

Romania, cured meats

Transylvanian Pork Liver Pate Sausages, Caltabosi Transilvaneni

The villagers in the Saxon villages still kill and butcher their pigs at home in their courtyards. They produce very delicious speciality pork products, such as smoked bacon (slanina), smoked ham (sunca afumata) and pork liver pâté sausages (Caltabosi). The pigs are generally Durac or Large White (Marele Alb) breeds. They are well-cared for in the courtyards of the farmhouses and roam free-range in the village streets when young and are sometimes kept with the sheep in the summer pens when older. They are fed on whey from cheesemaking and scraps from the Saxon household. The rearing and butchering of pigs at home is the secret to the villages' high-quality pork products – the household is responsible for the whole process, from raising the pig to serving it at table.

Pork liver pâté sausages, or Caltabosi transilvaneni, are prepared using the cleaned intestines of the pig for the sausage casings. The casings are stuffed with cooked, chopped pork offal, including heart, liver, kidney and lungs, to which garlic, sautéed onions, salt, pepper, and herbs are added. Some chopped green vegetables or rice may be added. The sausages can be fried or eaten cold. Caltabosi should be eaten fresh; they cannot be dried, and they lose their flavor if frozen.

Home slaughtering of sheep, lambs and pigs ensures that there is an unbroken line from the young animal to the table. This is threatened by tighter health regulations that may be introduced in Romania within the next two years preventing home slaughtering. This will sadly break the close link between animal, household and food product that still exists in Romania. The Mangalita, a native pig breed of Romania, was favored for rearing in Saxon households. This breed is black with a white stripe on the belly. It yields much fat as well as lean meat. However, with the change of taste from fat to lean pork products, the domestic breed of preference has changed to the Large White. Producers say that the taste of the pork products has changed little, as they are influenced more by diet than by breed.

Production area

Southeastern Transylvania