

# Traditional Ukrainian Comforts

BY ERIKA RAVNSBORG



Courtesy Heritage Bakery & Deli

**T**O MANY OF US, JANUARY MARKS A new year. It is full of new beginnings and the closing of an old chapter to start a new one. In the Ukraine, they live and celebrate by a different agenda called the “Julian Calendar.” While many of us are celebrating a new year, the Ukrainians have traditionally celebrated their Christmas on January 7th. That was until they made the move to December 25 last year – chiefly to separate this holiday from the Russian Orthodox Church’s calendar. Traditions do take time to change, and no doubt many may still celebrate in January.

Just like any celebration, this Christmas has a feast to enjoy (usually after a fasting period). But this dinner doesn’t start until the first star appears in the sky. As soon as it does, people have a dinner composed of twelve dishes to symbolize the twelve apostles. This meal usually includes kutia (a sweet porridge made of wheat), mushrooms, sauerkraut, red borscht (beet soup), perogies, cabbage rolls (usually made without the meat), pyrizhky (cabbage buns), whitefish, and kolach (a special bread).

With a strong Ukrainian history and influence across the province, Ukrainian food is comfort food to many. So, if you

are looking for a good place to enjoy a Sviata Vecheria (Holy Supper) or just need some supplies for your own table, look no further than these local gems.

**Baba's Bistro & Coffee House:** Cute and charming, this little family-owned café is a perfect spot for breakfast and lunch. You can get a mouth-watering meal to go or stay a while and enjoy their praise-worthy perogies and cinnamon buns. Warm, welcoming, and inviting, with good old home made cooking, there’s a selection of quality arts and crafts too.

5215 50 St, Mundare  
[facebook.com/p/Babas-Bistro](https://facebook.com/p/Babas-Bistro)

**Heritage Bakery & Deli:** In Calgary’s SW, there is a quaint little spot where the perogies are plentiful and they boast the best borscht a person can get - a combination of both sweet and tangy - just the way a good borscht should be. The earthy flavours shine in this soup but it is the sweet and sour you will remember savouring the most. Stay and have one of their Hot Lunch Combos or take home some baked goods.

1912 37 Street SW, Calgary  
[heritagebakeryanddeli.ca](https://heritagebakeryanddeli.ca)

**Hung Uke Ukrainian Kitchen:** The motivation for Red Deer’s Hung Uke is to both serve the community and bring an experience like no other to their customers. These people want to celebrate cultural diversity with dishes such as poutine perogies. A unique twist on a Canadian classic, the hearty perogies are smothered with an oozy gravy and creamy cheese curds.  
90 Thorburn Ave #3110, Red Deer  
[hunguke.com](https://hunguke.com)



Pilav Central

**Pilav Central and My Beyond Meal:** Although their focus is on European dishes, their speciality, pilav, has an amazing story attached to it - be sure to ask the owners about the legend. One taste of this particular pilav will put a little pep in your step and be the talk of your table. The tenderness of the beef and lamb showcase the fluffiness of the rice. It is finished off with the aromatic flavours of the carrots, chickpeas, and spices.  
8330 Macleod Trail SE, Calgary  
[pilavcentral.com](https://pilavcentral.com)