



The Culinary Art of Hungary

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SOUP CHAUVINISM

Most nations in the world have one thing in common in their kitchens: They have a national chicken soup they consider the best.

Consider the Greek chicken lemon soup, the French potage a la reine, the "Jewish penicillin", canned by Mount Sinai Hospital in Miami. The Polish and Russians, Serbians and Austrians, the African aborigines have their chicken soup. So do the Chinese, the Japanese, and practically all others.

For about a century, Hungarian kitchens have been very proud of a chicken soup which, according to a legend or local history, was consumed daily by the famous Hungarian actor, Ujhazy, and so named.

Ujhazy is really more than a soup -- it is a meal in itself. Although it is good year round, it is best and most

appropriate during November. All the root vegetables are at the peak of their goodness. The stewing hens are fat and heavy. And the weather really makes people hungry after a brisk walk or some seasonal work in the garden.

Most of the ingredients for the recipe that follows are always on hand in Hungarian households. Also we give you the recipe for the Hungarian mustard sauce we recommend you serve with the soup meat. The sauce recipe is for 5 cups, but don't worry. It'll keep it in the refrigerator for weeks. Also, you can serve it with any kind of Hungarian sausage, pork chops, meat loaf, meat cakes, hamburgers.

It is excellent with fish, and makes a surprisingly good salad dressing when thinned with oil and vinegar. It also can replace mayonnaise or butter as a tasty sandwich spread.

ÚJHÁZY CHICKEN SOUP

8 servings

3 medium carrots, scraped and split lengthwise in fourths

2 cups scraped, coarsely chopped parsley root

1 bunch flat-leaf parsley, tied with a bay leaf to a medium sized leek split lengthwise from the end almost down to the bottom

1 medium onion with the skin left on, studded with a clove

1 teaspoon marjoram

1 teaspoon tarragon

1 clove garlic mashed to a pulp with 1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1/2 teaspoon black peppercorns, slightly bruised

1/2 teaspoon white peppercorns, slightly bruised

1 tablespoon salt

1 stewing hen, about 4 to 5 pounds, cut up, with giblets, neck, and heart

2 fryers, about 2 pounds each, split in half

1 teaspoon sugar

1 tablespoon butter

2 to 3 tablespoons finely grated carrot

8 ounces very thin (angel hair) noodles, barely cooked, rinsed, and kept in cold water

Liver Dumplings:

8 ounces chicken livers

1/2 cup bread crumbs

2 tablespoon flour

2 heaping tablespoons finely minced onion

1 teaspoon shortening

1 egg

1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley

freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 clove of garlic mashed to a pulp with 1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1. Place all the vegetables and spices in a large soup pot. Cover with the cut-up hen and the giblets, neck, and heart.

2. Pour in enough water to cover, or approximately 4 quarts. Cook gently for 1 1/2 hours.

3. Add the chicken halves and enough additional water to cover. Bring to a boil again. Cook gently for another 30 minutes, or until the chicken halves are tender.

4. Remove the chicken halves with a slotted spoon and keep them warm.

5. To prepare the liver dumplings, blend all the ingredients in an electric blender until completely smooth. Let the mixture stand for at least 15 minutes.

6. Strain approximately 1 quart of the soup broth into a saucepan. Bring to a boil. Using a teaspoon, drop small portions of the liver mixture into the boiling soup, forming almond-sized dumplings. Cook until they are firm, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Keep the dumplings warm and completely covered with soup.

7. In another small saucepan, heat the sugar over medium heat until it begins to brown at the edges. Add the butter. When the mixture starts to foam, stir in the freshly grated carrots and remove from the heat. Add 2 to

3 spoonfuls of soup. Keep stirring until the mixture turns a bright orange color.

8. Strain all the soup through a fine sieve. Keep the cooked stewing hen and vegetables for other use. Add the carrot mixture to the clear soup by straining through a fine sieve also.

9. To serve, place in each soup plate a good cupful of cooked noodles, a chicken quarter, and a few liver dumplings. Ladle in some soup, and serve with crusty white bread and mustard sauce.

If you don't have a pot large enough to cook the chicken, place the chicken halves, slightly overlapping, in a roasting pan with a tight-fitting cover. After 1 1/2 hours, pour the soup on the chicken, cover the roasting pan, and place it in a 350° F. oven for about 45 minutes.

If the noodles were cooked in the soup, they would ruin its clarity and would make serving difficult. Cook the noodles only *al dente* and keep them in cold water. They will be firm, won't stick together, and will immediately heat through when the hot soup is poured over them.

Be sure to give the guests a knife and fork with the soup, and small butter dishes containing mustard sauce. After a few spoonfuls of soup, your guests can cut the chicken and put some mustard sauce on each bite.

HUNGARIAN MUSTARD SAUCE

approximately 5 cups

1 quart water

1/2 cup prepared mustard

1/3 cup vinegar

1/2 cup sugar

1/8 teaspoon white pepper

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/3 cup cornstarch

1 cup water

1/2 cup prepared mustard (second 1/2 cup)

1/4 cup port, Madeira, or cream sherry

1. Combine first six ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a vigorous boil over high heat. Stir with a wire whisk when it starts to boil, and keep stirring for a minute or so.

2. Mix 1/3 cup cornstarch into 1 cup water and slowly pour mixture into boiling liquid, stirring constantly. Adjust heat to medium and continue to cook until mixture is thick, smooth, and opaque.

3. Remove from heat, cool 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally;

then stir in mustard and wine. Cool to room temperature; then chill. It keeps refrigerated for two to three weeks.

If you wish, use a Bavarian-type mustard that has a pale gray color with small dark specks in it for at least half the mustard required by the recipe. It will give an excellent flavor.

If you don't wish to use an alcoholic beverage, add 1/4 cup orange juice or other fruit juice.