

World Recipes

Starter, main and dessert for your Christmas menu

Merry Christmas

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We at CheapTickets like to work with beautiful destinations to highlight special places. As we unfortunately cannot travel to all these places at the moment, we spend some more time on our second passion: good food!

Traveling and discovering local gastronomy are inextricably linked. Compose your Christmas menu this year with one of these worldly favorites. We have a nice selection of starters, main courses and desserts for you. Bring the world into your kitchen! And above all, enjoy your meal.

Hanne Corremans & Laura Elford
Partnerships managers

Merry Christmas
 cheapTickets

#1 Malta



Christmas is a hugely popular holiday celebrated by young and old in Malta. And that includes a lot of food, which is typically Maltese. Pastizzi is Malta's most popular snack. With this recipe you can make the traditional variant. Perfect to start your Christmas dinner with!



Starter Pastizzi

In collaboration with:



Recipe

You can choose to make the dough yourself or use a pre-packed puff pastry. If you make the dough yourself, you will need the following ingredients:

400 g flour
½ tsp salt
200 ml water
175 g margarine or butter

For the filling:

2 white onions
1 tbsp olive oil
3 tbsp water
Salt and pepper
200 gr peas
200 gr ricotta
1 yolk
1 egg
30 gr grated parmesan

Preparation

Heat the oven to 200° C. Mix the flour, salt and water to a soft but not sticky dough. Grease the ball of dough with 25gr margarine so it can't dry out. Let it rest for 30 minutes.

Chop the onions and fry them in olive oil, add 1 tbsp water so the onions boil and don't burn. Then add the peas and the remaining water. Crush the peas a little to obtain a mushy texture. Leave to cool in a mixing bowl. Then add the egg yolk, parmesan, salt, pepper and ricotta to a mixture. Put it in the refrigerator.

Place the dough on a floured surface. Spread the dough again with 25gr margarine so it doesn't dry out and roll it out until it's still 1 cm thick. Leave to rest for another 30 minutes. Then roll out the dough completely and spread it with the remaining margarine. Make sure the whole dough is smeared. Then start rolling the dough carefully along one side.



Christmas fact

Before and during Christmas, Malta will be completely transformed into the ultimate Christmas destination! The island is normally home to nativity scenes, crib, events and Christmas concerts. For example, Ghajnsielem, a small village on the island of Gozo, is being completely transformed into Bethlehem.

Follow the next steps if you are using a prepackaged puff pastry. Roll up the whole rag and make sure there is no air between the layers. Cut the roll into pieces. Then we will shape and fill the pieces. Push with your two thumbs in the middle and knead the piece open so it gets the shape of a bowl. Fill the bowl with the mixture and glue the edges together so you get half-moons. Place on a lightly oiled baking tray, grease with the beaten egg and bake for 25 minutes or until golden. Serve warm!

Tip: This pastry can be eaten either savory or sweet as you adjust the filling. For example, you can make the ricotta filling with spinach, lemon or nuts, honey and sugar.

#2 Ireland



There's nothing tastier than the smell of freshly baked bread, is there? In Ireland, they know all about it.

Soda Bread became very 'popular' in Ireland during the Great Famine. Since yeast wasn't available everywhere at the time, sodium bicarbonate was used instead of traditional yeast as a raising agent. This provides a special flavor that is still part of the rich food culture that Ireland has to offer. A tasty variation on your standard bread with a drink. *Nollaig Shona Duit!*

Starter Sodabread

In collaboration with: **Fill your heart with
Ireland**

Recipe - for one loaf of bread

250 gr wholemeal flour
220 gr white flower
1 tsp salt
1 tsp baking soda
2 tsp baking powder
280 ml buttermilk
1 egg



Christmas fact

Did you know that the Irish call 6th of January 'Women's Christmas'? Traditionally, the women of Ireland are celebrated all over the country on this 'Nollaig na mBan'. On this last day of 12 days of Christmas, the women would finally get the relaxation after all the festivities. In other words, the women go out and the men stay at home!

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 190°C. Sieve and mix the flour, cooking salt, baking soda and baking powder. Add the buttermilk and beaten egg. Mix everything and knead on a surface sprinkled with flour until it is a smooth and soft dough. bake a round shape and place on a baking tray. Put a cross in the top of the dough and place in the oven for 35-40 minutes. Serve this delicious bread warm with smoked salmon, butter and a few drops of lemon juice. Delicious!

#3 Peru



During the traditional Christmas dinner in Peru you will find roast pork or turkey and various side dishes. Puré de papas' or mashed potatoes is one of them. This recipe is a nice variant of that.

Causa is a dish with a high dose of Peruvian history. This dish was used to raise money for Peruvian soldiers who fought for the emancipation of Peru. For the cause', in Spanish 'por la causa', became the name of the dish.

Starter Causa

In collaboration with:



Recipe - for 4 persons

Ingredients:

- 1.5 kg yellow potatoes
- 1/2 cup of vegetable oil
- The juice of 3-4 lemons
- 3 yellow chili peppers, blended to a paste
- Salt

For the filling:

- 1 shredded chicken breast, or crab meat, or tuna, or cooked vegetables or avocado (depending on the filling of your preference)
- 1/2 cups mayonnaise

To garnish

- 4 boiled eggs cut into round slices
- 8 pitted olives
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- Lettuce leaves
- Optional tomatoes slices



Christmas fact

Christmas is a very important holiday since a large majority of Peruvians are Catholic.

In some countries Christmas is typically celebrated on December 25. However Peruvians make a bigger deal out of 'Noche Buena' or Christmas Eve.

Preparation

To prepare the Peruvian causa, first boil and mash around 1.5 kg of yellow potatoes. Once ready, season them with salt, yellow chili pepper paste (ají amarillo), vegetable oil and lemon juice.

The base is now ready. Finely chop the chicken or vegetables and fry them. Leave to cool and then mix with the mayonnaise. Assemble the dish by alternating layers of potato, shredded chicken (or other options) and mayonnaise. The dish consists of alternating layers of potato and filling. You can make the turrets in any shape you like. With the help of cooking rings, you give the snacks a professional look. Garnish with slices of eggs, olives, tomato, finely chopped parsley and lettuce leaves.

#4 Israel



Main dish Shakshuka

In collaboration with:



Recipe - for 2 persons

- 1 large onion
- ¼ cup of olive oil
- 2 tbsp of butter
- 5 garlic cloves
- sweet red pepper
- hot chili pepper
- 1 tbsp of paprika
- 1 tbsp of salt
- ¼ tsp of black pepper
- ½ tsp of cumin
- 1 tbsp of tomato paste
- 2 large tomatoes
- half a cup of water
- half a cup of chopped cilantro/parsley
- 1 tsp of sugar
- 4 eggs

The Shakshuka is perhaps the best one pan dish there is. It is healthy, easy and suitable for multiple moments. In Israel this dish can be found everywhere, whether you are in a simple coffee bar or a high-end restaurant.

The dish was brought to Israel by Jewish immigrants and is now an important part of the local cuisine throughout the country. Time to try!

Preparation

Heat olive oil and butter in a large sauté pan on medium heat. Add the chopped bell pepper and onion and cook for 5 minutes or until the onion becomes translucent.

Add garlic and spices and cook for an additional minute.



Christmas fact

Because of famous places from the Christmas story such as Jerusalem and Nazareth, you might expect Christmas to be very present in Israel. However, only 3% of the population is Catholic, so it is not widely celebrated. Around Christmas time there are places where Christmas is celebrated, with Christmas markets and public festivities.

Add tomato paste, steer, add tomatoes, steer, add the water, steer once more, and finally, add the sugar. Use your large spoon to make small wells in the sauce and crack the eggs into each well. Cover the pan and cook for 5-8 minutes, or until the eggs are done to your liking. Garnish with chopped cilantro and/or parsley.

#5 Japan



The end of the year or 'shiwasu' is a special period for Japanese. Christmas is not really part of it. Most Japanese people believe in Buddhism and/or Shintoism and therefore celebrate other holidays. Nevertheless, Christmas is popular and present. After all, the Japanese love lights and decorations so you will encounter many Christmas trees and Santa Clauses. As with many Japanese dishes, this soba noodle soup has a symbolic meaning. This dish is enjoyed on New Year's Eve shortly before midnight because the noodles symbolize the transition from old to new and the cutting of 'bad luck'.

Main dish Soba Noodle soup

In collaboration with:



Recipe - for two portion of soup

- 750 ml water
- 70 ml soy sauce
- 50 ml mirin
- 10 g dashi stock
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 150 gr carrots
- powdered chili (if you want some "kick")
- 200 gr soba noodles
- 1 stalk of chives or a green onion
- Sesame seeds
- Shrimp tempura or kamaboko fish cakes

Preparation

Finely chop the carrots lengthwise. Bring the water, soy sauce and Mirin to boil in a pan and stir in the Shimaya Dashi. Add the sugar, the carrots and simmer until the sugar has dissolved.

Prepare the Soba noodles according to the instructions on the package and rinse them under cold water until they no longer stick. Divide the Soba noodles into 2 bowls and pour the stock over them. Serve the soup with chives (or green onions), and sesame seeds.



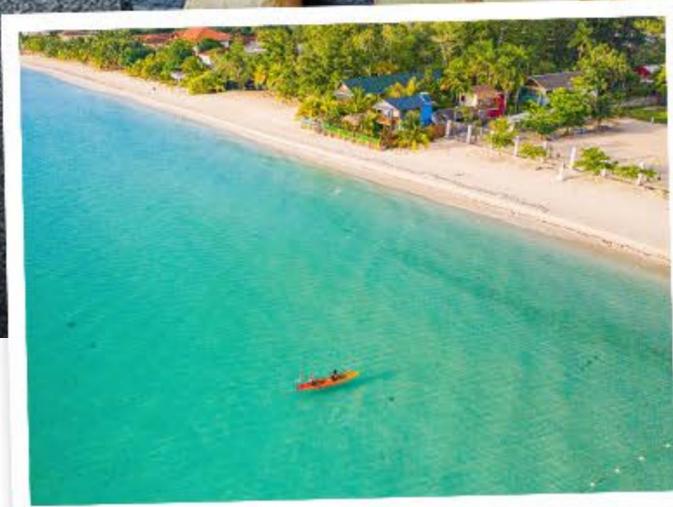
Christmas fact

On Christmas Eve, the Japanese celebrate a kind of Christmas. Chicken (roasted or fried) is a popular dish on the Christmas menu. It is therefore not at all strange to go to the KFC with the whole family! Other than eating chicken, eating Christmas cake is also popular.

Tip: You can make the soup dish richer by topping your soba with a shrimp tempura or some kamaboko fish cakes.



#6 Jamaica



Jamaica is an island for real bon vivants. You will discover beautiful beaches, relaxed life, rhythmic reggae music and delicious food!

Jerk is a national dish in Jamaica. The original recipe comes from the original inhabitants, who used Jamaican pimento to season meat and extend its shelf life. This method was further developed by smoking the meat under the earth on top of the pimento. Everywhere on the island you can enjoy Jerk Pork, Jerk Chicken and Jerk Fish, which is often roasted in oil barrels. Side dishes include toasted breadfruit, Bammy's (flat Jamaican Cassava bread), Festivals (Jamaican baked dough), rice and beans.

Main dish Jerk Chicken

In collaboration with:



Recipe for 6 – 8 person

- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 2 chili chillies
- 1 red onion
- 4 green onions
- 1 tbsp dried thyme
- 2 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp of salt
- 4 tl ground ginger
- 4 tsp of ground nutmeg
- 4 tsp of ground cinnamon
- 4 tl ground allspice
- 2 tsp brown soft sugar
- 1 whole chicken (about 2.5 kilos)
- 2 tbsp dark rum
- 1/2 cup lime juice

Preparation

Note: you start a day in advance with this recipe. To make the Jerk marinade, put the vinegar, rum, chopped peppers, chopped onions, thyme, olive oil, salt, pepper, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and brown caster sugar in a blender and mix to a whole. Cut the chicken in half lengthwise and put the chicken in a large bowl or baking dish. Pour lime juice over the whole chicken. Then spread the chicken well with the jerk marinade (it helps to use gloves!). Cover the chicken with plastic foil and put it in the refrigerator or in a cool room for one night.

Preheat the oven to 175-180° C.



Christmas fact

Christmas in Jamaica is above all a family celebration in a homely atmosphere. Being together, cooking and especially lots of food and drinks! Jerk Chicken is often on the Christmas menu. After all that food and drink, a surprising amount of coconuts are sold after Christmas. This is used to make coconut juice. A healthy boost after the extensive dinner!

Remove the chicken from the pan. Put the remaining marinade in a small saucepan. Bring to the boil for 15 minutes, lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Set this aside for later use as bedding sauce for the chicken. You can also use it as a serving sauce (if necessary, dilute with soy sauce). Make sure the marinade is cooked well as it was in contact with raw chicken.

Put the halves in a deep baking tin with the skin side up. Roast 40-45 min. Remove the chicken from the oven and leave for 15 min on a dish, preferably covered with warm foil. Then cut the chicken into pieces. Serve with side dishes of your choice.

#7 Thailand



Main dish Massaman Curry

In collaboration with:



Recipe - for 2 persons

500 ml coconut milk
200 gr chicken (thighs and/or drumsticks)
3 tbsp of Massaman Curry paste (bought in an Asian store)
2 cardamom pods, grilled
1-2 tbsp of unsalted peanuts
3 potatoes (or sweet potatoes)
1 carrot
1 small white onion & 2 shallots
2 bay leaves
½ tsp of salt
1 tbsp of palm sugar
2 tbsp of fish sauce
oil
fresh coriander

This rich Thai dish with coconut milk and various herbs goes well with chicken, beef and lamb, or your favorite vegi variant. Massaman curry became famous in the 19th century, because King Rama II loved it a lot. In Thailand, if the king likes something, of course everyone does too.

A good Massaman curry is velvety soft, slightly sweet and has a strong smell. With its creamy texture and warm scent, Massaman curry brings extra warmth to your meal during a long winter evening. This recipe is always a favorite!

Preparation

Pour some of the coconut milk in a saucepan and bring it to boil. Add the curry paste and stir well for 5 minutes until the aroma arises. Pour in the rest of the coconut milk and turn up the heat. When boiling, add the chicken and cook for 10 minutes. Then, add the cardamom pods, peanuts, potatoes, carrot, onion and bay leaves. Simmer, 3/4 covered, for 20 minutes or until the potatoes become soft. If too dry, add a little water or coconut milk and mix softly.

Finally, put in the sugar, salt and fish sauce to taste. After a new boil, turn off the heat. Transfer the curry into a bowl. Top it with crispy shallot and fresh coriander. Served with Thai jasmine rice or bread. Also great with a cucumber salad on the side. Enjoy!



Christmas fact

Did you know that Christmas as a religious festival is not really celebrated in Thailand? Only 1% of Thai people are Catholic, but because the Thai do like a party and socializing, there are still a lot of Christmas decorations to be found when visiting Thailand at Christmas.



#8 South Africa



Dessert Koeksisters

In collaboration with:



Recipe

For the syrup:

500 ml water
1 kg sugar
½ tbsp ground ginger
1 lemon
2 cinnamon sticks

For the dough:

500 gr self-rising flour
2 tbsp baking powder
½ tbsp salt
50 gr butter, in cubes
1 egg
250 ml buttermilk
Oil for frying

This traditional South African, sticky donut-like treat is deliciously sweet, sticky, crispy and soaked in syrup. Koeksisters are originally from the typical Malay cuisine of Cape Town. Due to immigrants from the Far East, these delicacies ended up on the South African dinner table.

Cookie players are a cross between a fried treat and a donut in the shape of a twisted pretzel. Prepare yourself for one of the sweetest dishes you've ever eaten! They are hugely popular in South Africa and are often eaten on special occasions such as Christmas. Enjoy!

Preparation

Note: start on time with the syrup. Bring the water with the sugar to the boil and add the cinnamon stick. Grate the zest of the lemon and add this as well. Halve the lemon and squeeze out the juice. Turn down the heat and let the syrup boil for 15 minutes. Leave the syrup to cool in the fridge for 4 hours.

Put the flour in a mixing bowl and make a dimple. Sprinkle the baking powder over the edges. Mix in the dimple the butter, milk, salt and egg. Gradually add the flour and knead into a supple dough. Add some water if the dough is too dry. Press the dough flat, wrap it in plastic foil and let it rest in the fridge for 20 minutes. Then divide the dough into 13 equal parts and roll each part out into a rectangular slice.



Christmas fact

During Christmas in South Africa celebrations centre around a very extensive lunch where the whole family is present. During Christmas, the cities are emptied and everyone retreats to family, who live in the 'townships' or somewhere in the countryside. Because it is high summer, the festivities are mainly outside and in the garden.

Cut the slice partially into 3 strips but don't cut the top (in the shape of a comb). Braid the 3 strips together and press the end in place. Repeat this for each slice.

Heat the oil to 180 °C and deep fry the cookies every 4 minutes until golden brown and crispy. Drain the cookie on a plate of kitchen paper and then scoop into the cold syrup. Drain the wafers and cool down.

#9 Greece



Dessert Melomakarona

In collaboration with:

GREECE

Recipe for ± 25 cookies

500 gr flour
250 ml olive oil
300 gr sugar
½ glass of orange juice
2 tbsp cognac
1 tsp cinnamon powder
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp baking soda
100 gr chopped walnuts
240 ml water
240 ml honey

Did you know that mainland Greece is a white paradise in winter? The land of thousands of islands becomes a real winter wonderland! And the Christmas atmosphere is also very present.

In Thessaloniki there is a delicious scent of the local bakers on every corner.

If you want to take home the Greek winter at Christmas, try Melomakarona. This is the cookie that is on the table of every Greek family during Christmas. Once in the oven, the whole house smells of cinnamon, honey and cookies. A scent that typically matches the real Christmas feeling. Merry Christmas! Or in Greek: Kala Christougenna!

Preparation

Heat the oven to 200° C. Grab a bowl and mix the olive oil, 100 gr sugar, the orange juice and the cognac. Sieve the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and baking soda over the mixture. Knead into a smooth dough. Divide the dough into small portions (the size of an egg) and form small pastries. Knead them into an elongated shape. Place the cookies on a baking tray with baking paper and bake for 30 min.

Now we start the syrup. Cook the honey, 200 gr sugar and water for five min. When the cookies come out of the oven, pour the syrup mixture over them. Leave them in the syrup for 2 to 3 min. Meanwhile, chop the walnuts finely with a blender or mixer. When serving, decorate the cookies with the chopped walnuts. Sprinkle some cinnamon over them.



Christmas fact

In Greece there are many Christmas traditions. One of them is that on the day before Christmas children go around the neighborhood. They ring the doorbell and ask: "May we sing Christmas carols?". They play triangles, drums and sometimes harmonicas and accordions! On the islands there are mainly violins and guitars. After singing at home, the children receive pocket money or delicacies.



#10 Costa Rica



Dessert Fruitcake

In collaboration with:



Recipe - for one cake

450 gr fruit (cherries, raisins, plums or nuts)
1 cup flour
1 tsp cinnamon
½ tsp baking powder
Bit of ground allspice
½ cup caramelized sugar
¼ cup of hot water
½ cup of rum
30 gr bitter chocolate
115 gr butter
1 cup powdered sugar
3 eggs

This 'Queque de Frutas' or 'Queque Navideño' is one of the many popular recipes made by the Ticos (Costa Ricans) at Christmas.

This sweet, heavy cake is made with dried fruit and often soaked in rum for days or weeks. Although the alcohol is baked in the oven, the Tico's like to joke about getting drunk on a good cake. The cake is also often given as a gift to friends and family. Feliz Navidad!

Preparation

Note: this recipe requires a bit of preparation. Start with the fruit one week in advance to soak in the rum and cinnamon. The evening before, mix the sugar with the hot water to caramelize it. Do not keep this mixture in the refrigerator.

Melt the chocolate. Mix the butter with the powdered sugar, add the yolks and beat until creamy. Beat the egg whites separately and firmly. Mix the flour with the baking powder and allspice. Add a cup of this mixture. Add all the ingredients little by little to the fruit soaked in the rum and mix gently. Cover a rectangular cake tin with baking paper or flour and divide the mixture over it. Bake at 135°C for 90 to 120 minutes.



Christmas fact

Christmas Eve or 'Noche Bueno' is the start of the long awaited summer vacation in Costa Rica! The rainy season ends and gives way to sunny days and clear nights full of stars. During Christmas in Costa Rica you will see lights and houses decorated with beautiful tropical flowers. Because it is the middle of summer, the festivities take place mainly on the streets.

Place a pan with water on the lower grill of the oven. The steam will keep the oven moist so that the cake does not dry out. Remove the cake from the oven and let it cool down. Serve with some powdered sugar. ¡Disfruta!



#11 Australia



The Christmas vacations in Australia are one big food festival. If you've ever dreamed of celebrating Christmas on the beach, Australia is probably one of the best places to do so!

Australians are famous for 'putting another shrimp on the barbie', which refers to their love of BBQ. After the main course, and probably a dip to cool off, one starts on the Pavlova. These sweet, white cushions are covered with fresh fruit and cream. It's super popular because it's easy to make and always looks impressive. The recipe is adaptable to everyone's taste.

Dessert Pavlova

In collaboration with:



Recipe - for 8 persons

3 egg whites
180 gr sugar
2 tl cornstarch
2 tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp white vinegar
200 gr cream or mascarpone

Bananas, strawberries, blueberries or other fruit of your choice as topping

Preparation

Heat the oven to 150° C. Mix your egg whites in a bowl. When the egg whites start to become stiff, add 150 gr sugar, cornstarch, 1 tsp vanilla and vinegar. Mix well for another 10-12 minutes until you have a smooth mixture.



Christmas fact

Since the end of the year is the start of the summer, many Australians can be found on the beach during the Christmas period. Some nice ways in which people celebrate Christmas is by wearing holiday themed swimsuits. You can see a lot of Santa hats and Santa suits on the beach. Bondi Beach in Sydney is very famous for this!

Spoon the mixture in a circular cake tin or on a baking tray. Make sure you keep a diameter of 20 cm for the latter. Bake for about 2 hours at 100 °C (top and bottom heat) until you see a crispy outside with a soft, golden glow. Let the pavlova cool down. Mix the cream, 30 gr sugar and 1 tsp vanilla into a mixture. Put in the fridge. Shortly before serving, decorate the Pavlova with the creamy mixture and piece of cut fruit.

#12 Croatia



Christmas remains one of the most important holidays in Croatia and the Christmas menu is certainly one of the things that is most looked forward to.

Orahnjača is a traditional, sweet Croatian dessert where dough is filled with a delicious filling made with walnuts, raisins and rum. The dough is also often flavored with lemon or orange peel. You will always find this dessert on the table in Croatia at Christmas time.

Dessert Orahnjača

In collaboration with:



Recipe

200 gr sugar
250 ml milk
30 gr yeast
380 gr flower
50 gr butter
4 eggs
1/2 ton salt
1 tbsp sour cream
350 grams walnuts, finely ground
1 lemon
3 tbsp rum
1 tsp vanilla extract
100 gr raisins
1 tbsp honey
1/2 tbsp of cinnamon
powdered sugar

Preparation

Mix the yeast with 50ml warm milk, 30gr sugar and 30gr flour. Leave to rise for 15 minutes, covered with a clean kitchen towel. Mix 350gr flour, the salt, melted butter, 2 tsp sugar and 1/2 finely chopped lemon rind. Add two yolks and a whole egg, the sour cream and the yeast mixture. Knead until a soft dough is formed. Leave it to rise again covered in a warm place, until the dough is doubled. This takes about 1 hour.

Heat the oven to 200° C and in the meantime make the filling. Mix the ground walnuts with 150gr sugar, vanilla, 1/2 finely chopped lemon peel, cinnamon and honey. Mix the raisins separately with rum and leave to stand for 15 minutes. Then add the raisins and rum to the filling mixture. Add 200ml of boiling milk and mix everything. Leave to cool until you roll out the dough.



Christmas fact

Christmas Eve is by far the best day of the period because then the Christmas tree is finally set up! Christmas Eve is a traditional Lent day in some areas, where a simple meal is enjoyed in the evening. On Christmas Eve there is only fish on the menu. Bakalar' or dried cod is often the favorite!

Divide the risen dough into two parts. Roll each part out on a floured surface to the size of your baking tray (about 35 x 30 cm). Spread the filling over the dough. Leave an edge of 1 cm free. Start rolling the dough on the long side and press the end. Put the rolls with the edge down on a greased baking tray. Let them rise again, until they are twice as big.

After rising, cover the rolls with a beaten egg yolk. Bake for 40 minutes. Let the rolls cool down before cutting them into pieces. Before serving, dust the pieces with powdered sugar.