

TASTE THE WORLD ~ RECIPE

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BORSCHCH

(Polish - barszcz; Ukrainian - борщ)

Serves 4-6

Borshch (борщ) is an invigorating and beautifully hued soup with origins in Polish/Ukrainian cuisine. While there are countless regional variations, most borshch has a base of beets in a subtly sour broth. It is one of the most popular soups in Eastern Europe. Spellings vary in English, including borsh, borsch, borsht (from the Yiddish, with the 't' silent).

Ingredients

- 2 or 3 tbsp butter or oil
- Onions and mushrooms, finely chopped
- Carrots, shredded cabbage, potatoes cut into small pieces
- 200g cooked white beans
- 1lb beets, peeled and grated and a few small pickled beetroots
- 2L vegetarian stock with dry mushrooms
- 3 or 4 tbsp red wine or vinegar
- 1 tbsp sugar
- Tomato paste
- Salt and pepper
- Bit of garlic, to taste
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 bunch fresh dill/chopped parsley

Method

Heat the butter or oil over medium flame in a large pot. Add the onions and sauté until translucent. Stir in the beets and carrots and heat through. Mushrooms have to be soaked in water first, and when soft, cut and fried with onion, beetroot and carrots. Mix everything together. Adjust seasoning with vinegar and sugar as needed. The broth should be lightly tart-sweet, but not overwhelmingly so.

Bring the ingredients to a boil, and then reduce heat to low and simmer for 45 to 50 minutes, or until the vegetables are cooked though yet retain their texture.

Serve hot in bowls garnished with a dollop of sour cream (smetana) and a sprinkling of chopped fresh dill/parsley.

Vegetarian broth

Try using a variety of vegetables. Saute some chopped carrots, celery, celery root, parsley root or mushrooms with the onions. Add some shredded cabbage, chunks of potato or parsnips to the simmering soup. Some say a true borshch must have beans. Use cooked white beans. The amount of vegetables should be about 2 to 3 cups total.