

Chef

express



perfect italian dinner



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perfect italian dinner

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introduction

Today practically all cooks have included in their menus some type of Italian dish. Multicolor vegetables, cheeses of unique character, proverbial pasta, intensely fragrant herbs fresh fish and seafood, garlic and olive oil make up a passionate, natural cuisine that seduces gourmets worldwide.



perfect italian dinner

Through the following pages you'll find a number of Italian dinner party recipes, as well as weeknight-friendly, quick meals and vegetarian.

In the Italian kitchen, melty cheeses, fresh tomatoes, fragrant basil, savory garlic, olive oil, and many other vibrant, high-quality ingredients are combined to create incredible textures and flavors... That's why one of the most important aspects of Italian cooking is using the best ingredients possible, especially when a recipe calls for just a few of them! Additionally, in season fruits and vegetables are always preferred as the typical Italian diet uses fresh produce, almost exclusively.

Cheeses like the Parmesan, mascarpone, ricotta and mozzarella have already acquired international status. The prosciutto from Parma has a well earned reputation as an exquisitely refined ham. Herbs like basil, thyme, rosemary, sage, oregano are definitely meridional. And the simple Caprese salad (tomato, basil, mozzarella and olive oil) has become a typical delight anyone can enjoy.



This cuisine that has crossed boundaries has even been known to create emblematic dishes with products originated in the Americas such as peppers and tomato.

When it comes to pasta, Italians like to eat pasta dressed with sauce, as opposed to sauce dressed with pasta! If possible, avoid topping your pasta with too much sauce, and using too much tomato purée when making the sauce. Another important aspect involves always boiling the pasta in salted water, and using sea salt. Also, dishes should be seasoned while cooking, rather than before serving, and try tasting your preparations as you move along through every step of the recipe, making sure that herbs, spices and seasonings are on point. Finally, make sure to enjoy your Italian feast with your favorite people!

Are you ready to start cooking Italian food like a true Italian cook? Get the knives out, and start cooking your way to this extraordinary country.

Difficulty scale

■ □ □ | Easy to do

■ ■ □ | Requires attention

■ ■ ■ | Requires experience

tomatoes with basil & cheese filling

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 0 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 6 tomatoes
- > 2 tablespoons fresh basil leaves
- > 8 oz/250 g ricotta cheese
- > ½ cup cottage cheese
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 2 tablespoons French dressing
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil, extra
- > fresh thyme, dill and parsley, for garnish

method

1. Slice about 1 inch from top of each tomato, scoop out pulp carefully with teaspoon. Blend or process tomato pulp with basil until smooth.
2. Combine ricotta and cottage cheese in bowl; mix well, stir in garlic, dressing and extra basil. Spoon cheese mixture into tomatoes; refrigerate several hours before serving; serve topped with tomato pulp mixture.
3. Garnish with thyme, dill and parsley, if desired.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

Tomatoes are hollowed out, filled with a cheesy stuffing, and baked, to create a truly savory appetizer.





three bean salad

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 0 minutes - Preparation time: 5 minutes

method

1. Drain beans, rinse well under cold water; drain well.
2. Combine parsley in bowl with lime juice, olive oil, garlic, mustard, salt and cayenne pepper; mix in beans and corn.
3. Top with sliced red chili peppers.

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Serves 6

ingredients

- > 14 oz/400 g cans kidney beans
- > 11 oz/310 g cans butter beans
- > 10 oz/280 g cans broad beans
- > ¼ cup chopped parsley
- > ⅓ cup fresh lime juice
- > ½ cup olive oil
- > 1 clove garlic, minced
- > 1 teaspoon salt
- > ⅛ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- > 1 tablespoon seeded mustard
- > ½ cup sweet corn kernels, canned
- > sliced red chili peppers, for garnish

tip from the chef

Any dried or canned bean of your choice can be used.



fruit & cheese platter

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 0 minutes - Preparation time: 5 minutes

ingredients

- > 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- > 2 red-skinned apples, cored and cut into wedges
- > 2 green-skinned apples, cored and cut into wedges
- > 4 kiwifruit, peeled and cut into slices
- > 2 oranges, peeled and segmented
- > 4 oz/100 g Camembert cheese
- > 4 oz/100 g Stilton cheese
- > 4 oz/100 g tasty cheese (mature Cheddar)
- > cheese biscuits, purchased or homemade

method

1. Place lemon juice in a small bowl, add red and green apple wedges and toss to coat. This will help prevent the apple wedges from going brown.
2. Arrange red and green apple wedges, kiwifruit slices, orange segments, Camembert, Stilton and tasty (mature Cheddar) cheeses attractively with biscuits on a large platter.

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Serves 10



tip from the chef

This classic party go-to can be made using any of your favorite fruits, crackers and cheeses.





two topping crostini

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 12 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. Brush bread slices with oil, place under a preheated hot grill and toast both sides until golden. Rub one side of toasts with cut side of garlic cloves.
2. For tomato and basil topping, top half the toast slices with some tomato, onion and basil, and grill for 1-2 minutes or until topping is warm.
3. For eggplant and feta topping, brush eggplant slices with oil and cook under preheated hot grill for 3-4 minutes each side or until lightly browned. Top remaining toasts with eggplant slices and sprinkle with feta cheese and black pepper to taste. Cook under a preheated hot grill for 1-2 minutes or until topping is warm.

- > 1 French bread stick, cut into ½ in / 1 cm slices
- > 2 tablespoons olive oil
- > 2 cloves garlic, halved

Tomato and basil topping

- > 2 tomatoes, sliced
- > 1 red onion, sliced
- > 2 tablespoons shredded basil leaves

Eggplant and feta topping

- > 2 baby eggplant, sliced
- > 1 tablespoon olive oil
- > 125 g/4 oz feta cheese, crumbled
- > freshly ground black pepper

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Serves 8-12

tip from the chef

Crostini, made from hot baguette slice toasts, can be topped with various pastes of cheese, olives or feta cheese with olive oil.



antipasto platter

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 25 minutes

ingredients

Three-cheese dip

- > 4 oz/125 g creamy blue cheese, crumbled
- > 4 oz/125 g ricotta cheese, drained
- > 4 oz/125 g provolone cheese, grated
- > 1 tablespoon sour cream
- > 3 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
- > 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- > 1 teaspoon crushed black peppercorns

Vegetable and herb crisps

- > 3 zucchinis, cut in long thin strips
- > 1 large eggplant, thinly sliced
- > Vegetable oil for deepfrying
- > 20 leaves each basil and sage
- > 20 small sprigs parsley

Crunchy prosciutto

- > 12 slices prosciutto
- > 2 tablespoons balsamic or red wine vinegar
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed

method

1. To make dip, place blue cheese, ricotta cheese, provolone cheese and sour cream in a bowl and mix well to combine. Stir in chives, lemon juice and black pepper. Cover and chill until required.
2. To make crisps, place zucchini and eggplant in a colander, sprinkle with salt and set aside to stand for 20 minutes. Rinse vegetables under cold running water and pat dry with absorbent kitchen paper. Heat oil in a large saucepan until a cube of bread dropped in browns in 50 seconds. Cook vegetables and herbs in batches for 2-3 minutes or until crisp. Remove, using a slotted spoon, and drain on absorbent kitchen paper.
3. Cut prosciutto slices in half, lengthwise. Place vinegar and garlic in a small bowl and whisk to combine. Brush prosciutto with vinegar mixture and cook under a preheated medium grill for 1-2 minutes each side or until crisp. Serve warm or cold, on a platter with dip and crisps.

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Serves 8

tip from the chef

This antipasto platter uses a combination of purchased and homemade foods. You could include olives, sun-dried tomatoes, artichoke hearts, cheese and bread.





spaghetti

with clams

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 40 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add the spaghetti and cook until al dente.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the shallots and parsley stalks and cook for 2-3 minutes until softened, then add the garlic and cook for a further 1 minute or until fragrant. Add the wine and bring to a simmer.
3. Increase heat to high and add the clams. Cover with a lid and cook, shaking the pan occasionally, for 3-4 minutes until all have opened. Remove from the heat and stir through the parsley leaves. Season with pepper.
4. Drain the pasta, reserving $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125ml) cooking liquid then add the pasta and reserved liquid to the clams to serve.

ingredients

- > 14 oz/400 g spaghetti
- > 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- > 3 shallots, thinly sliced
- > 1 small bunch parsley, stalks chopped,
- > leaves chopped
- > 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- > 1 cup dry white wine
- > 4 lb clams or mussels, cleaned

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

Simple, quick and impressive. This is one dish you'll be adding to your holiday repertoire. It pairs wonderfully with Sicilian white wines.



seafood lasagne

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 50 minutes - Preparation time: 40 minutes

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons olive oil
- > 1 leek, white part only, rinsed and finely chopped
- > salt and pepper, to taste
- > 2 cups tinned Italian tomatoes with juice, chopped
- > 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- > 2½ cups shrimp, shelled and deveined, cut into small pieces
- > 1 cup boneless fish fillet, cut into small pieces
- > 15 lasagna sheets
- > ¾ cup grated mozzarella cheese
- > fresh chopped thyme, for garnish

method

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Heat the oil in a large frying pan, add the leek and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes and paste. Cook until mixture boils. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
2. Simmer uncovered until sauce is slightly thickened. Stir in the shrimp and fish pieces, cover and cook over low heat for about 5 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, cook the lasagna sheets in a saucepan of boiling water until just cooked but still firm in center. Place lasagna in a large bowl of cool water until ready to use.
4. Spoon ⅓ of the sauce into the bottom of a 2 in deep casserole dish. Drain lasagna sheets and arrange a single layer over the seafood sauce. Spoon another ⅓ of the sauce over the sheets, and top with another layer of lasagna, and mozzarella cheese. Cover with foil. Bake 30 minutes. Uncover, and bake 10 more minutes, or until cheese is golden. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting. Sprinkle with chopped thyme, if desired.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

If using large lasagna sheets, cut them into smaller pieces. This will make it easier to cut the lasagna into individual portions.





spinach & ricotta cannelloni

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 40 minutes - Preparation time: 45 minutes

method

1. To make filling, place spinach and water in a saucepan, cover with a tight fitting lid and cook over a medium heat, shaking pan occasionally, for 4-5 minutes or until spinach wilts. Drain well, squeezing out excess water and set aside to cool.
2. Finely chop spinach and place in a bowl. Add ricotta cheese, Parmesan cheese, egg, nutmeg and black pepper to taste and mix to combine. Spoon mixture into cannelloni tubes and arrange tubes side-by-side in a lightly greased ovenproof dish.
3. Combine tomatoes and garlic in a bowl and spoon over cannelloni. Sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and Parmesan cheese and bake at 350°F/180°C/ Gas 3 for 30-35 minutes or until cannelloni is tender and top is golden.

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Serves 4

ingredients

- > 8 oz/250 g instant (no precooking required) cannelloni tubes
- > 14 oz/440 g canned tomatoes, drained and chopped
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 4 oz/125 g grated mozzarella cheese
- > 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Spinach filling

- > ½ bunch / 8 oz/250 g English spinach, shredded
- > ½ cup/4 fl oz/250 g water
- > 8 oz/ 250 g ricotta cheese, drained
- > 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- > 1 egg, beaten
- > ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- freshly ground black pepper

tip from the chef

An equally simple and impressive dish featuring juicy spinach and ricotta stuffed inside cannelloni tubes.



fettuccine with sun-dried tomatoes

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 4 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > 13 oz/400 g fresh or dried fettuccine
- > ¼ cups sunflower seeds
- > ½ cups sun-dried tomatoes, cut into thin strips
- > 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > ¼ cup olive oil
- > ½ cup heavy cream
- > ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- > salt and pepper, to taste

method

1. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil, add fettuccine and cook until just tender. Drain well.
2. Toast sunflower seeds in a large frying pan until golden. Stir in tomato paste, tomato strips, garlic and olive oil, cook 2 minutes. Add cream, cook further 5 minutes. Season with salt, to taste.
3. Stir tomato sauce into fettuccine, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, and pepper, if desired.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

A simple Mediterranean pasta featuring tender fettuccine layered with flavorful sun dried tomatoes, and rich Parmesan cheese.





chocolate almond biscotti

■□□ | Cooking time: 15 minutes - Preparation time: 40 minutes

method

1. Sift together flour, cocoa powder and bicarbonate of soda into a bowl. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture, add sugar, almonds and eggs and mix well to form a soft dough.
2. Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth. Divide dough into 4 equal portions. Roll out each portion of dough to make a strip that is $\frac{1}{4}$ in/5 mm thick and $1\frac{1}{2}$ in/4 cm wide.
3. Place strips on a baking tray lined with nonstick baking paper. Brush with egg yolk and bake at $350^{\circ}\text{F}/180^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{Gas } 4$ for 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Cut strips into $\frac{1}{2}$ in/1 cm slices, return to baking tray and bake for 10 minutes longer or until dry.

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Serves 18

ingredients

- > 2 cups/8 oz/250 g flour
- > $\frac{3}{4}$ cup /2½ oz/75 g cocoa powder
- > 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- > 1 cup/8 oz/250 g sugar
- > 6½ oz/200 g blanched almonds
- > 2 eggs
- > 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten, to brush

tip from the chef

Biscuits may be partially dipped into melted chocolate for a two-toned effect. Before the chocolate sets completely, dip into toasted crushed almonds.



three

tomato salad

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 0 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 6 egg (plum or Italian tomatoes, cut into wedges)
- > 8 oz/250 g cherry tomatoes, halved
- > 3 seasonal tomatoes, sliced
- > 1 red onion, chopped
- > 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- > 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > assorted lettuce leaves, or parsley

method

1. Place egg (plum or Italian) tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, tomatoes, onion, vinegar, basil and black pepper to taste in a bowl and toss to combine. Set aside to stand for 30 minutes.
2. Line a large serving platter with lettuce leaves, or parsley, and top with tomato mixture.

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Serves 6



tip from the chef

This salad can be made using any combination of tomatoes - so check the market and use what is in season available.





niçoise salad

■□□ | Cooking time: 0 minutes - Preparation time: 50 minutes

method

1. To make salad, place tuna, artichokes, if using, cheese, eggs, potatoes, tomatoes, onion, beans and olives in a large bowl and toss to combine.
2. To make dressing, place oil, vinegar, garlic, mustard and black pepper to taste in a screw-top jar and shake well to combine. Spoon dressing over salad and toss lightly.
3. Line a large serving platter with lettuce leaves and top with salad.

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Serves 6

ingredients

- > lettuce leaves of choice
- > 14 oz/440 g canned tuna, drained and flaked
- > 4 oz/125 g canned artichoke hearts, drained and sliced (optional)
- > 4 oz/125 g tasty cheese (mature Cheddar), cubed
- > 4 hard-boiled eggs, sliced
- > 2 potatoes, cooked and sliced
- > 2 tomatoes, sliced
- > 1 onion, sliced
- > 8 oz/250 g green beans, cooked
- > 1½ oz/45 g stuffed olives, sliced

Nicoise dressing

- > ¼ cup/2 fl oz/60 ml olive oil
- > 2 tablespoons vinegar
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- > freshly ground black pepper

tip from the chef

For a complete meal, serve with crusty fresh or toasted French bread. A few anchovies and shavings of Parmesan cheese are a great addition to this dish.



crispy chicken

marsala

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 30 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

ingredients

- > 1 cup all-purpose flour
- > kosher salt
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
- > 2 tablespoons butter, divided
- > 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- > 8 oz baby bella or cremini mushrooms, sliced
- > 2 cloves garlic, minced
- > ¾ cup marsala wine
- > ¾ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- > ½ cup heavy cream
- > 2 tablespoons freshly chopped parsley
- > fresh thyme, for garnish

method

1. In a shallow bowl, season flour with salt and pepper. Dredge chicken in flour.
2. In a large skillet over medium heat, melt 1 tablespoon butter and oil. Add chicken and cook until golden on both sides, about 5 minutes per side. Remove chicken from pan and place on a clean plate.
3. Make marsala sauce: Melt remaining 1 tablespoon butter in skillet and add mushrooms. Cook until mushrooms are golden and liquid has been released, 6 to 8 minutes (if the pan looks dry, add a splash of olive oil). Add garlic and cook until fragrant, then season with salt.
4. Add marsala, chicken broth, heavy cream, and parsley and bring to a simmer.
5. Return chicken to skillet and spoon sauce over breasts. Simmer until chicken is cooked through, about 10 minutes. Garnish with fresh thyme.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

The marsala wine makes this dish slightly sweet and is what gives it that addictive quality.





pasta fagioli

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. In a large, deep pot over medium heat, heat oil. Add sausage and cook, breaking up with a wooden spoon, until cooked through, about 5 minutes. Stir in onion, carrots, and celery and cook until slightly softened, about 5 minutes.
2. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, 1 minute more. Season with salt and pepper, then add in beans (with their liquid), diced tomatoes, chicken broth, and rosemary. Bring to a boil, then stir in elbow pasta. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
3. Reduce heat to medium and cook until pasta is al dente, about 8 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.
4. Serve in bowls garnished with Parmesan and parsley.

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Serves 6

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- > ½ lb. spicy (or sweet) Italian sausage
- > 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
- > 2 medium carrots, peeled and finely chopped
- > salt and pepper, to taste
- > 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- > 3 cloves garlic, minced
- > kosher salt
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 2 (15 oz) cans Great Northern Beans
- > 1 (15 oz) can diced tomatoes
- > 4 cups chicken broth
- > 2 sprigs rosemary, leaves finely chopped
- > 1½ cup elbow pasta (or other small shape)
- > freshly grated Parmesan, for garnish
- > freshly chopped parsley, for garnish

tip from the chef

A hearty, comforting dish, that can be made using any of your favorite beans and noodles, just try to use similar sized beans and pasta.



spaghetti

carbonara

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 30 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > ½ lb/500 g spaghetti
- > ¾ cup ham, finely sliced
- > salt and pepper, to taste
- > 1 tablespoon olive oil
- > 4 eggs
- > 4 tablespoons cream
- > ¾ cup freshly grated Pecorino cheese
- > chopped fresh parsley

method

1. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil, add spaghetti and cook until just tender.
2. Meanwhile heat the ham gently in the oil. In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs with the cream and the cheese.
3. Drain the cooked spaghetti and toss it with the egg and cheese mixture so the heat of the pasta “cooks” the sauce. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
4. Add the ham and toss again, serve immediately, garnished with chopped parsley.

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Serves 4



tip from the chef

Sparkling, white, and rosé wines pair perfectly with this flavorful dish.





spicy bolognese

with tuna

■■■ | Cooking time: 30 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Heat the oil in a medium frying pan, add the onions and cook until tender, about 4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
2. Stir in the garlic, add the tomatoes and wine and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, breaking up the tomato with the side of the spoon. Add the tuna, and stir to combine.
3. Simmer sauce, uncovered, until slightly thickened.
4. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil, add the pasta and cook until tender. Drain well and mix into tomato sauce. Serve immediately, garnished with fresh basil.

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Serves 4

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons olive oil
- > 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 2 cans tuna, drained
- > salt and pepper, to taste
- > 2 cups whole Italian style tomatoes with juice
- > ¼ cup dry white wine
- > 1 lb/500 g penne pasta
- > fresh basil, for garnish

tip from the chef

Fusilli pasta can be substituted for penne.



bows with rich tomato basil sauce

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 30 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

- > 6 oz/185 g bow pasta
- > tomato basil sauce
- > 2 teaspoons olive oil
- > 1 onion, sliced
- > 1 clove garlic, crushed
- > 3 tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
- > 4 fl oz/125 ml chicken stock
- > 1 tablespoon tomato purée
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
- > 2 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley
- > ½ teaspoon sugar
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > grated Parmesan cheese

method

1. Cook pasta in boiling water in a saucepan following packet directions. Drain, set aside and keep warm.
2. To make sauce, heat oil in a saucepan and cook onion and garlic over a medium heat for 3-4 minutes or until onion is soft. Add tomatoes, stock, tomato purée, basil, parsley and sugar and simmer for 10-15 minutes or until reduced and thickened. Season to taste with black pepper. Spoon sauce over pasta. Sprinkle with a little grated fresh Parmesan cheese and extra chopped fresh basil.

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Serves 2

tip from the chef

Any leftover sauce can be made into soup. To make, chop 1 small carrot and 1 stalk celery. Place leftover sauce, 8 fl oz/250 ml chicken stock, carrot and celery in a saucepan. Bring to simmering and simmer for 10-15 minutes or until carrot is tender. Season to taste with black pepper.





pasta with anchovies and basil sauce

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 30 minutes

method

1. Heat the oil and sauté garlic and anchovies until garlic is just yellow in color. Turn heat to very low, then toss halved tomatoes, basil leaves, sun-dried tomatoes and black olives in with the anchovies and oil.
2. Cook pasta in boiling, salted water until al dente and drain thoroughly. Pour sauce over fresh pasta and garnish with fresh chopped basil and sprinkle black pepper to taste.

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Serves 4

ingredients

- > 8 fl oz/250 ml olive oil
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 8 anchovy fillets, reserve oil
- > 2 punnets cherry tomatoes, halved
- > 20 fresh basil leaves, roughly chopped
- > 12 sun-dried tomatoes, sliced
- > 2 teaspoons black olives
- > 1 lb/500 g egg fettuccine
- > ½ cup fresh basil, chopped
- > freshly ground black pepper

tip from the chef

The basic dough for pasta is composed of 14 oz/400 g flour, 4 eggs, 1 tablespoon olive oil and salt. This formula will allow you to make all types of pasta.



penne with gonzola sauce

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

> 1 lb/500 g penne

Gorgonzola sauce

> 1 cup/8 fl oz/250 ml
cream (double)

> ½ cup/4 fl oz/125 ml
vegetable stock

> ½ cup/4 fl oz/125 ml white
wine

> 4 oz/125 g Gorgonzola or
blue cheese, crumbled

> 2 tablespoons chopped
flat-leaf parsley

> ½ teaspoon ground
nutmeg

> freshly ground black
pepper

method

1. Cook pasta in boiling water in a large saucepan following packet directions. Drain, set aside and keep warm.

2. To make sauce, place cream, stock, wine and Gorgonzola or blue cheese in a saucepan and cook, over a medium heat, stirring constantly, until smooth. Bring to simmering and simmer for 8 minutes or until sauce thickens.

3. Add parsley, nutmeg and black pepper to taste to sauce, bring to simmering and simmer for 2 minutes. Spoon sauce over hot pasta.

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

Reheating pasta can be done successfully, if it is already combined with a sauce. To reheat, place in a greased ovenproof dish, cover with foil, and reheat in a moderate oven.



scallop & pepper pasta

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 17 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

method

1. Cook pasta in boiling water in a large saucepan, following packet directions. Drain, set aside and keep warm.
2. Heat oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Add scallops and prosciutto or ham and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until scallops just turn opaque and prosciutto or ham is crisp. Remove pan from heat, stir in lemon juice, basil, and black pepper to taste, and set aside.
3. Place stock in a saucepan, bring to a simmer and cook until reduced by half. Add red pepper and leeks and simmer for 3 minutes. Add pasta and scallop mixture to stock mixture. Toss to combine and top with gremolata.

ingredients

- > 1 lb/500 g tagliarini
- > 1 tablespoon olive oil
- > 1 lb/500 g scallops
- > 3½ oz/100 g prosciutto or lean ham, cut into thin strips
- > 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- > 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil
- > freshly ground black pepper
- > 1 cup/8 fl oz /250 ml chicken stock
- > 1 red pepper, cut into strips
- > 2 leeks, cut into strips

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Serves 4

tip from the chef

When pepper is used to season pasta, it must always be fresh, ground in a wooden pepper mill and served at once.



tomato and basil pizza

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 30 minutes

ingredients

- > 1¾ oz/50 g fresh yeast
- > 1 teaspoon sugar
- > 10 fl oz/300 ml milk
- > 4½ oz/130 g of rice flour
- > 5¾ oz/165 g cassava flour
- > 8¾ oz/250 g corn starch
- > 1 teaspoon salt
- > 3½ oz/100 g butter
- > cooking spray, as needed

Topping

- > 3 tomatoes
- > ½ chopped onion
- > 1 teaspoon parsley
- > 1 teaspoon oregano
- > salt and pepper to taste
- > 7 oz/200 g cherry tomatoes
- > 7 oz/200 g grated mozzarella cheese
- > 12 basil leaves

method

1. Combine the yeast with sugar and milk. Place flours, yeast, salt and softened butter. Process until a soft dough is obtained. Let rise in a warm environment.
2. Roll out the dough, place it on a ½ in/2 cm pizza pan greased with cooking spray and let it rise. Cook dough in preheated oven for 7 minutes. Remove from oven.
3. For the topping, boil the tomatoes for a few minutes and peel them. Blend the tomatoes and onion and cook in a saucepan over medium heat for 5 minutes. Add parsley, oregano and salt and pepper to taste. Spread the precooked dough with the sauce. Arrange cherry tomatoes and mozzarella on top. Return to the oven until the cheese is melted. Serve immediately, garnished with basil leaves.

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Serves 8

tip from the chef

To avoid overworking your dough, it is best to knead dough by hand than to use a stand mixer with a dough hook. If the dough sticks to your hands, add a little bit of flour. The perfect dough should be slightly tacky, not sticky.



spaghetti

surf & turf

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 5 minutes - Preparation time: 15 minutes

ingredients

Spaghetti

- > 2 cloves garlic
- > 1 shallot, finely chopped
- > ½ cup butter
- > 3 tablespoons olive oil
- > ½ cup Riesling wine
- > 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- > ¾ cup chopped parsley
- > ½ teaspoon seafood spice
- > 16 shrimp, shelled
- > 3 leaves basil, to garnish
- > 10½ oz spaghetti
- > pepper to taste

Beef Fillet

- > 12 oz beef tenderloin
- > salt and pepper to taste
- > truffle salt to taste

method

1. **Spaghetti:** Cook pasta in salted boiling water just until al dente.
2. Sweat garlic and shallots in butter and olive oil. Add white wine and lemon juice. Add shelled shrimp and stir for 2 to 3 minutes until shrimp are pink. Season with seafood spice and ground black pepper.
3. Add to pasta and mix well. Garnish each serving with parsley and basil.
4. **Beef Fillet:** Cut tenderloin into slices 1 inch thick. Season both sides with salt, pepper and truffle salt. Grill 3 to 5 minutes per side for medium rare. Let rest for 5 minutes.
5. Slice each piece in half horizontally.

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Serves 3



tip from the chef

Pasta meets meat meets seafood! This succulent beef coupled with a seafood spaghetti won't disappoint!





bolognese lasagna

■ ■ □ | Cooking time: 1 hour, 45 minutes - Preparation time: 30 minutes

method

1. Heat the olive oil in a large soup pot over medium heat. When the oil shimmers, add the onion and season with salt and pepper. Cook 5 minutes or until onion is fragrant. Add bell pepper, garlic, sausage, and beef, brown all over, breaking up meat as you go, about 10 minutes.
2. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, oregano, bay leaves, milk, and 1 cup of water. Season with salt and pepper. Stir to combine. Cook over medium for 30 minutes, until the sauce has thickened slightly. Or cook, covered, for up to 3 hours over low heat, stirring occasionally. The longer you can cook, the more flavorful. Remove bay leaves and discard. If your sauce seems thick, add ½ cup additional water to thin.
3. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease a 9 x 13 inch pan. Spread ¼ of Bolognese sauce onto the bottom of the dish. Top with 3-4 lasagna sheets. Spread with ½ the ricotta cheese, another ¼ of the Bolognese sauce, and half of provolone. Place another 3-4 lasagna noodles on top. Then top with the remaining ricotta cheese, another ¼ of the Bolognese sauce, and remaining provolone. Add the remaining lasagna noodles and pour remaining Bolognese sauce over top. Top with mozzarella and parmesan cheese. Bake uncovered for 45 minutes or until the top has bubbled up and browned a bit. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

ingredients

- > 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- > 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- > 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- > 2 cloves garlic, minced or grated
- > ¾ pound ground spicy Italian sausage
- > ½ pound lean ground beef
- > kosher salt and black pepper
- > 1 x 28 oz can chopped tomatoes
- > ¼ cup tomato paste
- > 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- > 1 bay leaf
- > 1 cup whole milk
- > 2 cups shredded provolone cheese
- > 2 cups whole milk ricotta cheese
- > 6 ounces fresh mozzarella, torn
- > 1 box no-boil lasagna noodles
- > grated parmesan and fresh basil, for serving

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Serves 8



seafood

ravioli with vermouth

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 40 minutes

ingredients

Ravioli Dough

- > 2 cups plain flour
- > 1 egg, lightly beaten
- > 2 teaspoons oil
- > ½ cup water, approximately

Prawn Filling

- > 14 oz/400 g shelled prawns
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
- > 2 teaspoons dry vermouth
- > ¼ cup cream

Salmon and Dill Sauce

- > 2 x 10 fl oz/300 ml cartons cream
- > large vegetable stock cube, crumbled
- > 1½ tablespoons dry vermouth
- > 1 teaspoon corn flour
- > 1 teaspoon water
- > 1 zucchini, cubed
- > 3 oz/90 g cooked salmon, cubed
- > 3 teaspoons chopped fresh dill
- > watercress, for garnish

method

1. Roll ravioli dough out, half at a time, to thickness of 0.1 inches, cut into 3-inch rounds, using knife or fluted pastry cutter. Cover strips with a tea-towel.
2. Place heaped teaspoons of prawn filling on top of each round of dough. Brush edges with a little water, fold dough over filling; press firmly around filling.
3. Add ravioli to large saucepan of boiling water, boil, uncovered, for about 8 minutes or until ravioli are cooked; drain. Mix ravioli gently through sauce, serve with grated parmesan cheese. Garnish with watercress.
4. **Ravioli Dough:** Sift flour into large bowl, make well in center, gradually stir in combined egg, oil and enough water, to make dough firm and pliable. Turn onto lightly floured surface, knead for 5 minutes. Place in oiled bowl, cover, stand for 30 minutes before rolling.
5. **Prawn Filling:** Mince, process prawns with dill and vermouth until smooth. Transfer to large bowl, stir in cream gently, cover, refrigerate.
6. **Salmon and Dill Sauce:** Combine cream and stock cube in medium saucepan, bring to boil, reduce heat, add zucchini, simmer for about 5 minutes or until mixture is reduced by half. Add vermouth and corn flour blended with water, stir constantly over high heat until mixture boils and thickens stir in salmon and dill.

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Serves 6





cassata alla siciliano

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 5 minutes - Preparation time: 10 minutes

method

1. To make filling, place sugar and water in a saucepan and stir over a low heat until sugar dissolves; set aside to cool. Process ricotta cheese until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and mix in sugar mixture and remaining ingredients.
2. Line a 4 ½ x 8 ½ in/11 x 21 cm loaf tin with plastic food wrap. Cut cake into slices and sprinkle with brandy. Line base and sides of prepared tin with cake. Spoon filling into tin and top with a final layer of cake. Cover and freeze until solid.
3. To make the topping, place chocolate and butter in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water and stir until melted and well blended. Allow to cool slightly.
4. Turn cassata onto a wire rack and cover with topping. Return to freezer until chocolate sets.

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Serves 6

ingredients

- > 10 ½ x 12 ¾ in/26 x 32 cm Swiss roll cake
- > ⅓ cup/3 fl oz/90 ml brandy

Cassata filling

- > ½ cup/4 oz/125 g sugar
- > 2 tablespoons water
- > 12 oz/375 g ricotta cheese
- > ½ cup/4 fl oz/125 ml cream, whipped
- > 2 oz/60 g mixed peel, chopped
- > 3 ½ oz/100 g dark chocolate, finely chopped
- > 2 oz/60 g glacé cherries, quartered
- > 1 ½ oz/45 g pistachios, chopped

Chocolate topping

- > 10 oz/315 g dark chocolate
- > 3 oz/90 g butter

Tip from the Chef

In its homeland, this classic Italian dessert is seen on the Easter Table.



rum & ricotta tiramisu

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

ingredients

- > 10½ oz/300g low-fat ricotta cheese
- > 7 oz/200 g light cream cheese
- > 1 tablespoon rum or cognac
- > ¼ cup caster sugar
- > 1½ cups/12¼ fl oz/375 ml very strong espresso or good quality coffee, cooled
- > 16 savoiardi sponge finger biscuits (ladyfingers)
- > 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa, for dusting

method

1. Beat the cheeses, rum and sugar with electric beaters until light and creamy, set aside. Pour the coffee into a large shallow dish. Quickly dip one side of half the sponge fingers into the coffee and lay closely together with the dipped side down over the base of a large flat-based serving dish. Spread half of the cheese mixture evenly over the biscuits.
2. Dust with half the cocoa then repeat layers with coffee-dipped biscuits and cheese. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight. Dust with remaining cocoa just before serving.

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 Serves 8



tip from the chef

For a special liqueur touch, add a tablespoon of Kahlua, Baileys Irish Cream or other coffee liqueur to the coffee.





gelato duo

honeydew and pistachio

■ □ □ | Cooking time: 20 minutes - Preparation time: 20 minutes

method

1. To make the base, heat the milk until near boiling point but don't boil. Beat the egg yolks and sugar in a large bowl until thick and creamy. Add a few spoons of the hot milk while beating, then gradually add the remainder in a thin stream.
2. Transfer mixture to a double boiler or bain marie and cook, whisking until mixture coats the back of a spoon. Don't allow the custard to boil. Pour into a jug, cover and chill. This can be kept for a few days before making gelato.
3. Pour mixture into an ice-cream churn – after 1-2 minutes churning, add either the honeydew or ground pistachio nuts, and make the gelato following manufacturer's instructions.
4. If you don't own an ice-cream churn, beat the custard and flavoring together, pour into ice cube trays and freeze. Transfer to a food processor and beat well to break up the crystals then pour into an ice-cream tray. When nearly frozen, beat again then repeat this process 3-4 times over the next 1-2 hours to make as smooth as possible.
5. Serve with chopped pistachios.

ingredients

Base mix for each gelato

- > 2 cups/17 fl oz/500 ml skim or low-fat milk
- > 4 egg yolks
- > 4½ oz/125 g caster sugar

Rockmelon gelato

- > 2 cups pureed fresh honeydew

Pistachio gelato

- > 4½ oz/125 g pistachios, finely ground, or try hazelnuts, plus extra chopped pistachios, to serve

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Serves 4



aperol spritz

■ □ □ | Preparation time: 5 minutes

ingredients

- > 3 ounces Prosecco
- > 2 ounces Aperol
- > 1 ounce club soda
- > orange slices, for garnish

method

1. Add the Prosecco, Aperol and club soda to a wine glass filled with ice and stir.
2. Garnish with an orange slice.

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 Serves 1



tip from the chef

Pair Aperol with bubbly wine and sparkling water, and you'll be hard-pressed to find a more refreshing and thirst-quenching cocktail. And because it's low in alcohol, you can start drinking early and still make it to dinner.



index

Introduction	3
Tomatoes with basil & cheese filling.....	6
Three bean salad	8
Fruit & cheese platter	10
Two topping crostin.....	12
Antipasto platter.....	14
Spaghetti with clams	16
Seafood lasagne	18
Spinach & ricotta cannelloni.....	20
Fettuccine with sun-dried tomatoes.....	22
Chocolate almond biscotti	24
Three tomato salad	26
Niçoise salad	28
Crispy chicken marsala.....	30
Pasta fagioli	32
Spaghetti carbonara.....	34
Spicy bolognese with tuna.....	36
Bows with rich tomato basil sauce	38
Pasta with anchovies and basil sauce.....	40
Penne with gorgonzola sauce	42
Scallop with tomato and basil.....	44
Tomato and basil pizza.....	46
Anchovie pizza	48
Spaghetti surf & turf.....	50
Bolognese lasagna	52
Seafood ravioli with vermouth	54
Cassata alla siciliano.....	56
Rum & ricotta tiramisù.....	58
Gelato duo	60
Aperol spritz	62



Chef

e x p r e s s



perfect italian dinner

Today practically all cooks have included in their menus some type of definitely Italian dish. Multicolor vegetables, cheeses of unique character, proverbial pasta, intensely. fragrant herbs fresh fish and seafood, garlic and olive oil make up a passionate, natural cuisine that seduces gourmets worldwide.



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