Rakott Palacsinta (Savory Layered Crepe Cake)

Make-ahead · Serves a crowd · Holiday · Serves 8–10 as an appetizer

Ken's note: TBD

Thin Hungarian crepes layered with ham, grated cheese, and a sour cream binder, baked until set and cut into wedges like a cake. Make it ahead and bake it just before serving. For the crepe technique, see Palacsinta in Desserts.

Ingredients

Crepes (unsweetened)

- 2 eggs
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½–¾ cup soda water
- 1 Tbsp oil, plus butter for the pan

Filling

- 1 cup sour cream
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp chopped parsley or chives
- Black pepper
- 8 oz cooked ham, finely diced or ground
- 1½ cups (6 oz) grated Emmental, Gruyère, or sharp cheddar, divided
- Butter, for the dish

Topping

- ¼ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup grated cheese
- 1 Tbsp butter, in small pieces

Method

1. Whisk the eggs and salt. Whisk in the milk and flour until smooth, then stir in the soda water until the batter is like thin cream. Rest 30 minutes, then stir in the oil. Cook 10 thin 8-inch crepes in a lightly buttered skillet, about 1 minute on the first side and 30 seconds on the second. Stack and cool.
2. Whisk the sour cream, eggs, herbs, and pepper for the binder.
3. Heat the oven to 350°F and butter a 9-inch springform pan or round baking dish. Set one crepe in the bottom. Spread with a thin layer of the binder, scatter on a quarter of the ham, and cover with another crepe. Spread with binder and a quarter of the cheese, and top with another crepe. Continue alternating ham and cheese layers, ending with a crepe on top. You should have 10 crepes and 8 filling layers.
4. Spread the topping sour cream over the top crepe, sprinkle on the cheese, and dot with butter. Bake 30–35 minutes, until set in the center and golden. Rest 10 minutes, then cut in wedges. Taste a bit of the ham and cheese before adding any salt to the binder; both are salty. It can be assembled a day ahead, chilled, and baked 10 minutes longer.