

FEB-MAR
2020

LA CUCINA ITALIANA

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SUNDAYS WELL SPENT



A couple Sundays ago my family and I dined with friends at a restaurant outside Milan. It was one of those bitter-cold, rather gloomy winter days.

When we reached the family-run ristorante-trattoria, it felt so much like someone's home that I instinctively, with traditional Italian manners, asked for permission to enter. The warm, welcoming rooms wound their way back to the kitchen, each home to a long table seated with a variety of parties, large and small. We sat down at

our table and spent hours enjoying wonderful food (to be exact: carbonara, cacio e pepe, ragù, and some exquisite pumpkin malfatti). A dog snoozed on the floor, blissfully enveloped by all the delightful aromas (it had already been fed). Children played with their superhero toys, chasing each other around the high chairs and demolishing everything in their paths. Meanwhile, our conversation flowed ever more smoothly between one glass of fine wine and the other, between one delicious course and the next. In the late afternoon we looked each other in the eye and agreed that this was undoubtedly the best way to spend a Sunday — eating and drinking in good company. There's joy to be found in a plate of pasta (or any dish, especially one from a distant land) and a glass of wine when you're with loved ones with whom you can discuss anything.

Maddalena Fossati Dondero

mfoassati@lacucinaitaliana.it – [instagram.com/maddafox](https://www.instagram.com/maddafox)

Our Story

Founded in Milan, *La Cucina Italiana* has existed for almost a century and is now also (proudly) a .com

The idea belonged to Umberto Notari and Delia Pavoni, a Milanese couple who loved food. The two turned their home kitchen into a newspaper editorial office, called their friends — legendary authors, chefs and gourmets — and started cooking and creating recipes (and eating, too, of course). A century later, we're still here. Countless mothers and fathers, *nonne* and *nonni*, have fed their families thanks to the tips and recipes shared on our pages.



Above: the first issue of *La Cucina Italiana* in the '20s and a cover from the '50s. Below: our February 2020 issue.



The Alps

Wherefore art thou Bormio?



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**Nettle Risotto with Pecorino
Sauce – See page 51**
Photography: Riccardo Lettieri
Styling: Beatrice Prada

For more recipes & stories visit www.lacucinaitaliana.com

LA CUCINA ITALIANA

QUALITY IS OUR BUSINESS PLAN

We settle only for the best and create the finest publishing products. That's why we have La Cucina Italiana, which for almost 90 years has been the world's most authoritative guide to Italian cuisine and tradition; Vogue, the most influential monthly magazine; and AD, which for over 30 years has highlighted the world's most beautiful home. In a word: quality. In two words: Condé Nast

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Editor in Chief
MADDALENA FOSSATI DONDERO

Art Director
BRENDAN ALLTHORPE

Senior Editor
MARIA VITTORIA DALLA CIA

Web Editor
SABINA MONTEVERGINE

Contributing Editor
FIAMMETTA FADDA

Editors
LAURA FORTI - lforti@lacucinaitaliana.it
ANGELA ODORE - aodore@lacucinaitaliana.it
SARA TIENI - stieni@lacucinaitaliana.it

Design
RITA ORLANDI (Head of Graphic Design), FRANCESCA SAMADEN

Photo Editor
ELENA VILLA

In-house chef
JOËLLE NÉDERLANTS

Styling
BEATRICE PRADA (consultant)

Editorial assistant
MONICA OGGIONI - cucina@lacucinaitaliana.it

Digital
RICCARDO ANGIOLANI - rangiolani@condenast.it GAIA MASIERO - gmasiero.ext@lacucinaitaliana.it
ALESSANDRO PIROLLO - apirollo@lacucinaitaliana.it STEFANIA VIRONI - svirone@lacucinaitaliana.it

Chefs
CRISTINA AROMANDO, SILVIA BARBAN, DAVIDE BROVELLI, DANIEL CANZIAN, DAVIDE COMASCHI,
FEDERICO DELL'OMARINO, MARIA ANDREA DONATI, EDOARDO FUMAGALLI,
SIMONA GALIMBERTI, JOËLLE NÉDERLANTS, JEAN MARC NEUVILLE, ALESSANDRO PROCOPPIO,
ANDREA RIBALDONE, MATTEO RIGANELLI, GIOVANNI ROTA, GIOVANNI RUGGIERI,
GIOVANNA SAMMARRO, MATTEO STEFANI, GIOVANNI TRAVERSONE

Contributors
CECILIA CARMANA, BETTINA CASANOVA, RICHARD CONTI,
JACLYN DEGIORGIO, SERENA GROPPA, LEAH JANECZKO, SARA MAGRO,
CRISTINA MANFREDI, SARA PORRO, STEFANIA VASQUEZ, VALENTINA VERCELLI

Photos
AG. GETTY IMAGES, GUIDO BARBAGELATA, GIACOMO BRETZEL, MATTEO CARASSALE,
RICCARDO LETTIERI, DAVIDE LOVATTI, FEDERICO MILETTO, JACOPO SALVI, EVAN SUNG

Editorial Director LUCA DINI

Chief Marketing Officer FRANCESCA AIROLDI
Sales & Marketing Advisor ROMANO RUOSI

Business Director ALESSANDRO BELLONI
Advertising Manager FEDERICA METTICA

Content Experience Unit Director VALENTINA DI FRANCO

Digital Content Unit Director SILVIA CAVALLI

Advertising Marketing Director RAFFAELLA BUDA

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Grandi Mercati e Centri Media Print: ROMANO RUOSI ad interim. **Arredo:** CARLO CLERICI Director.

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Toscana, Umbria, Lazio e Sud Italia: ANTONELLA BASILE Area Manager.

Foreign Markets: MATTIA MONDANI Director

Foreign Advertising Offices - Paris/London ANGELA NEUMANN

New York: ILARIA ANGHINONI

EDIZIONI CONDÉ NAST S.p.A.

Chief Executive Officer FEDELE USAI
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Enterprise CTO AURELIO FERRARI. **Digital Operations and Content Commerce Director** ROBERTO ALBANI

Sede: 20123 Milano, piazzale Luigi Cadorna 5 - tel. 02 85611 - fax 02 85055716.

Padova, via degli Zabarella 113, tel. 049 8455777 - fax 049 8455700.

Bologna, via Carlo Farini 13, Palazzo Zambecari, tel. 051 2750147 - fax 051 222099.

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Parigi/Londra, 3 Avenue Hoche 75008 Paris - tel. 00331-53436975.

New York, Spring Place 6, St Johns Lane - New York NY 10013 - tel. 212 380 8236.

CONDÉ NAST

Chief Executive Officer
ROGER LYNCH

In the USA

ANNA WINTOUR, Artistic Director

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Greece: Vogue

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Poland: Vogue, Glamour

Portugal: Vogue, GQ, Vogue Café Porto

Romania: Glamour

Russia: Vogue Café Moscow, Tatler Club Moscow

Serbia: La Cucina Italiana

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House & Garden Gourmet, GQ Style, Glamour Hair
The Netherlands: Vogue, Glamour, Vogue The Book,
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Thailand: Vogue, GQ

Turkey: Vogue, GQ, La Cucina Italiana

Ukraine: Vogue, Vogue Café Kiev

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LA CUCINA
ITALIANA

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Contributors

BEATRICE PRADA
FOOD STYLIST

- 🍷 Focaccia Ligure
- 📍 Alta Valle d'Aosta
- 🍷 Timorasso
- 🍷 Panettone



RICCARDO LETTIERI
PHOTOGRAPHER

- 🍷 Mozzarella in carrozza
- 📍 Tuscany
- 🍷 Sangiovese
- 🍷 Zuppa inglese



GIACOMO BRETZEL
PHOTOGRAPHER
& VIDEO MAKER

- 🍷 Cacciucco alla Livornese
- 📍 Migliara Anacapri
- 🍷 Nerello mascarese dal cappuccio
- 🍷 Babbà from Tizzano Pasticceria

JOELLE NÉDERLANTS
CHEF, LA CUCINA ITALIANA

- 🍷 Pasta con le sarde
- 📍 Alberobello
- 🍷 Pinot Nero
- 🍷 Sbrisolona



SIMONA GALIMBERTI
CHEF

- 🍷 Spaghetti alle vongole
- 📍 Santa Margherita Ligure
- 🍷 Cremes di Gaja
- 🍷 Salame al cioccolato



CIAO!

For this issue, we asked our contributors to share a few of their favorite Italian things:

🍷 DISH 📍 PLACE 🍷 WINE 🍷 DESSERT



JACLYN DEGIORGIO
JOURNALIST

- 🍷 Spaghetti all'acciugata
- 📍 The Dolomites
- 🍷 Zidarich Vitovska
- 🍷 Cannoncino



DAVIDE LOVATTI
PHOTOGRAPHER

- 🍷 Spaghetti al pomodoro piled with Parmigiano
- 📍 Val d'Orcia
- 🍷 Lambrusco
- 🍷 Panettone from Pasticceria Marchesi



FIAMMETTA FADDA
FOOD CRITIC

- 🍷 Gnocchi alla romana
- 📍 Capri
- 🍷 Gewürtztraminer
- 🍷 A cupful of warm zabaione

SARA MAGRO
JOURNALIST

- 🍷 Parmigiana di melanzane
- 📍 Portofino, Paraggi Bay in particular
- 🍷 Barolo
- 🍷 Millefoglie



BRENDAN ALLTHORPE
ART DIRECTOR

- 🍷 Farinata
- 📍 The Ligurian Coast
- 🍷 Barbaresco
- 🍷 Gelato



COLLEZIONE

ARTISANAL COLLECTION

Chef Carolina Diaz

*Terzo Piano
Chicago, IL*

MASTERS
OF
PASTA

When you spend time artfully crafting your dishes, you need a pasta that's artfully crafted.
Bronze cut for a texture that perfectly holds sauces.



February – March

food news



'Tis the Season

For better or worse, most foods are available year-round — even when they're not in season. It's no secret that seasonal fare tastes noticeably more flavorful than what's harvested in the off season, but non-seasonal items lack proper nutrition. To keep your diet aligned with the season, shop at the farmers market. Not only is seasonality guaranteed, but this ritual also ups the farmers' bottom line. The National Farmers Union revealed last year that "farmers and ranchers receive only 15 cents of every food dollar that consumers spend," as opposed to the 100% they receive from those who buy from them directly.

For more food news visit www.lacucinaitaliana.com

WOMEN WE LOVE

Two extraordinary ladies who have helped shape America's Italian food culture

Cathy Whims

CHEF AND OWNER,
NOSTRANA, PORTLAND

Cathy Whims had cooked at the Italian restaurant Genoa for 20 years — long before Portland became the noted gastronomic destination it is today. When a visit to Italy revealed how genuine Italian cuisine differed from Genoa's menu items, Whims had to "relearn everything," eventually opening Nostrana in 2005. The six-time James Beard nominee studied under Marcella Hazan and still remains inspired by what she learned under the tutelage of the "godmother of Italian cooking."

One day we did potato gnocchi and it just blew my mind. It was like, these gnocchi are so light, I've never eaten gnocchi this light. I'm sure I'd probably tried to make them



myself and wasn't that thrilled with the results. And the key, besides the technique, was that she didn't believe in adding any egg to the dough because the protein in the egg made them heavier in her mind. And so I came back from that class and I was just obsessed with gnocchi and I became a potato gnocchi evangelist. To this day, every Thursday at Nostrana, since we opened 14 years ago, we take pasta off the menu and only have gnocchi, with four or five different sauces.

March is a powerful month for females — 31 days dedicated entirely to women's history plus International Women's Day, which falls on the eighth. Yet 2020 is a notable year for womankind in general as it marks the centennial of the ratification of the 19th amendment (the landmark victory that granted American women the right to vote).

In honor of International Women's Day — though we fully support the exaltation of females any day of the year — here's a look at two bold ladies who add their own exquisite flair to Italian cuisine.



Sarah Grueneberg

CHEF/PARTNER,
MONTEVERDE RESTAURANT &
PASTIFICIO, CHICAGO

A Texas native, Sarah Grueneberg honed her talent at chef Tony Mantuano's Michelin-starred Spiaggia in Chicago, working her way up to executive chef. The Bravo's *Top Chef* alum opened Monteverde Restaurant & Pastificio in 2016 and earned a James Beard Award the following year. What drew her to Italian food?

Being from the south, I've always been drawn to history and tradition, especially when it relates to food. When I first was introduced to traditional, authentic Italian cuisine I instantly fell in love with the stories, the regionality and culture that goes into every dish. I wanted to learn as much as I could. After my first trip to Italy in 2008, it all clicked. I learned from the great Nadia Santini, worked at some of Rome's

best restaurants and met traditional balsamic producer Andrea Bezzeschi of Acetaia San Giacomo and mono-floral honey producer Andrea Paternoster of Mieli Thun. Those experiences have influenced my work greatly over the years, serving as points of inspiration when opening Monteverde four years ago. I like to cook from the heart and I think Italian cuisine perfectly fits my approach to ingredients and dishes.



Visit www.lacucinaitaliana.com to read more about these ladies and other inspiring chefs.





1. Flour + Water Pizzeria SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

At any given time, Thomas McNaughton has ten pizzas on offer. The one bearing tomatoes, dollops of burrata, basil and lemon and chili oils is exquisite — opt for the anchovies add-on. Or, if you're grabbing a bite to go, inquire about the Big Slice, a changing daily special. flourandwaterpizzeria.com



2. Pizzeria Bianco PHOENIX, ARIZONA

At this 33-year-old pizzeria, Bronx native Chris Bianco fires up what some of the most discerning cognoscenti consider to be the country's best pizza. The Wiseguy, with wood-roasted onion, house-smoked mozzarella and fennel sausage, is unforgettable. pizzeriabianco.com



THE UNITED STATES OF PIZZA

Here's a look at five of our favorite pizzerias in America, and what to order at each

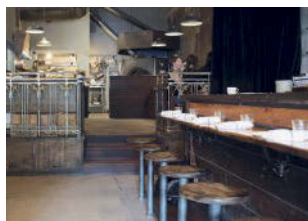


3. Pizzeria Locale BOULDER, COLORADO

Owners Bobby Stuckey and Lachlan Mackinnon-Patterson fuse the best of Boulder with Naples, firing up pizza in a custom-made imported oven. Go for the Mais, a dazzling hodgepodge of prosciutto, corn, mozzarella, crème fraîche and garlic. localeboulder.com

4. Razza Pizza Artigianale JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

When in NYC, hop on the PATH train to sample Dan Richer's delightfully crisp yet soft wood-fired crusts, all complete with local bounty. Mozzarella from the milk of local water buffalo tops the Bufala pizza, while the Cavolini features fresh mozzarella, Brussels sprouts, shaved onion, melted anchovy and garlic. razzanj.com



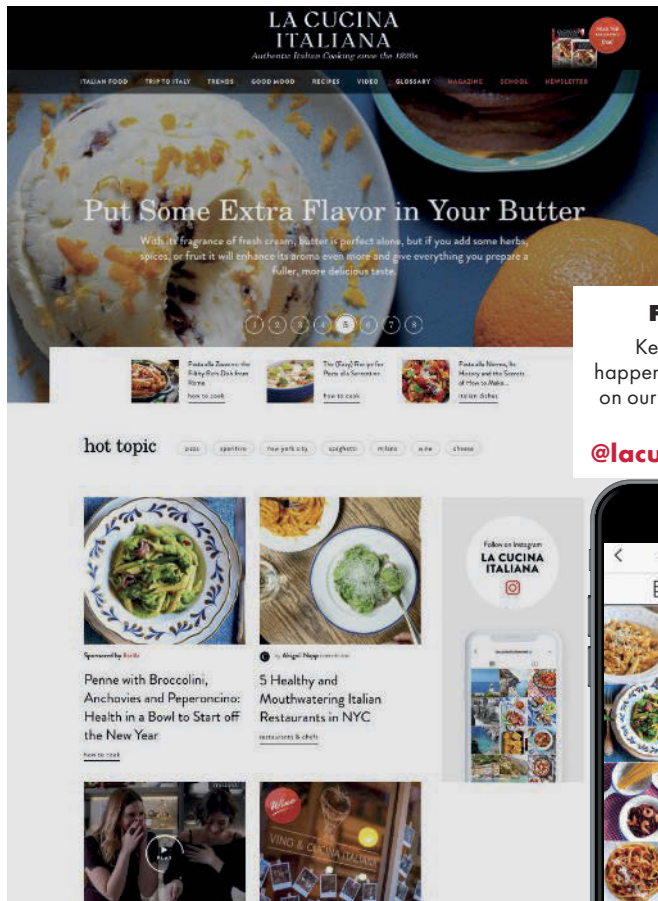
5. Frank Pepe's NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Though his pizzeria has been a New Haven institution since 1925, Frank Pepe didn't create his iconic White Clam pizza until the 1960s. The coal-fired, thin and crispy crust is crowned with clams, grated cheese, garlic, olive oil and oregano — a testament to how coupling fish with cheese really isn't a bad idea after all. pepespizzeria.com



Cin Cin!

Ca' del Bosco's Cuvée Prestige Extra Brut is a sumptuous Franciacorta made from chardonnay, pinot bianco and pinot noir blended with reserve wines and aged for 25 months *sur lies*. Sip this sparkler in honor of a special occasion...or simply just because. cadelbosco.com



VISIT

Check out our website for recipes, tutorials, videos, stories, culinary itineraries and more
www.lacucinaitaliana.com

Our (Good) World

La Cucina Italiana USA is dedicated to those who love Italy, those who dream of visiting and those who are nostalgic for more

FOLLOW US

Keep up with what's happening in our kitchen and on our travels – follow us on Instagram

@lacucinaitalianausa



BEING DIGITAL

Download the App **LA CUCINA ITALIANA USA** in the **App Store** and **Google Play** to read the magazine on your mobile and tablet

Go Gaga

With 20 stores in Florida and California, Gelato-go recently expanded its empire to Hong Kong.

The founders of this Miami-based franchise inaugurated their newest concept, Pasta-go, on Alton Road, South Beach this past August, followed by an Ocean Drive outpost this winter. Choose from authentic Italian pasta preparations, such as Al pomodoro, Arrabbiata and Puttanesca.
gelatogo.net & pastago.us



Pile High

Add some extra oomph to your sandwich with Levoni's deli meats. The fragrant and flavorful Mortadella Oro with pistachios follows a century-old recipe — its silky, luscious slices melt in your mouth. If you prefer more of a kick, the Schiacciata Piccante is an exquisitely bold and spicy pork salami rounded out by chili, paprika and fennel seeds. Both are available in the U.S. levoniusa.com

CARAMELIZED ONIONS
WITH RASPBERRY VINEGAR

FOR THE LOVE OF ONIONS

Jazz up your cheese board with an iteration of this versatile allium

A small selection of cheese and condiments paired with a refreshing glass of wine is always a thoughtful way to welcome guests. Caramelized onions, with their sweet-and-sour notes, pair delightfully with mature and fresh cheeses. They add some extra bite to an aperitivo, or are lovely on the dinner table alongside velvety vegetables or a light pasta.

Skill Level Easy
Time 10 minutes, plus 1 hour marinating

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

7 red onions
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup raspberry vinegar
 $3\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp. sugar
butter – salt

Cut the onion into thin slices. **Marinate** them for 1 hour in a bowl with raspberry vinegar, all well mixed.

Drain, then transfer to a pan with the sugar, a pinch of salt and a knob of butter. Braise 4-5 minutes over high heat, switch off the heat and let cool. **Serve** with thin slices of Parmigiano and a young cheese, such as primo sale.

THE KINGLY KRUMIRI

These cornmeal cookies from Casale Monferrato were created in 1878, the year of King Vittorio Emanuele II's death, and their shape is a tribute to his handlebar mustache

Anight of revelry at a café that ended in confectioner Domenico Rossi's kitchen — pure chance seems to have brought Piedmont its most famous cookie. After 141 years, the recipe hasn't changed. The Portinaro family, who bought the pastry shop and Krumiro patent in 1953, still implements the three-day artisanal method and packages them in the traditional keepsake tin. No one's sure of the name's origins, but there are two theories. According to the first, Rossi named his cookie after a liqueur called krumiro in honor of those late nights out with friends. The second theory leads us back to Casale Monferrato's Jewish tradition — the Yiddish word *krumm* means “crooked”... just like the king's mustache.

Our Version

Ingredients for 50 cookies:
1 cup fine cornmeal, 5½ oz.
softened unsalted butter,
⅔ cup powdered sugar,
⅔ cup all-purpose flour, salt,
2 large egg yolks, ½ vanilla pod

Mix the butter with the powdered sugar and egg yolks, then add the flour and cornmeal, a pinch of salt and the seeds scraped from the vanilla pod. Blend into a stiff dough. Let rest in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes. Remove the dough from the fridge and place in a pastry bag with a ½" serrated tip. Squeeze ridged tubes at least 2"-3" long directly onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, then bend them slightly into the traditional shape. Put the baking sheet in the refrigerator for around 10 minutes. In the meantime, preheat the oven to 325°F then bake for 15-16 minutes. Remove and let cool.

TEXT VALENTINA VERCELLI, RECIPE J. NÉDERLANTS, PHOTO R. LETTIERI, STYLING B. PRADA

GO LOCO FOR COCOA

It's no secret that there's something so exhilaratingly sensual about chocolate. On Valentine's Day — or whenever you're feeling in the mood — take the simple route: keep hot, melted chocolate sauce on hand to savor with your better half. Whether poured over ice cream or drizzled on finger food, it's bound to add a little extra oomph to the occasion. Sexy, intimate and pleasurable... everything that Valentine's Day should be.

Get Saucy

When it comes to Valentine's Day — or any romantic occasion for that matter — a little bit of chocolate sauce can go a delightfully long way



STEAK OUT

We dug into our archives and created a sauce inspired by the works of an esteemed Italian poet to liven up your cut of choice

INSPIRED BY

GIUSEPPE UNGARETTI

Simple and genuine, this “joyful sauce” is inspired by *L’allegria di naufragi/The Joy of Shipwrecks*, a volume of works by poet Giuseppe Ungaretti. According to a 1963 interview with *La Cucina Italiana*, the bon vivant preferred “spaghetti with butter and cheese, stockfish alla livornese [a red sauce with olives] and bistecca alla fiorentina [a steak typical of Florence].” So, we created this steak sauce in his honor.



Skill Level Easy

Time 30 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 1 STEAK

4 oz. stale bread
1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
1 Tbsp. chopped walnuts
1 Tbsp. almond flour
1 Tbsp. hazelnut flour
lemons – mint
nepitella
juniper berries
wild fennel
parsley
extra-virgin olive oil
salt – pepper

Crumble the bread crumbs into coarse

Salsina Allegria

bits. Dampen with the oil and vinegar, and let soften for 15 minutes.

Finely chop a generous sprig of each herb, then combine with the bread and grated juniper berries. Incorporate the almond and hazelnut flours, chopped walnuts, a pinch of salt and the zest and juice from ½ lemon (at least).

Blend, adding 2 Tbsp. cold water and ½ cup oil. Season with salt if necessary, cover with plastic wrap and keep in the refrigerator until ready to serve alongside steak.

Good to know: Nepitella is an herb used regularly in Italian cuisine on our side of the pond. In the U.S., it can be found at certain farmers' markets as well as some nurseries for those who want to grow their own. If you can't find it, just substitute oregano or mint.

WITH THIS CHEESE I THEE WED

This tiered *formaggio* platter elevates the idea of cheesecake to a ripe new level

BUILD YOUR OWN

From bottom to top: **Toma Valle**

Elvo serves as the base of our wedding cheese-cake. This soft cow milk cheese from Piedmont boasts intense flavors and aromas that reflect its Alpine origins.

Scimudin is a brie-like cheese with a soft rind that's produced in the foothills of the Lombard Alps, while **Vacherin** is a rich, gooey

Swiss cheese produced from mid-August through late March.

Finally, the earthy **Tuma D'Fè**, a Slow Food Presidium sheep milk cheese typical of the Langhe, wears the crown.





WHEN IN VENICE

With its ties to Cassanova, echoing footsteps and lapping canals, Venice offers the perfect romantic backdrop for a meal.

1

ALL'ARCO

SESTIERE SAN PAOLO 436

This bacaro, or wine bar specializing in *cicchetti* (typical Venetian bar snacks), is one of the city's most traditional. Located in the labyrinthine streets near the fabled Rialto fish market, the century-old locale is run by the fourth generation of the Pinto family (pictured).

2

QUADRI

PIAZZA SAN MARCO 121

Massimiliano and Raffaele Alajmo, the brothers behind the esteemed three-star Le Calandre in Padua, offer Michelin-starred riffs on the bounty of the Venetian Lagoon in an astounding, remarkably restored 17th-century cafe. alajmo.it

3

ENOITECA MASCARETA

CALLE LUNGA SANTA

MARIA FORMOSA 5183

Night owls eat incredibly well and drink even better here, cloaked in the hospitality of Mauro Lorenzon. The bowtied and bespectacled host personifies the lively spirit of his beloved wine bar.

ostemaurolorenzoni.com

4

GRITTI PALACE

CAMPO SANTA MARIA

DEL GIGLIO 30124

Watch the sunset from the patio while sipping one of Hemingway's favorite concoctions, then sit for a meal prepared by Daniele Turco, whose impeccable cuisine includes ingredients from around the world.

thegrittiipalace.com

5

VENISSA

FONDA MENTA

DI SANTA CATERINA, 3

Chefs Chiara Pavan and Francesco Brutto helm the kitchen at this Michelin-starred resort on the outer island of Mazzorbo, where the owners have revived and made wine from the indigenous Dorona grape.

venissa.it

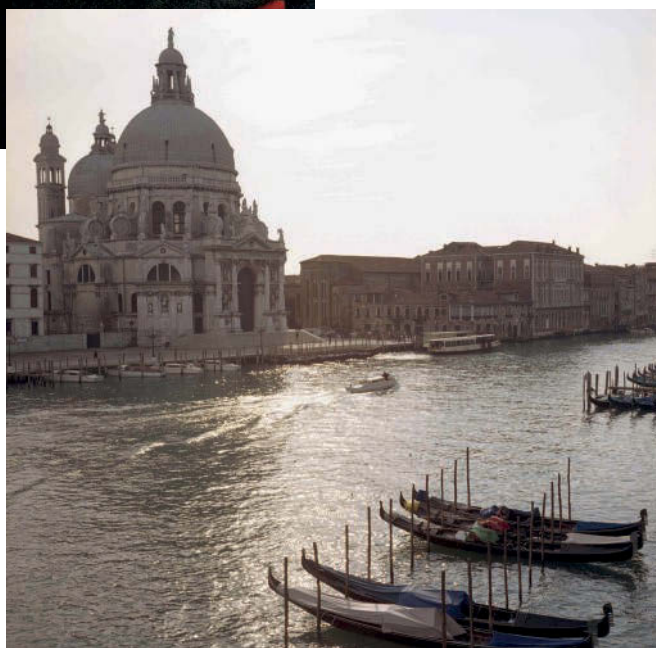


PHOTO GIACOMO BRETEL

Lemon Zest

Brighten up those dark and dreary days of winter with this simple, satisfying recipe — without having to make a grocery store run. You should already have everything you need in your fridge and pantry

Lemon Cream Cookie Tart

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 45 minutes + 1 hour refrigeration

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
2 oz. dry cookies
4 tsp. flour
3-4 lemons
3 large eggs
powdered sugar

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Cut the lemons in half. Slice a few thin rounds to use as a final garnish, then squeeze them to obtain around $\frac{1}{2}$ cup juice. If you prefer a less-bitter tart, reduce the amount of juice by 1 or 2 Tbsp. for a more delicate result.

Mix the eggs with the sugar and flour, then add the lemon juice, a little at a time. Thicken the mixture on the stove, stirring constantly for 10-12 minutes.

Line a 10"x4" baking pan with parchment paper.

Create the bottom layer by lining the cookies alongside one another, then crumble the remaining ones to fill the gaps between the cookies.

Pour the lemon cream over the cookies and bake for around 15 minutes. Remove from the pan using the parchment paper as an aid, and let cool in the fridge for 1 hour. Garnish with the lemon slices and a sprinkling of powdered sugar before serving.

BRUTTA MA BUONA

Pastry chef Simona Galimberti shares a recipe for a cheesecake that, while it might not tempt you at first glance, will make your taste buds dance at first bite

Brutti ma buoni means “ugly but good,” and this phrase is not only a cheeky descriptor, but the moniker bestowed on a beloved Italian cookie. Though recipes vary by region, Piedmont claims one of the most popular iterations — crispy, yet chewy chocolate-hazelnut meringues shaped like a casually crumpled piece of paper. Here, we borrowed and adapted the term for this simple though dazzling ricotta cake. While the intriguingly amorphous *dolce* might not be so easy on the eyes, it most certainly stirs the palate.

Skill Level Easy
Time 1 hour + 30 minutes for cooling

INGREDIENTS FOR 4-6

11 oz. cow milk ricotta
½ cup granulated sugar
2 Tbsp. potato flour, sifted
3 eggs
1 lemon
powdered sugar

Preheat the oven to 350°F.
Grate the lemon peel and

Ricotta Cake

juice the lemon.

Whip the egg yolks together with the granulated sugar, then mix in the ricotta, the potato flour and the lemon peel and juice, and mix with electric beaters until smooth.

Beat the egg whites until stiff and gently fold into mixture.

Line an 8"-round/2"-high cake pan with parchment paper, pour in the mixture and bake for around 40 minutes.

Remove the cake from the oven and let cool. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve.

Meet, Stay, Sip

Here are five cocktail bars across the continent where you can enjoy a cleverly crafted libation mixed by some of the most deft hands in the biz

DANTE

NEW YORK

The owners' efforts to couple old-school Italian charm with a modern flair haven't gone unnoticed as the World's 50 Best Bars recently awarded its top honors to Dante. Sip one of the specialty negronis or a Garibaldi mixed with "fluffy" orange juice.
dante-nyc.com

CURE

NEW ORLEANS

With its numerous accolades and distinctions, this decade-old cocktail bar is a beloved local institution. Sip a delicious Fall in Sardinia, a negroni with notes of wormwood, sour orange, myrtle berry and cassia bark.
curenola.com

PRETTY UGLY

TORONTO

This wildly inventive, quirky cocktail bar is known for mezcal, but we also suggest the Cuke Sky-Walker with grappa, sherry, spiced melon, tepache, lime and cucumber.
prettyuglybar.com

PONY UP

DENVER

It's good vibes all around at this lively downtown joint. Sip the Beauty and the Beet with Spring 44 gin, Cocchi Americano, grapefruit, lemon, egg white and absinthe.
ponyupdenver.com

THE DRIFTER

CHICAGO

At this 1920s-style speakeasy hidden beneath the Green Door Tavern, choose from more than 100 ever-changing cocktails presented on tarot cards.
thedrifterchicago.com

FLORENCE 66

FLORENCE

Pour 6 parts Champagne, 4 parts pomegranate juice and a touch of *elisir* (herbal liqueur) into a vintage Champagne coupe.

Mixologist Cristina Bini crafted this cocktail for Gurdulù. Today, Edoardo Lazzeri, the new bar manager, currently oversees Gurdulù's cocktail program.



Teatro Farnese is one of the treasures of Palazzo della Pilotta, a 16th-century complex in the center of Parma. Opposite: a detail of Antonio Canova's statue of Marie Louise of Austria as Concordia, the Roman goddess of harmony, grasping the plate with which the duchess is said to have "nourished" the city; chef Roberto Conti of Ristorante Parmigianino and his anolini in veal consommé.

A FEAST FOR THE

PA



LA

TE



Parma, home to exquisite prosciutto and the sumptuous Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, sits in the heart of the Italian Food Valley, earning the Creative City of Gastronomy 2020 and Italian Capital of Culture distinctions from UNESCO

by SARA MAGRO, photography DAVIDE LOVATTI

You can find all the ingredients you would ever need for a hearty winter feast in Parma: prosciutto, culatello, Parmigiano-Reggiano, porcini mushrooms and fresh-from-the-forest truffles, as well as plenty of quinces and butternut squash, not to mention the fundamentals for some classic pasta recipes: Mutti tomato sauce and Barilla also call Parma home. I could go on — the list is a mile long. The city of Parma and its eponymous province is one of Italy's richest "mother lodes" of unforgettably delicious food, nicknamed Food Valley as it contains the greatest number of traditional Italian products with quality certifications. The local cuisine is best savored via a satisfying winter meal.

A flavorful touch of tradition

A brief digression: here, *fumāra*, fog in local dialect, is considered godsent, a gift that helps cure the meats and adds flavor to the mushrooms — chef Massimo Spigaroli is a fan. Originally from Umbria, Spigaroli transformed an old farm in the town of Polesine Parmense into Antica Corte Pallavicina, a multipurpose complex complete with a Michelin-starred restaurant and bistro, a relais with frescoed halls and guest rooms, an organic vegetable garden and a farm that raises pigs, ducks and hens. Spigaroli also owns a culatello museum and hosteria, which fellow chefs, such as Alain Ducasse and Massimo Bottura, have visited, as have notables like the Prince of Wales. He serves paper-thin cured meats before

the tasting of "gastrofluvial" dishes, like his hallmark frog legs with mashed sweet potatoes and legumes.

The people from in and around Parma cling to tradition — in fact, osteria menus haven't changed in decades. At Osteria Ardenga in the town of Diolo di Soragna, you're sure to find *anolini in brodo* (a local beef-filled pasta in meat broth), *punta di vitello* (a typical veal brisket preparation) and sparkling, semi-sweet red Lambrusco wine. Book weeks in advance to dine at Trattoria Ai Due Platani in the town of Coloretto, recently named "Italy's best trattoria" by Italian food magazine *Espresso*. Otherwise you'll be left dreaming of the pumpkin tortelli and the mountain of vanilla gelato that's rolled in on a dessert cart carrying an array of toppings. →

Fast facts: Parma



Where: The city of Parma sits within its eponymous province in the heart of Emilia-Romagna, northwest of Bologna and Modena.

Eat: Prosciutto and Parmigiano-Reggiano are musts, but

don't pass up Culatello di Zibello and Coppa di Parma, two typical cured meats. *Torta frita*, a deep fried puff pastry similar to *gnoccho fritto*, is quite dreamy. Anolini is a meat-filled pasta while tortelli's fillings tend to be meat-free.

Speak Parmigiano:

Da volare via literally means to fly away.

The Parmigiani say this instead of *buonissimo*,

to describe something delightfully delicious.

Sip: Lambrusco, a semi-sweet red sparkler, is emblematic of the region and pairs well with all the specialties.

Buy: We know that gelato doesn't travel well, but Banchini gelateria's chocolates and cookies do. Stash some in your luggage for yourself and/or to bring home as gift to loved ones.

More about Parma at www.lacucinaitaliana.com

Parmigiano and prosciutto: the local claim to fame

Parmigiano and prosciutto are stalwarts of the local food canon. Of the 330 cheese factories, Bertinelli and Gennari, two historic producers, are among the few with a complete supply chain. Bertinelli also specializes in kosher Parmigiano and has a rabbi supervise the entire process, from the milking of the cows to marking the cheese wheels with the Star of David. It's exhausting work, from five in the morning to midnight, seven days a week. Sporting overalls, Paolo Gennari is always on the job and always churning out innovative ideas. Of his three shops, two are in the center of Parma. In addition to his prestigious *Vacche Rosse* and 48- and 60-month *Riserva*, he's crafting a new table cheese. He even teaches "Parmigiano lessons" and sends the students their wheel after it has aged.

The history of Prosciutto recounts tales of bold entrepreneurs, such as Fratelli Galloni. In July 2016 a fire at the local factories burned 85,000 legs of ham to a crisp, but the disaster didn't slow the family down for a minute — they sent out the morning deliveries while the firefighters were still putting out the flames. Suppliers to Bottura and Bastianich, they made a name for *crudo di Parma* in the United States and introduced the process of aging hams in oak barrels originally used for fine wines, which gives the meat a delicate fruity fragrance — you can taste it for yourself in the restaurant beside the factory.

"In my dishes, which for the most part are traditional, I always add a 'pinch of nostalgia' from my travels in Asia," says chef Maria Amalia

Rediscovering nature

Knowing how to modernize tradition is the secret to the territory's success, which has also preserved its agricultural identity. Rural is the visionary project by Mauro Ziveri, owner of the Rosa dell'Angelo prosciutto production center in the hills of Rivalta. The black pigs from which he makes his 36-month-aged prosciutto crudo are part of an ancient local breed. Each enjoys an average of 10,760 square feet of woodland to graze freely on fresh grass, roots, tubers, berries and acorns. Ziveri's big passion, though, is protecting the area's agricultural biodiversity, from ancient grains to Romagna hens to the now-rare gray Apennine cows. Rural also hosts a producers' festival every September to exhibit Lamborghini and Landini tractors for which they set up six huts in the orchard for overnight accommodation. The bathroom is a bit far, but the →





From left, clockwise:
boiled, grilled tongue at
Bistrot Cortex; the Cortex
team at lunch with bread
and salame di Felino IGP,
another product typical of
Parma. *La punta di vitello*,
a traditional dish at the
Osteria Ardenga run by
the Borlenghi family
(in the photo, the chef with
his daughter Anna).
Opposite: top, Maria
Amalia Anedda prepares
passatelli, which she
serves in mushroom dashi
broth (right). Below,
the entrance of Palazzo
della Pilotta; the famous
black pigs of Parma,
a native breed.





From left, clockwise, la vecchia a horse meat panino. Lopez, sporting a beret and red shoes, makes it at Tra L'uss e L'asa, his paninoteca. Butternut squash and quinces at Elisa Ziveri's Rural Market. Opposite: above, historic books and magazines at the Accademia Barilla library; Fratelli Galloni's prosciutto. Below, Parmigiano-Reggiano by Bertinelli, a company that has had a complete supply chain since 1895 that now also specializes in kosher production.



place is a veritable suite, with a sauna, chromotherapy and wardrobe stocked with overalls and boots for anyone who wants to help out in the fields. They also own a shop in downtown Parma that sells seasonal products.

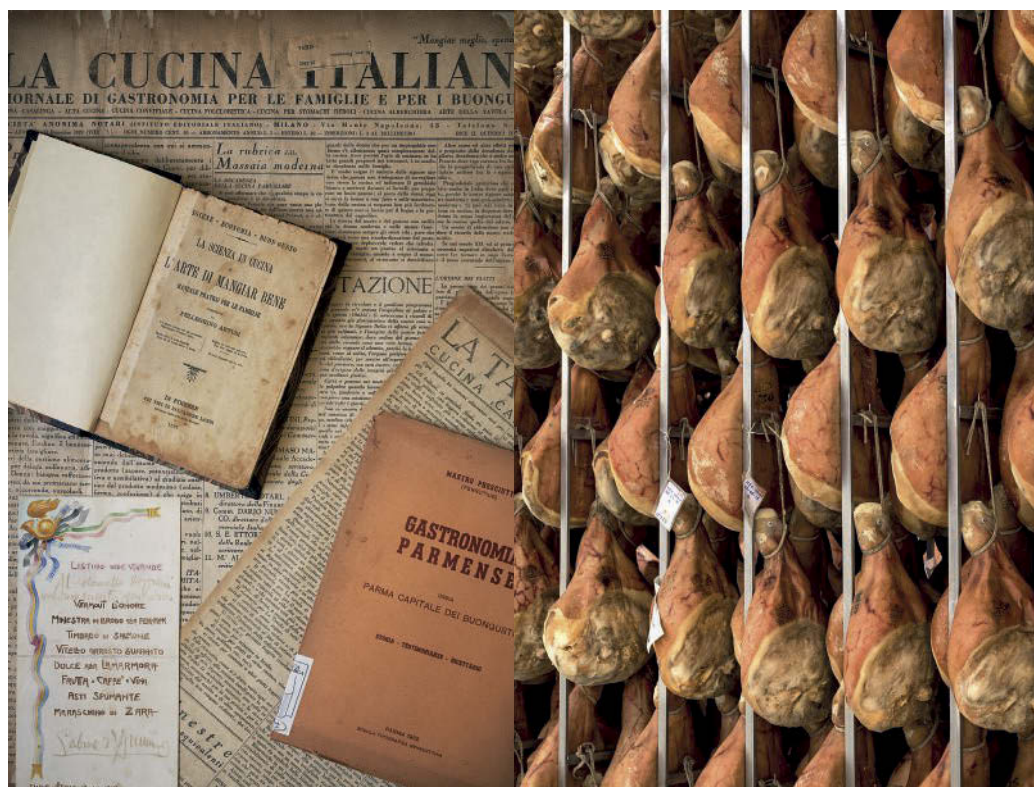
Even music plays a part

As you stop at Tra L'uss e L'asa paninoteca for a *la vecchia* panino (horse meatballs with sweet bell peppers), the notes of *Aida* fill the streets of Verdi and Toscanini's city. As you enjoy an aperitivo at Tabarro, you might hear someone in a nearby home singing an aria from *Rigoletto*. Music is everywhere, even in the restaurants. At Bistrot Cortex, music by famous singer-songwriters delights the ears while the menu delights the palate: egg al Parmigiano and Jerusalem artichokes with nori as well as beef tongue, bok choy, Jerusalem artichoke chips and grilled bread, which together form a sort of bollito whose ingredients are served separately. Chefs Diego and Simone, along with Simone's wife Mikako — the couple met in London while he was cooking at Locanda Locatelli, she at Nobu — wanted to come up with a family project. In fact, the team also includes Simone's sister Ottavia in the dining room, and her husband Tommaso Granelli on social media. The convivial atmosphere, casual interior, well-organized kitchen and generous dishes showcase how the traditional trattoria can evolve.

Fine dining welcomes the new

Chef Marco Parizzi's Michelin-starred namesake concept is a school, online shop and suites, while Terry Giacomello is the star of the moment with Inkiostro at Hotel Ink. Roberto Conti now graces the Ristorante Parmigianino at the Grand Hotel de la Ville, where he has one clear goal: winning over the city while implementing ingredients and recipes from outside the Food Valley. He knows it's not easy to lure people to a hotel restaurant in a city brimming with exquisite trattorias. But judging from how his restaurant is often booked solid, his Lombard-style risotto and veal cutlet undoubtedly please the locals. He also studies Emilian cooking and spends a lot of time at the Accademia Barilla's library, which is filled with endless forms of inspiration, from magazines to 5,000 historic dinner menus to landmark texts about Parma-style culinary arts.

Chef Amalia Maria Anedda, who studied under Ducasse, won't do without tradition either. At Ristorante →



Bertinelli produces kosher Parmigiano-Reggiano, which is exported primarily to the U.S. From the milking of the cows to marking the cheese wheels with the Star of David, a rabbi oversees the entire production process





“My ancestors ran one of Giuseppe Verdi’s farms. In my family they say the maestro was rather impetuous, like his music, but a good man and a culinary man,” says Massimo Spigaroli, who wrote a cookbook inspired by the composer’s love of food



Les Caves in the town of Sala Baganza, she serves passatelli pasta in a mushroom-flavored dashi broth inspired by her travels in Asia. And breakfast at Carlotta Campari’s La Terrazza sul Duomo B&B is complete with antique porcelains, silver platters, moka-fresh espresso, pastries and, of course, Parmigiano and salumi.

At this point it must be clear why Parma was the first Italian city designated a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy and why it’s poised to be a 2020 Italian Capital of Culture — yet Parma’s bounty isn’t limited to its tabletops. Impressive works can be found in the Duomo, Teatro Regio and Palazzo della Pilotta, a monumental complex that’s home to Teatro Farnese, the Bodoni typography and printing museum, Italy’s leading archaeological museum as well as paintings by Parmigianino, busts by Bernini, Leonardo da Vinci’s *La Scapigliata* and a Canova sculpture of Marie Louise of Habsburg, duchess and benefactress of Parma. “They’re a miniature of the Vatican museums, and no one knows about them,” says director Simone Verde. He came to Parma from the Louvre Abu Dhabi, and it’s thanks to him that they’re dusting off this jewel, shining a new light on Parma’s priceless heritage and the efforts being made to promote it. ■

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From left, clockwise, Paolo Gennari runs his family dairy farm, established in 1953. The Duomo di Parma, alongside Carlotta Campari's, Terrazza sul Duomo B&B with a view of the cathedral. Opposite: Massimo Spigaroli in his liquor lounge, the restaurant, frog legs and the little church at the Antica Corte Pallavicina.



HOW THE WINE OF KINGS STILL RULES THE TABLE

Fontanafredda Barolo DOCG Serralunga d'Alba

Barolo is celebrated for its aging potential, meaning most bottles have a long shelf-life. This bottle by Fontanafredda typically reaches its peak 6–8 years after the harvest, or even longer depending on the vintage.



Lauded as the “King of Wines and Wine of Kings,” Barolo is made with Nebbiolo grapes in Piemonte, and is renowned for its rich history, bold flavors and ability to age gracefully.

ALL GREAT WINES HAVE A GREAT STORY. The most prestigious expression of the Nebbiolo grape variety, Barolo wine hails from a village of the same name located in the region of Piemonte. Known around the world as “the king of wines,” Barolo is a timeless wine with a history as rich as its nickname. While wines have been made from Nebbiolo for centuries, the name “Barolo” didn’t appear on labels until

the mid-1800s. It was around the same time that Barolo began to distinguish itself thanks to a dry, tannic profile that set it apart from the sweet and fruity wines of the time. Barolo was granted DOCG status in 1980, and today’s Barolo winemakers coax an elegant expression out of their harvest with a minimum aging of at least three years (two years in oak barrels and one year in the bottle).

Barolo



THE NEBBIOLO VARIETY

For anyone in doubt that Nebbiolo is indigenous to northern Italy, consider its name: "Nebbiolo" is thought to derive from the Italian *nebbia*, meaning "fog". Barolo DOCG wines can only be produced with Nebbiolo grapes grown in specific zones surrounding the village of Barolo. The scenic region sits in the foothills of the Alps in northwestern Italy; in fact, the mountainous soil that nurtures the Nebbiolo vines is what gives this wine its distinct characteristics. Nebbiolo grapes bud early and ripen late, and are usually harvested in late October, when temperatures begin to drop steadily.

PIEMONTESE PAIRINGS

A complex red wine often pairs well with robust dishes like meat, and Barolo is no different. A hearty stew of brasato al Barolo even makes calls for the wine in the dish itself (if you can bear to spare it). Or try it with stuffed pasta typical of the region, like tajarin or agnolotti del plin. For an elevated affair, enjoy a glass with the sensory pleasures of white truffles (tartufo bianco d'Alba) for a classic marriage of two of Piemonte's finest exports.



EATALY'S TOP BAROLO PICKS

FONTANAFREDDA

Barolo DOCG Serralunga d'Alba

With over 250 acres, Fontanafredda's Barolo Cru property is the single largest contiguous wine estate in the Langhe region of Piemonte. It was purchased in 1858 by Vittorio Emanuele II, the first king of Italy, who cherished the Nebbiolo variety. This classic expression displays the power that is a benchmark for quality Barolo from Serralunga, loaded with notes of smoke, leather, plum and exotic spice.



MIRAFIORE

Barolo DOCG

This noble Mirafiore estate was established in 1878 by the son of King Vittorio Emanuele II and soon became internationally renowned, only to disappear at the start of the twentieth century. Recently, Fontanafredda has helped re-establish Mirafiore as a classic winemaking label; their Barolo is soft and balanced, with clear-cut overtones of ripe plums and tobacco.



BORGOGNO

Barolo DOCG Cannubi

The name Borgogno is connected to one of the oldest wine cellars in Piemonte. Founded in 1761 by Bartolomeo Borgogno, their winemakers continue to craft elegant red wines to this day. Made with fruit from the renowned Cannubi vineyard, this is a round, full-bodied and with floral and spicy aromas, which will only get better with age.



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Even the land of pasta and pizza abounds with scrumptious gluten-free recipes. These soft rolls, ravioli and gnocchi are so light and fragrant that you'll forget they're missing a typical ingredient

recipes
GIOVANNA SAMMARRO

text LAURA FORTI

photography
RICCARDO LETTIERI

styling
CECILIA CARMANA

These recipes from Brio Gluten Free Bakery in Verona call for artisanal mixtures of organic flours and long rising times. Every day, Giovanna Sammarro (left), assisted by her staff, makes a dough that leavens overnight.

BREEZY AND GLUTEN FREE



Radicchio Ravioli

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour + 2 hours for resting

Vegetarian, gluten-free

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup fine cornmeal
4 oz. red radicchio
4 oz. boiled potatoes
2 Tbsp. dark buckwheat flour,
plus extra
4 tsp. tapioca starch
1 tsp. xanthan gum
2 large eggs
Parmigiano
gluten-free breadcrumbs
extra-virgin olive oil – salt

Mix the cornmeal, buckwheat flour, tapioca starch and xanthan gum with the eggs to form a smooth dough.

Place in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 2 hours.

Trim the radicchio, cut into small pieces and rinse.

Place a drizzle of oil and a pinch of salt in a frying pan and cook the radicchio over a medium flame. Turn off the heat when the white sections begin to pale, which is usually around the 10-minute mark.

Let the radicchio cool, then squeeze dry and grind it in a mixer. Stir in the crushed potatoes, 2 Tbsp. Parmigiano

and 1 Tbsp. breadcrumbs. Put the mixture in a pastry bag.

Take out the dough and dust the workspace with buckwheat flour.

Roll the dough into a thin sheet — don't make it paper thin as gluten-free dough has a higher risk of tearing.

Cut the dough into $2\frac{1}{2}$ " squares.

Squeeze a dollop of the radicchio filling onto each square and seal them into triangles.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Drop the ravioli into boiling salted water. When they float to the surface remove them with a slotted spoon.

Dress as desired.



Bread Rolls with Olives and Cherry Tomatoes

Skill Level Easy

Time 40 minutes + 2 hours for rising

Vegetarian, gluten-free

INGREDIENTS FOR 12 ROLLS

1 cup flour mix for gluten-free bread

3 Tbsp. fine cornmeal

4 tsp. pitted olives

4 tsp. sun-dried tomatoes in oil

1½ tsp. fresh brewer's yeast

1½ tsp. extra-virgin olive oil

1 tsp. salt

½ tsp. sugar

Dissolve the sugar in ¾ cup warm water, then crumble and dissolve the yeast in it. Combine the flour and cornmeal in a bowl, stir in the salt and oil, then pour in the sugar and yeast solution. Knead until clump free; if using a kneader, use the flat beater, which is better for soft doughs than a dough hook.

Crumble the olives and dice the tomatoes. Split the dough in two. Mix the olives into one half and the tomatoes into the other.

Preheat the oven to 75-85 °F.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and place 6 tall 2½" cake rings on top. Divide each batch of dough into the rings. Place in the oven and let rise for 2 hours.

Set the oven to 350°F and bake the rolls without ventilation for 10 minutes, then raise the temperature to 400°F, add ventilation and bake for another 5 minutes.



Leavening There are three ingredients that on their own or when combined can compensate for the elasticity-forming effect normally provided by gluten: guar, xanthan and psyllium. Guar (also guar gum or guar flour) is obtained from ground seeds of the guar plant, a legume of Indian origins. Xanthan (or xanthan

GOOD TO KNOW

gum) is obtained through a complex process that begins with the fermentation of natural strains of the bacteria *Xanthomonas campestris*. Psyllium (or psyllium fiber) is obtained from the seeds or cuticle of *Plantago psyllium*, a plant also from India. When gluten is missing, these three products have the common trait of

helping flours bond. All three can be found in pharmacies or herbalist shops.

Baking When a recipe calls for baking at a certain temperature, you need to preheat the oven an extra 100°F, given that the temperature drops significantly once the oven door has been opened and the room-temperature ingredients have been placed inside.

Spinach Gnocchi

Skill Level Easy

Time 1 hour

Vegetarian, gluten-free

INGREDIENTS FOR 6

2 lb. potatoes
1 lb. fresh spinach
4 Tbsp. rice flour, plus extra
4 Tbsp. corn starch
4 Tbsp. tapioca starch
1 large egg

Boil the potatoes for 40 minutes.

In a separate pot, boil the spinach for 2-3 minutes, drain and let cool. Squeeze dry and chop finely.

Drain the potatoes, peel then mash them in a bowl with a potato masher. Stir in the spinach.

Combine the flour and starches, and stir them into the potato mixture, followed by the egg.

Mix until smooth. On a surface dusted with rice flour, roll a little dough at a time into tubes around 1" in diameter.

Cut the tubes into small pieces to make the gnocchi.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Drop the gnocchi into the boiling water. When they float to the surface remove them with a slotted spoon.

Dress as desired.



A TASTE OF MOLISE

Pizza buffs know Molise for its cornmeal crusts, but this relatively unsung Southern Italian region — part of Abruzzo until 1970 — prides itself on vibrant rustic fare drawn from centuries-old traditions

recipes JOËLLE NÉDERLANTS, text VALENTINA VERCELLI,
photography RICCARDO LETTIERI, styling BEATRICE PRADA



Lunch

**CRISPY CACIOCAVALLO
CHEESE BITES**



HUMBLE ORIGINS

Nestled cozily between Lazio, Campania, Abruzzo and Puglia, the mountainous region of Molise sits along the Adriatic Sea. Like most regions of Italy, a history of poverty has shaped its cuisine. Expect simple preparations, robust flavors and the occasional jolt of spiciness.



VEDOVO SAUCE

This typical Molisano sauce hails from the cuisine's humble origins. Vedovo means "widower" and the sauce is so-called because it doesn't have any meat — the principle ingredient is lard, or pig fat, consumed by the underprivileged who couldn't afford nobler meat cuts.

Dinner

CAVATELLI WITH
VEDOVO SAUCE

Crispy Caciocavallo Cheese Bites

Skill Level Easy

Time 45 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 14 oz. chicory
- 8 ½"-thick slices of slightly aged caciocavallo
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1 garlic clove, skin on and smashed
- flour – breadcrumbs
- fresh chili pepper
- extra-virgin olive oil – salt

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Wash and shred the chicory, blanch for 1 minute, remove and gently squeeze dry.

Wilt in a pan for 5 minutes with 3-4 Tbsp. oil, the smashed garlic clove and a few pieces of chopped chili pepper.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Remove the garlic and coarsely chop the chicory. Divide the chicory between 4 slices of caciocavallo, then top with the remaining 4 slices to make a sandwich, pressing down slightly so they adhere.

Dip the 4 caciocavallo "sandwiches" first in the flour, then in the beaten eggs and, lastly, in the breadcrumbs. Repeat this process once more, then bake for 15 minutes.

CACIOCAVALLO

This pear-shaped raw cow's milk cheese is typical of Southern Italy. Agnone, a town in Molise's Isernia province, produces the most famous. Its name translates to "horse cheese" and it's so-called as, when formed, two cheeses are typically tied together and aged *a cavallo* (straddled/dangling) over a stick or wooden board.

Cavatelli with Vedovo Sauce

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour

INGREDIENTS FOR 6

FOR THE CAVATELLI

- 14 oz. remilled durum wheat semolina
- salt

FOR THE SAUCE

- 2 lb. ripe tomatoes
- 2 oz. lardo or cured fatty bacon
- ½ garlic clove
- parsley, chopped
- basil leaves, chopped
- Pecorino
- extra-virgin olive oil
- salt
- pepper

FOR THE CAVATELLI

Mix the semolina with approximately 1 cup water and a pinch of salt. Form the dough into a ball and cover it with plastic wrap, then let rest for 30 minutes.

Flour the work surface.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Shape the dough into small cylinders a little less than ¼" in diameter. Cut them into small pieces around ¾" long and drag them along the work surface, squeezing them with two fingers, to achieve the classic cavatelli shape.

Cook the cavatelli in the boiling water for 5-6 minutes, until they rise to the surface.

FOR THE SAUCE

Bring a pot of water to a boil.

Blanch the tomatoes, peel them, remove the seeds and cut them into 1" pieces.

Beat the lardo and fry it in a pan with 2 Tbsp. oil, 2 Tbsp. parsley and the chopped garlic. Add the chopped tomatoes, a few basil leaves, salt and pepper, and cook for 25 minutes.

Dress the cavatelli with the sauce.

Finish with plenty of grated pecorino and serve.

Wine-Stewed Sweet and Sour Almonds with Almond Cake

Skill Level Easy

Time 2 hours and 30 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 10

- 1 lb. almonds, blanched
- 2 cups dry white wine
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 5 tsp. cooked grape must
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 2 cups almond flour
- ¾ cup sugar
- 6 large eggs
- 1 lemon
- salt

FOR THE WINE-STEWED ALMONDS

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Place the almonds on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and roast for 10 minutes.

Remove then stew in a large pot with the sugar, white and red wine, grape must and honey until the liquid has reduced to a dense syrup (around 2 hours and 10 minutes).

FOR THE ALMOND CAKE

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Beat the egg yolks with ½ cup sugar and a pinch of salt until they turn pale yellow.

Mix in the lemon juice and the almond flour, stirring constantly.

Beat the egg whites until peaks form, then gradually add ¼ cup sugar and continue to beat until the peaks stiffen.

Gently fold the egg whites into the mixture.

Pour into an 8"-round cake pan and bake for 40 minutes.

Remove from the oven and let cool.

Cut into squares and serve with the stewed almonds.

On March 19, the feast of St. Joseph, all Molisano households have 13 "poor" dishes atop their tables. Among these are the (exquisite) sweet-and-sour almonds

LA MERENDA

In Italy, *merenda* is an afternoon snack taken to hold one over between meals. It should be filling yet not risk spoiling dinner. Almonds abound in Molise and this recipe is just one of the many ways the Molisani enjoy them — *merenda* time or not.



Merenda

**WINE-STEWED
SWEET AND SOUR ALMONDS
WITH ALMOND CAKE**

VALPOLICELLA VENI, VINI,

Corvina, corvinone and rondinella grapes give us Valpolicella, Ripasso, Amarone and Recioto, all vibrant reds from the Veneto

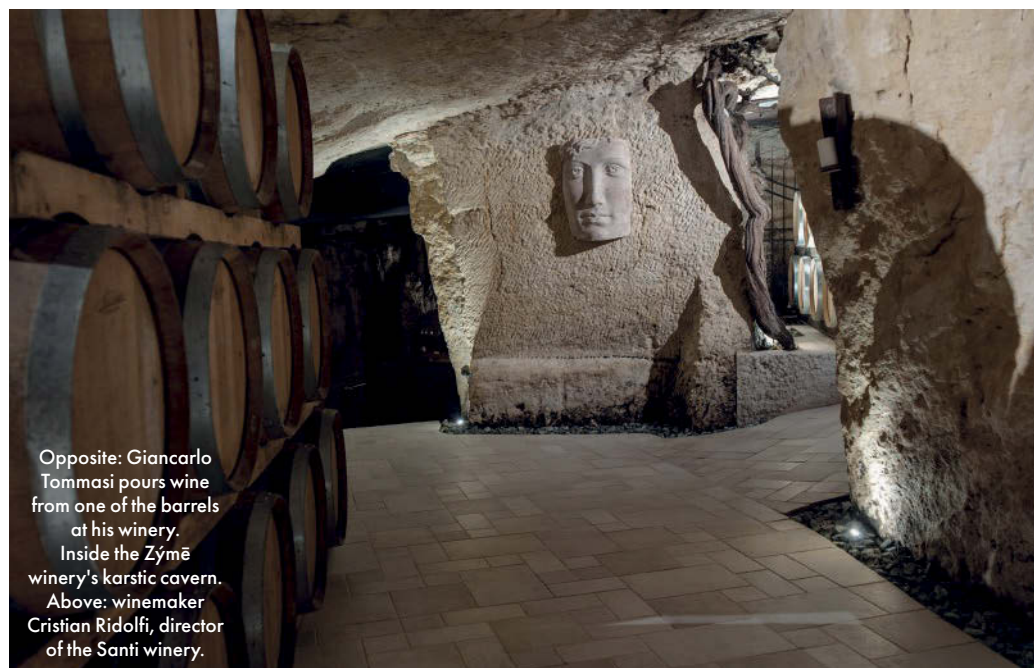
by VALENTINA VERCELLI,
photography
GIACOMO BRETZEL



« **H**ow much corvina did you use?” asks Giacomo Bretzel. The photographer is my Valpolicella travel companion, and we’re currently in the

Pasqua cellars about to complete the final phase of the winemaker’s new tasting experience. In the aging room sits a table topped with various tools of the trade: two “wine thieves” (pipettes used to draw small amounts of wine from the casks), two beakers, paper and pens, blank labels, two empty bottles and two aprons. Off to the side are a small corking machine and a burner topped with a small pot of bubbling thick, red liquid: sealing wax.

We’re creating our own personal wine that we get to keep, and after tasting the contents of the casks, I combine three varietals. Over the last few days, I’ve discovered that corvina veronese is the area’s noblest grape, known for elegant, soft, fruity reds, though it’s at its finest when blended. Fiddling with pipettes and beakers, we’re having as much fun as children playing with chemistry sets. The experience strengthens my conviction that, despite Pasqua’s almost century-long history, the work, currently overseen by the third generation, is also a creative act — in fact, two earlier occasions verified this for me as well. The first: when we tasted Hey French: You Could Have Made This But You Didn’t, a white produced in the Soave area, a combination of the last decade’s four best vintages. Its name is not only a taunt but also a tribute to the territory’s winemaking history. The second was our visit to the meeting room, presided over by the



Opposite: Giancarlo Tommasi pours wine from one of the barrels at his winery. Inside the Zýmē winery’s karstic cavern. Above: winemaker Cristian Ridolfi, director of the Santi winery.

word “BOOM” written in big, colorful letters, along with a punching bag complete with boxing gloves. “This was my uncle’s office, and I wanted to transform it into a more welcoming place,” says Riccardo Pasqua. “The punching bag represents any potential clashes during a meeting, and ‘Boom!’ is an exclamation that often comes up during business talks.”

A blessing in disguise

We continue with visits to two Verona winemakers from the Gruppo Italiano Vini: Bolla and Santi. Bolla played an instrumental part of the territory’s history as it was here, in 1953, where the first Amarone wine was sold: the now-famous Amarone Bolla Riserva del Nonno

1950, which Alberto Bolla’s children and grandchildren bottled for his 80th birthday. The area’s most famous red, however, had already been created a few years earlier and was born from Recioto, the sweet passito wine. Legend has it that in the 1930s, a cask of Recioto sat forgotten, and consequently continued to ferment. It’s said that when the cellar master tasted the wine, expecting it to be *amaro* (bitter), he exclaimed, “This wine isn’t *amaro*, it’s *amarone*!” However, no one knows for sure how exactly the superlative form of the adjective became the name of one of the world’s most famous Italian reds.

Cristian Ridolfi, winemaker at the Santi cellars, explains the →



Cheese and salumi from Trattoria dalla Rosa Alba. Below: the family who runs this restaurant specializing in typical Veronese fare.

territory's distinctive differences. Its 8,000 hectares of vineyards span 19 municipalities north of Verona. The classico area lies within the borders of Negrar, Marano in Valpolicella, Fumane, Sant'Ambrogio di Valpolicella and San Pietro in Cariano. Corvinone and rondinella, in addition to corvino, are the most important grapes for local reds, to which small percentages of other varieties may be added — among them, oseleta, which is currently undergoing a revival.

Valpolicella reds are known for intense cherry aromas coupled with a hint of bitter almonds. In Valpolicella Classico, the cherry is fresh and crisp, becoming more mature in Valpolicella Ripasso and denser in Amarone and Recioto.

Cherry trees, olive groves and villas

Valpolicella's classico zone is flanked by Valpantena, where, in addition to grapes, olive trees also thrive due to its particular microclimate. We visit Costa Arènte, Genagricola's winemaking estate

nestled in a landscape of rare beauty, equally divided into vineyards and olive groves, and taste three different oils, accompanying them with glasses of Amarone and an excellent Ripasso, another typical local wine, which is made by "repassing" a Valpolicella base over an Amarone pomace.

Yet Valpolicella isn't all vineyards and olive groves. During the height of the season, the cherry blossoms are breathtaking, while Venetian villas captivate visitors year-round. Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio designed the Villa Serego, which, along with the 18th-century Villa Mosconi Bertani, is UNESCO-protected. Originally constructed for farming and winemaking, the latter currently serves as the headquarters of the Bertani family's Tenuta Santa Maria. We pass through its elegant frescoed halls, the cellars and the lofts with the arele, wood and bamboo racks used to dry the grapes, and a dainty English garden. A great deal of local winemaking history came to pass within these walls. After an exile in Burgundy, the Bertani

Fast facts: Valpolicella



Where: Valpolicella is located in the province of Verona, perched in the hills north of its namesake city and west of Venice.

Eat: Head to Trattoria dalla Rosa Alba to enjoy typical Veronese dishes. Don't miss the hand-made tagliatelle *enbogonè* in a sauce made from bortolotti beans and Lake Garda olive oil. Also, while you're in this neck of the woods, you'd be remiss to skip the exquisite pies at Renato Bosco's pizzeria Sapore.

Sip: Of course Valpolicella is a must, but if

you prefer a local white, Pinot Grigio hails from the Veneto, and we suggest keeping an eye out for Soave.

Speak Veronese: A local phrase (spoken regularly) says, *Meglio morire ubriachi che mangiati*, which means "Better to die drunk than eaten." In local dialect, it's said as such: *Meio morir bevui che magnai*.

Buy: Obviously, it's the perfect opportunity to stock up on Valpolicella. Some other food items that travel well: olive oil from Lake Garda and pandoro, a local baked treat popular around the holidays. Although not edible, the handmade stationary at Il Gelso is particularly special and makes for a thoughtful and unconventional gift for yourself or your loved ones.

More about Valpolicella at www.lacucinaitaliana.com





Massimilla di Serego Alighieri. Left: the Valpolicella landscape. Below: Riccardo Pasqua and his boxing gloves in the meeting room of his family's winery.

brothers returned to their native land with many innovative ideas, such as the Guyot system. When they noticed that consumers had started to favor less-sweet wines, they began to produce drier Reciotos, the forefathers of modern-day Amarone.

Did you say Dante?

We make our way to Possessioni Serego Alighieri to meet Massimilla di Serego Alighieri, a direct descendant of Dante Alighieri, the monumental Italian poet. Pietro, Dante's son, purchased the estate in 1353, having accompanied his father on his exile to Verona. Today it is home to Valpolicella's oldest cellars, and the prestigious Masi Group, helmed by Sandro Boscaini, oversees the winemaking. As we stroll the manicured gardens, I ask Massimilla about her favorite wine. "If I were on a deserted island I would want Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Vaio Armaron [one of the world's top ten wines, according to Wine Spectator], but my 'travel wine,' the one I always pack alongside my little black dress, is a Possessioni red because just like the dress it's perfect for any occasion, and it goes well with any dish, including fish." In the bottle, corvina and molinara grapes encounter sangiovese, the dominant varietal in Chianti.

The 17th-century Villa Quaranta is a four-star hotel with spa, the villa is



owned by the Tommasi family, winemakers since 1902. Its wellness center offers wine therapy treatments using the grapes' healthful substances, such as the Divino Amarone, which includes a grape seed oil bath and an Amarone compress. Enjoy the family's wines at the villa's Borgo Antico restaurant or the onsite shop. We ask the Tommasis to suggest some foods pairings for the wines. "Valpolicella Classico is an everyday wine; it's fresh, versatile and goes with everything, even pizza. Ripasso is a

bit more structured but still casual: it's nice at a barbecue or a Sunday dinner with tortellini and a roast. Amarone is the wine for special occasions, brought out for a birthday or a special dinner, but it's also highly recommended for an evening of company and conversation. Recioto remains unsurpassable with desserts, blue cheeses and chocolate."

Save the date

Before our journey ends, we visit Celestino Gaspari, a former collaborator of cult Amarone producer Giuseppe Quintarelli. His Zýmë winery, which sits partly in an ancient sandstone quarry, is outfitted with a corkscrew-shaped elevator and staircase, karstic cavern with a water spring and soft, dramatic lighting. We taste a few rarities, such as a wine made from oseleta or From Black to White, a blend with rondinella bianca, a natural genetic mutation of the traditional variety.

At Vigneto dei Salumi, we sit at the round table in the all-wood meat aging room and choose from among chef Walter Ceradini's creations. The Isabella is a tender 24-month-seasoned pork leg while the *polvere del Vinappeso* is a lean cut of oven-dried pork that's been pulverized. Valpolicella's response to bottarga, it's perfect for flavoring risottos and vegetable dishes — it's also nice on top of gelato. ■



No dish welcomes guests quite as warmly as a cold cut platter.

In case you'd like to draw inspiration from Italy for yours, here are some ideas.

Cheese

1. Formaggio Piave DOP This hard cow milk cheese hails from the Dolomites.

2. Buffalo Mozzarella DOP A luscious cheese with a richness that lingers significantly longer than its cow milk counterparts.

3. Parmigiano Reggiano DOP The "King of Cheeses" always brings a pleasant burst of umami.

4. Burrata Stracciatella on the inside, mozzarella on the outside — enough said.

5. Montasio DOP A crumbly cheese from Friuli that dates back to the 13th century.

6. Grana Padano DOP This sweet granular cheese typical of the Po Valley ages for at least nine months.

Salumi

7. Prosciutto crudo In Italy, this dry-cured ham is a kitchen staple.

8. Salame Felino IGP From the province of Parma, this sweet pork salumi is made with red wine and black peppercorns.

9. Salame Milano Various spices are incorporated into this pork salumi produced in and around Milan.

10. Mortadella This particular variety of the popular Bolognese lunch meat has pistachios.

Extras

11. Sweet olives These scrumptious green delights add a delicately briny flair to your spread.

12. Semi-cooked tomatoes in oil Enjoy these on their own or piled on bruschetta.

Mix and Match

Try one or all of these combinations for an indisputable win-win (from left to right):

Bruschetta 1

Prosciutto crudo + Buffalo Mozzarella DOP + Semi-cooked tomatoes

Bruschetta 2

Mortadella with pistachios + Montasio DOP

Bruschetta 3

Salame Milano + Grana Padano DOP

text
JACLYN DEGIORGIO

photography
RICCARDO LETTIERI

styling
BEATRICE PRADA

BRUSCHETTAS





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What we're cooking now



photography RICCARDO LETTIERI, styling BEATRICE PRADA, SERENA GROPPA

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appetizers

ANTIPASTI



Fried Tripe with Pepper Mayonnaise

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 1 lb. tripe, blanched
- 2 large egg yolks
- 1 lemon
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup sparkling water
- grated lemon zest
- mustard
- sunflower seed oil
- salt – pepper

FOR THE MAYONNAISE

Combine the egg yolks with 1 tsp. mustard, a pinch of salt and the juice of 1 lemon.

Blend the mixture in a blender, slowly adding $\frac{2}{3}$ cup sunflower seed oil to form a mayonnaise.

Add the grated lemon zest and 1 tsp. fresh pepper.

FOR THE TRIPE

Wash the tripe well and cut into thin slices. Dry with paper towels and sprinkle with a pinch of salt.

Mix the flour with the sparkling water to make a batter.

Pour enough sunflower seed oil into a pan to cover the tripe when frying.

Coat the tripe with batter and fry, a few at a time, in the oil for about 3 minutes.

Remove and place on paper towels to absorb the oil.

Add salt to taste and serve hot accompanied by the mayonnaise.

Mediterranean Torciglioni with Chicory Sauce

Skill Level Easy

Time 1 hour and 15 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 60 PIECES

- 7 oz. chicory, rinsed
- 5 oz. Greek yogurt
- 4 Tbsp. Parmigiano, grated
- 4 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 Tbsp. cream
- 2 rolls rectangular puff pastry dough
- 2 large eggs

marjoram
chili pepper flakes
extra-virgin olive oil
salt – pepper

FOR THE TORCIGLIONI

Combine the tomato paste with 1 tsp. chopped marjoram leaves, 1 egg, cream, Parmigiano and a pinch of chili flakes.

Unroll 1 puff pastry dough roll and place on a baking tray.

Spread the mixture over the dough then unroll the second roll of puff pastry dough and place on top.

Freeze for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Remove the tray from freezer and halve lengthwise, then slice the other way to produce $\frac{1}{2}$ " strips. Brush with the beaten egg and twist each piece into a braid. Transfer to a baking tray lined with parchment paper and bake for 15 minutes.

FOR THE SAUCE

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Boil the chicory for 2 minutes.

Chop coarsely, then place in the blender. Combine with 4 Tbsp. oil and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Mix until uniform.

Add the yogurt and blend until creamy.

Serve the torciglioni with the sauce.





Lemon Carrot Ricotta Terrine

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 45 minutes + 4 hours for resting

INGREDIENTS FOR 4-6

1 lb. carrots
1 lb. ricotta
¼ cup cream
¾ oz. gelatin
lemon
cashews, shelled
extra-virgin olive oil
thyme
salt – pepper

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Peel the carrots then slice into thin strips using a vegetable peeler. Blanch in the boiling water for 2-3 minutes, drain and let cool.

Mix the ricotta with 1 tsp. grated lemon rind, 1 tsp. olive oil, salt and pepper.

Dissolve the gelatin in hot cream. Let cool to about 95°F, then add the cream to the ricotta and mix well.

Line a 9"x 4" mold with plastic wrap. Coat the mold with the carrot strips so that they overflow by half the length, placing them parallel to the shorter side and letting them slightly overlap.

Spread a layer of ricotta about ½" thick on top and cover with 3-4 layers of carrot strips. Repeat the process until all the ingredients are used. At the end, fold over the edges of the overlapping carrots, gently pressing them down on the ricotta so that it holds together well.

Refrigerate for 4 hours.

Drizzle a pan with olive oil and toast 2 Tbsp. cashews.

Remove the terrine from the mold and garnish with cashews, ground pepper, thyme, and, if desired, glazed carrots.

Pea Cake with Crispy Wafers and Robiola Cream

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour and 40 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 10-12

1½ lb. peas
1½ lb. potatoes
5 oz. robiola cheese
½ cup cream
3 large egg whites

½ cup Parmigiano, grated
¾ cup all-purpose flour
unsalted butter
flax seeds
salt

Boil the potatoes with the skins on until tender.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook the peas for 3 minutes if fresh or 7-8 minutes if frozen.

Drain and, while still warm, purée until smooth and velvety.

Peel the potatoes and, while still warm, use a potato masher or ricer to mash them.

Lightly beat 2 egg whites.

Combine the puréed peas with the mashed potatoes, then add 1 Tbsp. grated Parmigiano, ½ cup flour and 2 tsp. salt. Finally, add the egg whites and

gently fold in from the bottom up.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Melt the butter and use it to brush a 7½" ring mold, then pour in the mixture.

Bake for approximately 30 minutes.

FOR THE WAFERS

Preheat the oven to 350 °F.

Combine ¼ cup softened butter with ¼ cup flour, ¼ cup grated Parmigiano and the remaining egg whites.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and brush on the mixture in 2" strips. Sprinkle a handful of flax seeds on top, distributing evenly.

Bake for 7-8 minutes.

Remove from the oven and let cool

Bring the cream to a boil, remove from the heat and stir in the robiola cheese.

Serve the ring cake while it's warm, accompanied by the wafers and the warm robiola cream.





first courses

PRIMI

Nettle Risotto with Pecorino Sauce

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 1½ cups carnaroli rice
- 9 oz. nettles
- ¾ cup milk
- 8 oz. hazelnuts, peeled and toasted
- 1 cup Pecorino, grated
- 3 Tbsp. Grana Padano, grated
- 4-5 cups vegetable broth
- cornstarch
- white wine vinegar
- extra-virgin olive oil

FOR THE RICE

Prepare a pot of boiling water and in another pot, bring the vegetable broth to a boil.

Clean the nettle leaves, blanch them in the boiling water and then remove. Blend to a soft cream.

Blend 4 oz. hazelnuts with ⅓ cup oil, and chop the remaining hazelnuts.

Toast the rice in a dry saucepan for 3-4 minutes. Moisten with a ladleful of boiling broth and cook, adding more broth, a little at a time, for 15-18 minutes.

FOR THE SAUCE

Bring the milk to a boil.

Add 1 tsp. cornstarch dissolved in 1 tsp. water. Add the grated pecorino, and stir until it forms a sauce.

Stir the nettle sauce in to the risotto, along with 3-4 Tbsp. hazelnut oil and Grana Padano.

To serve, top with 1 tsp. white wine vinegar, the Pecorino sauce and the chopped hazelnuts.

Caramelle with Mortadella and Pumpkin Velouté

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour and 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4-6

- 4 cups pumpkin
- ½ lb. mortadella, shredded
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- Grana Padano or Parmigiano, grated
- 1 Tbsp. dry amaretti cookies
- 2 large eggs

rosemary sprigs
salt – pepper
butter
vegetable broth
extra-virgin olive oil

FOR THE PUMPKIN VELOUTÉ

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Clean the pumpkin: remove the seeds, but leave the peel on. Cut into slices. Place on a baking tray and top with a drizzle of oil and salt.

Bake for 50 minutes.

Remove the peel and blend the pulp with 2 ladlefuls warm broth, a few rosemary leaves, 2 Tbsp. oil, a pinch of salt and freshly ground pepper.

FOR THE CAMELLE

Blend the mortadella with an egg, the cheese and amaretti for the filling.

Mix the flour with an egg, ½ Tbsp.

oil and 4 Tbsp. water, working the ingredients until smooth and uniform. Flour a work surface and roll the dough into a paper-thin sheet. Cut out 2¼" circles.

Prepare the caramelle by placing a small walnut-sized ball of filling in the center of each, then fold into half moons.

Flatten the dough around the filling to remove the air. Press the ends of the crescent between your fingers and use your thumb to work it into the shape of wrapped candy.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook for 2-3 minutes. Drain with a slotted spoon and cook in a pan with a knob of butter for 1 minute. Ladle the velouté into shallow bowls, top with pasta, garnish with rosemary and serve immediately.





Barley with Squacquerone Cheese and Turmeric

Skill Level Easy
Time 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 11 oz. pearl barley
- 4 oz. Squacquerone PDO cheese (or soft stracchino)
- 2 oz. guanciale, sliced
- 3 fresh turmeric roots – salt

Peel and slice the turmeric. **Transfer** to a pot with filled with 6 cups water and cook for 5 minutes after it comes to a boil. **Toast** the barley in a dry pan with a pinch of salt for 1 minute. **Cook** for approximately 20 minutes, adding the turmeric broth a little at a time to moisten. **Stir** 2 Tbsp. cheese into the barley. **Brown** the guanciale in a pan, place on top of the barley along with the remaining cheese and serve.

Spaghetti with Shrimp and Chili Pepper

Skill Level Intermediate
Time 1 hour and 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 2½ lb. shrimp
- 12 oz. spaghetti
- 1 celery stalk
- 1 carrot
- 1 onion
- 1 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 bay leaf
- cilantro
- fresh chili pepper
- dry white wine
- extra-virgin olive oil
- salt

Shell the shrimp and remove the brown vein. Empty the heads and set aside with the shells for the broth. **Heat** 2-3 Tbsp. oil in a saucepan and brown the heads and shells for about 5 minutes on high heat, mixing and crushing them with a spoon. **Clean** and chop the celery, carrot and ½ onion and add them to the saucepan. After 2 minutes, add the tomato paste. **Moisten** with a glass of white wine, let evaporate, then add 2 qt. water and 1 bay leaf, and bring to a boil. Cover with a lid and let simmer for 50 minutes. Turn off the heat and strain, extracting all the broth. Heat a drizzle of oil in a large pan and toast the uncooked spaghetti, stirring for 2-3 minutes. **Add** three ladles of shrimp broth, then continue to cook the pasta like a risotto for about 10-12 minutes, adding a little bit of both salt and broth at a time. During the last few minutes, let the pasta absorb the broth so it doesn't need be drained. **Warm** up the shrimp. **Turn** off the heat when the spaghetti is al dente. Transfer to another pan coated with a thin layer of oil and sauté for 1 minute until crispy. Add the shrimp and a handful of chopped coriander. **Serve** with more coriander and chopped fresh chili pepper.





Pasta and Cream of Broccoli with Anchovies, Hazelnuts and Grapefruit

Skill Level Easy

Time 50 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

2 lb. broccoli
7 oz. macaroni-style pasta
3 Tbsp. hazelnuts, blanched
12 anchovies
fresh chili pepper
anchovy paste
pink grapefruit
extra-virgin olive oil
pepper – salt

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Clean the broccoli and set aside the nicest florets. Cook the rest of the broccoli for 7-8 minutes. Drain and blend with 4 Tbsp. oil, adding salt and pepper if needed.

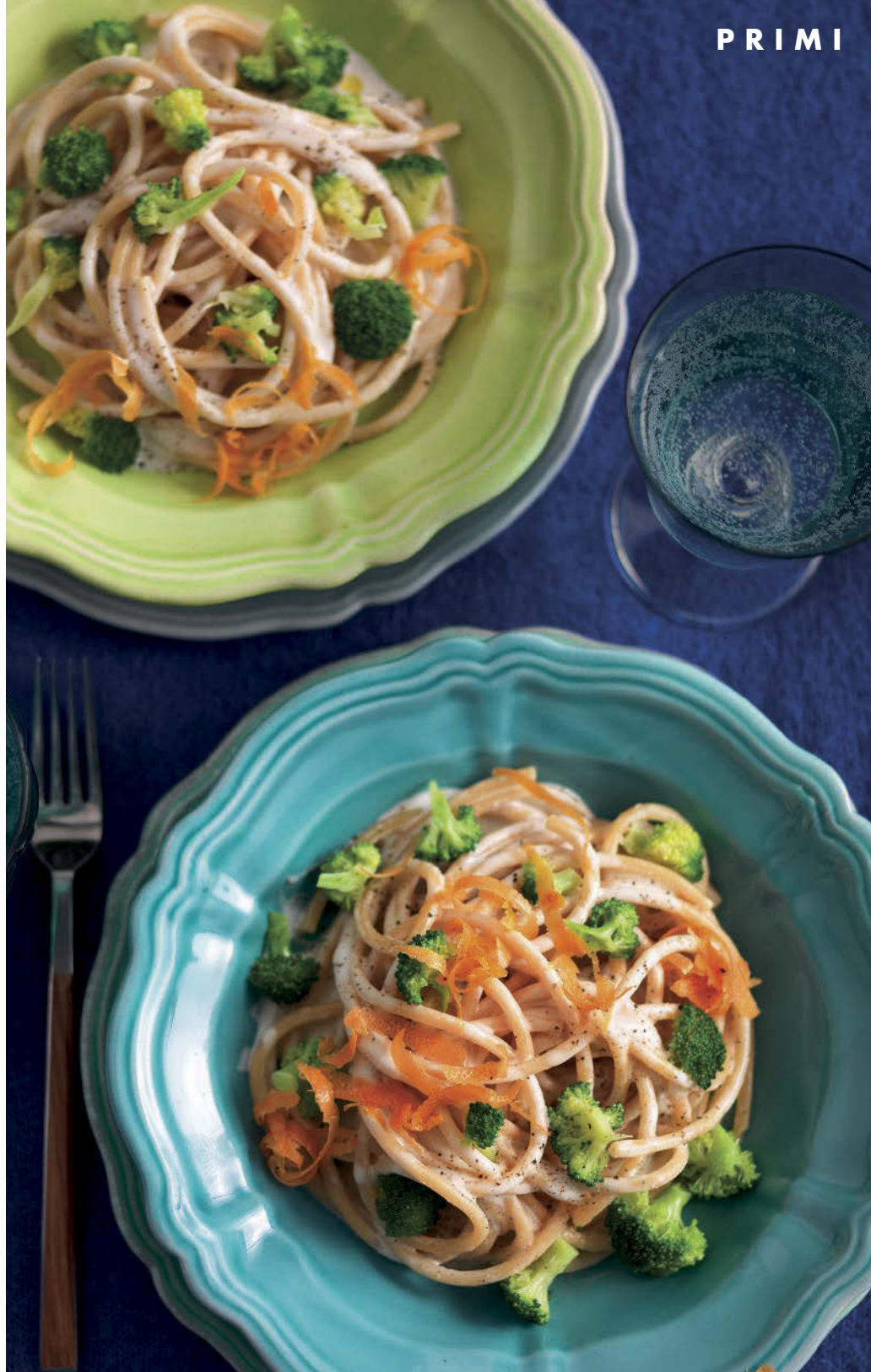
Fillet the anchovies and cut them into ½" pieces. Add a drizzle of oil and a pinch of salt to a non-stick pan and place over medium heat. Brown the anchovies on their skin side for 2 minutes.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta. Set 1 cup of the cooking water aside, then drain a couple of minutes before the time indicated on the package.

Blanch for 2-3 minutes the florets that were set aside, drain and brown them in a frying pan with the macaroni, a pinch of anchovy paste and a few slices of fresh chili pepper for 1 minute, then add 1 ladleful of the pasta water and cook for 2-3 more minutes.

Chop the hazelnuts and grate the grapefruit rind.

Spread the broccoli cream on plates, place the macaroni and broccoli florets on top. Finish with the chopped hazelnuts and 1 tsp. grapefruit peel, and serve.



Bucatini with Mozzarella, Broccoli and Orange Zest

Skill Level Easy

Time 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

12 oz. bucatini
9 oz. buffalo mozzarella
1 cup milk

1 cup broccoli florets
6 oil-packed anchovy fillets
cornstarch
orange – salt

Place the anchovies and a drizzle of their oil in a sauce pan and cook them down over low heat. Dissolve the tip of a teaspoon of corn starch in 2 Tbsp. milk (taken from the 1 cup).

Mix the rest of the milk with the anchovies in the saucepan.

Switch off the heat and use an

immersion mixer to blend.

Turn the heat back on, add the milk with the cornstarch and let it thicken for 2 minutes to obtain a bechamel-like texture. Let cool, then add the chopped mozzarella and blend everything into a sauce.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook the bucatini. Add the broccoli florets 2 minutes before the end of cooking. Drain everything at the same time, dress with the mozzarella cream and finish with grated orange zest.

first courses



Ravioli with Arugula, Artichokes and Almonds

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 50 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 egg
- 9 oz. ricotta
- 5 oz. arugula, washed and chopped
- 2 Tbsp. Pecorino, grated
- 3 oil-packed anchovy fillets
- 1 shallot, chopped
- butter – salt

FOR THE TOPPING

- 4 oz. almonds, unblanched
- 3 artichokes
- dry white wine
- extra-virgin olive oil
- butter – salt

FOR THE PASTA

Mix the flour with the egg, egg yolks and 2 Tbsp. water to obtain a smooth mixture. Work it first in a bowl, then move to a floured surface. Cover with plastic wrap and let rest for 1 hour.

FOR THE FILLING

Chop the shallot and let it sweat in a saucepan with 1¼ oz. butter for 2 minutes. Add the anchovy fillets and melt them in the butter. Finally add the arugula and salt, stewing for 5-6 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool. Mix the arugula with the ricotta and Pecorino to obtain the filling, then scoop it into a pastry bag.

FOR THE RAVIOLI

Roll the dough out into thin strips then distribute the filling in walnut-sized mounds, placing them 2" apart. Brush a little water around the filling then cover with another sheet of pasta.

Remove the air by pressing down around the filling, then cut out the ravioli with a round or drop-shaped pastry cutter every 2¼".

FOR THE TOPPING

Peel the artichokes and cut them into 8 wedges. Cook them in a pan with a thin layer of hot oil and a pinch of salt for 5 minutes. Blend with ½ glass wine and cook for 10 minutes. Roughly chop the almonds and toast them in a pan. Add a knob of butter and sauté for 2 more minutes until they are glossy.

Boil the ravioli for 2-3 minutes, drain and dress with the butter and almonds. Finish with artichokes and aromatic herbs to taste.



Pasta with Butternut Squash, Sausage and Lettuce Cream

Skill Level Easy

Time 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 6

- 1 lb. small pasta, such as calamarata
- 1 lb. fresh sausage
- 10 oz. butternut squash
- 9 oz. ricotta
- 5 large lettuce leaves
- 1 onion
- dry white wine
- extra-virgin olive oil

FOR THE CREAM

Boil the lettuce leaves for 2 minutes.

Drain and squeeze out the excess water, then blend with the ricotta and a pinch of salt to obtain a smooth cream.

FOR THE PASTA

Chop the onion and brown it in a large pan with a drizzle of oil for 5 minutes. Remove the sausage from its casing, cut into small pieces and add to the pan. Crush and crumble it for 2-3 minutes while cooking. Blend in a dash of wine and cook for another 8-10 minutes. Dice the pumpkin and brown it in another pan with a drizzle of oil for about 5 minutes.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.

Cook the pasta until al dente, then drain, setting aside 1 cup of the cooking water. Add the pasta to the sausage pan, then add the pumpkin and stir. If needed, add a little cooking water. Finish with the cream and mint leaves to taste.

first courses

Pumpkin Minestrone

Skill Level Easy

Time 50 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 3 lb. pumpkin
- 7 oz. pasta, such as ditalini
- 1 oz. fresh spinach leaves
- 3 spring onions
- fresh ginger

vegetable broth
extra-virgin olive oil
salt

Trim the pumpkin and cut it into 1" pieces and chop 1 spring onion.

Add 3 Tbsp. oil to a pan and fry the onion for 1 minute. Add the pumpkin and let cook for about 3 minutes, then add 1 qt. vegetable broth and cook for 25-30 minutes.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta until al dente then add

it to the soup. Sauté the spinach in a drizzle of oil for 1 minute.

Drizzle a pan with olive oil and heat over a low flame. Trim the other spring onions, removing the green part. Cut them in half lengthwise and sauté for 2 minutes.

Peel a piece of ginger and cut it into small sticks. Distribute the minestrone into deep dishes and top with the spinach leaves, sautéed spring onions and ginger sticks.

Add croutons to taste.





Orecchiette with Mediterranean Pesto and Chicory

Skill Level Easy
Time 40 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

1 head chicory
12 oz. fresh orecchiette
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 oz. Taggiasca olives, pitted

2 oz. salt-packed capers, rinsed
2 oz. sun-dried tomatoes
1 lemon
1 orange
coarse salt

Prepare 3 small pots of boiling water. **Peel** off ½ oz. orange rind and ½ oz. lemon rind. Cut them into thin strips, parboil for a few seconds and drain. **Repeat** this process 2 more times so the peels lose their bitterness. For convenience, you can prepare them simultaneously in the other pots.

Chop the capers, olives and tomatoes, and mix together in a bowl with the drained citrus peels, 1½ Tbsp. lemon juice, 1½ Tbsp. fresh-squeezed orange juice and the oil, until it forms a fragrant sauce with the consistency of pesto.

Break apart the chicory leaves, wash and trim them then cut them into strips.

Place them in a bowl of ice water to make them crisp and curled, then drain completely.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. **Cook** the orecchiette, strain, toss with the pesto and garnish with the chicory.

first courses



Gorgonzola and Ricotta Cannelloni

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour and 20 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4-6

- 2 cups cold milk
- 14 oz. creamy sweet gorgonzola
- 9 oz. ricotta
- 9 oz. Romanesco broccoli florets
- 4 Tbsp. pistachios, shelled & peeled
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 16 dried cannelloni shells
- 1 large egg

nutmeg
Parmigiano cheese
extra-virgin olive oil
salt – pepper

FOR THE FILLING

Remove the gorgonzola rind and mix the cheese with the ricotta, 1½ oz. grated Parmigiano and the egg. Season generously with black pepper and a pinch of salt. Mix everything and place inside a pastry bag.

FOR THE BECHAMEL

Melt the butter in a saucepan, then add the flour and cook for 3-4 minutes. Add the milk, stir and bring to a boil. Stir constantly for around 10 minutes. Add salt and flavor generously with grated nutmeg.

FOR THE CANNELLONI

Pre-heat the oven to 375°F.

Pour 2-3 Tbsp. bechamel in an oven-proof dish that will hold the 16 cannelloni shells. Fill the cannelloni and place them beside each other in an 11"x 14" pan.

Cover with the remaining bechamel and sprinkle with more grated Parmigiano. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes.

Remove the foil and increase the temperature to 390°F. Let brown for around 10 minutes. In the meantime, bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook the broccoli for 6-8 minutes. Drain and dress with a drizzle of oil. Serve the cannelloni with the broccoli florets and the chopped pistachios.

vegetables

VERDURE

Fried Artichokes with Shallot Sauce

Skill Level Easy
Time 40 minutes

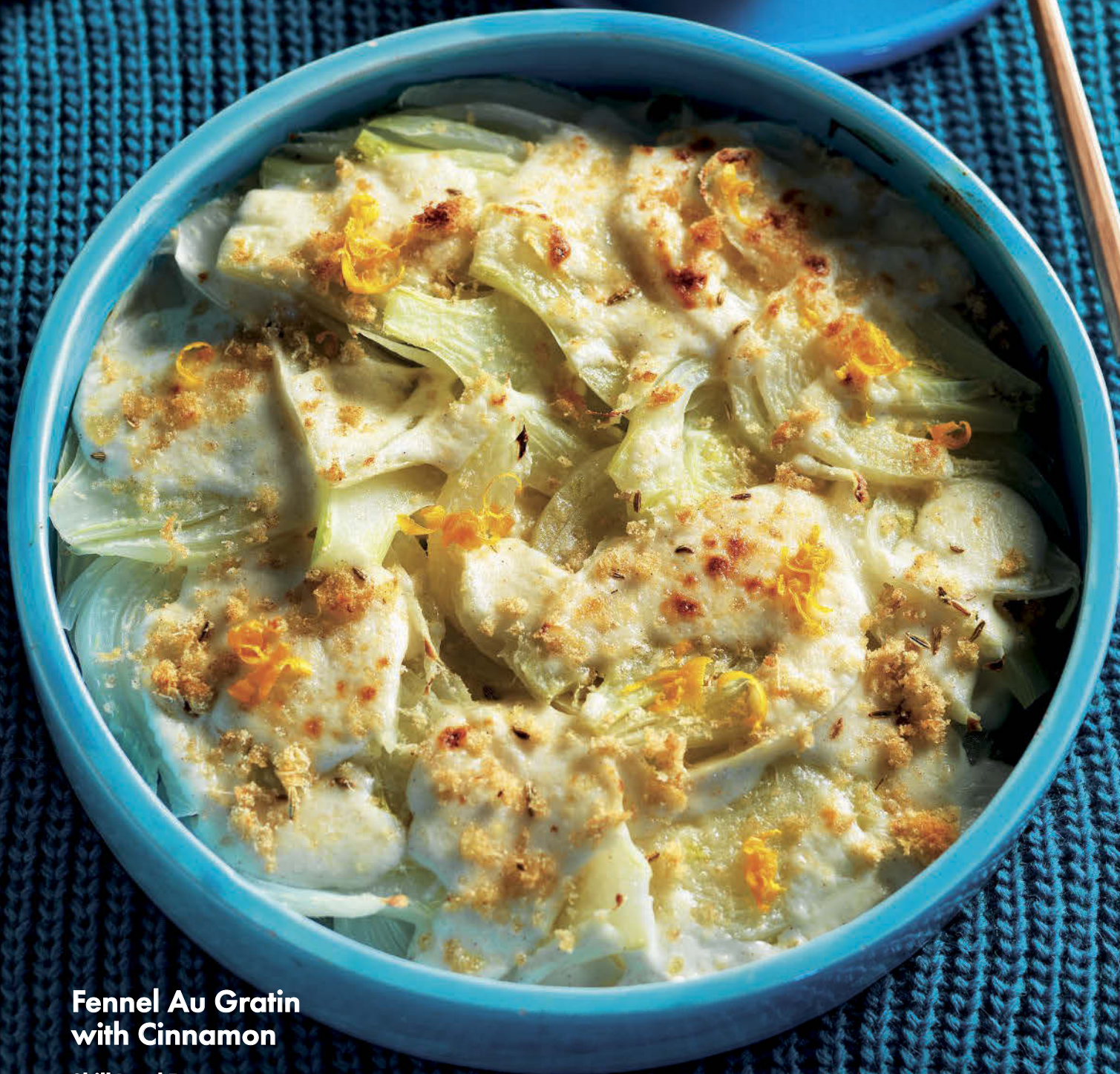
Vegetarian/Gluten-free

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

1 cup cream
4 Romanesco artichokes
4 shallots
parsley
dry white wine
lemon – butter
sunflower seed oil
extra-virgin olive oil
salt

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and add the juice of 1 lemon. **Trim** the artichokes and cook them whole for 14-16 minutes. **Remove** and chill immediately in ice water for 2 minutes. **Cut** them in half lengthwise and fry them in a pan with ¼ cup oil for 4-5 minutes. **Peel** the shallots, coarsely chop them and brown them in a saucepan with 1 Tbsp. of butter and a pinch of salt for 4-5 minutes; **Add** a few stalks of parsley and ½ glass of wine. After a couple of minutes, add the cream and continue cooking for another 8-9 minutes,

until the liquid has almost completely reduced. **Blend** the mixture and return it to a saucepan over heat and cook until it reaches a creamy consistency. **Blend** ½ oz. parsley leaves with 1½ Tbsp. olive oil and 2 Tbsp. sunflower seed oil. **Drizzle** the parsley oil on the artichokes and serve with the shallot sauce on the side.



Fennel Au Gratin with Cinnamon

Skill Level Easy

Time 45 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

2 cups milk
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
4 fennel bulbs
ground cinnamon
lemon
Grana Padano, grated
butter – orange – salt

FOR THE BECHEMEL

Heat the milk together with $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. cinnamon and a pinch of salt. On the side, melt 2½ Tbsp. butter, then mix in the flour, turn off the heat and whisk. **Add** the mixture to the milk and cook for 5 minutes, continuing to stir.

FOR THE FENNEL

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and add the juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon. **Trim** the fennel, cut into $\frac{1}{8}$ " slices and boil for 8-9 minutes.

Remove and allow to cool.

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Grease a baking dish with butter and spread bechamel on the bottom.

Add a layer of fennel slices and top with the bechamel and grated cheese. Keep layering until all the fennel is used, then top with bechamel and grated cheese.

Bake under the broiler for 12-13 minutes, garnish with orange zest and serve.

Baked Onions with Zucchini and Mint Sauce

Skill Level Easy

Time 1 hour and 15 minutes

Vegetarian/Gluten-free

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

4 yellow onions
5 cups zucchini
1 oz. fresh mint leaves,
plus extra
extra-virgin olive oil
salt

Preheat the oven to 320°F.

Shape a sheet of aluminum foil into a round base with a 3" diameter that is slightly concave in the center. Set it on a baking sheet and place an onion on top so that it stands upright. Repeat for the other 3 onions then bake them for 45-50 minutes.

Bring a pot of water to a boil.

Trim the ends of the zucchini, cut them into ½" pieces and cook for 5-6 minutes.

Drain the zucchini and purée with the mint leaves, a pinch of salt and ¼ cup oil to form a smooth, bright sauce.

Remove the onions from the oven, peel and separate into sheets. Pour some zucchini sauce on the serving plates and place the onion pieces on top. Sprinkle with salt if needed and garnish with additional fresh mint.

Roasted Winter Vegetables

Skill Level Easy

Time 45 minutes

Vegetarian/Gluten-free

INGREDIENTS FOR 6-8

2 fennel bulbs
1 lb. sweet potatoes, peeled

2 medium leeks

½ lb. red potatoes

½ lb. fingerling potatoes

thyme

extra-virgin olive oil

pepper – salt

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Trim the fennel without removing the base and slice them up. Trim the leeks, removing the green part, the base and the first layer.

Slice the leeks into thin rings then cut the sweet potatoes into ½" cubes.

Wash the red and fingerling potatoes and, leaving them unpeeled, cut them into similar-sized pieces.

Arrange all the vegetables in a baking dish or on a baking tray, then drizzle with olive oil and season with salt, pepper and a few sprigs of thyme. Place in the oven and bake for around 30 minutes.

Add freshly ground pepper, fresh herbs and spices to taste, then serve.



entrées

SECONDI



Roast Veal Shank with Cabbage

Skill Level Easy

Time 1 hour and 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4-6

4 lbs. veal shank
1 red cabbage
1 red onion
1 apple
1 zest of lemon, minced
unsalted butter
vegetable broth
apple cider vinegar
extra-virgin olive oil
coarse salt
peppercorns

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

In a mortar, combine a handful of coarse salt, 1 Tbsp. peppercorns and the lemon zest. Grind together to form an even mixture. Sprinkle this on all surfaces of the veal shank, then place the veal in a baking dish. Add a drizzle of oil and 3-5 pats of butter, then bake for 1 hour and 20 minutes.

Cut the cabbage into thin strips.

Peel the onion and apple, and cut them into thin slices.

Drizzle a large pot with oil, then fry the apple and onion together for 2 minutes. Add the cabbage, salt, a ladleful of vegetable broth and stew for 10 minutes. Add 2 Tbsp. vinegar and cook for another 10 minutes.

Remove the veal from the oven and take it out of the pan. In a saucepan, combine the cooking liquid with a ladleful of broth, warm it up over medium heat and then strain to get gravy. Serve it alongside the veal and the stewed cabbage.

Scorpion Fish in Guazzetto Sauce with Frutti di Mare

Skill Level Advanced

Time 1 hour and 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

1 lb. mixed fish for frying
¾ lb. scorpion fish fillet
10 oz. mussels, cleaned
4 oz. cherry tomatoes
2 oz. shrimp, peeled
2 oz. clams, shelled
2 Tbsp. Taggiasca olives
4 slices of bread

2 small potatoes
1 garlic clove
1 Tbsp. sea beans
basil – marjoram
dry white wine
extra-virgin olive oil
salt – pepper

Peel and chop the garlic clove.

Cut the tomatoes into small pieces. Clean the mixed fish, removing the heads and innards, then cut into small pieces. Place the garlic and 2 Tbsp. oil in a saucepan and brown the fish over medium heat. Add 1 cup of white wine and let it evaporate, then add the tomatoes, 2 basil leaves, a sprig of marjoram, salt and pepper. Cover with water and cook for 30 minutes, then pass everything through a vegetable mill.

Peel the potatoes, cut them into 1" cubes and combine with the fish guazzetto sauce together with the olives. Cook for 10 minutes.

Pour 2 Tbsp. oil in a pan and brown the scorpion fish fillets on their skin side for 1-2 minutes. Add to the guazzetto sauce and cook for 8 minutes.

Pour 1 Tbsp. oil in a pan and toast the bread for 1 minute on each side.

Add 1 Tbsp. oil to a saucepan and open the mussels over medium heat, then remove half the shells.

Add the mussels, clams and shrimp to the guazzetto and mix delicately, cooking for 1 minute.

Boil the sea beans in salted water for 1 minute.

Serve the fish accompanied by toasted bread and garnished with the sea beans.



entrées

Stuffed Squid over Creamed Chard

Skill Level Intermediate
Time 1 hour and 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

1½ lb. squid
18 oz. chard
4 slices of stale bread
1 cup grated Pecorino
2 anchovy fillets
2 sprigs of thyme
1 garlic clove
sprouts – gomashio
sugar
extra-virgin olive oil
salt

Bring a pot of water to a boil and add a pinch each of salt and sugar. Separate the chard leaves from their stems, then cut them into strips and blanch for 2 minutes. Drain and cool in ice water for 5 minutes, then drain again and set aside.

Chop the stems into ¼" cubes and toss them in a pan with a drizzle of oil, an unpeeled garlic clove and the chopped anchovies for 4-5 minutes, then remove the garlic. Cut the bread into 1" cubes and place in a pan. Add the stems and brown until the bread becomes crisp. Let the mixture cool, then add the Pecorino and thyme leaves.

Clean the squid and set the tentacles aside. Stuff the squid with the bread and stem mixture and fasten closed with a toothpick. Blend the chard leaves while

slowly drizzling in ¾ cup oil, until you obtain a smooth cream. Sauté the stuffed squid in a pan with a little oil over high heat until they become golden. Repeat with the tentacles.

Serve the squid over the creamed chard, some sprouts and a sprinkling of gomashio, a salt and sesame condiment that you can find in supermarkets and organic specialty shops.

White Bream "En Croute" with Leeks, Olives and Capers

Skill Level Intermediate
Time 1 hour

INGREDIENTS FOR 2

8 medium leeks
1 (1½ lb) white bream, cleaned
7 oz. ready-made bread dough
1 large egg yolk
Taggiasca olives, pitted
pickled capers
thyme
rosemary
unsalted butter
extra-virgin olive oil
salt

Rinse the leeks thoroughly, removing the green part and the outer layer of the white part. Cut them in half lengthwise, then into half circles. Rinse them again, drain and sauté in a saucepan with a pat of butter and a pinch of salt. Lower the heat and cook the leeks for 10-12 minutes.

Remove the scales and fins from the fish, rinse it and salt the inside. Place a rosemary sprig and a few thyme sprigs in the belly. Pour the leeks into a baking dish, mixing them with 3 Tbsp. Taggiasca olives, 1 Tbsp. drained capers and 3 thyme sprigs.

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Set the fish on the leeks, sprinkle with salt and drizzle with a little oil. Roll out the bread dough until 1" thick, then use it to cover the baking dish and trim it to about ½" below the top. Add a little water to the remaining beaten egg yolk and brush it on the dough's surface.

Bake for 15-18 minutes then bring the fish directly to the table. If you like, serve it with balsamic vinegar — a few drops on the fish and leeks will brighten up the flavor.







Roast Beef with Root Vegetables

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour

INGREDIENTS FOR 8

- 4 lb. beef sirloin, cleaned
- 10 medium yellow carrots
- 5 medium purple carrots
- 4 medium parsnips
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 4 white turnips
- 2 unpeeled garlic cloves
- honey
- meat extract
- rosemary
- thyme
- extra-virgin olive oil
- salt – pepper

FOR THE ROAST BEEF

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Drizzle a pan with oil and sear the sirloin for 2 minutes on each side. Line a baking dish with parchment paper and place the sirloin on top. Drizzle with oil and add a pinch each of salt and pepper, 1 rosemary sprig and 2 crushed unpeeled garlic cloves, and bake for around 35 minutes.

FOR THE ROOT VEGETABLES

Preheat the oven to 425°F.

Thoroughly scrub the carrots, parsnip and turnips. Peel the parsnip and yellow carrots. Cut the yellow and purple carrots and parsnip into sticks, and cut the white turnips into 4 wedges each, keeping a little of the green part attached. Drizzle the vegetables with 2 Tbsp. oil and 1 tsp. honey and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add a few sprigs of thyme then bake for 30 minutes in circulating mode.

FOR THE SAUCE

Heat 1 cup water then dissolve about ½ tsp. meat extract in it and mix well. Add the leaves from 1 thyme sprig and a pinch of salt then cook for 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat, add the butter and flour and beat with a whisk, then return the sauce to the heat and cook for another 3 minutes, continuing to whisk. Serve the roast with the root vegetables and the sauce.



Chicken Breast with Walnuts and Mustard

Skill Level Easy

Time 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 2 lbs. chicken breast
- 5 oz. winter radicchio
- 15 shelled walnuts
- whole grain mustard
- creamy mustard
- extra-virgin olive oil
- salt – pepper

Separate the chicken breast, discarding the fatty parts and the central bone. Pour 3 Tbsp. oil in a frying pan then fry the meat over medium heat for 15-20 minutes, turning them halfway through cooking. Add salt and pepper at the end.

Mix 3 tsp. whole grain mustard with 4 tsp. creamy mustard in a bowl along with ½ cup of oil and 1½ Tbsp. water. Chop 5-6 walnuts into fine pieces until they become a powder.

Trim the radicchio, arrange it in a serving dish with the chicken and finish with the mustard sauce, walnut powder and the remaining walnuts, left whole.

entrées

Octopus with Red Wine and Seafood Mayonnaise

Skill Level Easy

Time 2 hours and 10 minutes
+ 30 minutes of cooling

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

3 lb. octopus
1½ cups red wine
1 cup chopped red onion
1 garlic clove
bay leaf
lemon

extra-virgin olive oil
sunflower seed oil
salt

Peel the onion and cut it into thin slices. Add a drizzle of oil to a large saucepan, then gently sauté the onion for 7-8 minutes with a peeled garlic clove over medium heat.

Meanwhile, clean the octopus: separate the body from the tentacles; remove the eyes and the hard beak at the tentacles' base. Add the octopus to the saucepan with the onion, turn up the heat, add salt and cook for 2 minutes. Add the red wine and 1 bay leaf, cover the pan and cook over medium heat for about 1 hour and 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool in the cooking liquid for 30 minutes.

Strain and measure out 7 Tbsp. cooking liquid. Pour it into a tall container and add 1 cup sunflower seed oil. Use an immersion blender to form a mayonnaise, adding the juice of ½ lemon. Serve the octopus with the mayonnaise and seasonal salad greens.

Clam Sauté in Cream Soup

Skill Level Easy

Time 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 2

2 lbs. clams, soaked and rinsed
8 oz. mascarpone cheese
4 slices of crustless bread
tarragon
garlic
pepper
dry white wine
extra-virgin olive oil

Cut the bread slices into sticks and toast them in a pan with a drizzle of oil. In a saucepan, heat 2 Tbsp. oil and 1 peeled garlic clove. Add the clams and ½ cup white wine, then cover the pan and cook until the clams open, which should be 4-5 minutes.

Strain the cooking liquid, pour 1¼ cups into a saucepan and heat it up.

Add the mascarpone and melt it with a whisk. Add pepper to taste and cook for 5 minutes. Remove the garlic clove.

Ladle the soup into bowls then add the clams and sprinkle with tarragon leaves.

Serve the toast sticks on the side.





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Bread Soup with Egg and Roasted Greens

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 30 minutes + 7 hours marinating

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

2 cups broth
4 oz. savoy cabbage
2 oz. lacinato kale leaves
16 slices thick-crusted bread
4 large egg yolks
salt – sugar
Grana Padano
extra-virgin olive oil

FOR THE MARINATED EGG YOLKS

Combine 4 Tbsp. salt with 4 Tbsp. sugar. Spread half the mixture in a baking dish and set the egg yolks on top. Cover them completely with the rest of the salt and sugar and let marinate in the refrigerator for 7 hours.

FOR THE SOUP

Preheat the oven to 200°F.

Sprinkle the bread slices with grated Grana Padano and bake for 7-8 minutes. Remove from the oven and break them into small pieces. Combine with the broth and 1 Tbsp. oil and purée to form a thickened soup.

FOR THE VEGETABLES

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Cut the outer leaves of the cabbage into small pieces, removing the hard parts of the ribs. Clean a few kale leaves then brush all the greens with oil and bake for 10-13 minutes until crisp. Remove the yolks from the salt and set them in a large bowl of water to rinse them.

Ladle the bread soup into 4 small bowls with a yolk on top of each and serve the roasted greens on the side.

Steamed Egg Yolks Over Celeriac Purée

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

2 lb. celeriac
2 oz. cream
½ cup all-purpose flour
6 Tbsp. pumpkin seeds, shelled
10 fresh sage leaves

4 large eggs
unsalted butter
sunflower seed oil
extra-virgin olive oil
salt – pepper

FOR THE CELERIAC PURÉE

Scrub, pare and peel the celeriac, and cut it into 1" pieces then steam for 35 minutes. Purée the celeriac with a pinch of salt and return it to a saucepan.

Add the cream and a pat of butter and mix for a couple of minutes. Remove from heat and add salt if needed.

Combine the flour with 7 Tbsp. water to make a batter.

Pour sunflower seed oil into a frying pan, enough to cover the entire bottom

of the pan. Dip the sage leaves in the batter and fry them in sunflower seed oil for 20-30 seconds or until crisp, then drain them on paper towels.

Toast the pumpkin seeds in a pan with 1 Tbsp. olive oil for 2 minutes.

FOR THE STEAMED EGG

Break one or more eggs into a glass bowl lightly greased with a little olive oil.

Place it in a steamer, cover and cook for 3-4 minutes.

Turn the bowl over onto a plate and gently remove the yolks.

To serve spread the celeriac purée on the plates, top with the steamed yolks, and sprinkle with pepper and the toasted pumpkin seeds, garnishing with edible flowers as desired.





desserts dolci

Tangerine and Olive Oil Cake

Skill Level Intermediate
Time 1 hour and 30 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 8

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup caster sugar
1½ cups powdered sugar
4 oz. yogurt
¼ cup delicate extra-virgin olive oil
3¼ Tbsp. cornstarch
2½ tsp. baking powder
4 tangerines
3 large eggs
unsalted butter
salt

FOR THE CAKE

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Grate the 4 tangerine peels and mix it with the yogurt.

In a large bowl, combine and mix the flour, corn starch and baking powder. In a separate bowl, whip the eggs and sugar until the mixture is clear and fluffy. Gently incorporate the oil first, then the yogurt, then the flour mixture.

Butter a 9"-round baking dish, dust the bottom and the edges with a little bit of flour and add the batter.

Place in the oven and bake for 40-45 minutes.

FOR THE GLAZE

Dissolve the powdered sugar in 2 Tbsp. tangerine juice and whisk for 2-3 minutes.

Remove the cake from the mold, let cool, then even out the base by trimming with a knife.

Place the tangerine glaze on top and garnish with peeled tangerine slices, kumquats and mint leaves.

Pecan Frangipane Cake with Caramelized Apples

Skill Level Intermediate
Time 1 hour and 30 minutes + 2 hours for cooling

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 8

FOR THE CRUST

1 cup all-purpose flour
4 Tbsp. unsalted butter
3 Tbsp. caster sugar

1 Tbsp. almond flour
1 large egg yolk

FOR THE FRANGIPANE
3 oz. pecans
5 Tbsp. unsalted butter, softened
3 Tbsp. brown sugar
1 Tbsp. maple syrup
1 large egg
salt

FOR THE TOPPING
1 cup caster sugar
3 small organic red apples
2 lemons
1 green apple
maple syrup
pecans

MAKE THE CRUST

Combine the two types of flour with the butter and sugar to obtain a grainy mixture, then mix in the egg yolk. Shape the dough into a ball, cover and refrigerate for 2 hours.

Preheat the oven to 340°F.

Roll the dough out into a ⅛"-thick sheet and then use it to cover the bottom and edges of a 7"-round springform pan, removing any excess dough at the top. Pierce the dough with a fork, line with parchment paper and cover with pie

weights or dried beans. Bake the crust for 20 minutes. Remove the parchment paper and weights, and cook for another 5 minutes.

MAKE THE FRANGIPANE

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a food processor, pulverize the pecans and brown sugar into a flour. Add the butter, maple syrup, egg and a pinch of salt. Mix and blend. Pour into the crust and bake for 12-15 minutes.

FOR THE TOPPING

Peel and core the green apple, then cut it into small pieces. Cook it in a saucepan with the juice of 1 lemon for 10 minutes, then add 1 Tbsp. maple syrup and continue cooking for another 2 minutes. Let cool, then place on top of the tart.

Brush the edge of the tart with maple syrup and stick on a handful of chopped pecans.

Make a syrup: combine the sugar with 1 cup water and the juice of 1 lemon and bring to a boil over medium heat, then switch off. Thinly slice the red apples. Leave the peel on, but remove the core and seeds.

Dip the slices in the caramel syrup, let the excess drip off, and arrange them in a spiral on top of the tart.



desserts

Chocolate Pie with Rice Pudding

Skill Level Intermediate
Time 1 hour and 30 minutes
+ 2 hours for cooling

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 6

FOR THE CRUST

1 cup all-purpose flour
5 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cold
¼ cup caster sugar
1 Tbsp. almond flour
2 tsp. cocoa powder
1 large egg – salt

FOR THE RICE CREAM

1½ cup whole milk, cold
5 oz. Greek yogurt
3 oz. originario rice (round rice)

3 Tbsp. sugar
4 tsp. acacia honey
1 vanilla pod, halved
lengthwise – salt

MAKE THE CRUST

Cut the butter in ½" cubes and combine with the flours, sugar, cocoa powder and a pinch of salt. Mix until coarse, then add ½ of the beaten egg.

Shape into a ball, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 350 °F.

Roll out the dough paper thin and coat a 7"-round pan with it. Place a circle of parchment paper on top, add pie weights and bake for 20 minutes.

Take out of the oven, remove the paper and weights and let cool.

MAKE THE RICE CREAM

Bring a pot of lightly salted water to

a boil and add the rice. Bring again to a boil and cook for 5 more minutes to let the starch seep out.

Drain and pour it into a saucepan with the milk, sugar and vanilla pod. When it comes to a boil, turn the heat to low and cook for 45-60 minutes, stirring often so it doesn't stick to the pan.

Cook until all the milk has absorbed and the rice has a creamy, not-too-dry texture. Transfer to a bowl and let cool to room temperature, then mix with the honey and yogurt. If you like, add 1 Tsp. rose water or orange blossom water.

Fill the pie with the rice pudding and put in the fridge for 1 hour.

Decorate as desired just before serving with sliced pan-toasted almonds, shortbread crumbs, cocoa beans (chopped, peeled and pan-toasted) and rose petals.





Grapefruit Chiffon Cake

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hours 30 minutes + 1 hour for cooling

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 8

¾ cup caster sugar
1 cup all-purpose flour
3 Tbsp. rice oil
1½ oz. ground pistachios
3½ Tbsp. brown sugar
1 tsp. baking powder
4 large eggs

Timut pepper
pomelo
pink grapefruit – salt

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

With an electric mixer, beat the egg yolks with ⅓ cup granulated sugar and a pinch of salt. Incorporate the oil, followed by ⅓ cup of grapefruit juice. Then add ½ tsp. ground Timut pepper and ½ tsp. grated grapefruit rind. Finally, sift the flour and baking powder into this mixture. Beat the egg whites with the brown sugar until stiff and gently fold into the mixture. Pour the batter into a sponge cake pan or other 8"-round

cake mold and bake for 50 minutes.

Retrieve the cake from the oven, flip it over without removing the pan, and let cool for 1 hour. When removing the cake from the pan, run a small knife along the inside edge to separate it. Prepare a syrup by boiling the juice of 1 grapefruit with ½ cup granulated sugar for 5 minutes. Brush the edge of the cake with the syrup.

Cover the edge with ground pistachios so that they stick. Peel 3-4 slices of pomelo, pull apart the inner pulp and arrange it on top of the chiffon cake, named for its light and airy chiffon-like texture.

Giorgio Guidotti in his New York home. Photos on the wall by Malick Sidibé, Karl Lagerfeld, Bruce Weber and Craig McDean.

COLOR PALATE

At his New York home, fashion professional Giorgio Guidotti is known for his dinner parties. Here, he discusses the importance of color, his inspiration and keeping his guests' glasses full

by CRISTINA MANFREDI,
photography GIACOMO BRETZEL

In the fashion world, everyone knows Giorgio Guidotti. No, he's not a designer who wows the glitterati with coveted catwalk collections each autumn and spring. Instead the sophisticated and charming Emilia-Romagna native is the head of communications for the Max Mara group, a fashion house established in 1951 that today is one of the most important names in Italian-made goods. Today, eight additional brands currently fall within its realm.

For work, Guidotti often finds himself planning grand-scale events across the globe, immersing the attendees in brand experiences conveyed through food. Ironically enough, he's never cooked a day in his life — in fact, he's very open about the fact that he can't even make a sandwich. And yet anyone who's ever been his guest will recount an experience of an exquisitely cooked meal complemented by impeccably arranged table settings. He particularly loves entertaining in his New York home, and an invitation to his holiday party is one of the most coveted by local movers and shakers. Be it a casual lunch, an intimate dinner or an elegant aperitivo, Guidotti crafts the menu with the head chef, dedicating meticulous care to even the smallest details, starting with the colors. However, not just the hues of the tablecloth, plates and stemware — for each dish he chooses particular shades in a harmonious cornucopia that tempts the eyes as well as the palate. Here, we speak to him about what it means to be the host with the most.

What kind of a host are you? When hosting guests, can you enjoy the moment? Or are you always rushing around?
Well, I hate being alone as much as I love having guests and being someone's guest. Before sending out the invitations, I always think about how →



Lobster salad served in its claw. Above: Guidotti's New York home. The couch is by Richard Mishaan.



Giorgio Guidotti. Below: Vintage dishes from the Richard Ginori Eclettica line, cutlery by Gio Ponti for Sambonet, vintage Venetian glassware and a Vienna Secession tablecloth.



to best group my friends. I like the idea that at my home, my guests can meet new people and make interesting, unexpected acquaintances. It's something I learned from the great masters of the art of entertaining whom I had the good fortune to meet in New York. Just think of Truman Capote's swans [wealthy, powerful women from New York in the '60s and '70s, including C. Z. Guest and her daughter Cornelia, Guidotti's personal friends] or Holly Solomon's unforgettable style. But it was Deeda Blair who taught me the importance of recipes that are captivating even in their color. Food needs to be aesthetically appealing as well as delicious.

Is that why you like to include caviar pizza on the menu?

I stole the idea from an American friend of mine who surprised us all with it at lunch one day. Then at a Max Mara event in Berlin, I put it on the menu along with a vegetarian version topped with black lentils. I find the effect of a total black pizza intriguing, and they both tasted delicious.

You also gave the table a touch of refinement by playing with black elements...

Yes, the combination of black and white is quintessentially chic. Tablecloth and napkins, all with black embroidery on a spotless white background. I found them in New York, but they're a replica of a Viennese set from the '20s. As for the dishes, they're Richard Ginori originals from the '60s, from the Eclettica line. I bought them at an antique shop in Reggio Emilia where I also found the Venetian glassware. The cutlery, on the other hand, is Sambonet, designed by Gio Ponti. I wanted to convey a sense of *italianità* through the table settings.

And the other dishes? Why borscht?

I wanted a course with bold colors, which I concluded with blueberries, a dessert that's simple but always a hit. As for the lobster salad, which I'm crazy about, it was important to me that it be served in the shell as it adds a distinct shape.

What do you pay the most attention to when you have company?

The drinks, which need to be of excellent quality, and, most importantly, in abundant quantities! Be it wine, Champagne or vodka, my friends know that their glasses will never go empty at my place, because I find it nice to see them a little tipsy and cheerful — even though at the end of the night there might be a few minor incidents. Once two ladies left wearing each other's furs without realizing it. The funny thing was, the coats were two completely different styles. ■



Clockwise: A vintage table that once belonged to actress Carole Lombard and a Paul McCobb armchair. Borscht, fresh blueberries and caviar pizza

“Food needs to be aesthetically appealing as well as delicious,”
Giorgio Guidotti says



FRIITELLE

During the Carnival festivities that lead up to Lent, you can find these indulgent sweet fritters on bakery shelves all around Italy

recipes JOËLLE NÉDERLANTS

text LAURA FORTI

photography

RICCARDO LETTIERI

styling BEATRICE PRADA

SFERETTE DI RICOTTA

Sferette di Ricotta, or ricotta balls, are delightful round fritters stuffed with ricotta cheese, a characteristic of many Sicilian sweets.



Chiacchiere means "chit chat" and each city has its own name for these sugar-dusted fried dough sheets — frappe in Rome, bugie in Milan, galani in Venice and sfrappole in Bologna.

CHIACCHIERE

Sferette di Ricotta

Skill Level Easy

Time 1 hour + 1 hour of resting

INGREDIENTS FOR 80 PIECES

- 14 oz. sheep milk ricotta
- 11 oz. honey
- 9 oz. primo sale cheese
- 1¼ cups remilled durum wheat
- 1 cup semolina
- ⅔ cup granulated sugar
- 4 large egg yolks
- 2 oranges
- ¼ tsp. saffron
- baking powder
- aquavit – peanut oil

Let the ricotta and primo sale drain for 30 minutes on a plate covered with a layer of paper towels to absorb the excess liquid. Then vigorously whisk the ricotta with the sugar until it forms a creamy foam.

Crumble the primo sale into fine pieces and grate the zest of one orange. In a mixing bowl, combine the primo sale, egg yolks, saffron, orange zest, 1 Tbsp. aquavit, semolina and ½ tsp. baking powder. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes. In the meantime, grate

the zest of ½ the other orange and heat it with the honey, but don't bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and let steep until the recipe calls for it.

Shape the ricotta mixture into 1½" spheres and place them on a tray.

Pour enough peanut oil into a pan to cover the balls when frying and heat.

Dust with a handful of semolina, fry until nicely golden and drain on paper towels. Dip in the orange-scented honey and serve on a plate.

Chiacchiere

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 50 minutes + 2 hours of resting

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- ⅔ cup whole milk
- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 2 Tbsp. white wine
- 2 Tbsp. grappa
- 2 large egg yolks
- powdered sugar
- lemons
- peanut oil

Knead the flour with the egg yolks, grappa, wine, ¼ cup powdered sugar, butter and milk. When the dough is still a bit rough, flavor with the grated zest of 1 lemon and continue to knead until smooth and evenly combined. Cover and chill for 2 hours.

Pour enough peanut oil into a pan to cover when frying.

Roll out the dough into paper-thin sheets, cut into small rectangles, then cut a slit into the top of each and fry for 1 minute. Drain the chiacchiere on paper towels. When dry, dust with powdered sugar and serve immediately.

Fritellone del Luna Park

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour

+ 1 hour and 20 minutes for rising

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 8

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 cup bread flour
- 7 Tbsp. unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 4 tsp. fresh brewer's yeast
- 1 vanilla bean pod
- peanut oil
- lime
- salt

Cut the vanilla bean lengthwise, scrape out the seeds and dissolve them in the milk. Add the pod and the grated zest of 1 lime and let the milk infuse for 10 minutes before removing the pod.

In a bowl, mix the flours then add the sugar and crumbled yeast. Pour in the flavored milk and start to knead, gradually adding the butter in pieces and 1½ tsp. salt. Knead the dough until it pulls away from the sides of the bowl and your hands, becoming more elastic and less sticky.

Shape the dough into a ball, place it in a bowl, cover with a damp cloth and let rise for 1 hour. Finally, divide the dough into pieces, knead them briefly and shape into small balls. Cover with a damp cloth and let them rest for 20 minutes. Flatten the balls and stretch them out like small pizzas. Fry in plenty of peanut oil for 4-5 minutes, turning often. Drain on paper towels, then dunk and cover in granulated sugar while still hot. Eat immediately.



**FRIPELLONE DEL
LUNA PARK**

Fritellone del Luna Park, or Amusement Park Fritters, are also popular at Carnival, a cousin of those pillowy fried fun fair treats you likely know and love.



Ciambelline are the Italian take on donuts. Though available year-round, many bakeries pull out all the stops and offer an array of options come Carnival.

Ciambelline Glassate

Skill Level Advanced

Time 1 hour and 30 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 12

FOR THE CIAMBELLINE

- 1 cup flour
- 3 oz. unsalted butter
- 2 oz. milk
- 2 oz. large egg whites
- 2 tsp. granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 vanilla bean pod
- bergamot
- peanut oil
- salt

FOR THE GLAZE

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 3 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. bergamot juice
- 2 tsp. milk

Melt the butter in a saucepan with the milk, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water, the sugar and a pinch of salt. Bring to a boil, then remove the pan from the heat and add all the flour at once. Return the pan to the stove and cook, stirring vigorously until the mixture pulls away from the sides of the pan.

Remove from the heat and let it cool for at least 10 minutes.

Transfer to a stand mixer, add the seeds of $\frac{1}{2}$ vanilla bean pod, then mix the eggs in well one at a time to make a soft dough.

Beat the egg whites into stiff peaks and add to the dough along with the grated zest of half a bergamot. Let rest for 10 minutes.

Transfer the dough to a pastry bag fitted with an open star tip around $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter. Cut out 12 squares of parchment paper, 5" each, and draw a ring of dough on each one. **Fry** in plenty of hot oil, dropping them in face down, still attached to the parchment paper square. Cook them until you can remove the paper with tongs, then flip the ciambelline to fry them evenly until golden all over (2-3 minutes). Remove and place them on paper towels to dry.

FOR THE GLAZE

Mix the powdered sugar with the honey, bergamot or lemon juice and milk to create the glaze. Drizzle it over the donuts and serve.

Bignole alla crema are cream-filled beignets that are also known as castagnole or, in Milan, tortelli. They're also offered with various fillings including chocolate, Nutella, jam, zabione, chantilly and more.

**BIGNOLE ALLA
CREMA**



FUSI DI POLENTA

We created these treats especially for the occasion, looking to Northern Italy's traditions for inspiration. They're also a nifty way to make use of any leftover polenta.

Bignole alla Crema

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour and 10 minutes
+ 1 hour of resting

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 50 PIECES

FOR THE BIGNOLE

2 cups all-purpose flour
½ cup milk
⅔ cup powdered sugar
1 large egg
1 large egg yolk
dried brewer's yeast
peanut oil – salt

FOR THE CREAM

1 cup milk
4 Tbsp. granulated sugar
2 Tbsp. corn starch
2 large egg yolks
1 vanilla bean pod

FOR THE BIGNOLE

Mix 1 tsp. baking powder with the flour, then add the milk, egg and 1 egg yolk and start to blend. Add the powdered sugar and a pinch of salt. Combine until you have a smooth, creamy mixture.

Cover with a damp cloth and let rest for 1 hour in a warm place. Fry small spoonfuls of the mixture in plenty of hot oil, continuously stirring the small pastry puffs that form until they become airy. Drain on paper towels and let cool.

FOR THE CREAM

Heat the milk with a vanilla bean pod opened lengthwise. Beat the egg yolks with the sugar and the cornstarch. When the milk reaches a boil, pour it through a strainer into the egg yolks and stir. Put the mixture back on the stove and cook, stirring for 3-4 minutes until it thickens. Let the cream cool, then transfer it to a pastry bag with a small tip. Gently insert the piping tip to make a hole in the pastry and fill with the cream.

Fusi di Polenta

Skill Level Easy

Time 1 hour and 20 minutes
+ 1 hour and 10 minutes of resting

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 60 PIECES

7 oz. yellow cornmeal

5 oz. raisins

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup granulated sugar
3 large eggs
1 apple – lemon
baking powder
chestnut honey
liqueur such as
Grand Marnier
peanut oil – salt

Prepare the polenta: bring 1 quart of water to a boil, add salt, then add the cornmeal and cook, stirring, for 35 minutes. Remove from heat and allow the polenta to cool completely. Soak the raisins in water for 15 minutes. Weigh exactly 28 oz. of the polenta, purée it and then add the sugar, eggs, peeled and chopped apples, grated zest of ½ lemon, raisins, 2 Tbsp. Grand Marnier, 2 tsp. baking powder and the flour.

Stir the ingredients together and let the mixture rest for 30 minutes. Press it between two spoons to form spindle-shaped quenelles and drop into plenty of hot oil to fry. Cook for about 3 minutes, then drain on paper towels. Serve with a drizzle of chestnut honey.

Heritage

Milena Cavaggioni at
home in her Padua
kitchen.

J **A KITCHEN FULL OF** Y

Pearà, a traditional Veronese gravy, adds a soft, flavorful touch to bollito

by LAURA FORTI, photography JACOPO SALVI

We traveled to the Veneto region to listen to the culinary memories of Milena Cavaggioni, a beloved grandmother of 12 and great-grandmother of two.

Milena, now 88, has lived in Padua since her wedding, though she was raised in Verona, where she inherited her mother and grandmother's passion for the city's culinary traditions. For our visit, she prepared pearà, a traditional recipe from Verona. This "poor man's gravy" was originally made from broth and breadcrumbs only. After cooking for a few hours, the two ingredients form a thick sauce that adds a softer touch to bollito (a traditional Northern Italian preparation for meat) — particularly meats that dry out when boiled. Over time, pearà's humble ingredients were joined by pepper (from which it takes its name), beef marrow and, in some recipes, grated grana, which transforms it into an exquisite sauce. "The secret is still the broth, which you need to cook with a bit of bone," explains Milena, who can whip one together with her eyes closed. "If you use a good, hearty broth you don't even need the marrow. I don't use it, myself." As for the cake? It's a family recipe, one that's simple but scrumptious if you choose the right apples. "My mother would make a special trip to Zevio, where the area's best orchards were, to buy Dezi. They were hard to find back then, and grown by only a few farmers. So fragrant and sweet — I've never forgotten them." This type of apple, also known as Decio, Deso and Dezo, is typical of the Veneto, where it has been known since Roman times. ■



Beef Bollito with Pearà

Place the beef in a pot full of cold water with its bones; celery and carrots that have been trimmed and halved; and a peeled onion. Bring to a boil and cook for around 2 hours. Once the meat is done, pour 3 ladlefuls of its broth into a saucepan, bring to a boil, add 5 Tbsp. breadcrumbs, stir until creamy and simmer for around 20 minutes. For the finishing touch, add 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, salt to taste, 1½ tsp. ground pepper and, if desired, grated grana. Let the sauce cook for another 30 minutes over a low flame and serve with the meat.

Ingredients for 6-8

2 lb. boneless beef, 2 carrots, 1 celery stalk, 1 onion, 1 beef bone, breadcrumbs, grana, extra-virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

Torta Petronilla

Crack the eggs into the sugar and whisk together until slightly frothy. Gradually add the flour, then the milk. Flavor with the grated lemon zest. Pour the batter into a greased and floured cake pan. Peel the apples, slice them into thin pieces and spread on top of the batter. Sprinkle with a little sugar and bake at 350°F for around 30 minutes.

Ingredients

1½ cup all-purpose flour, ¾ cup sugar, 3 medium apples, 2 large eggs, 1 lemon, ½ cup milk, unsalted butter

FOOD FOR THE SOUL

No phone, no TV, no mini-bar, no Wi-Fi. These are added comforts at a luxury hermitage in Umbria where you can refresh your spiritual self. Fiammetta Fadda, on assignment, shares her experience

photography MATTEO CARASSALE

The Location

Eremito, the Hotelito del Alma, meaning “little hotel of the soul,” graces the woods in the heart of a 37,400-acre natural reserve in Umbria, the land where St. Francis of Assisi communed with Brother Wolf and Sister Water. The Chiani River flows below, and deer and wild boar inhabit the forest. Parrano, the closest village, is six miles away. With no planes flying overhead anywhere nearby, the sky is an enchanting expanse of stars and clouds.

The Promise

A wondrous restoration of the self by switching off the daily background noise that distracts us both from ourselves and others. Monks are masters of this, and 500 monasteries in Italy welcome those who wish to commune with God. Eremito, a member of the Design Hotels collection, is a secular hermitage, a place for spiritual detox. In 2016, the property garnered coveted awards and distinctions from Tatler, Condé Nast Traveller, GeoSaison and SpaFinder.



An exquisite breakfast: all the ingredients come from local artisans or organic farms; the ceramics are a specialty of the nearby village of Ficulle. Left, Hotelito del Alma from the nearby hillside — fourteen rooms surrounded by woods.



Fast facts: Umbria?

Where: The region of Umbria is landlocked in Central Italy between Lazio, Tuscany and Le Marche.

Eat: Believe it or not, the terrain of Umbria is rich with truffles — savor them with pasta. Also, lentils from Castelluccio are arguably the best in Italy. Tiny and delicate, though rich in flavor, they cook quickly and don't require soaking. Try them in a variety of dishes, such as a hearty soup.

Speak Umbro: A local proverb *Sono finiti i prosciutti anche a Sorbo*, translates to "even Sorbo has run out of prosciutto." This is a way of saying that everything eventually comes to an end, even the funds of the wealthy, like those of Sorbo, a rich prosciutto maker who eventually went out of business.

Sip: Montefalco Sagrantino

DOCG is a structured, tannic red wine that can last for several years in the bottle. Sangiovese also flourishes here and is the dominant varietal in the Torgiano Rosso Riserva DOCG.

Buy: Pick up some strangozzi pasta, long rectangular noodles typical of Umbria that pair well with ragù, tomato sauce and, of course, truffles. While you might not (legally) be able to carry the jewels of the forest back with you, you can purchase some foodstuffs with them, like infused oil, sauces and spreads, to take home.



More about Umbria at www.lacucinaitaliana.com

Friday

24 NOVEMBER, 8:00 A.M. – OUR DEPARTURE

I meet with Matteo Carassale, the photographer. Our 4x4 is powerful but so is the traffic heading out of Milan. By 1:00 p.m. we're in Fabro, the little neck of the Umbrian woods where we'll be spending the weekend. Following the Hotelito's instructions, we notify them that we're about to turn onto the road along the river and then stop at the large oak tree from where we're supposed to be guided the rest of the way. After a 20-minute wait, we resort to our hyperactive Milanese demeanors, switching on our GPS to venture toward the destination on our own. The 4x4 does its duty. We make our way uphill — the woods are golden and the silence enveloping. Even more than the location, we're curious about Marcello Murzilli, its founder and owner who ended up here after living various lives. His first life: an unenthusiastic student in Rome, a hippy in 1970s London and a curious traveler in Mexico, where he has the idea of importing El Charro belts to Italy. The second: he sells everything, reconditions a 70-foot cutter and sails around the world for two years. The third: nature inspires him to create a new kind of hotel on Mexico's Pacific coast that's powered by solar energy, illuminated by candles and furnished with the colors of Frida Kahlo — a place to be found only in children's adventure stories. In front, beaches as far as the eye can see while the jungle stretches behind. Once the celebrities catch wind of Hotelito Desconocido, they flock to it in droves — it's now considered an eco-resort, a term that didn't exist in 2000. Murzilli decides to sell it and ventures off to find a silent retreat where he can let nature lighten his load, cast off the old and superfluous, and treat himself to the ultimate luxury: starting afresh. He began his search ten years ago.

OUR ARRIVAL

Eremito overlooks the valley, carved out of living stone with a monastery door standing in the middle of its surrounding wall. We pull the cord and Marcello Murzilli emerges — tall, lean, bearded and smiling, as befits a modern-day hermit. Inside are a refectory and a common area with a fireplace, tatamis and cushions. All 20 *celluzze*, 30 square-feet each, have a wrought iron bed made up in bedding crafted from white hand-made hemp yarn, a desk carved from stone adjacent to the window, a carafe of water, a sink with a mortar as a basin and a rain shower head. My *celluzza* is named Pachomius. A saint? "No, a hermit, like all the rooms' namesakes. They're devoted to solitary meditation that can lead to spiritual elevation," explains the owner. Trusting his intuition — "It's never let me down," he says — he spent two years visiting monasteries and meeting with visionaries. One day, he found himself standing before what was once ruins amid a sea of green and said to himself, "This is it." Only two other guests are here right now. One of them is a beautiful young woman of Mexican origin, as spiritual as a madonna.

7:30 P.M. – WE SUP IN SILENCE

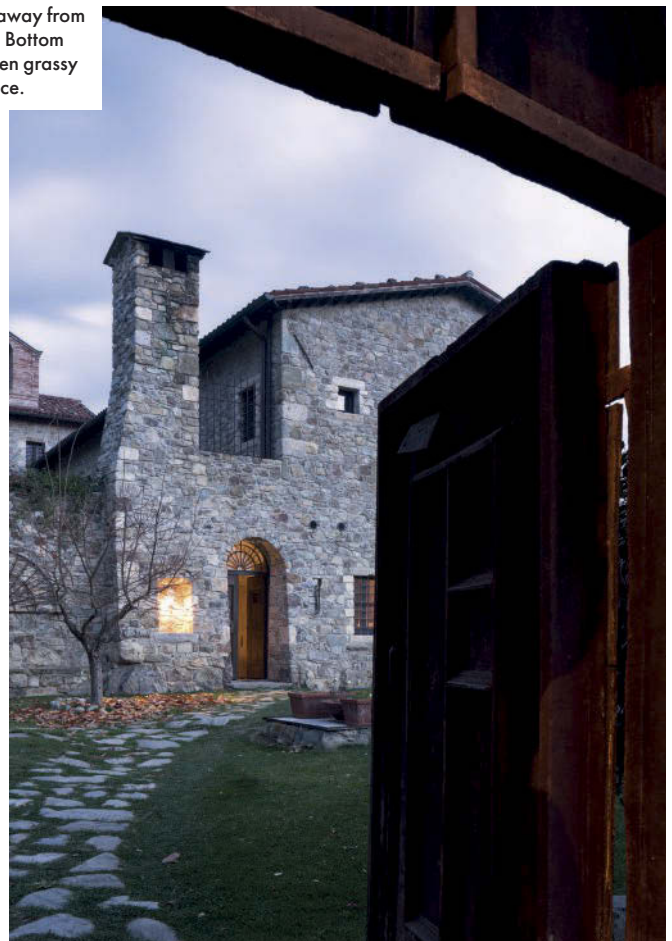
A bell announces dinner. Three young women have arrived for a seminar with the guru of solo travel, an expert in everything there is to know before, during and after a journey on one's own — starting with the reason for taking it. Murzilli fully understands this feeling, having lived in a tent with his dog Peppo for two years while he was building the Hotelito alongside a master stone sculptor and a handful of craftsmen. "I didn't know what I'd be capable of doing, but the pursuit intrigued me." Which was wise because it seems there →



Opposite: each celluzza has a desk carved from stone with a view of the landscape. Bottom left: the herbs are just steps away from the kitchen. Bottom right: the green grassy entrance.

Leek Risotto

Enzo, the cook, starts work at 6:00 a.m. every day, arriving from nearby Parrano to make breakfast and get a head start on lunch and dinner. There's a lot to do, because four courses are served at both the afternoon and evening meals. What's more, it's vegetarian cooking, so it takes imagination and skill to add variety to the flavors. This recipe is one of his favorites. "I've already made a broth from our garden vegetables. I mince the inner layers of a leek, setting a couple of the green ones aside. I sauté the minced leek in a bit of butter and add the rice, calculating three handfuls per person. Carnaroli provides just the right tenderness. I toast the rice, stirring it with a wooden spoon, then douse it with a good quality dry white wine. Once it evaporates I add ladlefuls of broth, without stirring it too often, to avoid breaking up the grains of rice. Then I flavor it with saffron and salt to taste. Removing it from the heat, I add a handful of grated grana. I use ring molds to shape the rice, then decorate it with a bit of julienned leek and a sprinkle of grana."





Clockwise, Enzo, the cook, makes the day's bread. His friendship with Marcello Murzilli dates back to their school years; two plump monks watch over and admire the table set for lunch; cornflake cookies.



are 500 million people in the world who want to travel alone. A fireplace and candles illuminate the refectory, where we sit down to eat at long wooden tables topped with earthenware dishes made by artisans from nearby Ficulle. Calming Gregorian chants disrupt our order of silence. The food arrives: chickpea purée, pumpkin patties and pears cooked in red wine, the same locally made, slightly sweet wine we're drinking. Is there any white? No, because they make a concerted effort not to seem like a hotel. Two young Norwegians from WWOOF, a movement that arranges for young people to work on organic farms in exchange for accommodation, distribute our food. Wooden beams, carved stone, the table, the clink of cutlery, stolen glances — mystical, and even somehow erotic. We begin to sense the sacredness of the food, realizing a relaxing getaway doesn't necessarily have to be on a beach in the Caribbean.

Saturday

7:30 A.M. – WE MEDITATE

Those who wish to may make their way up to the turret for 15 minutes of guided spiritual readings: a page from the Old and New Testaments, the Zohar and words of the saints. Then an hour of gentle yoga to continue the meditation in motion. At 9:00 a.m., the bell chimes to announce breakfast. Laid out on the long, wooden monk's table are homemade cakes, cookies, almond biscotti, sliced tomatoes seasoned with oregano, oranges with pomegranate seeds, locally made ricotta, goat cheese, walnuts, quince marmalade, honey, dried fruit and scrumptious homemade bread. We're allowed to chat while we eat.



It's sunny but we find ourselves wishing for fog and cold during our walk up to the top of the hill and down to the river. Our total silence is interspersed by two distracting sounds: on the outside, the ground crunching beneath our feet and on the inside, the thoughts whirling around in our heads.

12:30 P.M. – THE VEGETABLE GARDEN IS SERVED

The Hotelito is fully booked. The latest arrivals are regulars from Milan, a few visitors curious about “humble luxury,” a young graduate in cultural anthropology who works for UNESCO, plus a well-dressed, spiritual young man from Brussels who walks the Camino de Santiago ten days each year — tomorrow he's traveling to Orvieto on foot. We're also allowed to chat at noon. Groups of euphoric guests gather for lunch. The cook has prepared a fennel and orange salad, leek risotto, baked cheese and beetroot pie and semifreddo al mascarpone — all homemade and served in generous portions, like a proper Italian Sunday supper. It's a vegetarian lunch that is every bit a delight — in fact, it brings to mind *The Duke's Table: The Complete Book of Vegetarian Italian Cooking* with its 1,030 “formulas” — that is, recipes — by Enrico Alliata, Duke of Salaparuta, published in 2013.

Enzo, the hotel cook, tends the vegetable garden and the greenhouse, chops wood for the fireplace and environmentally friendly heating. But he's also skilled with his pastries and makes delicious bread, soups and cheeses, drawing inspiration from conventual cookbooks — including *La cucina dei Papi*, an encyclopedia of healthy eating with secret recipes from abbeys and monasteries fit for a Pope — and compiling his own recipe notebook, in which you can read about specialties like Martina's crostata, his ciambellone, plum marmalade and wild fennel liqueur.

2:00 P.M. – SIESTA IN THE CELLUZZA

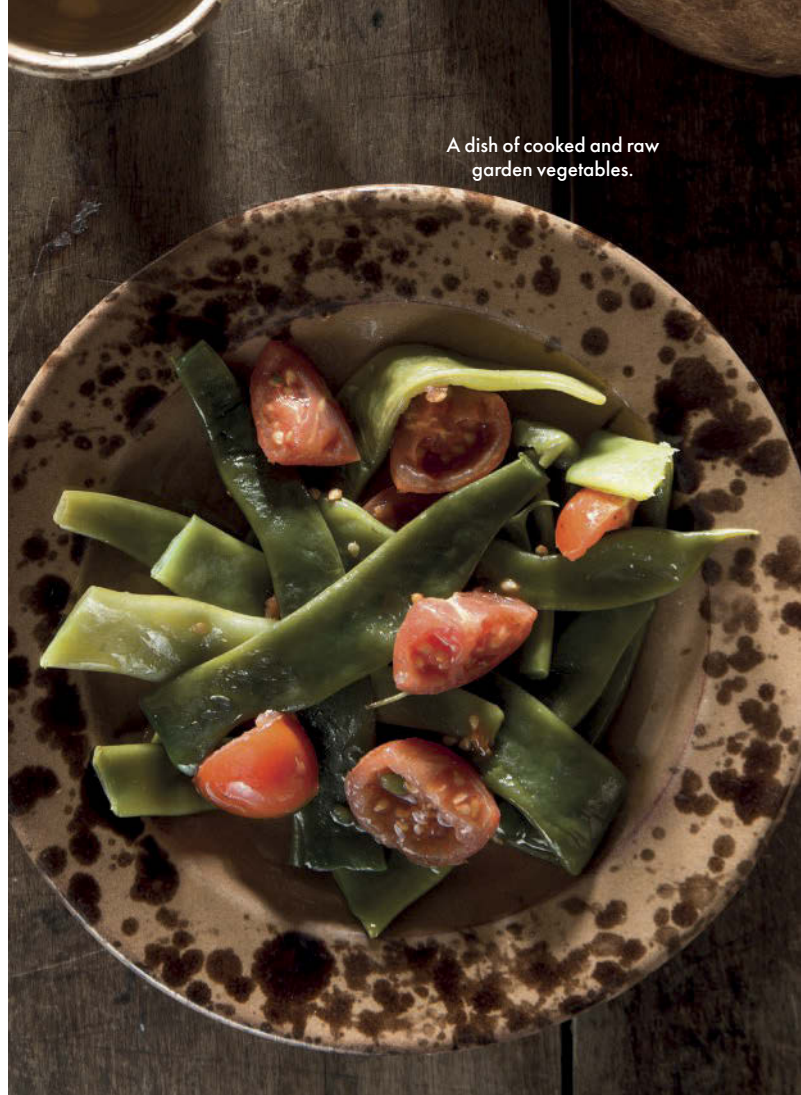
The rule: 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. is siesta, a time to rest, contemplate the silence or read in your *celluzza*. Those who don't wish to do so must respect the stillness of the others. Or, if they can't — since silence is often accompanied by a certain degree of restlessness — they can head down to the river or visit Parrano, four miles on foot, seven by car, a magnificent 14th-century hamlet with a castle that once belonged to the Papal State, or Ficulle, a town dating back to the 11th century that's famous for its pottery.

The time to socialize is 5:00 p.m. Guests, bundled in robes with cowl-like hoods, are soothed by Gregorian chants as they walk in a procession down the narrow hallway toward the warmth of the rock-hewn pool or steam bath, perhaps followed by an ice-cold shower.

7:30 P.M. – CHICORY AND MELEMITO

The menu: pan-fried cabbage, chickpea and chestnut soup, sautéed chard and potatoes and stewed apples. Cooking of impeccable simplicity. Not dishes but stories, tales, silence; recipes that come to us from a parallel world, the map to which has long been forgotten. Soups with herbs, chickpeas and leeks, pizza with potatoes and fried broccoli, risotto with chicory from the garden and pecorino and pancotto, a bread soup with humble origins. We discover the ancient, subtle pleasure of not having to deal with the overwhelming selection typical of an urban greengrocer. Winter is seeking perfect harmony among ingredients like pumpkin, legumes, cabbage and dried beans, changing their flavor by adding a handful of wild fennel, a couple of bay leaves, sage and rosemary, all straight from the

A dish of cooked and raw garden vegetables.



garden. For a hermitage, the dinner laid out on the table before us is a banquet — in times past, the friar cook might have served a bowl of vegetable broth, little more than water and a few mouthfuls of stale bread. We head to the common room after dinner, where there is little light, but dozens of candles, an invitation to share our impressions and emotions rather than isolating ourselves in reading — though this hotel is popular among solo travelers. Or lovebirds, I think, since all the *celluzze* have only wide-single beds and there are more couples than single guests. We sip our cups of melemito, an infusion of herbs and honey, the hermitage's trademark beverage. Going out onto the terrace suspended over the vast darkness of the valley now almost feels like leaving the earth behind and venturing into an aquatic element in which impressions come to you slower yet more fully.

Sunday

WE SAY GOODBYE

A bold sky, a mix of clouds, rain and sunshine. While the others meditate and practice yoga, we go for a stroll before leaving. But this is enough to make me realize that my stiff, tense shoulders have relaxed and my breathing is freer and deeper now. Matteo is photographing the honey ring cake that's just come out of the oven for the morning meal. Speaking of which, you won't be losing weight here. You'll find new inspiration to do so after you return, though, discovering to your delight that your newfound wellbeing leads from the spirit to the body. In five hours Matteo and I will once again be walking down gray city sidewalks, but we don't let that stop us from making our way over the Umbrian hillsides carpeted with the amber leaves and olive groves immortalized in the poems of Italian literary luminary Gabrielle D'Annunzio. ■

text VALENTINA VERCELLI, photography GUIDO BARBAGELATA, styling BETTINA CASANOVA

BOTTLES AND BOUQUETS

Mixed berries, yeasty bread, Mediterranean herbs...
Much of a wine's charm lies in its aromas.
Choose the bouquet that beckons you



IT'S PARTY TIME!

The bottle:

Franciacorta Brut Rosé '61 Berlucchi.

The bouquet: Intense aromas of berries dance with subtler notes of red apple and bread crust.

The occasion: A versatile wine for everything from an aperitivo to dinner. Choose it for a toast with friends.

The pairings: Serve it for an aperitivo with quiche or with grissini and prosciutto crudo, or for a romantic dinner with shrimp cocktail and baked salmon.

Look like a pro:

It's a mix of pinot noir (60%) and chardonnay (40%) that matures *sur lie* for two years.

Website: berlucchi.it

WITH FRIENDS BY THE FIREPLACE

The bottle:

Brunello di Montalcino Castel Giocondo 2014 Frescobaldi.

The bouquet: Raspberries, blackcurrants and blueberries combine with scents of violets to then move on to spices like cinnamon and pepper. With age, leather also emerges.

The occasion: A fine dinner with friends, perhaps in a mountain chalet.

The pairings: It's a wine with great structure that needs dishes with the same qualities: game, red meats, aged cheeses.

Look like a pro:

After fermentation in stainless steel vats, the sangiovese rests for five years in wood.

Website: frescobaldi.com





A TASTE OF THE SEA

The bottle: Vermentino di Gallura Superiore Montecoro 2018 Sella&Mosca.

The bouquet: Aromatic herbs, berries, flowers, Mediterranean shrubs and marine notes: the scents of this Vermentino are a tribute to Sardinia.

The occasion: From aperitivo to dinner on the beach (even) in winter.

The pairings: A fine companion for seafood. Try it with seafood risotto, shellfish and baked fish. Superb with *spaghetti alla bottarga*.

Look like a pro: After soft pressing, it matures *sur lie* in stainless steel for four months.

Website: sellaemosca.com

AN ODE TO JOY

The bottle: Trento Brut Perlé 2014 Ferrari.

The bouquet: The first aromas are those of grapefruit and fresh pineapple, but then come honey, salted butter and a finish of toast-like notes reminiscent of coffee. Delicate, balanced and elegant, you'll be captivated by its creamy perlage.

The occasion: Anytime you feel like making a toast.

The pairings: A scrumptious dinner or hearty aperitivo complete with *culatello*, *vitello tonnato*, canapés with salmon, caviar and anchovies.

Look like a pro: This mountain Chardonnay matures *sur lie* for five years.

Website:

ferraritrento.com





THE AMERICAN DREAM

The bottle: Valdadige
Pinot Grigio 2018
Santa Margherita.

The bouquet: The clear aromas of Golden Delicious apples, pears and grapefruit are joined by that of jasmine. With the finish comes a touch of ginger and salt.

The occasion: Informal dinners and parties.

The pairings: First courses featuring seafood, freshwater fish, frittatas, fried vegetables and delicate white meats.

Look like a pro: One of the most famous Italian wines in the United States, fermented and aged in stainless steel to preserve its delightful freshness.

Website:

santamargherita.com

AIN'T SHE SWEET?

The bottle: Moscato
d'Asti Primo Bacio 2019
Scagliola.

The bouquet:

Sage and rosemary are joined by wisteria, linden and orange blossoms, ripe white fruits and citrus, including bittersweet lemon.

The occasion:

An elegant finishing touch to Sunday dinner.

The pairings: Pastries, desserts with fruit or custard or cream. Dare to pair it with spicy ethnic food.

Look like a pro: This sweet, sparkling wine is typical of Piedmont. To produce it, the must is fermented to 5% ABV and then bottled.

Website:

scagliolavini.com



by STEFANIA VIRONE VITTOR
photography EVAN SUNG

FROM ROME TO NEW YORK, ROUND TRIP

How **Francesco Panella**, along with his brothers Simone and Lorenzo, exported Roman cuisine from the Italian capital's historic Antica Pesa restaurant to the Big Apple

The beating hearts of two of the world's grandest cities — the animated neighborhoods of Trastevere and Brooklyn — have something (appetizing) in common: the Panella brothers' Roman-style cooking. Heirs of Antica Pesa, the historic Roman restaurant established in 1922, Francesco, Simone and Lorenzo took their culinary passion across the ocean via an authentic menu beloved by international celebrities from

the worlds of cinema, television and sports. In fact, it's almost easier to mention those who haven't (yet) dined there.

It all began four generations ago, when the former Vatican City customs post on Via Garibaldi, an old-school osteria at the time, became a full-fledged restaurant. The sixties saw the beginning of its gradual rise to success headed by Pietro Panella, a sociable restaurateur and forward-thinking art enthusiast. In fact, the nine walls of the restaurant's Sala Invernale (the Winter Dining Room

Spaghetti cacio e pepe at Antica Pesa Brooklyn keeps to the traditional recipe. Just after opening in the U.S., Simone Panella decided to import the pasta-cooking water from Italy, but the idea was soon abandoned as it wasn't sustainable. On the opposite page, Francesco Panella.



complete with a striking fireplace) are adorned with extraordinary paintings created by his artist friends before they became famous. The works continue to enliven the ambiance today.

Pietro's friends also included former Italian President Sandro Pertini, who dined there with the King of Spain, Juan Carlos, in 1982, just weeks after Italy defeated West Germany to win the World Cup. Spain had hosted the tournament, and Petrini and Juan Carlos decided to pass up the traditional institutional

dinner in lieu of an evening at Antica Pesa. Pertini loved lemon sorbet, so Simone decided to personally prepare the president's dessert using freshly picked fruit from the garden. Francesco then volunteered to carry the tray — with his trembling hands — to their table under the watch of his proud, yet slightly amused father Pietro. This teamwork by the 12- and 14-year-olds might have marked the turning point in what would become Antica Pesa's current success.

While Pietro Panella, a lively

78-year-old, remains in control of the historic restaurant, Francesco Panella is now the entrepreneurial symbol of Roman and Italian dining abroad — Italians know him from his television show *Little Big Italy*. Simone, instead, is the creative mind in the kitchen, balancing tradition and innovation. Together they have managed to renew enthusiasm in the Trastevere restaurant, which continues to rise in popularity, winning over lovers of Roman cuisine one dish at a time, including cacio e pepe →



Antica Pesa Brooklyn is located in Williamsburg. Executive chef Emanuele Baldassari (right, on the sofa with Francesco Panella); under Simone Panella's direction from Rome, he prepares the seasonal menu. On the left, *trippa alla romana* with mint emulsion and carta musica, and the inside of the restaurant.



“One night a big, bald man walked in, insisting on having dinner. It was Russell Crowe, who’d come from the studio. After 40 minutes taking off his makeup, we had a meal together”

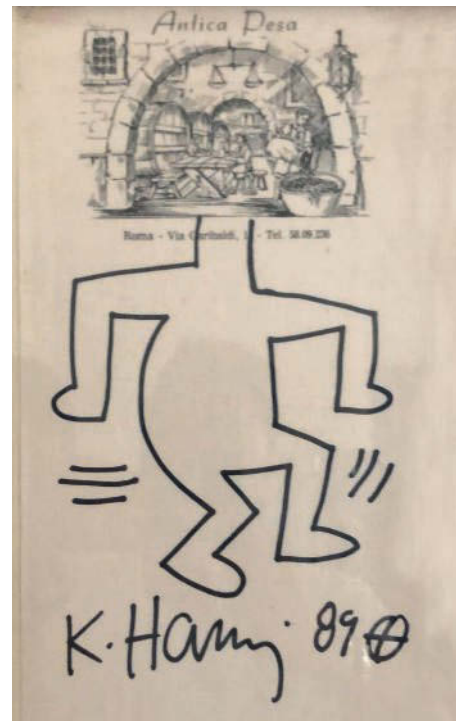
and *saltimbocca alla romana* (prosciutto-wrapped veal that’s been marinated in red wine). Three being a perfect number, their younger brother Lorenzo joined the team to manage Antica Pesa in New York. In October 2012 the Panella family inaugurated their Williamsburg restaurant, and among the attendees was then-mayor of New York Mike Bloomberg and businessman James Murdoch. The decision to open in the United States was unanimous, as the family shared a strong desire to move

beyond their national borders.

Francesco had already worked in the United States. “There comes a time in the life of an entrepreneur when you understand you need to do something different. For me that time came around ten years ago, when I started spending time with people in New York and California who are still great friends of mine. We established a steady exchange of ideas among our three neighborhoods: Silver Lake in Los Angeles, the Mission District in San Francisco and Williamsburg/

Brooklyn in New York. It was a special network predicting what was going to happen in the United States and consequently in Europe. I realized it was time to change, to open this restaurant, which is also a think-tank.”

There are two ways to work in the restaurant business: one is to stay inside the comfort zone and follow trends, and the other is to be strong enough to be exactly who you are and let others follow. Francesco Panella decided to be a driving force by sharing his family’s



Antica Pesa's Roman heart beats strong in the Panella family, whose genuine cuisine has won over celebrities and artists in NYC. From left, clockwise, Simone and Francesco Panella at their American debut; Madonna in 2003 celebrating her daughter Lourdes's birthday; Pietro Panella with his three children in the 1980s; an original 1989 drawing by Keith Haring on Antica Pesa letterhead; Sandro Pertini dining at the Rome restaurant in 1982.



philosophy. Within years Williamsburg had become a fashionable district and Francesco thought his new plans for a restaurant in NYC could soon become reality. In Manhattan's Flower District on Fifth Avenue, Feroce Ristorante & Bar, the Roman entrepreneur's other establishment, has been wildly successful.

Antica Pesa Brooklyn soon became a favorite among Italian food enthusiasts. Hollywood stars have dropped in to taste the *pappa al pomodoro* (bread and tomato soup typical of Tuscany) and *trippa alla romana* (braised tripe typical of Rome). Like in Rome, people were lining up to enjoy an experience with the Panellas, who welcomed everyone with genuine affection.

The two restaurants have many things in common, starting from Simone

Panella's cuisine, created in Rome through trusted executive chef Emanuele Baldassari. Considered a member of the family, Baldassari began working with the Panellas years ago, and having spent time abroad he was the perfect choice for the U.S. outpost. There's a direct connection between Simone and Emanuele, between Rome and New York. "We worked together side by side for years. He knows exactly what I want, gets my style and perfectly understands the dishes at Antica Pesa Rome. It's easier to work together when you're on the same wavelength," Simone explains. Baldassari is his alter ego in the Williamsburg kitchen, and they Facetime every week to share updates, discuss new proposals and study new dishes. The menu follows in the Rome restaurant's footsteps and

changes each season. While the fruit and vegetable supplies are entrusted to small, local organic farms, the key ingredients are perfectly Italian, such as the pasta Mancini or Pecorino Romano Fulvi.

Great attention is placed on the quality of all the ingredients, which must be faithful to their Italian origins, and it's respect for cuisine and a love of Italy that drives them even further. Francesco Panella admits he finds strength in the distance and, almost like a nostalgic lover, confesses that "Italy is like the girlfriend who broke your heart. You know you'll always love her, but you'll never be together again."

Maybe that's why he continues to seek her out all around the world, and to ardently defend and support her, even overseas. ■

WHITE WINE
COOKIES

Nosh-Up

(BEFORE 3:00 P.M.)

Yes, we start our day with a cappuccino, but that doesn't mean we don't indulge in the occasional grander take on the most important meal of the day



8:00 a.m. BREAKFAST

When time permits,
we pair our morning
cappuccino with a sweet
breakfast pastry

TEXT SARA PORRO, PHOTO G. BRETZEL

Niko Romito is a superstar. The chef's Reale restaurant in Abruzzo, where he elevates local culinary traditions to an art form, is one of Italy's ten three-star Michelin shrines. His Spazio restaurants in Abruzzo, Rome and Milan — entrusted to the care of chef Gaia Giordano — have set a new benchmark for mid-range restaurant concepts. Spazio Pane e Caffè in Rome, which opened in 2018, is an exquisite place to fuel up in the morning. "Breakfast is a special moment," explains Giordano, "which brings me back to the work my father Antonio did for 40 years in his pastry shop in Rivisondoli." In addition to a stellar cappuccino and flawlessly baked goods, Spazio Pane e Caffè offers seasonal fruit juices and savory breakfast dishes, such as toast, eggs and cheese. Recreate one of Romito's treats at home with the following recipe.

Niko Romito's White Wine Cookies

Skill Level Easy **Time** 25 minutes **Vegetarian**

INGREDIENTS – $\frac{1}{4}$ cup, all-purpose flour,
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dry white wine, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup seed oil, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar,
1 tsp. baking powder, brown sugar

Preheat the oven to 320°F. Combine white wine, oil and sugar, then add the flour and baking powder to the mixture until it forms a dough. Roll out the dough until $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick, then cut into $1\frac{1}{2}$ " discs. Dip each cookie in brown sugar then place on a baking tray lined with parchment paper and bake for 7 to 8 minutes.



Niko Romito and
Gaia Giordano
at Spazio Pane
e Caffè in Rome.

The breakfast spread
at L'Aubergine
restaurant
at l'Auberge de
La Maison hotel
in Courmayeur.

10:00 a.m. LATE BREAKFAST

This elaborate spread is perfect for those
leisurely mornings when you can linger
at the table and sample myriad delights





The Aosta Valley, Italy's smallest region, sits in the Northwest, bordering France and Switzerland — it's just as delightful for a summer mountain getaway as it is for a winter one. This cozy spread from the l'Auberge de La Maison hotel in Courmayeur will let you hit the ground running once you've had your fill. The Garin family oversees this 19th-century chalet while chef Jean Marc Neuville helms L'Aubergine, the on-site restaurant with a view of Mont Blanc. Apple tart, polenta with cheese, crispy potato balls and more keep guests satiated until lunch. Evoke these very vibes at home with this recipe for Neuville's pillowy apple doughnuts.

Jean Marc Neuville's Apple Doughnuts

Skill Level Intermediate **Time** 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS — 1 liter milk, 4¾ cups all-purpose flour, ¾ Tbsp. rice flour, 4 apples, peanut oil, salt

Combine the milk, rice flour and 4 cups flour in a bowl until it forms a smooth paste. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Peel the apples and remove the cores, then turn sideways and cut into thin slices, keeping the whole in the center (like a doughnut). Dip the apple slices into the remaining flour and then into the batter.

Fry the apple slices in hot oil, a few at a time, for 3-4 minutes, or until golden. Drain the doughnuts and sprinkle with salt.

Serving tip: Plate the doughnuts with a salumi assortment.



COTOLETTA SBAGLIATA



1:00 p.m. BRUNCH
Italy loves this American
ritual that couples the best
of both worlds, offering
a dish for every taste





PHOTO R. LETTIERI

If chef Matteo Stefani is famous for one thing, it's his *cotoletta sbagliata* ("mistaken cutlet") at Milan's Anche restaurant. Come Sunday, his brunch prix fixe menu mixes the sweet and the savory, and he'd be remiss in not offering his crispy, tender, fragrant cult cutlet. Stefani knew it was impossible to make the emblematic *cotoletta alla milanese* with, as tradition dictates, veal at his target price point, so he created a *sbagliata*, or "mistaken" version with pork — unsurprisingly, other chefs have followed suit. To make the recipe his own, he added a few more deliberate "errors." Here's how you can prepare Stefani's beloved mistake at home.

Matteo Stefani's Cotoletta Sbagliata

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

2½ oz. pork loin, 2 eggs, beaten, salt, clarified butter (enough to fry the entire cutlet), oranges, breadcrumbs, sliced almonds

Flatten and widen the pork loin (first "mistake") with a meat tenderizer until it's between 9"-10" in diameter, the shape of an "elephant ear."

Season the beaten eggs with a pinch of salt and juice from ½ orange (second "mistake").

Mix the breadcrumbs with the sliced almonds (third "mistake"). Dip the cutlet in the beaten eggs two times, then in the breadcrumbs and almonds so that it's coated in the mixture.

Fry the cutlet in the clarified butter for a few minutes on each side until it's cooked through, let dry and while still hot, spray it with a spritz of orange juice.

THE LUNELLI FACTOR

The family behind Ferrari, one of Italy's most popular sparkling wine producers, on heritage, rules and when to mix business with pleasure

by MADDALENA FOSSATI, photography GIACOMO BRETZEL

On a cold January morning, we arrive at Villa Margon to photograph the Lunelli family. Well, most of them, because we're only the middle generation is present. The children, eleven in total, ranging from 3 to 15 years old, are at school. The aunts and uncles — four of the five remaining children of Bruno Lunelli, who in 1952 acquired the wineries founded by Giulio Ferrari in 1902 — are keeping warm inside their home. You can't see the villa and its 15th-century frescoes from the road, which is how the property, where the family holds all its celebrations, managed to remain untouched during World War II. For three generations the Lunelli family has been producing Ferrari, arguably the world's most popular Trento DOC wine. Available in over 50 countries, Ferrari is poured at the Emmy Awards, and Barack Obama is also a fan. It's the only Italian sparkler to have been awarded 98 points in the Wine Advocate "bible" (Giulio Ferrari Rosé 2006), a recognition usually reserved for Champagne. "That was one of the greatest milestones of my career, as was seeing our reserve sparkling wine dedicated to Casa Italia gifted to Sergio Mattarella [Italy's then president] during Expo 2015," says Matteo Lunelli, president of Cantine Ferrari since 2011. But first, let's properly introduce the family. There's, of course, Matteo with his wife Valentina. Then there's Marcello, who manages production, and his wife Roberta. Alessandro is married to Silvia, and is

the president of the family's real estate holding company as well as the CEO of Tenute Lunelli. This winery, also owned and operated by the family, produces Auritea from Tuscany, a pure Cabernet Franc, and Carapace from Umbria, the award-winning Montefalco Sagrantino. Camilla, married to Stefano Rossi, is the head of communications of the entire company. Then there's Alessandra, whose mother is Carla (Bruno's only daughter) married to Jean Louis a Beccara, and Chiara, Matteo's sister, married to Alberto Calvi di Coenzo. "Today there are only 12 of us, but during the holidays, there are more than 20. If our parents join, we're usually more than 40," says Camilla. After a great deal of chitchat, I come to learn that the whole family gathers several times a year for special occasions other than Christmas to enjoy dinner together. "We used to go to grandma Elda's house (Bruno Lunelli's wife) in the center of Trento," Alessandro recalls. "Today we meet at the Locanda [Locanda Margon, the Michelin-starred family restaurant] or at someone's house or the villa. The tastings before Nonna Elda's dinner were always special. Each aunt and uncle would bring a few great bottles of Champagne or a rare wine from their travels. As children, we couldn't wait to grow up so we could share that moment, too."

Camilla adds, "We also enjoy these tastings a few days before the harvest, when we meet to speak with the shareholders, which is basically all of us again, or while on holiday in Sardinia, or enjoying the snow in the →



From left, Chiara Lunelli, Jean Louis a Beccara, Roberta and Marcello Lunelli, Stefano Rossi, Silvia Lunelli and Alberto Calvi di Coenzo. Seated, Alessandra, Valentina, Matteo, Camilla and Alessandro Lunelli.



Brenta Dolomites.” The Lunellis see each other often, both in the small company kitchen or to enjoy a creamy risotto and Perlé Rosé at Locanda Margon. Whoever organizes the dinner is also responsible for the table and the menu. Today it’s Roberta’s turn, helped by her mother-in-law Giuliana, who has proposed vintage Hermès tableware. The pieces clash somewhat but the fact that they are so dainty and rare eventually prevails. A centerpiece was chosen with a just few thoughtfully placed flowers — after all, it’s the middle of winter — and traditional local dishes are served, all rustic, but elegantly presented. We get ready to take the picture — quickly, due to the bitter cold.

It’s a beautiful day, Monte Bondone frames the villa and our cast of characters. Everyone is cheerful, joking and commenting through chattering teeth. They seem more like a group of friends than relatives. Are they reciting a script? Nope. The French philosopher

Montaigne once said, “Governing a family is only slightly less complicated than ruling a kingdom,” but the Lunellis immediately refute this point. “Surely our serenity is directly connected to the covenants that our aunts and uncles sanctioned a long time ago. Rules must be established before there is even a need to apply them,” Matteo says. Rules govern relations between the company and the family to protect both. Prospective employees must meet certain requirements: a college degree, experience abroad, good English and knowledge of another language is always a plus. Husbands and wives are not both permitted to work for the company in order to avoid complications from a potential separation. And the results are clear: the numbers are growing, long-term projects are planned and they’ve set their sight on the distant horizon. “A united family guarantees we’ll be able to plan a future for the generations to come.” ■

Chiacchiere fritters, known locally as *crostoli*. Below: Strangolapreti, a type of gnocchi made from spinach and stale bread.



WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Strangolapreti:

This typical Trento pasta translates to “priest stranglers.” Dating back to the Council of Trent, the name refers to the gluttonous clergymen who would eat so much of it that they would choke.

Strangolapreti alla trentina

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 30 minutes + 3 hours of resting

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

1 lb. crustless stale bread, diced
8 oz. spinach leaves
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup milk
1 small onion, minced
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup flour
2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
2 large eggs
sage
grated Trentingrana
salt

Combine the bread, milk and eggs and mix, then cover with a towel and let rest for 2 hours, stirring occasionally. **Rinse** and blanch the spinach in a large pot of salted water, then let cool. **Mince** and sauté it with the butter and onion, then add it to the bread mixture. **Stir** in $\frac{3}{4}$ cup grated Trentingrana and the flour. Let rest another hour. **Shape** into large oval gnocchi and cook in salted water for a few minutes, removing and draining them once they float. **Plate** then sprinkle with Trentingrana, drizzle on melted butter and fried sage.





Seated from the left:
Alessandra Cirolini Lunelli,
Stefano Rossi, Silvia Lunelli,
Alberto Calvi di Coenzo,
Valentina Lunelli.
And again: Chiara, Camilla
and Roberta. Standing:
Jean Louis a Beccaro
and Matteo, Marcello
and Alessandro Lunelli.

“Rules are made before there’s any need to apply them,
and they’re key to maintaining our relationships within
the family and between the family and the business.”

Award-Worthy Eats

SPAGHETTI WITH
LAMB AND CUMIN RAGÙ

LEEK AND CARROT SOUP

Starry Starry Night

FRENCH TOAST

recipes JOËLLE NÉDERLANTS, text VALENTINA VERCELLI and SARA MAGRO,
photography FEDERICO MILETTO, styling SERENA GROPPA

Nursing a case of the post-awards-season blues? Roll out the red carpet for some guests



THE BULLDOG COCKTAIL

**CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY
CROSTATA**

**TIMBALLO
DI MACCHERONI**

with these six dashing dishes inspired by the silver screen



The Bulldog Cocktail



Darkest Hour (2017)
Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who was known as the “British Bulldog,” is portrayed by Gary Oldman. His drink of choice was whisky with a touch of vermouth and Cynar.

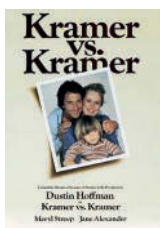
Skill Level Easy
Time 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 1 DRINK

- 1 oz. whisky
- 1 oz. white vermouth
- 1 oz. Cynar

In a shaker, mix the whisky, white vermouth and Cynar with a bit of ice. Serve on the rocks.

French Toast



Kramer vs. Kramer (1979)
Dustin Hoffman plays a bumbling single father. For him, even French toast seems like an insurmountable challenge at first.

Skill Level Easy
Time 15 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 8 PIECES

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup milk
- 8 slices white bread
- 4 large eggs
- unsalted butter – syrup
- sugar, honey or maple

Beat the eggs and milk together. Quickly dip each slice of bread into



the mixture, once on each side, and immediately place it in a large, hot skillet with a bit of melted butter. **Brown** on both sides. Remove and serve immediately with a sprinkle of sugar or, if desired, with honey or maple syrup.

Leek and Carrot Soup



Ratatouille (2007)
The dish prepared by the little mouse Rémy in this Disney cartoon wins the praises of food critic Anton Ego, catapulting the restaurant to success.

Skill Level Easy
Time 1 hour and 15 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 1½ lb. peeled potatoes
- 3 large carrots, trimmed
- 2 medium leeks, trimmed
- 1 medium onion, peeled
- 4 oz. fresh cream
- cubed bread
- dry white wine
- extra-virgin olive oil
- unsalted butter – salt

Cut the leeks and onions into thin slices and combine in a pot with 3 Tbsp. oil and a pinch of salt.

Cover and then simmer. Remove the lid, allow the liquid to evaporate and douse with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup white wine.

Dice the carrots and potatoes, cover with water and cook for 40 minutes, gradually adding around 2 liters of water as it evaporates. Then, purée it together with the cream, salting to taste.

Melt some butter in a frying pan and brown the bread cubes into crispy croutons.

Serve the soup with the croutons.



Timballo di Maccheroni



Big Night (1996)
In the film co-directed by Campbell Scott and Stanley Tucci, the only thing standing between two Italian brothers and bankruptcy is their timballo.

Skill Level Advanced
Time 6 hours

INGREDIENTS FOR 6

FOR THE FILLING

- 14 oz. tomato purée
- $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. lean pork
- $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. lean beef
- 12 oz. maccheroni
- 7 oz. aged provola, diced
- 3 oz. pancetta
- 1 large egg
- 4 large eggs, hard-boiled
- 1 onion
- tomato paste
- flour – red wine
- parsley
- fresh rosemary
- fresh thyme
- extra-virgin olive oil
- peanut oil
- salt – pepper

FOR THE TOP CRUST

- 2½ cups flour
- 5 oz. butter
- 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 2 large egg yolks – salt

FOR THE FILLING

Mince the pancetta and onion separately, then brown for 5 minutes in a saucepan with 3 Tbsp. oil, 1 rosemary sprig and a few thyme leaves.

Add the 2 pieces of whole meat and brown them on both sides over a high flame for 5-6 minutes. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red wine, let simmer for a few minutes, then add the tomato purée and 2 Tbsp. tomato paste and cover.



Cook for 2 hours and 30 minutes. Then remove the lid and continue cooking for 1 hour and 30 minutes. Let cool. Setting aside the tomato sauce, remove the meat, cut it into pieces and grind together with 1 egg and 1 Tbsp. minced parsley, adding salt and pepper to taste. **Shape** into walnut-sized balls and pour enough peanut oil into a pan to cover when frying.

Roll them in the flour and fry for 1 minute. Drain on paper towels.

Boil the maccheroni, draining it 3-4 minutes prior to the time indicated on the package, then cover with the tomato sauce.

FOR THE TOP CRUST

Combine the butter, flour, sugar and a pinch of salt into a sandy mixture. Mix it with 2 egg yolks and 2 Tbsp. water. Shape it into a smooth ball, cover and let rest for 1 hour.

FOR THE TIMBALLO

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Cut the hard-boiled eggs into wedges. Roll the dough out until it's paper thin and use it to line a greased 8" hemisphere mold. In it, layer the maccheroni, the hard-boiled eggs, the meatballs and the provola, and top with another layer of maccheroni.

Fold over the edges of the dough and gently press down to even its surface. Bake for around 1 hour.

Let the timballo cool slightly in its mold, then turn upside-down onto a platter and serve.

Spaghetti with Lamb and Cumin Ragù



The Post (2017)
When Tom Hanks invites the Washington Post's editors for dinner to discuss publishing the Pentagon Papers, his wife prepares this pasta.



Skill Level Easy

Time 50 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

¾ lb. spaghetti
14 oz. tomato purée
12 oz. boneless lamb
1 small onion
1 crushed, unpeeled garlic clove
cumin – mint
parsley
red wine
extra-virgin olive oil
salt – pepper

Thinly slice the lamb, then cut into small pieces and tenderize with a knife.

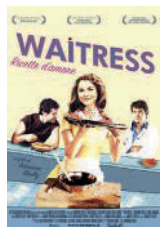
Mince the onion and let sweat in a saucepan with a drizzle of oil and the garlic clove.

Add the meat and a pinch of cumin. Once browned, douse as desired with a splash of red wine, then add the tomato purée and salt, and cook for 20 minutes.

Pepper to taste and season with minced mint and parsley.

Boil the spaghetti and serve it with the ragù, garnishing with parsley and mint, a drizzle of oil and a sprinkle of fresh ground pepper.

Chocolate Raspberry Crostata



Waitress (2007)

At Joe's Pie Diner, Jenna is the team's most creative pastry chef. Every day she creates new pies that win the heart of the audience and her doctor.

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 1 hour and 10 minutes
+ 1 hour for resting



Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 6

FOR THE PIE CRUST

1½ cup flour
5 oz. unsalted butter, diced
⅔ cup sugar
4 tsp. almond flour
1 Tbsp. cocoa
1 large egg
salt

FOR THE FILLING

10 oz. fresh cream
8 oz. dark chocolate
8 oz. raspberries
4 oz. blackberries

FOR THE PIE CRUST

Combine the flour, sugar, cocoa, almond flour and a pinch of salt with the butter to make a crumbly mixture.

Scoop it into a mound and mix in a whole egg and 1 tsp. water.

Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and let rest in the refrigerator for 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Roll the dough out until it's paper thin and use it to line an 8" shallow fluted pie pan with a removable bottom.

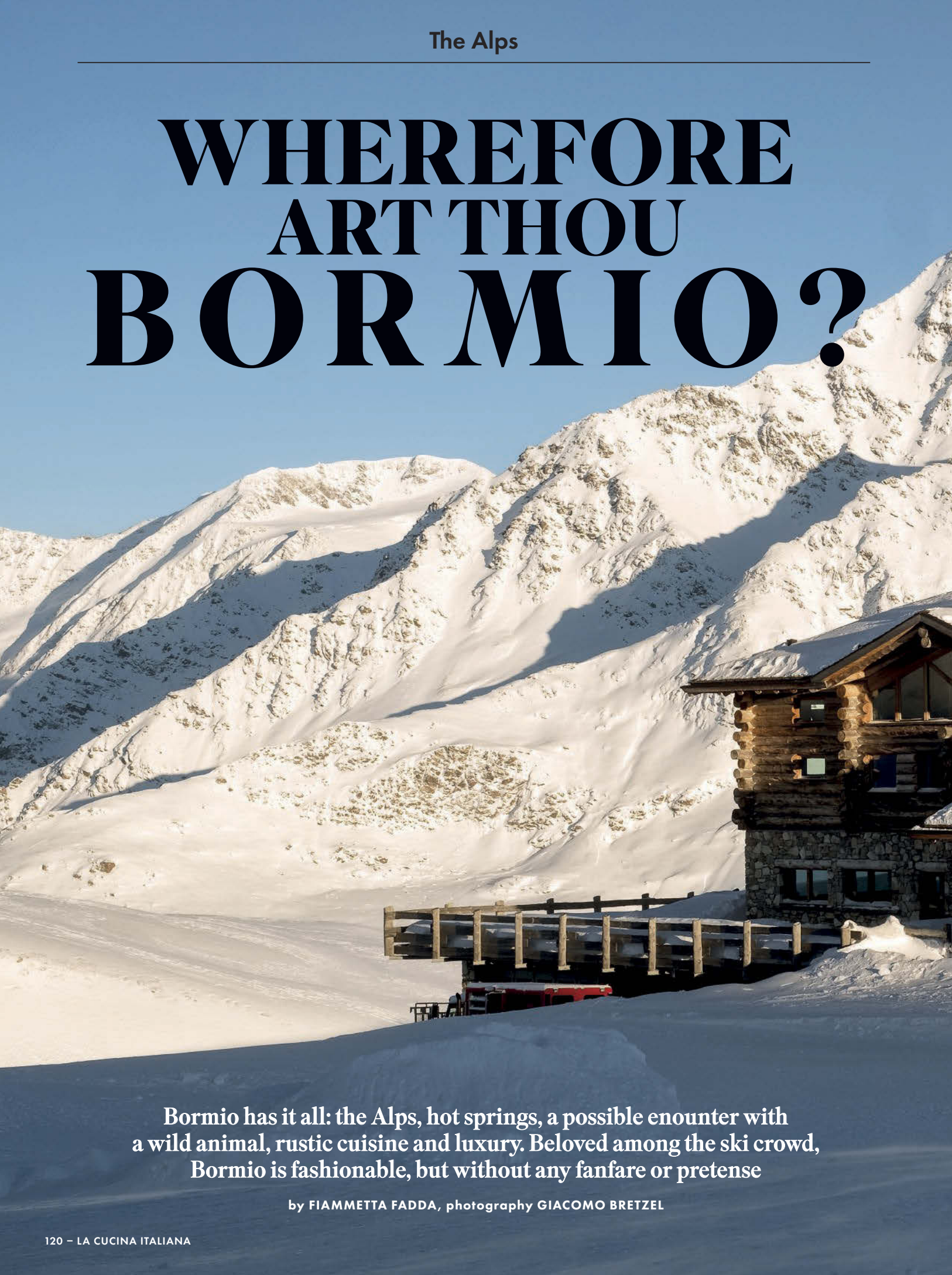
Cover the dough with parchment paper and fill with pie weights or dried beans. **Bake** the crust on its own for 25-30 minutes, then remove the beans and paper, and let cool.

FOR THE FILLING

Break the chocolate into pieces, melt it in a double-boiler, simmering low.

Add the cream and let the ganache stand at room temperature until it begins to thicken. Then spread it in the crust and top with raspberries and blackberries.

WHEREFORE ART THOU BORMIO?



Bormio has it all: the Alps, hot springs, a possible encounter with a wild animal, rustic cuisine and luxury. Beloved among the ski crowd, Bormio is fashionable, but without any fanfare or pretense

by FIAMMETTA FADDA, photography GIACOMO BRETZEL



The Sunny Valley
Kelo Resort amid the
snow of Mt. Ortler
in the heart of Stelvio
National Park.

There are no highways nearby. The railroad stops in Tirano, a town about 20 miles away, then you have to take an hour-long bus ride to get here. At 4,000 feet above sea level, Bormio in Valtellina is a bit more difficult to reach than Cortina or St. Moritz. “What a shame,” the locals say. But true mountain enthusiasts, those who can’t wait to reach the wide valley stretching between the Alps in the heart of Stelvio National Park, think it’s a stroke of luck. No painted houses with balconies like in the heart of South Tyrol and none of those elaborate cottages that characterize most popular mountain destinations.

Here simple stone houses, frost-resistant vineyards and a town of 4,000 inhabitants greet you. The Frodolfo River passes through the town, which is divided into five tiny districts. Nobody wears fur coats or hats here — not even if they can afford them. Bormio’s inhabitants enjoy the emotional luxury of freedom to choose among the various souls such a place embodies — which says a lot about this fiercely Catholic valley. Though intact and protected today, in the past it was contested by Napoleon and Austria as well as during World War I and II due to its strategic position.

The chic Lapland

If you want to combine comfort with a spiritual experience in the snow, you have two choices: either aim for extreme adventure destinations and book a club, or stay at Kelo Resort, a luxury mountain lodge overlooking Bormio at an altitude



From left, clockwise, pumpkin and game tortelli at Kelo Resort; freshly molded butter pats from the Al Taulà farm and its owners Filippo Forini and Layla Ricci.



Fast facts: Bormio



Where: Located in the province of Sondrio in Northern Lombardy, Bormio sits in the Italian Alps at an altitude of just over 4,000 feet.

Eat: Our sidebar has your meals covered, but you’d be remiss to skip out on

bresaola, a cured beef salami that’s emblematic of the region.

Speak Valtellinese:

You say “an apple a day keeps the doctor away.” The Valtellinese say *Vin da cantina*, *broeu da galina i manda i dutùr an ruina*, a proverb suggesting that wine and hen broth are the daily remedies for avoiding the doctor.

Sip: The nebbiolo grape for which Piedmont is

known also thrives here. Sample it in Valtellina Superiore DOCG wines from Arpepe and Nino Negri.

Buy: There’s something to be said for picking up a bottle of Braulio straight from the source. Also, pizzoccheri pasta travels well. Pick up a few packages in a specialty shop to create your own version of the beloved local pasta at home.

of nearly 8,850 feet. The last cable car to Santa Caterina di Valfurva, the town at the bottom, leaves at four. As the skiers refreshing themselves in the parlor downstairs disappear, you’ll be up close and personal with the Ortles-Cevedale peaks, the night and the silence, protected by walls of the log cabin-style lodge made of kelo, centuries-old Lapland fir trees hauled up to the site by specially summoned Finnish craftsmen.

This “madness” was built by Beppe Bonseri, a brilliant mind from Valtellina who, while touring the world with the Italian national ski champions, noted a similarity between these peaks and the most inaccessible northern destinations. Eleven suites, a small restaurant, fireplaces and sauna — all covered with fur. In the evening you can enjoy a before- or after-dinner drink in one of the

More about Bormio at www.lacucinaitaliana.com

lodge's igloos — there is also an igloo bedroom for those who love extreme experiences. You'll eat proudly local but highly refined cuisine, an elevated take on hearty mountain fare: Gnocchi with a cream of mountain cheese, polenta crust, dry alpine flowers; wild game and pumpkin ravioli; and beef ganassino with potato rösti.

At the thermal spa with Pliny

In the days of ancient Rome, Pliny came here to be healed, followed by Roman emperors and medieval monks. Their journeys were arduous, considering that the Stelvio Pass opened in 1823. From then on, with an easier way to arrive, came the members of the Austrian imperial court and, little by little, everyone else, all seduced by the hot springs bubbling along a path of underground caves and natural pools. But it's not just a place for the elderly — hardy types come here in winter, delighted to leave the intense warmth (98-107°F) and cross some 35 yards barefoot out in the snow to step into tubs of hot water overlooking the mountain peaks.

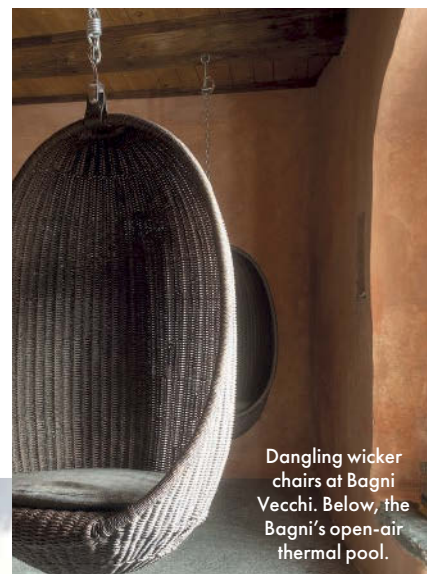
Two fascinating new rooms have just been inaugurated inside: the salt room where you can take deep breaths while meditating, and a room with wicker chairs dangling from the ceiling where you can meditate while you swing. Afterwards you'll have no problem enjoying a traditional dinner at the restaurant of Bagni Vecchi, the hotel next to the thermal spa, or you can go down to the Grand Hotel Bagni Nuovi further below for an immersion in Belle Époque grandeur.

Farmers' arms still at work

In some mountain areas success has made the industrious farmer a figure of the past. Not here. In the farm at Taulà, with its small shop, Filippo Forini and Layla Ricci are living out a story of love and cheese. When he was 18 years old, Filippo asked for a cow instead of a car, enrolled in dairy school and began working. Layla, meanwhile, returned from an unsatisfactory trip to Paris to marry him and help out.

They milk their 25 brown cows in the evening and lay out hay for the small, stocky local cows in the morning before making the curd. They churn and then package the butter, feed the calves, cook, manage sales and raise their young children. You'll never taste a more delicious ricotta, buttermilk or formaggella (soft, creamy cheese). Rini Agriturismo also offers an →

“Above Valtellina is Burmi. In Burmi there are baths,” wrote Leonardo da Vinci in the *Codex Atlanticus*, having visited them himself in 1493



Dangling wicker chairs at Bagni Vecchi. Below, the Bagni's open-air thermal pool.





artisanal atmosphere without any pretense. It's not the scheme of a newly arrived entrepreneur, but the initiative of an old local family. The restaurant's dining room — where you can enjoy a tasty pasta dish of buckwheat pizoccheri and sciatt, or venison cutlets with juniper berries — has a large bay window overlooking the stable where 50 cows ruminant. In the summer they graze on the property's mountain hay.

Even the owners of a stable full of magnificent horses have to do the most menial jobs. When he's not accompanying his guests in a carriage through the snowy landscapes, the Alpine Friesian owner Jacopo Martinelli is the valley's trusted blacksmith, plumber, and electrician.

**Rini Agriturismo
offers an artisanal
atmosphere without
any pretense.
It's not the scheme
of a newly arrived
entrepreneur,
but the initiative
of an old local
family**

Dark flours

You'll find buckwheat here — now all the rage. It doesn't come from a grain, but from the Polygonaceae family. Then there's rye, a grain that grows well in such inhospitable terrain. These dark, pasty flours are pleasantly rustic — as is the circular rye bread and the holiday loaf stuffed with raisins, nuts and dried figs baked in the ancient restored oven in the nearby town of Berola. But this had long been the sustenance of a very poor farming society, which nourished itself with the ground grains of the "forest," a far cry from the luxuriously blonde ears of wheat. Indeed, the bakery and patisserie Eredi Romani, which today is known for its irresistible tarts, nut cakes and chocolate breads, made



From the top, clockwise: Alfonso Boscacci and his son in front of their historic salumeria; Edoardo Tarantola Peloni of Braulio; a plate of Speck at Locanda Altavilla. Opposite: the dining room at Agriturismo Rini with a view of the stable.



its first refined cake only in the 1980s from a recipe penned by St. Mortiz's famous pastry chef, Hanselmann. Today, Eredi Romani is nicknamed "Le Bonette" after the two owners who once ran the shop. But trouble awaits anyone who suggests that pizzoccheri is a good substitute for tagliatelle in the kitchen of the Vecchia Combo restaurant, which celebrated its 50th anniversary last year.

Here, Rina and her daughter Tiziana make it on the spot — up to three times a night when exceptionally busy. Every inhabitant of Bormio and anyone on vacation comes to try it, alternating with the dishes of the day: *menestra del mak* (barley soup), *manfrigoli*, *taroz* and sausage with *polenta taragna*. All local

THE SPECIALTIES

Sciatt — Meaning "toads" in the local dialect, these fried buckwheat flour balls are stuffed with melted cheese and served with thinly sliced lettuce.

Manfrigoli — Crepes stuffed with melted cheese and milk-soaked bread rolled into a sausage shape then sliced into sections that stand upright while oven-baked.

Pizzoccheri — 3"-long Fettuccine made of two-thirds dark flour, one-third white flour, a pinch of salt and a touch of olive oil. Cooked with potatoes and Savoy cabbage, they're served layered with young casera cheese and dressed in piping-hot melted butter with garlic.

Taroz — A mash made of leftover vegetables that changes with the seasons. The best-known combination is chunks of potatoes and pumpkin flavored with local cheeses and grated grana, all dressed in piping-hot butter.

Polenta taragna — Buckwheat and cornmeal are blended together and added to boiling salted water and butter. As it cooks, more butter and breadcrumbs are added, followed by flavorful Valtellina cheeses and again more butter. After a final stirring, the polenta is poured onto a cutting board.

Sferzata — Boiling-hot garlic-flavored butter, the traditional finishing touch to local first courses.

Panun — Egg-shaped rye bread with raisins, dried figs and walnuts, enjoyed primarily at Christmastime.

specialties that you'll find interpreted in a more refined manner at Locanda Altavilla, a historic restaurant opened in Bianzone in 1958, a half-mile from the main road to Tirano. The owner, after having worked in Paris before returning to join his mother in the kitchen, added a touch of nouvelle cuisine: the humble *taroz* is no longer a soup of leftovers, becoming a basket of stuffed pasta; the *manfrigola* is filled with bechamel; the venison is served with a pear baked in Sfursat and caramelized chestnuts.

You'll also get all the information you need to pass for an authentic gourmet: the beef bresaola has to be the one made by Stefano Besseghini in Tirano with his secret curing technique; the best wheat is grown in Teglio; *sciatt*, which many attribute to Cicci Franchetti, chef of Valtellina's Cerere restaurant in the 1970s, were previously called *chisoi* and were made from two different millings of buckwheat.

Must-try platters

Don't go for the usual mixed platter of cured meats and cheese. These specialties can be enjoyed in single tastings. The bresaola from Valtellina is famous. And with good reason: it's made with only salt, pepper, cinnamon, cloves and crushed garlic using the finest cuts of beef. Plus the more frugal *slinzegha*, strips obtained from bresaola trimmings. But here the mountain civilization has also rediscovered game: the butcher Alfonso Boscacci, who boasts a National Institute of Rural Sociology certificate for "the discovery of cured deer meats and the collaboration between agriculture, crafts and trade," cures and seasons the meats himself. The feather in his →



cap is deer bresaola and roe deer violino, a small ham so named because when slicing it, it's held on the left shoulder and the knife is held in the other hand like a violin bow. You should also buy pepper lonzino before going back home, as well as some pork filzetta and bondiola, coppa and liver mortadella.

Eat them with rye bread and a glass of the same Sassella that Boscacci uses to cure bresaola. The cheeses deserve an episode all on their own: start with cow and/or goat milk scimudin, a slightly bitter creamy soft cheese, then continue with casera, a PDO since 1996. Finish with the spicy, hole-flecked bitto, an exceptional mountain cheese. Enjoy them with crisp rye bread sticks to counteract the cheesy softness and bless them with the perfectly intense notes of a Grumello.

These wines need heroes

All the way up to Tirano the hills facing south are an elaborate tapestry of vineyards: they're steeper and more dangerous than those of South Tyrol, and just a tiny bit less precipitous than those of Cinque Terre or Etna. They're called "hero vineyards" because it takes a heroic will to go into the mountains to build



Don't go for the usual mixed platter of cured meats and cheese



From top, clockwise, pizzoccheri at Vecchia Combo; a glimpse of the cellar of Locanda Altavilla and its refined take on taroz. Opposite: an old ledger from Eredi Romani; pizzoccheri being prepared by hand at Vecchia Combo and Locanda Altavilla's owner.



walls to support the few feet of land the vines cling to, to prune them following the classic *Valtellina archetto* method and to pick the grapes by hand, place them in baskets and go back down into town — and then back up again.

The grape variety is Nebbiolo, the same with which Barolo is made in Piedmont, but here they call it Chiavennasca. Less austere Nebbiolos are the result: more velvety, more enjoyable by inexperienced palates, but able to withstand aging well. They are little known because of the small quantities produced, but two wines are proof of their quality after having been named DOCGs: Valtellina Superiore, divided into five sub-zones — Grumello, Sassella, Maroggia, Inferno, Valgella — and Sfursat, dialect for “strained,” the dry red passito, ideally the local correspondent of Amarone, forced to concentrate for three months on racks to make up for the sugar lacking from the bunches which grew in such stingy mountain heat.

The pharmacist and mountain herbs

Perhaps you already knew that Bormio is the birthplace of the Amaro Braulio, a liqueur made from mountain herbs grown on Mount Braulio. The amaro

was created in 1875 by the pharmacist and chemist Francis Peloni. What Dr. Peloni certainly didn't foresee was that his bitter liquor, sold in pharmacies for stomach-curing and digestive properties, would be adopted, along with other historical elixirs, by contemporary mixologists to become Braulio Spritz with Prosecco and seltzer, and Cobra, a long drink that mixes Braulio with Coca-Cola — good (some say) with pizza.

You can order them on the central Via Roma in the Steak House Braulio, above the cellars, which open to the public for visits, for the preparation and aging of the celebrated bitter. If you're lucky, Edoardo Tarantola Peloni himself will guide you through the 65,000 square feet and five underground floors. He is the descendant, along with his brothers, of the family that guards the founder's



secret and unchanged formula. To make it even more mysterious, you'll be shown only four of the many herbs, roots, berries and flowers that go into the liquor: namely gentian, wormwood, juniper and taneda, the dialect name for Achillea nutmeg.

All the herbs and other components that compose the bitter are dried, ground and macerated in a solution of alcohol and water for a month, then sugar and more water are added to reach 21 percent alcohol. It then rests no less than 15 months in oak barrels for the classic Braulio — 24 months for the reserve — before it's bottled. The highlight of the tour delves 25 meters below ground in the scenic “atelier cellar” built by Campari, the holder of the brand today, shining with Slavonian oak barrels — it's like an underground cathedral. Yet Edoardo Tarantola Peloni wanders around like a conscientious landlord with only three employees, turning off lights, checking doors and then going back upstairs where he lives. It comes naturally to ask him banal questions: when he goes out to eat, where does he go? “Eira, where I used to go with my parents as a child.” And for a fancy dinner? “Filo, a charming old barn, with bold but sensible reinterpretations of local dishes.” ■

ADDRESSES

Il Salumaio, Via Peccedi 20, Bormio,
Tel. +39 0342 903382,
ilsalumaioibormio.it

Agriturismo Rini, Via Cav. Pietro
Rini 2, Bormio, Tel. +39 0342 901224

Ristorante Vecchia Combo,
Piazza Santuario 4, Bormio,
Tel. +39 0342 901568

Azienda Agricola al Taulà,
Via al Taulà 1, Oga, Valdisotto,
Tel. +39 346 8554883,
iformaggiidioga.it

Cantine Braulio, Via Roma 27,
Bormio e Braulio, Via Roma 21,
Tel. +39 0342 905258

Pasticceria Eredi Romani,
Via Roma 100, Bormio,
Tel. +39 0342 901323

Kelo Resort Sunny Valley,
Valle dell'Alpe Valfurva,
Tel. +39 0342 935422, sunnyvalley.it

Locanda Altavilla, Bianzone,
Tel. +39 0342 720355, altavilla.info
Forno di Berola, Via Berola 4, Ponte
in Valtellina, Tel. +39 0342 484248

Alpine Friesian, Via Pecé 29 A,
Valdidentro, Tel. +39 347 281532





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Pasta



diversa

The starch that keeps on giving — who knew there were so many ways to prepare pasta? Here are **6 alternative cooking methods** that let you switch up your pasta routine without any hassle

recipes ALESSANDRO PROCOPIO, text VALENTINA VERCELLI
photography RICCARDO LETTIERI, styling BEATRICE PRADA



Penne with Sausage and Escarole Ragù

Skill Level Easy

Time 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

12 oz. penne
12 oz. escarole
7oz. sausage
3 Tbsp. pine nuts
2 Tbsp. raisins
½ cup dry white wine
salt

Wash the escarole and cut it into strips. Set some of the soft pieces aside for garnishing.

Rinse the raisins in lukewarm water.

Remove the sausage casing, break the sausage up and brown in a sauté pan for 5-6 minutes, continuing to break up the pieces with a fork. Add the escarole and let wither for 1-2 minutes, then stir in the wine. Season with salt, add the pine nuts and raisins, then cook for 1 minute.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and stir, then cook for 1 minute. Switch off the heat, remove from the burner and keep the pasta in the water following the cooking time indicated on the package.

Drain the pasta, add to the ragù and cook everything together for 1 minute before serving. Garnish with the soft escarole pieces.

Method:
Soaked



1

Place the pasta in boiling water.



2

Remove from heat and keep the pasta in the water for the amount of time indicated on the package. This saves energy and space: you use less gas/electricity and it frees up the stovetop.



3

Add the pasta to the ragù and let it cook. This method gives the pasta a softer consistency.

Caserecce with Pumpkin and Gorgonzola

Skill Level Easy

Time 40 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

1½ lb. pumpkin, cleaned
12 oz. caserecce pasta
3 oz. sweet gorgonzola
2 Tbsp. pumpkin seeds, peeled and coarsely chopped
Parmigiano Reggiano, grated
celery leaves
extra-virgin olive oil
vegetable broth
salt - pepper

Cut 1 lb. pumpkin into small pieces and cook in a casserole pan with 1 qt. water

for 20 minutes, adding salt to taste as it cooks. Drain and purée.

Dice the remaining pumpkin and brown the cubes in a frying pan with 1 Tbsp. oil and a pinch of salt. Add the caserecce, let sit for 1 minute, then add 3 ladlefuls of broth. Stir, adding more broth once it's been absorbed and cooking for a total of around 7 minutes.

Stir in the pumpkin purée a little at a time. Continue cooking for a few more minutes until the liquid evaporates. (The pumpkin will take a few minutes longer to cook than the time indicated on the pasta package.)

Remove from the heat and stir the caserecce vigorously, adding 3 Tbsp. oil and grated Parmigiano to taste, then season with pepper.

Plate the pasta, topping each portion with gorgonzola, celery leaves and pumpkin seeds.

Method:
"Risottata"



1
Toast the caserecce (or any short pasta) in oil, which will cook like risotto, hence the term "risottata".



2
When pouring the broth on the pasta, the quantity should be around 15% more than the pasta. So, for every 4 oz. of pasta, use around 4½ oz. of broth.



3
The pasta cooks by absorbing the broth. When finished, stir in the pumpkin cream and grated cheese. The pasta starch won't disperse, so the sauce becomes creamy without the addition of fat.



Method:
Baked



Add the spaghetti, or any type of long pasta, to the browned vegetables and toast for 1 minute.



Pour in the white wine.



Add the broth and bake. This technique results in a drier, more flavorful pasta.

Spaghetti with Vegetables

Skill Level Easy

Time 40 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 1½ cups vegetable broth
- 12 oz. spaghetti
- 8 small carrots with leaves
- 4 borettane onions
- 3 celery stalks
- 1 cup dry white wine
- thyme
- rosemary
- extra-virgin olive oil
- salt

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Peel the carrots. Keep them whole and set the leaves aside. Peel the onions and slice the celery crosswise.

Brown the celery and onions in a large oven-safe saucepan with 3 Tbsp. oil for 3 minutes. Add the carrots, a few thyme and rosemary sprigs, salt to taste, then continue cooking for another 2-3 minutes.

Add the spaghetti and let sit for 1 minute, then add 1 cup white wine. Cook for another minute then add the broth and salt to taste. Cover and bake for ¾ of the time indicated on the pasta package.

Remove from oven and stir well. Return to oven and bake for the full amount of time indicated on the pasta package.

Serve with the vegetables. If desired, garnish with fresh thyme and rosemary.



Wintry Mezze Maniche with Calamaretti

Skill Level Easy

Time 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

- 8 cups fish broth
- 1 lb. calamaretti (baby squid)
- 12 oz. mezze maniche pasta
- 6 oz. Savoy cabbage
- 6 oz. romanesco broccoli
- 6 oz. cauliflower
- 4 oz. black cabbage
- extra-virgin olive oil
- salt

Cut the cauliflower and romanesco broccoli into florets, and chop up the black and Savoy cabbages.

Heat 3 Tbsp. oil in a casserole pan and brown the florets for 2-3 minutes. Add both cabbages, season with salt and cook for another 2 minutes.

Add the fish broth followed by the mezze maniche. Salt to taste and cook for the amount of time indicated on the package.

Drizzle a sauté pan with oil, brown the squid for 30-40 seconds and salt to taste.

Serve the pasta with a bit of its cooking liquid and finish with the browned squid.



Method:
Simmered



1 Brown the vegetables in a saucepan with oil.



2 Add the broth — the ratio should be 2½ cups for every 4 oz. of pasta.



3 Add the pasta and cover. Cooking the pasta directly in the broth adds flavor.

ORECCHIETTE
PATATE & COZZE
al
MICROONDE

Orecchiette with Potatoes and Mussels

Skill Level Easy

Time 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS FOR 4

2 lb. mussels
12 oz. orecchiette
20 oz. new potatoes
2 garlic cloves, peeled
and halved
fennel
dry white wine
extra-virgin olive oil
salt

Clean the mussels and place them in a casserole pan with 2 Tbsp. oil, garlic, 1 fennel frond, 2 cups water and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white wine, then cover. Cook over medium heat to open the mussels.

Filter the mussel cooking liquid and dilute it with water until you have 1 qt.

Shell half of the mussels.

Wash the potatoes, then slice them up without removing the skin.

Place the orecchiette in a glass bowl and lightly coat with oil, then add the sliced potatoes and the cooking water from the mussels.

Seal the bowl with plastic wrap and pierce a hole in the top.

Microwave at maximum power for $\frac{2}{3}$ of the cooking time indicated on the pasta package. Salt to taste, then plate the orecchiette and potatoes. Add the mussels and fennel fronds to finish.

Method:
Microwaved



1

Lightly coat the orecchiette with oil so they won't stick together.



2

Add the potatoes and filtered cooking liquid to the bowl.



3

Seal the soup bowl with plastic wrap, pierce it and microwave.

Method:
Fried

Sweet and Savory Fried Pasta

Skill Level Intermediate

Time 20 minutes

Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS FOR 8

12 oz. fresh scialatielli
12 oz. lasagna sheets
powdered sugar
peanut oil
salt

FOR THE SWEET VERSION

Cut up the lasagna sheets and fry them in hot oil for around 1 minute until they swell slightly and become crispy and golden. Dry on paper towels, dust with powdered sugar and serve alongside chocolate dipping sauce.

FOR THE SAVORY VERSION

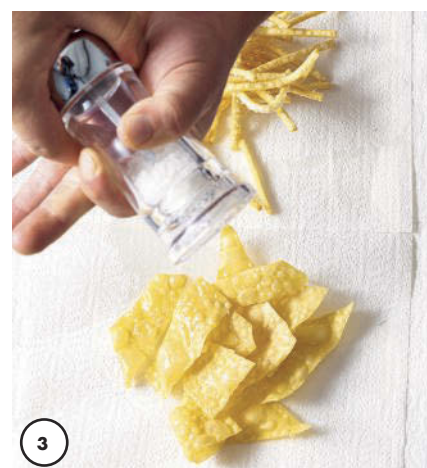
Fry the scialatielli in hot oil for 2-3 minutes until they become crispy and golden. Dry them on paper towels, add salt and serve with ketchup or your favorite sauces or condiments.



Choose your favorite type of fresh pasta and fry it in hot oil; the scialatielli will swell and take on a crunchy, breadstick-like texture.



Drain with a metal strainer.



Dry on paper towels before serving.



PREFER THE TRADITIONAL BOILING METHOD?

Here are a couple of tips

1 The perfect ratio is 1 quart of water and 2 teaspoons of salt for every 4 ounces of pasta.

2 A few minutes before the time indicated on the package, drain the pasta and finish cooking it directly in the sauce along with 1-2 ladlefuls of the cooking water. The starch released from the pasta will make the sauce creamy without the need for any additional fats.

PHILLY PLATED

With striking architecture, a bustling food scene and a trove of cultural treasures, Philadelphia boldly juxtaposes history with tomorrow for a whirring city that's impossible not to love

by JACLYN DEGIORGIO, photography EVAN SUNG





Jean-Georges Philadelphia
located on the 59th floor
of the new Four Seasons
Hotel at the Comcast
Technology Center,
designed by Norman
Foster. Opposite: Philly by
night as seen from the Four
Seasons' Sky Lobby.

I'm loath to admit that once upon a time I was *that* New Yorker. The one who urged others to visit Philadelphia without having really spent any quality time there myself — save for a few elementary school field trips, but they don't really count. I took the 80-minute train ride for granted, knowing that I could visit the highly touted city whenever I wished. Yet thinking wishfully regressed into wishful thinking when I moved to Italy...until I (finally) managed to reach Philly by dint of a nine-hour flight.

Anytime I mention Philadelphia to Italian friends, the conversation immediately jumps to the topic of emulating a certain silver screen pugilist by jogging jubilantly up the 72 steps leading to the columned Greek Revival facade of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. But, with all due respect to Signore Balboa, Philadelphia is a much more intriguing nut to crack.

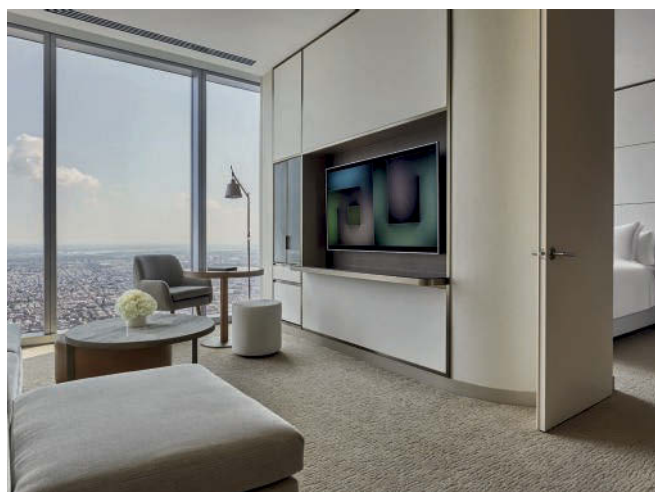
As America's first capital, Philadelphia is teeming with history, a detail that hasn't gone unnoticed by UNESCO, which named Philadelphia a World Heritage City in 2015. I have advised all New-York-bound Italians to hop on a train and spend a night there, but, as they tend to believe that New York is the be-all-end-all, they're hesitant to venture outside the Big Apple. It's a shame that Philadelphia gets overshadowed by New York because, as my recent visit confirmed, Philadelphia doesn't live in New York's shadows.

Sky's the limit

The Comcast Technology Center dominates Philadelphia's skyline, having dwarfed its predecessors in 2018 to become the city's tallest structure. The second skyscraper from the Philadelphia-based telecommunications conglomerate stands 1,121-feet tall, its 60 stories surpassed by a laser beam that ups the structure's dramatic impact as it extends triumphantly above the clouds. The skyscraper's top 12 floors lodge the 219 accommodations (180 rooms and 59 suites) of the new Four Seasons Hotel, my base for the next four days. I enter the glass elevator, keeping my back to the door to watch the City of Brotherly Love unfold as we soar toward the 60th



Jean-Georges at the Four Seasons Philadelphia. Below: a hotel suite outfitted with custom-designed furniture from the Foster Practice.



floor. Sixty seconds later, I disembark in the Sky Lobby and admire the sweeping city panoramas. On my way to check-in, I pass Norman Foster's glossy onyx pedestals bedecked with designer Jeff Leatham's floral arrangements in assorted purple hues, then take the elevator down to my room on the 51st floor.

Outfitted with specially designed furniture from the Foster Practice in warm earth and bronze tones, the room features a curved wall that adds a spacious dimension and a plush white bed that I just wish would swallow me whole. The floor-to-ceiling glass windows overlook the latticed pyramid crown topping the postmodernist BNY Mellon Center as well as the steel spire jutting out of the Art Deco edifice of One Liberty Place, Philly's first skyscraper, and its third tallest.

A meal at the Four Seasons warrants a visit in and of itself. Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten opened an outpost of his

namesake Central Park West restaurant, a two-star Michelin shrine that also holds four stars (top honors) from *The New York Times*. I stroll through the JG SkyHigh lobby bar and descend a staircase flanked by two black stone walls varnished by glistening ripples of gently cascading water. The glass-enclosed dining room offers horizon-stretching views while mirrored ceilings capture an inverted glimpse of those urban scenes, which emit a cosmic effect when the city lights sparkle at night.

The classically trained Alsatian chef, whose 38-restaurant empire spans the world, is known for refined cuisine with an Asian flair. Vongerichten was involved in the Comcast Tower from the get-go, and spent the last five years working on the project. "Brian Roberts [CEO of Comcast] came for lunch at

Jean-Georges in New York and asked me about it. I said why not? Yes!"

The menu at Jean-Georges Philadelphia features a selection of his signatures — a toasted egg yolk sandwich served on thin, burnished crispy bread crowned with a dollop of caviar, and tender raw tuna ribbons with creamy avocado and lime sauce — alongside dishes created solely for Philly, such as burly crab dumplings in a tangy Meyer lemon sauce.

The Comcast Center's ground floor houses Vernick Fish, a new concept from Greg Vernick of Vernick Food & Drink, a beloved local chef whose distinctions include a James Beard Award. Having worked for Vongerichten for years, Vernick's career has taken him full circle to collaborate with his mentor in a new capacity, which as Vernick explains, keeps him on his toes — for better or worse. His new concept specializes in various fish preparations, from raw to cooked to everywhere in between. "When I opened Vernick Food & Drink seven years ago, I was on a shoestring budget. I would do all the butchering. I cut all the fish and I fell in love with it. Calling the fishmongers was part of my week. As we grew, I had to hire a butcher and give that up, and I missed it."

The Adam Tihany-designed 200-seat oyster bar and brasserie is edged with a glass wall that spans the length of Arch Street. Illuminated orbs dangle from the ceilings, copper cookware clings →

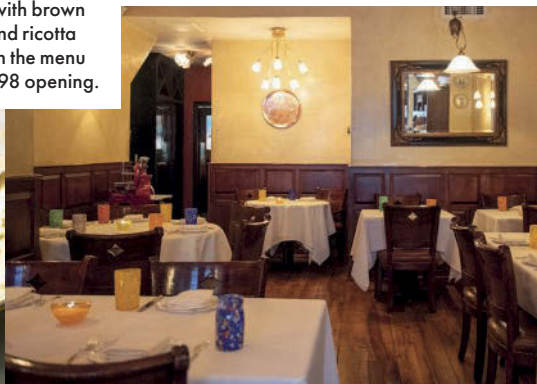


Clockwise: Pasta shapes crafted by Michael Vincent Ferreri; the dining room at Res Ipsa Cafe; Vernick Fish at the Four Seasons, located on the ground floor of the Comcast Technology Center.





From right, clockwise: chef Marc Vetri and his Taylor guitar; Vetri's ground floor dining room; Swiss chard gnocchi with brown butter and ricotta salata, on the menu since its 1998 opening.



to the wall of the open kitchen and warm wood abounds, occasionally juxtaposed with splashes of marine blue.

With his share-style menu, Vernick encourages guests to branch out and feel at home. "I saw people dining differently. I saw people eating lighter. The opportunity to share a meal of seafood and vegetables let me add more variety to the table. I wanted to build a menu that lets people try more things — the idea of a seafood platter and everyone breaking bread together, this is not just what I like to prepare, it's how I like to eat. I don't just like my appetizer, entree and dessert — I want to try different things. It's a more enjoyable way to dine out." House-made lattice-shaped potato chips accompany tartares such as spicy tuna and buttery salmon for scooping while raw preparations include a pinwheel-shaped Nantucket bay scallop crudo with caviar and a drizzle of cranberry-ginger vinaigrette. Squid "pad thai" salad and grilled harissa shrimp with pomegranate, figs and yogurt are ideal for those who prefer to keep their food to themselves.

Vernick's third concept, Vernick Coffee Bar, is perched in the lobby of the Comcast Technology Center.

The Italian side

Like most major American cities, Italian influences have shaped Philadelphia's food culture. The South 9th Street Italian Market, America's oldest continuously operating outdoor market, is a half-mile pocket of South Philly where merchants have been peddling their wares since 1915. I pass Cannuli Brothers, famous for its cooked-to-order oven-roasted whole pigs, and Esposito's, a butcher shop established in 1911 where skin-on pork belly is today's special. At Anastasi Seafood, Blue Point Oysters beckon from a glistening bed of ice and lobsters unknowingly crawl their final steps. I browse fresh hand-cut pasta at Talluto's and an array of imported tinned fish at Claudio's. The South Philly outpost of Cristina Martinez's Barbacoa, a taqueria that fans of Netflix's *Chef's Table* will recognize, is nestled inconspicuously between awninged storefronts.

While plenty of spots around the city cook up Italian-American crowd-pleasers, a handful of chefs specialize in fare that's more in line with what's on the menu in the motherland.

It would be blasphemous to celebrate Philly's Italian food scene without

mentioning Marc Vetri. An unquestionable trailblazer, the chef opened Vetri Cucina in 1998 inside a 19th-century townhouse on Spruce Street that once hosted Le Bec Fin restaurant, an emblem of the city's dining culture. What drew him to the location? "I can't explain it, but as soon as I walked in, I knew," he says. And I get it — the cozy feels-like-home ambiance alone could tempt one to linger at the table for hours.

Vetri was one of the first chefs in the country to offer elevated rustic Italian fare that deviated from Italian cuisine as locals knew it. "We had a lot of people who would walk in, look at the menu and ask where are the meatballs? Where's the Parmesan? It took a bit of time, but it worked because Philadelphia was ready for it," says Vetri. His efforts haven't gone unnoticed, earning him coveted culinary accolades, including a James Beard Award in 2005.

Vetri honed his talent under Wolfgang Puck in Los Angeles before a two-year stint in Italy, where he spent most of his time in Bergamo — a journey from nouvelle California cuisine to rustic Italian.

At Vetri Cucina, he serves what he describes as the ultimate surf and turf



Left: Lombarda pizza with cotechino sausage, bitto cheese and egg. Right: the glass-enclosed patio at Osteria. Below: robiola-filled francobolli pasta filled with trumpet mushrooms



In 1998, Marc Vetri opened Vetri Cucina, a restaurant offering elevated rustic Italian cuisine that deviates from traditional Italian-American fare

pasta: lobster tagliolini with a delicately robust 'nduja butter, then topped with crispy lobster-bisque soaked bread-crumbs. "We had been playing around with homemade Calabrian chilis that we ferment in house. There's nothing better to make with them than a really good 'nduja sausage. Once we had that, we tried it in several dishes and we decided to try it with lobster."

Six tender Swiss chard gnocchi spheres, a Vetri Cucina classic, sit in an opaque pool of nutty brown butter and are topped with a blanket of ricotta salata, a salty sheep milk cheese. "This dish has been on the menu since we opened," says Vetri. "I originally had something like it at a restaurant I worked at in Bergamo called Frosio. They were much larger and more like one big spinach ball. When I opened I tried the one ball but it didn't work well so I started rolling them smaller. We change between Swiss chard and spinach depending on what's in season."

A spit-roasted capretto (baby goat) on the bone lays languorously atop a bed of creamy polenta — another classic that's been on the menu since day one. "This dish has evolved the most over time as



we used to cook it solely on a spit outside. Through the years we have tried different methods making it just a little better every year. Also, the polenta that we used originally was from Italy. Now we use polenta that we mill in-house daily, which adds an entirely different flavor."

Twelve years ago, Vetri established the Vetri Community Partnership. What started as a school lunch initiative has evolved into an after-school program called the Vetri Cooking Lab, a mobile

teaching kitchen comprised of three vans that visit farmers' markets after school to teach students about vegetables, their origins and how to cook them. In early 2019 Vetri acquired Fiorella, a 100-year-old sausage shop where he plans to open a 14-seat pasta bar.

In 2016, close friends Tyler Akin of Stock Restaurants and Mark Corpus and Mark Capriotti of ReAnimator Coffee Roasters brought their food and cafe experience together to open Res Ipsa Cafe, an all-day eatery serving three meals (dinner is BYOB) and everything in between. They brought on Michael Vincent Ferreri, with whom Akin had cooked for years at Zahav restaurant, to lead the day-to-day kitchen operations. "The name is derived from the Latin-language common law concept *res ipsa loquitur*," Akin explains. "I had learned this phrase during law school, which translates to 'the thing speaks for itself.' The name allows the space to carry various identities throughout the day."

For the menu, Ferreri, whose parents were chefs, seeks inspiration from his Southern Italian roots, Sicily in particular. While the entire menu is flawlessly executed, his house-made pasta →



Above: the entrance to the Comcast Technology Center.
Below: chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten and his toasted egg yolk sandwich topped with caviar.



has caused quite a frenzy. The fazzoletti, the only pasta on the menu year-round, are prepared with preserved lemon and orange, then finished with bottarga, which tempers the acidity and adds a subtle touch of umami — I hold myself back from a second helping of these “handkerchiefs.”

House-made fennel sausage and honey nut squash accompany the strascinati, one of Ferreri’s favorite pasta shapes. “It’s been around forever, a precursor to orecchiette. You make it the same way, you just don’t put your thumb in it.” The diminutive squash, a variety advocated for and revived by chef Dan Barber, comes from a local farmer. Ferreri cooks the squash until it takes on an al dente texture similar to the pasta, and finishes with brown butter, sage and rosemary. Breakfast is served until 11:30 a.m. and among the American-style sandwiches, Ferreri follows the full English archetype for his Italian breakfast: fried egg, broccoli rabe, fennel sausage and focaccia topped with salsa verde.

Jeff Michaud, a Vetri veteran, helms Osteria, which he opened in 2007. The chef spent a year in Italy cooking, traveling and training at various Michelin-starred restaurants.

With its rustic wooden accents and airy, glass-enclosed patio overlooking the garden, Osteria evokes one of the many *cascina* on Milan’s outskirts where I’d go for Sunday lunch among loved ones. Lombarda pizza is topped with egg, bitto (a cheese from Valtellina in Northern Lombardy) and cotechino sausage, and pillows of francobolli pasta are filled with delicate robiola cheese and tossed with trumpet mushrooms and thyme. Michaud draws inspiration from his mother-in-law and often tries to replicate Italy as much as possible on the plate. “When I put the rabbit and polenta on the menu, it’s the same way my wife’s grandma prepares it.” In addition, Michaud and his wife run La Via Gaia, a high-end travel company where he leads food-forward tours of Italy, often alongside other chefs.

Mission cheesesteak

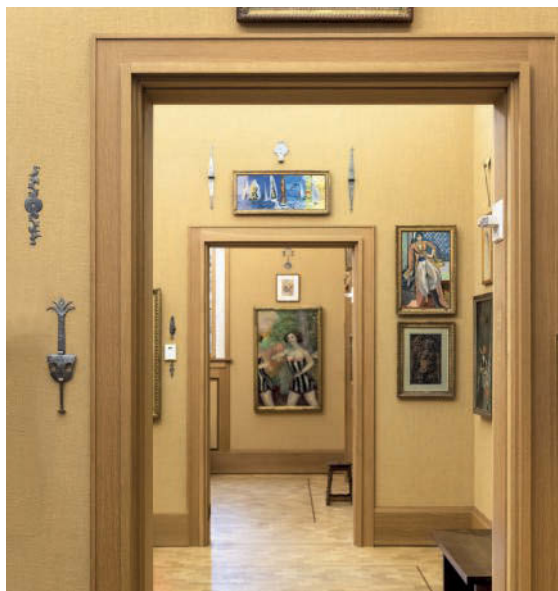
Not eating a cheesesteak in Philly is just as sacrilegious as passing up pizza in Naples. Two institutions dedicated to this beef and cheese hoagie sit at the tail end of the Italian market: Geno’s and Pat’s. The two stand diagonally across from each other on Passyunk Avenue as if ready to lace up for a spar in the center of the ring.

Yet, I learn the hard way that these two cash-only operations are programmed for high volume turn-and-burn traffic, so, despite the hype, you'll fare better elsewhere. The one I choose, which I won't call out, leaves me tragically disappointed. I order my cheesesteak "wit" onions and American cheese from one designated window, and cheese fries and a beverage at the other. The first cashier hands me the sandwich immediately and the second one follows suit just as swiftly. I unravel it to find a soggy, greasy specimen — not the good, fresh-out-of-the-oven-Ligurian-focaccia kind of greasy, but the not-so-good kind...the kind that recalls a certain Milanese pizza chain. Unmelted cheese accompanies the dry, bland, tepid meat-and-onion filling. I'm devastated, though determined to find a cheesesteak worth writing (home) about, so I summon an Uber to bring me to the 127-year-old Reading Terminal Market, a thrumming emporium with dozens of food stalls.

I stroll beneath the dangling neon signs and pass wood pickle barrels and 50-plus flavors of fluffy hand-rolled doughnuts at Beiler's, bounty from the Amish Country at Lancaster County Dairy and soft jumbo pretzels at Miller's Twist. After my first lap, I notice that the line at Carmen's Famous Italian Hoagies & Cheesesteaks has nearly doubled, so I hop on and wait, watching the team behind the glass wall prepare made-to-order cheesesteaks, a harmonious medley of spatulas chopping the beef into delicate strands on the griddle coupled with the sizzle and hiss of searing meat. Though the Cheez Whiz is tempting, I once again go for American and onions and I add pickles, then wait about 15 minutes for my food before plopping myself down at one of the seating areas to dig in. The hot beef melds seamlessly with the cheese and onions, all held taut by sturdy, though delightfully greasy bread. Each bite fuses the tender meat with sweet onions, gooey cheese and an occasional burst of brininess from the pickles — I'm satisfied, and ready for dessert. I head to the Termini Brothers Bakery stall, where I ponder the round individually-sized layer cakes in flavors like tiramisu and limoncello, but ultimately opt for a cannolo that's filled on the spot — the best way to savor one.



Dr. Barnes' art collection includes 181 Renoirs, 69 Cézannes, 59 Matisse and 46 Picassos



ADDRESSES

The Four Seasons Philadelphia,
fourseasons.com
Jean-Georges Philadelphia, jean-georges.com
Vernick Fish, www.vernickfish.com
Vetri Cucina, vetricucina.com
Res Ipsa Cafe, resipsaphilly.com
Osteria, osteriaphilly.com
Reading Terminal Market,
readingterminalmarket.org
Italian Market, italianmarketphilly.org
K' Far Cafe, kfarcafe.com
Suraya, surayaphilly.com

Other eats

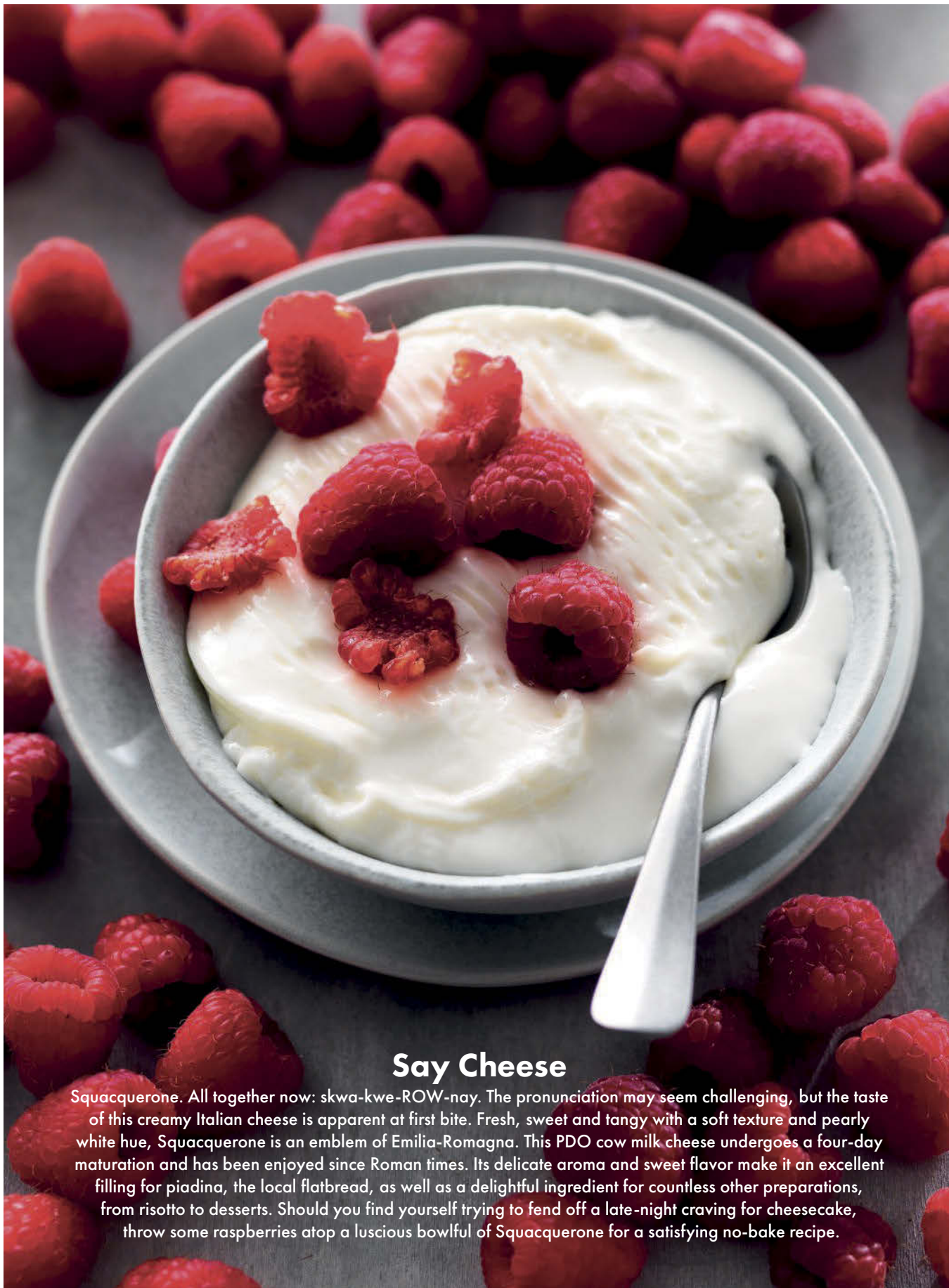
According to the James Beard Foundation, Philadelphia is home to America's current Outstanding Restaurant, Zahav, chef Michael Solomonov's homage to his native Israel. At K'Far Cafe, Zahav's sister restaurant, I tear into a Jerusalem bagel, dipping each jaggy nugget into a bowlful of labneh concealed under a layer of za'atar and caviar. Fishtown, the hip, edgy district north of the city center where coffee titan La Colombe originated, is home to Suraya. The owners, siblings Roland Kassis and Nathalie Richan, named this Lebanese restaurant after their grandmother. Silky, smoky baba ganoush is topped with pomegranate seeds and the kanafeh made with local mozzarella is coated with phyllo strands and drizzled with rose syrup.

Culture

I find plenty of ways to keep my dance card full in between meals, most notably at the Barnes Foundation. The late Alfred Barnes, a quirky character to say the least, amassed a modern art collection that is worth \$25 billion today. Dr. Barnes invented Argyrol, an eye drop that prevented newborn blindness — it made him a fortune, which he invested into what's considered one of the world's most important collections of Impressionist and post-Impressionist art, claiming 181 Renoirs, 69 Cézannes, 46 Picassos (one from his Blue era), a couple of Van Goghs, a Degas dancer, a Pissaro and the collection's crown jewel: Matisse's *Joy of Life*...not to mention another 58 of his works. Part of the museum's intrigue lay in Barnes' whimsical curation with myriad ways to contemplate each work.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art is worth the visit and not just for paying homage to Rocky. The collection includes works by modern masters like Picasso, Duchamp and Dalí as well as pieces by notable contemporary greats, such as Cy Twombly and Jasper Johns. Its Beaux-Arts-style Rodin Museum annex is home to the largest collection of the artist's works outside of Paris.

I've just barely scratched the surface, but I know one thing for sure: history won't repeat itself — decades won't elapse between now and next time. Until then, Philly. ■



Say Cheese

Squacquerone. All together now: skwa-kwe-ROW-nay. The pronunciation may seem challenging, but the taste of this creamy Italian cheese is apparent at first bite. Fresh, sweet and tangy with a soft texture and pearly white hue, Squacquerone is an emblem of Emilia-Romagna. This PDO cow milk cheese undergoes a four-day maturation and has been enjoyed since Roman times. Its delicate aroma and sweet flavor make it an excellent filling for piadina, the local flatbread, as well as a delightful ingredient for countless other preparations, from risotto to desserts. Should you find yourself trying to fend off a late-night craving for cheesecake, throw some raspberries atop a luscious bowlful of Squacquerone for a satisfying no-bake recipe.

Hungry for more? Visit www.lacucinaitaliana.com



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