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Home > Advice > Bea's stuffed cabbage leaves recipe

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This is Bea Csap's recipe. She is from Hungary and is our gardener here on the farm. The stuffed cabbage leaves are excellent eaten on their own, dipped into natural yoghurt or with sauerkraut. The sauerkraut is not essential but it adds another flavour.

Serves 8-10 (about 20 rolls)

- 1 cabbage
- 4 bay leaves
- 150ml white wine vinegar
- bowl of iced water
- 200g smoked dry-cure bacon, chopped
- 1 chopped onion
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- bunch of chopped mixed herbs (such as sweet marjoram, thyme and dill)
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin seeds
- salt and black pepper
- 500g minced pork
- 500g minced beef
- 150g cooked long-grain rice
- 1 egg
- 1 jar of sauerkraut (optional)
- small bunch of dill
- 570ml chicken or vegetable stock

Method

Preheat the oven to a medium heat, 180°C/gas mark 4.

Choose the bright green outer leaves of the cabbage and blanch them whole for 2-3 minutes in a large pan of salted water containing 3 of the bay leaves and the vinegar. Plunge the leaves into ice-cold water to cool and then remove the thickest part of the midrib. This makes them easier to roll.

Fry the bacon in a shallow pan until it's cooked, but not crisp, and put aside. In the same pan, add the onion to the bacon juices with the crushed garlic, chopped herbs, paprika, cumin, salt and pepper, and gently fry for five minutes.

Mix the raw pork and beef together with the cooked rice and the bacon (if using sauerkraut, reserve a little of the bacon to add to that) and onion mixture, adding a beaten egg to bind it and seasoning with salt and pepper (you can quickly fry a teaspoonful of the mixture in a dash of oil to test the seasoning). Take a small handful of the mixture and place on a cabbage leaf, then roll it up, starting from the stem end and tucking the



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edges inwards to make a neat roll.

If you're using sauerkraut, drain the jar, keeping the liquor to one side, and rinse under cold water in a sieve. Fluff it up and mix with the reserved bacon and a little more chopped dill. Place this mixture on the bottom of a casserole dish and arrange the cabbage rolls in quite a tight layer on top.

Cover with the stock plus a little of the sauerkraut liquor, add the remaining bay leaf and some more dill, and cook, covered, in the preheated oven for 1½ hours.

This recipe appears on p18 of Sarah Raven's Garden Cookbook.

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