

Polish Foods

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about the class

Class taught by Co-op owner Roy Sarosik

Roy Sarosik (saw-row-sick) is employed as a paraprofessional for Marquette public schools. He works with students that have special needs.

Roy was born into a Polish family. His mother's family came from the Western (German) side of Poland and still resides there to this day. His father's family came from the Eastern (Russian) side of Poland.

Foods from Eastern Europe are usually a mixture of cultures- Polish, German, Hungarian, and Russian- reflected in their very similar recipes. Small differences are usually related to regions in Poland. There are over 90 different kielbasa recipes, each having a slightly different spice or ingredient, while all still considered kielbasa.

Polish food reflects the rural and agricultural scene, using traditional ingredients like pork, cabbage, potatoes, and dairy products. Roy recalls visiting his grandmother, who always had a small garden of select vegetable and certain spices along with chickens and ducks, all within the city limits of Detroit. His mother always had a garden and he continues that tradition today. Some of the food we are cooking tonight were served during holidays or special occasions like Christmas and Easter.

Typical Polish foods are made with a variety of meats: beef, pork, veal, chicken, duck and wild game. A variety of dairy and vegetables as well- cucumbers, beets, cabbage, potato, breads, kohlrabi, mushrooms, sour cream, cheese, butter, milk, and of course herring.

This class is dedicated to my mother, Rita. She let me watch when I was little, let me help as I got older, and taught me everything I know. Bless her, and the food we cook tonight.

Thanks Ma, Thanks Grandma

Roy

chrusciki *(kroos-chee-kee)* Yields about 24 cookies

- 3 C sifted, all-purpose flour
- 6 large egg yolks
- 2 T sour cream
- ½ C granulated sugar
- 2 T rum or whiskey
- 2 pinches salt

In the center of a bread board (or in a bowl) place 2 ½ cups flour. Make a well in the center and add the whole yolks, sour cream, sugar, rum, and salt. Mix with a fork until liquids are well combined.

Gradually, work in the flour. Dough should be the consistency of noodle dough. Knead until the dough is smooth.

On a floured board split dough into 2 sections. Roll out until paper thin. If you have a pie crimping wheel use it to cut dough into 3 ½ to 2 1/2" rectangles (for serrated edges) or cut with a knife. Make 2 or 3 gashes 2" long and evenly spaced. Fry at 350°F to 375°F in hot lard or shortening. Fry only 2-4 cookies at a time. They will sink to the bottom and eventually puff up and float to the surface. Flip with a fork then remove from oil. They should be golden in color.

When golden, remove with a strainer to drain on paper towels. Immediately dust hot cookies with the sifted sugar. These can be stored in a tightly covered wax paper lined tin.

mizeria *(miz-air-ree-ah)*

This is a very traditional Polish cucumber salad.

- 4 large cucumbers
- 1 medium sweet onion
- 1 C sour cream or plain yogurt
- fresh or powdered garlic
- dill
- salt and pepper

Thinly slice cucumbers; thinly slice onions. Put 1/3 of cucumbers in a bowl (how big?) Take 1/3 onion slices, quarter them, and sprinkle over cukes. Sprinkle salt, pepper, dill, and garlic according to taste. Repeat two more times.

Let it chill. When serving, drain water from cucumbers and mix in sour cream or yogurt and serve.

a phonetic guide of Polish food phrases

Throughout this recipe booklet you will see phonetic guides to help you learn to pronounce the Polish names of the dish. Below are the guides to some essential food phrases as well.

Jes'c' <i>(to eat)</i>	yesh-t
Kolacja <i>(dinner)</i>	ko-lots-sia
Gotowac <i>(to cook)</i>	go-toe-baush
Pic' <i>(to drink)</i>	peach
Smacznego <i>(enjoy your meal)</i>	smats-nego
Na zdrowia <i>(cheers to your health)</i>	noz-drowb-beya
Pico <i>(beer)</i>	pee-co

notes

pierogi *(peer-rog-ee)* Yields about thirty 4 ½" circles

In the surprising event of leftovers, the best way to reheat these is to sauté them in butter.

- 4 C flour
- 1 stick butter (1/4 lb)
- ½ C sour cream
- ¼ C milk
- 3 eggs
- pierogi filling
- 1 onion, finely chopped (optional)
- sour cream for garnish (optional)

Work butter into flour with until crumbly. Set aside. Beat eggs and sour cream together and add this to the flour mixture. Add the milk and work into the dough; about 8-10 minutes. The dough will look and feel very dry at first, but as you knead, it will become soft and smooth. Roll dough to be thin, but like a noodle dough.

Use a bowl, Tupperware top, or any 4-5" item to cut a circle into the dough. Take enough filling to fill pierogi (between ¼ to ½ C, depending on size of circle), fold in half and pinch edges together, sealing the mixture.

Simmer in boiling water for 7-8 minutes, it may take longer depending on the size. Pierogis will float when done.

Drain and place pierogi on a buttered platter. This will keep them from sticking to each other.

Before serving, if you desire, sauté in butter and onions until golden brown. Serve with a dollop of sour cream or plain yogurt.

kapusta sauerkraut

(ka-puss-sta) Yields about 8 servings

If you don't ferment your own cabbage for sauerkraut, our instructor recommends Bubbe's in the refrigerated section at the Co-op.

- 6lbs sauerkraut (rinsed and drained well)
- 1 small onion, diced very small
- 1 C apple juice
- 1 C water
- 2 T caraway
- 2 T brown sugar or more to taste
- 1 potato diced very small
- butter, salt and pepper to taste

Melt butter in pan and sauté onions until tender. Add sauerkraut, apple juice, caraway, water, brown sugar, diced potato and salt and pepper. Bake for one hour in a 350° oven.

Add cooked sausage and bake for 45 minutes longer, also at 350°F.

Option: add uncooked sausage after preparing sauerkraut and bake for 1 ½-2 hours in a covered pan.

kielbasa *(keel-boss-ah)* Yields about 6lbs

- 6lbs pork butt (boneless) with fat
- 6-10 cloves of minced garlic or powdered garlic to taste
- 4-5 T marjoram
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2-4 cups of water
- hog casings and string to tie ends

Soak hog casing in warm water, wash well. Grind or fine cut (very small dice) meat. Add spices and mix well. Add water to make meat filling “squishy”. You may need to add more marjoram and garlic because you want the mixture to smell aromatic. Marjoram mixed with garlic will both be strong.

Fill casing with meat mixture. “Pin prick” any air pockets in sausage (using an actual pin) Allow to dry 3-5 hours in a cool spot or refrigerate uncovered for 24 hours.

Bring water to a boil and simmer for 45 minutes. Remove from water and place in oven at 375°F for an additional 45 minutes to brown.

pierogi filling

The sauerkraut and mushroom filling is from Western Poland, and the potato cheese filling is from Eastern Poland.

Traditionally, Roy’s mom used “farmer cheese.” This is a dry version of cottage cheese that was similar in flavor but formed in a block. It is often used in the cooking of Eastern Europe. This is not available locally, but would probably be found in a specialty food store, such as Eastern Market in Detroit. Cottage cheese is a great substitute.

sauerkraut and mushroom (grandma’s version)

yields 9-10 pierogi depending on dough size

- 2lb sauerkraut (well drained)
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ¼-½lb mushrooms, chopped
- butter
- salt and pepper to taste

Sauté sauerkraut in 2T butter until tender, about 10-15 minutes, add to a bowl, then sauté mushrooms and onion in butter until tender.

Combine all ingredients and salt and pepper to taste.

potato and cheese (mom’s version for my dad)

yields 15-20 pierogi depending on dough size

- 2 large containers of large curd cottage cheese
- 1 medium onion diced
- 4 to 6 large potatoes cooked and mashed
- salt and pepper to taste

Drain cottage cheese through cheese cloth. Should be well drained.

While it drains, sauté onion in butter until tender

Mix all ingredients in a large bowl. Mix well then add salt and pepper to taste.

golabki *(go-wom-kee)*

Roy offers two versions, a traditional one, and one he created for a vegetarian version. A note on the sauce- when Roy's mother didn't have all the ingredients she needed for the sauce she would use a 32oz can of good quality tomato juice with equally good results.

meat filling Yields 16-20 rolls, depending on the size.

- 2lb ground beef
- 1 ½ lb ground pork
- 1 medium onion finely diced
- 4 large garlic cloves, minced or 3 T garlic powder
- 2 t salt
- 1-2 t pepper
- 1 ½ C cooked rice
- ½ of 1 small can tomato paste

Mix all ingredients thoroughly in a large bowl. The other half of the tomato paste can be put into your sauce.

meatless filling Yields 10-15 rolls, depending on the size.

- 4 C cooked rice
- 2 C cooked green lentils
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 ribs celery, diced
- ½ lb mushrooms, chopped
- 1 small can tomato paste
- ¼ stick butter (more if needed)
- salt, pepper, and garlic to taste.

Sauté onion, celery, mushrooms until tender. Add to rice/lentil mix. Add ½ the tomato paste, mix thoroughly. Use the rest of the tomato paste in sauce.

sauce

- one 10oz can undiluted tomato soup
- one 8oz can tomato sauce
- salt and pepper to taste
- water if the sauce is too thick

Mix ingredients in bowl. Mix well.

cabbage

- 1 large green cabbage

Remove core of cabbage. Place in steamer for 15-20 minutes, longer if it is very large. You will know it is done when it loses its shape. Cool. Cabbage will be soft. Carefully peel whole leaves and place on a plate.

assembly

Pre-heat oven to 350°F. Grease a large 13"x9" deep sided pan or use a roasting pan. Line pan with ½ of excess cabbage. Pour ¼ of sauce on cabbage.

Count cabbage leaves and make approximate scoops of fillings. Place scooped mixture on leaf. Fold and roll tightly and place in a single layer in pan. Drizzle remaining sauce over rolls, using a butter knife to separate rolls slightly to get sauce in between.

Cover rolls with remaining, broken pieces of unused cabbage. Place cover on pan or use foil. If your pan is very full, place on cookie sheet to catch any boil over.

Cook for 3 hours for meat filling, slightly less needed for alternate filling. After about an hour, you can turn the heat down to 250°F. You may need to add a little water, so check after 1 ½ hours of cooking so the rolls don't dry out. if covered well that probably won't be a problem.

Make a day ahead, cool and then reheat for best flavor.