

THE WORKERS' LUNCH

DELAVSKA MALCA



In the canteen, 1963.

Proper nutrition ► health + work capacity = personal satisfaction

Long gone are the days when people knew and perhaps even adhered to the simple folk saying that an empty sack cannot stand upright. Who knows in whose mind this idea was born? As simple as it is, it is a sprout of life's wisdom. It tells us that people have known the importance of nutrition for a long time. Understandably, they approached it in their own, primitive way, and even today, the attention given to nutrition is undoubtedly insufficient.

What should every housewife know about nutrition? And not just every housewife! It wouldn't hurt for any girl or man to know these things as well. For you see, it matters when, what, and how we eat.

It is best if our diet includes five meals a day, if possible, in regular intervals. Breakfast is certainly one of the main meals of the day. Should an employee, be it an intellectual or a physical worker, arrive at work in the morning on an empty stomach or hungry, because they – out of ignorance or carelessness – had an inadequate breakfast or even no breakfast at all, they may not even notice that they

cannot concentrate enough at work and cannot properly focus on their tasks. They quickly become tired, feeling hunger only when their work performance has already declined. For all these reasons, breakfast should be truly substantial. It should include nutritious foods such as milk, oats, eggs, cheese, sugar, meat, bread (preferably whole grain), etc. In this selection, everyone can find something to their taste that will provide a light yet hearty breakfast. Unfortunately, for many, due to disorganized conditions, this is difficult or even impossible. – That is why a warm meal, prepared for workers in the Iron foundry, would be very necessary. However, it would be incorrect and wrong for people to treat it as a replacement for breakfast or even lunch. The proposed warm meal, served in the foundry, should truly be just a snack; an intermediate meal, but one that is, regardless of whether eaten in the morning or in the afternoon, way more important than we used to realize.

Both the Iron foundry and its workers would benefit from the introduction of this meal. To list just

a few benefits: higher productivity, better health status of the staff, fewer accidents, etc. And above all, it would be of great help to employed women who, after a full day's work, still have to cook lunch at home, as well as to workers who live far away or commute from other places. If this manner of eating were adopted so that people ate both a substantial lunch and a dinner, albeit a modest one, there would be significantly less illness.

In conclusion, just one more thing. It is highly recommended to slow down while eating, take each bite slowly and thoughtfully. During your meal, try to put your worries aside and forget about the work that awaits you. This way, the food will taste better and be more beneficial.

Stick to all of this, and your work will be more successful. It will bring you satisfaction, which is an important condition for health.

T.S.

Stane Tušar

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Dear readers,

I proudly present to you this booklet of the history of the workers' lunch in Jesenice. The term “workers' lunch” came into use when compulsory factory lunch breaks were introduced. First, it was customary for lunch to be prepared and delivered by the workers' family members, but soon, the factory canteen was introduced. It served simple, quickly prepared meals, similar to the ones cooked at home: hearty meals made from modest ingredients that were mostly obtained from the local fields, garden and stables, and only occasionally from the butcher's (meat was a luxury due to its price). Workers' lunches were also part of my childhood. Reading about all this reminds me of a different time, when people knew how to take something small and amplify it with their love ... They appreciated each meal so much more than we do nowadays, especially when the said meal was a “sumptuous” lunch with both meat and dessert. The town of Jesenice is a symbol of the iron foundry and industry, which includes the culinary habits of our ancestors – both locals and inhabitants who migrated from different parts of the former common state of Yugoslavia and spent a large part of their lives in the Jesenice iron foundry. Through the decades, this fusion of different cuisines has created the traditional cuisine of the Jesenice area as we know it today. These recipes were passed down from generation to generation, creating a network of flavours, colours and smells in this environment. Dietary habits have changed a lot over the years, and food preparation conditions have improved. However, the recipes collected are still useful today and should perhaps be on our menus more often. To make sure these precious – and delicious – recipes were not merely saved from extinction, but brought to life again, we joined forces with the local restaurant owners and caterers in Jesenice, so you can now enjoy a delicious, warm *ájmoht* stew with *žganci* instead of a pizza next time you dine out.

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Dear readers!

The initiative to preserve traditional cooking knowledge began in 2020 when The Development Agency for Upper Gorenjska (RAGOR) and The Municipality of Jesenice organized theme cooking workshops. Aimed at locals of all ages, these workshops focused on practical meal preparation, documenting recipes, and celebrating the simplicity and ingenuity of our grandparents' daily menus. Over the years, the project has evolved, resulting in the publication of a recipe booklet titled *HOMELY COOKING (KUHAM DOMAČE)* in collaboration with municipalities of Jesenice, Kranjska Gora and Radovljica.

Additionally, The Municipality of Jesenice and The Upper Sava Valley Museum (Gornjesavski muzej) released the booklet *The Workers' Lunch (Delavska malca)*, highlighting typical meals from The Jesenice Iron Foundry. This expanded edition includes recipes and photos of the dishes prepared. Shout out to all the cooks for their contributions, and enjoy exploring these traditional recipes!

*Eva Štravs Podlogar,
Director of The Development Agency for Upper Gorenjska*

INSTEAD OF AN APERITIF: ABOUT THE WORKER'S LUNCH

In the Interwar period, the factory workers of the *Železarna Jesenice* iron foundry were entitled to a 10-minute lunch break during each shift. Their meals were either brought to them by family members or they brought something along themselves. Most often, their lunch was simply *okisan fržov* – cooked kidney beans with some onions in a vinegar-and-salt “dressing”. After WWII, the *Železar* (Foundry worker) kitchen and canteen facility was introduced where initially, they even served beer. However, since many workers drank too much during shifts, some even adding brandy to it, beer was soon removed from the menu despite the objections of the workers' union.

The workers' families lived modest lives. The average daily wage of a factory worker in May 1937 was 65 dinars, while in the same year the estimated monthly expenditure for a family of 5 was almost 2,200 dinars. Self-sufficiency was therefore crucial for survival. Most families, including those living in barracks, had allotments that they rented from the factory. Housewives grew vegetables and potatoes, chickens roamed the woodlots, many families kept a goat or two, and only a few kept pigs. In the end, even the friendly little hens the children knew by name met a sad death in the *ajmoht* stew, but only when they could no longer lay eggs, which were a precious food-source for the family. To keep them fresh for longer, eggs were stored in cellars, covered with lime, alongside potatoes, beetroot, sauerkraut and cabbage, all of which they grew themselves. The children, while wandering carefree in the forests, picked mushrooms and other forest fruits.

Everything else had to be bought. The consumer societies (*Konzumna društva*) and the factory itself enabled their members, including foundry employees, to buy food cheaper than in the regular stores. The foundry had its own store they called *kašta* (granary, storehouse). They bought from the “foundry granary” and local butchers “on the slate”, and paid each Friday, when it was payday. One Jesenice woman recalls her life in Senožeti: *»We were mostly self-sustaining at home, buying only flour, sugar and the meat that wasn't at home – for beef soup and sometimes for roasts. In winter I used to go to the shop with a sledge. At home, they wrote me a list of things I needed on a piece of paper and put a wicker basket on the sledge – the kind of basket we'd put a baby in. At the shop, they put everything I bought in this basket, wrote it all down in a little booklet, and once a month one of my parents came to pay the debt. The merchant then loaded the full basket back onto my sledge, gave me a little push and the slope was just steep enough to get me home to Senožeti on the sledge.«*

The food was simple, with black bread or *žganci* with white (grain) coffee reigning on the breakfast and dinner menu most often, whereas lunch was vegetable,

potato or bean soup. Nevertheless, the flavours were varied, as the mothers knew how to make miracles out of the humblest ingredients.

“The Workers' Lunch” is the brainchild of two pre-existing culinary projects, ¹RAGOR's “HOMELY COOKING” (KUHAM DOMAČE) and ²GMJ's “Our cuisine” (Naša kuhna). When their enthusiastic employees joined forces with each-other and also with the finest Jesenice chefs and restaurant owners, many charming olden-day menus were re-created, bringing you the best “classical” home meals of Yugoslavia. Thanks to this joint effort, on top reading about these yummy meals, now you can also try them in various guesthouses and restaurants of Jesenice – brace yourself for flavours that will trigger a flare of nostalgia with each precious bite.

THE BEST BEEF SOUP IS ONLY COOKED AT OUR PLACE!

Beef soup is often the bone of contention in many conversations, because the best soup has always been, and always will be, the one cooked by your mother or grandmother. Many young housewives despaired over their first beef soup, which was not even close in flavour to the one of their mother's, and many a husband rubbed salt to the wound with their typical statement: *»My mother cooks it better.«* This was the reason why we decided not to publish a recipe for this delicate dish described in previous editions of the booklet. In fact, simple, working-class dishes don't really have recipes. The *ajmoht* stew was made with whatever was on hand at the time: rabbit or fowl, rarely beef, and seasonal vegetables. Should *govnač* stew be as firm as mashed potatoes or is it a more liquid “spoon dish”? Which version is correct? Both are. That's why, in this issue, we have published recipes from professional and amateur cooks who present their own recipes as they inherited them from their mothers and grandmothers, but have (most likely unknowingly) added their own personal touch over the years.

You can stick to them to the T or they can be just a guideline or an idea for improvement of your own recipe. Most of all, take inspiration from our working mothers, who, despite owning cookbooks with recipes, often ran out of money for ingredients so they had to adapt and improvise. Nevertheless, they always made sure the family didn't go hungry.

¹ RAGOR is acronym for “Razvojna Agencija Zgornje Gorenjske” (The Development Agency for Upper Gorenjska)

² GMJ is acronym for “Gornjesavski muzej Jesenice” (The Upper Sava Valley Museum)



Billycan for bringing lunch to the Iron Foundry.



Woven basket for bringing lunch to the Iron Foundry.



Canteen miracle workers, 1962.

FROM THE FACTORY CANTEEN

After the Second World War, women were also increasingly employed in the iron foundry, and there was no one left at home to cook. The Factory had to adapt to the new way of life and provide the workers with organised meals. The workers' union fought for a better diet, and a burning issue was the question of serving beer in the canteens: »*The canteens are in a truly miserable state and we will have to resort to serving only alcohol-free drinks in order to avoid all cases of drunkenness in the early morning hours. The company will also bear all the overhead costs of the canteens, thus eliminating the creation of profit, and it is also necessary to ensure a greater variety of food in the canteens.*« (The *Železar* local newspaper, volume 6, no. 2–3, April 1955)

Beer bottle, 2nd half of the 20th century.

Queueing up for a hot meal, 6 July 1982.

“Kranjska klobasa” parboiled sausage
Bean salad
Pastry (optional)



 Vera Grgurič, Penzion Pr' Betel, Planina pod Golico

**“KRANJSKA KLOBASA” PARBOILED SAUSAGE
 AND BEAN SALAD**

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 4 whole *Kranjska klobasa* sausages
- 2 small tins or 200 g (0.44 lbs) of dried home-grown beans
- 2 medium-sized onions
- oil
- salt
- wine vinegar
- mustard

Preparation:

Soak the beans in water, leave overnight. The next day, drain the water and place the soaked beans in cold salted water. Cook for 1–2 hours (depending on the beans). Once cooked, let the beans cool in the water they were cooked in, then drain and rinse with cold water. Chop the onions, add them to the beans and season to taste with oil, vinegar and salt. You can also add a little pepper. Put the sausages in boiling water to cook. Let them boil for 7 minutes. Once cooked, serve with mustard and bean salad.

Mac & meat
Seasonal salad
Pastry (optional)



 Vijoleta Smolej, Prihodi

MAC & MEAT

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) of pasta
- 300–400 g (0.66–0.88 lbs) mixed minced meat
- 1 medium-sized onion
- fat
- salt
- pepper
- caraway
- homemade spice mix with vegetables
- ground sweet paprika
- grated Parmesan or other cheese

Preparation:

Put the *macaroni* in salted boiling water, cook *al dente*.

In another pan, fry the chopped onion in the fat, add the meat and the rest of the spices. Roast the ingredients, thinning with water or stock as necessary to make a sauce known as Bolognese. Place the *macaroni* on a plate, pour the sauce over it and sprinkle with grated cheese or Parmesan cheese.

Vijoleta reminisces:

»For us, “macaroni” has always meant the type of pasta that is elongated and hollow!«

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**Spoon-dishes: “Szegedin goulash” or tripe or “goulash”
Bread
Pastry (optional)**



 Vera Grgurič, Penzion Pr' Betel, Planina pod Golico

TRIPLE

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 600 g (1.3 lbs) of cooked and sliced tripe
- 300 g (0.7 lbs) onions
- 4 cloves of garlic
- chopped parsley
- salt
- pepper
- oil
- ground sweet paprika
- 20 g (0.044 lbs) of coarse flour or a tablespoon of breadcrumbs
- a tablespoon of smoked bacon jam (*zaseka*) or a piece of dry bacon

Preparation:

Put the chopped onion in a frying pan and fry until it releases water and reduces in size. Add the cooked and already sliced tripe. Sauté covered for about 15 minutes until tender. Add water or stock as needed during the stewing process to prevent the tripe slices from sticking together. Add the chopped garlic, salt, pepper, a tablespoon of ground paprika, a tablespoon of flour or breadcrumbs. Stir and pour in just enough water or stock to keep the dish thick. Then add a tablespoon of smoked bacon jam or a piece of bacon to taste. When serving, sprinkle chopped parsley on top. Serve with black bread or salted boiled potatoes.

PASTRY – “BUCHTELN” BUNS³

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) white flour (type 400)
- a pinch of salt
- a cube of yeast
- 4 egg yolks
- a spoonful of oil
- 50 g (0.11 lbs) butter
- 1 sachet of vanilla sugar
- 50 g (0.11 lbs) of ordinary white sugar
- 3 dl (10.5⁴ oz) milk
- hard apricot jam
- 1 whole egg for coating
- powdered sugar for sprinkling

Preparation:

First, prepare the starter: crush the yeast, add a teaspoon of sugar and 0.5 dl (1.7 oz) of lukewarm milk (subtract the sugar and milk from the quantities given). Stir and allow the yeast to rise.

Add the flour and a pinch of salt to the bowl.

Put the egg yolks in a separate bowl, add oil, butter, the rest of the icing sugar and vanilla sugar. Mix with a whisk and add the rest of the lukewarm milk to this mixture. Whisk some more. Pour the mixture into the bowl with the flour, add the yeast starter.

Knead into a nice smooth mass, which should not be too thick. Let rise at room temperature. Let the dough rise until it is twice the size. Then, put flour on a flat surface and roll the dough out (the thickness of a finger). Cut into squares of an appropriate size. Add a teaspoon of jam to the centre of each square.

Assemble the *buchteln*: Lift up the dough around the filling and pinch the opposite corners of the squares together with your fingertips. Place the *buchteln* buns side by side on a pre-greased baking tray. Allow the dough to rise again for half its original size.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 170 °C (338 °F). Before putting the *buchteln* in the oven, brush them with a beaten egg. Bake for about 25–30 minutes. Sprinkle with icing sugar before serving.



³ sweet rolls made of yeast dough, filled with jam

⁴ UK oz is used consistently throughout the text, not US.

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Beef heart chunks in sauce
Mashed potatoes
Seasonal salad (lettuce)



 *Violeta Smolej, Prihodi*

BEEF HEART CHUNKS IN SAUCE

Ingredients:

- (for 4 people)
- 1 beef heart
 - 2 onions
 - fat
 - salt
 - pepper
 - caraway
 - bay laurel leaf
 - ground sweet paprika
 - marjoram
 - 1 tablespoon flour

Preparation:

Cut the heart into thin slices. The ratio between the weight of the heart and the weight of the onion should be 1:1. Fry the onion in the fat until light brown, add the sliced heart and sauté. After 10 minutes of stewing, add the flour and pour in the water or stock. Season with salt and pepper to taste, add the marjoram at the end. You can also add a spoonful of cream (sour or sweet) to enrich the flavour. Simmer gently for about 15 minutes until soft or until the ingredients are combined.

MASHED POTATOES

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 4 large potatoes
- salt
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 tablespoons cream or milk
- freshly chopped chives or parsley or young onion leaves

Preparation:

Peel the potatoes, cut them into pieces and boil them in salted water. Once they are cooked, drain the water and add the rest of the ingredients. Mash well and – for the finishing touch – add the freshly chopped chives, parsley or young onion leaves.

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“Safalada” knackwurst sausage or “pasja radost” (dog’s joy) sausage
Potato salad
Pastry

Before 1991, food for the foundry canteens was prepared in huge quantities by the Jesenice butcheries under the auspices of the Jesenice slaughterhouse. Their *safalada* and

dogs’ joy sausages were the best! One of the cooks recalls that the foundry workers ate well back then. For many of the foundry workers, the meal they had at work was the only meal of the day.



A little garden in front of a house, photo taken in the 1960s.

*“Gorenjski želodček” rich sausage with porridge
“Govnač” stew (potato puree and white cabbage)
Pastry (optional)*



 *Vijoleta Smolej, Prihodi*

**“GORENJSKI ŽELODČEK” RICH SAUSAGE
WITH PORRIDGE**

Ingredients:

- (for 4 people)
• 2 whole *želodček* sausages

Preparation:

The *želodček* sausage is cooked in boiling water for about 45 minutes ... This is how long it takes to cook the raw porridge it contains. Serve with *govnač* stew.

Vijoleta reminisces:

»We would either buy the “želodček” sausage or make it ourselves when it was pig slaughter time. The same meat was used for the “želodček” sausage as for the “pečenice” (bratwurst sausage), but washed raw porridge was added. They were then hung to dry in the chimney.«

*Braised liver and “polenta”
Seasonal salad*



 *Vijoleta Smolej, Prihodi*

BRAISED LIVER AND “POLENTA”

Ingredients for the braised liver:

- (for 4 people)
• 400–600 g (0.88–1.4 lbs) of liver (beef or any of your choice)
• 2 onions
• fat
• salt
• pepper
• caraway
• marjoram

Ingredients for polenta:

- (for 4 people)
• 4 coffee cups (larger size) of corn meal
• 0.5 l (17 oz) of milk
• 0.5 l (17 oz) of water
• salt
• cracklings

Offal (organ meats) was the best approximation to meat in times of scarcity. In addition to liver, hearts, lungs or kidneys were often roasted and eaten in gravy. The side-dish was almost obligatory *polenta*.

Preparation of the braised liver dish:

Cut the liver into thin slices. Fry the onion in fat until light brown, add the chopped liver, sauté. Stir fry the liver on both sides until tender. Only at the very end do we add salt, pepper, caraway and marjoram. Serve immediately before they become hard.

Preparation of polenta:

Bring the milk and salted water to the boil in a saucepan, add the corn meal and cook for about 20 minutes. If you are cooking instant *polenta*, please refer to the cooking time indicated on the packaging. Stir constantly while cooking. When the *polenta* is cooked, place it in a large bowl, make a hole in the centre and place the warmed cracklings inside it. Serve as a side dish.

FROM THE LOCAL WORKERS' TABLE

Before the introduction of the foundry canteens, the workers' meals were prepared of by housewives – the cooked both for the husbands and for the single workers referred to as *koštarji* (a dialectal term which would loosely translate to as “guest eaters”). In the interwar period and after the Second World War, menus were much more modest than those listed below. But the gradual rise in workers' standards was mainly reflected in better and more nutritious food. Here are dishes that are still often found on the tables of the families of Jesenice today.



Pan for roasting barley
(a grain used as a coffee supplement)



Cooking with love knows no scarcity,
The barracks, around 1930



“Govnač” stew and soup meat
“Apples in nightgown”

For the working-class families, this was a regular Monday lunch – in this way, they finished the meat leftovers from the traditional Sunday beef soup. The traditional Sunday lunch was namely beef soup, followed – as a separate dish – by beef meat from the soup served with roasted potatoes. The apples grown in local orchards were either dried or stored fresh in basements to last the winter. They were used in strudel, apple mousse, compote or fried in beer batter.



 Vijoleta Smolej, Prihodi

“GOVNAČ” STEW AND MEAT FROM THE SOUP

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- half a medium-sized cabbage head
- 4 large potatoes
- caraway seeds (whole or powdered)
- half a bay leaf
- pepper
- salt
- 12 pieces of sliced beef from beef soup

Preparation:

Cut the cabbage leaves into pieces and put them in a larger bowl. Pour water over them and just boil them for the time being. Do not add salt yet. Then peel the potatoes and cut them into cubes. Once the cabbage has come to a boil, let it simmer for a few minutes, then drain and return it to the empty pot. Add the potatoes to the cabbage. Pour water over the vegetables in the pot until they are completely covered. Make sure to not pour too much water to avoid a watery

dish. Before we start cooking again, add the spices: salt, pepper, cumin and bay leaf. Cook for about 20–30 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft enough.

Serve the *govnač* stew with sliced beef from the beef stock. For an even better taste, you can pour a little beef stock over the dish before serving it.

Vijoleta reminisces:

»My mother taught me that cabbage should always be boiled first. This way it will be easier to digest, and this is supposed to prevent bloating and flatulence. As a child, I also remember my mother cooking cabbage leaves when they were still green.«

»In the old days, the inferior cabbage heads (in a miserable state) were cut into smaller pieces; removing the bad parts and using the rest for “govnač” stew. The better ones were saved for cabbage salad or sweet (braised) cabbage.«

“APPLES IN NIGHTGOWN”

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 300–500 g (0.66–1.1 lbs) white flour
- 3 large (or 5 smaller) apples
- 3 eggs
- 2–3 dl (7–10.5 oz) milk
- a pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- knife tip’s amount of baking powder
- oil for frying
- sugar (plain or powdered) for sprinkling

Preparation:

Peel and core the apples, cut them into rings. Then mix the eggs, milk, salt, sugar, baking powder and flour into a batter. This is very similar to the one for pancakes, but a little thicker. Pour the oil into the frying pan and heat it for frying. Dip the apple slices in the mixture completely and fry them in oil on both sides. Sprinkle with sugar before serving.



Vijoleta reminisces:

»We ate the “apples in the nightgown” together with the “govnač” stew as a typical Friday lunch. As children, for dinner we were often served a cup of warm milk and an apple prepared according to this recipe.«

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“Ájmoht” stew with “žganci” or “vaseršpoclni” dumplings
Snowy eggs (oeufs à la neige) or strudel

Chicken or rabbit stew (called *ájmoht*) was a regular item on the workers' menu, as most housewives grew some vegetables in their home garden, and most of them also had some chickens and rabbits. When cooking this stew, they used whatever was on hand. To make it more filling, they added *vaseršpoclni* water dumplings, a simple dumpling dish made of egg and flour, shaped by using two spoons. For lighter lunches, they often prepared a “stronger” dessert, but snowy eggs were already considered a luxury.



 Vera Grgurič, Penzion Pr' Betel, Planina pod Golico

“ÁJMOHT” STEW WITH “VASERŠPOCLNI” DUMPLINGS

Ingredients for the *ájmoht* stew:

(for 4 people)

- ½ kg (3.3 lbs) veal (shoulder)
- 3 medium-sized carrots
- 3 medium-sized potatoes
- a spoonful of oil
- water or stock
- savory, marjoram, bay leaves, salt, pepper
- ground sweet paprika
- chopped parsley

Preparation:

Cut the meat into small cubes. In a saucepan, fry it in oil until browned. Add a pinch of paprika and diced carrots. Fry again for 1–2 minutes. Then pour in water or stock. Add the diced potatoes, all the spices (to taste), then pour in about 1 litre (33 oz) of water or stock. Cook for about half an hour or until the meat is tender.

Ingredients for *vaseršpoclni* (water dumplings):

- 100 g (0.2 lbs) white flour
- pinch of salt
- 1 egg
- 1–2 dl (3.5–7 oz) water

During this time, make the *vaseršpoclni* (dumplings). Place the flour, salt and egg in a bowl, stir with a whisk or fork, and gradually pour in water until the mixture is thick-ish. 10 minutes before the end of the cooking time, use a spoon to add the dumplings into the soup. Meanwhile, stir the soup continuously to prevent the dumplings from sticking together. Cook for about 10 minutes. Finally, we can add the chopped parsley.

APPLE STRUDEL

Ingredients for the dough:

- 250 g (0.5 lbs) flour
- 0,15 l (5,2 oz) lukewarm water
- a pinch of salt
- 1,5 tablespoons oil
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar or lemon juice
- coating oil

Ingredients for the filling:

- 1,5 kg (3.3 lbs) apples
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 sachets vanilla sugar
- juice of half a lemon
- one teaspoon cinnamon
- raisins, if desired
- butter
- breadcrumbs
- powdered sugar (for sprinkling)

Preparation:

Put the flour in a bowl, make a hole in the middle, pour the water into it and add the salt. Add the oil and vinegar (or lemon juice), then mix to make a rough dough. Turn it out onto a work surface and knead for 5–10 minutes until the dough is smooth, soft and pliable. If it is too dry, add a little more water. Form the kneaded dough into a ball, oil it and place it in a bowl. Leave to rest, covered, at room temperature for 1 hour. In the meantime, wash, peel (if desired) and grate the apples, then mix them in a bowl with the other ingredients for the filling (except butter and breadcrumbs). Roll out the dough. Spread the filling on top of 1/3 of the dough. Sprinkle the rest of the dough with butter and fried breadcrumbs. Roll up and place on a greased baking tray. Brush the strudel with butter or whisked egg and 2 tablespoons of sour cream. Bake for 50 minutes at 180 °C (356° F). Once the strudel is baked, leave it to cool (cover with baking paper) before dusting with icing sugar.

Bean soup
Pancakes (crêpes) with jam

Meatless bean soup was usually served on Friday, which is a fasting day according to Christian tradition. Even in most families that do not go to church, the custom has persisted to this day. The housewives usually “crowned” the meal with jam-filled pancakes (crêpes).



 Vijoleta Smolej, Prihodi

BEAN SOUP

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) beans (from the garden or canned)
- 1 medium-sized onion
- a few slices of cured bacon
- a little lemon zest
- flour
- 1 l (17 oz) of water
- bay laurel leaf
- oil
- salt
- pepper
- vinegar (to taste)

Preparation:

Soak the beans overnight and then cook in salted water the following day. Make a light roux with oil, chopped onion and flour. Mash the beans and pour them into the boiled roux. Add the finely chopped bacon, lemon zest and bay leaves, salt and pepper to taste. If there is not enough liquid, pour in some of the bean water or broth. Finally, season to taste with vinegar. This soup can be served with pasta or rice.

PANCAKES (CRÊPES) WITH JAM

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 300–500 g (0.66–1.1 lbs) white flour
- 3 eggs
- 4–5 dl (14–17 oz) milk (or a milk/water mixture)
- a pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- knife tip's amount of baking powder
- oil for frying
- plum or cranberry jam

Preparation:

Mix the eggs, milk, salt, sugar, baking powder and flour into a batter. The batter must remain liquid. Pour the oil into a frying pan and heat it enough for frying. When the oil is hot enough, pour one ladle of the mixture into the pan and spread it over the entire surface of the pan. Bake on each side until browned. Serve with jam to taste.

Vijoleta shares her childhood memories:

»We used to eat pancakes on Fridays with mushroom or potato soup. As kids we also sometimes used to get them for dinner. In spring, we made soup from wild garlic (Allium ursinum) and then had pancakes as dessert. As a child, my favourite pancakes were served with cream from boiled milk and sprinkled with sugar. My sister preferred them with lemon juice and sugar.«



**“Gypsy goulash” or “potato goulash”
“Buchteln” buns or angel wings pastry**

Fridays were traditionally reserved for meatless meals, but that does not mean that meat was on the menu every other day. The “potato” or “gypsy goulash” was made with whatever was on hand, and it was at its best in the mushroom season. The angel wings pastry was especially popular at carnival time. Because oil was expensive, they were fried in lard instead.



 Milka Zavelcina, Društvo podeželskih žensk pod Golico in Stolom
(Association of Rural Women), Koroška Bela

“POTATO GOULASH”

Ingredients:

(for 4–6 persons)

- 3–4 medium-sized potatoes
- 300 g (0.7 lbs) onions
- some pickles or a slice of lemon (to taste)
- marjoram
- caraway
- tomato sauce
- a clove of garlic
- bay laurel leaf
- salt
- pepper
- flour
- fat (lard)

Preparation:

Fry the onion in the fat until it is golden. Add the raw potatoes cut into pieces. Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring continuously, then add the flour, spices (pepper, salt, cumin, marjoram, bay leaf) and tomato sauce. Cover with cold water and cook until the potatoes are soft. Finally, crush the garlic and add it to the goulash. Add a pickle or lemon if desired. Serve with *polenta* garnished with cracklings.

Milka reminisces:


»At home, we used the term “potato goulash” and always cooked it without meat. When I started going to work, “gypsy goulash” was the fashionable term instead.«

**“Married žganci”
Sauerkraut**

Until the end of the Second World War and even afterwards, the dish called *žganci* (a savoury type of *Pauper's Kaiserschmarrn*) was practically a regular daily dish on the workers' table. For dinner, for example, they had *prežganka* roux soup, and for breakfast they ate the leftovers with white coffee. They cooked buckwheat, corn or *mešta žganci* – made from potatoes and white flour. Sauerkraut and sour turnips were also a winter regular, as preserved in this way they constituted a cheap source of vitamins throughout

the winter. If they could afford a pinch of cracklings “as a cherry on top”, the dish was considered a real treat.



 Maja Ambrožič, Društvo žena in deklet na vasi občin Bled in Gorje
(Association of Women and Girls in the Villages of Bled and Gorje), Zasip

“MARRIED ŽGANCI”

Ingredients:

(for 6–8 persons)

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) potatoes
- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) white flour
- salt
- cracklings

Preparation:

Peel the potatoes, cut them into cubes and throw them in boiling salted water. Cook in a tall pot for 15–20 minutes. Then add the flour in the water and make a hole in the middle. Leave for about 30 minutes. Then drain the water in which the *žganci* were cooked. It is better to drain more at first and then pour back if needed. Stir the *žganci* with a large fork to form lumps. Add the cracklings while stirring constantly. Add salt if necessary.

SAUERKRAUT

Ingredients:

- 1 kg (2.2 lbs) sauerkraut
- one small onion
- one bay leaf
- salt
- pepper
- cracklings
- juniper berries
- fat

Preparation:

Add the sauerkraut, bay leaves, juniper berries, pepper and salt to the fried onions. Cook for about 30 minutes. When the *žganci* are ready, serve them with the cabbage and sprinkle with the cracklings.

“Prežganka” roux soup, patties from meat from the soup, horseradish sauce, potato salad (with cucumber)

Because of the abundance of caraway seeds, the *prežganka* roux soup was cooked primarily to relieve stomach upsets, but it often found its way onto the daily menu for no reason other than its simplicity and the availability of the ingredients. The leftover beef from Sunday lunch was used for the meat balls/patties. The horseradish sauce was a tasty treat to accompany the otherwise dry patties. Some horseradish was roasted and simmered in white wine before added to the roux (called *ajnpre*n in the local dialect).

In cucumber season, the potato salad was enriched by adding a cucumber from the garden.



 *Vijoleta Smolej, Prihodi*

“PREŽGANKA” ROUX SOUP

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2–3 tablespoons flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 l (35 oz) of water
- salt and/or seasoning mix with vegetables
- caraway (ground or whole)
- parsley

Preparation:

Fry the flour in the oil until golden brown. Make sure you don't burn it. Pour in the water. Season to taste with salt, caraway and vegetable seasoning mix. Crack the eggs, whisk well, and pour into the boiling soup. The soup should simmer for at least 5–10 minutes to make sure the flour is cooked. Stir constantly while cooking. Sprinkle with parsley for the finishing touch.

PATTIES MADE FROM LEFTOVER MEAT FROM THE SOUP

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 3–4 bread rolls
- beef from the soup
- 2 eggs
- milk (to taste)
- salt

- pepper
- parsley
- onions
- garlic
- flour
- fat (oil or lard)

Preparation:

Cut the bread rolls into cubes and add a beaten egg. Finely chop or mince the beef. Add the spices and all the other ingredients and mix them together until they form a sticky mass. Add the milk by feel – it should form a compact paste. Form into balls – patties Sprinkle flour on both sides of the patty and throw it into the pan once the fat is sufficiently

heated. Bake the patties until they are light brown (depending on their thickness). If there is any fat left from frying, you can make a sauce for the patties. Add 2 cloves of chopped garlic to the fat, add a little flour, season with sweet paprika and thin with the stock if necessary. Then cook the patty in this sauce for about 20 minutes. You can also add a little sweet or sour cream.

HORSERADISH SAUCE

Ingredients:

- 40–50 g (0.09 – 0.11 lbs) grated horseradish
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons breadcrumbs
- 2 dl (7 oz) red wine
- 1 dl (3.5 oz) water
- knife point of powdered (or whole) cloves
- a little grated lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- pinch of salt

Preparation:

Melt the butter in a pan, add the breadcrumbs and fry until they turn golden brown. Then add the sugar and caramelize it. Add the horseradish and cover with water and wine. Stir well to avoid lumps. Add all the spices. If it is too thin, thicken with a little flour.

POTATO SALAD (WITH CUCUMBER)

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 2 medium sized cucumbers
- 8 medium-sized potatoes
- 1 large onion
- salt
- oil
- wine vinegar
- pepper

Preparation:

Boil the potatoes then peel them and cut into rings. Allow to cool. Add the peeled and sliced cucumbers. Do not squeeze the cucumbers (in order to try and get rid of excess moisture). Add the sliced onion and season with salt and pepper. If the vinegar is too strong, pour a little water over it.

Vegetable soup
Plum dumplings
Compote



 Milka Zavelcina, Društvo podeželskih žensk pod Golico in Stolom
(Association of Rural Women), Koroška Bela

VEGETABLE SOUP

Ingredients:

(for 4–6 persons)

- 100 g (0.22 lbs) of leek
- 1–2 handfuls kohlrabi (white and yellow)
- 1 medium-sized carrot
- brussels sprouts or kale
- 1 large potato
- a few tablespoons of cooked peas
- fresh celery (root and leaf)
- a handful of rice
- one bay leaf
- salt
- pepper
- turmeric
- marjoram
- parsley
- fat (oil or lard)

Preparation:

Roast all vegetables (except peas) in oil for 5 minutes, cover with cold water and add all the spices. When the water boils, add a handful of rice. Cook for 30–35 minutes. Before it is fully cooked, add the cooked peas.

PLUM DUMPLINGS

Plum dumplings were usually made in late summer or early autumn, when the plums were ripe, and the potatoes from the cellar were perfect for the dough once they had softened and wrinkled a little. Plums were often dried or cooked into a compote, and once preserved in this way, they were used in dumplings.

Ingredients:

(for 9–10 medium-sized dumplings)

- 6 potatoes
- 3 eggs
- 700 g (1.5 lbs) white flour (type 400)
- 9–10 plums
- 100 g (0.22 lbs) butter
- salt
- white sugar
- cinnamon
- fried breadcrumbs

Preparation:

Boil the potatoes in their skins. Once cooked, peel and pass through a strainer. Add the salt, eggs, butter and flour and knead. Add the flour to the appropriate hardness. Roll out the dough and cut it into rectangular cloths. Place a plum in the middle of each cloth and add a pinch of sugar on top. Fold in all four corners. Correct so that the fruit does not stick out. Make balls and put them to boiling salted water. Cook for about 20 minutes, or until the dumpling floats to the surface. Put the cooked dumplings in a bowl, sprinkle with cinnamon, sugar and toasted breadcrumbs. If desired, pour them over with some of the water in which the dumplings were cooked.



Milka explains:

»I always put the cooked dumplings in a bigger bowl first, and then everyone can put as many as they want on their own plate. That's what my mother did when we were little.«

COMPOTE

Ingredients:

- 3–4 medium-sized apples
- 1.5 l of water
- sugar

Preparation:

Bring the water to the boil, add the sliced apples, sweeten if desired, add cinnamon or a slice of lemon (depending on the sweetness of the apples). Cook until the apples have “dissolved”.

Hulled barley soup with dried meat
 “Kaiserschmarrn” (scrambled pancake) with jam

In Jesenice, we call the hulled barley soup *ješprenj* (as opposed to *ričet*, the word which is used in the rest of Slovenia). During Lent, (i.e., in the period between Shrove Tuesday (Carnival) and Easter) – as well as on random days throughout the year when people simply could not afford meat – dried meat was often replaced by dried fruit: pears, apples and plums. There were several ways in which housewives made *Kaiserschmarrn*. Most of the time, they made a thicker pancake (crepe) and then cut it into pieces. The *Kaiserschmarrn* was also a treat for nameday, when only the celebrant got it.

 Vera Grgurič, Penzion Pr' Betel, Planina pod Golico

HULLED BARLEY SOUP WITH DRIED MEAT

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 200 g (0.44 lbs) of hulled barley
- 400 g (0.88 lbs) of dried meat (neck or dry ribs)
- 2 medium-sized carrots
- 50 g (0.11 lbs) of dried beans
- fresh parsley (root and leaf)
- celery root
- 2 cloves of garlic
- bay laurel leaf
- salt
- pepper
- one small onion
- ground sweet paprika



Preparation:

The day before, soak the beans and the barley in water in two separate containers and leave overnight. The next day, pour the water away. Place the barley in a pot and pour in enough water to cover it completely. When it comes to the boil, drain it again, rinse it with water and put it back in the pot. Pour 2.5–3 l (88–105 oz) of water into it. Leaving the barley in water, add the

beans, carrots, dried meat and spices. It should cook for about 2 hours. Take the dry meat out beforehand to prevent it from overcooking. Chop the onion separately and fry until it reduces, then add the crushed garlic and a teaspoon of ground sweet paprika. When the mix becomes fragrant, remove from the heat and add to the barley in the pot. Serve with the dried meat.

“KAISERSCHMARRN” (SCRAMBLED PANCAKE) WITH JAM

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) white flour
- 2 eggs
- 6 dl (21 oz) milk
- vanilla sugar
- 80 g (0.17 lbs) of sugar
- pinch of salt
- 50 g (0.11 lbs) butter
- oil
- powdered sugar
- plum jam



Preparation:

Separate the eggs into yolks and whites. Mix the egg yolks, sugar, vanilla sugar, a pinch of salt and half the milk with a whisk. Then keeping gradually adding the flour and the rest of the milk until the mixture is smooth. Whisk the egg whites into a stiff cream, adding sugar in the process. Once they reach stiff peaks, add them to the first mixture to make it fluffy. Stir with a whisk.

Heat oil in a large enough pan. Pour in a generous amount of the batter (the *Kaiserschmarrn* should be thick and fluffy, not thin like a crêpe). Bake until slowly browned, first on the underside. Cut in half and turn over. When almost cooked, use a wooden spatula to cut the Schmarrn into smaller pieces, adding butter to make the dish light and fluffy. Place on a plate, sprinkle with icing sugar and add the plum jam.

Dry ribs or dry neck
Endive with potatoes or other seasonal salad
Eggnog (“šato”)

Some working families raised their own pigs: most, however, simply bought pork halves for the winter food supply during the time of slaughter. That's when they would eat fresh pork, however, most of the meat was processed immediately to prevent it from spoiling. They cured (dried and smoked) larger chunks of meat as well as sausages. This was then kept for special, festive days, and rarely appeared on the regular menu. Eggnog was also considered a special treat for rare occasions. Although wine was the most affordable alcoholic beverage of the time, it was reserved for the father – the head of the family and the main provider. They used to eat eggnog on its own, not with pancakes or ice cream as is the custom today.



 Milka Zavelcina, Društvo podeželskih žensk pod Golico in Stolom (Association of Rural Women), Koroška Bela

DRY RIBS

Ingredients:

- (for 4 people)
- 1 kg dried ribs
 - spices for beef soup

Preparation:

Place the ribs in cold water to cook. Immediately add all the spices as for beef stock (carrots, caraway, anise, onion, pepper, parsley). Cook the ribs for about 45–60 minutes.

EGGNOG

Ingredients:

- (for 1 person)
- 1 egg
 - 1 dl (3.5 oz) white wine
 - 1 large spoonful of sugar

Preparation:

Put all three ingredients in a bowl. Whisk them with a whisk over steam until all the ingredients are combined to a suitable consistency.

Milka reminisces:

»We used to make eggnog as a treat for patients for strength, for better blood.«

Mashed potatoes and beans Apple mousse

Another common dish – and very popular among children – was apple mousse, especially when apples from the cellar had to be consumed before the new gardening season began. It was often eaten with mashed potatoes and boiled beans, which they would either combine into *matevž* stew (or, in Jesenice dialect, *fržolova pešta*) or eat as two separate dishes – in which case they would cover the beans with breadcrumbs for extra flavour.



 Milka Zavelcina, Društvo podeželskih žensk pod Golico in Stolom (Association of Rural Women), Koroška Bela

APPLE MOUSSE

Ingredients:

- (for 2–3 persons)
- 6 large apples (*Ontario* and *Majda* – a Slovenian cultivar, a cross between *Jonatan* and *Golden Noble* – are excellent for apple mousse)
 - 3 dl (10.5 oz) water
 - 2 tablespoons sugar

Preparation:

Place the sliced apples in cold water to cook. Cook until soft – for approximately 15 minutes. Mash with a potato masher or a handheld blender. Finally, add the sugar. You can eat it with macaroni, roasted potatoes, *struckel* dumplings, *krapci* dumplings, etc.

Milka reminisces:

»At home, we always ate only boiled beans, topped with “zaseka” bacon jam and apple mousse, no mashed potatoes. I still sometimes make this.«

Meat in vinegar with egg
Homemade bread
Baked apples

Meat in vinegar was another way to use up the beef from the soup. Served with a hard-boiled egg and onions, seasoned with vinegar, salt and pepper, and a generous slice of bread, it was a hearty and tasty meal.



 Vijoleta Smolej, Prihodi

VINEGAR MEAT WITH EGG

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- diced or chopped into leaves beef from the soup
- 8–10 hard-boiled eggs
- 1 large onion
- pepper
- salt
- wine vinegar
- oil (pumpkin or any desired salad oil)

Preparation:

Mix the meat and onion in a large bowl, season to taste and add the hard-boiled eggs. Serve with black bread.

HOMEMADE BREAD

Ingredients:

(for one larger or two smaller loaves)

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) semi-white flour type 850
- 330 g white flour (0.7 lbs) type 500
- 170 g (0.37 lbs) rye or wholemeal flour
- 0.75 l (26.3 oz) lukewarm water (or milk or whey)
- 13 g (0.03 lbs) fresh yeast
- 1 small teaspoon sugar
- 13 g (0.03 lbs) salt
- a little caraway or aniseed

Preparation:

Prepare a starter from crumbled yeast, water, a little flour and sugar. Buttermilk, milk or sour milk can also be used instead of water.

Sift the flour into a bowl and salt it on the side. Add the yeast starter and liquid, then knead well. The dough should be smooth. Cover the bowl with a tablecloth and leave to rise. It must rise for 30–60 minutes in a warm spot. When the dough has risen, shape the loaves into any size you like and place them, smooth side down, in round straw baskets (or comparable containers you have at hand). Cover them with a lightly dampened cloth and let them rise once more. When the loaves have risen again to at least half their size, turn them out onto a baking tray lined

with baking paper or sprinkled with cornmeal. Brush the loaves with water or milk and cut evenly into the surface. Place them in an oven, preheated to 200–220 °C (392–428 °F) and bake for 20 minutes. Then reduce the temperature to about 170–180 °C (338–356 °F). Bake at this temperature for another 30–40 minutes. This means you should bake the bread for about 1 hour in total. If you want a soft crust, cover the baked bread with a clean, dry kitchen towel when left to cool. It is important that the napkin used for covering is not washed with fabric softener!

BAKED APPLES THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 8 small or 4 large sweet apples
- walnut kernels (1–2 kernels per apple)
- honey
- butter

Preparation:

Clean the unpeeled apples and hollow them out with a spoon. Fill them

with walnut kernels, a teaspoon of honey and a teaspoon of butter. You can also grind the nuts. A little jam can be added to taste. Place the stuffed apples on a baking tray. Place them in an oven preheated to 200 °C (392 °F). Bake for about 15–20 minutes (depending on both the oven and the thickness of apples).



Vijoleta's husband Franci reminisces: *»We had a special variety of apples for baking. I don't remember the name of the variety, but the apples were medium-sized, perfectly red, yellow inside and extremely sweet. When the wood-burning stove was lit, we put a tray of apples in it. We used to eat baked apples without any filling.«*

SUNDAY LUNCH

Not long ago, meat was only on the table on Sundays, when the mother cooked beef soup. Only in wealthier families was there a roast for Sunday lunch, and for the most part each family member was given only a little piece of meat from the broth whereas in the poorer families all of the meat was reserved for the father, who was the only breadwinner and thus had to be well fed. Lunch on Sundays was always at noon sharp. In more recent times, slurping beef broth went hand in hand with the mandatory “Avseniki” (The Avsenik Brothers Ensemble) music and “Congratulations and Greetings” on Radio Triglav, the local Jesenice radio station. Therefore, we still refer to this type of traditional Slovenian music as “beef” music.

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Beef soup
Meat from the soup
Roasted potatoes
Horseradish sauce
Lettuce (with egg) or other seasonal salad

 *Vijoleta Smolej, Prihodi*

BEEF SOUP

Ingredients:

- 600–700 g (1.3–1.5 lbs) of beef with bones (ribs or neck)
- 1 part of old hen
- 2 beef bones
- 5 l (176 oz) of water
- carrots
- parsley (greens, root)
- celery
- marjoram
- thyme
- leek
- onions
- garlic
- bay laurel leaf
- a piece of underground kohlrabi
- nutmeg
- safflower



Preparation:

Rinse the meat and bones well and place them in cold water. Clean the vegetables, put them in a pot and immediately add salt. Cover the pot

and let the ingredients simmer for 2–3 hours. The soup should simmer slowly and be covered with a lid to prevent the flavours and aromas from evaporating.

ROASTED POTATOES

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 8 medium-sized potatoes
- 1 onion
- lard
- salt

Preparation:

Boil the potatoes in salted water. Peel the cooked potatoes. Fry the sliced onion in the lard until golden brown. Add the sliced potatoes to the onions and season with salt. If the potatoes are left to stand for a long time, pour the beef stock over them.

To balance out a heavy meal, they also ate seasonal salad grown in their home garden, in early spring they picked dandelion leaves, and for the winter they had pickled salads: beetroot, sauerkraut, cucumbers, and later also bell peppers.



FOLLOWING THE BOHINJ RAILWAY

For centuries, people from near and far saw the iron foundry of Jesenice as an opportunity to make money. The construction of the Bohinj Railway contributed to more mass immigration in the early 20th century. Skilled, Capable builders came to work on the track mainly from the Primorska region. In the Interwar period, people came to Jesenice fleeing from the fascist regime of their region, and after the Second World War they commuted to work every day due to the favourable railway connection, especially from the nearby Baška grapa. Many of these workers settled in Jesenice for good, bringing into the local culinary mix the dishes their mothers taught them. Thus, the *jota* stew soon found its way into the offer of the factory canteens and on the tables of other Jesenice residents, whereas the more specific *luštrkajca* and *frika* dishes were reserved for reviving memories of their native Primorska.

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“*Jota*” stew or *minestrone* or *pasta beans*
“*Luštrkajca*” pastry or “*buchteln*” buns

 Vera Grgurič, Penzion Pr' Betel, Planina pod Golico

“JOTA” STEW

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 150 g (0.33 lbs) of beans in the grain
- 250 g (0.55 lbs) of dried meat
- 3 medium-sized potatoes
- 250 g (0.55 lbs) sauerkraut
- 1.5 l (53 oz) of water
- a spoonful of oil
- 1 medium-sized onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 20 g (0.044 lbs) or 1 tablespoon flour
- peppercorns
- bay laurel leaf
- one teaspoon ground sweet paprika

Preparation:

Soak the beans in water the day before and leave overnight, then boil them separately in salted water for about 1 hour. Drain the cabbage, rinse it with water and put it in 1.5 l (53 oz) of water to cook. Add the diced dried meat, bay

and pepper to the cabbage. Peel the potatoes, cut them into large cubes and boil them in another pan. Fry the onion in the oil until fragrant, add the garlic for aroma, then also add the flour and the ground paprika. Fry a little and add everything to the cabbage. Add the cooked and drained beans and potatoes to the cabbage as well. Stir and cook a little more. Serve. The dried meat can be cooked beforehand or served in one piece alongside the *jota*.



 Marija Cirila Beguš, Podbrdo

“LUŠTRKAJCA” SAVOURY PASTRY

Luštrkajca is a type of salty *potica* (dough roll) with a filling of egg, oil, lovage (in Slovene: *luštrek*) and diced dried pork. They ate it with *jota* stew or with braised sauerkraut.

Ingredients for the dough:

- 1 kg (2.2 lbs) white flour
- 1 cube of yeast
- 3 pinches of salt
- 4 dl (14 oz) lukewarm water

Ingredients for the filling:

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) of *zaseka* bacon jam (adjust quantity as desired – more, in this case, is not less)
- 100 g (0.22 lbs) corn meal
- two handfuls of finely chopped lovage leaves

Preparation:

Knead the dough like sourdough bread dough and leave it to rise.

For the filling, heat the bacon jam, add the cornmeal and finally the lovage. Then let everything cool well. Roll out the dough once it has risen. Spread the filling all over the dough and roll it up like a roulade. Preheat the oven to 180 °C (356 °F). Bake for about 1 hour.



Workers celebrate the breaking through of the Karavanke tunnel on the Karavanke–Bohinj railway in 1905.

“Frika” “Polenta”

Frika originates from Friuli-Venezia Giulia. It settled in the area of the Soča Valley in various forms. The basis of the dish is pan-fried cheese, to which potatoes are added, as well as bacon, various herbs, and, in some places, eggs. *Frika* was once eaten as a standalone dish whereas today it is often served with toasted polenta, bread and/or salad.

 Mirjam Rutar, Letni vrt Pr Jakču, Tolmin

“FRIKA” AND “POLENTA”

Ingredients:

(for 1–2 persons)

- 5 medium-sized potatoes
- 250 g (0.55 lbs) Tolmin mountain cheese (or a comparable full fat hard cheese)
- oil or lard
- salt
- 0.5 dl (1.8 oz) corn semolina (not an instant sort)
- at least 1.5 dcl (5.3 oz) water for the *polenta*



Preparation:

We start by preparing the *polenta*. Put the corn meal in salted boiling water and cook over a moderate heat. For larger quantities of *polenta*, cook for at least 45 minutes, whereas this recipe

requires less time. Stir several times in between to make sure it does not stick to the bottom of the bowl. Gradually add water as needed. Remove from the heat and cover the *polenta* with a lid to prevent it from cooling. While the *polenta* is cooking, you can already start preparing the *frika*.

Peel the potatoes and cut into thin slices. Fry them in oil in a frying pan. Place the slices in a bowl, add the grated mountain cheese and season with salt. Mix to form a compact mixture. Put a little oil in the pan, then spread some of the mixture over the pan (about 2 cm thick). Bake on both sides.

Mirjam Rutar explains:

»The recipe is adapted for a quicker preparation, as the “frika” used to be baked in lard on a wood-stove slowly for about an hour. It is a strong and filling dish that wives used to prepare for their husbands when they were working in the forest.«

The “*frika*”, prepared at the Pr’ Jakču Summer Garden in Tolmin, has been awarded the “Iz doline Soče” (From the Soča Valley) certificate because it uses locally produced ingredients. Tolmin cheese comes from organic farms in the village of Čadrg.

FROM VARDAR TO TRIGLAV⁵

As early as 1948, immigrants from the republics of the former Yugoslavia were either making their way to Jesenice by themselves or the Iron Foundry representatives ‘went down to get them’ because they needed workers for the ironworks. In 1969, 15.3% of the approximately 6,300 employees of the Železarna iron foundry were immigrants from other Yugoslav republics. They brought their habits from their environment and kept them very much alive. This was clearly manifested in their cuisine (cooking styles and dishes of choice), which largely contributed to the current “fusion food” culinary culture of Jesenice.⁶ In the *Za naše gospodinje* (For Our Housewives) section of the Tovarniški vestnik Factory Journal we find a sarma recipe as early as 1938. Similar to the jota of Primorska, the Železarna canteens soon offered pasulj bean stew, filled bell peppers and *sarma*, *moussaka* etc. However, only a few local housewives mastered the skills of rolling dough with the *oklagija* rolling pin, so *pita* pies and

burek more or less remained in the domain of immigrant housewives. A very important factor in introducing Slovenes to the diet of immigrants were mixed marriages and joint work campaigns.



End of the shift – workers in front of the gatehouse of the Jesenice Iron Foundry in 1964.



Oklagija dough rolling pin, online source.

⁵ *From Vardar to Triglav* is the first verse of the popular patriotic song »Yugoslavia« from the 1980s. Macedonia's Vardar River and Slovenia's Mount Triglav are famous landmarks in the extreme south and north of the former Yugoslavia.

⁶ Fusion food cuisine combines elements of different culinary traditions originating from different countries, regions or cultures. This type of cooking concept is not categorized according to a certain culinary style and has been the driving force of innovation in many modern restaurant kitchens since the 1970s.

“Pita” or “burek” Yoghurt/ayran

Pita (pie) is a generic name for various dishes made of dough, whereby its more specific name is determined by the filling it contains. *Burek*, however, is just one type of pie, filled with minced meat. There is a famous – and untranslatable – Bosnian saying: »*Sve su pite pite, samo je burek pitac*«, which would, very loosely translated mean something like »*Every “pita” is a Queen, but only “burek” is King.*« For the truest experience, yoghurt or ayran (salted yoghurt, diluted with water) is a must when eating *pita* or *burek*.

 Hasnija - Hasna Dugonjić, Jesenice

“BUREK” (MEAT PIE)

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

Dough

- 300 g (0.66 lbs) white flour
- 2 dl (7 oz) lukewarm water
- salt

Stuffing

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) beef (can be minced, but even better if it is cut into small pieces instead)
- 1 large onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- a tablespoon of salt
- a spoonful of spice mix with vegetables
- pepper

Cream-wash

- 1 dl (3.5 oz) boiling water
- a teaspoon of butter

Preparation:

Knead a smooth, elastic dough, form into loaves and leave to rise. Meanwhile, prepare the stuffing – mix the meat, finely chopped onion, garlic and spices well. Roll out the dough, stuff and roll together. Place the rolls on a greased baking tray.

Place in a preheated oven and bake at 200 °C (392 °F) for about 30 minutes. Pour the prepared boiling water in which the butter has been melted over the baked *burek* (as a wash, to make it shine) and cover it.



“Mutuša” pie with chicken Yoghurt/ayran



 Hasnija - Hasna Dugonjić, Jesenice

“MUTUŠA” PIE WITH CHICKEN

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

Dough

- 300 g (0.66 lbs) white flour
- 1 egg
- 1 yoghurt
- 1 dl (3.5 oz) mineral water
- salt
- a little baking powder

Stuffing

- 4 chicken thighs or legs (can also be wings)
- salt

Cream-wash

- sour or sweet cream

Preparation:

Knead the dough and leave to stand. Clean the meat and boil it for a few minutes. Place the greased baking tray in the oven and turn it on. Season the meat with salt, pour the batter onto the heated baking tray, and place the meat on top of the batter. Bake in the oven for 25 minutes at 200°C/392 °F (or depending on the oven). When the *mutuša* pie is done, pour cream over it and serve with yoghurt or a seasonal salad.

Hasnija says:

»*“Mutuša” and “kljukuša” are prepared in a similar way, but “kljukuša” is a meatless dish. The “kljukuša” has many different names in different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina: “kljukuša”, “razlivača”, “buranija” or “uljevak.”*«

**“Čorba” stew: Bosnian pot or “bamija” (okra soup)
“Somun” (“lepinja”) bread roll**

Čorba stews have a special place in the everyday traditional Bosnian cuisine. A Bosnian pot is a workers’ dish of Bosnian miners, which was traditionally cooked during the shift. It is considered a group dish, as it gets a better taste and aroma if prepared in larger quantities and in a clay pot. *Bamija* or okra is an unripe seed pod that is used as a vegetable in many Bosnian čorba stews. The most typical okra stew (*čorba*), which is an extremely prized dish throughout the Middle East, is also called *bamija*.

 Hasnija - Hasna Dugonjić, Jesenice

BOSNIAN POT

Ingredients:

(for 6 persons)

- 1.5 kg (3.3 lbs) meat (lamb, mutton or veal)
- 3–4 potatoes
- 3 tomatoes
- 1 eggplant
- 150 g string beans
- 2 peppers
- 3 onions
- garlic
- 3 carrots
- 1 parsley (root)
- half a head of fresh cabbage
- salt
- pepper
- seasoning mix with vegetables
- ground sweet paprika
- 1–2 dl (3.5–7 oz) water

Preparation:

Place a layer of sliced meat in a deep pot, then a layer of vegetables, then another layer of meat and then take turn placing the meat and vegetables. Also add salt, seasoning mix with vegetables, pepper and ground sweet paprika. When the meat and vegetables have been used up, pour some water over it and add a little oil. Cook for at least 3 hours over a medium heat.



Hasnija reminisces:

»When I was a child, my father loved to cook on a wood stove. He filled the pot with the ingredients for the Bosnian pot, covered it with a sack, usually one that flour came in, and tied the sack over the pot. He put the pot on the edge of the stove. Because it was cold, we kept the fire burning all night, so the dish cooked slowly overnight.«

**“Sarma” rolls or “dolme”⁷
Mashed potatoes, sour cream**

In Turkish, *sarma* means anything wrapped in cabbage or vine leaves, and *dolma* means stuffing of minced meat and rice. In Slovenia, *dolma* is usually used as stuffing for stuffed bell peppers, but we can also use it to stuff tomatoes, onions, zucchini etc.

 Hasnija - Hasna Dugonjić, Jesenice

“SARMA”

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

Mixture (filling)

- 1 head of sauerkraut
- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) minced meat
- 150 g (0.33 lbs) rice
- 1 large onion
- garlic
- salt
- pepper
- ground sweet paprika
- seasoning mix with vegetables
- 1 dl (3.5 oz) mineral water
- dry meat

Sauce

- flour
- tomato sauce
- butter
- salt
- pepper
- one bay leaf
- ground sweet paprika
- seasoning mix with vegetables



Preparation:

Mix the minced meat, onion, rice, garlic, mineral water and spices well. Put a little of the filling on the cabbage leaf and shape into *sarma* rolls. Put one large tablespoon of butter or oil in a pan, add 2 spoonfuls of flour and fry until it turns a golden colour. Then pour in some water, add the tomato sauce, seasoning and cook for a while longer. Place the *sarma* rolls in the sauce and the dried meat in between. Pour hot water over the *sarma* until they are fully submerged cook slowly over a low heat for 1.5 hours.

⁷ Dolmas (*dolme*) are meat wrapped in onion leaves, similar to *sarma*.

“Moussaka” Seasonal salad

Moussaka is a word of Arabic origin and it signifies a dish made of vegetables and roasted meat, prepared in several luscious layers.

 Hasnija - Hasna Dugonjić, Jesenice

“MOUSSAKA”

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) minced meat
- 1 onion
- 600 g (1.3 lbs) of potatoes
- salt
- pepper

Egg-wash

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 dl (3.5 oz) milk



Preparation:

Fry the meat with the onion and spices. Cut the potatoes into discs, add salt and boil for a few minutes (no more than 5). Place the ingredients on the baking tray in layers, taking turns: first a layer of potatoes, then the meat filling and then the potatoes again. Bake in a preheated oven at 200 °C (392 °F) for

30 minutes. When it is baked well, remove from the oven and pour the egg-wash made with eggs, cream and milk on top. Return to the oven for a few minutes to allow the moussaka to form a crust on top. *Moussaka* can also be made with eggplants. Instead of potatoes, simply use sliced, salted and breaded eggplants.

“Boranija” or “pasulj” “Somun” (“lepinja”) bread roll

Boranija can be with meat or meatless. Some even call it “string beans goulash”. The word *boranija* simultaneously means “string beans” and “string bean stew”. Just as *pasulj* in its native tongue denotes both beans and bean stew. Easy beansy!



 Milka Zavelcina, Društvo podeželskih žensk pod Golico in Stolom
(Association of Rural Women), Koroška Bela

“BORANIJA”

Ingredients:

(for 4–5 persons)

- 300 g (0.66 lbs) pork
- 500 g (1.1 lbs) string beans
- 2 medium-sized potatoes
- 2 medium-sized onions
- 1.5 l (52.8 oz) of water
- pepper
- salt
- 1 large spoonful of tomato sauce
- nutmeg
- caraway
- turmeric
- flour
- parsley
- fat (lard)

Preparation:

Fry the onion in the fat until it is golden brown. Add the diced meat. Roast for about 20 minutes, then add the raw string beans, cut into quarters. Cover with water and cook until soft. Cook the diced potatoes separately. Once cooked, drain them and add to the soup. Add all the spices. If the soup is too thin, thicken it with flour (or an alternative food thickener).

“*Gravče na tavče*”⁸ with dried meat
Pickled chilli peppers

Among the Orthodox families, each household has its patron saint, and according to tradition, families prepare their *slava* (patron saint celebration day) on the day of the family saint, wherever they are, even abroad or far from home. In Macedonia, on this day, they serve *sarma*, *gravče na tavče* from special *tetovac* beans, *turšija* (mixed pickled vegetables: carrots, cauliflower and unripe green tomatoes), roasted red bell peppers and peppers stuffed with cottage cheese, salad from fresh cabbage or sauerkraut, cold cuts with salami and salty white cheese and mandatory desserts such as *baklava* and *tulumba*. On an ordinary day, however, they will eat only *gravče na tavče* without meat.

 Saša Svetina, Jesenice

“GRAVČE NA TAVČE”

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)

- 400 g (0.88 lbs) dried beans (or 2 tins)
- 1 large onion
- garlic
- tomato sauce
- 2 carrots
- 1 green, 1 red and 1 yellow pepper
- parsley leaves
- dried meat or sausages
- salt
- seasoning mix with vegetables
- pepper
- ground sweet paprika
- chilli peppers if desired

Preparation:

Soak the beans overnight, then cook them. Leave it in the water in which it was cooked (canned beans do not need to be cooked). Fry the onions until they turn golden, add the peppers, carrots and garlic and fry them until they

soften. Add the spices (be careful not to add too much salt, as dried meat is salty in itself). Take the baking tray and grease it well with oil. Put all the vegetables in the baking tray and mix them well. Add the dried meat and shake the beans over everything. Pour some of the water in which the beans were cooked over the mixture. Then mix a large spoonful of flour in a couple of tablespoons of water and a tablespoon of red pepper and pour over everything. Bake for 25 min in a preheated oven at 180°C (356 °F).




⁸ *Tavče* or *tava* is the clay pot in which the *gravče* – i.e., beans – are baked

THE WORKERS' LUNCH STREET FOOD PROJECT

In 2021, the Jesenice HOMEly cooking (*KUHAM DOMAČE*) project took a step further from mere cooking workshops. We joined forces with The Upper Sava Valley Museum (*Gornjesavski muzej*) of Jesenice and hand-picked Jesenice caterers to create a collection of menus under the joint title The Workers' Lunch (*Delavska mal'ca*). The menus combine dishes once eaten by workers in the canteen of the Jesenice ironworks, dishes that found their way onto the tables of local workers, and dishes “imported” to Jesenice by immigrants from Primorska and the republics of the former Yugoslavia. Today, selected dishes are available in six Jesenice pubs and restaurants: *Penzion Pr' Betel*, *Gostilnica in pizzerija Chilli* (Chilli Inn and Pizzeria), *Kazina*, *Bistro Oaza*, *Dom Pristava* and *Gostilna in pizzerija Turist*. The following year, we served street food to present the dishes in a more modern format. We presented our culinary offer at various events in The municipality of Jesenice and at cooking workshops in the primary schools of Jesenice.



Barley “risotto” with “Kranjska klobasa” parboiled sausage

 Jerica Klinar, Slovenski Javornik

BARLEY “RISOTTO” WITH “KRANJSKA KLOBASA” PARBOILED SAUSAGE

Ingredients:

- 200 g (0.44 lbs) hulled barley
- 2 *Kranjska klobasa* sausages
- 1 small carrot
- 2 stalks of celery
- the white part of a small leek
- 1 tablespoon tomato sauce
- 3 tablespoons crushed tomatoes
- vegetable base or water
- extra virgin olive oil
- 15 g (0.033 lbs) butter
- parmesan
- 3 dl (10.5 oz) Malvasia wine
- salt
- white peppercorns
- thyme
- parsley

Preparation:

Soak the barley in cold water overnight. Finely coarsely chop the white part of the leek. Peel and finely dice the celery and carrot. Make a vegetable base from the clean trimmings and other vegetables. Cut the sausages into wheels or small cubes. Heat the oil in a pot and fry the leeks. Add the chopped vegetables, thyme and parsley. Sauté for 2–3 minutes. Add the tomato sauce, the crushed tomatoes and the cooked barley. Bake the sausages in a pan or on the grill and add them to the pot with the vegetables. Add butter to taste. Before serving, stir in the grated Parmesan cheese.

**“Kaiserschmarrn” scrambled pancake
with jam, raisins and caramel**

 Jerica Klinar, Slovenski Javornik

“KAISERSCHMARRN” SCRAMBLED PANCAKE WITH JAM, RAISINS AND CARAMEL

Ingredients:

(for 4 people)


- 220 g (0.5 lbs) plain white flour
- 4 eggs
- 50 g (0.11 lbs) sugar
- 0.5 l (17 oz) of milk
- 1 pinch of salt
- a little baking powder
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon powdered sugar
- raisins (to taste)

**Preparation:**

Separate the egg whites and egg yolks. Add the milk, salt and half the sugar to the yolks and whisk until frothy. Gradually add the flour, mixed with baking powder. Whisk the egg whites until they reach a stiff peak. When they start to foam, gradually add half of the sugar while whisking. Slowly whisk them into the egg yolk mixture. Stir gently and slowly to keep the mixture loose and fluffy. Melt half the butter in a frying pan and pour in the mixture about 1 cm thick. Cook over a low heat and, when the pancake is golden brown on the underside, divide it into quarters with a blunt spatula and carefully turn each one over. Fry well on the other side as well, then cut or tear them with a spatula smaller pieces and mix. Push

the *Kaiserschmarrn* onto the edge of the pan. Increase the heat, put the rest of the butter and the icing sugar in the middle of the pan. When it starts to caramelize, begin stirring to mix it with pieces of *Kaiserschmarrn* to coat them in caramel and give them a crispy crust. Sprinkle the raisins on top. Wash, peel and slice the apples. Shake them in a large saucepan, add the sugar and 3 dl (10.5 oz) of water. Sauté them for about 15 minutes until they turn soft. Stir several times. Finally, mash them with a wooden spoon and add the butter. Stir well to melt the butter. To serve, add the apple mousse to the *Kaiserschmarrn* – either on the side or pour it directly over it. Garnish with mint leaves.

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Mac & meat au gratin (gratinated) Jerica Klinar, Slovenski Javornik**MAC & MEAT AU GRATIN****Ingredients:**

(for 4 people)

- 400 g (0.88 lbs) ground beef
- ½ kg (1.1 lbs) pasta (macaroni)
- 1 medium-sized onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 50 g (0.033 lbs) butter
- 50 g (0.5 lbs) flour
- 0.5 l (17 oz) warm milk
- salt
- freshly ground pepper
- ground nutmeg
- 100 g (0.22 lbs) grated cheese (Edam, Gouda, mozzarella, etc.)
- chopped parsley

**Preparation:**

Peel the onion and garlic and finely chop them separately. Put a pot of pasta cooking water on the stove. Put the pasta in the salted water and cook for the time indicated on the package. Drain when they are the cooked. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and fry the chopped onion. Add the garlic and minced meat and fry over a moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until the meat is browned. Season with salt and pepper. Melt the butter in a large pan. Add the flour and fry, stirring constantly, for 1 min. Then gradually add the warm milk and stir all the time to prevent the formation of

lumps. Stir and cook until the béchamel sauce thickens (about 2 minutes). Season to taste with pepper, salt and nutmeg. Preheat the oven to 190 °C (374 °F). Grease a deep baking tray with oil. Put half of the cooked pasta in a baking tray and spread it evenly over the base of the tray. Arrange the roasted meat over the pasta and cover with the remaining pasta. Pour the béchamel over everything and sprinkle the grated cheese on top. Put the baking tray into the preheated oven for 20–25 minutes to get a nice golden-brown colour on top. Before serving, sprinkle with grated cheese and freshly chopped parsley.

“Ájmoht” stew with “žganci” buckwheat mush Jerica Klinar, Slovenski Javornik**“ÁJMOHT” STEW WITH “ŽGANCI” BUCKWHEAT MUSH**

32

Ingredients:

(for 10 persons)

- 300 g (0.66 lbs) chicken meat
- 200 g (0.44 lbs) chicken bones
- 1.5 l (53 oz) chicken base
- 200 g (0.44 lbs) soup vegetables (leek, celery, kohlrabi)
- 40 g (0.09 lbs) of oil
- 100 g (0.22 lbs) onions
- a clove of garlic
- one bay leaf
- marjoram
- thyme
- salt
- pepper
- vinegar or lemon juice

Buckwheat žganci

- 300 g (0.66 lbs) buckwheat flour
- 1 litre (53 oz) of water
- 1 teaspoon salt


**Preparation of ájmoht stew:**

Peel and chop the onion and garlic. Fry the onion in the fat, add the garlic. When you can smell the aroma, add the meat that you cut into chunks, and fry. Add the chicken bones (neck etc.) Clean the vegetables and cut them into pieces. Place them with the meat and fry for a few minutes. Season with salt, pepper, bay leaves, marjoram and thyme. Pour over the chicken base. Let the *ájmoht* stew boil slowly for 45 minutes. Finally, season with lemon juice or vinegar.

Preparation of buckwheat žganci:

Place a large pan over a medium heat. Add the buckwheat flour and fry for 2–3 minutes. Stir constantly to prevent it from burning or sticking to the pan. Put the water and salt in a pot and turn the heat to high. When the water comes to the boil, shake all the flour vigorously in the centre of the pot to form a ball surrounded by water. When the water comes back to the boil, cook for 2–3 minutes. Then, with the handle of a rolling pin, make a 2–3 cm wide hole in the centre of the lump, into which the water must pour. Cover, cook for 20–25 minutes. Drain the *žganci* and save the water in which they were cooked. Stir the *žganci* well with a wooden spoon or spatula to form a thick ball. If they are too dry, not sticky and there are traces of flour, gradually add water to make them stickier and denser. Either pour the *ájmoht* over the *žganci* or serve them each in a separate bowl.

Baked apples filled with walnuts

 Jerica Klinar, Slovenski Javornik

“TUFABIJE” (BAKED APPLES FILLED WITH WALNUTS)**Ingredients:**

(for 4 people)

- 4 medium-sized apples
- 12 tablespoons chopped or coarsely ground walnuts
- 4 tablespoons honey
- 4 tablespoons sliced almonds
- 4 tablespoons dried cranberries or raisins
- 4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- whipped sweet cream

Preparation:

Mix the ground walnuts, honey, cinnamon and raisins. Add the almonds and stir gently again. Cut off the “lid” from the apples and carefully scoop out their cores with a spoon. Be careful not to go too deep, the wall of the apple should be at least 1 cm thick. Fill them with the filling, cover them with the cut-off “lid” and wrap them in aluminium foil. Bake at 180 °C (356 °F) for about 25 minutes. To serve, place the baked apple on a plate and pour over it some of the juice from the baking. Add a spoonful of whipped cream, drizzle with a little honey and sprinkle with walnuts.

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THE WORKERS' LUNCH (DELAVSKA MALCA)

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The Jesenice Iron Foundry, 1933 (Photo by: Slavko Smolej)



“Street food” – Baked apples filled with walnuts