



KAZAKH CUISINE COOKBOOK

National Recipes

EMBASSY OF KAZAKHSTAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

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KAZAKH CUISINE

Kazakh cuisine was shaped by the nomadic way of life and the harsh steppe climate. It is based on meat and dairy products, rich in nutrients and energy, essential for survival in extreme conditions. Key ingredients include lamb, beef, horse meat, dairy products, and grains such as millet and wheat.

One of the defining features of Kazakh cuisine is the extensive use of milk and its derivatives. Popular dairy products include ayran (a refreshing fermented milk drink), kumis (fermented mare's milk), shubat (a camel milk equivalent), as well as kurt, irimshik, and other nutritious snacks.

Meat dishes are at the heart of traditional Kazakh cuisine. The most famous dish is beshbarmak, a hearty meal of boiled meat served with homemade noodles and onions. Other notable dishes include kazy (*homemade horse meat sausage*), qyrdag (*fried meat with potatoes and onions*), and et (*boiled meat served in large chunks with broth*).



Kazakh cuisine is simple yet deeply flavorful. Meals are not prepared in haste—each dish takes time to ensure the natural flavors are preserved. Today, traditional Kazakh recipes continue to be passed down through generations, remaining an essential part of the country's culture and hospitality.

KAZAKHSTAN
BORN BOLD

BAUYRSAK

Ingredients

- 800g flour
- 250ml warm milk
- 250ml water
- 10g dry yeast
- 2 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 50ml sunflower oil
- Sunflower oil for frying



How to make

1 Make the Dough

- In a bowl, mix warm milk and water. Add sugar and yeast, stir until dissolved, and let sit for **10–15 minutes** until a foamy layer forms—this means the yeast is active.
- Stir in the sunflower oil and salt.
- Gradually add the flour and knead until you get a smooth, elastic dough.
- Place the dough in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let it rise in a warm place for **about 1 hour**, until it doubles in size.

2 Shape the Pastries

- Roll out the dough to about **1 cm** thick on a lightly floured surface.
- Use a glass or round cutter to cut out circles.
- Cover with a kitchen towel and let them rest for **few minutes**.

3 Fry and Serve

- Heat sunflower oil in a deep pan over medium heat.
- Carefully add the dough circles and fry until golden brown on both sides, flipping once.
- Drain on paper towels and serve warm.



SAMSA

Ingredients

For the dough (if making from scratch; otherwise, use store-bought puff pastry):

- 500g flour
- 150ml cold water
- 1 tsp salt
- 250g butter
- 1 egg

For the filling:

- 500g chicken fillet or mince
- 1 medium onion
- 300g butternut (or potato optional)
- 1 tsp salt
- black pepper to taste
- 80g melted butter

For assembling and baking:

- 1 egg or yolk (for brushing)
- Sesame seeds (optional)

SAMSA

How to make

1 Prepare the Dough

(if making from scratch)

- Grate the butter using a coarse grater.
- In a bowl, mix flour, 150g butter, egg and salt, then gradually add water. Knead into a dough.
- Cover and freeze for 30-40 minutes.
- Roll out the dough into a thin sheet, brush with 100g melted butter, and roll it into a roll/log, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate for **at least 5-6 hours or overnight**.
- Divide the dough into portions of 30 to 35 grams each.

2 Prepare the Filling

- Finely chop the chicken into small pieces or use chicken mince.
- Dice the butternut or potato into small cubes (about 0.5 cm).
- Mix the chicken, finely chopped onion, butternut, salt, and pepper.
- Add 80g of softened butter for extra juiciness. Mix well.

3 Assemble the Samsa

- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- Roll out the puff pastry into circles.
- Place a spoonful of filling in the center of each circle.
- Fold the dough over the filling, pinching the edges tightly to form an oval-shaped samsa.
- Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
- Brush the tops with whole egg or just yolk and sprinkle with sesame seeds.

4 Bake the Samsa

- Bake at **180°C for 35 minutes** until golden brown and crispy.
- Let them cool slightly before serving.



MANTY

Ingredients

For the dough:

- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp oil
- 3 cups flour (divided)
- 2 eggs

For cooking:

- Sunflower oil
(for greasing the steamer)

For the filling:

- 500g beef mince
- 200g butternut, finely diced
- 2 medium onions (finely chopped)
- 1 tsp salt (or to taste)
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp paprika (optional)
- 50ml water or broth (for extra juiciness)



MANTY

Traditional steamed
dumplings



How to make

1 Prepare the Dough

- In a bowl, mix boiling water, salt, and oil.
- Add 1.5 cups of flour, stir quickly, and let the dough rest for 5 minutes.
- After resting, add 2 eggs and mix well.
- Gradually add the remaining 1.5 cups of flour, kneading until smooth and elastic.
- Cover and let it rest for 10–15 minutes.

2 Prepare the Filling

- Finely chop the meat, onions, and butternut (or use ground meat).
- Season with salt, pepper, and cumin.
- Add a bit of water or broth to keep the filling juicy.

3 Shape the Manty

- Roll out the dough thinly and cut into 10x10 cm squares.
- Place a spoonful of filling in the center of each piece.
- Pinch the edges together, forming a traditional manty shape.

4 Steam the Manty

- Grease the steamer trays with oil to prevent sticking.
- Place the manty slightly apart so they don't stick together.
- Steam over boiling water for 40–45 minutes.

5 Serve and Enjoy

- Serve hot with butter, sour cream, or a garlic-yogurt sauce.
- Garnish with fresh herbs if desired.



Quyrdaq

Ingredients

- 1.5 kg lamb (*a mix of meat, fat, and some bones for flavor*)
- 500g lamb liver (*added later*)
- 3 large onions, sliced
- 3 medium potatoes, diced
- 100ml vegetable oil or lamb fat
- 1 tsp salt (*or to taste*)
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp paprika (*optional*)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 cup water or broth
- Fresh green onions (*for garnish*)

QUYRDAQ

How to make

This rich and flavorful dish is a staple of Kazakh cuisine, traditionally made with lamb, liver, and potatoes, simmered to perfection.

1 Prepare the Base

- Heat the oil or rendered lamb fat in a heavy pan or cauldron over **medium-high heat**.
- Add the lamb pieces (including fat and bones) and sear until browned, about **10–15 minutes**.
- Stir in the sliced onions and cook until soft and golden.

2 Simmer the Stew

- Season with salt, pepper, cumin, and paprika.
- Add **1 cup of water or broth**, reduce the heat to low, and let it simmer for **40–50 minutes**, stirring occasionally.

3 Add Potatoes and Liver

- Once the meat is tender, add the diced potatoes and bay leaves.
- After **10 minutes**, add the liver, cut into bite-sized pieces.
- Cook everything together for another **10 minutes**, until the liver is tender and the potatoes are soft.



4 Serve and Garnish

- Remove from heat and let it rest for a few minutes.
- Garnish with freshly chopped green onions.
- Serve hot with flatbread or fresh salad.

QURT

Kazakh Snack

Qurt is more than just a Kazakh snack—it's a symbol of the nomadic way of life. Its history goes back centuries, originally created as a food that could be stored for months without refrigeration. Nomads carried qurt on long journeys and military campaigns because it was rich in protein, calcium, and salt, helping them maintain strength in the harsh steppe conditions.

The preparation process involves fermenting milk, draining the whey, and drying it in the sun for a long period. Qurt comes in various shapes, from small balls to large bars. The taste also varies—from salty and tangy to creamier versions, depending on the recipe.

Today, qurt remains an essential part of Kazakh cuisine. It's eaten as a snack, paired with tea, or added to soups for extra flavor. More than just food, qurt is a living heritage passed down through generations.





JENT

Kazakh Dessert

Jent is a sweet and nutritious Kazakh dessert made from crushed millet (tary), butter, sugar (or honey), and dried milk (sometimes with raisins and nuts). It has a soft, slightly crumbly texture and a pleasant milky taste. Jent is often served with tea or as a treat during celebrations and family gatherings.

IRIMSHIK



Irimshik is a homemade curd cheese made by curdling milk, then filtering and drying it. Depending on the preparation method, it can be soft or hard, slightly sweet or salty. It is eaten on its own, added to pastries, or served with honey and melted butter alongside tea.

Kazakh Dessert

