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Recipe: Soviet-style Sandwiches for Subbotnik

By The Moscow Times

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Typically a day out doing yard work would be followed by a picnic, but early spring in Russia isn't exactly picnic weather. You might find a place to have a quick sandwich, except that — ironically for a country that loves bread — Russia isn't known for its sandwich culture. The closest you might get to a sandwich in Russia is a *buterbrod* — basically a slice of bread with something on top.

The iconic Soviet-era cookbook "The Book of Healthy and Tasty Food" lists recipes for both open-faced and "closed" sandwiches, although for the latter, the recipes read simply, "Closed sandwiches are prepared with the same ingredients as open sandwiches." The cookbook recommends that the bread be toasted for open-faced sandwiches and also suggests that you cut the bread into shapes to fit the shape of the toppings.

In the Soviet spirit of Subbotnik, try these sandwich combinations for a light lunch this weekend.

Tomatoes and Cucumbers: Place half a slice of tomato and half a slice of cucumber on a slice of buttered bread to form a circle. Put a dot of mayonnaise in the center of the circle and top with a radish slice.

Caviar: Place a slice of hard boiled egg on a slice of buttered bread. Top with a small portion of caviar.

Cheese: Place a slice of cheese on a slice of buttered bread. Top with tomato paste mixed with oil and cover with shredded cheese.

Sprats, anchovies or herring: On a slice of rye bread, place a slice of tomato, a slice of hard boiled egg and top with sprats, anchovies or a slice of herring. Decorate with mayonnaise and garnish with a sprig of greens or a slice of tomato and capers.

Sardines: Put a piece of boneless sardine on a slice of toasted bread. Cover with mayonnaise. Place a slice of lemon on top.

Salmon: Place a piece of salmon on a slice of buttered bread. Top with caviar, parsley and cucumber.

Ham: Cover a slice of bread with mustard mixed with butter. Lay ham slices on top.

Sturgeon: Cover a slice of bread with butter mixed with horseradish. Top with a slice of sturgeon.

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