



Newsletter – December, 2003

“I ran out of Paprika so I went to Budapest!”

or so I told a fellow Friar when she asked where I had been ... well, she cracked up (maybe it was the drinks).

If you ask anyone who has been to Budapest what made the greatest impression on them (besides paprika), and apart from the Danube, gypsy music, the city frozen in time, the fantastic museums, the opera, the thermal baths, the most pleasant of my experiences was the hospitality, and great restaurants.

Until 1873 Budapest was the capital city of Hungary – it was three independent towns: Pest, Buda and Obuda; this region has been inhabited for over two thousand years.

After they were unified, the city underwent enormous change. At the turn of the century the first underground railway in continental Europe was built along the entire length of Andrassy ut with the Opera House at the middle and the City Park and Heroes' Square at its end. The colonnade with statues in Heroes' Square commemorates the leaders of the Conquest of Hungary and other illustrious rulers and leaders from Hungarian history. The Vajdahunyad Castle was build as a collection of replicas showing historic buildings from different parts of Hungary at that time. One of the most interesting of the listed buildings of the 135 year old Budapest Zoo and Botanical Gardens is the Europa Nostra prize-winning elephant house, and it is here in the City Park that the one hundred plus year old exquisite Gundel Restaurant (a museum in itself). This restaurant is owned by our New York friend George Lang. I know you've been to his famous

New York City restaurant *Café des Artistes*. George came along in 1992 to awaken the 'sleeping beauty' with a complete restoration.

Gundel has a great wine cellar, party space, also its own vineyards from which the house and local folk are supplied with some boutique wines.

I had the opportunity to taste the famous Hungarian Bull's Blood, which is an exquisite wine (a mixture of the blue kadarka grape from the Szekszard area, one of 22 wine producing regions, mixed with kekfrankos, merlot and carbernet.

One thinks of goulash when in Hungary, but one trip through the central market, one of the most popular Central European shopping sites, will show the variety of food and spices; the diversity and influence of Germans, Austrians, Turks, Tartars, Czechs, Serbs, Croatians, Slovaks, Slovenes, and Russians.

Even Italy, by means of a marriage of an Italian (Beatrice of Aragon) to the Renaissance King Matthias, who introduced the making of gnocchi served as the basis of Hungarian noodles and dumplings. The Turks with their phyllo dough became Hungarian Strudel as so like every country, assimilation, folk traditions and recipes, ingredients vary from region to region.

And here I give you a sampling of bold, alluring Hungarian cuisine.
(Note: I have replaced the lard with hearth healthy Colavita Extra Virgin Olive Oil.)

If you should go to Budapest you will find Gundel at:
1146 Budapest Allatkerti ut 2
Tel: (36-1) 321-35-50
Fax: (36-1) 342-2917

Other wonderful restaurants are:

RESTAURANT KARPATIA
1053 Budapest Ferenciek tere 7-8
Tel: (36-1) 317-35-96
Fax: (36-1) 318-05-91

MOSAIC CAFÉ RESTAURANT
1063 Budapest Andrassy ut 111
Tel: (36-1) 462-2189

You can find more information on www.thechef.com

BEEF GOULASH (*GULYAS*)

1 medium yellow onion, chopped
1 medium green pepper, cored, seeded, chopped
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons Colavita Extra Virgin Olive Oil
2 pounds beef, shin, chuck, cut into 1-1/2" cubes
1 cup beef stock
2-1/2 tablespoons sweet Hungarian paprika
1/2 teaspoon cumin
2 crushed garlic cloves
Salt and pepper to taste
8 ounces noodles

Serves 4.

In a large skillet brown the onion and peppers in butter and oil. Remove onion and peppers.

Brown the beef, lower heat and return onion and pepper mixture. Sprinkle on paprika and mix thoroughly. Add some beef stock; then add cumin, garlic, salt and pepper. Add the remaining stock. Cover and simmer for 2 hours or until meat is tender. Serve on buttered noodles.

Have extra paprika for sprinkling, as you would black pepper.

Option:

NOTE: Since we are serving over noodles, I omitted the diced potatoes. You can also make this dish hotter by adding hot paprika or cherry peppers.

HUNGARIAN STYLE CABBAGE

1 large green cabbage
1 cup sour cream
Salt to taste
1 tablespoon Hungarian paprika
3 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon caraway seeds

Shred cabbage coarsely. Cook uncovered for 8-10 minutes or until tender. Drain thoroughly. Mix in sour cream, season with salt and paprika. When ready to serve, stir in butter and caraway seeds.

PAPRIKA OIL

1 tablespoon Hungarian paprika (sweet or hot)
1 tablespoon Colavita Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Mix paprika and oil and use for brush on to fish, roasts, barbecues, etc.

CHICKEN PAPRIKA (CSIRKE PAPRIKAS)

2 medium yellow onions, chopped
½ cup Colavita Extra Virgin Olive Oil
3-1/2 tablespoons sweet Hungarian paprika
1 teaspoon cumin
Salt to taste
3-1/2 – 4 lbs. chicken, cut up
1 cup chicken stock
1 pint sour cream

Serves 4

In a large skillet, brown the onions in olive oil, push to the side and brown the chicken – sprinkle paprika, cumin and salt. Add stock, cover and simmer until cooked.

Remove chicken; add sour cream and mix well. NOTE: Flour can be used to thicken, if necessary. Return chicken to bathe in sauce.

Serve with dumplings or noodles.

CATFISH IN SAUERKRAUT HUNGARIAN STYLE

Ingredients for 6 persons

3 lbs. catfish
2 lbs. potatoes
2 lbs. sauerkraut
4 strips smoked bacon
½ cup Colavita Extra Virgin Olive Oil
16 oz. sour cream
Salt to taste
½ cup flour
1 tablespoon paprika

Mix flour and paprika.

Slice catfish, coat with flour and paprika mixture, pre-fry in a little oil.
Wash sauerkraut, chop strips of smoked bacon, slice potatoes.

Preheat oven 375°F.

Braise sauerkraut in a little oil until half ready, fry potato slices in oil.
Place half of the potatoes in oiled pan. Add half of the sauerkraut, the slices of catfish, season with salt and paprika. Add a layer of potatoes and the rest of the sauerkraut, sprinkle sour cream on top, place smoked bacon pieces on and cook until ready in 375°F oven.

PORK FRY OF VIZIVAROS

One 1/4-1/2 lb. fillet of pork, sliced 1/2" thick
1/2 lb. chicken livers
4 strips smoked bacon, chopped
1/2 cup Colavita Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1/4 lb. white mushrooms, chopped
1 small onion, chopped
1 medium ripe tomatoes, chopped
2 small green bell peppers, cored, seeded, chopped
1/4 lb. green peas
2 tablespoons sweet Hungarian paprika
Salt and ground black pepper to taste
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup Italian parsley, chopped
4 small potatoes, boiled, quartered

Serves 4

Fry the bacon in a little oil and remove bacon, then add remaining oil. Sauté the pork medallions; when browned add mushrooms, onion, tomatoes, bell pepper. After 5 minutes add chicken livers, peas, sprinkle on paprika, salt, pepper, garlic. Add water. Continue to cook until pork and livers are cooked and vegetables tender.

Serve on boiled potatoes and sprinkle parsley over all.