The Fantastic L Cooks
Barszcz
(Polish beetroot soup with dumplings)

This soup is traditionally eaten on Christmas Eve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment:</th>
<th>Ingredients:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowls</td>
<td>4 beetroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boards</td>
<td>1 carrot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knives</td>
<td>2 sticks celery</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Large saucepan</td>
<td>1 large onion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sifter</td>
<td>3 leaves cabbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden spoons</td>
<td>4 large dried mushrooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rolling pin</td>
<td>Dill to taste</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colander</td>
<td>Splash of cider vinegar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spoon measures</td>
<td><strong>For the dumplings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scales</td>
<td>2 dried mushrooms, soaked in a little hot water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
<pre><code>                                                             | 100g plain flour, plus extra for dusting |
                                                             | 1 egg, beaten                          |
                                                             | 1 tablespoon water                    |
                                                             | 1 tablespoon butter                   |
                                                             | 4 fresh brown button mushrooms, chopped|
                                                             | 1 large onion, chopped                |
                                                             | 1 tablespoon chopped dill             |
                                                             | 1 tablespoon dried breadcrumbs        |
</code></pre>

What to do:
- For the soup: soak the dried mushrooms in a cup of hot water to soften for about half an hour. Take out and chop fine (keep the liquid).
- Put the beetroot into a saucepan with the carrot, celery, onion, cabbage, finely chopped mushroom pieces, and sprig of dill, add water to cover.
• Bring it to the boil and turn the heat off, leaving the lid on (do not lift the lid up to peak inside!) and leave for an hour.
• While this is happening you can start making the dumplings.
• Dumplings: sift the flour into a bowl season with salt and pepper to taste.
• Make a well in the centre and add the egg and water.
• Mix thoroughly, and then knead the dough until smooth. (Do this by hand so you can keep an eye on the texture; when you start to knead it can be sticky but this goes away.
• If your dough gets sticky again you have over kneaded!)
• Wrap it in cling film and set aside while you make the filling.
• Soak the mushrooms in a little water for half an hour.
• Take out and chop as finely as you can (again keep the liquid)
• Melt the butter in a large saucepan over a medium heat.
• Add the fresh mushrooms and onion and fry for about 3 minutes, stirring, until the onion begins to colour.
• Add the rehydrated mushrooms and liquid.
• Heat and cook, stirring until most of the liquid evaporates.
• Then stir in the dill and the breadcrumbs.
• Take off the heat and leave to cool.
• Divide the dough into eight pieces; roll out each one thinly on a lightly floured surface.
• Cut the sheet of dough into 5cm squares. Do one square at a time:
• Place a teaspoonful of the filling in the centre, fold the square up and over it, to make a triangle and then crimp the edges together. You should be looking at a large triangle now. The next step is to take the two corners of the longest inwards so that they overlap, and crimp them together too.
• Set each one aside on a floured board while you make the rest.
• Take a large pan of salted water and bring to the boil. Gently add the dumplings.
• Turn the heat down to simmer, stirring gently (this is to stop them sticking).
• Bring the water back to the boil and simmer for about 3 minutes - the dumplings are ready when they float to the top.
• Strain the soup (discard the vegetables). Reheat the soup until hot, adding a tiny bit of vinegar to taste (taste the soup first; you may decide not to add any).
• If you do add vinegar, the soup will have a sharp edge to it, without loosing the sweetness of the beetroot and will keep that rich red colour
• Serve soup with the dumplings floating in it.