



Bruschetta con Pomodori e Mozzarella **(Bruschetta with Sundried Tomatoes and Mozzarella)**

Ingredients

- 1 Whole Baguette sliced into 18 even rounds
- 400g Mozzarella - sliced
- 1 jar sundried tomatoes **Finely chopped and drained but keep the oil**
- 200g diced fresh tomatoes
- 2 cloves garlic - minced or **VERY** finely chopped
- 4 tablespoons fresh basil - chopped
- A little Salt and black pepper

1. Arrange the baguette slices on baking trays and lightly brush with the reserved sundried tomato oil
2. Toast in oven at 200 degrees for 10 minutes until the bread is lightly brown and crisp
3. Mix together the sundried tomatoes, fresh tomatoes and garlic and season with salt and pepper
4. Place a slice of mozzarella on each piece of bread, top with the tomatoes and sprinkle with chopped basil

Pasta e Fagioli

(Pasta and bean soup - serves 6)

Ingredients

- 1 medium sized onion peeled and finely chopped
- 3 large carrots – peeled and diced
- 4 sticks of celery - finely diced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley - including the stalks
- Few sprigs fresh thyme or ½ teaspoons dried thyme
- 2 cloves of garlic – peeled and crushed
- 1 parmesan rind (optional but it really enhances the flavour)
- Salt and black pepper
- 3 pints water

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 150ml (5fl ozs) white wine
 - 14ozs canned peeled tomatoes (I use Mutti Polpa finely chopped)
 - 2 cans cannellini beans (drained)
 - 200 grams – 8ozs short pasta, macaroni or broken spaghetti
 - Grated parmesan to serve
1. Heat the olive oil in a **Large** saucepan and gently cook the onion, garlic, celery and carrots (**this is known in Italy as the soffritto**)
 2. Add the bay leaves, thyme, parsley, salt and pepper, water and parmesan rind, bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently for 45 minutes
 3. **Remove the parmesan rind and bay leaves** and then add the tomatoes and white wine
 4. Bring to the boil, add the pasta and cook for 10 minutes or until soft
 5. Stir in the drained cannellini beans, heat through and serve with plenty of grated parmesan cheese

Chef's tips

- This freezes beautifully complete
- Dried beans can be used but they need to be soaked overnight and cooked before adding to the soup
- A mixture of beans can be used ie. Borlotti, butter beans as well as cannellini
- Spelt can be used in place of pasta to give a nutty flavour
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Pollo Ripiena al Forno

(Stuffed and Roasted Chicken Thighs - serves 6)

Ingredients

- 6 Skinless and boneless chicken thighs
- 6 wooden cocktail sticks
- 1 heaped tablespoon runny honey

Stuffing:

- 8ozs white breadcrumbs
- 1 large egg
- 3 spring onions
- 1 clove of garlic
- Grated rind of ½ a lemon
- ½ teaspoon oregano
- 1 tablespoon parsley
- 3 slices Parma ham
- 4 sundried tomatoes
- A little salt and black pepper

1. Place all of the stuffing ingredients into a food processor and pulse until completely smooth
2. Trim any fat from the chicken thighs
3. Divide the stuffing mixture into 6 portions and spread on the inside of the chicken thighs
4. Fold them over and secure each with a wooden cocktail stick
5. Place in an oven proof dish
6. Drizzle over the honey and roast at 180 degrees for 40 minutes
7. Remove the cocktail sticks, cover the dish loosely with tin foil and allow to rest for 10 minutes before serving

Chef's Tips

- These can be prepared the day before - **keep refrigerated until you are ready to cook them**
- They can also be prepared in advance and frozen before cooking
- **Make sure they are thoroughly defrosted before roasting**
- They freeze really well cooked and delicious **served cold**

Broccoli alla Romana

(Serves 6)

Ingredients

- 750g Broccoli Spears
- 6 Fresh Tomatoes
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 Tablespoon Olive oil
- 3 spring onions - chopped
- Few basil leaves - torn
- Salt and black pepper

1. Cover the tomatoes with boiling water and leave to stand for 5 minutes
2. Drain and cover with **COLD** water, peel off the skins and dice
3. Gently heat the olive oil in a saucepan, add the onion and garlic and cook for 3 minutes, add the diced tomatoes and season with salt and pepper and continue to cook gently for a further 5 minutes
4. Add the basil and set aside
5. Cook the broccoli spears in boiling salted water until tender, drain and set aside
6. Place a third of the broccoli in a serving dish, top with a third of the tomato mixture and repeat twice more finishing with a layer of tomato

Chef's Tip

- This can be prepared a day in advance and microwaved when needed
- The tomato topping can be made and frozen - particularly good when you have a glut
- Use the topping to 'liven up' green beans

Patate Arrostiti con Rosmarino e Aglio

(Serves 6)

Ingredients

- 750g small new potatoes
- 1 large onion cut into thin wedges
- 2 crushed cloves of garlic
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- Few sprigs of fresh Rosemary or a teaspoon of dried
- Sea salt to season

1. Place the potatoes, onion, garlic and Rosemary in an oven proof dish or roasting tin
2. Add the olive oil and stir the potatoes etc until completely coated
3. Sprinkle with sea salt and roast at 200 degrees for 40 – 45 minutes until golden brown turning them half way through the cooking time.

Chef's Tip

- These are **not suitable** for freezing but reheat beautifully in a hot oven for 10 minutes
- If the potatoes are on the large side, cut in half and cook cut side down and then turn over halfway through cooking

Torta di Limone e Ricotta

(Traditionally served on Easter Sunday)

Ingredients for pastry

- 250g or 10ozs Plain Flour
- 125g or 5ozs Butter or margarine
- 1 tablespoon icing sugar
- 1 large egg

Ingredients for filling

- 350g (12ozs) Ricotta
- 2 large beaten eggs
- 100g (4ozs) caster sugar
- Grated rind of 1 lemon
- 50g (2ozs) ground almonds
- 50g (2ozs) of either raisins or chocolate chips
- Icing sugar to dust

1. Place the flour, butter and icing sugar into a food processor and pulse until it resembles fine breadcrumbs (or do by hand by rubbing in method)
2. Add the egg and pulse again until the mixture forms a ball
3. Refrigerate for 30 minutes
4. Roll out to fit a 9inch or 23 cm Loose bottom metal flan tin

RESERVE ALL THE PASTRY TRIMMINGS

5. Beat together the ricotta, eggs, caster sugar, ground almonds and lemon rind
6. Stir in the raisins or chocolate chips and pour into the pastry case
7. Roll out the pastry trimmings and cut into strips.
8. Dampen the edges of the flan and use the pastry strips to form a lattice top
9. Bake at 160 degrees - gas mark 4 for 45 minutes or until the filling is firm and lightly browned
10. Allow to cool and then dust with icing sugar

Chef's Tips

- This tart (known as a **Pastiera**) freezes beautifully, can be made in advance and served on Easter Sunday
- It works well with grated orange rind in place of the lemon
- A tea spoon of vanilla essence can be used to replace lemon or orange rind

Tira Mi Su

serves 6-8

Ingredients

- 400ml double cream
- 250g Mascarpone (1 drum)
- 4 level tablespoons caster sugar
- 75 ml Marsala
- 300 ml black coffee =
- 2 tablespoons coffee granules dissolved in 300 ml water
- 175 g sponge fingers – usually one box
- 25g grated dark chocolate

1. Place the coffee and marsala into a shallow bowl
2. Whisk together the double cream, mascarpone and caster sugar until thick
3. Dip the sponge fingers into the coffee mixture a few at a time (do not allow them to soak as they will disintegrate) and arrange in a layer in the bottom of a square or rectangular dish or glass bowl
4. Spread half of the cream mixture over the sponge fingers and repeat the process again forming a second layer
5. Cover the top with the grated chocolate and refrigerate for at least 4 – 6 hours or preferable overnight

Chef's Tips

- Brandy or Rum can be used in place of Marsala
- This dish can be made two days in advance
- This is **NOT SUITABLE FOR FREEZING**

