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A Tradition Unfamiliar to Me and a 12 Course Meal

Friday, January 08, 2016

This is about food, not religion, but yesterday Orthodox Christians around the world celebrated Christmas. This is not my tradition, but it could have been if earlier generations had made different decisions.

DH & I were invited to participate in Christmas Eve "Holy Night Supper" in Asheville, NC by friends I met online during my search for roots in Eastern Europe. I remember hearing stories of this symbol filled meal and I knew that some of the food would be the staples that my grandmother made throughout the year.

The house and table were decorated beautifully. The readings explained the symbolism of each course and the related action performed (e.g. honey and garlic - the sweetness and bitterness of life).

The food was chosen from the following list since traditions varied within each village, country and evolved over time as the immigrants settled into American life.

Bread, honey, garlic, bobalky, pirohy, mushrooms, mushroom soup, pea soup, nuts, vegetables, fish, prunes, prune soup, stuffed cabbage, sauerkraut, tea, kolachy (cakes), borsch. There was also wine. We were all adults, but even children would participate in the toast.

I decided that I would eat whatever was offered. This was a one-time event and not subject to tracking or even consideration of nutrition

There was no need for concern. I had done research ahead of time so I wouldn't be totally clueless. Although there was a huge amount of food available, the meal is actually considered a "fast."

How could this be?

My research explained "Only a small portion of the food is consumed"
Sounds very "spark like," doesn't it?

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Note: This was DH's plate. I'm allergic to shellfish.

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HOLLYM48

What an awesome opportunity to spend a holiday with friends and sample all of this wonderful food. Good for you for thinking about it ahead of time and being open to having a little of each thing except the shellfish!
1978 days ago



WATERMELLEN

Deep roots -- what a marvellous sharing of tradition!
1979 days ago



LIVEDAILY

Several of the dishes you named were familiar to me. I'm so glad you had the opportunity to participate in such a special dinner!



1979 days ago



DOVESEYES

What a lovely tradition to share in.
1979 days ago



CD4114015



WOW, VERY interesting!

THANK YOU!

1979 days ago



GARDENCHRIS

interesting
1979 days ago



PHOENIX1949

Very interesting. Thank you for sharing this.
1979 days ago



BBEAGAN

What a lovely experience!
1980 days ago



CD15733790

I grew up with that tradition and miss it now. I think I may just have to revive it in our family!
The Easter celebration is also very symbolic and delicious!
1980 days ago



WILSONWR

That does sound like a fantastic experience. That plate is a good example of portion control!
1980 days ago



SWEDE_SU

how interesting - what a great experience for you! thank you for sharing it!
1980 days ago



IFDEEVARUNS2

Sounds much like a Seder in concept and execution.
1980 days ago





HELEN_BRU

I especially liked the mushroom soup.
1980 days ago



A_NEW_JAN

I love learning where & why traditions developed over the years. I enjoyed reading this blog!
1980 days ago



PASTORJEFF2

Glad you enjoyed it, we all need to enjoy life sometimes
1980 days ago



SLENDERELLA61

Thanks for sharing. What an awesome experience. So glad you could partake in this tradition of your ancestors.
1980 days ago



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