

Liver Dumpling (Leberknödel) Soup in Vegetable Broth – Made from Scratch!

Recipe for 4 persons

The restaurant “Herz & Niere” in Berlin stands for respect for all life and for using the entire animal, from the pig’s snout to the cow’s lung. Award-winning chef Christoph Hauser is head chef and restaurant manager. He makes no distinctions between so-called “fine” cuts of meat and the so-called lesser parts. Instead, guests can experience culinary discoveries beyond the fillet.

Vegetable Broth

Ingredients

Spice paste for vegetable broth

3	Bay leaves	2	Juniper berries
10	Green peppercorns	2	Cloves
½ tsp	Fennel seed	½ tsp	Anise seed
1	Garlic clove	2	Allspice berries
1	Sprig of rosemary	1	Sprig of Thyme
4	Carrots with carrot tops	8	Mushrooms
4	Stalks of spring leek	200g	Celery
2	Parsnips		

Preparation

Grind all spices with a mortar and pestle. Wash, peel, and slice the vegetables for the soup. The vegetable slices and peels should amount to 400g. Using a Thermomixer or similar food processor, mince peels together with the ground spices and 100g of salt to the consistency of a mush. The vegetable paste can be filled into jars, to be used later. 20g of vegetable paste stirred into 300ml of water makes for a well-rounded vegetable broth. The vegetables are simmered in the vegetable broth.

Liver Dumplings (Leberknödel)

Ingredients

1 tsp	Dry marjoram	1 tsp	Salt
1 tsp	Caraway seeds	1 tsp	Green pepper
4	Cloves	70g	Beef
140g	Cow liver	1	Egg
3	Slices of toast		

Preparation

Finely grind all spices with a mortar and pestle. Grind beef and half of the cow liver with a meat grinder. Cut the other half of the cow liver into very fine cubes and mix together with the ground meat. Finely cube toast and, together with the egg, mix together with meat. Add spice mixture to taste. Boil 300ml water with 20g spice paste. Using a spoon, shape the meat mixture into dumplings (approximately 12). Simmer dumplings in the vegetable broth. Bring broth and dumplings to a quick boil and then reduce heat and simmer the dumplings for about 10 minutes.

Presentation

Layer vegetables in soup plates, pour in broth, place dumplings on top, and decorate with diced carrot tops.

Particularities

The basis of the liver dumpling soup is not the dumpling, but rather the spice paste, which Christoph Hauser masterfully creates. The remaining spice paste can be stored for the next time.

Tips for the Dish

The Entire Animal

Liver dumplings are the introduction to Christoph Hauser's philosophy of using the entire animal. Whoever doesn't want to eat just the "fine" cuts must invent recipes and dishes for the other parts. And as liver dumplings are generally accepted by many diners, they easy way to approach the idea of eating the entire animal.

Vegetable Broth

The basis of the dish is not actually the dumpling, but rather the vegetable paste. In his studio kitchen, together with participants, Christoph Hauser makes two different kinds of vegetable broth pastes. To make the pastes, you need at least 400g of vegetable scraps.

Carrot Tops

Don't throw away the carrot tops, instead include them in the vegetable paste and save some for decoration. Carrot tops also make a good substitute for parsley.

Leek

How much green should be cut off? Christoph Hauser cuts off most of the green and uses the rest in the vegetable paste: "In principle you can eat it all." The woody parts, however, must be discarded. He doesn't dice the stalk too finely, because "I like it when you still have something to chew on in a broth."

Mortar and Pestle

The vegetable paste can be mixed or ground. Grinding the salt and the vegetables for the vegetable paste makes for a finer paste. And it is also possible to make your own spiced salt at home.

Basic Recipe

20g vegetable paste for 600ml water

Christoph Hauser remembers:

"My grandmother always stored the broth for up to a year." And it doesn't have to be stored in the refrigerator: "With so much salt, it doesn't go bad." In any case, in Hauser's opinion: "We have to get away from readymade products."

Liver Dumplings (Leberknödel)

The butcher can grind the liver, but you must mix the spices in yourself. Here Christoph Hauser also uses his own homemade spiced salt. This time the salt consists of salt, marjoram, pepper, clove, and caraway seeds, finely ground with a mortar and pestle. His tip: "Spice it a bit more because the taste becomes milder during the cooking process."

How to shape the dumplings

The pretty little dumplings can be best shaped by using two teaspoons or with one teaspoon and hands. It is easiest when an appropriately small spoon is used.

Perfectly cooked vegetables

Christoph Hauser cooks the vegetables in two pots, so that the vegetables are never overcooked. The different types of vegetables are added in two-minute intervals into the pot: parsnip first, then celery, carrots, finally, leek. He then lets it all boil and simmer with for 10 minutes together with the mushrooms.

Wine suggestion

Pair with a Riesling from Baden.

