

Delicious Italian Classics to Cook at Home

Minestrone

This is an easy soup that is very traditional and very satisfying. Serve with crusty bread for dunking.

Serves 6 Preparation: 45 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium potato, diced (about 1 cup)
- 2 tablespoons onion, diced
- 1 carrot, cubed (about ½ cup)
- 1 celery stalk, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced
- 1 cup zucchini, diced
- 2 cans low-sodium chicken broth (15 ounces each)
- 1 can cannelloni beans (15 ounces)
- 1 can Italian-style stewed tomatoes (14 ounces)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup small pasta, uncooked
- Parmesan cheese

Preparation Method

1. In a saucepan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add potato, onion, and carrot. Cook 5–7 minutes until vegetables are softened, then add all remaining ingredients except pasta, and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce heat, add pasta, and cook until pasta is done. Season the minestrone with salt and pepper to taste.
3. To serve, ladle into soup bowls. Top with parmesan cheese.

Caesar Salad

The salad is accredited to an Italian immigrant who opened a restaurant in the United States, not the commonly assumed Julius Caesar. The dressing is bright and tangy.

Serves 4–6 Preparation: 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 bunch romaine lettuce, cleaned and torn into bite-sized pieces
- 1 cup fresh croutons, 1-inch pieces, toasted
- Ses salt and freshly ground pepper

Dressing

- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- ⅓ cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/8 teaspoon mustard powder
- 1 anchovy fillet
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Preparation Method

1. Arrange lettuce in serving bowl.
2. In a food processor, combine all dressing ingredients. Process until well blended. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Prior to serving, pour dressing on lettuce and toss. Add croutons, toss again, and serve immediately.

Gnocchi Basic Recipe

Translated as “little lumps” these are simple pillows of dough created from a potato base. They are eager to soak up sauce.

Serves 6 *Preparation: 60 minutes*

Ingredients

- 1½ pounds boiling potatoes (do not substitute new potatoes; they do not have the same starch level required)
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- Olive oil

Preparation Method

1. Boil the potatoes, skins on, in a large pot of water until tender, about 30 minutes. Drain.
2. As soon as you can touch them, remove the skins from hot potatoes. Press the potatoes through a food mill, and turn onto counter. Add most of the flour, and begin to knead. When the mixture is smooth and soft, but still sticky, there is enough flour.
3. Roll dough out into 1-inch-thick logs. Slice into ¾-inch pieces dusting hands and knife with flour as needed. Next, shape the gnocchi by rolling each along a fork, creating grooves. They should become barrel-shaped. Continue until all have been rolled.
4. To cook: boil 4 quarts of water in a large, wide pot to which about a tablespoon of olive oil has been added. Drop gnocchi, in batches, and cook for just 8–10 seconds, scooping out with a slotted spoon. Transfer to serving plate and keep warm.

Gnocchi Piedmont Style

This is another regional favorite. It has grown to be loved across Italy and beyond.

Serves 6 *Preparation: 40 minutes*

Ingredients

- 1 batch gnocchi, cooked
- 4 cups tomato sauce
- 1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
- ½ cup prosciutto, chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 1 cup heavy cream (35% fat)
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ⅓ cup parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped

Preparation Method

1. Melt butter in saucepan over medium heat. Add mushrooms, prosciutto, onions, and cook until softened. Stir in cream, pepper, and nutmeg, and heat to boiling. Reduce heat and cook, uncovered, until thickened, about 15 minutes. Stir frequently.
2. Stir in spaghetti sauce, and simmer an additional 10–12 minutes until heated through.
3. Serve over hot gnocchi. Sprinkle with parmesan and chopped parsley.

Italian Rice with four cheeses

This rice is very rich and creamy. The four cheeses create a complex flavor profile.

Serves 4 Preparation: 25–30 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup Arborio rice
- 2 tablespoons dry white wine
- 3–4 cups chicken broth
- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- ¼ cup mozzarella, shredded
- ¼ cup blue cheese (or gorgonzola)
- ¼ cup parmesan, grated
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped

Preparation Method

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook onion until tender and translucent, about 5 minutes.
2. Stir in rice, and cook 3–4 minutes, stirring. Add wine, and cook until liquid evaporates.
3. Start with half cup of broth poured over rice mixture. Stir often while cooking. When liquid has evaporated, repeat 1 cup at a time.
4. When rice is creamy and softened, remove from heat and stir in all cheeses. Sprinkle with parsley prior to serving.

Veal Scaloppini with Marsala and Mushroom Sauce

The veal is made even tender by flattening out prior to cooking. Marsala wine and mushrooms create a flavorful, quick sauce.

Serves 4 Preparation: 25 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 pound veal scaloppini, flattened
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 small clove garlic, thinly sliced
- Flour for dredging
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup veal stock
- 1 cup dry Marsala wine
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

Preparation Method for the scaloppini

1. Pound out the veal with a mallet or rolling pin to about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch
2. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil and 1 tablespoon of the butter over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, dredge the veal in flour. Salt and pepper both sides. Dredge only as many as will fit in the skillet.
3. Cook veal about 1 minute on each side or until cooked through. Remove from skillet, and place on an oven-proof platter. Keep warm, in oven, while remaining veal is cooked.

Preparation Method for the Marsala sauce

1. In the same skillet, add 1 tablespoon of olive oil. On medium-high heat, sauté mushrooms and garlic until softened. Remove the mushrooms from the pan and set aside.
2. Add the veal stock and loosen any remaining bits in the pan. On high heat, let reduce by half, about 6-8 minutes. Add Marsala wine and lemon juice and in the same manner reduce by half, about 6-8 minutes. Add the mushroom back in the saucepan, and stir in the Dijon mustard. Warm for 1 minute on medium-low heat. Remove from heat, stir in the remaining butter to make the sauce silkier.
3. To serve, pour sauce over veal, and serve immediately.

Classic Tiramisu in a Glass

Is there a better way to finish a great Italian meal than have a creamy delicious tiramisu? I think not! This recipe calls for all the traditional ingredients we use to make this classic dessert.

Serves 6 Preparation: 3h30 minutes or more

Ingredients

- 1½ pounds mascarpone
- 6 eggs
- ⅔ cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons of vanilla
- 1 cup Espresso – very strong
- Amaretto liquor (optional)
- 18 Lady fingers cookies
- Cocoa powder
- Mint leaves for decoration

Preparation Method

1. Beat eggs, sugar, and vanilla about 8-10 minutes, until it's very smooth and the cream has become fluffy and almost white. Incorporate the mascarpone cheese, and mix for an additional 4 to 6 minutes.
2. Prepare the espresso so it is very strong. Pour the coffee into a shallow bowl, and if desired, add some amaretto to taste. Break the lady finger cookies in two before soaking. Soak the cookies one piece at a time very quickly, literally in and out of the coffee. Let rest on a plate.
3. To assemble the tiramisu, deposit 1 tablespoon of the mascarpone cream at the bottom of serving glass, just so it barely covers the bottom. Place 2 or 3 pieces of the soaked cookie, and cover with the mascarpone cream. Lightly sprinkle with cocoa powder. Repeat another layer of cookies and cream and cocoa powder until the glass is almost filled. Finish with the cocoa powder.
4. Refrigerate at least 3 hours before you are ready to serve.
5. Decorate with fresh mint leaves.

***These recipes and more are found in Gabriella Lepore's *Mangia! Classic Italian Recipes*. To get your own copy, click on the cover below or click [here](#).

