
Stuffed Cabbage Rolls Recipe Secrets

by [mihaelaotp](#)
35 Followers

Cabbage rolls – traditional stuffed cabbage for your family

The cabbage rolls are meat stuffed cabbage leaves with added rice, tomato juice and some seasonings. When holidays are near, in some east European countries like Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, all grandmothers and mothers prepare one of the best dishes around: [stuffed cabbage rolls](#). Families should have during holidays when everyone gets together these tasty cabbage rolls on their tables. My mother often prepares stuffed cabbage rolls, a traditional recipe that requires a specific process to prepare the cabbage, that is the great secret of genuine cabbage rolls. This delicious food is loved by the entire family, and it keeps the flavor and freshness over a few days after you make it. Stuffed cabbage rolls recipe is a something that everyone wants to know, and it is no secret of how to make it in the traditional way, it's really simple.

What are Stuffed Cabbage Rolls?

[Cabbage rolls](#) is the name for a dish that contains cabbage leaves, which are pickled prior to any attempt of cooking this food, minced meat (the best would be pork, as it has a tasty fat), rice tomato juice, spices. The recipe I will provide is the traditional Romanian for stuffed cabbage rolls, which is the best in the world.

Cabbage Rolls look delicious!



History of Cabbage Rolls

Stone Age people invented, along with the clay pot, a number of new ways of preparing food, including [meat](#). So the invention of the pot in which meat was boiled first, was a huge step towards the diversification of the dishes. As shown by some very old cave paintings, people enveloped the meat loafs in different edible leaves. Thus, one can say that the first rolls were invented by primitive people. How those rolls looked and what kind of meat did they put in it, it is not known, as there is no such data. But the history of the stuffed cabbage rolls goes way back, as there is certain evidence that Ice Age people understood the technique of rolling chopped meat in leaves. This means that the stuffed cabbage rolls were born at least 15,000 years ago.

How did stuffed cabbage rolls become a culinary custom

As shown in several studies, there was no need of passing along the tradition of preparing minced meat in leaves, because people and cultures have reinvented the cabbage rolls, in isolated environments, from different tribes in the Amazon jungle and Papua New Guinea. The tribes were made up of children, who had been expelled from Amazonian tribes, and did not know how to prepare food, it appeared

that they had reinvented it. For this reason, the assumption that the Indians would have taken a very old tradition of cooking stuffed cabbage has no real support. Rather, it appeared that in ancient India, 2,000 years before Christ, cabbage have occurred in very isolated jungle tribes. From these tribes it is believed that Persians learned to cook the stuffed cabbage rolls, and later passed on the culinary knowledge to the Europeans though the Middle East.

Origin of stuffed cabbage rolls - reason of dispute in Europe

Both Greeks and Albanians, Bulgarians and, last but not least, the Croats and the Turks think they are the stuffed cabbage rolls inventors. The Romanian and Croatian common name for cabbage roll is "*sarma*", which is similar to "*sarmi*" in Bulgarian and "*sarmalaki*" in Greek. It says nothing however, about the identity of those who took first, this culinary delight or reinvented it in the Balkans. Moreover, the Bulgarian stuffed cabbage rolls are different from the Croatian ones. Many researchers do not exclude the hypothesis that all southern Balkan stuffed cabbage rolls have a different origin than the Romanian ones, that would have been reinvented in Romania. In support of this hypothesis comes the fact that Romanians are the best at Chapter creativity from the South and South-Eastern Europe.

Bulgarian Stuffed cabbage rolls

Bulgarians also have their cabbage rolls, which they prepare not only with pork, beef or mixed, but also lamb, goat, and other mixtures of meat, like duck or goose. It is seasoned with salt, pepper and herbs, then rolled into cabbage leaves (fresh or pickled), sugar beet, or vine leaves.

Greek Stuffed cabbage rolls

They are not really containing cabbage as they are prepared like regular rolls with meat and rice in vine leaves, and placed in layers, putting together rice, mixed with butter and parmesan. Pour over the yogurt and sprinkle the butter pieces and cut tomato cubes and bake in the oven. Serve hot with avgolemono sauce (a sauce of egg with lemon juice).

Turkish Stuffed cabbage rolls

Prepared like regular cabbage rolls, but it is only used lamb or mutton, and dried composition is added, for the stuffing.

Stuffed Cabbage Rolls look delicious working



The traditional Romanian Stuffed Cabbage Rolls recipe

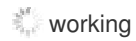
Ingredients (for 40 cabbage rolls; 1 roll has about 3 inches in length and 1.5 inches in diameter)

- 2 pickled medium or large cabbages
- 2.2 pounds minced pork
- 1 cup rice
- 2-3 onions
- 4-5 tablespoons of tomato paste
- 1 egg (optional)
- oil
- Spices (salt, pepper, thyme, bay)
- juice from 1 lemon or Romanian Bors (1 liter)
- Several pieces of smoked meat (optional) or bacon



How to make Stuffed Cabbage Rolls filling

1. Peel the onion and finely chop it.
2. Put oil in a deep pan or pot and turn on the heat. Make sure to add enough oil to cover the bottom of your pot. Add the onion and stir fry it until it becomes glossy.
3. Rinse the rice, add it over the onion and stir.
4. Add water over rice so that it will be covered with water. Stir continuously to until the rice absorbs about half of the water.
- 5 Add one or two tablespoons of tomato paste and seasonings (salt, pepper, thyme) to the rice and mix well.



The quantities of spices are your own choice and taste!

6. Cook until rice absorbs all the water. Dam bowl aside and let it cool for 15 minutes.

Until the rice cools, you can begin preparing the cabbage leaf.

7. Add the rice and beaten egg over meat and mix well.

The filling is ready!

Images of how to make Stuffed Cabbage Rolls Filling



Chop finely the onion



Stir onions  working



Add rice over the onions



Add water over onions and rice



Add tomato paste and spices and let it simmer until the water is absorbed, then remove from heat



Let the mixture cool and add minced meat and beaten egg



The Stuffed Cabbage Rolls filling is ready!

Roll the composition in the cabbage leaves

1 Stretch a [cabbage leaf](#) and add one tablespoon of the filling to cover half of the leaf.

Place the filling on the cabbage leaf and keep a distance of approx. two fingers between the edge of the leaf and the mixture.

2 Cover the filling with the edge from the base of the cabbage leaf.

3 Bend edges on the right, left and covered over the filling.

4 Roll the stuffed cabbage leaf holding firm. Repeat steps 1-3 until you finish all of your mixture.

5 Add a layer of chopped pickled cabbage in a large clay pot or if you don't have a clay pot a regular one will do.

6 Place a layer of cabbage rolls over the layer of cabbage. If you will use smoked meat as well to intensify the taste, add a few pieces among the stuffed cabbage rolls.

Repeat steps 4-5 until all the cabbage rolls are all placed in the pot.

7 Finally, cover with a layer of chopped pickled cabbage.

8 Separately prepare the soup which will be added over the cabbage rolls.

Add Romanian borsch or add lemon juice, seasoning (salt, a little pepper, thyme, one bay leaf) and a tablespoon of tomato paste in a deep bowl and mix well. If using lemon juice, add one liter of water.

9 Pour over the stuffed cabbage rolls the juice obtained previously.

10 Put the pot on the stove and let the cabbage rolls cook for 10 minutes. Turn the cabbage rolls from time to time - grasp firmly the pot handles and shake to the right or left so the cabbage rolls would move around and not stick on the bottom of the pot.

11 Place the pot in the oven and let it simmer on medium heat for approx. 3-4 hours. Checking from time to time (every 20-30 minutes) if there is no need to add water. When cabbage is almost cooked add tomato sauce or tomato paste diluted in a cup of water over the cabbage rolls and still keep the oven until they are cooked.

Images of how to roll the stuffed cabbage and place in the pot



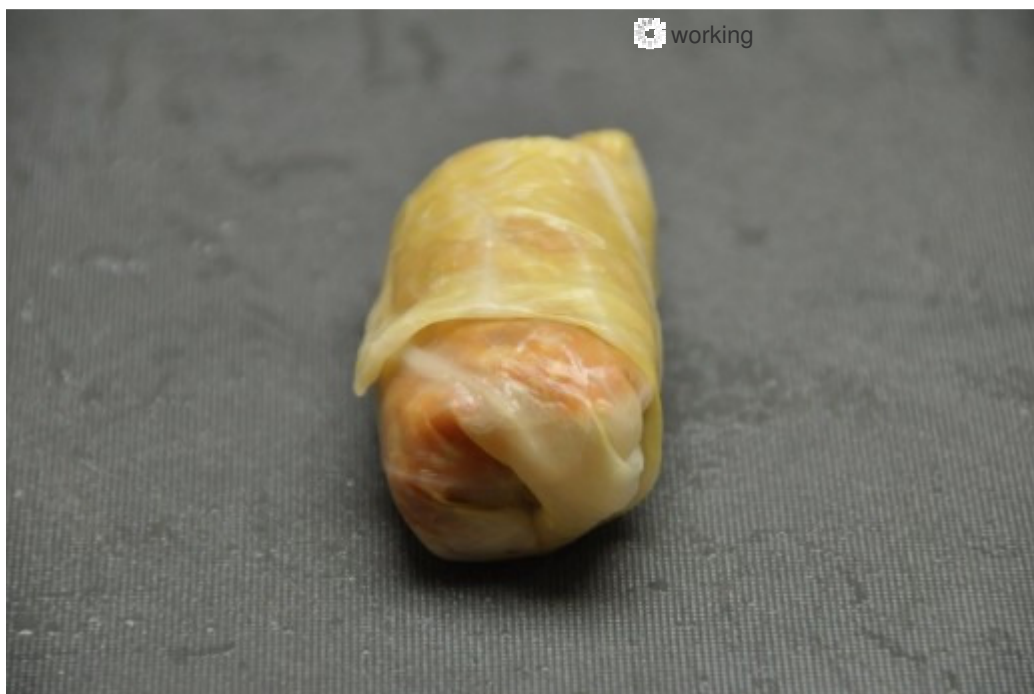
Place the mixture on the pickled cabbage leaf



Roll the cabbage leaf



Rolling it



It's rolled!



Place chopped pickled cabbage



Place the stuffed cabbage rolls



Place on the top of the stuffed cabbage rolls some chopped pickled cabbage



Pour over some of the soup in which the cabbage rolls will boil



Boil on the stove for 10 minutes and then put the pot in the oven for 3 or 4 hours on low heat



The stuffed cabbage rolls are ready! They will be delicious with some sour cream!

Things you may need to make Stuffed Cabbage

[Pomaware Clay Bean Pot with Lid, 1 Quart](#)

Amazon Price: \$23.00



[Pomaware Clay Pig Faced Pot with Ladle](#)

Amazon Price: \$76.90

List Price: \$85.00



[Romertopf Reco Complete Guide to Clay Pot Cooking Cookbook](#)

Amazon Price: \$14.96

List Price: \$15.00



[Romertopf No. 117 Clay Baker](#)

Amazon Price: \$79.99

List Price: \$80.00



[Knorr Bors Magic for 7 L \(1 Pc \)](#)

This is for making the Romanian Bors you need for the boiling soup.

Amazon Price: \$2.69



[Simply Organic Thyme Leaf Whole Certified Organic, 0.78-Ounce Containers \(Pack of 3\)](#)

Amazon Price: \$11.97

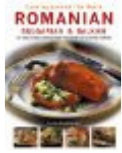
List Price: \$14.67



[Pickled Cabbage Leaves, 56oz](#)

Amazon Price: \$7.99

 working



[Cooking Around the World: Romanian, Bulgarian & Balkan](#)

Amazon Price: \$39.96

List Price: \$10.99



[Sanda Marin's Traditional Romanian Cooking](#)

Amazon Price: \$49.00

Stuffed Cabbage Rolls FAQ

Want to cook stuffed cabbage but you're afraid it might not come out as good as your mother's? Have you tried to prepare this food and do not know what should you do to get one eventually so those who eat it would say "these are the best cabbage rolls I've ever eaten!" Here is some advice in this regard.

How to make pickled cabbage ?

In order to make pickled cabbage you need to choose some good cabbages, wash and peel the first layer of leaves and then place them in a large container along with some horseradish, dried dill, a handful of corn, a quince, cut into quarters. Above the cabbages put a few wooden boards, dried dill, sprigs of cherry. Add in the container a mixture of water and salt. (for 1 liter of water use 50 grams of salt). Keep the container in a warm spot for one or two weeks until the fermentation process begins. Then you have to shake well the container and take it in a cool place.

If it's too complicated to make pickled cabbage you can always buy it from your local store.

Should it be used a single type of meat or a mixture?

Those who [cook Stuffed Cabbage Rolls](#) say the best filling is made out of a mixture of beef and pork, minced. There are areas in the world where for the composition are used mutton, chicken or fish, the latter type of meat being met especially in the Danube Delta area, in Romania.

Cabbage rolls can be prepared for vegetarians as well, replacing the meat in the stuffing with mushrooms, soy beans, chopped vegetables, potatoes or pieces of bread, most often in the form of a combination.

What other ingredients are added to the composition ?

The filling does not contain only meat. In the stuffed cabbage leaves, it is also added rice, greens and then wrapped in the cabbage or vine leaves. To get good rolls, add potatoes, grated and squeezed of juice, not more than two slices of dry

bread, soaked in water and squeezed. Potato is said to make stuffed cabbage digest easier.

If you want your cabbage to taste like Turkish stuffed cabbage, add dill, pepper and cinnamon in composition.

Add egg to the mixture ?

The mixture of meat, rice, vegetables and onion will blend better if a egg is added to the composition. Before you add it, beat the egg so that whites will not remain whole.

Rice and onion in the cabbage rolls composition?

When preparing the mixture for the stuffed cabbage, do not add more rice or onions than the recipe says, because the final taste of onion is not predominant. The most appropriate would be to put a coffee cup of rice for two pounds of meat. Also, for the same amount of meat, you should not put more than two or three medium onions, finely chopped.

It is best to fry the onions until they become transparent, and in that time add a little water and let it simmer a bit. You can then add the rice, but you should not let it boil with the onion. It will be best that it will boil with the meat, in order to get the flavor from it.