

In Touch with Prairie Living

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By Michael M. Miller

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



GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

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One of GRHC's most popular published foodways books is *German Food & Folkways: Heirloom Memories from Europe, South Russia & the Great Plains*, by Rose Marie Gueldner.

Gueldner of Fargo, ND, native of Anamoose, ND, writes in the Introduction, "My research in writing *German Food & Folkways* involved not only cooking, tasting and reading, but traveling and interviewing. Most of all, it involved listening to a variety of people – home cooks, botanists, butchers, historians and farmers. Of the five years on this book, four of them were research and one was writing." Gueldner graduated from NDSU and obtained a Master's Degree in Food & Nutrition from Iowa State University.

Crispy Bratkartoffeln, creamy Kopfsalad, tasty Knoephla, delicious Borscht, savory Strudel and plump Halupsi can make a feast. There are more than 400 recipes for these historic foods titled in English and German with comments on how dishes varied within this seemingly homogeneous ethnic group – the Germans from Russia. It's about family recipes for everyday and for holidays. The cookbook is about the farm butcher, the farmhouse cook and gardener and the home vintner. *German Food & Folkways* is about food and drink that has nourished and nurtured for centuries.

Gwen Schock Cowherd, White Bear Lake, MN, native of Leola, SD, is creator of the popular facebook page, *Germans from Russia Foodways & Traditions*, recently wrote, "Gueldner's book is a gem. It contains many word-of-mouth, hard-to-find German-Russian recipes. But, it is much more than a compilation of recipes – detailed culinary traditions and historical perspectives accompany each recipe category engaging both the everyday cook and academician.

Gueldner focuses on comprehensive cooking directions – memory jogging for the experienced German-Russian cook, invaluable to the newcomer."

Dr. Timothy J. Kloberdanz, NDSU Anthropology Professor emeritus, well-known researcher and writer comments, "Although there are German-Russian cookbooks currently on the market, this one is quite unusual because of the way it intervenes background history, ethnic heritage, and so many mouth-watering Old Country recipes. If the German-Russians have a Martha Stewart anywhere in North America, it may very well be Rose Marie Gueldner."

Brother Placid Gross, German-Russian folklorist at Assumption Abbey, Richardton, ND, native of Napoleon, ND, writes, "This book is the crowning achievement of all cookbooks for the Germans from Russia community. It is a great and wonderful tribute to our pioneer mothers who know how to hold body and soul together with hard work and creativities to make a banquet with the simplest of basic ingredients."

Mark Phillips, writes in the *Herald Press*, Harvey, ND, "Gueldner traced many recipes as far back as medieval Europe when butter was introduced. Originally the Germans used mostly barley rye. When did wheat come in? Those who went to southern Russia (Ukraine) began to raise wheat. They made that area the breadbasket of Europe and exported it all over the region. When they settled in the Dakotas, they became grain farmers and made the plains of the United States the breadbasket of the world."

One of Gueldner's favorites is stuffed cabbage or Halupsi. Translated, it means "little doves". The cabbage leaves are filled, rolled and tucked under. They appear to be little doves in the sauce. The cookbook emphasized

what Gueldner calls "peasant cooking." Gueldner writes, "It is simple, with honest flavors. Not embellished or highly seasoned, but not bland, either. Their eating habits followed the seasons. They ate vegetables when the gardens were ripe and chicken, pork or beef at butchering time. Eventually, in this country, they started canning."

Deneen Gilmour writes in the *Fargo Forum*, "In towns like Strasburg, Ashley, Hague, Napoleon, Wishek, Kulm, Beulah, Hazen, New Leipzig, Zeeland, Eureka, Leola, Hoven, Bowdle, Selby, Tripp, Freeman and Roscoe in the Dakotas, families did – and still do – enjoy Borscht, Strudel, Knoephla soup, creamed chicken, Fleischkuechla, Halupsi (pigs-in-the-blanket), Kase Knoephla (cheese buttons), Plachenta, liver and smoked sausage and head cheese."

When she was asked if the book is for cooks, history buffs or Germans from Russia, Gueldner answers, "In the book, I tried to approach the needs of all three audiences. I wanted historical content for the scholar but didn't want it bogged down in footnotes. It's also for people who want a collection of grandmother's recipes, of wonderful historical foods. And it's for those who like to try different cuisines."

Purchase *German Food & Folkways* online at <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/cookbooks/gueldner.html> or call Michael Miller at 701-231-8416.

If you would like more information about the Journey to the Homeland Tour to Germany and Ukraine (May 18-28, 2017); or would like donate to the GRHC (family histories or photographs), contact Michael M. Miller, NDSU Libraries, PO Box 6050, Dept. 2080, Fargo, ND 58108-6050. (Tel: 701-231-8416); Email: Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu; website: www.ndsu.edu/grhc.