

# Spring Northern Italian

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# about the class

You will notice there are very few exact amounts given in these recipes. Our instructor, Louise Berndt, is encouraging you to be bold and cook to your taste! If you like lots of garlic, the use lots. If you don't like garlic, barely use it! Unlike baking, where measurements are of utmost importance, in cooking it is easy to be inventive and experimental. Have fun!

## antipasta

Antipasta literally means "before the meal".

### mixed vegetables

- Carrots
- Celery
- Peppers
- Fennel
- Olive Oil
- Selection of mustards – yellow, stone ground, Dijon

Put mustard and olive oil in shallow dish. Do not mix. Use as dip for sliced vegetables. People can mix it as they dip; this allows them to take as much or as little mustard as they want.

### asparagus bundles

- Asparagus
- Fontina Cheese
- Prosciutto
- Butter

Steam or parboil asparagus until almost tender. Drain and cool. Slice cheese into lengthwise sections. Lay out three asparagus spears with slice of cheese and wrap with one or two slices of prosciutto. Lay flat in baking dish and dot with butter. Bake briefly in oven preheated to 400 degrees just until cheese is melted.

# dolce

Two desserts- one quick and easy and the other a perfect project for when you have a little more time.

## tiramisu

- 16 oz Mascarpone Cheese
- Sponge Cake or Lady Fingers
- 5 Eggs
- Coffee and/or Marsala wine
- Sugar (superfine)
- Cocoa powder

Lay out cake or lady fingers in a cake dish. Sprinkle with coffee and/or marsala. The proportions are 1 egg to each 3oz. mascarpone.

Separate the needed eggs and set the egg whites aside. Whip mascarpone and egg yolks together until light and smooth. Add sugar to taste. Whip the egg whites separately until they form soft peaks. Fold into mascarpone--egg yolk mixture. Spread over cake/lady finger mixture. Add another layer of cake/lady fingers. Sprinkle with coffee and/or marsala, spread mascarpone cream, then another layer of ladyfingers, then another layer of cream etc., etc., etc., until done. Sprinkle with cocoa.

## strawberry dessert

- Strawberries
- 2 Lemons
- Balsamic Vinegar
- Sugar

Wash, hull and slice strawberries. Lightly sugar. Add lemon juice or balsamic vinegar. Excellent with the tiramisu!

# secundo (cont.)

## rosemary potatoes

- Yukon Gold Potatoes
- Corn oil (Peanut or Safflower)
- Butter
- Rosemary
- Salt
- Pepper

Heat oil in pan. Peel and cut potatoes into 1 inch cubes. Add to pan as you are cutting. Add butter, rosemary. Cook over moderate heat, turning potatoes until crispy and golden on all sides. Salt and pepper to taste. Chopped garlic can be added if desired. Oil is good for sautéing meat quickly if desired.

## eggplant with mozzarella

- 1 Eggplant
- 2-3 Tomatoes
- Large Balls of fresh Mozzarella
- Italian Parsley
- Garlic
- Olive Oil
- Salt and Pepper

Slice eggplant crosswise into rounds and score. Slice tomatoes into rounds. Slice mozzarella. Chop parsley. Chop garlic. Heat olive oil in pan to moderate temperature. Add scored eggplant. Top with chopped parsley and garlic. Top with tomato slices. Salt and pepper. Cover and cook on low heat until eggplant is tender. Add mozzarella slices. Cover and cook until cheese is just melted.

# primo

Primo, the first course, is usually pasta based. If pasta is ever the main course, it would certainly be paired with a large salad or greens.

## risotto with spinach

- 1 ½ lb fresh spinach
- Nutmeg
- Cayenne Pepper
- Onions
- Butter
- Parmesan or Grana Padana
- Chicken Stock
- Rice--Arborio or other fat short grained rice
- Corn oil, or other vegetable oil, such as peanut or sunflower oil

Cook, drain, squeeze, and chop spinach. Heat chicken broth until almost boiling—dilute with water. Heat oil over moderate flame in a pot. Add chopped onions and sauté until just transparent. Do not brown. Add rice and heat, stirring, until rice is somewhat transparent. Add spinach and stir. Ladle enough diluted broth just to cover rice mixture. Let rice absorb broth. Repeat until rice is tender. That is, until you no longer see or feel a hard white center in the grains of rice—this is al dente. You just keep adding broth and/or water until your rice is done. Be sure to let each addition of liquid fully absorb before you add the next so it doesn't become too liquid. Add nutmeg and cayenne to taste. Ladle just a bit more broth then add butter and grated cheese. Some prefer a thinner texture. In that case add a bit more broth, but risotto is to be eaten with a fork. It is not a soup.

## ravioli with walnut garlic sauce

- 2 pkgs Butternut Squash Ravioli
- Olive Oil
- Garlic
- Italian Parsley
- 1 C. Walnuts

Brown crushed garlic in olive oil until just golden over moderate heat. Do not burn. Remove and set lovely golden garlic aside. Add coarsely chopped walnuts and heat until fragrant. Turn off heat. Boil water and add salt. Add ravioli and cook until done—when pasta is cooked through and shows no white. Drain. Heat walnut-oil sauce. Add golden garlic and chopped parsley to taste. Salt if necessary. Pepper or cayenne is optional. Add nut sauce to ravioli and mix. Parmesan optional.

# primo (cont.)

## spaghetti with eggplant

- 1 Italian Eggplant
- Spaghetti (thin)
- Dried, Hot Red Pepper
- Olive Oil
- Can of Tomato chunks or cut up tomato
- Garlic
- Chopped parsley (optional)

Slice eggplant into ½ inch strips lengthwise. Heat olive oil until moderately hot. Sauté eggplant slices in oil until golden on both sides. Don't worry about oil absorption as it will reemerge as eggplant cooks. Set slices aside as they finish cooking. Heat olive oil in saucepan. Brown chopped garlic until just golden then add tomatoes. Simmer at low heat and slice eggplant slices crosswise. Add to tomato sauce. Add hot pepper to taste. Simmer until oil appears. Taste for salt and pepper. Add parsley if desired.

Boil water. Add salt and thin spaghetti. Cook until done, when there is no white center. Drain. Add sauce. Eat. Grated cheese does not go with this pasta.

# secundo

The second course of an Italian meal is usually meat based and complimented with plenty of vegetables, but it could also be a hearty vegetable dish.

## Italian style chicken

- 3 lbs chicken breast
- Italian Parsley--chopped
- 2 Lemons
- Marsala Wine
- Pinot Grigio
- Corn Oil (Peanut can be a substitute)
- Flour
- Cayenne
- Black pepper
- Salt

These are three easy ways of preparing chicken breast or thin slices of veal (SCALLOPINI). You may choose to eat lemon chicken, white wine chicken, or marsala chicken. Squeeze lemon and reserve juice. Slice chicken breast in to *very* thin pieces across the grain. Heat oil over moderate to moderately high temperature. Dredge chicken in flour. Brown chicken in oil and remove from pan. Be careful, when meat is cut so thin, it will cook quickly. Add sauce—either lemon juice, marsala, or white wine to the pan. Pepper and salt to taste. Deglaze the pan and pour over chicken. Add parsley if desired. The same technique works for veal. For a richer dish heavy cream may be added to marsala.

## trifolate

- Mushrooms or Zucchini
  - Mushrooms can be mixture, oyster, button, cremini
- Olive Oil
- Garlic--chopped
- Italian Parsley—chopped
- Salt
- Pepper

Slice vegetables as thin as possible. If using zucchini, you can salt ahead of time to keep them from losing too much water in the pan. Heat oil and add garlic and vegetables. Cook until just browned and tender. Salt and pepper to taste. Add parsley.