

What the Hands Did

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The women used their hands. The men, too, had fattened and slaughtered two lambs for the visitors from across the ocean. The goulash was started with large chunks of lard and chopped onion, the lamb added, and handfuls of paprika spice till it was orange and lusciously greasy. The potatoes came in last, cooked, peeled, and chopped. The hands do the work. The bread is baked inside the wood fire oven and comes out pitch-black after an hour. The hands use knives and an electric sander to remove the charred crust. Leave the crust on and the bread lasts for a month. The hands do the work, and the bread and stew are made for the community the week we are there. Hands made the ubiquitous red embroidery (there is some in blue, too) that decorates the churches, and the rag yarn carpets are made to cover steps and chairs at home. Hands and hearts greeted and kept us while we were there.



This piece refers to visitors to Homoródszentpéter, Romania.