



A TRADITIONAL TASTE OF THE REGION

A different region with different habits and different cuisine. In a public survey, the people of the Prešov region have chosen 21 of the most typical specialities of the region. This mini cook book will allow you to look under the pot lids of the people of the Carpathians, will expose the secrets created their distinctive cuisine and provide you with 21 exceptionally tasty recipes that were once an integral ingredient at every dinner table and special occasion.



A TRADITIONAL TASTE OF THE REGION



Traditional meals in the Prešov Region have always been based on basic available ingredients, of which there were many, mainly potatoes, sauerkraut, forest crops, mushrooms and seeds. People catered for their needs mostly from their own sources and were engaged in farming and agriculture. This self-sufficient way of life prevailed, mainly in the countryside, until the mid 20th century. Traditional meal preparation methods from that period are still used today, although some have undergone simple modifications due to the modernisation of the kitchen. The base of the traditional diet was plant foods such as potatoes, cabbage, onions, garlic, root vegetables, beetroot, swedes, turnips, marrows, legumes (mainly beans and peas) and cereals like wheat, rye, barley,

oats, corn and buckwheat. Fruits, mainly pears, plums, cherries, sour cherries, gooseberries, currants, grapes and nuts, were used for making desserts and jams. Fruit was also consumed raw in the form of refreshing juices, syrups, stum and wines. Sauerkraut had an irreplaceable position in the traditional regional cuisine. Sauerkraut juice used to be a refreshing drink and was also used in the preparation of many kinds of thick nutritional soups. A typical and still very popular meal is for example 'hubová mačanka' (thick mushroom soup) which is prepared using sauerkraut juice as well. Potatoes were used a great deal in the preparation of traditional meals and still are. The many ways in which they were prepared is evidence of the creative

approach of Eastern Slovak housewives. For example 'nalešniky' (a type of potato flatbread), flatbread baked on a cabbage leaf or the extremely popular 'lokše' (another type of potato flatbread) were made from grated raw potatoes and flour. Potatoes were also used to prepare dough and as a stuffing for various dough based meals. For all of them we can mention countless types of 'pirohy' (something like ravioli), filled and unfilled dumplings and the food of the poor, 'džatky' (cooked potato-dough pieces). Today, mashed potatoes are still made and consumed with a glass of milk.



One of the typical meals of north-eastern Slovakia was a sour fermented soup made from oatmeal or bran. Lukewarm water was poured over coarsely ground oatmeal and then yeast was added into it. The liquid was left to stand and ferment, then passed through a sieve, salted, seasoned and boiled. The soup was eaten with potatoes, beans or green beans, mostly in the time of the lent. In the area of Snina, it was made from rye flour and it went by the name 'cybarej'. In times when flour was unavailable, buckwheat porridge or corn semolina was eaten.

Bread, as it is known today, did not become a part of the menu until the end of the 19th century. Its predecessor or a substitute was a flat unleavened pastry made from barley, oat or buckwheat flour. These archaic bread pastries survived until the mid 20th century, mostly in the area of Snina, Medzilaborce and Svidník. The flatbreads had different names: ošipok, ščipok, oščipok, osuch, adzimka, pagač, moskoľ, moskaľ and so on. In this context, the general unifying name, Carpathian bread, is used. Some of the most typical bread-type cakes in Eastern Slovakia included kračun, rohač, paska, knyš and kuch, all of which had a ceremonial character and were baked at the time of Christmas and Easter.



The culinary culture of the area was greatly influenced by religion. Deep devotion led the people to strictly follow Lent, when meaty and fatty foods were excluded from the menu. During the longest periods of fasting, before Easter and Christmas, even dairy products could not be consumed in some localities. Easter meals had a ritual significance. Easter Sunday is in many families still the day of blessing the ceremonial food. Above all a blessed ceremonial cake called paska, and of course ham, sausage, quark and eggs cannot be missing from the table. The diversity and abundance of Easter foods were meant to secure the wellbeing of the whole family during the year.

Tvaroh (quark), which is something similar to cottage cheese, used to be obtained from sour milk and used mostly in pasta dishes. However, the main cow dairy product remained butter, without which it is not possible to imagine local traditional cuisine. Buttermilk, a by-product of the butter making process, used to be drunk when thirsty or to wash potatoes down. Interesting dairy-based meals are 'mastylo' or 'pacjarka', where flour or potato starch (krochma) is stirred into milk and

once the milk is boiling, a few raw eggs are also added. Sometimes also sheep cheese (bryndza) and fried onion were added into the mixture. This meal was consumed with bread or potato pancakes. In Slovakia, it was very popular around Stará Ľubovňa. Meat appeared only sporadically in the kitchens of this region and its increased consumption can be observed in the second half of the 20th century.





Sódové adzimky

(soda flat bread)

Ingredients:

500 g of flour

1 tsp. of baking soda

sour milk

Preparation:

Mix the flour and baking soda with the sour milk so the dough is not too thin and easy to roll. Roll to a thickness of approx. 1 cm and cut into round shapes. Bake both sides on the hob, without fat, until golden brown. When ready, season with salt and serve with butter or a spread of choice. Use instead of bread.

When there is no bread...

Various types of flat bread prepared from flour, water and salt are considered the oldest form of bread known to the Europeans, and were eaten as far back as the Stone Age. They were a regular part of the diet of people in poorer areas until the middle of the 20th century, especially in times when there was a lack of normal bread. These breads were mostly prepared from flour of a lesser quality that rose badly. They were baked dry on a fire, in

front of a kiln, in a kiln, and later on the stovetop. Baking with oil, in pans and baking trays, did not become a cooking method until the second half of the 20th century. Many folk names were used for the flat breads. The archaic name 'adzimky', as well as the names 'poplameník' (the Slovak word 'plameň' means flame) and 'podymník' (the Slovak word 'dym' means smoke) indicate that these types of flat bread were baked in smoke or on the fire.



The history of bread in Slovakia

Our ancestors discovered the first bread recipes probably from the Gothic people. A simple recipe underwent a process of development and it spread rapidly. Many types were baked in some Slovak towns, including a sweet loaf filled with cheese and seasoned with poppy seeds, honey or spices. Bread baking became a real craft in the Middle Ages. References to the first bakers as courteous artisans appeared at the turn of the 11th and the 12th centuries. Their numbers grew continuously and led to them associating into guilds. But it was mainly monasteries, which baked bread in big numbers for the pilgrims that excelled in the skilful preparation of bread dough.

Since wheat flour was sold mainly in towns, country folk had to work predominantly with inferior cereals. An interesting thing is that they could process edible chestnuts, the tree of which they referred to as the 'bread tree', in the same way as bread and managed to obtain flour from it. At the same time, the profession of a cook started to take shape behind monastery walls. It arose from the natural division of tasks and led to the gradual selection of the most talented monks for the kitchen. This art spread, through various routes, from monasteries to secular households where it became a respectable profession under the patronage of cooks and confectioners, St Lawrence.



Džatky

(potato dumplings)

Preparation:

Cut the peeled potatoes into cubes and boil in salted water. Drain the potatoes, but save a little of the water in the pot. Cover the potatoes with flour and leave to boil again. Do not stir. Once cooked, mash the mixture and form small balls of it using your hands. Džatky are served with onion and bacon fried in butter or with cottage cheese. If not consumed immediately, they can be fried in fat until crunchy.

Ingredients:

12 medium sized potatoes
2 cups of wholemeal flour
caraway seeds
butter
onion
bacon
salt





Preparation:

Peel and grate the potatoes. Then add the flour, salt and eggs and mix together into a dough for the dumplings. When ready, push it through a special dumpling sieve into boiling salted water. Stir lightly and leave to boil for a while. Drain the cooked dumplings and allow the water to drip off. Sprinkle individual portions with grated cheese and pour over some hot fat and cream. Finally add pieces of chopped bacon to garnish.

Furmanské halušky

(a special type of dumplings)

Ingredients:

- 3.2 kg of potatoes
- 800 g of all purpose flour
- 40 g of salt
- 100 ml of water
- 100 g of pork dripping (pork fat)
- 400 g of hard sheep cheese
- 300 g of smoked, skinless bacon
- 500 g of 12 % fat cream
- eggs





Holúbky

(stuffed cabbage leaves)

Ingredients:

1 kg of white cabbage
400 g of minced pork
200 g of rice
50 g of onion
1 egg
50 ml of oil
50 g of tomato puree
salt
ground black pepper
vegetable seasoning
paprika

Preparation:

Wash the rice and warm it a little in the oil. Add water and salt and cook until soft. Allow it to cool and then mix with the minced pork. Add an egg, the tomato puree, salt, ground black pepper and the onion fried in oil together with the paprika. Take the cabbage apart into leaves and scald them with boiling water. Fill the scolded leaves with the prepared mixture and place in a large pan closely together. If necessary make more layers. Fill the pan with water and cook until the cabbage goes soft.

A wedding speciality

"No wedding is complete without holubky (stuffed cabbage leaves)!", they say in Eastern Slovakia. This simply means that any traditional wedding feast cannot go without this great food. Holubky are served as the last course and act as a gentle hint to the guests that it is time to go home. So if you find yourself at an Eastern Slovak wedding and holubky appear on the table, do not forget it is time to leave the party!

Wedding meals and traditions in the Spiš and Šariš regions

Weddings, along with Christmas and Easter, are celebrations with a strong tradition in terms of ceremonial meals and rituals. These celebrations included dishes that were supposed to secure the prosperity, fertility and happiness of newlyweds. One traditional wedding meal in the Slovak folk environment was porridge, used to symbolise abundance and prosperity. Sometimes it was served at the beginning, according to certain rules, but usually at the end. In some places, the whole wedding feast was called 'the porridge'. The tradition of serving porridge to wedding guests in one bowl, or to newlyweds in one plate, was prevalent for many years, especially in mountain areas until the mid 20th century. Other wedding foods with magical significance according to



folklore were poultry and eggs. They symbolised the circle of life and supposedly aided fertility. In Eastern Slovakia, they were served to newlyweds as scrambled eggs. The consumption of dairy products, especially cottage cheese, bryndza and milk were also supposed to have mystical significance. This type of food was generally served in areas with cattle and sheep farming. They were considered a tool to help newlyweds have beautiful white children, and in case of milk a sweet life. Honey was also a very important ingredient in preparations for a wedding feast. It was used to sweeten the wedding porridge, added to cakes and liquors and served to the young couple, generally at the entrance to the groom's house. It was meant to ensure a sweet and happy life. In some places they used to serve an apple to the newlyweds. According to the folklore of the region, eating an apple is thought to induce fertility. Other wedding foods were cakes and pastries, used to symbolise the cereal harvest. Traditional wedding cakes were circular, rectangular or horseshoe-shaped and were decorated with dough and sometimes other things. A main wedding cake, of bigger proportions, was common in more prosperous areas. Another typical meal in north-eastern Slovakia was hubová mačanka (thick mushroom soup), which was usually served in the middle of the wedding feast, pirohy (boiled filled dumplings similar to ravioli) from buckwheat and barley flour filled with potatoes,

bryndza or cheese and the already mentioned holubky. Serving head cheese at the wedding feast was also a custom. Alcoholic drinks also belonged to the wedding, in particular spirits and wine. Beer and other bought alcoholic drinks became more common in the 20th century. Ingredients for wedding meals were provided mostly by the families of the bride and groom. A well-to-do family would slaughter a cow, calf, sheep, pig or some poultry and they needed to obtain spirits and sometimes wine as well as enough flour for the bread and cakes. Many foods were obtained thanks to good relations between relatives and neighbours. Cheaper meats were often bought in case that there was a lack of money. When there was no fresh meat, cured bacon or smoked meats were used instead. Often, cooked cabbage and grits made up the wedding meal. The character of wedding meals has changed significantly since the 1960s. A pig slaughter usually took place before a wedding in villages. The meat from the pig catered for the most part of the meat dishes. Wedding preparations also included many traditional rituals that varied from village to village. They included courting when the groom sent someone from the village elders to the bride's house to ask for her hand. Often it did not concern pure love so much but an intention to merge fortunes. An engagement usually took place on a Saturday, a week after the courting. After that, a period of banns started, during which the priest

announced the forthcoming joining three weeks in a row. Before the ceremony itself, bachelor and bachelorette parties with music took place on a Sunday evening. A bridesmaid played a key role in the preparation process of the wedding ceremony. It was a single girl accompanied by a single young man – the best man. His role was to invite people to the wedding and perform the wedding speech and give best wishes. In contrast to now, when a bride is usually walked to the altar by her father, this used to be the best man's job. The wedding usually took place on a Monday morning. The nuptials started at eight o'clock with a holy church service. The bride wore a decorative wedding crown, a so-called parta, as a symbol of purity. After the wedding ceremony, the parade, led by the newlyweds, went to the bride's house where the festivities started. At noon or in the evening the bride then made her way to her groom's house with gifts for the mother-in-law, which normally consisted

of a wedding cake or bread. In exchange, the mother-in-law gave her a red apple to be healthy. The bride was to step over the threshold with her right foot and was not allowed to step on it because it meant bad luck. When she arrived, she walked around the table in the direction of the sun's movement, cut the bread and as a sign of general goodness she would sprinkle grains in all the corners of the houses so the family lived in affluence. The bride became a woman when her bonnet was removed while the women were singing. A very important wedding feature in this region is a so-called 'redovy' dance, which is started by the best man. Gradually, all members of the party swapped places with him and the fun started. A whip or axe was placed under the bed for the wedding night to ensure the newlyweds have male offspring. For this reason it was also recommended that the bride not bring her sewing kit into her new house because she would give birth only to girls.





Kapušníky zo zemiakového cesta

(potato dumplings filled with sauerkraut)

Ingredients:

1.9 kg of potatoes
500 g of fine flour
2 eggs
½ tsp. of salt
400 g of sauerkraut
Pork dripping (pork fat)
smoked bacon

Preparation:

Wash and boil the potatoes in the skins. Once cooked, peel them and mash them, making sure there are no big lumps. Allow the mash to cool and then add the flour and eggs and knead the mixture into soft dough. Rinse the sauerkraut under water, drain it properly and chop it

finely. Divide the dough into small balls. Roll out each of ball and place some sauerkraut in the middle and close the dough around it and then make into a ball again. Roll the completed balls again, to a thickness of about 5 mm (the thinner the tastier) and bake on a dry pan on a moderate heat. Once baked, cover with melted fat and chopped bacon.





Kuľaša

(seasoned corn semolina)

Ingredients:

700 g of corn semolina

40 g of salt

100 ml of water

250 g of butter

Preparation:

Gradually add the corn semolina to the cold salted water while heating it and stirring constantly. When it starts boiling, stir until it thickens. Pour melted butter over individual portions and season according to your taste, either sweet with honey or with fried bacon.

A quick dinner

This traditional meal was cooked mostly for dinner. Most men liked it with fried bacon and sour milk whereas children preferred the corn semolina with melted butter and liked to wash it down with milk and honey. Various types of porridge were a consistent and popular part of the menu in the region since early Middle Ages, and were seasoned with vegetables, herbs, spices and mushrooms. Sweet porridge, seasoned with powidl (plum stew), strawberries, cherries or cranberries was often served as a festive meal.





Ošipky

(kefir flat bread)

Ingredients:

1.5 kg of all purpose flour
kefir
baking soda
30 g of salt
250 g of butter
fine flour for sprinkling

Preparation:

Mix the sieved all purpose flour with the salt, baking soda, kefir and then knead to mixture into a medium thick dough. Divide the dough into small loafs, roll them out thinly and bake both sides on a hot plate. When ready, pour melted butter over them.

The iconic lokša (potato flatbread)

Behind the name of 'ošipky' hides nothing more than the good old and very popular lokša. Though it is famous among Slovaks and the neighbouring Czech people under this name, the interesting thing is that in Germany and Austria it is not known, despite their geographical closeness. These breads appear sporadically in Hungary, after becoming familiar in the time of the Astrian-Hungarian Empire. Experienced housewives advise to prepare lokša from old potatoes as new, freshly dug potatoes contain more water and therefore they are not suitable.





Preparation:

Soak the beans a day before. Rinse and drain the sauerkraut. Mix the beans, sauerkraut and tomato puree and cook. When the beans are almost cooked, add a light roux made from butter and flour and boil again together. Peel and finely grate the potatoes and mix with flour to form thick dough and put small pieces of it in the boiling soup directly from the board/bowl. When the dumplings are cooked, take the soup off the heat and add the chopped bacon. Season with salt and crushed garlic.

Šarišská ľušta

(bean and sauerkraut soup)

Ingredients:

240 g of sauerkraut	tomato puree
220 g of beans	garlic
150 g of smoked bacon	oil
100 g of wholemeal flour	salt
160 g of fine flour	butter
350 g of potatoes	2.5 l of water





Bačogy

(meatless sausages)

Ingredients:

potatoes
fine flour
garlic
salt
ground black pepper
crushed caraway seeds
sausage casing

Preparation:

Peel and grate the potatoes and mix with the flour and crushed garlic, according to taste. Knead the mixture into a thick dough. Season it with salt and ground black pepper. Half fill the sausage casings with the dough and tie both ends with a thread. Pierce the casings with a needle and boil on a moderate heat for about 10 minutes. When cold, daub with pork dripping and place them next to each other on a baking tray and bake until golden brown. Serve with pickled gherkins, pickled vegetables and beer.





Škvarkové pagáčky

(crackling round cakes)

Ingredients:

800 g of crackling (pork scratchings)
 1.46 kg of fine flour
 40 g of yeast
 340 ml of milk
 eggs
 salt
 water
 ground black pepper

Preparation:

Allow the yeast to dissolve in lukewarm milk and then add to a prepared mix of flour and egg (1–2 eggs as necessary) and the rest of warm milk. Knead into smooth dough. Allow the dough to rise and then roll it out, spread one third of the crackling on it, then fold it like puff pastry and leave to sit for 10 minutes. Repeat this three times. Roll it out again to a thickness of approx. 3 cm, line with a knife, cut out small circles, place on a baking tray, top with beaten egg and leave to rise a little longer. Then bake at approx. 175°C until golden brown.





Domáca hubová mačanka

(homemade sour mushroom soup)

Ingredients:

500 g of pork shoulder
100 g of button mushrooms
100 ml of oil

100 g of onion
200 g of fine flour
a pinch of paprika
ground black pepper
a bay leaf
fresh butter
cream for 'zatrepka' (milk/cream and flour together as a smooth mixture)

Preparation:

Peel, slice and fry the onion in oil until glossy. Add the meat cut into cubes, the salt, pepper, crushed garlic and a bay leaf and leave to simmer. Add water and boil until the meat is tender. Just before the end, add the chopped mushrooms and 'zatrepka', prepared from milk/cream and flour. Soften with butter before serving. This soup tastes fantastic with crusty bread.





Bobaľky s makom

(croutons with poppy seeds)

Ingredients:

500 g of all purpose flour
1 egg
2 tbsp. of sugar
20 g of yeast
300–400 ml of sweet milk
80 g of fat or butter
a pinch of salt

Topping:

400 g of poppy seeds
500–600 ml of condensed milk

Preparation:

Mix the egg and flour, and then add the sugar, salt and fat. Allow the yeast to dissolve in warm milk with a pinch of sugar, and then add it to the mixture. Knead the dough until smooth and allow it to rise. When ready, transfer it, in portions, onto a board and cut into small pieces – the bobaľky. Place on a greased baking tray and bake at approx. 175°C until golden brown. Pour sweet milk over warm bobaľky and sprinkle with ground poppy seeds and sugar.

A sweet Christmas finale

The traditional Christmas dinner was accompanied by many ceremonial rituals and customs, many of which many families maintain until today. A piece of bread and a coin are put underneath the tablecloth so the family has enough food and money in the coming year. Some families use carp scales for this purpose, placing them underneath the tablecloth or each member of the family puts one in their wallet. A common prayer precedes the Christmas feast. During the prayer no one should move away from the table to make sure they do not stray from the family

during the coming year. As a sign of respect and in memory of the family members who passed away, it is customary to set one extra plate. The customs and meal composition vary slightly in different locations, however, the general tradition is without exception a several course menu, often consisting of seven to nine courses. It begins with wafers, honey and garlic, which are meant to ensure family's health for the whole year. Then it continues with a lentil, bean or mushroom soup. Legume soups are consumed at Christmas to make sure the family is rich for the whole year. Following are pirohy filled with potatoes with a thick lentil or bean stew and then carp with potato salad. The sweet finale of the Christmas dinner is a dessert called bobaľky (small pieces of baked bread dough) with honey, milk and poppy seeds. The cutting of an apple is a custom practised after dinner and it should tell all family members about their health in the next year.





Rusínske pirohy

(Ruthenian filled dumplings)

Ingredients:

1.5 kg of all purpose flour
100 ml of water
potatoes
500 g of bryndza (sheep milk cheese)
200 g of butter
300 g of smoked bacon
salt

Filling:

potatoes
bryndza
salt

Preparation:

Make dough from the flour, water and salt and knead it. Roll it out and cut it into squares. Prepare a filling for the squares from the boiled and mashed potatoes, bryndza. Fill the squares and add another square on top to form a 'pirohy' shape (something like ravioli). Push the sides together thoroughly with a fork. Boil for approx. 15 minutes. Pour melted butter over the pirohy and sprinkle with chopped bacon.

The Ruthenians and Christmas

Ruthenians came to Slovakia at the turn of the 15th and the 16th centuries from the area of Halič and West Ukrainian regions. They settled mostly along the Slovak-Polish-Ukrainian border where they still inhabit approximately 220 villages today. Despite difficult conditions, they managed to maintain their specific culture, which is closely connected to the religious ceremonies of a Greek-Catholic and Orthodox faith. It also concerns meal preparation and habits around their consumption. Ruthenian Orthodox believers celebrate Christmas and thus Christ's birthday on 6th January. The idea is not in any way different from the Roman-Catholic perception and the only difference is in the time shift, which has been caused by them following a Julian calendar.



A 40-day fast ends with a seven course Christmas dinner. Various traditional family rituals were performed before the feasting itself. While the family was sitting down at the table the head of the household would feed a so-called kračun ceremonial pastry to the domestic animals. Then he brought a stack of oat straw or hay into the room, which he distributed under the table and partially even on it. Cereal and legume grains and coins were added to the hay and covered by a tablecloth. The table legs were bound with a chain to ensure the family and homestead held together. Some kind of metal tool, for example an axe, was placed under the table and candle was lit on the table. On the Christmas table, set in this way, the housewife then put the prepared meals, which were eaten

in absolute silence after the common prayer. The dinner started with a garlic clove that was meant to protect all members of the family from illness. Bread with honey followed. Traditional Ruthenian filled dumplings could never be missing and they were made bigger and fuller on Christmas Eve so the cattle would be big and fat. Typical Christmas Eve meals were also different types of porridge made from barley or wheat grits and 'bobalky'. Mushroom soup with cabbage was meant to give the family strength and fight off problems. Beans with plums were meant to protect everybody from heartburn. The dinner was finished with a drink of sauerkraut juice, compote, fruit or nuts. The rest of the food was left on the table overnight for the souls of deceased ancestors.



Fazuľová polievka s párkami

(bean soup with frankfurters)

Ingredients:

- 2 l of bone stock
- 250 g of dry beans
- paprika
- salt
- ground black pepper
- caraway seeds
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp. of pork dripping (pork fat)
- 300 g of frankfurters
- 1 tbsp. of fine flour



Preparation:

Soak the beans a day before. Boil in the stock the following day with added salt and approx. 1 teaspoon caraway seeds. When the beans are almost ready, add the sliced frankfurters. Prepare a roux from the pork dripping and flour. The roux must be dark and thick. Cool the roux and add crushed garlic, paprika and black pepper. Add some stock to it and let it boil. Once boiled, transfer it into the soup. This recipe tastes fantastic with bread.



A quick visit to the Gorals

In the area of Belianske Tatry and the beautiful Pieniny, in the villages of Ždiar, Osturňa and Červený Kláštor, live descendants of the Vlach ethnicity known as Gorals. They have a specific dialect of a Polish origin and distinctive folklore, which includes beautiful and richly decorated traditional costumes. Members of this ethnicity maintain their traditions with love and respect. The same applies to Goral cuisine, which varies slightly from location to location. Traditional Goral cuisine is rich in filling meals and, in contrast to Spiš and Šariš cuisine, there are more meat dishes made from pork, goat, game and around Dunajec also fish, especially trout and herrings. Sheep and cow milk products, sauerkraut, root vegetables, potatoes, beetroot, mushrooms and forest fruits have a stable position in the diet. The winter months could not go without a pig slaughter when blood sausages, sausages, bacon, crackling and headcheese were made because cold winters created good conditions for their storage. Some of the typical specialities are pork knee in beer, sauerkraut with pork, smoked sheep milk cheese (Slovak: oštiepok), different types of filled dumplings and pancakes.



Kreple

(doughnuts with sweet cheese)

Preparation:

Mix the drained cottage cheese with the flour, sugar, egg, baking soda and a pinch of salt. Knead into smooth dough and allow it to sit for about an hour. Roll the dough to a thickness of approx. 1 cm on floured board and use a mug to cut out the doughnuts. Fry them in oil and sprinkle with icing sugar. If they seem too dry, you can put a dollop of forest fruit jam on it.

Ingredients:

250 g of all purpose flour
500 g of cottage cheese (drained)
1 egg
salt
4 tbsp. of icing sugar
1 tsp. of baking soda
oil for frying



German heritage

The beginning of German settlement in Slovakia dates back to the 12th century. Its evidence can be found in traditional cuisine. The name of the Shrovetide delicacy 'kreple' (doughnuts) is derived from the German Kreaple, which originated in the language of the Germanic people called the Goths and their word 'krappa'. They used to be baked traditionally on the last Thursday of the Easter fast during which it was forbidden to consume fatty foods and eggs. The Germans came to Spiš in 1147. When, the same as the rest of Europe, this area was endangered by the Tatars, King Bela IV was not prepared for the

delimitation that followed. To revive the country culturally and economically he called German immigrants into the country. They settled mostly in the region of Spiš, where their duty was to protect the borders. A secondary motive was the mineral wealth, which enabled the development of mining. The towns of Spiš gained great town privileges during German colonisation. The Germans of Spiš paid a tax on land to the amount of 300 talents of silver every year and in this way they bought themselves out of any other fee. They were also obliged to send 50 lancers to join the royal army if the king

summoned them. The Germans of Spiš could vote for their own mayor, who judged together with the district administrator in the district Levoča. In 1344, an association of 24 royal towns in the Spiš area was established and run under Saxon law. Another wave of immigrating German came to Spiš at the time of anti-Reformation followed by the last wave in 1899 when a German colony was established in the area of the current district town of Vranov nad Topľou. The German immigrants were predominantly different types of specialists who were supposed to contribute to the rise of the economy in the region and they also contributed to a significant development of crafts. The first craft guilds were established in Spiš in the 14th century and their

first members were only Germans. The German part in the development of crafts is documented by the many names of the tools, processes and products that have origins in the German language.

They take credit for the development of mining in the region as well as the establishment of the book printer of V Bareuer in Levoča. They also published a German newspaper in Levoča, The Zipser Anzeiger, and later Zipser Bote and in Kežmarok the Karpaten-Post was issued. Evidence of the religious architecture resulting from the strong Christian faith of the German immigrants can still be found in Kežmarok, Spišská Sobota, Spišská Belá, Spišská Kapitula, Levoča, Bardejov and Stará Ľubovňa.





Huspenina

(head cheese/brawn)

Ingredients:

pig skin
pig bones
trotters
knee
paprika
ground black pepper

salt
water
parsley
onion
vinegar

Preparation:

Wash and season the trotters with the black pepper and paprika and leave to cook with the knee, skin and bones in salty water until the meat separates from the bones. Drain the stock and put it in deep plates. Put a piece of cooked meat in each plate. Allow the mixture to solidify in a cool room. Decorate with parsley. Serve with finely chopped onion, vinegar and bread.

various initiation ceremonies, i.e. accepting young boys and girls in the society or promoting students to craftsmen, were organised in bigger numbers especially in villages. Shrovetide also signalled the time to stop making thread and to start weaving.

Organising carnivals had two objectives. Apart from providing entertainment, they also protected against dark powers and were meant to help ensure a fruitful year and the fertility of the farm animals. The Shrovetide season finished on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday with a ritual called burying the contrabass.

Life is good at Shrovetide!

It began with Three Kings' Day and ended with Ash Wednesday followed by a 40 day fast. Accompanied by merry celebrations of life, carnivals and rich meals with an obligatory pig slaughter and headcheese and indispensable shrove doughnuts. Those who could not make it to the celebrations got at least a hamper! The season of Shrovetide fell winter and spring, which was a perfect time for celebrating life and good cuisine. People had less work to do on their homesteads and more time for socialising. It was this time when weddings, dances and





Paska

(Easter bread)

Ingredients:

2 kg of all purpose flour
125 g of butter
150 g of granulated sugar
1 l milk
3 eggs
40 g of yeast

Preparation:

Add the sugar to the sieved flour. Prepare leaven from milk, sugar and yeast. When ready, add it to flour, mix in the eggs and knead the mixture into smooth dough. Allow the dough to rise in a warm place. Save some of the dough and knead the rest into a bigger loaf and leave to sit.

Make From the saved dough, form the letters B for Boh otec (God the Father), S for Boh syn (God the Son) and D for Boh duch svätý (God the Holy Ghost) and place them in the centre of the loaf. Top with beaten egg and bake.





Pečená plnka

(baked liver stuffing)

Ingredients:

4 white bread rolls
 4 eggs
 50 g of chicken liver
 300 ml of oil
 parsley
 1 garlic of clove
 100 ml of milk
 50 g of all purpose flour
 ground black pepper
 salt

Preparation:

Pour the warmed milk over the sliced bread rolls. Chop and fry the liver in oil with the onion. Add the soaked bread rolls, eggs, flour, crushed garlic, parsley, salt and pepper and stir well. Heat oil in a pan. Use a tablespoon to form small flat cakes from the mixture and place directly in the pan. Bake both sides until golden brown.





Veľkonočná hrudka

(Easter cheese)

Ingredients:

1 l of milk
10 eggs
salt
chives

Preparation:

Whisk the eggs and milk together. Add the salt and chives and bring the mixture to the boil while constantly stirring. When the eggs solidify in the milk, take the mixture off the heat and pass it through a thin fabric. Tie the fabric close above the 'cheese' ball and allow it to drain slowly. Easter cheese is served cold with horseradish.

Enough with the fast!

The Lent season of abstinence ends with Easter, which for Christian is connected to the idea of Christ's resurrection. Typical Easter dishes, that were a must on every table, were the ceremonial cake called paska, which used to be blessed and then divided between family members, ham, sausage and a boiled egg as a symbol of fertility and life. The ceremoniously set table could not go without the baked stuffing or Easter cheese. Small cakes called 'paščata' were baked in some Greek-Catholic families and were given to the priest.





Pečené plnené zemiaky na paradzkovej kapuste

(baked potatoes stuffed with tomato and cabbage)

Ingredients:

600 g of minced pork shoulder

1.5 kg of potatoes

2.0 kg of sauerkraut

salt

ground black pepper

onion

garlic

paprika

tomato puree

Začurka

(Milky potato soup)

Ingredients:

1.5 kg of potatoes

2 l milk

100 g of fine flour

salt

allspice

a bay leaf

2 smaller potatoes

Preparation:

Peel and chop the potatoes into cubes and boil in salted water. Grate the two smaller potatoes and add the salt and flour. Form the mixture into small pieces in a bowl and transfer them to the pan with the other potatoes. When cooked take the soup off the heat and add the milk.





Preparation:

Boil the potatoes in the skins. Half them and fill them with a mixture of minced meat seasoned with salt, pepper and finely chopped onion. Bake the filled potatoes in the oven until crunchy. In the meantime, pour cold water over the sauerkraut, add the tomato puree and leave the mixture to simmer until soft. Serve with the potatoes as a side dish.

The iconic cabbage

Cabbage was, along with potatoes, one of the most grown vegetables in the region. There is a simple reason for this. In a soured or salted form it could be stored for a long time. It used to be consumed as a side dish with meat, bacon, porridge or bread and it was the base for thick soups. Other popular vegetables were onions, garlic, horseradish, cumin, mustard, bay leaf, kale, spinach, peas, parsnips, lettuce, celery and cucumbers. The now popular beans and cauliflower did not appear in the regional cuisine until the 17th and 18th century.



The original spirit from Spiš

The tradition of distilling in the Prešov region goes back to the mid 18th century when the first distillery in Slovakia started there. A document from 1747 confirms the existence of the distillery and the making of alcohol at Ľubovňa Castle. The document literally states that a spirit called 'gořalka' was made in the castle's distillery.



A typical Slovak distillate called 'borovička' was made here according to a traditional recipe. It was named after one of the key ingredients used for its production, the borievka obyčajná (common juniper). The distillery in Hniezdne, which grew on the site of its predecessor, still continues with the production tradition with slightly more innovative technology. The distillate, called 'Spišská borovička', is protected by the



geographical indication. Crystal clear waters, alcohol and natural juniper distillate acquired from junipers, picked around Stará Ľubovňa and in the military forests of Jakubany, are used for the production. The water used in production is pumped from underground springs that originate in the area of Belianske Tatras and while travelling to Ľubovnianska kotlina they are enriched with a unique mineral composition when passing through the underground sediment. At the same time it gets naturally filtered through prehistoric rocks. The result is water rich in calcium, magnesium and iron that, along with the juniper, gives borovička its distinctive taste. Spišská borovička is a member of the fruit distillate group and when consumed sensibly it can significantly activate the digestive metabolism.



Castle feast á la haute cuisine

Even though the general characteristic of the traditional regional cuisine suggests that it was a modest though filling one processing mostly ingredients grown and bred by the people themselves, it would be a mistake to come to a conclusion that all people were eating this way. On the contrary, the traditional regional kitchen reflects the eating habits of the simpler people and ethnic minorities. It says nothing about the fact that already in the Middle Ages a 'high cuisine' was cooked for the 'chosen ones' even in Eastern Slovakia. It reflected European trends and used imported ingredients. We are of course



talking about the kitchens of rich aristocrats where, for a special occasion, it was normal to prepare a feast consisting of a hundred courses. On a regular day, five courses were enough for

the Slovak aristocrats and from the 16th century it was thirty courses that prolonged the feast to several hours complemented by music and theatre performances. Table manners were not subject to a strict etiquette. Guests normally sat in pairs so they could be served from a bowl. The pieces of food were put on bread, a wooden board and later on a plate and put in the mouth with hands. While cutlery was already known, it was only used when in case it was necessary. A regular aristocratic larder was filled up to the top with plenty of bread, porridges, peas, broad beans, hemp oil, dried mushrooms, salted and smoked meats, game, cheese, butter, eggs, honey, beer barrels, cucumbers, carrots, fresh cabbage and sauerkraut, turnips, garlic, onion, parsnips and fruit.

Unlike the 'under the castle', the castle kitchen processed a lot of different types of meat. As well as pork and beef, game, poultry and fish were popular items served and prepared in many different ways especially during fast days. There were plenty of those days, so to prevent the guests from getting bored with fish it was sometimes changed for beaver meat with a belief that if it lives in water, it must be a fish, too. Unconventional specialities that appeared on the table were for example squirrels or roasted swans. The interesting thing is that we can find evidence of the prevailing trends of molecular gastronomy (beef is prepared as boar or sturgeon and tastes like veal) and artistic food styling for the first time in the haute medieval cuisine. The medieval cooks were skilled in the art of colouring food in the most fantastic tones including gold and silver. Favourite specialities were, for example, roe with plums and cherries, deer on apples and onion with wine sauce and dried bread, almonds and raisins, rabbit roasted on a skewer or marinated in a blend of beer and spices. Sometimes the feasters enjoyed also bison or roasted bear paws. The castle lords did not have to worry about the basic ingredients. Milk, cream, quark, eggs and cheese entered their larders in a form of feudal duties.





Salt from Prešov

Brine started to be mined in Solivar, near Prešov 1571. The first excavated hole was a shaft called Leopold. It is 155 m deep and in 1674 the first technical building was built above it where salt cooking started. Four pairs of horses turned the mechanism for salt mining. The brine was drawn out in a leather bag with a volume of 500 to 700 litres. The first storage buildings for keeping the brine in were built in 1815. They consisted of eight wooden containers of 132,000 litres placed on a stone base. The brine got there through wooden pipes from the Leopold shaft after it went through a clarifying basin. The process of turning brine into salt continued in a preheating and evaporating basin. From there it was taken to the draining chamber where it remained for the next 24 hours. Then it travelled to the drying

rooms where it remained for another eight hours. After that it was taken to the storage room and transported in small wooden carts on the rails. The storage room was a particularly interesting architectural structure, but was unfortunately burnt down in 1986.



Since the beginning of mining in Solivar, it catered for the whole Austrian-Hungarian Empire with high quality salt. It bravely resisted the snares of famines, economical recession and both world wars. After 439 years, it finished its activity in 2009. The salt from Prešov, which appears in shops in original packaging, is currently produced in Austria.

The technical building complex of Solivar is one of the most important technical monuments in Slovakia. With the exception of Leopold shaft, there are preserved a smelt house, digester house, storage house, blacksmith's workshop, clapper,



salt baths, machine room, barn and others. Another interesting object is a so-called turňa, a bell house that signalled the start and finish of a working shift or cautioned workers in the case of imminent danger. In the digester house, there has been an exhibition about the history of mining and salt production in Solivar, open to the public as part of the Solivar complex since 2001.

Salt over gold

In our ancestor's kitchens, salt and herbs were the only available means to improve the taste of their food because of its price. One of the most popular Slovak fairy tales also documents the significance of salt in Slovak cuisine and today is a nostalgic reminder of the times when one of the best quality salts in Europe was mined and cooked in Prešov.

One king had three daughters. He watched them very closely. When his hair was turning white and his limbs did not work as before, he often thought which one of his daughters should be queen after his death. It worried him a lot because he loved them all the same. Eventually it came to him that the one who loves him the most would be appointed as queen.

So he called his daughters in front of him and said this to them "My dear girls! I am old, as you see, and I do not know if I am to remain with you for much longer. So I want to decide which one of you will be queen after my passing. But before I do that, I would like to know how much every one of you loves me." The oldest daughter nicely kissed the father's hand and told him she loved him more than gold. The middle daughter confessed she loved him more than her virginity and hugged her father tightly. When it was the turn of the youngest daughter, Maruška, she looked at the father nicely and said: "I love you daddy, as much as salt..." Her sisters started shouting at Maruška and the father got very angry that she

loved him only like salt, such an ordinary, futile thing that only passes through the fingers and nobody cares about it... And so the royal father banished his youngest daughter from the palace saying that she could only return back home when salt would be more valuable than gold and precious stones. With eyes full of tears and sorrow in her heart Maruška obeyed her father left. She walked through mountains and valleys and eventually she reached a dark forest. There, an old lady was suddenly standing in her way. When she saw the tearful girl, she asked her with a motherly care what horrible things had happened to her. Maruška told her everything. The old lady was not an ordinary mortal but a good witch and a fortune-teller, very skilled with herbal magic. She took the girl in and let her help around the house. She was very pleasant and worked hard. In the meantime, in the castle, her sisters were indulging themselves in boisterous fun. The older one was only dressing up in expensive clothes, the middle one was going from feast to feast and danced until daylight. The ageing king knew by now that his oldest daughter liked gold more than him and



the middle one would gladly lose her virginity and marry well. His memories of Maruška clouded his mind and he missed her greatly. But every time he thought of salt he still got very angry. One day, there was a big feast organised at the castle and an alarmed cook rushed to the king and informed him that there is no salt in the whole castle, even the whole kingdom! The king thought for a while and advised the cook to use something else instead of salt. He was a wise king but he was not able to advise him any better.

And so from that day only non-salted food was cooked at the castle. Although the food was nice to look at and seemed tasty, nobody liked it. They tried it sweet but the guests got bored with it very quickly.

Even the cattle suffered. Cows and sheep did not give enough milk because they missed salt too much. It was a punishment for everybody. People were dazzled and suffered with bad illnesses. The king himself and his daughters fell ill. The salt was so expensive people would pay anything for just a crumb. The king finally understood what

his Maruška wanted to tell him in her confession but he could not send for her because he did not know where she was. The old woman knew exactly what was going on in the kingdom and she also knew that the time had come for the girl to return home. She rewarded her for good service with a bag of salt and a magic wand. They did not recognise Maruška in the castle, in her simple clothes and with a scarf on her head, but she insisted so much to see the king and give him the precious gift that they finally let her in. When Maruška handed over a salted slice of bread to her royal father he cheered up a lot and was promising a big reward to her. "I ask for nothing Father, just that you love me as much as that salt!", answered Maruška and revealed her head. The king asked her for forgiveness and made her the queen. The magic wand she got from the nice old lady then took her to a cave, beautifully decorated with something that shimmered just as much as precious stones. It was nothing more but 'ordinary' salt that since then was never missed in the kingdom...



Where to go for a speciality:

POPRAD

Restaurant Turnička

Slovak style restaurant offering Slovak cuisine and traditional specialities.

Liptovská Teplička 605

Goralská krčma (Goral pub)

Goral speciality treats in a traditional Goral room.

Ždiar 460

Salaš Slavkov

Chalet Slavkov's restaurant is situated on the foothills of the High Tatras between Poprad and Starý Smokovec in Veľký Slavkov. The stylishly decorated restaurant offers good homemade cuisine and traditional Slovak meals following the original recipes.

Tatranská 4, Veľký Slavkov

www.salas.sk

Koliba u Štefana

A family restaurant that prepared quality homemade cuisine focused on Slovak methods.

Poprad, Športová (next to AquaCity)

www.penzionustefana.sk

Stodola MAX Poprad

Traditional Slovak foods in an untraditional environment.

OC MAX, Dlhé hony 1, Poprad

www.stodolamax.sk



U Jakuba, restaurant and bed & breakfast, Kežmarok

Situated a 4 minute walk away from Kežmarok Castle 39 Starý trh Stree, this stylish restaurant offers a great selection of tasty meals from domestic and international cuisine.

Starý trh 39

www.penzionujakuba.sk

KEŽMAROK

Hotel Hviezdoslav***+, Kežmarok

Luxurious food in the poetic environment of the restaurant Poézia.

www.hotelhviezdoslav.sk

Zbojnícka koliba, Stará Lesná

– Vysoké Tatry

Traditional Slovak cuisine and an authentic atmosphere in a stylish environment.

The restaurant offers an opportunity to prepare a whole ox on an open fire.

Stará Lesná 103

www.zbojnickakoliba.com

Hotel Kontakt****, Stará Lesná

Traditional with a touch of luxury. You can find typical Slovak food on the menu in this four star Tatra hotel.

www.hotelkontakt.sk

Krčma pod Lipami, Červený Kláštor

A distinctive pub with Goral specialities on the menu, which in winter months regularly organises a traditional Goral pig slaughter in the Carthusian Monastery's courtyard.

www.dunajec.sk

Penzión Pltník

Červený Kláštor 93

www.penzionpltnik.sk



Hanus Manor House

Offers traditional Goral cuisine. The original oven, after it's restoration, is still used for baking authentic delicious and crispy homemade bread.

Spišské Hanušovce 10
www.penzionhanus.sk

PREŠOV

Šarišska chiža, Prešov

Traditional treats from original recipes in the centre of the Town Monument reserve.

Hlavná 67, Prešov
www.sarisskachiza.sk

Restaurant Kulinár, Prešov

Situated directly in the historical centre of Prešov in the restored premises of a townhouse basement, it serves regional specialities prepared from original recipes.

Hlavná 34, Prešov

Šariš Park, Prešov

Recreational complex with a chalet restaurant, hotel and traditional log cabins and with traditional regional cuisine and pig slaughter treats.

www.relax.sarispark.sk

BARDEJOV

Restaurant Roland

The restaurant is located in the heart of the Town Square in Bardejov in an old but beautifully and comfortably refurbished basement underneath townhouse number 12. Besides a classic menu it also offers specialities from the regional cuisine.

Radničné námestie 12
www.restauraciaroland.sk

STARÁ ĽUBOVŇA

Salaš u Franka, Stará Ľubovňa

An armful of the traditional Spiš specialities and, on order, even a roasted pig.

www.salasufranka.sk



LEVOČA

Spišský Salaš, Spišské Podhradie

A culinary tradition established in 1964 with a lot of homemade meals from traditional recipes and local spirits: Gazdovská slivovička and Spišská borovička.

Levočská cesta, Spišské Podhradie

Hotel Stela****, Levoča, restaurant

A hotel in the centre of the Town Monument reserve. The history of the building goes back to the 14th century. It already served as an inn for merchants in the 16th century. The restaurant offers a wide range of Slovak and international cuisine.

Námestie Majstra Pavla 55, Levoča

SVIDNÍK

Motorest Alpinka, Svidník

The roadhouse Alpinka is located near the town of Svidník (approx. 3 km towards Poland) and has been known for its homemade specialities and traditional regional cuisine for a long time.

Svidník, in the direction of Vyšný Komárnik

STROPKOV

Restaurant and Wine House Kaštieľ Stropkov

In beautiful Stropkov there is a charming restaurant in the premises of an old manor house with a unique atmosphere and delicious specialities.

Zámocká 3, Stropkov
www.restauraciakastiel.com



HUMENNÉ

Hotel AliBaba***, Humenné

Traditional homestead specialities hold a strong position on the menu of this modern, restored hotel.

www.hotelalibaba.sk



Traditional gourmet events

Festival of good taste

Gastronomic festival full of aromas and tastes in the centre of Prešov, **May**

Guláš Fest Branisko, Spišský salaš, Spišské Podhradie

A regular competition where people aim to make the tastiest goulash

Made in Slovakia, Poprad

A festival focused on popularisation of characteristic and exceptional Slovak products, **July/August**

Spiš potato fair, Spišská Belá

Annual showing and tasting of the best and tastiest potatoes, **September**

Traditional Goral slaughter, Červený Kláštor

Traditional pig killing directly in monastic courtyard, **December**

Bardejov fair

A traditional fair with a history spanning more than six hundred years, held in the historic heart of the town, **August**

Stropkov honey days

A sweet festival with the smell of honey, honey-cakes, gingerbread and mead for honey connoisseurs and beekeepers, **November/December**

Švejk beer days

A beer festival with tastings of samples from small breweries and a rich cultural-musical programme, **April/May**

The Domaša goulash championship

A competition open to all amateur cooks, who fight to prepare the tastiest goulash and be awarded the 'golden spoon', **July/August**





EURÓPSKA ÚNIA



regionálny
operačný
program



European Regional Development Fund “Investing in your future”

A collection of systematic informational and promotional materials about PSK (Prešov Autonomous Region)

The project is co-financed with resources from the European Union, Regional Operational Program, Priority 3 The reinforcement of the cultural potential of the regions and the infrastructure of tourism, Provision 3.2 The support and development of tourism infrastructure – non-investment activities in tourism.