

In Touch with Prairie Living

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Germans from Russia Heritage Collection
North Dakota State University Libraries, Fargo



GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

GRHC

HERITAGE COLLECTION

The Germans from Russia Heritage Collection at the NDSU Libraries in Fargo reaches out to prairie families and former Dakotans. In various ways, it affirms the heritage of the Germans from Russia as an important part of the northern plains culture. In this month's column, we share some of the foodways.

The following recipes have been selected from *Sei Unser Gast* (Be Our Guest), a publication of the North Star Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

Hasenpfeffer

This recipe, whose name means "hare in pepper," is just as good made with commercially raised rabbit (available frozen in supermarkets), or freshly bagged cottontails or young jackrabbit.

- 1/2 lb. bacon, finely chopped
- 1-5 to 6 lb. rabbit
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 3/4 tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 3/4 c. flour
- 2/3 c. minced shallot or onion
- 1/2 tsp. chopped garlic
- 1-1/4 c. dry red wine
- 3/4 c. beef stock
- 1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. brandy
- 2 tsp. red currant jelly
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 crushed juniper berry
- pinch of ground cloves
- pinch of crumbled dried rosemary
- 1/4 tsp. crumbled dried thyme

In a dutch oven, cook the bacon, stirring until it is crisp. Drain the bacon bits on paper towels. Cut the rabbit into serving pieces. Sprinkle with salt and pepper; then, dredge the pieces in the flour, tapping off the excess. Heat the bacon fat over high heat and brown the rabbit on both sides, a few pieces at a time. Transfer the browned pieces to a plate. Pour off all but a little fat and add the shallots and garlic. Cook over moderate heat until the shallots are soft, stirring frequently. Add the wine, stock, and vinegar and bring to a boil, scraping

loose bits clinging to the bottom of the dutch oven. Stir in the brandy, jelly, and herbs. Return the rabbit and any juices that have seeped from it to the dutch oven. Add the bacon bits, cover, and simmer over low heat for 45 to 90 minutes, or until the rabbit is tender, but not falling apart. Discard the bay leaf. Taste for seasoning; adding more salt and pepper, if needed (the sauce should be quite peppery).

Although the meat is not marinated in this recipe, many recipes call for it. To make the marinade, mix salt, pepper, wine, stock, vinegar, brandy, jelly, salt, pepper, herbs, and spices. Add the rabbit pieces and refrigerate 24 to 48 hours, turning occasionally. Reserve the marinade and later add it to the browned bacon and rabbit pieces and sauteed onion and garlic.

Himmel und Erde (Heaven and Earth)

- 1 lb. potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 1/4 pt. water
- 1 lb. cooling apples, cored and peeled
- 2 oz. bacon, diced
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper

Cook potatoes in salted water 10-15 minutes. Add cored and peeled apples. Add salt and pepper. Cook until apples and potatoes are soft. Drain. Fry the diced bacon and sprinkle on the apples and potatoes when you serve. This goes well with sausages, poultry, or game.

We are pleased to announce two cookbooks: *Some Wonderful Old Time Recipes from Our Mothers and Grandmothers* compiled by Thelma Bartel Wiest, Portland, OR, and *Pots of Gold from Hutterian Kitchens* by the Forest River Hutterite Colony in ND.

Thelma shares many recipes from her family such as Pfeffernusse, Borscht, Aunt Minnie's Roll Koka, and prune cake. Thelma writes in the forward, "This recipe book was

compiled in order to preserve the many old family recipes that are endangered, but which are still alive in the memories of many family members and in some cases, also the kitchens. If, a hundred years from now, some curious, bright-eyed teenager, rummaging through an old trunk discovers this cookbook, I hope she [or he] enjoys reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it."

The Hutterites share their many German recipes including carrot soup, sauerkraut relish, cottage cheese perogies, Fleisch Korfeln, dumplings, Sauer Fleisch and potato pancakes. For further information about the cookbooks, contact the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection.

We continue to receive positive feedback by e-mail from persons viewing the recipes at the GRHC website. Our thanks for their contributions.

For further information about the collection, German-Russian heritage, the cookbooks, and the future Journey to the Homeland tours to Ukraine including the former Bessarabian, Black Sea and Crimean German villages, contact Michael M. Miller, NDSU Libraries, PO Box 5599, Fargo, ND 58105-5599 (Tel: 701-231-8416; E-mail: Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu; GRHC website: <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc>).

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