



# CCCP COOK BOOK: True Stories of Soviet Cuisine

*Olga Syutkin, Pavel Syutkin*

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As the Soviet Union struggled along the path to communism, food shortages were commonplace, and both Party authorities and Soviet citizens had to apply every ounce of ingenuity to maximize often-inadequate resources. The stories and recipes contained in the *CCCP Cook Book* reflect these turbulent times: from basic subsistence meals consumed by the average citizen (like okroshka, a cold soup made with the fermented beverage kvass) to extravagant banquets held by the political elite (suckling pig with buckwheat), with a scattering of classics (beef stroganoff) in between. Each recipe is introduced with a historical story or anecdote from the period, and illustrated using images sourced from original Soviet recipe books collected by the authors, food historians Olga and Pavel Syutkin.

Many of the sometimes extraordinary-looking pictures depict dishes whose recipes used unobtainable ingredients, placing them firmly in the realm of "aspirational" fantasy for the average Soviet household. In their content and presentation, the recipes and illustrations act as windows into the cuisine and culture of the era.

*CCCP Cook Book* offers an illustrated history of Soviet cuisine told through the stories and popular recipes from the period. The book contains 60 recipes from the Soviet period, including such delicacies as aspic, borscht, caviar and herring, by way of bird's milk cake and pelmeni.



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