

As much as I talk about my Grandma Irma being such a wonderful cook and inspiration to my love of the kitchen, I also owe a portion of that praise to my grandmother on the other side of the fence. Barbara Dick.

My Nana Barb adds a non-traditional type of cooking to my ever expanding recipe book, good old fashioned German food.

My Nana lives in Henderson and is the mother of four, grandmother of seven and even has reached the status of great-grandmother of two. Therefore, a person could easily claim her as “seasoned.”

I recall as a small girl never missing a holiday dinner of Ham, Verenika and Tweibak. Man do I love that stuff. Well, all except the ham, I could do without that! Those were the days when my aunts, sisters and I would sit at the table and have contests as to who could eat the most. If my memory serves me correctly, I was always the winner. I believe that I still hold the record at 15 Verenika in one sitting. Yummy!

Those were also the days when I didn't have to worry about calories and carbs. I am not saying that I could not beat that record, however, I don't feel like waiting to see how much the scale raises after a meal of that caliber either!

I do realize that German food is not for everyone. Nevertheless, I credit this amazing dish for a great number of childhood memories that are so delightful and entertaining. This meal will always be a staple in my life. Although this meal is traditionally prepared along with ham slices and cubed ham in the cream gravy, it can also be eaten alone as the main course. It's up to you!

Verenika

DOUGH: FILLING:

2 eggs

1 qt dry cottage cheese

2/3 cup heavy cream 1 egg

2 tsp salt salt and pepper to taste

1 1/3 cup milk

3 1/2 - 4 1/2 cups flour

Mix all dough ingredients together adding enough flour to make a stiff dough. Knead until firm and elastic.

Roll out dough very thin on a slightly floured board. Loosen from board and cut into circles using a peanut butter jar or a large mouth glass.

Mix all filling ingredients together in a medium bowl. Place a small tablespoon of filling on each dough circle. Fold dough over filling to form a half circle and seal tightly using the thumb and forefinger. Make sure the edges are sealed well. The filling is crumbly and the pouch will not seal well if cheese gets stuck in the seam.

Freeze pouches to use at a later date, or:

PREPARE:

Poke pouch with a fork. Place in boiling water until dough is done and cheese is heated through. A rule of thumb is when the Verenika floats, it is nearly done. Wait another minute or two and remove from water. Drain and serve with a cream gravy or ham slices. Serving with a cream gravy will keep the Verenika from sticking together.

Cream Gravy

1 qt heavy cream

1 medium container sour cream

Real bacon bits to taste

salt and pepper to taste

1 Tbsp vinegar

Make a roux with flour and a small amount of milk or drippings from your ham. Slowly add all gravy ingredients and mix well. Add enough milk to make gravy desired consistency. Cube ham and add to gravy. Pour over Verenika and serve.

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Kitchen Tip: Did you know that you can silence your smoke detector during a kitchen disaster by dampening a dish towel with vinegar and waving the towel in the smoky area near the detector?