

Diet

The diet in the Soviet Union, as well as that of most Eastern European diets, was not very healthy, with its strong reliance on carbohydrates and fats. In fact, Eastern Europeans have the highest rates of heart disease in the world. In the Soviet Union, there was also limited access to many foods and citizens often filled up with bread to compensate. A typical lunch or dinner for a Soviet family included up to four courses. Soup and bread would come first, followed by a meat or fish dish with one or more sides, followed by some kind of drink such as milk, and topped off by a dessert of cake or cookies.

Healthy recipe

Cabbage borsch (serves 10-12)

Ingredients

Water

1 head of red cabbage, chopped into bite-sized pieces
4 fresh beets, peeled and cut into small cubes
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 red onion, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped (optional)
1 6-oz. can tomato paste
3 vegetable Maggi cubes
1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
1 tbsp. (or to taste) maple syrup
2 tbsp. nutritional yeast (if available)
Salt/pepper, if needed.

Directions

1. Pour water into a 6-qt. slow cooker until it is slightly over half full.
 2. Add the cabbage, beets, garlic, onion, celery, and paste to the water.
 3. Cook on medium heat for 2-4 hours, until the cabbage is slightly mushy. Add more water if mixture is too thick*.
 4. Add Maggi cubes, vinegar, syrup, and yeast to soup. Taste and adjust ingredients or salt/pepper accordingly.
 5. Traditionally this soup is topped with sour cream and served with a crusty bread.
- Whenever a sauce or soup seems too thin, add a few teaspoons of unseasoned breadcrumbs. It will also add an interesting texture to the dish.