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**Culture.**

## **Belarussian cuisine.**

**Aims:**

- 1. To introduce the topic and read for general information.**
- 2. To read for specific information.**
- 3. To expand the topic.**
- 4 to write a short text about favorite Belarusian dish.**

## Belarusian cuisine

Belarusian cuisine **shares** the same roots with cuisines of other Eastern or Northern European countries, basing predominantly on meat and various vegetables typical for the region. Belarusians have always been fond of **sour rye bread**, and the most traditional hard drink, the local vodka distilled primarily from a **rye malt**. Like other Slavic peoples, Belarusians could boast of a huge variety of pancakes of various thickness, **plain** and **filled**, made mostly of **wheat** or **buckwheat flour**, but also using **oatmeal**. Many traditional belarusian dishes are potato based: potato **dumplings**, thick potato pancakes and baked **grated potato pie (babka)**. *Potato babka* is a **savoury dish** made from grated potatoes, eggs, onions and pieces of smoked, boiled or fried bacon. It is oven-baked in a **crock**, and often in a crock with a sauce of sour cream and **pork flitch**. Depending on recipe and cooking method it may be either a flaxy potato pie, or a heavy potato pudding. *Machanka* is the very **indigenous** and very traditional Belarusian dish, made from pork ribs and usually **served** with pancakes and **sprinkled** with **chopped herbs**. All family members **dip** pancakes into the **stew**. Natural and geographical conditions, surely, influenced the traditional dishes of Belarus. We eat mushrooms, wild berries and plants. When speaking about drinks, the specialties of the cuisine are **rye beer** (called kvas), beresovik (kvas out of **birch sap**), medovukha (a drink out of honey, berries and herbs on the basis of **fretting**).

### VERESHCHAKA



Aromatic vereshchaka, roasted juicy meat, home-cooked sausages, golden draniki, cabbage, **buckwheat** and **pumpkin** pancakes, lazanka with different layers, trickled pastries, **pickles**, soups with white mushrooms and herbal and berry liqueurs... the Belarusian cuisine has a lot of dishes that can pleasantly surprise even **gourmets**.

Here you can find the recipes which will help you cook a dinner in Belarusian

style and feel the taste of Belarus' national cuisine. Cooks from Minsk restaurants share original recipes and their own cooking secrets.

### POTATO PYZY



They are made from raw potato, bound with cooked potato. They take slightly longer to cook than other dumplings, but have a different flavor and texture that warrants the method. This recipe uses a cooked **ground** meat filling - a raw meat filling may be used, but the dumplings would take even longer to cook, and there is a

danger of the potato mixture disintegrating. You may use other fillings equally successfully.

### POTATO SAUSAGE



Potato kishka appeared in the national cuisine in the 19th with the spread of potato (bulba), which is called "the second bread" in Belarus. The prototype of the potato kishka was even more ancient dish – sausage made from blood and buckwheat stuffed into pork **intestine** (kryvyanaya kishka). By the way, according to a legend, the influential noble family Kiszka

got their name because the founder of the dynasty was very fond of the sausage. There are also recipes of kishka without blood, with cooked pork.

The sausage made from grated potatoes and pork (bacon and/or meat) became very popular among Belarusians as a delicious, affordable and nourishing dish.

### BELARUSIAN SALAD



This dish was introduced in the diet of Belarusians not so long ago, but it perfectly fits the traditions of the Belarusian cuisine. Salads are based on products, which have long been used in many Belarusian recipes: liver, onion, mushrooms, pickled cucumbers.

### LAZANKI



Lazanki was introduced into the Belarusian cuisine in the 16th century. The dish consists of pieces of dough made from wheat, buckwheat, or rye flour. Basically speaking, Belarusian lazanki and Italian lasagna come from one family. Belarusian cooks formed squares (triangles) from flattened tough dough, boiled them and pour fried lard with onions on top. During the lent, they put ground poppy seeds or mashed

berries into the dough. Lazanki was also baked in pots together with meat or cabbage and stewed with sour cream.

### DRANIKI





Draniki is one of the most popular and famous dishes of the Belarusian cuisine.

Although there are many similar recipes for potato pancakes in various countries, Belarusian draniki is famous for its rich taste, national culinary secrets and the floury Belarusian potatoes – bulba – with their fluffy, dry texture that is perfect for making potato pancakes.

Floury Belarusian potatoes have great cooking qualities, which makes potato dishes particularly tasty.

Today Belarus is not a world leader in potato growing, but the country is a leader in per capita production and consumption of potatoes. According to statistics, a Belarusian consumes over 180kg of potatoes per year.

Potatoes are the basis for many dishes in the Belarusian national cuisine; there are plenty of recipes. Traditional Belarusian dishes are now enhanced by new interesting products and sauces; they become healthier while remaining very tasty.

## ZRAZY



Zrazy – stuffed meat balls – is one of the specialties of the national cuisine. This dish traces its roots back to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The first written record of this dish dates back to the times of the Grand Duke and King Jagailo (15th century).

This savory dish was served to Zhigimont II who was married to Bona Sforza, a representative of the powerful

Milanese House of Sforza. The Italian princess liked the Belarusian traditional dish that reminded her of Italian cotoletta alla milanese.

At first zrazy was the food of the nobility, but later it found its way to the table of every Belarusian home. The dish is called differently depending on a region; you might here the names 'zavivantsy' or 'krucheniki'.

Classic zrazy are made from beef. The meat is pounded, folded and rolled with a filling inside. It can be stuffed with mushrooms, liver, vegetables, eggs and cereals.

### MAZURKA



Another traditional dessert of Belarusian and Polish cuisine is the mazurka. This cake with a rich taste and wonderful aroma is prepared very quickly, and it also has the property of insisting, enriched with taste over time. That is, a day or two after cooking mazurka will become even more fragrant and tastier. As a traditional stuffing for pie, poppy, raisins, nuts are used. However, often poppy is replaced

with dried fruits (dried apricots, prunes) to your liking, and you can also experiment with nuts.

### BELARUSIAN PANCAKES



Pancakes are some of the world's most popular flour-based dishes. However every national cuisine has its own cooking traditions and secrets. Pancakes (bliny, blintsy, mliny) are cooked all over Belarus, on weekends and on holidays. There is one thing that differs Belarusian

pancakes from pancakes cooked in other countries: Belarusians use all kinds of flour in pancake recipes.

**CHECK THESE WORDS:** *to share, sour rye bread, rye molt, plain/ filled pancakes, wheat/ buckwheat flour, oatmeal, dumplings, grated potato, crock, pork flitch, indigenous, to serve, to sprinkle (with), chopped herbs, to dip, stew, rye beer, birch sap, fretting, pumpkin, pickles, gourmets, cooked ground meat filling, intestine*

## **Reading.**

**1. Look at the pictures, read the text. Is Belarussian cuisine tasty?**

**2. Read the text again, check the meaning of the words in bold, and decide if the sentences are T (true), F (false) or DS (doesn't say).**

1. Belarussian cuisine shares the same roots with cuisines of other Eastern or Northern European countries, basing predominantly on milk and various vegetables typical for the region.
2. Like other Slavic peoples, Belarusians could boast of a huge variety of pies of various thickness, plain and filled, made mostly of wheat or buckwheat flour, but also using oatmeal.
3. Many traditional belarusian dishes are carrot based.
4. Potato babka is a savoury dish made from grated cabbage, eggs, onions and pieces of smoked, boiled or fried bacon. It is oven-baked in a crock, and often in a crock with a sauce of sour cream and pork flitch.
5. Machanka is the very indigenous and very traditional Belarusian dish, made from pork ribs and usually served with bread and sprinkled with chopped herbs. All family members dip bread into the stew.
6. The specialties of the cuisine are rye beer (called kvas), beresovik (kvas out of birch sap), medovukha (a drink out of honey, berries and herbs on the basis of fretting).
7. Potato pyzy are cooked on special holidays.
8. Potato sausage is made from pork and chicken.
9. Belarusian draniki is famous for its rich taste, national culinary secrets and the floury Belarusian potatoes – bulba – with their fluffy, dry texture that is perfect for making potato pancakes.

10. Pancakes (bliny, blintsy, mliny) are cooked all over Belarus, on weekends and on holidays.

**Complete the sentences.**

1. Like other Slavic peoples, Belarusians could boast of a huge variety of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The most traditional hard drink is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Potato dumplings, thick potato pancakes and baked grated potato pie (babka) are \_\_\_\_\_ based dishes.
4. \_\_\_\_\_, surely, influenced the traditional dishes of Belarus.
5. Potato pyzy are made from \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Potato kishka appeared in the national cuisine in the 19th with the spread of \_\_\_\_\_, which is called "the second bread" in Belarus.
7. Lazanki was introduced into the Belarusian cuisine in \_\_\_\_\_.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ – stuffed meat balls – is one of the specialties of the national cuisine. This dish traces its roots back to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.
9. Traditional dessert of Belarusian and Polish cuisine is \_\_\_\_\_. As a traditional stuffing for pie, \_\_\_\_\_ are used.
10. There is one thing that differs Belarusian pancakes from pancakes cooked in other countries: \_\_\_\_\_.

***Speaking and writing.***

3. Think of your favorite Belarussian dish and tell the class about it. Do you know how to cook it? Do you cook it yourself? What ingredients are used? When do you eat it?
4. Write a short text about your favorite Belarussian dish.  
Write: name - the ingredients - how you make it - when you eat it.



