

Bakers ready to roll out the Cadillac of doughnuts — Paczki

BY KEELY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER

Paczki used to be a Polish thing — not anymore. Everyone loves paczki — plump, jelly-filled doughnuts traditionally eaten on "Fat Tuesday," the day before Lent begins.

Bakers will be working round the clock to make paczki for customers who will begin lining up this weekend. "We're getting ready for the big day," said Dan Domzalski and Rich Jurkiewicz of Paris GM Bakery, 28418 Joy Road, Livonia, (313) 425-2060. "We start making them Saturday, and continue Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. We'll be open 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday; 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday and Tuesday. Last year we sold 5,000 dozen. This year we anticipate selling over 6,000 dozen."

What makes paczki the "Cadillac of doughnuts?"

"They're made with all special ingredients," explained Domzalski. "Special flour, fillings, and extra egg yolks. Everything is top quality."

Mary Denning, who just expanded her popular Cake Shoppe at 8038 N. Wayne Road, Westland, (313) 261-3680, to include a coffee shop where cake decorating classes will be offered beginning Feb. 24, is getting ready for the big day too.

"It's like having cookies at Christmas," she said. "Paczki are a tradition, and everything is coming back full circle. People are interested in these old traditions. The dough is richer, and they take longer to fry, that's why they're so good. Regular jelly doughnuts are made with a lean dough that doesn't include egg yolks or milk."

Chris and Jacqui of Ridley's Bakery Cafe, 4054 Rochester

Road, Troy, (810) 689-8638, has introduced a "guilt-less" paczki that "tastes as good and yet is much more gentler on the tummy." They've developed a paczki that's lower in fat, and baked, not deep fried. Fillings include chopped apples, red raspberries, lemon, cherry, apricot and chocolate chip, canoli bavian cream.

Call your favorite baker, and order early — "so we'll know how many to make," said Denning. "It helps." Expect to pay \$11.95 to \$7.50 a dozen.

In Hamtramck, Paczki Day is a really big deal. Before I came to work at the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers in 1989, I worked at The Hamtramck Citizen. There I learned a lot about paczki, and my Polish-American heritage. Friends from Fordson High School in Dearborn know me as Keely Kaleski, but I confess, until last Saturday I never made paczki.

Sister Mary, who grew up in Poland, and helps out at my church, St. Barbara, in Dearborn, showed me how to make them a week ago Saturday.

Poles don't celebrate "Paczki Day," on Tuesday, the before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, this year Feb. 11. They celebrate "Greasy Thursday," which opens the last week of carnival before Lent begins. My friend Ewa Junczyk-Ziomecka, who used to work at the Citizen, but now lives in Warsaw, said the week begins with paczki and hot tea, and ends on Ash Wednesday with herring and vodka. On that Wednesday evening Catholic families go to church after which no parties or dances are organized until Easter.

For Polish Americans, many of whom are Catholic, making paczki is a way to use up the

extra fat, eggs and rich jams around the house so they would not go to waste, or tempt those in the household, during Lent when many Catholics fast. Sister Mary adds homemade candied orange peel to her paczki dough.

I learned a lot about making paczki, and patience helping Sister Mary make paczki. She shops for ingredients in Hamtramck, and fills her paczki with prune butter. Other popular fillings include custard, blueberry and raspberry jam.

For those planning a trip to Hamtramck, some of my favorite stops are: Polish Art Center, 9539 Jos. Campau; Ciemiak's Meat Market, 9629 Jos. Campau; and Kopytko Meat Market. There are lots of good bakeries on Jos. Campau too including—New Martha Washington, New Palace, and Oaza.

Here's a recipe to try.

4 (1/4 ounce) packages active dry yeast (4 table-spoons)

1/3 cup warm water (110 degrees F.)

2 tablespoons plus 1 cup granulated sugar

6 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

1 1/4 cups milk, warmed

12 egg yolks

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/2 cup butter, melted, cooled

1/2 cup margarine, melted, cooled

2 tablespoons Polish spirits or rum

About 3/4 cup thick cherry jam or other favorite jam

Vegetable oil

Powdered sugar

Grease 3 baking sheets. In a medium bowl dissolve yeast in

water. Stir in 2 tablespoons granulated sugar and 1/4 cup flour. Blend in milk until smooth. Let stand until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes.

In a large bowl beat egg yolks, 1 cup granulated sugar, salt and vanilla until pale and creamy. Add yeast mixture, melted butter and margarine, 3 cups flour and spirits (strong vodka will work too) or rum. Work mixture into a soft dough, adding flour as needed. Turn out dough on a lightly floured surface. Clean and grease bowl.

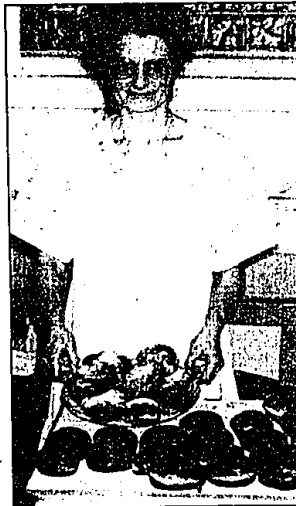
Knead dough 8 to 10 minutes or until smooth and elastic, working in additional flour as needed. Place dough in greased bowl, turning to coat all sides. Cover and let rise in a warm place, free from drafts, until doubled in bulk, about 2 to 2 1/2 hours.

On flat surface, roll out about 1 cup raised dough until 1/4 inch thick. Keep remaining dough covered to prevent drying. Using a 2 1/2-inch round cutter, cut out dough. Place 1/2 teaspoon jam on 1 dough round. Lightly place another dough round directly on top of the first, covering the jam. Using your fingers, crimp dough edges together tightly to prevent halves from separating during frying.

Place filled doughnut on a flat working surface. Using a 2 1/4-inch round cutter, press over doughnut so crimped rough edge gets trimmed smooth and round. Place filled doughnut on a lightly greased baking sheet.

Repeat process with remaining dough and jam until all baking sheets are filled, being careful to leave enough room between each doughnut for spreading when dough rises.

Cover each baking sheet of doughnuts with a clean cloth.



Homemade paczki: Sister Mary with freshly made Polish paczki. These luscious jelly doughnuts are a once a year treat, traditionally served on "Fat Tuesday," the day before Lent begins.

Let rise in a warm place, free from drafts, until doubled in bulk, about 1 hour.

Pour oil (Sister uses Mazola) in a deep fryer or large saucepan to a depth of about 5 inches. Heat to 360 degrees F or until a 1-inch bread cube turns golden brown in 60 seconds. (Sister checks the temperature of her oil with a slice of potato).

Add doughnut without crowding, (so they have room to swim in the oil), raised or top-side down, so bottom will round out

during cooking. Fry 3 to 4 minutes until golden brown. Turn and fry other side about 3 minutes or until golden brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels. Dust paczki with powdered sugar. Makes 50 to 60 doughnuts.

Tip: Sister adds raw potato slices to help cool down the oil when it gets too hot!

Recipe from: "Polish Cooking," by Marianna Olaszewska, (The Berkley Publishing Group, 1991).

VALENTINE'S DAY DINNERS

Cupid's picks
In addition to their regular menu, these restaurants have special Valentine's Day offerings. Reservations are necessary.

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844 Pennington, Plymouth
(313) 453-6260

• **Cafe Cortina**

30715 W. 10 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills
(810) 474-3033

• **DePalma's Ristorante**
"Italian Opera Classics and Opera" 3-5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 16, 31735 Plymouth Road (west of Merriman) Livonia, love songs performed by Jan Rae, Gregg Galla and Dorothy Cornie and

dinner. Cost \$35 per person, including tax and gratuity, cash bar available. Call (313) 261-2430.

• **Emily's**
505 N. Center, Northville
(810) 349-0505
• **Forté**
201 S. Woodward, Birmingham
(810) 694-7300

• **Pike Street**
18 Pike Street (2 blocks east of Woodward), Pontiac
(810) 334-7878

• **The Lark**
6430 Farmington Rd., W. Bloomfield (810) 661-4466
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