

RUSSIAN FOOD NETWORK

Project form

Please fill out the form below, print it to turn it in, in **HARD COPY**, and also send **ELECTRONICALLY**, on the due date you selected on the sign up sheet. The Russian Food Network Event as a follow up to your Russian cooking experience will take place during class time as indicated on the syllabus. Please duplicate your recipe and bring it in for the event.

Recipe: Cabbage Pirog

Filling:

- Boiled and strained small-medium cabbage
- One chopped and caramelized white onion
- Two-Three chopped hard boiled eggs

Crust:

- 0.5 ounce yeast dissolved in 0.25 cup of water
- 0.75 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 0.25 cup of butter
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 0.5 tbs sugar
- 0.5 tsp salt
- 2.5 cups flour
- 1 egg and 0.5 tsp butter to brush

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350°

 - Dissolve yeast in the water
 - Combine the egg, milk, sugar, salt, butter, olive oil, and mix
 - Add the flour, then the dissolved yeast, and beat until well-mixed, and forming bubbles
 - Cover and let dough rise to approximately twice original size

 - Chop and boil the cabbage, and thoroughly strain
 - Fry onion in a little butter or oil, in a pan, add cabbage, and fry for another 10 minutes
 - Add in chopped hardboiled eggs

 - When the dough has risen, knead on a board, and cut off 2/3 to roll and place into a pie tin
 - Fill with the cabbage, onion, and egg
 - Use the remaining dough as the top
 - Cut a slit in the top to vent, and brush with a beaten egg.
 - Bake for approximately 30–35 minutes
 - Once finished baking, brush pastry with melted butter, and let sit for 5 minutes prior to serving
- Photo of the prepared dish:

(Photo is lighter than actual finished product)



A synopsis of your research on the recipe and the area where the recipe originated:

The word ‘*pirog*’ is derived from the ancient Slavic word ‘*pir*,’ which denoted various forms of celebratory social gatherings, at which *pirogi* (plural of *pirog*, distinct from the *pierogi* of Polish cuisine) were a common feature.

Pirogi and their smaller, often fried counterparts, *pirozhki*, are considered to be traditional staples of Russian cuisine.

Pirogi basically consist of a short pastry filled with anything ranging from meats and/or vegetables; to sweet, fruity fillings. The recipe I listed above is essentially a combination of two recipes in *The Art of Russian Cooking*, by Nina Nicolaieff and Nancy Phelan (1969), using the filling of the deep-fried cabbage *Piroshki*, and the pastry dough of the bake-able meat/beef *pirog*.

Your description of the experience of preparing and tasting the recipe (any ingredients you needed to substitute, any changes you made to the recipe... does it remind you of something you tasted before? What would you serve to accompany it? Etc.

The *pirog* is similar in form to American pot-pies, but with traditionally varying internal ingredients, and with a fluffier, leavened crust. Due to personal taste, I used less oil than what the book-recipe called for, and I might try in the future to forego the sugar, and less salt, too. I might recommend using less than the whole head of cabbage, as well; using, instead, 2/3rds of the cabbage might make a better cabbage-to-onion-to-egg ratio. It is also important to be sure that the pie filling is dry before baking, so that the pastry is allowed to cook easier around the filling.

Finally, the *pirog* is a hearty dish that feels appropriate for the harvesting season, and would be served well alongside an appropriately hearty soup, and stewed vegetables like beets, cabbage—if not used as filling—carrots, peas, etc.

Like a wine recommendation to accompany a dish, make a recommendation of a reading from Russian literature that would accompany the making or tasting of the dish you prepared. Perhaps the reading would suit the mood of the dish, its spiciness or its sweetness... perhaps there was a mention of one of the ingredients or the dish itself in the reading... etc. You may select from the stories read or presented in class, or some other Russian work with which you are familiar.

For a dish that has roots in Slavic culture before Russian was even a formal language, I can only recommend reading Russian history alongside eating a *pirog*. For history in our Russian Literature class, we read from a mammoth book called *Russia and the Russians: A History*, by

Geoffrey Hosking; but for a more brief, more general-interest text, and one from my personal experience, I can only recommend *October* by China Miéville for a look at the year 1917 in Russia and the Russian Revolution that neither celebrates what the USSR was to become, nor condemns Bolshevik party figures, or the workers and peasants who made the revolution.