

F A R E

Warm-Weather Fun from the World of Food, plus Wines from the Saveur Cellar and Agenda

CRÊPE HARVEST

These ladies really roll out the pancakes

LAST SUMMER I read an editorial in an obscure European business publication that stated, “[T]he fear of responsibility is a legacy of the hierarchical Communist system.” My mother, raised in communist-socialist Serbia, never got that memo. In fact, she occupies a leadership position in her community. Directing a team of cooks, she is the palačinka chairperson for the annual Serb Fest held in Hobart, Indiana—a three-day event that attracts some 10,000 Serbs, Croatians, Bosnians, and Montenegrins, most of whom live in northwestern Indiana and Chicago. The palačinka (pah-lah-CHEEN-ka) is a Balkan dessert crêpe—and a dish that crosses political lines with great ease.

Serb Fest involves things like

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For Serb Fest, Milica Milojevic, top, and the author's mother, Radmila, above, make the palačinke.

doughnuts dusted with powdered sugar), and palačinke.

I joined the palačinke makers one afternoon in the kitchen at the Saint Sava Serbian Orthodox Church hall. For hours, I lifted one crêpe after another from steaming stacks, plopping a mixture of cottage cheese, egg, cream cheese, and tapioca onto each and rolling it up. ("Spread the filling out to the sides," my mother admonished, "so you have a nice, even roll.")

Working together, we'd place 34 palačinke on a sheet pan, smear them with a topping of sour cream, egg yolk, and sugar, and bake them for about 20 minutes, then begin again. "I wonder how many calories are in these," I said. No one responded, so I answered myself, saying, "A lot, I bet." Most of the women are 60-something Serbian immigrants to whom counting calories is a foreign concept.

By the end of the evening, the frying, rolling, and shuttling of trays to the selling floor had exhausted me. I wondered how these elderly ladies could spend three days straight making 3,000 palačinke by this process.

That evening, as I drove home down the Chicago Skyway, my hair smelling of econ-



omy-brand vegetable oil and cottage cheese, I was looking forward to eating my hard-earned palačinke the next day, when I would visit the festival. For some reason, they never taste as good when I make them by myself at home.

—JOANN MILIVOJEVIC

EAT A BRICK

Serious hikers know how to cool down

PINE GROVE Furnace General Store is a spare stone structure located near the entrance to a woody state park on the Appalachian Trail in Gardners, in rural southern Pennsylvania. For almost a quarter century, the store, less than a mile from the official halfway point of the 2,000-mile pedestrian thoroughfare—which stretches from Georgia to Maine—has hosted what it calls the Half Gallon Challenge, wherein hikers must consume a half-gallon brick of ice cream in one sitting. Each year during the

From the Saver Cellar

EACH MONTH we taste scores of wines from every corner of the globe. These are some of our recent favorites (see **THE PANTRY**, page 98, for sources):

DOMAINE CHANDON CARNEROS PINOT MEUNIER 2000 (\$29). Like strawberry juice with a kick—a superlative summertime red, medium light and very fruity with a lean, crisp finish.

FREEMARK ABBEY RUTHERFORD CHARDONNAY 2001 (\$19). Old-style Napa chardonnay, with good varietal flavor, a citrusy tartness, and a faint oaky sweetness.

NOZZOLE LE BRUNICHE CHARDONNAY DI TOSCANA 2001 (\$12). Inexpensive, clean, full of varietal character, and completely innocent of oak—what more could we ask?

SOKOL BLOSSER WILLAMETTE VALLEY PINOT NOIR 1999 (\$30). A bright, juicy wine, with lots of fruit and an unexpected and attractively stemmy herbal character.

TOMASELLO WINERY ATLANTIC COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, CHAMBOURCIN 2001 (\$12). An austere, vaguely Rhônish red with flavors of cherry and black walnut. Surprisingly agreeable. —THE EDITORS



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