

Baba's Ukrainian Borshch

From
Baba's Kitchen: Ukrainian Soul Food
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Hello, is your Baba here. I show you how to make special kind borshch, just like in Ukraine. You pay attention and do exactly what I say, or borshch not so good. This is important national food. We say, *If is no borshch, I not even stay at wedding.*

Give self lots of time, because borshch must cook for hours. This not modern original soup from can. Is real thing. Do not use crazy microwave for borshch. This make enough soup for four people for few day. For good party, make two, three time as much.

Borsch and our *Buryak* (beet) *Salata* is one reason Ukrainian so healthy. Buryak is full of iron, phosphorous, Vitamin C, niacin and magnesium.

Now, go get:

Oxtail. Other beef okay if not oxtail, but just okay. Nothing so good like oxtail for rich borshch. If you not have beef cow, you can find in stupormarket or in Chinatown.

Buryak, beet. If you have organic vegetable, so much better for you, the earth and also good tasting. Organic grow in horse manure, and nothing that come from horse can be bad.

Kapusta, green cabbage. No fancy-schmancy red or curly cabbage. Should be size your head. Little bit worm hole on outside leaf okay, let you know not much chemical on plant. Peel away this leaf. Ignore dirty look from store worker. Who making borshch, you or him?

Morkva. Some healthy carrot. If have dirt on them, so much better.

Tsibulya. Onion. Do not use kind already sprouting green at top. She busy having baby, not have time for you.

Chasnyk. One head garlic. Start with usual size, maybe later you like size elephant kind.

Krip. Fresh dill weed. Do not use kind dried up, come in salt shaker. That taste like straw. Pah! I spit on it.

Fasolia, little white bean. These add protein, so borshch can be whole meal. Also turn pink when cooking with beets. Very cute. Later, when you get used to eating borshch, you might add more bean. One cup dry will make double in size, so you know. Do NOT use can bean for borshch. Will turn into ugly mushinski.

Peretz. Whole black pepper. Enough so when you cup hand, just fit in your palm.

Little bit cheesecloth, needle and thread to sew whole black pepper in, drop into borshch. You also can use piece thin cotton sock. Make sure is clean, not smell like feet.

Lavrovyi list. Bay leaf. Be careful, have sharp edge.

Never mind pronunciation **salt**. Sea salt best. Tiny pinch, like you give friend, then pretend you not know why he mad.

Soniashnyk, sunflower seed oil. From soniashnyk, kind we use in Ukraina.

Limon, Juice from fresh lemon. Not frozen, not bottled. Fresh.

Xlib. Two loaf dark rye bread. The kind so heavy you can use as football. Not modern Canadian white cotton bread.

Maslo, butter. If you can get from farm, is better.

Tool: Extra wooden spoon for smack hand of grown up person try to eat borshch before ready. Do not smack little kid, or Baba be mad.

Put on apron, this get messy. **Put water in soup pot about three quarter to top.** Make boil. Make plan stay home that day. You have something to do, I know.

Drop garlic head and oxtail direct in borshch . Do not peel garlic. Let boil for at least four hour, maybe six, until some meat fall off bony part and floating in water. Liquid will make frothing. Keep removing this frothing. When frothing stop, this your second clue meat is cook.

Add boiling water when necessary, so not run dry. That boiling water, not from tap. Make big difference to flavor. Then **take all bone out of water**. Let bone cool on counter, because meat left make nice snack.

Grate beet, carrot and cabbage into big pile. Make sure wash and peel beet. I don't peel carrot, it kill vitamin. This part I can't tell you, you have to use own brain. Look back and forth from soup stock to vegetable. Liquid should be about three-quarter of pot. You want nice thick borshch, so look if you think vegetable fit in that liquid. Not too much, not too little. Should always be about one inch liquid on top vegetable. If too much liquid, either chop more vegetable or boil liquid more until some evaporate.

Chop fresh dill weed. Give stem to chicken.

Peel and chop onion. Put into frying pan with sunflower seed oil. I not measure oil, nobody so stupid they can't see how much. Fry until onion soft and clear.

Put all vegetable careful in soup pot. Be gentle so they not splash hot water.

Drop in little sewn up bag of whole black pepper. Do not be smarty pants, put pepper in without making bag. You be chewing terrible taste later.

Drop in four bay leaf. You can also make little bag for them, or just put in loose.

Pour in dry fasolia, white bean. Can bean will turn to mushinski.

Add salt.

Have cool meat for nice snack while wait for borshch to cook. See instruction below for how to eat with bread.

Make borshch cook two hour. Scoop white bean from bottom of pot, taste if they soft. Blow on them first! They will be pink now. This where you get kid excited about eating bean. Soup should be thick, almost like vegetable stew. Add more boiling water if too thick. In meantime, **squeeze lemon** and pour into glass jar. **Put butter out** so is soft. **Scoop out black pepper and bay leaf.** Throw away. Do not be lazy and leave in or borshch taste funny later. Keep soft garlic to spread on top of buttered bread, if you like.

How to eat borshch:

You think you know how eat soup? Ha! Maybe terrible scary thing from can. Tuck napkin into shirt, because once redness of beet hit it, it not wash out. That why beet make good *pysanka* (Easter egg) dye. Ladle nice thick borshch into bowls. Make sure you get bean from bottom, even you think you not love bean. You will now, Baba telling you this. Take thick slice butter onto dark rye bread. Not this skinny-shminny “spread” butter like is dangerous monster going to bite you. Add one teaspoon to one tablespoon lemon juice to soup. Take spoonful soup, blow on it. Eat soup, take bite bread. Or can dip buttered bread into soup. Try spread little soft garlic on top of butter. Keep eating.

Borshch taste even better, left in fridge overnight. Eat hot or cold.

Ingredient List:

- Oxtail, two pounds.
If unavailable, substitute two pounds fatty beef or beef soup bones with plenty of marrow
- Beets, three pounds
- Green cabbage, one medium head
- Carrots, two pounds
- Onion, one large
- Garlic, one head
- Fresh dill weed, one bunch.
- White beans, one cup dry. Do not substitute canned beans.
- Whole black pepper, one quarter cup
- Bay leaves, four
- Salt to taste
- Sunflower seed oil, half cup
- Lemons, three

- Dark rye or pumpernickel bread, two loaves
- Butter for bread
- Square of cheesecloth, needle and thread
- Keep kettle of boiled water handy

Smachnoho! Enjoy your borshch, Poopchik. *Baba's Borshch* is one of 200 traditional recipes and natural remedies in **Baba's Kitchen: Ukrainian Soul Food**. These recipes and stories are from Stalinist survivors. You can buy copy here:

<http://WWW.UKRAINIANSOULFOOD.CA>

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