

Stockfish (Norway, Portugal)

Sea fish is a very valuable food, rich in protein and besides it provides necessary iodine. Unfortunately fish is very perishable too. To make fish available even on long sea voyages and in the interior of a country, there is a good way known since the Middle Ages. Fish, especially cod, is gutted freshly caught and two are bound together at the tail and hung over wooden racks in the salty sea wind.

Because of dehydration the water activity is lowered so fast, that the fish does not perish, but instead becomes hard like a board. In this state the food, now called stockfish, can be stored for a long time and hauled over far distance unharmed. To be eaten the fish has to be watered at least for two days, which increases its volume remarkable by retaking the water lost in drying.

The fact, that there are specific recipes with stockfish from differing regions shows, that this protein provider was known and liked everywhere in earlier centuries. Of course stockfish plays a prominent role in the cooking of the most important producing nations, that have been seafaring nations at the same time. Even nowadays stockfish can not be missed in Portuguese cooking. Even so far away from the sea like Southern Germany stockfish is used since old times.

Stockfish Franconian

(traditionally served on Good Friday)

Ingredients (for 4 persons)

1 pair of medium sized stockfish

10 oz of smoked pork belly

4 onions

5 rolls from the day before (half dry toast could work, if there are no German rolls <Semmeln>)

2 eggs

butter

salt

pepper

preparation

cut stockfish in pieces with a saw and water them in warm, salted water for a week (renew water daily)

Pull off the skin from the fish, take out the bones and simmer the fish in salted water for 20 minutes. Take out the fish and keep the broth.

In the meantime cut the smoked pork and the onions into cubes and roast them till the onion is golden. Slice four rolls and fry them golden in butter.

Put the fish, the roasted bread and the porc-onion-mix alternating into a casserole and leave it in the oven at 212 °F (100 °C) for about 30 minutes.

The remaining roll is put into some water for softening and then whisked together with the eggs.

This mix and some of the porc-onion-mix is added to the broth. This gravy is salted and peppered.

With the fish goes the traditional Franconian dumpling from raw potatoes