

## Finnish Recipes from Jim Kurtti,

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*Here are the recipes! Good cooking. I hope you can understand my instructions! ~ Jim*

### Pannukakku (also called kropsu)

(Johanna Kurtti - Paynesville, Michigan)

*It is an oven custard, easy to make and generally liked by everyone, including fussy children. It is good warm from the oven with jam spread over the top. Some folks even put syrup.*

1 quart of milk  
4 eggs, beaten  
1 C. flour  
1/2 C sugar  
1 tsp. salt  
1/2 stick margarine

Heat oven to 400. Place oleo in a 9"x13" pan and place in oven. Mix other ingredients and stir well. When margarine is melted pour batter into pan and bake until golden brown. The pannukakku will rise, but fall when removed from oven. Serve warm or cold, plain, or with jam, syrup or sugar. I think it's best with raspberry jam.

### Laksloda — from Sophie Wickstrom

*Uncle Ray was a fisherman and often when we visited my grandfather, John Nyman, we would have salmon fresh off the boat. Leftover salmon was picked clean of bones and used in this casserole.*

*There's an old Finnish joke about dinner: Asked what's for dinner, the housewife would say "Fish and potatoes."*

*"Not that again!"*

*"All right. We'll have potatoes and fish."*

*My grandfather's housekeeper, Sophie, made laksloda baked in a huge old Monarch woodstove, but it works fine in an electric stove in a covered casserole.*

- \* A dozen Yukon Gold or Yellow Finn potatoes washed and sliced (Sophie peeled them but I don't)
- \* 2 cups of chunked leftover salmon
- \* 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- \* 1/2 c. half and half (at least...it might be a bit more)
- \* Dill weed (this is my contribution. Sophie never used it.)
- \* Salt and pepper

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a large covered casserole. Mix the sliced potatoes with the chopped onion and salmon. Add the half and half, salt and pepper, and dill if you want to use it. Toss to cover evenly. Put it in the casserole and cover. Bake for about an hour or until the potatoes are done. I've tried this in an uncovered casserole, a casserole covered with aluminum foil, and the covered casserole. The covered casserole works the best.

## **Karjalan piirakat (Karelian pasties)**

(Aino Henttinen - Oulu, Finland)

(converted to non-metric)

*The crust is made of rye and the filling is cooked rice, milk and butter. Again, best served warm and one can add egg-butter as a topping.*

Filling:

1 C white rice

1 tsp. salt

6 cups milk

2 Tbsp. butter

Cook rice, salt and milk in a double boiler, over boiling water, stirring occasionally. Cook until the milk is absorbed into the rice (about two hours) and the rice is creamy. Stir in the butter and cool. (This is how they make rice pudding in Finland. You might be tempted to stop right there and eat the rice.)

Crust:

1 cup water

1 tsp. salt

2 Tbps. melted butter, or oleo

1 1/2 C white flour

1 1/2 C rye flour

Mix water, salt and butter. Add white flour. Beat until smooth. Add rye flour and knead well. Roll dough into a ball and then roll it out with the palms of your hand to a rope of about 2 inches thick. Cut off a small amount and roll out to a circle about 5-6 inches in diameter. The rolled dough should be even and very thin. (Thin enough to see seven churches through it - as the saying goes.)

Put a small amount of rice filling in the middle of the rolled out dough and fold two opposing sides to nearly the middle. Then begin to crimp the edges. You really need to see this done to understand. Place piirakkas in a greased baking sheet and bake at about 450 until lightly browned. Take out and baste with melted butter. Keep piirakkas covered or they'll get hard. They freeze very well. Serve warm and top with cold egg butter.

## **Munavoi (egg butter):**

1 cup softened butter

3 hard boiled eggs, finely chopped

Cream butter and blend in eggs and a bit of salt to taste. Try to keep the mixture fluffy (don't heat).

**Leipäjuustoa (Breadcheese - squeaky cheese)** (Margaret Mattila - Toivola, Michigan)  
(makes one cheese - should consider two or so with all the mess it causes)

*Leipäjuusto ("bread cheese") sometimes call "squeaky cheese". Made from whole milk and rennet. It is the only cheese one should have with coffee rather than tea.*

2.5 gallons of milk

Heat milk in a hot water bath to 80 degrees. Remove pan of milk from water bath. Add the following mixture:

1/3 C sugar  
1 Tbsp. salt  
1/3 C corn starch

Mix and add:

1/4 of a rennet tablet (crushed with the back of a spoon).

Add to milk and let set until the curd and whey separate. When you run a spatula through the readied milk you should see the separation. The time it takes will vary with the fat content of the milk.

Ladle the curd/whey mixture into a colander over a sink. Rotate colander to allow the whey to run out. You'll probably have to do this portion at a time. Once the whey is more or less out place the "ball" of curd onto a pizza pan and broil in a hot oven near the top. You'll want a drip pan underneath or you'll have a mess because more whey will run out or the edges of the pizza pan. The cheese will brown unevenly. When it is browned, take from oven, place another pizza pan on top and flip over your sink. Brown the other side. It is wonderful hot with some coffee. We freeze it in quartered sections adding some saved whey to keep in soft and fresh.

It was traditionally made with milk from a cow, which has just freshened. The old-timers (me included) liked to drop it in their coffee and eat it out with a spoon once the coffee is drunk. A special treat in the very north of Finland is to warm the cheese and top it with some cloudberry jam and serve as a dessert. My grandmother made this cheese to the very end. When she died at age 85 there was some in the freezer and my grandfather insisted it be brought to the church to be served after the funeral.

## **Joulutahtia (prune tarts)**

(Mary Bikki Mikelsen - Hancock, Michigan)

*"Christmas stars" - or prune tarts.*

1 C. flour  
1 small fresh yeast cake

Mix well with your hands.

Add:

4 C. flour  
1 lb. margarine

Mix well with hands again.

Add:

4 egg yolks  
1 C. sour cream

Mix well and chill for several hours, or better over night.

Cook prunes (about 1 1/2 to 2 pounds). Add sugar (and I put a little brandy). Also easier to work with if cooled.

Roll out dough and cut in squares about 2.5 inches. I use a straight edge and cut with a pizza cutter. Then I take the pizza cutter and cut each way diagonally about a 1/3 of the way towards the center. You can also use a prune tart cutter, but all of what we've seen are too large for our liking. These prune tarts must be rolled thinly. There are other recipes that make a thicker tart. Put some cooked prune in the center of each square. Bring four corners together and pinch well. Sprinkle with sugar and place on greased baking sheet. Bake at 350 or so until lightly browned.

*This makes a big batch. What we do to keep them fresh is only bake some. The rest we freeze on baking sheets. If freezer space is a problem, removed and put in flat containers until needed. When company drops in. Heat the oven and bake another pan or so. That way the crust is flaky and the tarts are fresh. Keep an eye on them because they don't take long to bake.*