workshops improving seniors' digital skills”

Partners: Rural Housewives' Circle in Dąbrowa Chotomowska (Poland) and Università della Terza Età di Novara (Italy)

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