



**Cooking time:**  
45-50 minutes

**Serves:**  
6-8

## RECIPE

# ROMANIAN SARMALE/ CABBAGE ROLLS

## Ingredients

- A large, pickled cabbage (or a fresh medium cabbage, blanched)
- One cup of uncooked arborio rice
- 2 onions (finely chopped)
- 1 carrot (grated)
- 200 - 300 grams mushrooms (finely chopped)
- 100 grams finely chopped walnuts
- 2 - 3 tbsp oil
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp paprika
- Salt and pepper (to taste)
- Fresh dill and parsley
- Thyme (optional)
- 1 - 2 bay leaves
- 500ml tomato juice or diluted tomato sauce
- \* For a non-vegetarian version:  
Add 600g of ground beef



[www.cch.org.au/feast-of-cultures](http://www.cch.org.au/feast-of-cultures)

## Instructions

### • Prepare the filling

- Heat oil in a pan, sauté onions until soft.
- Add carrot, walnuts and mushrooms, cook until reduced.
- Stir in rice, tomato paste, paprika, salt, pepper, and herbs.
- Add a bit of water and cook for 2 - 3 minutes. Let cool.

### • Prepare the cabbage

- Separate leaves and cut out the thick stems.
- Cut large leaves into smaller pieces for rolling.

### • Roll the Sarmale

- Place a spoon of filling on each leaf.
- Fold sides and roll tightly into small cylinders.

### • Assemble the pot

- Line the bottom with leftover cabbage pieces.
- Place rolls in layers.
- Add bay leaves and thyme.
- Pour tomato juice over them.

### • Cook

- Simmer on low heat for 1.5 - 2 hours (or bake in oven at 160°C for 2 hours).



### • Serving Serve hot with:

- Bread or polenta (mămăligă)
- Optional: yoghurt



Sarmale is one of the most iconic dishes in Romanian cuisine, but their origins go beyond Romania. The word “sarmale” comes from the Turkish word “sarma”, meaning wrapped or rolled.

When the dish reached Romanian lands, locals adapted it using cabbage leaves instead of vine leaves, especially in colder regions. Romanians made it smaller and slow-cooked for deeper flavour.

**Feast of Cultures brings multicultural community members together to share stories, celebrate culture, and connect over a meal.**



These recipes have been generously compiled and provided by people of multicultural background living in and around Mt. Alexander Shire.

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