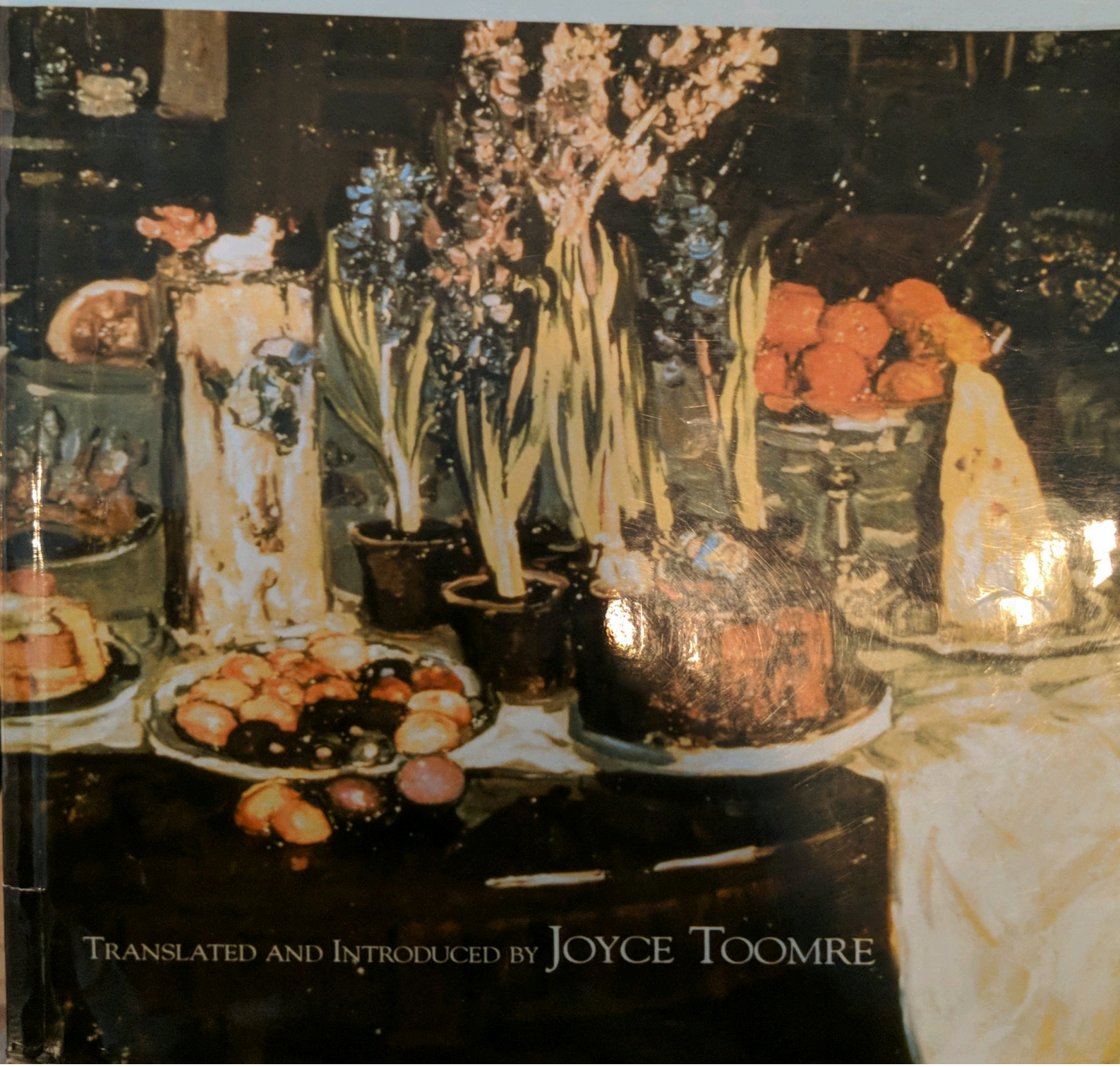
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Classic Russian Cooking

Elena Molokhovets' A Gift to Young Housewives



Translated and Introduced by Joyce Toomre

Remarks: When crayfish are expensive, economize by not adding them to this soup, but instead use them that same day to prepare crayfish sauce.

Instead of using flour, pearl barley or rice boiled separately in bouillon may be added to the soup tureen together with the remaining tails and some dill. Pour in the soup, stir, and serve.

To flavor the soup, some people add 2–3 seeded lemon slices or ¼–½ glass of table wine.

The stuffing may be varied as follows. Finely pound all the cleaned claws and half the tails. Mix with 2 spoons of finely pounded rusks, ½ glass of rice boiled in bouillon, parsley, and dill. Add 2 raw eggs, 1 spoon butter, salt, and nutmeg. Dilute with ½ glass or more of whole milk or cream, but not too much—the forcemeat should be rather thick. Fill the crayfish shells, add to the bouillon, and bring to a boil.

This stuffing is also made from buckwheat groats or millet, which first must be washed and scalded with boiling water and then rinsed in cold water. Cook with butter in a small quantity of water. Let it cool, then mix with an egg and butter and stuff the crayfish shells. Use 1 glass of groats in all, ½ glass for the stuffing and ½ glass for the soup.

INGREDIENTS

3 lbs beef or veal
2 carrots
1 parsley root
1 celery root
1 leek
(1 onion)
40 crayfish
5–10 allspice
(1–2 bay leaves)
5–6 eggs
parsley and dill
salt
2 spoons butter
nutmeg
3–4 spoons rusks, or ½ French roll
½ glass flour
½–1½ glasses sour cream
(½ glass rice or pearl barley)

57 Mixed meat soup, or *soljanka*

(Seljanka mjasnaja)

Prepare a bouillon in the usual way, with 1 or 2 lbs of beef, root vegetables, pepper, and a bay leaf. Strain and, when the bouillon is done, add a plateful of meat, cut into small cubes. Use a little of each of the following: boiled or roast beef, veal, chicken, ham, goose, duck, and sausage.

Finely chop 1 onion and fry in 1 spoon of fresh butter. Sprinkle with 1 spoon flour, fry lightly, and dilute with bouillon. Add 2 cubed, salted cucumbers, 12 olives, 6–12 field mushrooms [*Agaricus campestris* or *Psalliota campestris*], 6–12 marinated saffron milk-caps, and 6–12 salted milk-agaric mushrooms, scalded with boiling water.* Or add fresh white mushrooms, saffron milk-caps, yellow-

brown boletus [*Boletus luteus*] or milk-agaric mushrooms. Before using fresh mushrooms, they must be cleaned, scalded with boiling water, and cooked separately, skimming the liquid. Add 1–2 glasses of cucumber brine and fresh cabbage scalded with boiling water. When all this is ready, add it to the rest of the bouillon containing the assorted meats. Pour in ½ to 1 glass of sour cream or thick fresh cream and bring to a boil. To serve, sprinkle the soup tureen with finely chopped parsley and dill, and for those who like it, a good handful of finely chopped green onions.

INGREDIENTS

[Listed as follows in a single paragraph]:

From 1–3 lbs beef, less than a full plate of various meats, root vegetables, an onion, spices, 1 spoon butter, 1 spoon flour, less than a full plate of various fresh or marinated mushrooms, 12 olives, 2 salted cucumbers, 1–2 glasses of cucumber brine, ¼ head of fresh cabbage, ½–1 glass of fresh sour or sweet cream, dill, parsley, and green onions.

**See Chapter 29 for directions on marinating and salting mushrooms.*

MEAT-BASED PURÉED SOUPS

(Supy-pjure mjasnye)

Remarks about puréed soups made from pulses and vegetables: Use root vegetables from which puréed soups are prepared, such as carrots, turnips, rutabagas, and Jerusalem artichokes. Wash them and, without peeling or slicing them, put them in warm water. Bring them just to a boil; this will remove the raw, bitter taste. Drain them immediately in a sieve. Now peel and wash the vegetables, cut them into small cubes, and place them in a stoneware pot. Cover with boiling water or bouillon. Boil them until they are completely soft, rub them through a colander, and dilute with the remaining bouillon. Thicken the purée with a liaison; that is, beat 2 egg yolks with ½ glass of cream, strain the eggs and cream, and add to the puréed soup. Heat until the soup is very hot, but not boiling, as this would curdle the eggs. The liaison keeps the vegetable purée from settling or separating from the bouillon and gives the soup a smooth consistency. The liaison serves the same purpose in puréed pulse soups, as well.

Remarks about puréed game soups: For puréed soups made with wildfowl, chicken, hare, etc., the game must first be fried in butter. Remove the meat from the bones, pound it thoroughly, sprinkle 1 spoon flour over the meat, and add a little bouillon. Boil until soft, rub through a colander, and dilute with the remaining bouillon. Add 2 egg yolks mixed with ½ glass of cream as indicated in the

*Except for the addition of nutmeg and the absence of lettuce, Molokhovets' recipe is remarkably similar to La Varenne's Potage de Pigeons aux pois verts, published in 1651. Fresh peas were the rage of high society at the court of Louis XIV. (See Wheaton, Savoring the Past, 136–137; also La Varenne, Le cuisinier françois, 123.)

89 Puréed oatmeal soup in the style of Hamburg

(Sup pjure gamburgskij s ovsjanoju krupoju)

Prepare a bouillon in the usual manner with 3 lbs of beef. Add oatmeal to the bouillon, boil until the oatmeal is soft, strain, and rub through a fine sieve. Add 2 wineglasses of rum, a little sugar, lemon zest, ½ glass each currants and grated almonds, and a piece of cinnamon. Bring the soup to a boil. Beat 2 egg yolks and ½ glass of cream, strain, and stir 2–3 spoons of the oatmeal soup into the eggs and cream. Pour liaison into the rest of the soup, stirring briskly, heat until very hot, and serve.

FISH SOUPS

(Supy rybnye)

Remarks: For remarks about fish, see Chapter 7.

90 Mixed fish soup, or Fish *soljanka*

(Seljanka rybnaja)

A thin fish *soljanka* is prepared as follows: Finely chop 1 onion and fry in 2 spoons animal fat. Sprinkle with 1½ spoons flour, fry lightly, and dilute with water. Add about 3 lbs raw fish cut into small pieces, such as sturgeon, white sturgeon, and whitefish, an equal amount of each. Add a bay leaf, pepper, 10 olives, 10 finely sliced field mushrooms, 2 salted cucumbers, and a little fresh cabbage or sauerkraut, previously scalded with boiling water. Bring to a boil several times so that the fish cooks. Add cucumber brine to taste and bring to a boil. Add sour cream, strew with greens, and serve.

INGREDIENTS

3 lbs of various fish
⅛–¼ lb butter
1½ spoons flour
1 onion
10 olives
½ lb or more fresh cabbage, or sauerkraut
10 field mushrooms
1 bay leaf
pepper
about 1–2 glasses cucumber brine
½–1 glass fresh sour or thick sweet cream
2 salted cucumbers

caviar that has just been removed from a fresh fish, mash it fine, mix with the sauerkraut, and let it boil thoroughly over the fire. The caviar will impart a fine flavor to the sauerkraut. This dish may be served with patties, small sausages, or fried fish. On fast days, substitute olive oil for the Finnish butter. Add enough caviar so that the sauerkraut appears as if it were strewn with poppy seeds.

INGREDIENTS

3 lbs shredded sauerkraut

½ glass caviar
½ lb butter

439 Moscow sauerkraut and meat stew in a skillet, or Moscow *soljanka*

(Moskovskaja seljanka na skovorode)

This *soljanka* must be thick. Mostly it is eaten for breakfast, but at dinner, it should precede the bouillon.* Finely grate 1 onion, fry in ¼ lb butter, and stir in about 1½ lbs shredded sauerkraut. Stew, covered, until cooked, stirring so it does not burn. Sprinkle on ½ spoon flour, mix everything together, and transfer half the sauerkraut to a skillet. Add a layer of various kinds of cooked meat cut into small pieces, such as beef, veal, ham, chicken, various game, etc., and cover with the rest of the sauerkraut. Decorate the top with finely chopped salted cucumbers, cornichons, olives, marinated mushrooms and, if desired, truffles or small sausages. Pour on the sauce left from cooking the meat, brown in the oven, and serve from the same skillet.

Fresh cabbage may be used instead of sauerkraut, in which case, it should be shredded and dropped into boiling water. When it begins to boil, remove with a slotted spoon and place in a saucepan with butter. Add 2–3 finely chopped sour apples and stew until done.

INGREDIENTS

1½–2 lbs sauerkraut
¼ lb butter
½ spoon flour
1½–2 lbs various meats
10 marinated mushrooms
1 onion
2 cucumbers
10 cornichons
10 olives
1–3 truffles

*It seems odd to serve this before bouillon. Perhaps Molokhovets considered it a substitute for zakuski. For more on menus and mealtimes, see the Introduction.