



HUNGARIAN CUISINE

Some **basic ingredients** and **cooking techniques** make Hungarian dishes hearty and spicy. Hungarian paprika powder gives a **unique taste** and **fiery colour** to typical Hungarian meals. However don't think that Hungarian dishes made with paprika are burning hot.



Hungarian food is often spicy, due to the common use of paprika but usually **sweet paprika** is used to make stews, goulash, paprika chicken and hot paprika is offered separately.

Additionally, the combination of paprika, lard and yellow onions is typical of Hungarian cuisine and the use of the thick sour cream called tejföl.

Braising onions in hot lard and adding paprika to it are the first basic steps of making authentic Hungarian stews, paprikás or goulash. Sour cream is another essential ingredient in Hungarian recipes. It's added to soups, pastas, casseroles and desserts.

Some other common ingredients are onions, garlic, caraway seed, black pepper and a variety of herbs including parsley, bay leaves, tarragon, celery, thyme, savoury.

Although most authentic Hungarian dishes require lard nowadays restaurants and housewives use vegetable oil instead of pork fat. Goulash, stew, paprikash, Hungarian fish soup, paprika potatoes etc. are similar traditional Hungarian dishes. The Hungarians cook stew or goulash on every holiday and family gathering. These foods are included in the main family events: weddings, christenings, birthdays, funerals etc. These dishes are often cooked outdoors on open fire in a kettle at the friends gatherings.



HUNGARIAN BREAKFAST



- rice pudding
- semolina cream with cocoa powder or jam
- milk, cacao
- tea with sugar or honey and lemon

A typical breakfast

- bun, crescent, pastries
- butter
- curd cheese
- Liptauer cheese spread
- liver paté
- sausage
- Pick salami
- egg
- French toast



Description of Traditional Hungarian Breakfast

In Hungary people usually have a large breakfast. Hungarian breakfast generally is an open sandwich with fresh bread or a toast, butter, cheese or different cream cheeses, curd cheese (*túró*) or Liptauer cheese spread (*körözött*), cold cuts such as ham, liver *pâté* (called *májkrém* or *kenőmájas*), bacon, salami, head cheese (*disznósajt*), sausages like *kabanos*, *beerwurst* or different Hungarian sausages or *kolbász*. Even eggs, (fried, scrambled or boiled), French toast called *bundáskenyér* and vegetables (like peppers, bell peppers, tomatoes, radish, scallion and cucumber) are part of the Hungarian breakfast. Sometimes breakfast is a cup of milk, tea or coffee with pastries, a bun, a *crescent* (*kifli*) or a *strudel* with jam or honey, or cereal like *muesli* and perhaps fruit. Children can have rice pudding (*tejberizs*) or *semolina* cream (*tejbegríz*) for breakfast topped with cocoa powder and sugar or with fruit syrup. Hot drinks are preferred for breakfast. *Villásreggeli* (literally breakfast with fork) is a more luxurious big breakfast given on special occasions or holidays. Often guests are invited. Deviled eggs, cold steak, cold salads, omelet, pancakes, *körözött*, foie gras, fruit salads, compote, fruit yogurts, fruit juices, and pastries, cakes and cookies may be served.



KÖRÖZÖTT - LIPTAUER CHEESE SPREAD

INGREDIENTS

- 500 grams of curd (cottage cheese)
- 100 grams of butter
- 1 onion
- 2 tsp of sweet Hungarian red paprika
- 1 tsp of ground cumin
- salt



Directions

Smash the curd in a bowl with the butter. Add the grated onion, the cumin, red paprika, salt and mix them well to get a smooth spread. You can add some spring onion. It's delicious with fresh bread and green pepper. You can serve it stuffed into green bell peppers



HUNGARIAN LUNCH

A typical lunch

Soups

- Újházy chicken broth
- Goulash soup
- Fisherman's soup
- Jókai bean soup
- Chilled sour cherry soup

Main courses

- Beef or pork stew with speatzle
- Chicken paprikash
- Stuffed cabbage
- Stuffed green peppers
- Breaded chicken or pork (Wiener snitzel)

Desserts

- Strudel filled with poppy seeds/curd/apple
- Plum or curd dumplings
- Gundel pancake
- Chestnut puree



Description of Traditional Hungarian Lunch

Hungary is a soup-eating nation. A complete **three-course meal** always starts with a soup. It can be a hearty meat soup like the world-famous goulash or a sweetish fruit soup. In restaurants you'll probably find **Jókai bean soup** on the menu. Fisherman's soup is another must to try when you're in Hungary.

Újházy chicken broth (Újházy tyúkhúsleves) is another tasty Hungarian soup that you'll find on restaurant menus. Soup is usually followed by some kind of **meat dish** with **potato, pasta or rice garnishing**. Pickles or salad made from seasonal vegetables accompany meat dishes.

Stews and **paprikash** are the most popular Hungarian meat dishes. Stew is a ragout made from pork, beef or mutton or chicken with onions and paprika powder as the main spice. Stuffed cabbage (töltött káposzta) is a traditional delicious Hungarian dish that is often made for holidays like Christmas or Easter. There are a range of pasta dishes that are peculiar to Hungarian cuisine. **Túrós csusza** (pasta with cottage cheese and bacon) **káposztás tészta** (egg squares with braised cabbage) are savoury pastas. Sweet pasta dishes include **túrógombóc** (cottage cheese dumplings) **szilvágombóc** (plum dumplings) and palacsinta (pancakes).



GOULASH SOUP

Ingredients

- 2 medium sized onions chopped finely
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 tablespoons of bacon fat or vegetable oil
- 3 pounds cubed beef
- 1 tablespoon sweet Hungarian paprika
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 carrots peeled and cubed
- 2 parsley roots peeled and cubed
- 1 small bunch parsley
- 4 medium sized potatoes peeled and cubed
- ½ teaspoon caraway seeds
- 2 Hungarian green peppers
- 1-2 tomatoes
- a pinch of hot Hungarian paprika
- salt to taste



Directions

In a large soup pot braise onions in bacon fat or vegetable oil over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until translucent. This will take 10 to 15 minutes. Do not let the onions brown. Salt the onions lightly to help tenderize them. Add the meat cubes and **sweet Hungarian paprika** and stir constantly for about 3 minutes or until the meat has been seared on all sides. Be careful as red paprika can easily burn and it will taste bitter. Add water to cover by an inch and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until meat is almost tender, adding water, as necessary, to keep it above the level of the meat. Add the carrots, parsley roots, bunch of parsley, potatoes, caraway seeds, **green peppers**, tomato and hot paprika. Bring back to the boil, reduce heat to a simmer, cover and cook until the vegetables are tender but not falling apart. Add additional water, if necessary, to keep a soup consistency. Add salt to taste.

CHILLED SOUR CHERRY SOUP



Ingredients

- 500 grams/1 lb sour cherries ripe and pitted
- 150 grams/6 oz sugar
- grated peel of half a lemon
- pinch of salt
- cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 100 ml sour cream

Directions

In a large pan put 1 and half litres (2 and half pints) of water, the sugar, salt, lemon peel, and cinnamon. Boil for 3-4 minutes and taste to see if the liquid is well-flavoured. If not, let it boil and reduce for another few minutes.

Add the cherries to the boiling water and simmer 4-5 minutes. Mix the cream and the flour then stir in slowly a ladle of hot cherry juice. Pour into the soup and boil until it thickens. Leave to cool, serve chilled.

A refreshing way to start a meal on a hot summer day. Many other kinds of fruit can be used like blackcurrants, gooseberries, raspberries or peach. It's delicious with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.



PÖRKÖLT - BEEF STEW

This particular paprika dish is quite common in Hungary. It originated with cattle herders, who made the dish in the fields in cast iron kettles and cooked it over an open fire. 'Marha pörkölt' is similar to another dish you may have heard of – goulash – which has the same origin and ingredients, though the texture of goulash would be slightly more soupy.

Ingredients

- 1 kilogram beef, cubed
- 3 medium onions, diced finely
- 3 cloves garlic, diced finely
- 1 green bell pepper
- 2 tomatoes
- 2 tbsp sweet Hungarian paprika
- caraway seed
- salt and black pepper
- 2 tbsp of lard or oil
- 200 ml red wine



DIRECTIONS

1

Heat the oil or lard in a deep frying pan and cook onions on a medium heat until soft and translucent. Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly.

2

Add paprika to onion and stir through.

3

Add diced meat to mixture and coat and marinade the mixture whilst you prepare the tomato and green pepper. Make sure you keep the juice from the tomato to add to the dish.

4

Stir in the tomato and green pepper and return to a medium/high heat and allow to cook for a few minutes on this heat before reducing the heat to medium/low. Cover with a lid for this to cook.

5

After 15 minutes, add the wine and salt, stir and simmer for 1 hour at least with a cover/lid, stirring occasionally. Add water as needed to keep it from getting dry.

The stew is ready when the meat is fork tender and the sauce is thick. Season with additional salt and pepper to taste before serving, if desired.

Serve over spaetzle, potatoes or noodles. For more heat, you could add a touch of spicy paprika

STUFFED BELL PEPPERS IN TOMATO SAUCE TÖLTÖTT PAPRIKA

Ingredients

- 800 gram ground pork
- 2-2,5 kg ripped tomato
- 8 Hungarian green bell peppers
- 4 tbsp rice
- 1 egg
- 1 medium onion
- salt, black pepper
- sugar



Directions

Braise the finely diced onion in the oil and let it cool. Mix the ground pork, the braised onion, the egg, the well rinsed rice, salt and pepper well in a bowl. Dice the tomatoes, cook them for 30 minutes and sieve the juice. Remove the stalk and the seeds from the green peppers and precook them for 5 minutes in salty water. (Don't split the water) Take them out of the water, stuff the meat paste into the peppers and form dumplings out of the rest. Make a roux with 1 tbsp of oil and 2 tbsp of flour. Add the tomato juice and the water that the peppers had been cooked in. Stir and add salt and sugar and bring it to boil. Put the stuffed peppers in the sauce and cook for an hour.



MEATY PANCAKE FROM HORTOBÁGY HORTOBÁGYI HÚSOS PALACSINTA

Ingredients

- 500 gram ground meat
- 1 big onion
- 1 tomato
- 1 green pepper
- 200 ml sour cream
- 400 g flour
- 250 ml milk
- 100 ml carbonated water
- 2 eggs
- vegetable oil
- salt, black pepper
- red paprika
- parsley



Directions

Make pancakes from the eggs, flour, milk, carbonated water with 1/2 tbsp salt. Adjust the consistency if necessary. It should look like heavy cream. Let the batter rest for 1/2 hour if you have time. Brown the diced onion on some oil. Add the meat, 2 tbsp red paprika, salt, the tomato, and the yellow pepper. Braise in little water until done. Filter through a colander. Add 100 ml of sour cream to the gravy. Add enough gravy to the meat to make a paste, and keep the rest for serving. Roll the paste in the pancakes. Pour some gravy on the pancakes and put them in the oven at 200 C for 20-25 min or until slightly crisp. When serving, pour more gravy and sour cream on them. Garnish with chopped parsley.



PLUM DUMPLINGS – MAIN MEATLESS DISH OR DESSERT

SZILVÁSGOMBÓC

Ingredients

- 1 kg floury potatoes
- 600 g ripped plums
- sugar cubes
- cinnamon
- caster sugar
- 150 g butter
- 100 g breadcrumbs
- 1 egg
- 350 g flour



Directions

Boil washed potato with skins on. Put under running cold water for a minute, peel, mash and let it cool. Mix with the beaten egg, 30gr melted butter and the flour until a smooth dough is obtained. Add more flour if too soft.

Flour the table and spread the dough with a rolling pin about 0.5 cm thick. Pit the plums and put a little cinnamon and a sugar cube inside each. Some people use one plum per dumpling, others put only a half. They won't be bite-sized either way so I recommend putting a whole plum so that the plum juice is less likely to pierce through the dough. Wrap the dough around the plums so as to cover them entirely. Do not put too much dough or it won't cook no matter how long you leave it. Fill your largest saucepan with salted water and heat until it boils. Plunge the dumplings carefully in the boiling water. The temperature will decrease as you put them in. Wait until the water simmers but do not let it boil. When the dumplings emerge again as they cook, count 5 more minutes and remove carefully one by one with a sieve. Heat the remaining butter in the largest, flattest saucepan you have. Mix in the breadcrumbs and leave for a few minutes. Add the dumplings one by one, carefully, and let them take some color. Turn them carefully to coat them evenly in breadcrumbs. Toss over the dumplings caster sugar and cinnamon.



HUNGARIAN DINNER

A Typical Dinner

- 'Lángos' – fried bread dough with sour cream and cheese or garlic
- Lecho
- Meat ball
- Wienerwurst/Frankfurter sausage with mustard
- Pasta with poppy seeds



Description

Dinner is the third meal of the day. Dinner is a far less significant meal than lunch. It may be similar to breakfast, usually an open sandwich, yogurt or *virslí* (hot dog sausage) with a bun, more seldom a cake, pancakes (*palacsinta*), and it consists of only one course. It can be Lecho (Lecsó) which was cooked by Cypriot pupils, rissole (meat ball) or a fried bread dough (Lángos). Some people and children eat a light meal in the afternoon, called *uzsonna*, usually an open sandwich, pastry, slice of cake or fruit.



LECHO – HUNGARIAN RATATOUILLE LECSÓ

Ingredients

- 200 gram of bacon
- 8 green peppers (paprika)
- 500 gram of tomato
- oil
- salt
- optional: egg or sausages



Directions

Chop the bacon and fry it in a frying pan with the oil until it's nice brown. Add the chopped onion and paprika (and a little bit of hot paprika if you like it) and fry it for 5-10 minutes. Chop the tomatoes (I prefer when the skin of the tomato is removed) and add it to the paprika and fry them together until the ingredients are cooked but not too soft. You can eat it in different ways: with bread, or with rice or with eggs (whisk two-three eggs and pour on 'lecsó' and fry it until eggs are firm. It's delicious with Hungarian sausage



HOT- POT POTATO (LAYERED POTATO) RAKOTT KRUMPLI

Ingredients

- 1 kg potato
- 6 eggs
- 200 grams of smoked sausages or salami (homemade is the best)
- 500 gram of sour cream
- 3 egg yolks



Directions

Wash the potatoes and the eggs properly. Boil the potatoes in its jacket (or shell) with some salt until they're soft and the eggs until they're hard. Peel the potatoes and remove the shell of the eggs when they're ready and slice them. Slice the sausage or salami, too. Whisk the sour cream with the egg yolks and some salt. Grease a tray with butter or oil and put one layer of sliced potatoes then sliced hard-boiled eggs sprinkle with a little bit of salt, put some slices of home-made sausages and pour half of the sour cream on it. Then repeat the layers: potato. eggs, sausages, sour cream and finish with a layer of potatoes and pour the rest of sour cream on top of it. Put it in the oven (preheated to 200°C) and cook it for 35-40 minutes until the top is nice brown.



LÁNGOS – TRADITIONAL HUNGARIAN FRIED BREAD

Ingredients

- 1 kg of flour
- 500-600 ml of lukewarm water
- 50 g yeast
- a pinch of sugar
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 liter of oil



Directions

Lángos – it's basically fried bread. Originally women made it when they baked bread – they took a piece of the dough and fried it in hot oil or lard and ate it with garlic.

In a mug, prepare the leavening agent: crumble the yeast into $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of lukewarm water, add the sugar and mix with a little flour. Sprinkle the top with $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp of flour, cover with a cheesecloth and let it raise at warm room temperature. Put the flour in a bowl and add the yeast mixture and begin to knead them well until the dough is smooth and satiny. Sprinkle the top with flour, cover with a cheesecloth and put in a dry warm place for about an hour to raise to twice its size. Tear pieces of the dough with oily hands and pull them thin, palm size and fry it in hot oil on both sides until golden brown. Dry them on paper towel. Rub 'lángos' with fresh garlic before serving. May be eaten with variety of toppings: sour cream, cheese or even jam.

