

Volga German Recipes

by Marjorie Sackett

In 1972 students in my class in Folk Recipes produced a booklet of the recipes they had collected. The following is the introduction to that booklet, written collaboratively by the students:

During harvest time father, mother, hired hands, and children (schoolage), hired girl (if they had one), arose at 4:30 a.m. to begin the preparations for the meal and the harvest job. Not only did bread have to be baked, chickens dressed, potatoes peeled, house put in order, etc., but outside chores had to be done, including the feeding of the horses. Horses did not get a 10 o'clock lunch, nor a 4 o'clock lunch; they were fed again at noon. They had to have time for a good morning meal, as much hard work was done by the animals.

In an interview with Mrs. John Augustine of Ellis, she referred to when she and her husband worked long hours in the harvest fields. Since there were fourteen children, it was necessary to have a bountiful crop each year. She also referred to the fact that the older female members of the family took care of the young babies while the parents and the boys worked long hours in the fields. One thing that was not forgotten was that when Mrs. Augustine made her bread, she had to make eight loaves, which did not last very long....

Mrs. Domatilla Pfannenstiel's husband said that at 10 o'clock, fresh bread (sliced) and sliced raw onion in vinegar and salt, black hot coffee, and schviele mouldosh of a sort, surely did taste good. The men-folks came in to the house at noon hour for the big meal: fresh pork, fried potatoes, schviele mouldosh, cucumbers sliced and put into vinegar water; and Mrs. said it's very good with cream. They also served onion in vinegar, custard, or schwartzenberren pie, fresh bread and butter, and coffee. Chicken and noodle soup substituted for meat and potato meals on some days. (Foods were salted when needed, but pepper was only placed on table for choice.)

In summer, when eggs were more plentiful, Mrs. Pfannenstiel said she used five or six egg yolks in her buttermilk pancakes. This made them richer and a very stable food for hungry men who worked fourteen or so hours a day. (In winter she would use less, as hens laid fewer, and winter noodles for the same reason might be made with only two egg yolks.) For present-day preparation for breakfast, Mrs.

Pfannenstiel says she still adds five yolks, even to her Gooch's Pancake Mix!...

The following recipes have been selected from among those in the Fort Hays Kansas State College Folklore Collection because they are undoubtedly of Volga German origin. Recipes in the collection which are probably from Volga German sources but for which documentation is incomplete or lacking, and those from outside the primary settlement area (Ellis, Rush, and Russell counties), have been omitted.

I. *Meat Dishes*

A. Gollerol

(Collected from Mrs. Monica Haselhorst, Hays, 1972.)

Boil hocks (feet) in water seasoned with salt, pepper, bay leaf, and onion till meat falls off bone. Remove meat and grind. Return meat to strained broth and chill until jelled. Serve on sandwiches or on crackers with mustard or horseradish.

B. Bierocks

(Collected from Mrs. Albert Hammersmith, Hays, 1972.)

1 cup scalded milk

½ cup sugar

1 tbsp. lard

1 tsp. salt

Put one pkg. dry yeast in bowl. Add 1 tsp. sugar, 2 cups lukewarm water. Let set 10 min. When milk mixture cools, add to yeast mixture. Add flour enough to make a soft batter. Let set for about 30 min. Mix with more flour (about 5-6 cups) until heavy enough for bread. Let rise once, about double in bulk. Work down to rise again. Roll a sheet of dough on floured board (1¼" thick). Cut into 6" squares.

1 head of cabbage (chopped or ground)

2 large onions (cut fine)

2 tbsp. lard

1 lb. hamburger

Salt and pepper to taste. Simmer lard, cabbage, and onions in covered kettle until done. Crumble hamburger into pan. Simmer until done. Mix with cabbage mixture. Make sure all ingredients have been drained very well.

Put 1 tbsp. of warm filling in a square. Pinch together. Set upside down on greased baking sheet. Let rise 25 min. Bake 25 min. in moderate oven (350°).

C. Galuskies

(Collected from Josephine Riedel, Hays, by S.J. Sackett, 20 March 1959.)

Select a nice head of cabbage and steam for about half an hour or until the leaves peel off easily. Then mix a pound of hamburger, a quarter of a pound of sausage, a small chopped onion, and a half a cup

of rice. Season to taste. Shape into round balls and wrap in cabbage leaves. Pack in a kettle lined with sauerkraut and cover with water. Cook until done. A small amount of vinegar may be added for flavor.

D. Schumatta

(Collected from Mrs. Matthew Augustine, Hays, 1972.)

Mix 2-3 eggs with milk, a little salt, and flour to form batter similar to pancake batter. Heat a small amount of corn oil in a skillet and then add batter. One should start at high range temperature and when it forms what looks like a pancake, then cut up into very small pieces. At the time one is making the crumbly mixture, one should heat a can of pork and beans. When it is served, the crumbly mixture is on the bottom and the pork and beans form the top, and then syrup is poured onto this to suit your taste.

II. *Meatless Friday Dishes*

A. Käse Sackeljen

(Collected by S.J. Sackett, 20 March, 1959.)

Make a dough of egg, flour, cream, butter, and salt and roll it like noodle dough but not quite so thin. Cut it in squares about four inches by four inches. Make the filling of cottage cheese, onion, pepper, salt, and cream. Put a good tablespoon of the filling on each square and then pinch the corners together. Boil in a kettle, being careful not to overcrowd them. Brown breadcrumbs in butter and pour them over the sackeljen when done.

B. Kartoffeln und Klump

(Collected by S.J. Sackett, 20 March, 1959.)

Boil potatoes. When they are done, leave them in still-simmering water. Make a stiff dough of flour, egg, baking powder, milk, and salt, and drop spoonfuls of this dough into the water. Simmer for 15 or 20 minutes. Then drain. Make a sauce with butter, chopped onions, cream, heated very slightly, and pour over the potatoes and dumplings.

C. Sviffel

(Collected from Sr. Bertilla Schiller, Ellis, By Sr. M. Hilda Stubna)

Slice onions rather thick. Fry them in ordinary manner of fried potatoes. Season with sugar and salt. Set aside. Take bread dough, roll it out like pie dough. Put onions in dough, pinch shut and let it raise. After it has raised, bake for half an hour. Eat while warm.

D. Poor Man

(Collected from Mrs. Mary Younkers, Antonino, 1972.)

5 beaten eggs, add 1 c. flour, 1 t. baking powder, 1 t. salt, and milk till batter is like pancake batter. Brown this in lard and while browning cut constantly with knife and fork till like scrambled eggs. Serve with syrup.

III. *Meat Soups*

A. Kugel Suppe

(Collected from Amy Toepfer, Hays, by Darrell Munsell, 7 January, 1960.)

2½ lbs. of beef

Inside of loaf of bread

½ teaspoon of salt

½ lb. of butter

1 egg

¾ cup of rice

Boil beef till done. Take the inside of a small loaf of bread and flake it into small parts (no crust). Put ½ teaspoon of salt on the bread. Take ½ lb. of butter and one egg. Mix the bread and other ingredients together and roll into balls about the size of marbles and let set. Boil rice and strain beef from broth. Put balls and rice into broth and wait for balls to surface.

B. Crumb Soup

(Collected from Mrs. John Augustine, Ellis, 1972.)

1 cup flour, 1 egg, and a little water to make into a stiff ball. Grate on grater and add to chicken broth (instead of noodles).

C. Dumpling Soup

(Collected from Mrs. Monica Haselhorst, Hays, 1972.)

Cook navy beans with hambone, salt, pepper, bay leaf, and onion till beans are tender. Peel and cut up one or two medium potatoes and add to soup. While potatoes cook, make dumplings from 2 eggs and enough flour to make a stiff dough. Drop by spoonful into rapidly boiling soup. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes.

D. Sauerkraut Soup with Bread Dumplings

(Collected from Mrs. Albert Hammersmith, Hays, 1972.)

Cook pork shank (skim off grease). Mix in diced potatoes, sauerkraut, salt, and pepper. Put bread dumplings on top and cook until potatoes are done.

IV. *Meatless Friday Soups*

A. Green Bean and Dumpling Cream Soup

(Collected from Mrs. Dale Schmeidler, Hays, 1972.)

1 can string green beans

4 potatoes (cubed)

3 bay leaves

Boil potatoes and bay leaves ¾ done, and then put in green beans. Add salt and pepper to taste. Mix up dumplings. Take a teaspoon and put dumplings into boiling water. Boil until done. Don't overcook. Take a little pan, and melt 1 tbs. butter. Brown a little flour with it so that it is yellow looking and then scrape this mixture into soup. Then take off burner. Add ½ cup cream.

Dumplings:

2 eggs

½ teaspoon salt

⅛ tsp. baking powder

½ cup water

2½ cups flour

Mix eggs, salt, water. Mix baking powder in with flour. Add flour and baking powder to eggs, salt, water. Can add more flour or more water if dough is not right.

B. Noodle and Bean Soup

(Collected from Mrs. Monica Haselhorst, Hays 1972.)

Boil Navy beans with salt to taste until done. Cook noodles with beans till noodles are done. Stir in cream till soup is of desired consistency.

V. *Salads*

A. Cucumbers in Cream Dressing

(Collected from Mrs. Albert Hammersmith, Hays, 1972.)

Peel cucumbers and slice. Slice Bermuda onions. Make a dressing with cream, a little vinegar, salt, pepper, and sugar. (Cultured sour cream may be used.) Pour dressing over cucumbers and onions.

B. Cabbage Slaw

(Collected from Mrs. E.J. Dreiling, Hays, 1972.)

1 head cabbage (average size) grated

1 tsp. salt

⅔ cup sugar

⅓ cup vinegar

1 cup cream (half-and-half may be used)

Mix all together.

C. Hot Cabbage Slaw

(Collected from Mrs. E.J. Dreiling, Hays 1972.)

Use cabbage cut fine or shredded. Cover with water and cook until tender. Drain some off the water. Add salt, pepper, sugar, and vinegar to taste.

D. Sweet-Sour Cabbage

(Collected from Mrs. Lydia Brungardt, Victoria, 1972.)

5 cups shredded cabbage

3 tbsp. flour

3 tbsp. brown sugar

¼ cup vinegar

¾ cup diced bacon

½ cup water

salt

pepper

Cook cabbage in salted water five minutes. Drain. Fry diced

bacon until crisp and brown. Combine with cabbage. Blend bacon fat with flour and brown sugar. Add vinegar, water, and two tablespoons finely chopped onion, salt, pepper to taste. Cook until thick. Pour over cabbage mixture.

VI. *Breads*

A. Butter Ring

(Collected from Mrs. Jim Herrman, Hays, 1972.)

3 cups flour

Sugar

1 tsp. salt

1 cup butter

1 cake of yeast

½ pt. cream

3 egg yolks or 2 eggs, beaten

¼ cup milk

Sift flour with 2 tbsp. sugar. Add salt and butter. Work until mealy. Heat milk to scalding. Add two tsp. sugar and cool. Add yeast and stir until dissolved. Add cream and eggs. Stir this mixture into the flour mixture to make smooth dough. Place in greased bowl, cover, and store in refrigerator overnight. Divide dough into 6 equal parts. Roll each part into long rope, twist two ropes together. Place in rings in greased pan. Let raise for 1 hr. and 30 min. Bake for 25 min. in 375° oven. Yield: 12 to 15 servings.

B. Huntzel Brod

(Collected from Cyril Herrman, Hays, 1972.)

3½-4 cups of flour

1½ tsp. salt

3 pkg. yeast

1/3 cup instant milk

1/3 cup soft butter

1 cup warm prune juice

1 egg

1 cup each, cut up; dates, prunes, dried apricots, nuts, raisins

Place 1 cup flour, salt, sugar, yeast, instant milk, and butter in large bowl. Add prune juice. Beat about two minutes. Add egg and ½ cup flour; beat for about three minutes. Add rest of ingredients and enough flour to make medium stiff dough. Let raise until double in bulk. Shape. Let raise again. Shape into small loaves. Bake at about 350° for 45 to 60 minutes.

C. Zwieback

(Collected from Mrs. Lydia Brungardt, Victoria, 1972.)

6 egg yolks

1 whole egg

Beat 4 min. until foamy. Then add ½ cup sugar slowly.

1 tsp. vanilla
¾ cup sifted all-purpose flour
½ cup cooked peanuts (unsalted) crushed fine
rind of 1 lemon (opt.)

Bake in 11 x 7 oblong pan at 350° until done. Cut while warm in ¼" slices and put in oven to toast.

VII. *Fruit and Pastry Dishes*

A. Fruit Soup

(Collected from Mrs. Albert Hammersmith, Hays, 1972.)

It was traditional for the godmother of a newborn baby to prepare this soup and take it to the new mother.

Use dried fruits. Add 2 qts. of water. Boil 2-3 hours or until fruit is well done. Add ½ cup sugar, ½ cup syrup, and ½ cup flour. Mix sugar and flour with 1 cup heavy sweet cream until smooth. Add this to the soup and bring to a boil. It is then ready to serve.

B. Heart Cookies

(Collected from Mrs. Louis Wasinger, Hays, 1972.)

1 cup sugar
1 cup butter
1 cup heavy cream (whipping or country cream)
¼ tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. baking powder
4 cups flour
¼ tsp. salt

Cream butter and sugar; add baking powder, cinnamon, and salt. Add flour and make a stiff dough. Turn out on floured board and knead in more flour to make a smooth dough. Chill. Roll about ¼" thick. Cut strips 4" long and 1" wide. Cut through center, leaving about ½". Turn strips in opposite directions and make shape of heart. Brush each with egg yolk thinned with cream. Bake at 375° for 8-10 min.

C. Kriebel

(Collected by S.J. Sackett, 20 March, 1959.)

Take 4 egg yolks, a cup of sweet cream, a pinch of salt, and enough flour to make a stiff dough; mix and roll out thin. Cut into strips two inches wide and four inches long. Cut two slits in each strip and pull the ends through the slits. Drop in deep fat and fry until nice and brown. Sprinkle with sugar. This is a traditional Shrove Tuesday dish.

D. Schwartzbeeren Kuchen

(Collected by S.J. Sackett, 29 March, 1959. "Black berries" are the fruit of the European -non-poisonous- -night shade, raised in many back yards in Ellis County.)

Make rich bread dough. After the dough is raised, put blackberries

on it with sugar. Then mix together one cup of cream, two egg yolks, one heaping teaspoon of flour, and two heaping tablespoons of sugar. Beat the two egg whites and fold in. Pour on top of the kuchen. Bake for 45 minutes. This makes enough topping for a kuchen about 14 by 16 inches.

VIII. *A Dish for Any Occasion*

Schviele Mouldosh

(Collected from Mrs. Domatilla Pfannenstiel, Hays, 1972.)

Raised bread dough (rolled out to $\frac{1}{8}$ " thickness). Cut into squares, 4" by 4" (can vary). Fill with schwartzeberren: onions which have been chopped; or chopped beef, or pork and beef combined. Corners of dough can be tied or one can also bring 2 sides together over top and pinch dough to enclose. Chopped meats have been previously cooked and seasoned with bay leaf and salt; berries are to be sweetened. Bake in 350° oven until lightly browned. Tops can be previously brushed with cream or lard.



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