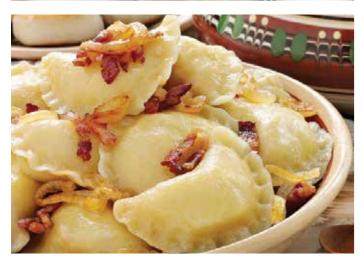
Ukrainian-Jewish cross-cultural influences in language and cuisine









Recipes for the dishes pictured can be found in the Cuisines section on UJE's website.

Head Office

Ukrainian Jewish Encounter 1508 Kenneth Drive Mississauga ON L5E 2Y5 Canada Tel: +1 (905) 891-0242

Ukraine

Ukrainian Jewish Encounter 29 Khreshchatyk Str., Room 50 Kyiv 01001 Ukraine Tel.: +38 (044) 38 99 777



At the end of the nineteenth century
Ukraine had the highest concentration
of Jews in the world with some 30 percent
of world Jewry residing in ethnographic
Ukrainian territories. Jews made up 10 to
15 percent of the population in Western
and Right-Bank Ukraine (west of the
Dnieper River) and were a relative majority

in some cities and towns in these areas. The presence among Ukrainians of such a numerous ethnic minority and the ongoing contact between Ukrainians and Yiddish-speaking Jews over five centuries left an indelible reciprocal imprint on the languages of these two peoples and their cuisines.

Nu, let's talk!

Ukrainian and Yiddish: linguistic interaction

Hundreds of Ukrainian loanwords have been adopted in the Yiddish language (for example, words for various agricultural products and the multi-expressive *nu*). Many Yiddish words and expressions have entered the Ukrainian language, particularly urban speech and regional dialects. For example, Bukovinian Ukrainian speech absorbed expressions from Yiddish, such as:

moiry maty

"to be afraid"
(Yid. hobn moyre)

tsuris

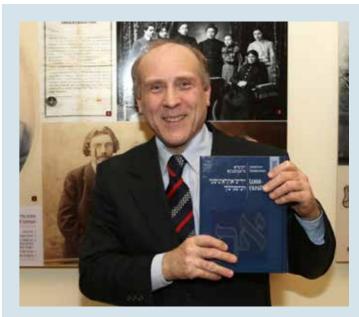
"rage, fury" (Yid. tsures "trouble, plight, aggravation, misery")

buty broigis z kym

"to be angry at somebody" (Yid. zayn broyges oyf emetsn)

metsiia

"something very good" (Yid. *metsie* "bargain")



Dmytro Tyshchenko is a Ukrainian philologist and a Germanist who specializes in Yiddish. He created the Yiddish-Russian (2013) and the Yiddish-Ukrainian (2014) dictionaries.

Ukrainian influence is also evident in Jewish family names, many of which are identical with Ukrainian surnames. Other Jewish surnames combine
Ukrainian stems with Yiddish stems or suffixes.
The suffix -enko was common among Jews in the
Kyivan region (e.g., Faibishenko) and the suffix -iuk
in Galicia (e.g., Shlomiuk). Around 70 percent of
surnames of Ukrainian Jews derive from the names
of towns or villages in Ukraine. (Based on a presentation
by Wolf Moskovich, Professor Emeritus, Hebrew
University, at a UJE-sponsored conference in
Jerusalem, October 2010.)

Nu, let's eat! Common dishes in Ukrainian and Jewish cuisine

It is not surprising that in the course of over one thousand years of the Ukrainian-Jewish encounter the national cuisines of the two peoples evolved to feature common dishes. Jews who migrated from Germany to Eastern Europe brought with them former food habits but also adopted and adapted local food customs. Jewish religious culture imprinted its own character on these foods to reflect the requirements of *kashrut*, the Jewish dietary laws. For example, forbidden ingredients such as pork in Ukrainian dishes were substituted with beef or chicken, and beef or chicken would never be mixed with dairy foods.

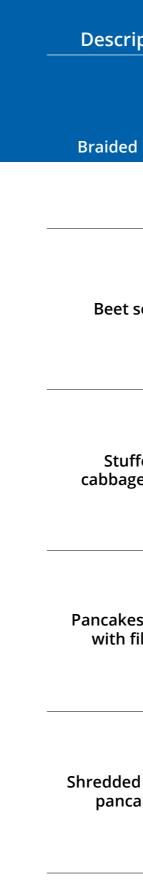
Some of these foods acquired symbolic meaning in evolving Jewish traditions: braided bread (Ukr. kalach, Yid. challah/koylitch) became an essential feature of the Sabbath and Jewish festivals; filled dairy pancakes (Ukr. nalysnyky, Yid. blintzes) became a specialty of the festival of Shavuot, which is associated with dairy products, and shredded potato pancakes (Ukr. deruny, Yid. latkes) became the hallmark of Hanukkah because they are deep-fried in oil, a key symbol of this festival. Dill pickles are a staple side dish in both cultures, and for dessert—anyone interested in a slice of poppy seed roll or honey cake?



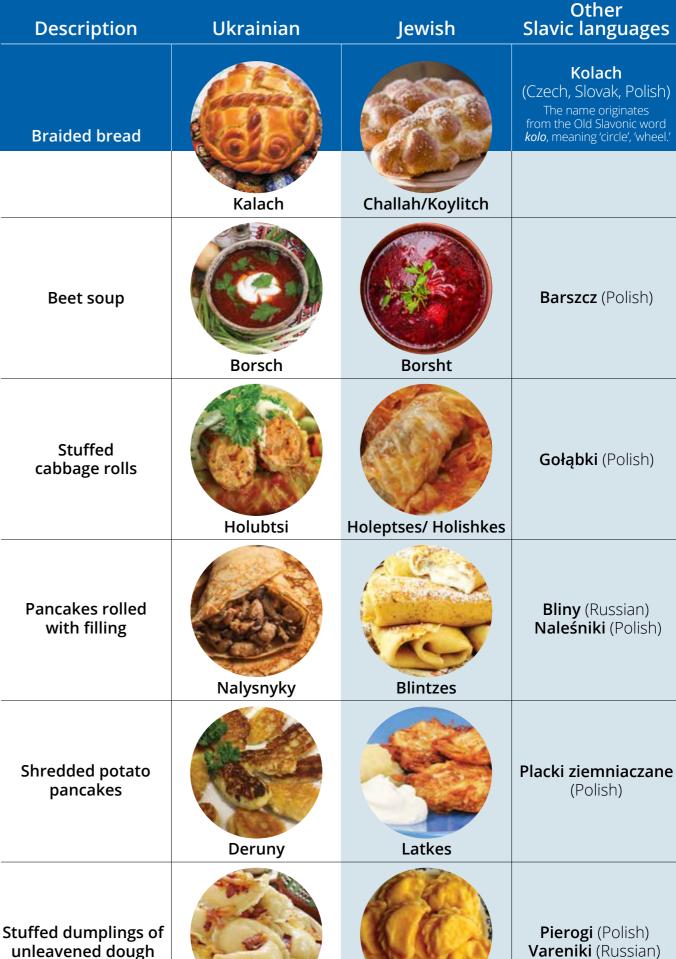


















Vareniki (Russian)