

Sausages of Eastern Europe

A Sausage-Laden Recipe Journey Down the Danube

I collected these recipes while cruising down the Danube in August, 2016. The other tourists must have thought I was insane, taking pictures of butcher shop sausage displays instead of historic buildings, sampling where I could. The tour guides and waiter staff aboard ship, however, encouraged me, in some cases buying samples and offering their own recipes. ...and, of course, there was the internet to search. Being in the middle of the region helped me find recipes otherwise drowned out by the flood volume of North American content.

As of this writing, I haven't made most of the recipes, but cold smoking season is approaching, my fermentation chamber is newly expanded, and it won't be long. I particularly look forward to making some of the paprika-laced, birch-smoked (I'll use alder) goodies that I sampled on our trip. Eastern Europe is only now opening up to travelers, and offers many delights, including of course its sausages and its delightful people. Here's hoping that you will sample their hospitality.

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Caution: some of these recipes require specialized cold smoking and fermentation equipment and procedures. Do not attempt these unless you are familiar with these specialized techniques.

Austrian Sausages

Based on <http://buttonsoup.ca/kasekrainer-austrian-sausages/> (heavily edited)
and

“Olympia Provisions, Cured Meats and Tales from an American Charcuterie”
by Elias Cairo and Meredith Erickson, 10-Speed Press, Berkeley, p. 98-100.

Käsekrainer

Käsekrainer is a sausage with a finely ground interior which includes cubes of cheese that melt when the sausage is cooked... [The recipe on the left is edited from a Canadian chef’s “take” on the recipe, showing the “a bit of this and a dab of that” approach. The one on the right is from a charcutiere, and has been developed so as to be more exact.]

Käsekrainer

Ingredients (normalized to 1000 gm pork + fatback)

Vienna (Canadian) version

- 1000 g pork shoulder
- 200 g ...Gruyère [or Emmentaler], diced into 3/16" cubes
- 16 g kosher salt
- 1/2 tbsp light corn syrup
- 1 pinch sodium nitrite>

Plus the following:

- 2 cloves (16 gm) garlic,... minced
- 1 bay leaf, ground
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/4 tsp mustard powder
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground, toasted coriander
- 1 pinch cayenne
- fresh ground black pepper
- 5' hog casings, soaked and rinsed

Swiss (Olympia Provisions) version

- 707 (1100) gm pork shoulder
- 293 (455) gm fatback
- 219 (340) gm Emmentaler cheese, diced into ¼" cubes
- 19 (30) gm sea salt
- 2.6 (4) gm sugar
- 1.9 (3) gm sodium nitrite

Plus the following:

- 145 (225) gm crushed ice
- 42 (66) gm milk powder
- 8.4 (13) gm chopped garlic
- 6.4 (10) gm black pepper
- 4' (5') hog casings, soaked and rinsed

Procedure

- ...Cut the pork into 1" cubes [...and partially freeze]. Grind the meat through a 1/4" plate. Add the salt and spices to the ground meat. ...return to the freezer... [Viennese:] Re grind the mixture using a 3/16" plate.
- ...slowly mix the forcemeat while adding the corn syrup. [When the meat begins to] bind, ...fold in the cubed cheese. Fry a small piece of the mixture and taste. Adjust the seasoning [if] necessary.
- Stuff the mixture into the hog casings and twist into 6" links. ...dry for an hour [in a refrigerator].

On Cooking Käsekrainer

[Canadian:] On the streets of Vienna there are actually two types of käsekrainer. ...The first... looks like any other sausage... upon biting into the link that you discover the cheese. The second has a crunchy crust of cheese



fried onto the exterior of the sausage. I don't think I need to spend much time explaining... still working on ... crust development...

Inevitably (and especially in homemade links) some cheese will leak out the ends during cooking. My working theory on crust development is that the sausage must be rolled through this cheese while it is still gooey, so that the cheese adheres to the skin. Otherwise the cheese will brown and stick to the pan, instead of the sausage. As a rule of thumb, move the *käsekrainer* frequently while cooking. The sausage must be eaten very hot, or the cheese will re-congeal.

[Olympic Provisions:] Smoke with 2 parts apple chips and one part hickory chips. Smoke at 70 degF for one hour, then increase to 180 – 200 degF and continue to smoke for two hours. Finish in the oven to an internal meat temperature of 155 degF. Plunge into ice water for 30 minutes. Will keep for up to 3 weeks in a plastic bag, refrigerated, or vacuum seal and freeze.

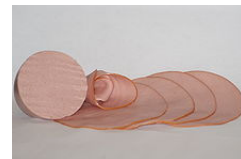
To serve, bring a pot of water or half water, half beer to a simmer. Add 24 grams kosher salt. Simmer for 3 minutes. Then fry in a skillet with a little oil for 3 minutes until browned and crisp. Serve in Kaiser rolls.

Austrian Summary (From Wikipedia):

Bierschinken, or Schinkenwurst (called in Austria and Switzerland Krakauer) is a form of sausage particularly common in German-speaking countries. Unlike the name suggests, it is not prepared with beer, but the name simply comes from the fact that Bierschinken is famously eaten with beer, as a cold cut. It is a fine brühwurst of pickled pork, beef or poultry meat (also mixed), bacon and spices with a coarse deposit of pork pieces or cooked ham. It may be slightly smoked. It is usually sold sliced in delicatessen stores, but it can also be found preserved in cans.



Extrawurst is a type of Austrian scalded cold cut. It is moist, light colored, fine textured and made from a well-spiced mixture of beef, pork and bacon fat. In Austria, it is the most popular type of cold cut. It is similar to the American Bologna sausage, the Dutch Boterhamwurst, the German Lyoner or Fleischwurst and the Swedish Falukorv. It is cooked or served cold, often in a Wurstsalat, or as a cold cut.



One variety is the Pikantwurst, which has finely chopped red or green peppers added to it.

Hungarian Winter Salami recipe

<http://hungarian-food.hungaryguide.info/salami-recipe.html>

The Hungarian Winter Salami is a unique salami which is smoked cold and has white mold.

Ingredients:

- 15.4 lb (7 kg) Pork, lean
- 6.6 lb (3 kg) Pork back fat
- 50 tsp (250 g) Salt
- 3.5 tbs (50 g) white pepper
- 1/2 tbs (10 g) pimento
- 1/2 tbs (10 g) saltpetre
- 1 tbs (15 g) powdered sugar
- 1/2 tbs (10 g) garlic

Procedure:

- Partially freeze the pork meat and fat.
- Grind pork meat and fat through a 12 mm plate.
- Place all spice ingredients in a spice mill and pulverize them.
- Mix in the spice with the meat and fat. Keep cold.
- Partially freeze again. Grind through a 5 mm plate.
- Let stand overnight in a cold place.
- Stuff into beef middles or protein -lined artificial casing
- Cold smoke for two days.
- Dry at 65°F (18°C), 75-80% humidity for at least 30 days.
- Store in a cool place for maximum 3-4 months.



Hungarian Sausage (Hazi Kolbasz)

<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/hungariansausages/r/hazi-kolbasz.htm>

This recipe for homemade Hungarian sausage or *hazi kolbasz* (HAH-zee KOOL-bahss) is made with pork shoulder, garlic, salt, pepper and paprika. Sausage recipes vary by region and personal taste. Some cooks add a pinch of cloves and lemon zest to their mixture. Make sure not to trim all the fat off the pork, otherwise the sausage will be too dry.

...The biggest difference between Hungarian and Polish sausage is that Hungarian sausage is never boiled, just baked or sautéed.

Ingredients

- 4 pounds boneless, well-marbled pork shoulder, cut [into 1" or so chunks]
- 3 crushed garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1/2 cup cold water
- 14 feet hog casings, rinsed three times

Preparation

- After rinsing hog casings, store in refrigerator until ready to use.
- In a small bowl, mix garlic, salt, pepper, paprika and water, and set aside.
- ...keep the meat refrigerated [partially freeze] until ready to grind. Coarsely grind the meat ...
- Combine water-spice mixture with meat until thoroughly incorporated [primary bind]. To make sure the seasonings are just right, fry a small patty and taste. Some people like to refrigerate the meat mixture, covered, overnight before stuffing so it flavors, but that's not necessary.
- [Stuff as usual. "Using funnel for stuffing" instructions deleted.]
- Use immediately or store sausage refrigerated and covered up to two days until ready to cook.
- Cooking instructions: Heat oven to 350 degrees. Place sausage in a greased baking pan or casserole dish with a little water (or beer). Bake 1 hour or until sausage is browned, but not dry.
- Freeze uncooked or cooked sausage for up to 6 months.

Slovak Potato Sausage Recipe - Bobrovecke Droby

<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/slovaksausages/r/potato.htm>

This recipe for Slovak potato sausage or **bobrovecke droby** contains pork, bacon and onion. Some cooks even add chopped ham. The mixture can be stuffed in beef (for a larger sausage) or hog casings and then slowly boiled. It can then be quickly pan fried to give a more appealing color.

Ingredients

- 1 pound boneless pork shoulder (pork butt, Boston butt)
- 1/2 pound diced bacon (not maple cured)
- 2 medium grated onions
- 10 pounds Idaho potatoes, peeled and cut into quarters
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper or to taste
- 1 teaspoon marjoram
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed dried peppermint leaves
- About 40 feet of beef or hog casings, rinsed thoroughly and refrigerated

Preparation

- In a small pan, cook pork shoulder with just enough water to cover for 15 to 20 minutes. Cut meat into large pieces. Reserve the cooking water and let it cool.
- In small skillet, saute bacon until golden. Add onions and saute 5 minutes more.
- Using a medium plate, grind the pork (fat and all) and potatoes...
- Add bacon, onions, salt, pepper, marjoram and peppermint leaves to the water the meat was cooked in. Mix well and then combine with meat-potato mixture.
- Fry a small patty of meat and taste to make sure the seasonings are just right.
- Stuff the meat into the casings. Prick air bubbles.
- Store refrigerated and covered for up to two days until ready to cook. Freeze uncooked or cooked sausage for up to 6 months.

To cook,

- Place sausage in a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer uncovered for 45 minutes.
- Or pan fry on both sides in a little fat until golden
- Or brown it in a 350-degree oven for about 20 minutes, turning frequently.

NOTE: The sausage can also be baked in a greased loaf pan or made into patties by adding up to 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour if the mixture is very loose.

Romanian Sausages Recipe - Mititei

<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/romanianmaincourses/r/mititei.htm>

The story has it a popular mid-19th-century Romanian inn, famous for its sausages, was out of a customer favorite. To save time, the chef formed the unstuffed meat mixture into sausage-shaped cylinders and grilled them over charcoal. The customers delighted in "the wee ones without skin," and so these casingless sausages became known as [mititei](#) or "the wee ones."



Mititei also can be made with lamb or pork or a combination, and formed into patties or meatballs and grilled, broiled, pan fried or baked in the oven...

Ingredients

- 1 pound ground chuck
- 1 pound ground pork
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3 to 9 finely chopped garlic cloves or to taste
- 2 teaspoons thyme
- 1 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes or to taste
- 1 tablespoon hot Hungarian paprika or to taste
- 2 teaspoons caraway seeds
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Preparation

- Place ingredients in a large bowl and mix thoroughly... Cover bowl and refrigerate 6 hours to overnight.
- ...divide mixture into 18 equal portions and form into oval sausages about 3 inches long and 1 1/2 inches thick.
- Grill, broil or pan fry 7 minutes per side or bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.
- Serve with tomato and green onion salad, sour cream sprinkled with paprika, baked potato or french fries, or rice.

Bulgarian Sausages Recipes and Descriptions

<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/bulgariansausages/a/bulgariansausag.htm>

Bulgarian sausages are as numerous as the flavors and countries that have influenced its cuisine. There are fresh sausages, hot smoked, cold smoked and dry-cured sausages.

Bulgarian Lukanka Sausage

Lukanka is a dry-cured Bulgarian salami. It is a flattened oblong in shape and traditionally made of pork, beef, veal, black pepper, cumin, salt, and fenugreek, but there are variations.

After the ground meat is stuffed, the sausage is hung to dry for about 40 to 90 days and then pressed into its typical flat form. As with all meat products, the sausage flavor varies depending on the feed the animals were given and the region where it was made.



Well-known lukanka makers are the people of central Bulgaria at the foot of the Balkan mountain range, notably the Smyadovo, Panagyurishte, and Karlovo regions (the latter of which is protected by the patent office of the Republic of Bulgaria attesting to its authenticity).

Bulgarian lukanka sausage is usually finely sliced and served cold as an appetizer or meze.

Bulgarian Soudjouk Sausage, also spelled sujuk, is a dry, spicy cured sausage made with a variety of ground meats and spices including cumin, sumac, garlic, salt, and red pepper. It's popular on appetizer (meze) trays and served with high-octane rakia brandy.

Bulgarian Kebabcheta or Kebabche Sausages are fresh casing-less sausages that can be grilled, broiled, pan-fried or baked and are similar to Croatian / Serbian cevapcici sausages.

List of Bulgarian Sausages (from internet):

- DRY CURED PORK AND BEEF SALAMI (PANAGIURSKA LUKANKA)
- DRY CURED PORK SALAMI (BANSKI STARETS)
- Dry Cured Beef Salami (Soudjouk)
- DRY CURED PORK SALAMI (SELSKI SOUDJOUK)
- Dry Cured Beef and Pork Salami (Majstorska Lukanka)
- Dry Cured Pork Loin (Fillet Elena)
- Dry Cured Pork Salami (KARLOVSKA LUKANKA)

Bulgarian Sausage

Via a personal communiqué from Radi and Miki Markovic
Attributed to Radi's Uncle Krasi

Ingredients (*ed. notes in italic*)

- 1 kg pork + fat (*add 400 gm fat back to get 27% fat*)
- 1 kg chicken gizzards
- 2% salt (*use 50 gm if fatback added*)
- Spice per kg, enough to fill the flat of your hand (*est. 30 gm/kg = 60 gm*)
- (*6.3 gm cure #2, to give 150 ppm nitrite, 95 ppm nitrate*)
- (*0.29 gm T-SPX*)

Instructions (*ed. notes in italic*)

- (*Chop or grind, mix*), stuff (*in hog casing*). Flatten.
- Hang cold to ferment. (*3 days, 14 degC*)
- Flatten again. Hang cold to dry. (*14 degC, 80-85% humidity, to 35% weight loss*)

Radi says that the recipe tends to be too dry unless fat is added. We estimated the amount of spice to be 30 gm/flat of hand, so the recipe requires 60 grams. The type of spice is not clear, but she didn't disagree with ½ sweet paprika, ½ sharp paprika.

Cure #2 has been added, per standard USA dried sausage practice. T-SPX bacteria has been added to give a "head start" to desirable bacteria. Fermenting/drying conditions are typical.

Croatian / Serbian Sausage - Cevapcici or Cevaps

<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/sausages/r/cevapcici.htm>

It has been said the casing-less sausages known as cevapcici or cevaps found their way into Eastern Europe via the Ottoman Empire, which picked them up from Arabic cultures around Persia. Today, there are different versions of cevapcici throughout Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. Some use pork and lamb, others use pork, lamb and beef, and yet others omit the pork entirely. Originally, they were skewered and grilled over an open fire. Nowadays, most cooks grill, broil or pan-fry them. They make great appetizers and sandwiches on lepinje bread!



Ingredients

- 1 pound [ground beef](#) chuck
- 1/2 pound ground pork
- 1/2 pound ground lamb
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onions
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Finely chopped onions, for garnish

Preparation

- Mix together beef, pork, lamb, garlic, 1/2 cup chopped onions and salt.
- Roll meat mixture into a long, 3/4-inch cylinder. Cut links at 4-inch intervals. ...Refrigerate for 1 hour to firm. **Note:** Sausages can be frozen at this point. When ready to use, thaw or cook from the frozen state.
- Broil cevapcici on a charcoal grill or a preheated oven broiler rack, 4 minutes per side or until no longer pink in the middle. Or pan fry ...for 8 minutes, turning frequently to brown all sides.
- Serve with chopped raw onion, Serbian potato salad and pogacha bread. Cevapcici make great appetizers!

Cevapcici

<http://www.stuffers.com/category-s/1985.htm>

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 1/2 lb. ground lamb
- 1/2 lb. ground pork
- 4 -7 finely minced garlic cloves
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. cracked or freshly ground black pepper 1 (+) tsp. cayenne pepper
- seasoned pepper and garlic pepper to taste
- 1 beaten egg white

Directions:

Mix all. You may wish to combine the seasonings or grind them together before adding them to the meat. Shape in thumb-sized sausages, or in croquette size shapes. Grill on open grill until done. Serve with pita bread or hard rolls, and onions (raw or sautéed). The smaller size works great for an appetizer (on a toothpick). Traditionally, these are not served in barbeque sauce.

Ukrainian Sausage Recipe - Kovbasa

<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/ukrainianmaincourses/r/kovbasa.htm>

In Ukrainian, **kovbasa** is the generic word for any type of "sausage," much like [kielbasa](#) is the generic word for "sausage" in Polish. The beauty of this particular Ukrainian fresh sausage (not smoked) recipe is that casings are optional. The links can be formed by hand, if desired. Other Eastern European sausages formed by hand include Serbian/Croatian cevapcici and Romanian mititei.



This simple sausage is made with a combination of pork and beef and **peperivka**, a spicy vodka. The meat mixture can be prepared days in advance in order for the flavors to meld and develop before rolling into cylinders and cooking. Grilling, frying, baking or poaching all produce a good result. If you have trouble finding **peperivka**, I include a recipe for it below. It must be aged for 48 hours before using, so plan accordingly.

Ingredients

- 1 pound ground pork shoulder
- 1/2 pound ground beef chuck
- 4 ounces fatback
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 2 teaspoons peperivka (see below)
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 1 teaspoon salt

To Poach the Sausage:

- Muslin
- Butcher's twine
- 7 1/2 cups chicken stock

Peperivka:

- 3 whole cayenne peppers
- 2/3 cup vodka, whiskey or bourbon

Garnish:

- Chopped fresh parsley

Preparation

Combine ingredients. Check seasonings by frying a small amount and tasting. Adjust seasonings if necessary.

Pan fry: form meat mixture into 6 sausages. Fry sausages... 7 to 10 minutes per side. Sausages also can be grilled or baked.

Poach: Form the meat mixture into 2 (8-inch) long sausages, wrap them in a double muslin layer and tie securely with butcher's twine. In a large saucepan, bring the stock to a gentle simmer. Add the sausages and poach gently, turning frequently, for 35 to 40 minutes or until the juices run clear when the sausages are pierced with a fine skewer. Leave the sausages in the stock for 20 minutes, then remove and leave to cool. Remove the twine and muslin and sauté the sausages in oil to brown them. Garnish with parsley and serve with buttered mashed potatoes, if desired.

To make the peperivka: Prick peppers all over with a fine skewer. Place peppers in a sterilized glass jar and add vodka. Screw on the top and shake. Let the pepper vodka sit for at least 48 hours before using and then refrigerate. This makes about 2/3 cup.

Source: Adapted from "[Polish and Russian: 70 Traditional Step-by-Step Dishes from Eastern Europe \(Cooking Around the World\)](#)" by Lesley Chamberlain & Catherine Atkinson (Lorenz Books, 2005).

Srpska Kobasica: Serbian Domestic Sausage Recipe

<http://www.acanadianfoodie.com/2010/09/19/srpska-kobasica-serbian-domestic-sausage/>

Ingredients:

- 10 pounds of pork shoulder and neck meat
- 4 big cloves of garlic **per pound of meat**, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup salt
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 tablespoon pepper
- 3 tablespoons paprika
- 1 tablespoon hot paprika
- Casings

(Note: If you plan to smoke these sausages, add cure #1 in proper amount)

NOTE: The garlic preparation seems excessive, especially the amount of salt involved.



Instructions:

- Chop garlic, mash with a pestle; add salt water mixture and work some more with the pestle.
- Add all ingredients to the meat. Mix to primary bind.
- Cook a sample to taste; adjust seasonings accordingly
- Stuff sausages
- Freeze, smoke, cure, or fry: Enjoy!

Serbian Sausage

Via a personal communiqué from “Radi” Markovic

This fermented, dried sausage recipe and another which follows were kindly provided by a young lady who was our Tour Leader for Grand Circle Cruise Line while we were on a trip down the Danube River from Budapest to Bucharest in 2016. She is Bulgarian, married to a Serbian husband, a delightful and outgoing woman who can charm the socks off any man in the Balkans, including old American tourists like me. This recipe is her husband’s translation handiwork, from a Serbian recipe. I include their charming English, clarifying where I can.

Warning: this sausage recipe requires advanced techniques and equipment in addition to the usual grinding and stuffing equipment- - ten days of cold smoking, followed by several weeks of curing under controlled temperature and humidity conditions. It is best done during winter months. Do not attempt it unless you have the equipment available. The original Serbian way, which involves using natural bacteria and hanging from rafters to dry, will give variable results depending on weather and cleanliness of the preparation and storage areas. In particular, without using cure #2, you risk botulism if cold smoking or curing/storing above 40 degrees F (4 degrees C). Cure #2 is cheap, so don’t skimp on it.

Sausage makers from each region swear that theirs is the best, mainly because their paprika is the best. If you can’t obtain regional paprika, at least buy the good stuff. If there is no country of origin listed, do not buy it.

Note the similarity to other sausages of this region. I have only changed two items: (1) added cure #2 consistent with American and western European practice, so as to reduce the risk of botulism. (2) introduced T-SPX bacteria for fermentation, so that we can ensure that “good” bacteria take over instead of whatever happens naturally.

Use of cure #2 is highly advisable, if not mandatory. Use of bacteria is useful, but not always possible due to the need for keeping the bacteria frozen until used. While not absolutely necessary, using T-SPX introduces consistency and a safety factor. The choice is yours. As it comes available, I hope that Eastern European home sausage makers will also adopt the use of cure #2, and optionally the bacterial technique if they can.

Ingredients

- 10 kg Pork – (best meat from the neck, back, or around the ribs) [*fatty pork. Use pork butt and add fat back to get 30% or so fat content*]
- 220 gm salt [*cut to 200 gm if using cure #2*]
- (25 gm cure #2 if used)
- (1.2 gm T-SPX bacteria if used)
- 40 gm black pepper powder
- 50 gm red sweet paprika powder
- 50 gm red hot paprika pepper
- 2 cloves garlic
- Thin pork intestines hose (as much as needed) [*hog casing*]

Preparation

Pork meat need to be minced together with garlic. *[If using bacteria, add a small amount of distilled or purified (chlorine free) water to activate them.]* After mincing, *[rest of ingredients]...* are added and all together is mixed by hands at least half an hour till everything is mixed nicely. *[Mix well, until primary bind is achieved. Ignore the half hour instruction.]*

When everything is mixed nicely, filling of the intestines hose can start. It can be done by hand, small spoon or spritz and there should be no air left inside the hose. *["Hose" refers to the intestine, of course. Wash out salted casing per instructions, and use a sausage stuffer or grinder with stuffer tube. Wear gloves. Keep the mince cold. Stuffing by hand is difficult, especially for controlling temperature and air content.]* After every 35 to 40 cm intestines hose should be twisted on both ends so 35 to 40 cm long sausage can be formed.

This way prepared sausage can be used in many meals or baked in pan. *[If cooked immediately (treated as a fresh sausage), it is not necessary to include the cure #2.]*

Sausages can be smoked as well, leaving them first two days as they are and after that smoke them on a cold smoke and that process lasts around 10 days. *[Many recipes use beech wood. Due to the long smoking time, bacteria will cause the sausage to ferment. This is part of the process. However, cure #2 is a necessity if botulism is to be avoided. A practical temperature limit for the cold smoking process is about 80 degrees F, 27 degC. Lower would be better. A good target would be 20 degrees C / 68 degrees F.]*

Also hanging them somewhere where they can be exposed to a breeze it's a very good way to make them dry. On the balcony or at the attic. This process is a bit slow, sausages are ready when they are completely dry and hard on touch and this process can last up to two or three weeks. *[A better solution is to use a curing chamber constructed from an old refrigerator with temperature and humidity control. A good target for curing would be 14 degC / 57 degF and 85% humidity until 40% weight loss is achieved.]*

Kulen – A Central European Sausage

<https://porkandgin.com/ingredients/kulen-a-central-european-sausage/>

The northern part of Serbia (Vojvodina province), the Slavonia region of Croatia, and Hungary are proud to share the honours for making kulen, maybe the best flavoured sausage in the world (but I am biased).

Kulen originated in the 18th century and was made by Slovaks who migrated from the region that is present-day Slovakia south to Hungary, Vojvodina, and then later in the 19th century into Croatia. Along with the colourful furniture for which they are probably most recognizable nowadays and their amazing culture and history, the Slovaks also brought us some culinary delights, like this wonderful cured dry sausage.

Depending on the region where it was produced, local varieties of kulen took on slightly different recipes, and geographical names such as Petrovački kulen, Sremski kulen, Slavonski kulen etc.

Interestingly, the etymology of the word kulen gives it three potential meanings/origins:

- From the greek word *kolon* meaning large intestine
- Derived from the word *kula* meaning tower, which might indicate the high ceilings used for drying kulen
- From *kulen* or *kulien* meaning, simply, sausage made of stomach

What's in a sausage?

Since the beginning kulen has been made simply of chopped high quality pork meat, mixed with salt, pepper and spices. One of the main characteristics of the sausage is its deep red colour, which comes from the substantial amount of paprika that is added. Original recipes for kulen were prepared without garlic, but nowadays many recipes will have garlic added. The only problem with garlic is if you really want to taste the meat in your kulen, then the garlic can be overpowering.

Those of you who have a problem with offal, may not love this part, but, like most sausages, in the 18th, 19th and beginning of 20th century this mixture was stuffed into natural casings that were actually cleaned pig colons. In modern times, to prepare kulen you don't actually need a pig's colon, but can instead find industrially manufactured sausage casings. To tell you the truth though there are still plenty of small villages that produce kulen in the original way with all natural materials.

The most important thing to pay attention to while making kulen is to make sure not to leave any air in the colon (or other casing), and the mixture must be placed firmly and carefully. After filling, the sausages are tied with rope which enables them to be hung, traditionally from tall ceilings in order to allow the sausage to dry. Nowadays we have refrigeration and air conditioning, but traditionally winter was the best time of the year for making kulen because of the cold weather. Once dried the kulen is cold smoked for a couple of weeks. The wood selection for smoking kulen plays a very important role, because not all of wood types provide a good taste, the best smoke comes from beech and sometimes cherry wood.

So, once you have your sausage, the big question is how you should eat your kulen. In Serbia and Croatia we serve it as cold cut on plate with some other cooked meat products; hams, bacon, maybe some cheese and hard boiled eggs. And that is just an appetizer. You could also put thin slices on a pizza, basically treat it as you would a French saucisson sec, or a cured chorizo.

Croatian Kulen as a Slavonic gastronomic jewel

<http://www.ostrogljad.com.ua/en/gastro/33/>

One of the thematic tours of our culinary course was to the Slavonic town of Brod on the border with Bosnia. Kulen has been made here for centuries. It is a famous uncooked smoked hot sausage pork. Back parts of the carcass are the most suitable for it. Fat tissue is thoroughly removed, as well as blood vessels and tendons. Meat must be stored in a cool and dry place at 5° C over one or two days. After that it is crushed; salt, garlic and hot paprika are added. The whole mass is to be well mixed and left for a few hours. Finally, pork blind guts are stuffed with the above mix.

Kulen must be kept in salty water up to eight days, and then it is removed to a smoke house with beech, horn beech or aspen chips. It is smoked for 3 weeks. Next it matures over ninety days and loses up to 40% weight, due to dehydration.

SLAVONSKI KULEN

<http://www.coolinarika.com/recept/slavonski-kulen/> (heavily edited)

Ingredients

- 5 kg of pork meat
- 10 grams of salt
- 8 grams of sweet spice pepper
- 7 grams of red chili peppers
- 5 grams of sugar
- Rum (for 5 kg of meat, at most 0.5 dl rum)
- NOTE: add cure #2 in proper amount)



Preparation

Grind meat with coarse plate (coarser than for sausages). Add all ingredients. Mix to primary bind. Let mixture stand to absorb the meat flavor and spices.

Stuff into (pork) stomachs and lower ends of which tie string. (NOTE: Use beef middles or protein-lined fibrous casings.) Allow

kulen to stay overnight salted. The next day, wash the salt off under tap water, hang them in a smokehouse and emit (cold) smoke (for 3 days to 3 weeks). (Dry at 15 degC 85% humidity until 40% weight loss, up to 90 days.)

Kulen - A Slovenian Smoked "Salami"

http://lpoli.50webs.com/index_files/Kulen.pdf

Kulen - A Slovenian Smoked "Salami – Len Poli website

Slovenian kulen is generally a home made product and unavailable commercially. However the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Croatia is exploring the possibility of Kulen being produced commercially for distribution throughout the ECU.

Kulen is often stuffed into various type of casings such as the "blind gut of a pig", bladders, the small intestine of a pig, or a large bovine's intestine. When the kulen mixture is stuffed into smaller intestines it is known as kulenova seka (kulen's sister).

U.S. Ingredient Metric Percent

- 5 lb Pork, Shoulder 2268.0 g 90.00
- 7 tsp. Salt 51.0 g 2.50
- 1 tsp. Cure #2 5.7 g 0.25
- 3½ oz. Garlic, Fresh 100.0 g 4.40
- 1-2 Tbs. Liquid Smoke (TSM) 30.0 ml 1.32
- 2 Tbs. Sweet Smoked Paprika 12.5 g 0.55
- 2 Tbs. Hungarian Half-Sharp Paprika* 12.5 g 0.55
- 1 tsp. Fine Black Pepper 2.2 g 0.10
- ¼ tsp. T-SPX Starter + ¼ cup water 0.5 g 0.02
- Casing: Beef Middles

5½ lb. ^ Totals v 2.5 Kg 100%

* Or, a mixture of sweet and hot paprika -- your choice.

This formulation is based on metric measures; U.S. measures are just approximations!

Options: Liquid Smoke from The Sausage Maker has a really nice, smoky, intense flavor. The amount you add to the meat paste is an option, depending on whether you want a mild or smokier product. It can be deleted if you are able to cold smoke for an extended period of time.

[This is a product that, made traditionally in small villages, would have been kept in a cold smokehouse for, probably, the entire winter.]

The amount of garlic is an option. This amount isn't overpowering in a fermented and dried sausage. The ratio of sweet smoked mild paprika to half sharp Hungarian paprika is an option. Or, a mixture of sweet and hot paprika-- your choice.

Methods:

1. Cut the pork shoulder into 1-2" chunks and partially freeze. Grind through a 3/16" plate.
2. Mash the garlic with the flat of a chef's knife to facilitate peeling. Add just enough water and use a blender to create a fine paste.
3. Mix the dry ingredients and the garlic paste thoroughly into the meat paste.
4. Add the liquid smoke and mix well.
5. Finally, add the starter culture and water and mix thoroughly.
6. Store in the refrigerator 24 hours.
7. Stuff into beef middles.
8. Ferment at 75 degF for 48 hours.
9. Turn the heat off and paint the sausage with liquid smoke for another day or so. [Option: if you can cold smoke at a temperature below 85 degF; do so for a minimum of 3 hours a day for 2 days.]
10. Store in the refrigerator to achieve a 20% shrink. This sausage should feel firm, like Salami, but not too dry.

Bill Mende, Elizabethville, Pennsylvania. Copyright (All rights reserved)-August 2008. Permission to post given to Sonoma Mountain Sausage – Sonoma, California