

Bavarian Cuisine

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The origins of Bavarian cuisine are rural. The cuisine typically includes many meat and Knödel dishes, and the prominent use of flour.

The Bavarian cuisine is closely connected to Czech cuisine and Austrian cuisine (especially from Tyrol and Salzburg). Already in the beginning, Bavarians were closely connected to their neighbours in Austria through linguistic, cultural and political similarities, which also reflected on the cuisine.

Regional cuisine in the various states of the German nation has received increasing attention since the late 19th century, particularly that of the larger cities. In cookbooks of that era termed "Bavarian" both domestic rural dishes and dishes inspired by French cuisine were published. The cookbooks concentrated on dishes based on flour and Knödel. For the regular people, even the people living in cities, meat was usually only reserved for Sundays.

The 19th century cookbooks included many recipes for soups containing Knödel. The meat recipes were mostly based on beef and veal, where cooked beef was used for everyday meals. In the case of pork, suckling pig played a great role. "The use of offal and the entire slaughtered animal - especially the calf - from head to toe was a special characteristic of the recipes collected in the Bavarian cookbooks. Udders, tripe, calf head, calf hoofs, etc. have changed from 'poor man's dishes' to the prestigious 'Schmankerl' of the new Bavarian regional cuisine. The prominence of head cheese, prepared both sweet and sour, seems to also be a speciality of Bavarian cuisine."

Knödel and noodles were a traditional festive dish in Bavaria. In the late 19th century, chopped pork with Knödel was a typical Bavarian regional dish. The Munich Weißwurst was "invented" only in 1857. There were few recipes for mixed vegetables in the cookbooks, and stews played hardly any role, but the Pichelsteiner stew is said to be introduced in Eastern Bavaria in 1847. In the 19th century, the vegetables that most of the Bavarians usually ate were Sauerkraut and beets. French-influenced dishes included Ragouts, Fricassee and "Böfflamott" (Boeuf à la Mode), larded and marinated beef. This was mostly only reserved for the nobility, but was later also adopted into the cuisine of ordinary people. A report from 1860 says: "A characteristic of the nurture of the Upper Bavarian rural people is the overall prominence of flour, milk and lard dishes with vegetables added and the diminished consumption of meat dishes on the five most important festive days of the year: Carnival, Easter, Pentecost, Kermesse and Christmas"

References:

1. Ulrike Zischka: Kochkunst in Bayern, in Die anständige Lust Esskultur und Tafelsitten, Munich 1994, p. 500
2. Metzger, Christine (ed.) Culinarium Germany. Cambridge: Ullmann, 2008.