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## Oktoberfest with the Fabulous Friars

By Susie Iventosch



St. Stephen's Oktoberfest tent Photo provided

gets his fair share of time and camaraderie in the kitchen, too.

Oktoberfest, which took place at the church on October 14, boasted an enticing menu of Sauerbraten and gravy, red cabbage, grilled bratwurst and sauerkraut casserole, potato latkes with sour cream and applesauce, German brown bread and green salad with balsamic dressing. This was after a spread of appetizers, but before an assortment of Robin Bailey's homemade cakes, strudels and tortes!

Naturally, being Oktoberfest, there were a variety of Oktoberfest beers, Trumer Pils on tap, and even red and white wine for those who prefer to sip their grog from the vine.

Now, I've never been to Oktoberfest in Munich, but from what I understand, there are makeshift tents in the woods not far from town, hosted by any number of organizations, all pouring mug after mug of locally crafted beer and serving up typical fare, such as roast chicken, sausages and Sauerbraten with potato pancakes. St. Stephen's event is set up in a similar fashion in a great, big, giant tent with lots of good beer, good friends, and good cheer, all supporting many good causes. Between the dinner, drinks and silent auction, the event raised some \$50,000, all going to support a host of charities and organizations.

Despite my half German heritage, I'd never made Sauerbraten, so I asked Ned Trippe for the Friars' recipe, which he kindly sent ... for 175 people! With a little assist from my calculator, I cut the recipe down for a family of five or six. Ned's recipe was absolutely delectable and the aroma while it was cooking made the whole house smell edible! Many thanks to Ned for sharing this wonderful dish with all of us!



The Fabulous Friars at Oktoberfest: From left, Mike Yount, Scott Rhoades, Jim Breedlove, Ned Trippe, Peter Margen, Mike Kerr Photo provided

Five short years ago, Father Larry Hunter came to town, and it wasn't long before the Fabulous Friars of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Orinda first gathered to don their chef hats and take to the kitchen. And, so began the "Friars" mission of bringing good food, along with good cheer and goodwill, to the community!

"Father Larry came along and said that food is an important part of fellowship and outreach," said Ned Trippe, a St. Stephen's congregant and one of the original Fabulous Friars. "He also knew that we had a number of aspiring recreational chefs in the congregation, so four of us—all with different cooking styles and interests, came together to form the Fabulous Friars."

Nowadays, the group consists of six men, all devoted cooking enthusiasts, who put on six or seven large events each year. These gatherings range from Oktoberfest and Mardi Gras to the Bishop's luncheon, the Preschool Family barbecue and the fall kickoff for the choir, not to mention a feast in honor of St. Stephen, himself, and a donated five-course dinner for 50, awarded to the highest silent auction bidder. As an honorary "Friar" and sous chef, Father Larry

## Fabulous Friars' Oktoberfest Sauerbraten

(Serves 5-6)



Fabulous Friars' Sauerbraten Photo Susie Iventosch

### INGREDIENTS

1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
2 pounds beef tri tip  
1/3 cup water  
1/3 cup cider vinegar  
1 cup red wine  
1 medium brown onion, peeled and sliced thick  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 tablespoon mixed pickling spice  
1/2 teaspoon whole peppercorns  
1-2 whole cloves  
1 bay leaf  
1-2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 gingersnap, crushed (for the gravy)

### DIRECTIONS

Combine salt and ginger; rub into tri tip. Place meat in deep bowl or non-conductive roasting pan.

In large pot, combine water, red wine, cider vinegar, onion, sugar, pickling spice, peppercorns, cloves and bay

leaf. Bring to a boil. Pour over roast; turn to coat, layer onions between pieces. Cover and refrigerate for 2 - 3 days, turning twice a day.

Remove roast, reserving marinade; pat roast dry. On a hot grill, brown roast on all sides in oil. (For smaller quantities you can use a Dutch oven.)

Strain marinade, reserving half of the onions and seasonings. Pour 1/3 to 1/2 of marinade and reserved onions and seasonings over roast (cover and refrigerate remaining marinade). Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 3 hours or until meat is tender.

Strain cooking liquid, discarding the onions and seasonings. Pour liquid into a large pot; bring to a rolling boil. Crush gingersnaps in processor and gradually add to marinade; simmer until gravy is thickened, adding gingersnaps as needed to thicken. If necessary, add reserved marinade. (Be careful not to add too much gingersnaps as gravy becomes too thick.)

Slice roast and serve with gravy.

\*Serve Sauerbraten with red cabbage and bratwurst casserole, homemade sauerkraut, and potato latkes with sour cream and applesauce garnish.

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