

## SOME VARIOUS HOLIDAY MEALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Russia – Mushroom Soup with *Zaprashka* – Soup thickened with a Soviet roux, oil and flour, and the liquid rendered from sautéing lots of onions.

Singapore – Curry Devil – Served on Boxing Day (12/26) this Eurasian dish also known as Devil's Curry incorporates Christmas leftovers, chicken, cocktail sausages, cabbage and cucumbers which are stewed in spicy *rempah* gravy.

Japan – Eating a plate of Buckwheat noodles before midnight on New Year's Eve is said to bring longevity and prosperity for the next 12 months and is an age-old tradition.

Romania – *Sarmale*—this is a time-tested staple that goes back to the Ottoman Empire: cabbage rolls packed with pork, beef and rice and boiled in a rich tomato sauce. Variations of this dish are also served across the Balkans and Central Europe.

The Philippines – *Bibingka*— This Christmas breakfast pastry of rice flour and coconut milk is baked in banana-leaf lined terracotta pots. It is topped with *Kesongputi*, a local white cheese, grated coconut, and sometimes even salted duck eggs.

Sweden – *Janzon's* Temptation – Said to be named after the Swedish opera star *Pelle Janzon*, this casserole of potatoes, herring, onions, cream and bread crumbs is a holiday mainstay.

Mexico – *Romeritos* with Mole – A batter of powdered, dried shrimp and egg whites is cooked like a pancake, sauced with mole and mixed with an indigenous mild-tasting green plant called *romerito*. It is eaten during the Posadas, the nine days leading up to Christmas. Mexico is also known for a variety of tamales with various fillings during the holiday season.

Ethiopia – *Yeberg Wot* – Many farmers in Ethiopia buy lambs far in advance of Christmas to fatten them up for this thick, buttery *berbere*-spiced stew. It is often served with *Injera*, traditional Ethiopian flatbread.

Italy – There are two traditions here, the first is the Feast of the Seven Fishes which is a traditional Christmas Eve meal consisting of numerous foods including seven separate seafood dishes, from *Baccala* (salt cod) to clams, scallops, squid, Octopus, shrimp, lobsters and quahogs (large clams). The second Italian treat is Eel- smoked or grilled it has been a go-to Christmas favorite for many, many years.

China – *Tangyuan* (in the North) and *Yuanxiao* (in the South) – These stuffed rice flour dumplings were once used as an oral remedy believed to protect exposed ears from cold-weather ulcerations. Now they are soaked in a sweet and savory broth during *Dongzhi* – the celebration of the winter solstice and the wintertime Lantern Festival.

Argentina – *VitelloTonnato* – Tender slices of Veal served with tuna sauce and capers and topped with chopped hard boiled eggs.

Some of the more famous Holiday dishes are *Stollen* from Germany, *Buche deNoel* from France, and back to Italy for *Panettone* (a yeasty bread with dried fruit, Fried Bow Ties (pastry crust that is tied into a bow shape, fried and covered in powdered sugar and my favorite, *Struffoli*– little dough balls fried then coated with honey and topped with little candy sprinkles.