

Fish soup – Szeged fish soup

Category: tourism and catering

Motto: *“The fish soup is the most famous soup near River Tisza.”*

Story of fish soup

Its colour is red, its taste is hot and it is made in a cauldron full of with paprika and fish. Its recipe differs from house to house but everybody says, his/her one is the most delicious soup. It is a typical dish of Christmas but you can eat it anytime. It is made mostly in wayside inns and restaurants. It is the main attraction of festivals and feasts, you can eat it anywhere in Hungary but keep in mind: The most delicious fish soup is the Szeged fish soup. Keep reading and you can know why it is the most delicious.

Did you know?

1. In the surroundings of Szeged, fishing was prospering in the 11th century.
2. The phrase *“River Tisza consists of two-thirds water and one third fish”* comes from Galeotto Marzio, the chronicle of Matthias Corvinus (1458-1490).
3. Fish soup is one of the most important food of the Hungarian gastronomy, however it is a quite new food because paprika has been used generally since the 18th century.
4. If we ask foreigners about the Hungarian gastronomy, probably, fish soup will be in the 3 most frequent answers.
5. The two most popular fish soups are the Szeged and the Baja fish soup.
6. Fish soup is ready when your thumb and forefinger stich together in the steam of the soup.
7. The International Tisza Fish Festival was organized 19 times in Szeged until 2015.

International Tisza Fish Festival

This is one of the biggest and the most prestigious gastronomic and cultural festival in Hungary. Cooks fight in a competition for the award: *“Halfőző Érdemrend”* (Fish soup Honour) which was established by Sándor Frank, Venesz Award winner masterchef. The competition takes place under the Szeged bridge and – in the last years - in Partfürdő in Újszeged (thanks to the increasing numbers of competitors) every year in the morning of the first Saturday of September.

8. Who wants to make an original fish soup, he/she makes it with onion from the last year because chives and boiling onion aren't suitable for this purpose.
9. Fish soups can be classified in the following way:

Danube fish soups:

- Baja fish soup
- Paks fish soup
- Komárom fish soup
- Danube fish soup
- Mohács fish soup
- Debrecen (paprika) fish soup

Tisza fish soups:

- Szeged fish soup
- Szolnok fish soup

- Tisza (winy) fish soup

Fish soups of Lake Balaton

- Fish soup of Lake Balaton
- Fűred fish soup
- Lelle fish soup

10. Beside the Szeged fish soup, fish crackling is another popular local fish food.
11. Ottó Herman, scientist described 34 fish species of River Tisza based partly on other scientists' notes and his own research.
12. As a result of the cyanide spill in 2000, the fauna of the river died out totally.

The fish soup is the most famous soup near River Tisza. It is made from several fish species. The smaller fish, heads and tails are rubbed through a sieve. In this way, the soup becomes thick but there won't be any bigger pieces in it. Then, fish meat (fish fillet) is cooked into the soup base.

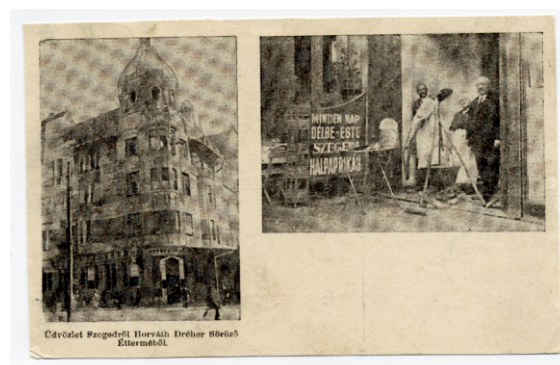
Fish soup is an important food in the Hungarian cuisine and it is a traditional dish of Christmas. Its recipe is a protected secret in each family. There are special ingredients but the basic ingredients and the method of cooking is traditional.

According to the Hungarian ethnographic literature, fish soup is the same as fish stew with more liquid. ("Fish stew a la fishermen" – written in receipt books 100 years ago)

Preparing fish soup in Hungary

In Hungary, different regions compete who makes the authentic, real fish soup. Ottó Herman, the internationally well-known ethnographer said that lots of sterlet, enough carps and a few catfish are needed for the real fish soup.

- Near River Tisza, fish soup is made from carps, pikes, eels and sterlets and it is flavoured with paprika, onion and bay leaf.
- The Szeged fish soup is as red as the blood of the "most savage bull".
- Komárom fish soup is made from a few types of fish but a large amount (carp, catfish and sterlet) – one-third, one-third paprika and one-third onion.
- According to the folk recipes, the fish soup near the Lake Balaton is made from a lot of onions, a little paprika and many small fish, especially common bream.



Szeged fish soup

How Szeged fish soup is made?

It is made from many types of fish. The smaller fish, heads and tails are rubbed through a sieve when they are cooked. In this way, the soup becomes thick but there won't be any bigger pieces in it. Then, fish meat is cooked into the soup base. In the surroundings of Szeged, mostly cauldrons, which tighten down, are used.

Recipe of the Szeged fish soup

Ingredients:

1 kg carp
0,5 kg catfish
25 dkg sterlet
25 dkg pike
30 dkg Makó onion
25 g Szeged paprika
10 dkg sweet paprika, 5dkg tomato
2-3 hot peppers, salt

Preparing Szeged fish soup:

Clean the fish and wash it thoroughly, put away the roe and soft roe of the fish. In order to make the soup base, simmer the heads and tails of the carp, catfish, sterlet and the sliced pike with the sliced onion. Meanwhile, slice the carp, sterlet and the catfish up for 2 cm slices, then salt it and sprinkle it with paprika powder, then put it aside. Salt and boil the soup base slowly for about one hour. Then add the paprika powder and cook it until the fish meat will be tender. Then strain the fish soup and pour it on the fish slices, roe and soft roe, then season and boil it slowly. After about 15 minutes, add the sweet paprika cut into small cubes, the tomato and the sliced hot pepper. Then simmer it for 10 minutes until it is ready. The original Szeged fish soup was made in a cauldron on open fire. If the fish soup is made in a cauldron, then the fish is sliced similar but during the preparing, put it into layers: in the bottom of the cauldron, put the heads, tails and smaller fish pieces, then cover it with the sliced onion, sprinkle it with paprika powder and fill it with cold water, season it with salt, hot Szeged cherry pepper and simmer it ready.



(Reference: szegedihalaszle.hu)

Links

References:

<http://www.szegedvaros.hu/ertektar/7755-szegedi-halaszle.html>

<http://www.szegedihalaszle.hu/szegedi-halaszle-tortenete>

<http://www.torzsasztal.com/barta-gasztrofolklor/haletelek-halfogyasztas-tortenete.html>

<http://hal.wyw.hu/detail.php?id=190>

<http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halászlé>

