

History

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**Ukrainian cuisine and drinks in cultural space: from ritual symbolism to
global presentation**

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Abstract. *The article presents a comprehensive culturological analysis of Ukrainian cuisine as a multidimensional phenomenon of intangible cultural heritage that accumulates historical experience, ethnic memory, collective ideas and symbolic meanings of the Ukrainian people.*

Ukrainian cuisine is interpreted as an important marker of ethnocultural identity, which reflects traditional worldview models, value orientations, social norms and moral and ethical principles formed in the process of long-term historical development.

The study analyzes the ritual, everyday and regional dishes of Ukrainians in the context of their semantics, symbolic codes, historical continuity and functioning

in the system of traditional culture, which allows us to trace the relationship of gastronomic practices with mythological representations and the social structure of society.

It is substantiated that traditional dishes within the framework of ritual actions perform not only a utilitarian function of ensuring life, but also a deep symbolic and communicative role, acting as a means of sacralizing space and time and a form of non-verbal cultural communication. The regional mosaic of the gastronomic tradition of Ukraine is studied, which is manifested in the variability of ingredients, cooking technologies and local interpretations of dishes, in particular borscht, as a key cultural concept that unites different regional identities within the national cultural space.

The role of Ukrainian cuisine in preserving collective memory is shown. Special attention is paid to the analysis of the representation of Ukrainian cuisine in the foreign gastronomic space, as well as the growing popularity of Ukrainian culinary heritage as a component of cultural diplomacy.

It is believed that the foundation of Ukrainian culinary traditions was laid more than 7 thousand years ago by the Trypillians. It was then that our ancestors learned to make bread, which for millennia became the "head of everything".

The symbol of Ukrainian cuisine from ancient times to the present day is borscht, which CNN included in the 20 most delicious soups in the world. Our ancestors gave borscht a sacred meaning, because they believed that with its steam the souls of the dead flew to heaven. Therefore, borscht was an obligatory dish at memorial dinners, both in the past and in our time.

In conclusion, it is argued that Ukrainian cuisine functions not only as a food system, but as a complex cultural code that represents the ethnic history, symbolic structures, and identity of the Ukrainian people in a globalized world.

Keywords: *Ukrainian cuisine, Ukrainian drinks, worldview, cultural heritage, spiritual practices, collective memory, regional mosaicism.*

Українська кухня та напої в культурному просторі: від обрядової символіки до глобальної презентації

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***Анотація.** У статті здійснено комплексний культурологічний аналіз української кухні, як багатовимірного феномену нематеріальної культурної спадщини, що акумулює історичний досвід, етнічну пам'ять, колективні уявлення та символічні смисли українського народу. Українська кухня інтерпретується як важливий маркер етнокультурної ідентичності, у якому відображено традиційні світоглядні моделі, ціннісні орієнтири, соціальні норми та морально-етичні засади, сформовані в процесі тривалого історичного розвитку.*

У дослідженні проаналізовано обрядові, повсякденні та регіональні страви українців у контексті їхньої семантики, символічних кодів, історичної неперервності та функціонування в системі традиційної культури, що дозволяє простежити взаємозв'язок гастрономічних практик із міфологічними уявленнями та соціальною структурою суспільства.

Обґрунтовано, що традиційні страви в межах обрядових дійств виконують не лише утилітарну функцію забезпечення життєдіяльності, а й глибоку символічну та комунікативну роль, виступаючи засобом сакралізації простору й часу та формою невербальної культурної комунікації. Досліджено

регіональну мозаїчність гастрономічної традиції України, що виявляється у варіативності інгредієнтів, технологій приготування та локальних інтерпретацій страв, зокрема борщу, як ключового культурного концепту, який об'єднує різні регіональні ідентичності в межах загальнонаціонального культурного простору.

Показано роль української кухні у збереженні колективної пам'яті. Окрему увагу приділено аналізу репрезентації української кухні в закордонному гастрономічному просторі, а також зростанню популярності української кулінарної спадщини як складової культурної дипломатії.

Вважається, що основу українських кулінарних традицій було покладено ще понад 7 тисяч років тому трипільцями. Саме тоді наші пращури навчилися робити хліб, який на тисячоліття став «усьому головою».

Символом української кухні з давніх часів і до сьогодні є борщ який CNN включили до 20 найсмачніших супів у світі. Наші предки надавали борщу сакрального значення, бо думали, що з його парю відлітали до раю душі небіжчиків. Тому борщ був обов'язковою стравою на поминальних обідах, як раніше так і в наш час.

У підсумку аргументовано, що українська кухня функціонує не лише як система харчування, а як складний культурний код, який репрезентує етнічну історію, символічні структури та ідентичність українського народу в умовах глобалізованого світу.

Ключові слова: Українська кухня, українські напої, світогляд, культурна спадщина, духовні практики, колективна пам'ять, регіональна мозаїчність

Problem statement and its relevance. In the current conditions of globalization processes, intensive migration and intercultural interaction, there is a growing need to understand the national cultural heritage as an important factor in

preserving the identity of the people. One of the least formalized, but at the same time extremely indicative forms of cultural memory is traditional cuisine, which accumulates historical experience, worldviews and symbolic meanings of the community.

Ukrainian cuisine has been formed over a long history as a holistic system of material and spiritual practices, in which each dish and each drink performs not only nutritional, but also communicative, identification, and sacred functions.

At the same time, in scientific research it is often reduced to a list of recipes or regional differences, which does not allow to fully reveal its cultural and symbolic potential. The problem lies in the insufficient comprehensive analysis of traditional and ceremonial dishes of Ukrainians as carriers of collective memory, ethnocultural meanings, and worldview models encoded in food practices, methods of preparation and consumption of food.

In this context, Ukrainian cuisine appears as an important resource for cultural self-identification, preservation of historical memory, and intergenerational continuity. Thus, the study of Ukrainian cuisine as a holistic cultural phenomenon is timely and scientifically sound, as it contributes to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of national identity formation, the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, and the actualization of traditional meanings in the modern socio-cultural space.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Over the past decades, traditional Ukrainian cuisine has increasingly become the object of interdisciplinary research within ethnology, cultural anthropology, history, and gastronomic studies. Modern scholars consider food practices not only as an element of material culture, but also as an important carrier of symbolic meanings, collective memory, and ethnocultural identity. The works of L. Artyukh, G. Skrypnyk, and O. Naydyuk remain fundamental for the study of Ukrainian gastronomic tradition, in which nutrition is analyzed in the context of traditional life, calendar and family rituals,

and the symbolism of products and dishes [1, 2, 3]. The authors emphasize the role of food as a cultural marker that represents Ukrainians' ideas about the world, nature, family values, and sacred order. In the works of modern cultural scientists and folklorists (V. Skurativsky, M. Dmytrenko, O. Kravchenko), Ukrainian cuisine is interpreted as a “cultural text” that encodes the mythological, religious, and worldviews of the people [4, 5, 6]. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of ritual dishes — kuty, uzvar, korovaya, paska — as symbolic elements of the calendar and ritual cycle, reflecting the ideas of fertility, the cyclical nature of time, life, and death. A separate area of research is the work devoted to the regional specificity of Ukrainian cuisine, which traces the dependence of gastronomic traditions on natural and climatic conditions, local raw materials, historical contacts, and ethnographic features of regions. Such studies prove that regional diversity forms a mosaic but holistic model of national gastronomic identity. In recent publications, considerable attention is focused on the phenomenon of Ukrainian borscht as a cultural concept that has gone beyond everyday use and has acquired a symbolic meaning of national unity and cultural continuity. This approach is reflected both in scientific articles and in analytical materials prepared within the framework of the inclusion of the “Culture of Ukrainian Borscht Cooking” in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2022. At the same time, an analysis of modern sources shows that the issues of the functioning of Ukrainian cuisine in the context of globalization, migration and cultural adaptation still remain insufficiently systematized. This necessitates the need for a comprehensive study of the Ukrainian gastronomic tradition as a dynamic cultural system capable of preserving authenticity and at the same time adapting to modern socio-cultural processes.

Formation of the article's goals. The purpose of the article is a comprehensive and systematic study of Ukrainian traditional cuisine as a multidimensional cultural phenomenon of intangible heritage, which is formed at the intersection of historical, ethnocultural, social and worldview factors, and

performs important identification, symbolic and communicative functions in the process of forming national cultural identity. The research aims to identify and analyze cultural meanings encoded in traditional and ritual dishes, ingredient composition, cooking methods and food consumption practices, as well as trace their connection with mythological representations, calendar and family rituals, regional features and historical experience of the Ukrainian people. A separate task is to understand the role of Ukrainian cuisine as a mechanism for preserving collective memory, intergenerational cultural continuity and transmission of traditional values in the context of globalization processes, cultural unification and transformation of gastronomic practices in the modern socio-cultural space. The purpose of the article is also to analyze the phenomenon of Ukrainian borscht as a symbolic element of national gastronomic culture, representing the unity of tradition, regional diversity and symbolic consolidation of Ukrainian society, taking into account its modern cultural status as an object of intangible cultural heritage. In general, the research is aimed at deepening the scientific understanding of the Ukrainian gastronomic tradition as a dynamic cultural system capable of preserving authenticity and at the same time adapting to the challenges of modernity, as well as at actualizing the importance of traditional cuisine in the processes of cultural self-identification and preservation of the intangible cultural heritage of Ukraine.

Food is not only a means of restoring physical energy, but also a complex carrier of cultural code, social experience, and symbolic information that structures the daily life of the community. Ukrainian cuisine, formed over a thousand years of history, is a unique system of meanings that concentrates the collective memory, worldview, and historical practices of the Ukrainian people. That is why every authentic Ukrainian dish is not just a culinary product, but a historical context filled with the meaning of life and symbolic content that conveys the spiritual experience of previous generations.

Ukrainian dishes are a kind of "cultural text" that captures ideas about nature, work, rituals, and the human world. They are part of the national worldview, reflect the mechanisms of cultural identity formation, and preserve the distinctive features of the Ukrainian spiritual cradle. For example, the centuries-old tradition of cooking borshch symbolizes harmony between man and nature, prosperity and family unity; varenyky represent the feminine principle, fertility and family well-being; Cossack kulish courage, endurance and military unity. The ideas and beliefs that our ancestors put into the process of making food have been preserved in Ukrainian national cuisine and continue to reflect modern reality.

Dishes are carriers of historical memory, as confirmed by numerous ethnographic descriptions, folklore texts, historical chronicles, literary works, folk songs and proverbs. Folk songs praise kulish and millet porridge as the food of Cossack strength; proverbs show respect for bread ("Bread is the head of everything"); carols mention kutia and uzvar as symbols of cosmic order and the cycle of life. Sources from Kievan Rus mention dishes made from grains porridge, noodles, bread, and flatbread; later Cossack chronicles describe borshch with beets, roast meat, meat dishes, and salted fish; and in the records of travelers from the 17th to 19th centuries varenyky, galushky, holubtsi, deruny, nalivky, and honey drinks. Such repetitiveness demonstrates the consistency and continuity of gastronomic tradition.

The gastronomic preferences that shaped Ukrainian cuisine are a kind of sacred value passed down through generations. Their significance is evident in the family inheritance of culinary skills and practices.

Historical realities often determined the nature of nutrition. For example, Cossacks took millet, salo, crackers and cereals on their campaigns - products that could be stored for a long time and provided the body with the necessary energy. Millet and salo were used to cook kulish, a dish that became a symbol of the Cossack era. In Polissya and Volhynia, borshch with kvass was common, in the Carpathians

banosh and dishes made from brynza cheese, in Podillia baked and stuffed vegetable dishes, in Slobozhanshchyna dumplings, zatirka, and lemishka. Such regional characteristics emphasize the diversity of Ukrainian gastronomic culture.

An important characteristic of Ukrainian culinary tradition is the differentiation between everyday and ritual dishes. Everyday dishes included borshch, porridge, baked potatoes, bread, dumplings, noodles, deruny, stewed cabbage, and kissel. Ritual dishes included kutia and uzvar for Christmas, pampushky for Christmas Eve, korovai for weddings, paska for Easter, varenyky for Green Holidays, and meat and fish dishes for major calendar cycles.

It was the ceremonial dishes and drinks that were saturated with special symbolism: kutya personified the unity of the family, the memory of ancestors, and the continuity of life; paska — the idea of rebirth; korovai — the well-being of a young family; uzvar — the connection of man with the natural cycle, which is given in Table 1.

Masnytsia is the boundary between winter and spring, as well as between everyday life and Lent. It is an ancient folk holiday that has a syncretic nature: it combines pagan ideas about the solar cycle and spring awakening with the Christian tradition of a “Cheese Week” before the big Lent. The main idea of the holiday is to say goodbye to winter and welcome spring, prepare for fasting, and purify relationships and the body [8].

On Masnytsia or Kolodya, which traditionally precedes Great Lent, Ukrainians treat themselves not only to dumplings and pancakes, but also to traditional drinks that emphasize the dairy and hearty nature of the holiday.

Authentic Masnytsia drinks include:

Uzvar: A traditional drink made from dried fruits (apples, pears, plums), often with the addition of honey.

Medovukha: An ancient alcoholic drink based on honey that was popular during festive festivities.

Varenukha: A hot alcoholic drink made from vodka, honey, dried fruits, and spices (cinnamon, cloves) in an oven.

Serovatka: A drink left over from making homemade cheese, often consumed chilled.

Various tinctures and liqueurs: Homemade alcoholic drinks based on berries and fruits.

Milk and yogurt: Since Maslenitsa is cheese week, dairy products were a staple.

Weddings. In Ukraine, historically, a wedding is not only a union of two people, but also a union of two families; that is why so many rituals were associated with parents, friends, and godparents. The main symbols of a wedding are the creation of a new family, the union of families, the transition to a new stage of life, unity and partnership, love and mutual support.

Funerals are a ritual that emphasizes the value of life and reminds us of its fragility. Funerals allow relatives and friends to say goodbye and express their love and respect for the person who has passed away. In the Christian tradition, particularly in the Ukrainian Orthodox tradition, it is a symbol of the soul's transition into eternity and a prayer for its peace. Funerals bring together relatives, friends and the community, who together support the family and help them cope with their loss. This is an important stage in the process of grieving and realizing that life has changed. Symbolically, it is:

Farewell and honoring the memory

Acceptance of loss

Community support

Spiritual transition

Respect for human life

Memorials (pominky) is a way to remember a person, their good deeds, character traits, and significance in the life of their family and community. It is a

moment when people reflect on their own path, the value of life, and spiritual priorities. A shared meal brings loved ones together, strengthens the sense of community, and helps to cope with loss through memories, traditional dishes, and rituals that seem to “form a bridge” with the deceased. Main symbols are:

Memory and gratitude

Support for relatives

Prayer for the soul of the deceased

Re-evaluation of life

Symbolic continuation of connection

Fasting - Restrictions in food and behavior symbolize willpower and the ability to control one's desires. Through restraint in consumption, a person can better understand the needs of others and show more compassion. Fasting often precedes major religious holidays (such as Easter or Christmas), symbolizing an inner readiness for spiritual renewal [7]. Symbolically, this means:

Purification of the soul

Self-discipline

Humility and repentance

Compassion and mercy

Preparation for important events

Christmas Eve - A Lenten dinner of 12 dishes symbolizes restraint, gratitude for the past year and readiness to accept the holiness of Christmas. A lit candle, prayer, and a *didukh* are all symbols of peace, prosperity, and God's presence in the home. Leaving a place at the table for *kutia* or a symbolic place is a reminder of those who have passed away and a connection between generations. Christmas Eve symbolizes the transition from darkness to light - spiritual renewal and hope. Family, unity, purity, and humility, honoring ancestors [2]. The differentiation of dishes by stages of consumption is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Differentiation of dishes by stages of consumption

Dishes	Features	Symbolic meaning	Drinks	Symbolic meaning
Masnytsia – Symbolises letting go of the old and starting a new period in life.				
Mlyntsi and nalysnyky	In many regions of Ukraine, there were not only “mlyntsi” (thin pancakes) but also nalysnyky – mlyntsi stuffed with cheese, berries poppyseeds, mushrooms.	Sun, warmth, new beginnings, rebirth, wishes for prosperity and family harmony.	Uzvar	A symbol of purity and connection with nature.
Vareniky	(Especially with cheese)	Fertility, femininity, prosperity.	Milk drinks, ryazhenka, sour milk, boiled milk.	These drinks symbolized youth and vitality.
Syrnyky (cottage cheese pancakes), casseroles, cheese “babky”	Traditional	Cheese dishes served as a symbol of purity and the spring awakening.	Mead	In the past – mead, kvas and other fermented drinks were symbols of solar energy, longevity and prosperity.
Butter, sour cream, cream	These are not separate dishes, but essential ingredients – they were generously poured all over varenyky and mlyntsi	Abundance and a “nutritious” year.	Kissels (berry, oatmeal)	Common on the left bank of the Dnipro river, a symbol of moderation and purification
Porridge	Especially millet, buckwheat, wheat, sometimes with butter or milk.	Agricultural fertility, family unity		

Pampushky	Sweet or savory donuts with cheese, jam, garlic.	As a symbol of hospitality.		
Weddings – symbolize coming of age, new responsibilities and a new social role.				
Korovai	Regional characteristics in dough preparation and decoration. Wedding loaves in Transcarpathia are lavish and highly decorated, while those in Polissya are more modest but rich in symbolism.	Blessing and unity of families. Prosperity and fertility. God's blessing on the new family.	Uzvar, a drink made from dried fruit.	Longevity, peace, sweet marriage. A reminder of ancient ancestral traditions.
Pinecones	Each pine cone is a "piece" of family blessing.	Happiness, prosperity and continuation of the family line		
Kutia	Less common at weddings, but occurs in folk traditions.	Life, fertility, family unity		
Funerals				
Kutia	It was made from wheat or barley, with poppy seeds and honey-symbols of purity and sweetness of the future. The main ritual dish, symbolizing eternal life and the spiritual connection between generations.		Uzvar	A drink made from dried fruit, associated with life and fertility.
Mlyntsi	Traditional	Their round shape symbolizes the sun and the eternal cycle of life and death. They were	Medovukha or light homemade beer	A symbol of and prosperity

		baked in memory of the souls of ancestors.		community unity.
Borshch and porridge	Regional characteristics	"earthly" dishes that emphasize unity with ancestors and the legacy left on earth	Wine	Used less frequently, mostly for sacred connotations.
Fish	Regionally	A symbol of the soul and salvation in the Christian tradition.		
Bread	Regionally made from various grains.	An essential element, symbolizing prosperity and continuity of the family line.		
Memorials				
Kutia	Traditionally prepared from wheat, rice or barley with the addition of honey, poppy seeds, raisins and nuts, depending on the region	The main dish of the memorial table, symbolizing resurrection and eternal life.	Water	A symbol of purity and eternal life.
Mlyntsi	Made according to traditional technology. They are served with honey, jam, sour cream or fish.	A symbol of the sun and warmth, heralding new life for the soul of the deceased.	Compote	A sweet drink made from fruits, symbolizing the garden of Eden.
Kissel	It is made from berries, fruit or starch.	It symbolizes the union of souls memory of the and the deceased.		
Pies	Regional features: dough and fillings with cabbage, mushrooms, potatoes or berries.	They are considered a symbol of prosperity and well-being.		
Cold appetizers	Sliced sausage, ham, cheese, salo (salted pig fat), cucumbers,	They are considered a symbol of prosperity and well-being.		

	tomatoes and other products.			
Lent				
Varenky	Recipes vary by region.	Lenten dumplings filled with potatoes, cabbage, mushroom, cherries or other fruits.	Uzvar or kissel are traditional drinks often served during fasting.	
Fish dishes	Fried, baked, stewed, boiled.	A symbol of the soul and salvation in the Christian tradition		
Holubtsi (stuffed cabbage rolls)	Lenten stuffed cabbage rolls are a combination of cabbage leaves, rice and fried vegetables.	Associated with the symbol of the Holy Spirit.		
Vegetable stew	Vegetable stew is made from potatoes, carrots, cabbage, courgettes, eggplants and peppers, differs by region.	Symbolizes restraint, purification, and spiritual preparation.		
Lenten borshch	Traditional Ukrainian borshch in a lean version is prepared without meat, but with the addition of a large amount of vegetables, such as cabbage, potatoes and carrots. This dish is suitable even on days other than fasting days. It is prepared on vegetable broth,	Symbolizes the blood of innocent children killed by King Herod		

	often with the addition of mushrooms or beans.			
Potatoes (baked, boiled, stewed)	The simplest and most common Lenten dish. Traditional regional variations: with garlic, onions, oil and herbs.	Symbolizes the idea of the lent, the simplest food.		
Vegetable cutlets	Regional recipe variations. Made from cabbage, carrots and potatoes.			
Porridge	Recipe variations (buckwheat, rice, millet, oatmeal) - cooked in water, sometimes with the addition of oil or fruit.	A symbol of continuity of the family line.		
Buckwheat with mushrooms	Traditional	Symbolizes harmony, well-being and prosperity.		
Pickled vegetables	Traditional	Symbol of well-being and prosperity.		
Christmas Eve				
Kutia	A symbol of prosperity and unity. These are traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. The main dish of the evening, made from wheat, honey and dried fruit.	12 traditional dishes on Christmas Eve: symbols that unite generations The Christmas table is not just food, but a real talisman of family warmth. Each dish has a special meaning and reminds us of the spirituality of this holiday.	Uzvar	A drink made from dried fruit, symbolizing new life and God's gift.

Lenten borschch	Made from vegetables and beetroot kvass. Regional recipes differ.	A symbol of the blood of innocent children killed by King Herod.		
Kapusnyak	A dish made from fermented cabbage	Symbolizing simplicity and unity.		
Fish	The difference in technological recipes	symbol of the Holy Trinity.		
Beans and peas	Regional and technological differences	Remind us of family unity.		
Holubtsi (stuffed cabbage rolls)	Traditional technology	associated with the symbol of the Holy Spirit.		
Mushrooms	Fried, stewed, baked, marinated	Reflect the two natures of Jesus Christ		
Pampushky	The traditional recipe	Symbolize the saints who have received eternal life.		
Varenyky	With various fillings	A symbol of satiety and abundance.		
Porridge	Recipes vary (buck wheat, rice, millet, oatmeal) - cooked in water, sometimes with the addition of oil or fruit.	A sign of continuity of the family tree.		
Bread	Regional recipes	Symbol of death.		

Features of the Christmas table in the regions of Ukraine:

Southern Ukraine: fish dishes prevail - herring, crucian carp, fish Borshch or aspic.

Donetsk region: kutia is prepared on the basis of rice

Zaporizhzhia: Cossack traditions have preserved the custom of eating Borshch and kulish after Christmas service.

Polissya: kutia is often made from barley, as wheat was not available to everyone.

Podillia: unique dishes include dumplings with cabbage and millet.

Galicia: stuffed cabbage rolls with rice or millet and pies with cabbage or potatoes are popular.

Zakarpattia: the main dish is karachun, bread with a "navel" symbolizing prosperity.

Bukovina: in addition to traditional pampushky, stollen and Christmas cupcakes are prepared.

Volhynia: Borshch with mushrooms and potatoes "in uniform" are a must.

These traditions not only unite Ukrainians around the festive table, but also tell about the richness of the spiritual and culinary heritage of each region.

In modern conditions, when a significant part of Ukrainians are forced to emigrate, processes of cultural adaptation and borrowing of gastronomic practices of other nations are taking place. And perhaps Ukrainian borshch will eventually evolve into something deeper and more exclusive. However, the popularity of Ukrainian restaurants abroad largely depends on the local communities' affinity for the Ukrainian ethnic group and the ability of foreigners to appreciate the skills of Ukrainian chefs [9].

The most popular Ukrainian dishes in different regions of the world are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Ukrainian cuisine in foreign restaurants (with popularity rating)

Country	City / Restaurant	Popular Ukrainian dishes	Features of adaptation and presentation	Level of popularity among locals /tourists
USA	New York / Veselka	Borshch, varenyky, pigeons, dumplings	The menu is adapted to local products; Borshch is often referred to as "beet soup."	High (tourists and diaspora)
Canada	Toronto / Ukrainian National Home	Borshch, varenyky, pampushky, galushky	Emphasis on authenticity; served with sour cream and garlic seasoning	High
United Kingdom	London / Ukrainian Kitchen	Borshch, dumplings, sausages, nalysnyky	Borshch with prunes; varenyky with various fillings	Medium-high
Germany	Berlin / Ukrainian House	Borshch, salo, varenyky, deruny	Some dishes are adapted to German vegetables and spices	Medium

Poland	Warsaw/Taste of Ukraine	Borshch, dumplings, varenyky, bean soup	Traditional recipes preserved; popular ritual dishes	High
Italy	Rome / Kyiv Restaurant	Borshch, varenyky, kruchenyky, holubtsi	Borshch as "beetroot soup", with olive oil and herbs added	Medium
France	Paris / Mama Kyiv	Borshch, dumplings, nalysnyky, kruchenyky	Elegant presentation; emphasis on the presentation of dishes	Average
Australia	Sydney / Ukrainian Delights	Borshch, dumplings, cheese dumplings, pampushky	Local vegetables are used; festive menus during festivals	Medium-high
Israel	Tel Aviv /Ukrainian Home	Borshch, varenyky, deruny, pampushky	Menu geared towards immigrants; Borshch without meat due to kosher restrictions	High among the diaspora
Netherlands	Amsterdam/Ukrainian Kitchen	Borshch, dumplings, varenyky	Borshch and varenyky are served with sour cream	Average
Japan	Tokyo / Kyiv Cafe	Borshch, dumplings, cheese dumplings	Borshch with local carrots and beets; dumplings adapted to Japanese vegetables	Medium-low
China	Shanghai /Ukrainian House	Borshch, dumplings, pampushki	Menu adapted to Chinese taste preferences	Low-medium
UAE	Dubai / Ukrainian Delights	Borshch, varenyky, deruny, holubtsi	Served with local seasonings; popular among tourists and expats	Medium
Spain	Barcelona / Kyiv Corner	Borshch, dumplings, nalysnyky	Borshch with olive oil; varenyky with local vegetables	Medium
Sweden	Stockholm /Ukrainian Kitchen	Borshch, dumplings, varenyky	Focus on healthy eating; popular vegetarian options	Average

Thus, the results of the analysis show that regardless of the geographical location of the Ukrainian diaspora, there is a steady demand for traditional national

products and their characteristic flavors. The human body, shaped in a specific cultural and historical context, gravitates towards familiar gastronomic choices, which explains the steady demand for authentic Ukrainian cuisine abroad. The menus of foreign restaurants representing Ukrainian culinary heritage are dominated by stuffed cabbage rolls, potato pancakes, cheese pancakes, pampushky, dough rolls, and pancakes dishes that have high identification value and serve as unique gastronomic symbols of Ukrainian identity. Borshch and varenyky deserve special attention as leading markers of Ukrainian culinary identity [10].

It is also symptomatic that in countries with religious restrictions, particularly in Israel, Borshch is prepared in a kosher variation without meat, confirming the flexibility and adaptability of Ukrainian cuisine and its ability to retain its authentic content while changing its form. The data obtained gives reason to believe that Ukrainian cuisine has high potential for global popularization due to the versatility of its dishes, their taste accessibility and cultural richness. The highest level of integration and success can be seen in regions where there is a large Ukrainian community or where the local population is open to intercultural gastronomic interactions. In this context, an important factor in the further development of Ukrainian restaurants abroad is the combination of authenticity with adaptation to local culinary preferences, which allows not only to preserve national identity, but also to expand interest in Ukrainian cuisine. In cultural terms, Ukrainian cuisine is not only a gastronomic phenomenon, but also an important communicative and identification marker that contributes to the preservation of national memory and the spread of Ukrainian cultural traditions beyond the borders of the homeland. Ukrainian dishes serve as a kind of "cultural bridge": they ensure the transmission of traditions within the diaspora and at the same time serve as a tool for cultural presentation to foreign communities. The popularity of Borshch as a symbol of Ukrainian identity is confirmed both by its numerous adaptations and by the deep associative connections embedded in folklore, literary texts and historical memory.

Conclusion. The conducted research shows that Ukrainian cuisine is a powerful cultural and historical phenomenon that integrates material, spiritual, ritual and symbolic elements of the national tradition. Ritual dishes – kutya, uzvar, paska, korovai, Maslenitsa dishes – act as a kind of “cultural texts” that encode knowledge about cosmological ideas, models of life and death, family relationships and the cyclical nature of time. Analysis of the functioning of Ukrainian cuisine in foreign restaurants proves its ability to adapt without losing authenticity. Dishes serve as an important means of preserving ethnocultural heritage in the diaspora and a tool for the cultural presentation of Ukraine in the world space.

Today, Ukrainian cuisine needs historical reconstruction. In “Aeneid” Kotlyarevsky mentions 140 dishes. Zinaida Klynovetska in her book “Dishes and Drinks in Ukraine” in 1913 gives 1000 recipes for Ukrainian dishes. Oleksiy Sokyryka wrote about what Cossack families ate in the Hetmanate. The question of today is how to preserve all this, convey it to the general public and surprise the world community with such dishes. How to work with such rich historical content, how to make our country known more precisely through our food. Therefore, the mission of the current generation of restaurateurs is not only to remember and promote ancient recipes, but also to highlight customs that have survived to our times. The tradition of food consumption, like other traditions of our people, should be the basis of cooking. Such traditions must be preserved and at the same time new ones must be initiated, as well as to make a new Ukrainian product so that it is competitive on the international market.

Thus, it can be argued that Ukrainian cuisine is not only a gastronomic phenomenon, but a holistic cultural system that preserves collective memory, forms a national worldview, and contributes to the establishment of Ukrainian identity in the modern world.

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