

A close-up photograph of a wine glass being filled with red wine. The wine is captured mid-pour, creating a dynamic splash. In the foreground, a bunch of dark grapes with green leaves is visible. The background is dark and out of focus. The text 'WINES, BITES & APPETIZERS' is overlaid in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a red drop shadow, following the curve of the glass.

WINES, BITES & APPETIZERS

The Daily Gazette Family of Newspapers



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THE ART OF PAIRING

GUIDE BOOK FOR BEGINNERS

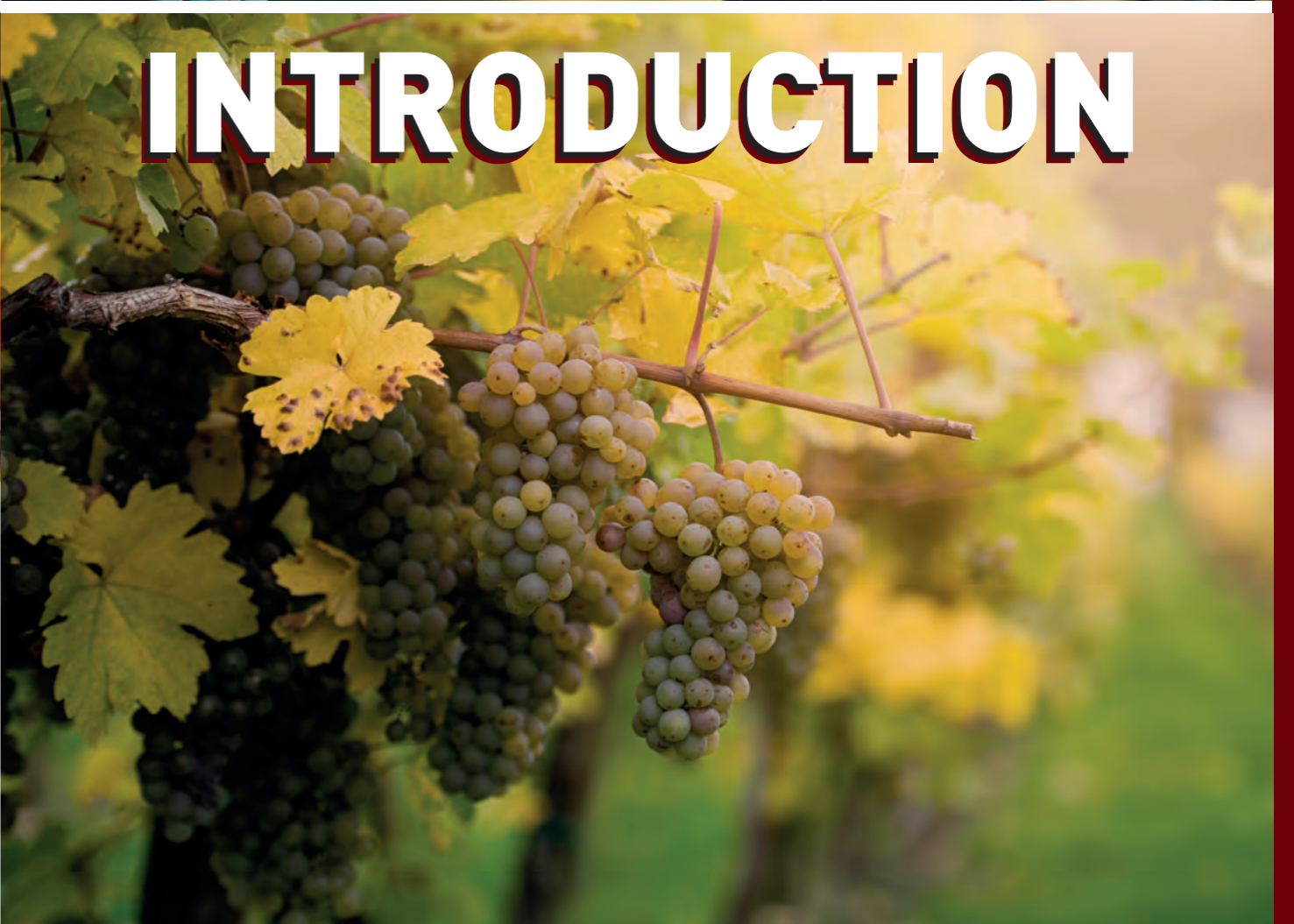
The art of wine pairing allows us to optimize the myriad of flavors that this exquisite beverage brings to our palate by combining it with the most appropriate kind of food for each variety. That is, every wine needs to be combined with a certain type of culinary preparation in order to offer us the fullness of its flavor. So much so, that nowadays there are people who specialize in this exquisite art of combining wines and recipes. When tasting a meal, its flavor lets us know if it is savory, bitter or sour to different extents, and the same thing happens with wine: its flavor is a combination of acids, alcohol, tannins and sugars.

In this book we present the different rules of wine pairing and some key notes on the effect that wine has on food, as well as some ideal recipes for each wine variety. Learning to pair is almost as important as learning to cook well. And when knowing how to combine both elements, food and wine, new sensations are created in the palate, which are able to enhance a particular feature both of the wine and of the food that we are enjoying.





WINES



INTRODUCTION





WINE HISTORY

Intensive vine cultivation began in Mesopotamia, where Iraq is located at present. In the Mesolithic era, around 9000 B.C., the more sedentary populations (farmers-cattle breeders) owned different varieties of vines, such as *Vitis vinifera pontica* in Mesopotamia, mother of the current Pinot noir, *Vitis vinifera orientalis*, located in the Jordan Valley in Israel and *Vitis vinifera occidentalis*, cultivated in ancient Egypt. The Phoenician people from the Syrian city of Tiro transported the *Vitis vinifera* to the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) settling the vine there together with the olive tree. These people were followed by the Greeks and Romans. Wine was consumed only for celebrations and its consumption was never daily. It thus became an object of worship, and gatherings to celebrate it were known as Dionysian festivals.

With the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 A.D. and the barbarian invasion that followed, vine cultivation was reduced although it did not disappear.

Quite on the contrary, in Spain, with the Muslim invasion in 711 A.D. and although the Koran prohibits the consumption of alcohol, vineyards expanded their cultivated hectares. But the wine boost came thanks to the Christian religion, since the blood of Jesus Christ was assumed to be wine. The great masters of wine were none other than the friars and monks of the Middle Ages, when wines such as Champagne were born.

Vitis vinifera was introduced in Mexico by the Spaniards in the 16th century, and from there it passed to California. In 1769, Franciscans planted the first Spanish vines in San Diego and in 1824 the first vineyard for commercial exploitation was created in Los Angeles. Francisco Carabantes, one of the conquerors of Peru introduced vine cultivation while instructing the native people of Cuzco how to carry it out. From there it passed to Chile extending to the South, and in Colonial times this crop was subject to regulation by the Spanish government, which thus intended to defend exports to South America.





WINE TASTING

Wine tasting is the sensory examination and evaluation of wine. The habit of tasting exercises the correct use of our senses and increases the capacity of our nervous system. Within comparative tastings there are horizontal tastings, in which wines from different wineries but the same vintage are examined, and vertical tastings, in which wines from the same winery but different vintages are tasted, always starting with the most recent harvest. There are four phases or steps to be followed in wine tasting:

VISUAL PHASE

The appearance of wine can betray its youth, maturity, decrepitude, cleanliness, the kind of grape and even its acidity. Even though sight does not deceive, it should not be decisive in the choice or rating of wine if it is not followed by olfactory and tasting trials. Through sight one can observe wine's fluidity, density, alcohol content and glycerin present in the legs or tears when swirling it in a glass.

The color of white wines and young cava wines is pale yellow with slightly green reflections. With time it turns to golden yellow and then some reddish glows

may appear. Very old white wines can be amber, old gold, iodized or slightly reddish. In fine young wines olive yellow prevails, then turning to golden yellow. Young red wines can be recognized by their ripe cherry color and the dark garnet, purplish or raspberry edge. With age, red wines can evolve into a ruby-garnet color with orange or slightly yellow tints. As time goes by, color can go to tile-ruby, orcher, brown and yellow.

Rosé wines can be distinguished at their prime for their bright pink color with a raspberry edge. They then evolve to orange, onion peel and copper hues.



OLFACTORY PHASE

The first aromas that are noticed are called primary aromas, and they correspond to the grape itself. Secondary aromas are produced by mechanical and chemical changes during fermentation and finally tertiary ones are derived from the exchanges between wine and wood. Primary aromas are brief and lighter, and they produce more subtle sensations, whereas secondary and tertiary ones, born from fermentation and aging respectively, are more persistent. We smell directly through the nose, before and after swirling the glass so that the wine rotates inside. We then smell in a second instance when the liquid is inside the mouth and it is transferred retro-nasally to the olfactory receptor site. More aromas are released thanks to body heat inside the mouth, reaching the olfactory epithelium. If we open our mouth a little the air will oxygenate the wine inside and will provide aromas to the acids present in the wine.

TASTING PHASE

Against all belief, taste is the sense that fewer sensations produces. Our taste buds register information only on the four basic flavors: sweet, which stimulates taste buds in the front part of our tongue; sour is perceived with the sides; salty is sensed in the middle and bitter is tasted



with the back of the tongue. Those four flavors are present in wine with more or less intensity; its virtue will depend upon the balance among them, as well as the strength with which it stimulated our sense of taste and the persistence or period of time those sensations remain in the mouth once the wine is tasted.

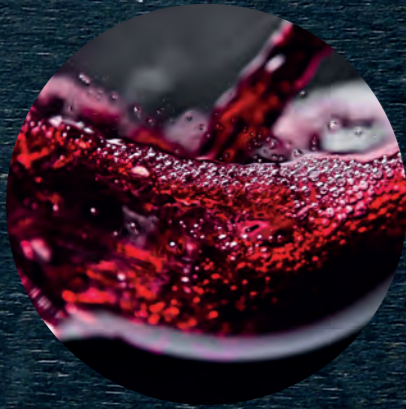
TACTILE SENSATIONS

Our mouth can sense touch as well as taste. To begin with, touch perceives the temperature of wine as we drink it. It also registers sensations such as a "silky" wine or a "rough" wine. The sense of touch offers a whole range of information to the wine taster: in the first place it provides information on the two aspects of temperature, physical temperature, expressed in degrees, and tactile temperature, or the pseudo-thermal sensation that wine produces, which depends on its composition. A wine with good acidity, not an excessive one, provides a sense of freshness and is defined as "fresh". On the contrary, richness of alcohol results in a "warm" or even "ardent" wine if the presence of alcohol is excessive. Wine's softness when passing through the mouth is also relevant: a wine which is pleasant and soft in the mouth can be defined as "soft", "silky" or "velvety", according the tactile sensation it produces. If flawed, it can be described as "rough", "astringent", "hard", etc.



WINE COMPOSITION

About 700 different components can be found in wine, depending on the variety and / or type of grapes analyzed. The flavors of grapes and later of wine come from the following substances:



SUGARS

They bring softness, density, pastiness and sweet flavor to wine.

ACIDS

Tartaric acid: 25-33% comes from grapes. It protects wine from bacterial agents.

Malic acid: It has a hard, unpleasant taste and also comes from grapes.

Succinic acid: Salty and bitter taste (fermentation smell).

Lactic acid: Originated in malolactic fermentation or second fermentation (MLF).

Acetic acid: Volatile acid produced by acetic bacteria in wine making and its alterations.

SALTS

They refresh the mouth by providing salts to wine

(phosphates, tartrates, chlorides, potassium, magnesium, sodium, etc).

BITTER SUBSTANCES

• Phenolic components or tannic substances, they provide color and astringency.

• Anthocyanins, they contribute in red color and they diminish over time.

• Flavones, responsible for the color in white wine; they increase with aging.

• Phenols, they are condensed tannins from grapes, hydrolyzed tannins from wood or they come from other added substances.

NITROGENOUS SUBSTANCES

They are fundamental for the development of yeasts, for example:

• Pectins, cell walls in vegetables.

• Gums, colloids.

• Mucilages, they come from grapes that are not in good sanitary conditions and make it difficult in general to clarify the wine.





VINTAGE WINE

Once grapes have acquired the desired ripeness and amount of sugar, the harvest begins. The first selection of fruit takes place in the vineyard. As a matter of fact, the first field work takes place weeks before the harvest, thus determining the best time for it. This fundamental work is carried out with a sugar meter called refractometer, which indicates the approximate degree of alcohol that the wine to be elaborated will have. This device makes its reading in Brix ($^{\circ}$ Bx), measuring the total ratio of sucrose dissolved in a liquid.

Upon arrival at the winery, grapes are placed on special tables and selected manually, grain by grain, according to their ripeness and health. They are then discharged into a hopper, a container in the

shape of an inverted truncated pyramid, at the bottom of which there is a conveyor belt that transports the grapes into the crusher, where the fruit is crushed by pressure. It is not convenient that hard parts of the clusters such as seeds, stems and skin be crushed as well, so that they do not contaminate the must with certain odors and flavors. The resulting paste is transferred to a press with the aid of pumps or by simple gravity, avoiding any more tearing as well as contact with the air, to prevent premature fermentation.

In a first classification, wines can be divided into three large groups: white, rosé and red. This is obviously by the color they present. Nevertheless, their differences are more complex and profound.



Most grapes used in wine making present the same pulp color, which is colorless or slightly yellowish, no matter if they are white or black grapes. If a black grape is peeled, its pulp is as colorless as that of a white grape. The color pigments (anthocyanins) that characterize and distinguish grapes are located in their skin. There are only two known exceptions: the Garnacha Tintorera and the Alicante Bousché, which also present pigments in the pulp. These precisions about the colors of grapes and their distribution allow us to deduce that in making red wines the color pigments in the skin must be transferred to the total mass of the must. This condition establishes the main difference in the elaboration of red and white wines.

Within the grape cluster there are substances and elements that are beneficial to wine quality, but also others that are undesired. It is determinant for the quality of the future wine to maintain positive substances in the must, as well as to separate negative elements as soon as possible. For example, pedicels (stems that support grapes as a cluster), add herbaceous flavors and aromas to wine, as well as water and salts. Therefore, they should be eliminated in the early stages of wine making. Nevertheless, in the elaboration of white wines it is convenient to keep them together with the other components of the cluster until all the pressing to extract liquid from the grapes is completed. Otherwise the must would lack the necessary sponginess.





CHAPTER 1: MERLOT

The Merlot grape is a very well known red variety in the world of wine.

Both its properties and its oenological potential make this variety the protagonist of great wines.

The Merlot grape is native to the Southwest of France, specifically the Bordeaux region, where it has established itself as one of the traditional strains in a land of great wines. It is also, after Cabernet Sauvignon, the second most widely spread red variety worldwide.

The Merlot grape is mainly characterized by its early ripening. Therefore, due to its rapid evolution, it is ideal for young wines. Depending on the climate where it is grown, it will develop different personalities, which is why winemakers call it "the chameleon variety".

This variety has a certain resemblance to the Cabernet Sauvignon grape, which is why they complement each other so well in the production of bivarietal reds. The main difference between the two is that the Merlot grape has a lower presence of tannins, thus obtaining lighter wines.

Merlot wine stands out for its finesse and smoothness, as well as for its surprising aromas of berries, spices and ripe fruit. Despite their rapid aging, Merlot wines do not lose quality with time, obtaining greater complexity through maturity.

In short, the Merlot grape is a variety with great potential to make wines with great nuances which rise intense sensations in the palate.



Origin:
**BORDEAUX,
FRANCE**

SALMON IN PARCHMENT PAPER

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 4 pieces of salmon
- Salt and pepper
- 2 shallots
- 1 carrot
- 1 leek
- 2 oz/50 g mushrooms
- 1 orange
- 2 tomatoes
- 1 tbsp thyme

The Papillote cooking method is very much used to maintain the flavor of ingredients unaltered while preserving their nutritional properties.

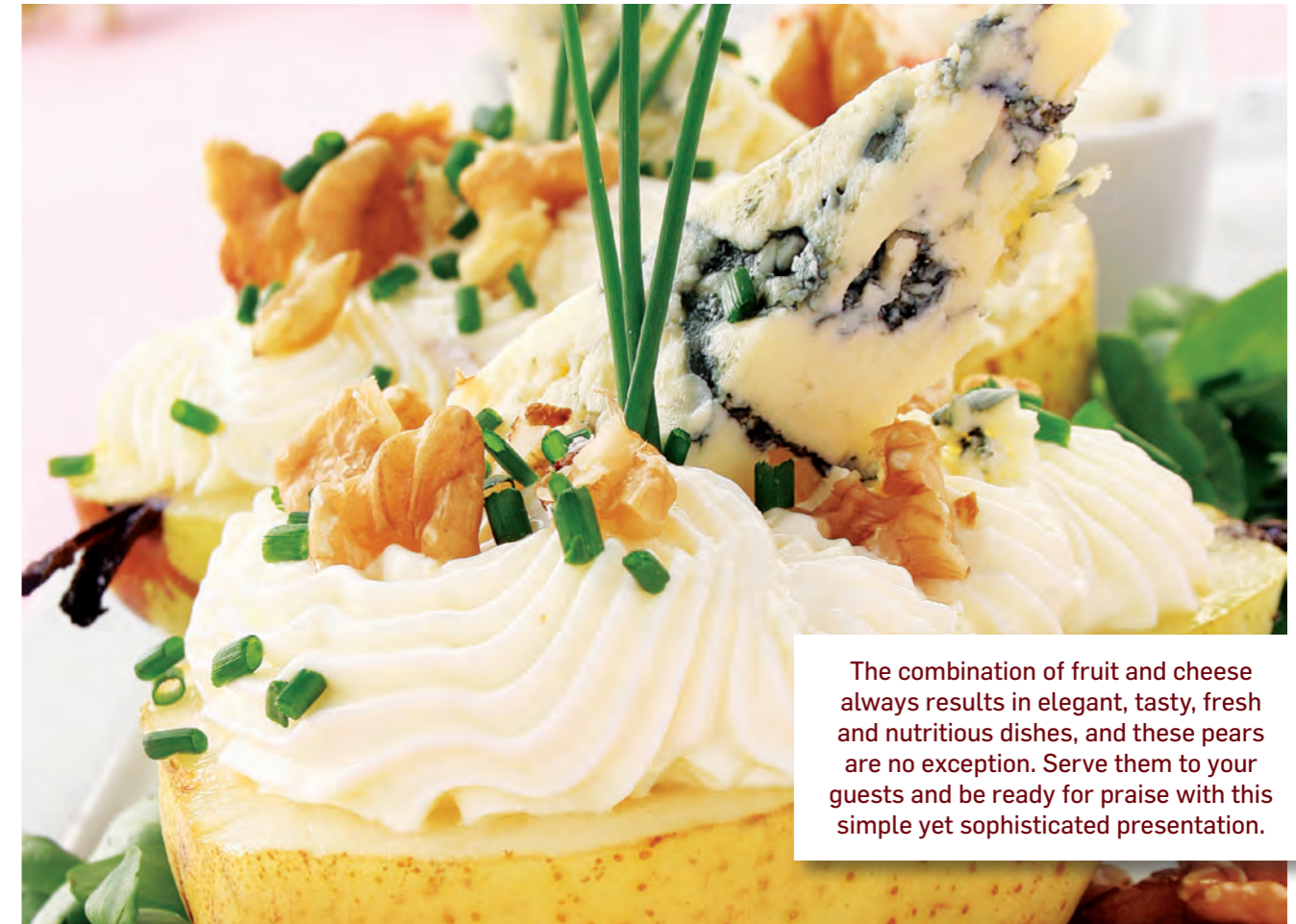
PREPARATION

1. Clean the salmon (remove fat and possible bones), add salt and pepper to taste and set aside. Thinly slice the shallot, and cut the carrot and leek in julienne. Slice the mushrooms and cut the orange in wedges. Peel the tomatoes, remove the seeds and dice. Mix all the ingredients, add salt and pepper to taste.
2. Cut four squares of parchment paper of 14 x 14 inches /35 x 35 cm. Place a piece of salmon in the middle of each and cover with the vegetable mixture. Sprinkle with thyme.
3. Close each package folding the edges of the parchment, place them on an oven pan and cook them in a preheated oven at medium temperature, 390° F/200°C, for about 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from heat and serve with boiled or roasted baby potatoes.



PEARS STUFFED WITH CHEESE

SERVES 6 · Preparation time: 25 minutes



The combination of fruit and cheese always results in elegant, tasty, fresh and nutritious dishes, and these pears are no exception. Serve them to your guests and be ready for praise with this simple yet sophisticated presentation.

INGREDIENTS

- 3.5 oz/100 g skim cream cheese
- 1 oz/30 g skim grated cheese
- 3.5 oz/100 g skim plain yoghurt
- Salt and pepper
- 3 pears
- 3 oz/80 g blue cheese
- 1 tbsp chopped chives
- 2 oz/50 g walnuts

PREPARATION

1. In a bowl, put the cream cheese, grated cheese and yoghurt, salt and pepper to taste, and mix until combined. Put the mixture in a piping bag and reserve in the refrigerator until used.
2. Wash the pears well, cut them in half, remove the seeds and hollow them out with a noisette spoon. Fill with the blue cheese cut in triangles and decorate, piping with the cheese mixture.
3. Sprinkle with chives and coarsely chopped walnuts. Garnish with halved walnuts, green leaves and chives, and serve immediately.

GOULASH

SOUP

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 45 minutes



This typical Hungarian dish has been adopted worldwide. It is a nutritional preparation that provides energy and fulfillment. Serve it with home-made bread to keep you warm on cold winter nights.

INGREDIENTS

- 21 oz/600 g lean beef
- 2 onions
- 1 clove garlic
- Oil spray
- Fat free beef broth
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 1 tbsp tomato extract
- 1 tbsp vinegar
- Salt
- 1 pinch cumin
- 1 tsp marjoram
- 9 oz/250g potatoes

PREPARATION

1. Dice the beef in small, even cubes. Finely chop the onion and garlic. Spray a large pot with oil, and sauté the onion and garlic. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup broth gradually and cook until the onions are translucent.
2. Lower the heat. Add the paprika and stir constantly to prevent from burning. Incorporate the tomato extract and vinegar, mix well. Add the beef, 1 and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup broth and allow to cook. Once the beef is done, season with salt, pepper, cumin and marjoram. Cover with broth and cook until the liquid evaporates. Cover the pot and cook on very low heat for about 15 minutes. Add the peeled and diced potatoes, cover with broth once more and cook until the potatoes are tender. Remove from heat and serve immediately.

VEAL Tournedos

WITH LEEK

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1.3 pound/600g veal tenderloin
- 4 leeks
- Salt and pepper
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup/70ml white wine
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup /70 ml fat free beef broth
- 1 fresh herb bouquet

PREPARATION

1. Remove all fat from the meat and cut 4 slices of about 1,5 inches/ 4 cm each. Cut the leeks in half lengthwise, wrap a strip of leek around the side of each tournedo and hold in place with a toothpick. Add salt and pepper to taste and place them in an oven pan. Pour the wine and the broth in the pan, and add the rest of the leeks cut in small pieces and the herb bouquet.
2. Cook in the oven at high temperature, 430°F/220°C, for about 5 minutes. Lower to medium heat, 375°F/190°C, and cook for another 10 minutes. Remove and serve the tournedos with the leeks and mixed mushrooms on the side.



To prevent the tournedos from losing their shape, you can tie some cooking twine around the sides. Remember to remove it before serving!



CHAPTER 2: CABERNET SAUVIGNON

French in its origin, it is recognized world-wide and has adapted exceptionally well to a great number of zones around the world.

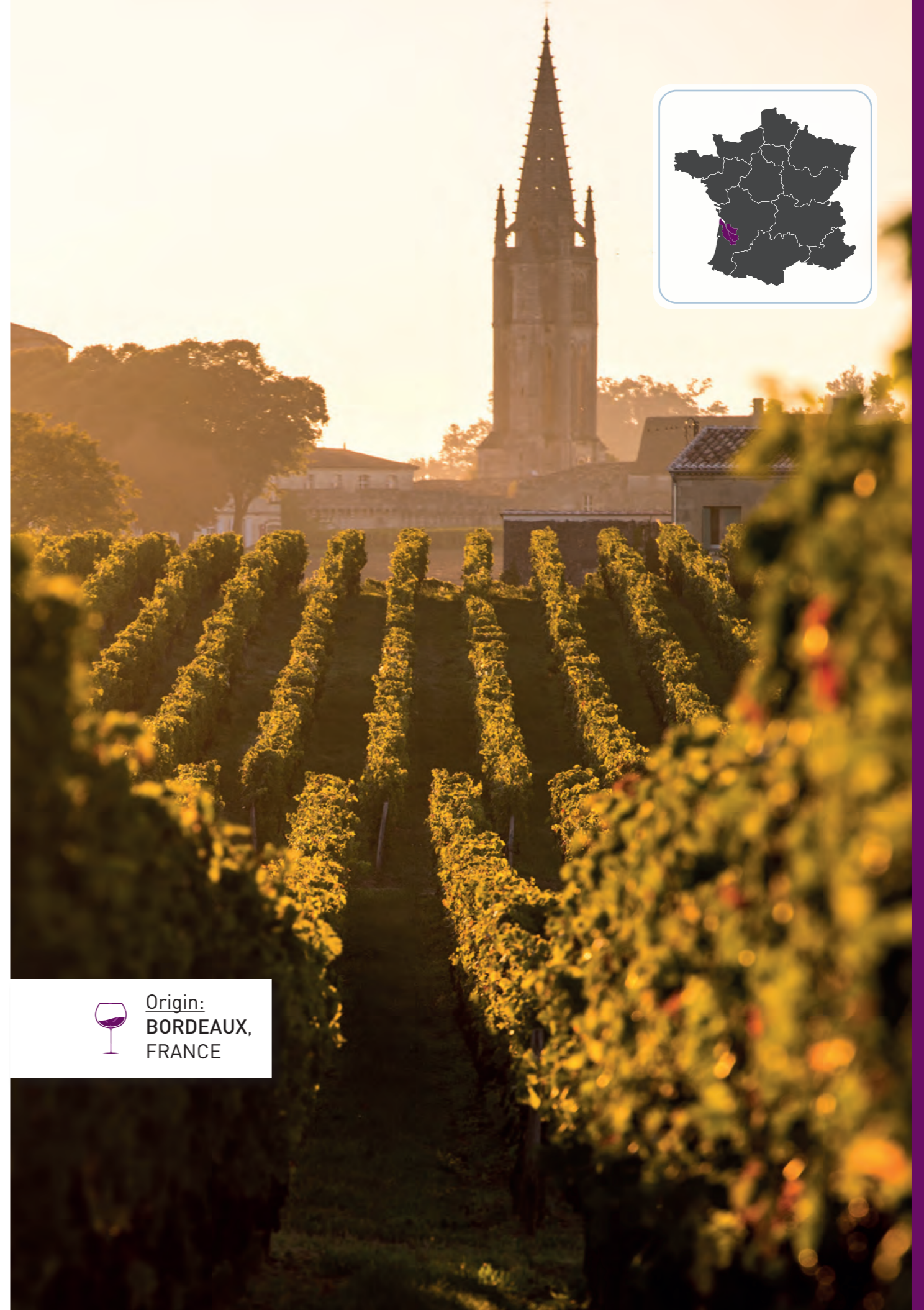
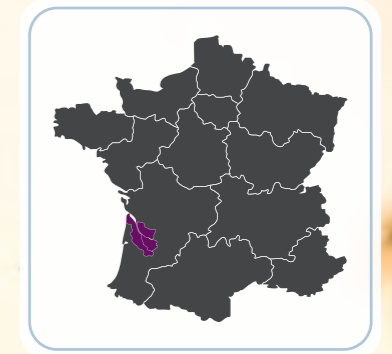
The Cabernet Sauvignon grape has a French origin, specifically from the wine country of Bordeaux and it is probably one of the most recognized kinds around the globe. This variety spread all over the world from its home in Medoc, adapting in many wine producing countries.

The grape appeared in the XVII century, a cross between Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc. It is easily cultivated, adapting to a great variety of soils, climates and latitudes. In spite of this, it always maintains its particular character.

It is a vigorous variety, with medium to late budding. It has a semi-erect vine sprout. The grapes present a dark tone, they are small and round, with a thick skin that provides the wine with its distinctive tannic character. It has a strong astringent sensation in the mouth.

The Cabernet Sauvignon grape produces a deep-colored, full bodied wine, rich in tannins. It has an intense red hue. It presents fruit, floral and herbal aromas that become more complex as the wine ages.

Cabernet Sauvignon aged wines pair well with grilled or broiled red meats, whereas meat casseroles or stews call for a younger Cabernet Sauvignon. It also combines well with bitter vegetables, such as endives and goes well with sauces or dressings with pepper.



Origin:
**BORDEAUX,
FRANCE**

CHILI AND MEAT BURRITOS

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 60 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 4 tbsp oil
- 2 onions
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 red bell peppers
- 1.1 pound/500 g ground beef
- 4 tsp ground chili pepper
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 14 oz/400g tomato puree
- 2 cups beef broth
- 11 oz/300 g canned red beans, drained and rinsed
- Ground black pepper
- 4 corn tortillas
- Lettuce leaves

PREPARATION

1. Chop the onions, garlic and red peppers. Heat the oil in a frying pan or skillet over medium heat and cook the vegetables, stirring during 3 or 4 minutes until tender. Add the ground beef and cook for another 5 minutes, until it has browned.
2. Add ground pepper, cumin, tomato puree and broth. Lower the heat and cook during 15 minutes stirring occasionally, until the liquid is reduced by half. Add the beans and black pepper to taste. Cook for another 10 minutes and remove from heat.
3. In another frying pan cook the tortillas for 3 or 4 minutes, until they brown.
4. Place lettuce leaves on each tortilla, put the beef mixture on the lettuce, roll carefully and serve.

Another easy way to present this meat preparation is to serve it on a baked potato. For this, bake a large potato in a medium oven, 390°F/200°C, until it is soft, cut an X on the top and press the sides to open. Serve the meat on top.



COLORFUL TERRINE

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 60 minutes

People with high cholesterol, hypertension or celiac disease can enjoy this very tasty chicken and vegetable terrine, since it has no added sodium or flour, and it is low fat.



INGREDIENTS

- 4 chicken breasts
- 5 egg whites
- 7 oz/200 g low fat ricotta
- 7 oz/200 g low fat cream cheese
- 1 tbsp fresh herbs, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 2 carrots
- 2 celery stalks
- Spray oil

PREPARATION

1. Clean the chicken breasts removing all visible fat. Process or finely chop them. Put the meat in a bowl and add the egg whites, ricotta and cream cheese. Mix in the herbs.
2. Cut the peppers, carrots and celery in very small cubes. Cook in a frying pan sprayed with oil, stirring constantly for 2 or 3 minutes. Remove from heat and add to the chicken. Pour the mixture into a terrine mold sprayed with vegetable oil and cook in a preheated oven at 356°F/180°C for about 30 minutes.
3. Remove from heat, let it set for 10 or 15 minutes, run a knife along the edges to release, and unmold carefully. Serve the terrine decorated with green leaves, such as curly endives or basil.

COUNTRY —SANDWICH—

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 25 minutes



The pepper can also be roasted in the oven at medium temperature until it is tender, then the skin can be removed and it can be cut in strips.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 slices country bread
- Olive oil
- 1 tsp rosemary
- Salt and pepper
- 4 tenderloin steaks
- 1 red pepper
- Curly endive leaves

Criolla sauce:

- 1 tomato
- 1 onion
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp vinegar

PREPARATION

1. Place the bread in an oven pan, sprinkle with olive oil and rosemary and bake in a preheated oven at medium temperature, 390°F/200°C, until golden.
2. Season the steaks with salt and pepper and grill or broil them until they are brown on the outside and done inside. Wash the pepper, remove the seeds and cut in wedges. Cook the wedges in a hot skillet or broiler sprinkled with olive oil.
3. For the salsa, wash and dice the tomato into small cubes. Finely chop the onion. Mix the tomato and onion with the oil and vinegar.
4. On each slice of bread, put some pepper and endives, place a steak on them and pour some salsa on the meat. Serve while the steak is hot.

ENDIVES AU GRATIN

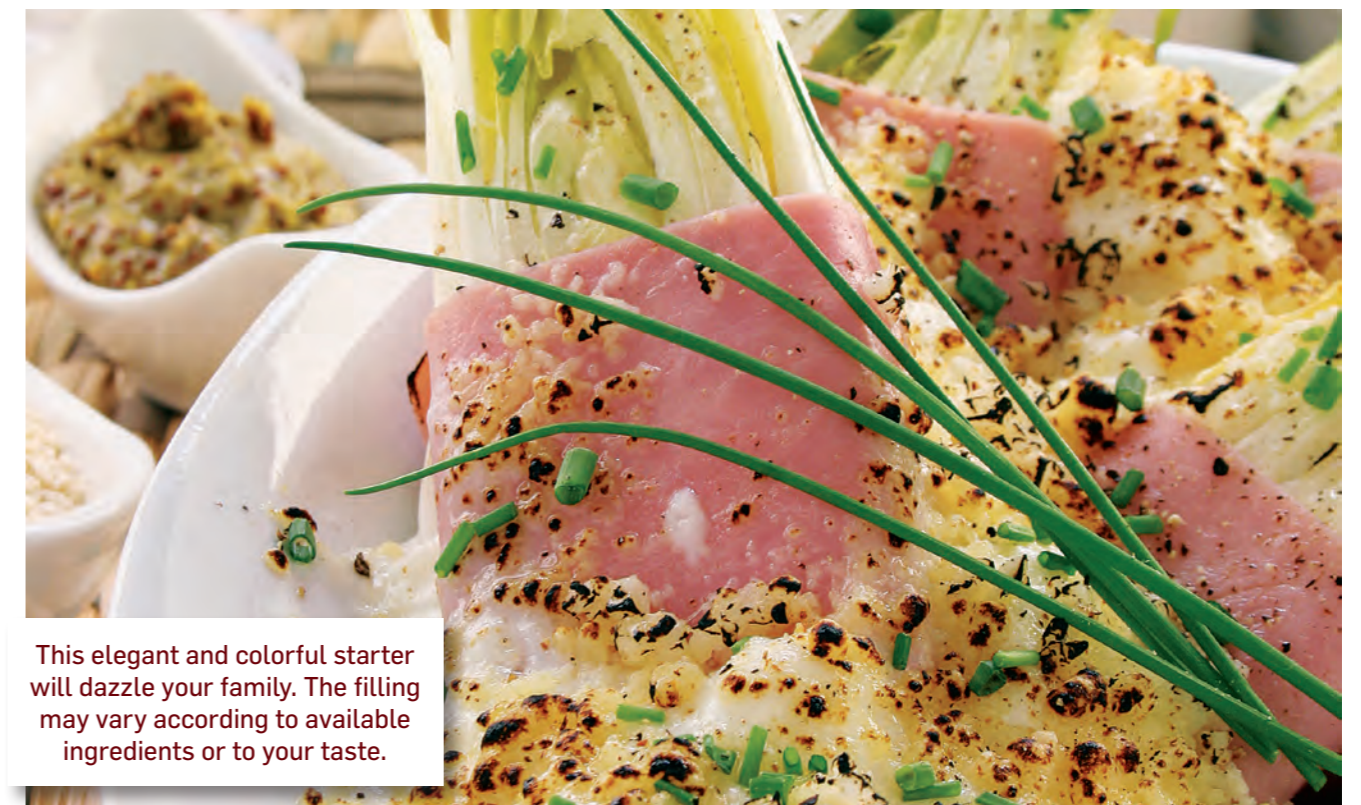
SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 4 endives
- 3.5 oz/100 g sliced Gouda cheese
- 3.5 oz/100 g sliced baked ham
- Oil spray
- 3.5 fl oz/100ml light cream
- 3.5 fl oz/100 g low fat cream cheese
- Nutmeg
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tbsp whole bread crumbs
- 3 tbsp/40 g grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp fresh chopped thyme
- 1 tbsp fresh chopped chives

PREPARATION

1. Wash the endives, cut off the hard stem and boil them in water with salt until they are tender but still crisp. Remove from water, drain and cut in half lengthwise. Wrap each half in a slice of cheese and a slice of ham. Place in an oven pan sprayed with cooking oil.
2. In a bowl, mix the light cream with the cream cheese and season with nutmeg, salt and pepper to taste. Pour the mixture over the endives and sprinkle with the bread crumbs, then the cheese and finally the herbs.
3. Bake in a preheated oven at high temperature, 460°F/240°C, during 20 minutes, until they are gratin. Serve immediately.



This elegant and colorful starter will dazzle your family. The filling may vary according to available ingredients or to your taste.



CHAPTER 3: MALBEC

Malbec is a European variety which arrived in Argentina after a crisis and has been since extensively cultivated to the point of becoming the country's distinctive wine. An immigrant variety that explored and adapted outstandingly to the terroirs in the different wine regions of the country, it has thus turned Argentina into the main producer of Malbec worldwide.

Since 2011 it is the most cultivated strain in the country, which has positioned itself as a leader in volume, quality and exports globally.

This wine stands out for its intense dark color and its fruity aromas associated to the specific characteristics of the terroir. In general, it reminds of cherry, strawberry or plum, raisins and black pepper in some cases, with a reminiscence of preserves. Aged in oak, it acquires notes of coffee, vanilla and chocolate.

In the mouth, it fulfills the palate thanks to its sweet, silky and round tannins.

Refined, vigorous and well-balanced, Malbec originates a diversity of styles that reflect its great potential. It is the quintessential red wine to pair with any dish from traditional Argentine barbecue or typical corn "humita" from the North of the country, to international plates such as pasta, pizza, tamales or sushi.



Main
producer:
ARGENTINA

HAMBURGERS WITH GRUYERE & MUSHROOMS

SERVES 6 • Preparation time: 40 minutes



Hamburger buns sprinkled with seeds add flavor and texture. They are the ideal combination for burgers that have mushrooms and vegetables.

INGREDIENTS

Burgers:

- 1/2 lb / 250g chopped beef
- 1/2 lb / 250g chopped pork
- 1 small purple onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tbsp barbecue sauce
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp all purpose flour
- Salt and pepper
- 6 slices gruyere cheese

Sandwiches:

- 7 oz/ 200 g mushrooms
- 6 burger buns
- 6 lettuce leaves

PREPARATION

1. For the burgers, finely mince the onion and garlic and mix with the chopped meat in a bowl. Add the barbecue sauce, egg and flour. Add salt and pepper to taste. Mix thoroughly.
2. Divide the mixture into 6 equal portions, form the burgers and cook them on both sides on a broiler over medium heat, until they are well done. Before removing them from heat, place a slice of cheese on each for a minute, until it melts.
3. Cook the sliced mushrooms on the same broiler.
4. To make the sandwiches, cut the buns open, put a lettuce leaf on the bottom half, place a burger on the lettuce and top with the mushrooms. Cover with the top half of the bun and serve immediately.

CORNMEAL PIZZA

SERVES 6 • Preparation time: 25 minutes, plus chilling time

INGREDIENTS

- 3 3/4 cup/900 ml skim milk
- 1tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion
- 4.5 oz/130 g cornmeal
- 1 tsp oregano
- Oil spray
- 4 tbsp tomato sauce
- 3.5 oz/100 g cherry tomatoes
- 1 roasted pepper
- 2 oz/50 g fresh mushrooms
- 2 garlic cloves
- 5 oz/150 g low fat cheese
- 1 tbsp fresh oregano

PREPARATION

1. Put the milk, oil and grated onion in a saucepan over medium heat until the milk begins to scald. Gradually pour in the cornmeal, stirring constantly, and cook according to package instructions. Add the oregano.
2. Spray a round oven pan or small pizza pan with oil spray. Pour the cornmeal on the pan and spread in an even layer with a wet spatula. Refrigerate well until it is solid.
3. Remove from the refrigerator, cover with tomato sauce, cherry tomatoes cut in half, roasted pepper cut in strips, sliced mushrooms and minced garlic. Place cheese slices in between the other ingredients and cook in a hot preheated oven, 430°F/220°C, until the cheese browns slightly. Sprinkle with fresh chopped oregano and serve immediately.

Pizza is commonly associated with certain ingredients, such as wheat flour, mozzarella and olives, among others. Here is an innovative and healthy way to make it, which is also ideal for people with celiac disease, since it is made with cornmeal.



LAMB CROWN

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 90 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 rack of lamb
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tbsp butter
- 1 thyme twig
- 1 rosemary twig
- 7 fl oz/ 200 ml beef broth
- 1 cup red wine

Side vegetables:

- 1,1 lb/500 g Brussels sprouts
- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp thyme
- 1/2 tsp ground pepper
- Salt and pepper

Sauce:

- 7 oz/200 g ketchup
- 2 tbsp light brown sugar
- 7 fl oz/200 ml vegetable broth
- 1 tbsp white vinegar
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 tbsp fresh chopped parsley
- 1/2 chili pepper

PREPARATION

1. Trim away the fat from the ribs exposing the first 2"/5 cm of bone. Remove the meat and tissue between the bones, scraping them to leave them bare. Lay the rack bone-side down and make cuts in the meat between the ribs, to then be able to fold the rack.

2. Stand the rack with the bones upward and fold it with the meat outwards, forming a crown. Push the ribs lightly outwards. Tie some cooking twine around the meat to keep it in shape.

3. Wrap some foil around each bare bone to prevent it from burning while roasting. Add salt and pepper to taste. Soften the butter at room temperature, mix with the chopped thyme and rosemary, and brush over the meat. Place the crown on a cooling or baking rack, put the rack over an oven pan and pour the wine and broth in the pan. Cook in a preheated medium oven, 390°F/200°C, for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

4. Wash the Brussels sprouts and boil them in water with salt until tender. Drain well. In a skillet, melt the butter and add the light brown sugar. Allow to bubble, then add the sprouts and stir until they are golden. Add thyme, ground pepper, salt and pepper to taste.

5. For the sauce, put the ketchup, light brown sugar, vegetable broth, vinegar and Worcestershire sauce in a small skillet. Bring to the boil, add the parsley and chili pepper, lower the heat and cook for 5 minutes. Serve the crown with the glazed Brussels sprouts and the hot sauce.

To blanch the beans, briefly submerge them in boiling water with salt until they become dark green, and then plunge them into cold water to set the color and texture.



STRIP LOIN MEDALLIONS WITH TAPENADE

SERVES 4 • Preparation time: 80 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 beef strip loin, cut in medallions
- 1 tbsp oil

Tapenade:

- 8 sun dried tomatoes
- 3.5 oz/100 g black olives
- 3.5 oz/100 g green olives
- 5 anchovy filets
- 1.5 oz/40 g capers
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp thyme
- Pepper

Side vegetable:

- 4 medium size potatoes
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 1 tbsp fresh chopped basil

PREPARATION

1. Remove all visible fat from meat and cut the strip loin in medallions, about 1.5 " wide. Tie some cooking twine around the edges so that they don't lose their shape while cooking. Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the medallions over high heat, turning them all around with the help of tongs so that they brown on both sides and around the edges. Remove from heat and set aside.

2. For the Tapenade, hydrate the sun dried tomatoes in hot water for 10 minutes. Drain well and finely chop, together with the anchovies and olives. Put everything in a bowl and add capers, olive oil and lemon juice. Add thyme and pepper to taste.

Place the medallions in an oven pan, spoon a generous portion of Tapenade on each and cook in a preheated oven at medium heat, 356°F/ 180°C, for approximately 20 minutes.

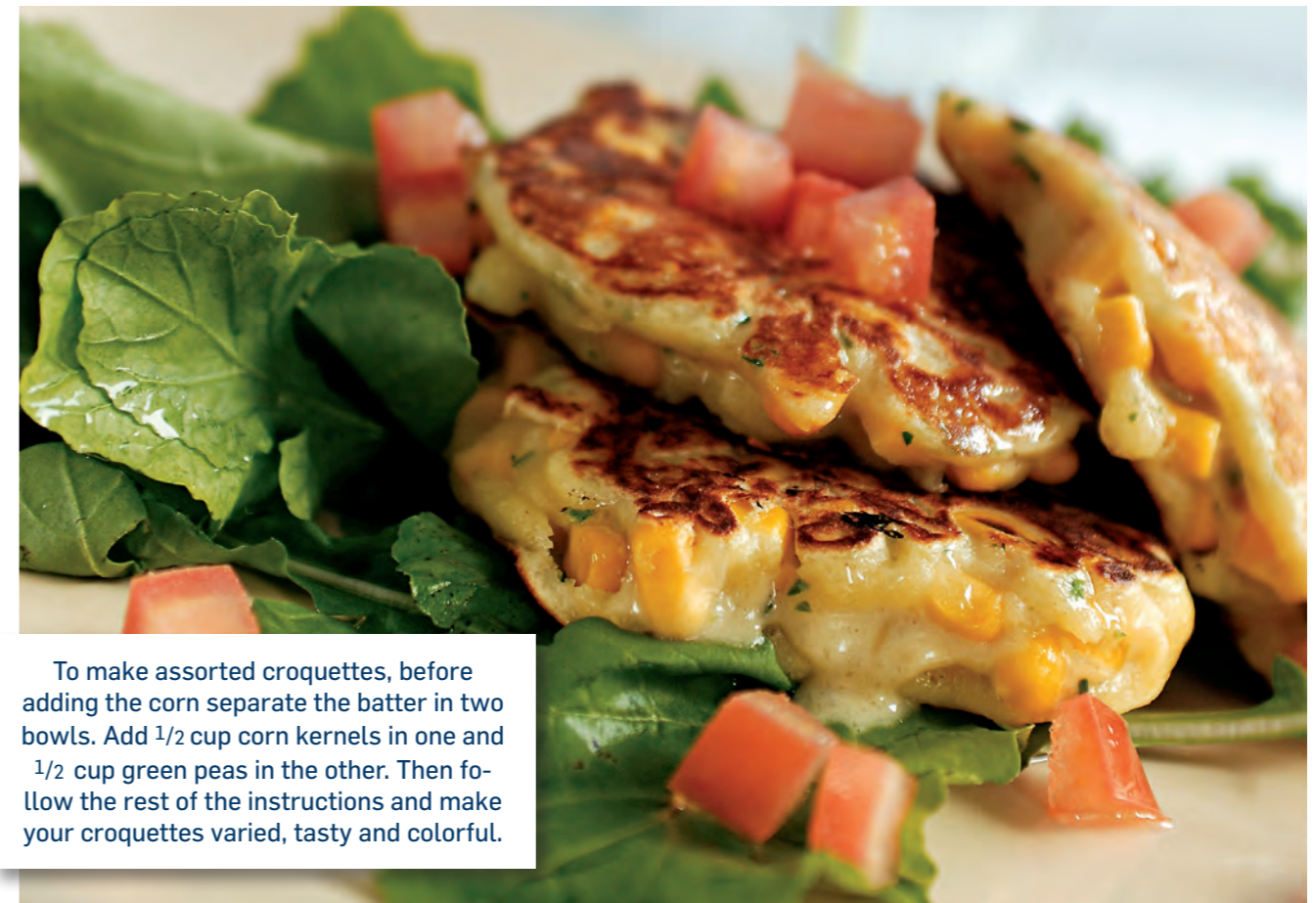
3. For the potatoes, wash them with their skin under cold water, using a brush or sponge to remove all dirt. Cook in a skillet with abundant water and salt until tender. Drain and drizzle with the olive oil mixed with paprika.



When looking for tender, lean and flavorful meat, strip loin is the answer. The side potatoes and the aroma of thyme provide this dish with a unique touch.

CORN CROQUETTES

MAKES 12 • Preparation time: 35 minutes



To make assorted croquettes, before adding the corn separate the batter in two bowls. Add 1/2 cup corn kernels in one and 1/2 cup green peas in the other. Then follow the rest of the instructions and make your croquettes varied, tasty and colorful.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup self rising flour
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp melted butter
- 1/4 cup milk
- 3.5 oz/100 g finely chopped baked ham
- 1 cup corn kernels
- 1 tbsp chopped basil
- 3 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
- Oil to fry

PREPARATION

- 1.** In a bowl, whisk together the flour, egg, butter and milk. Add the ham, corn, basil and Parmesan cheese, and mix with a fork. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- 2.** Fill a frying pan with oil, about 1" high. Heat it well and drop spoonfuls of mixture in the hot oil. Allow some space between them so that they don't stick. Cook on one side for 2 minutes, then flip them over using a spatula and cook for 2 minutes on the other side, until they are golden.
- 3.** Remove from heat and let them dry on absorbent paper to avoid excessive oil.
- 4.** Continue to make croquettes with all of the mixture.



CHAPTER 4: CHARDONNAY

The Chardonnay grape variety originated in the Burgundy wine region of Eastern France, precisely in the small village of Chardonnay, from which it takes its name. This French white variety is internationally recognized, and used for the elaboration of sparkling wines and champagnes as well as both young and creamy, cask-aged wines.

Due to its versatility and the different characteristics that it develops according to terroir and winemaking techniques, this variety is considered a great gateway to the world of wine, because it is used in the elaboration of a large number of very different white wines that may seduce a wide range of consumers.

It is probably the best known white grape variety in the world, and one of the most cultivated due to its good adaptation to different climates. Originally from the French region of Burgundy, its genetic origin can be traced to the strains of Gouais Blanc and Pinoccio. The name Chardonnay is the French adaption of the Hebrew words Sha'har-Adonay, which mean God's Gate, in reference to the Holy City of Jerusalem. These white strains were introduced into France from Palestine by the crusaders.

This variety has a very early sprouting and a short ripening period. The strain presents a horizontal semi-erect vine shoot. The grape clusters are small and compact, and the grapes are round and medium size, of a yellowish-green and a medium thick skin. The grape must is high in sugar content and acidity. Its winemaking produces a smooth and aromatic must, highly valued for the elaboration of sparkling wines and champagnes. Chardonnay aged white wines admit oak aging periods of a few weeks to several months, during which battonage takes place to obtain a creamier texture in the wine. It also acquires vanilla, coconut, toast and aniseed aromas. In the mouth it is perceived as full and unctuous, yet fresh.

White single-varietal Chardonnay wines are highly appreciated for their elegance and refinement.



Origin:
**BURGUNDY,
FRANCE**

SEAFOOD CASSEROLE


SERVES 4 • Preparation time: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/2 green bell pepper
- 2 celery stalks
- Oil spray
- 10.5 oz/300 g squid
- 4 tomatoes
- 1/4 cup cognac
- 7 fl oz fish broth
- 10.5 oz prawns
- 7 oz mussels
- 2 tbsp fresh chopped parsley

PREPARATION

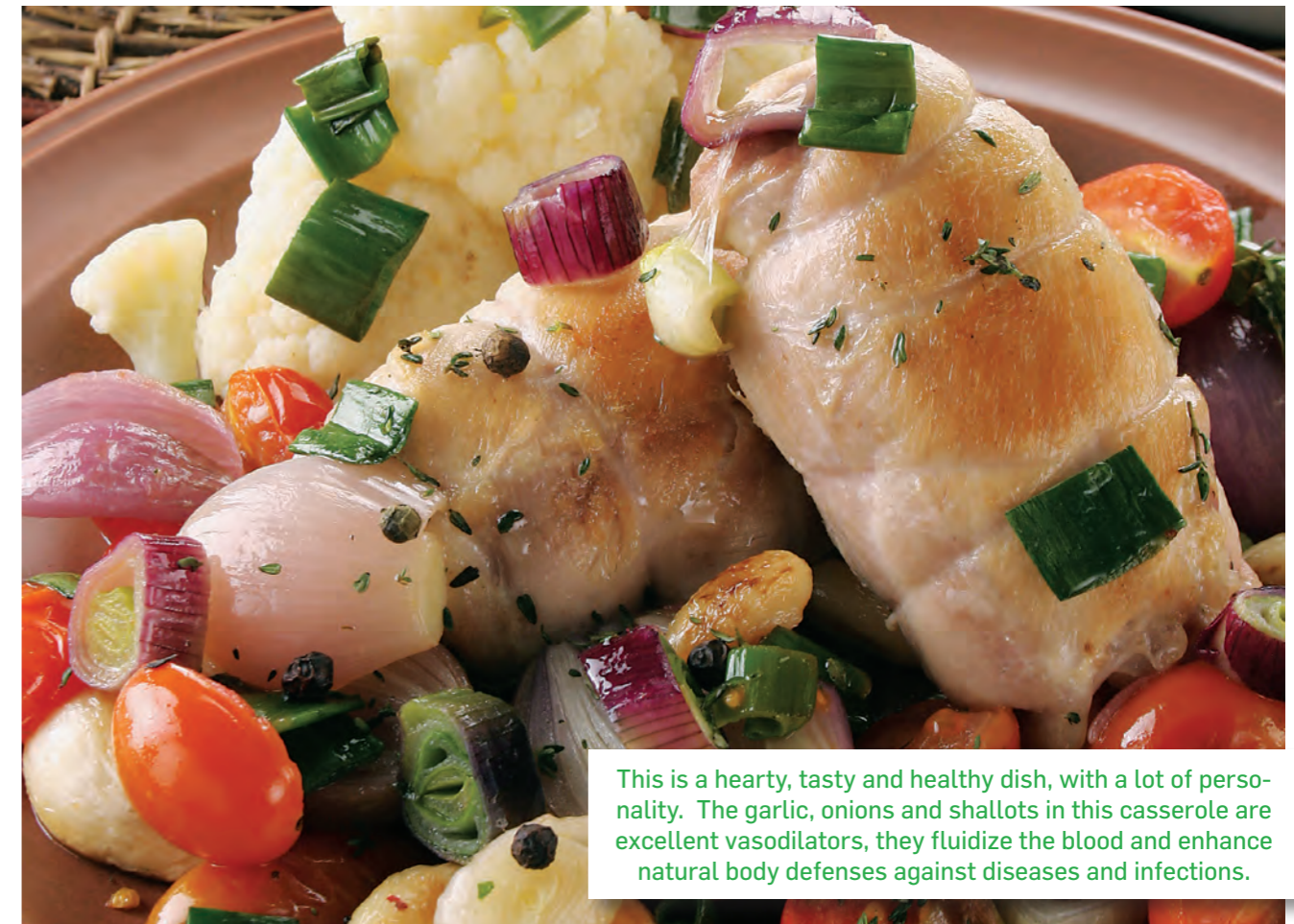
1. Finely chop the onion, garlic, pepper and celery. Spray a large skillet with cooking oil and cook the vegetables until they are soft. Add salt and pepper to taste and allow to cook for a couple more minutes.
2. Clean the squid, cut the tubes in rings and cook in the same skillet. Incorporate the diced tomato, the cognac and broth. Bring to the boil and add the clean prawns and mussels.
3. Cook for 8 minutes, add salt and pepper if needed, sprinkle with parsley and serve immediately.



This is a typical Spanish cuisine dish, which is very healthy and nourishing because of its elevated content of vitamin C, high nutritional value proteins and iron. Prepare this substantial meal on cold winter days and serve with toasted country bread or salted crackers.

GARLIC CHICKEN CASSEROLE

SERVES 6 • Preparation time: 60 minutes, plus resting time



This is a hearty, tasty and healthy dish, with a lot of personality. The garlic, onions and shallots in this casserole are excellent vasodilators, they fluidize the blood and enhance natural body defenses against diseases and infections.

INGREDIENTS

- 20 garlic cloves
- 5 shallots
- 2 scallions
- Oil spray
- 6 chicken thighs
- 3.5 fl oz dry white wine
- 8.5 fl oz low fat chicken broth
- Salt and pepper
- 3 twigs fresh thyme
- 5 oz cherry tomatoes

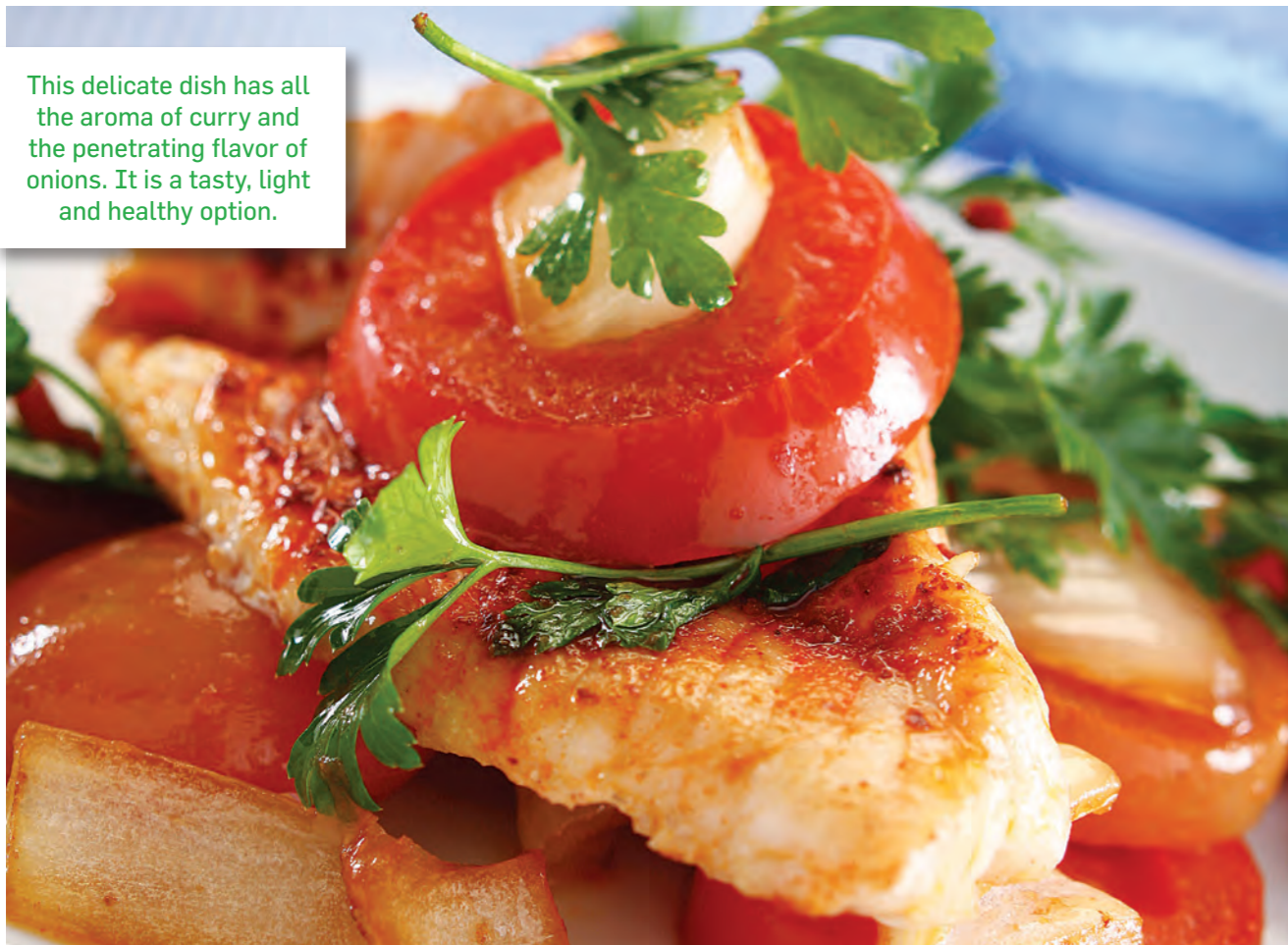
PREPARATION

1. Cut the shallots in half, cut the scallions in thick slices, peel the garlic cloves and leave whole. Put in a skillet sprayed with oil over medium heat and cook until they are tender.
2. Remove the skin and all visible fat from the chicken thighs. Put in the skillet together with the vegetables and brown on both sides. Pour the wine and cook on medium heat until the alcohol evaporates. Add the broth, the thyme twigs and salt and pepper to taste. Allow to cook for 15 minutes and add the halved cherry tomatoes. Check salt and pepper, and serve with steamed broccoli or cauliflower.

CURRIED FILETS OF GROUPER

SERVES 6 · Preparation time: 40 minutes

This delicate dish has all the aroma of curry and the penetrating flavor of onions. It is a tasty, light and healthy option.



INGREDIENTS

- 6 filets of grouper or any other white fish
- 3 tsp paprika
- 3 tsp curry
- Salt and pepper
- Oil spray
- 4 tomatoes
- 2 medium size onions
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley

PREPARATION

1. Clean the filets well, removing all bones. Season with paprika, curry, salt and pepper. Heat a frying pan, spray with cooking oil and sear the filets until they are brown on both sides.
2. Wash the tomatoes and peel the onions. Cut them in cubes of about 1/2 cm. Heat a skillet or frying pan, spray with oil and brown the onions. Add the tomatoes and cook for about 3 or 4 minutes. Add the parsley and cook for an extra minute.
3. Serve the filets hot with the sautéed vegetables on the side.

MULTIVITAMIN MINSTRONE

SERVES 6 · Preparation time: 45 minutes, plus drain

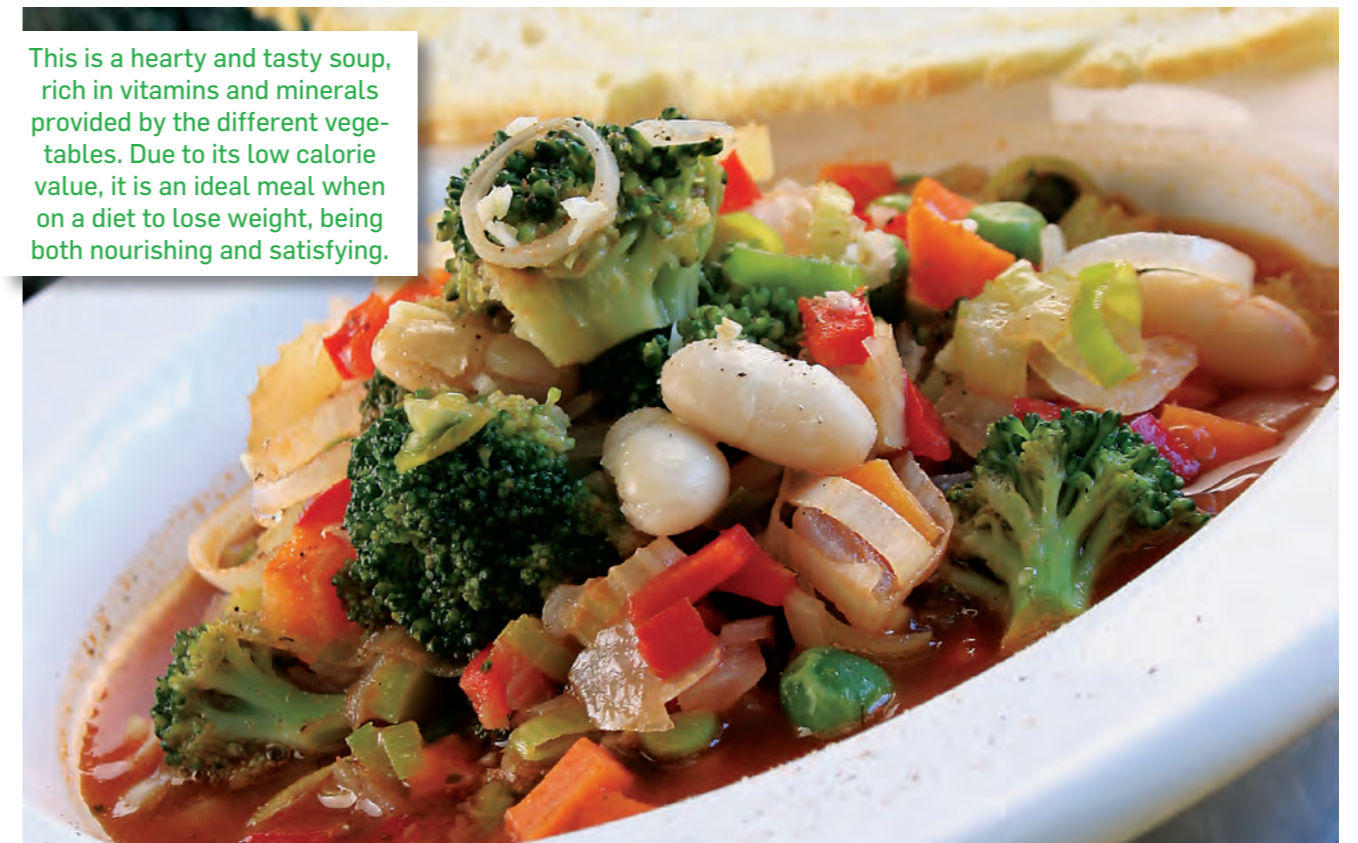
INGREDIENTS

- 2 oz/50 g beans
- 1.6 qt /1.5 l low fat chicken broth
- Oil spray
- 1 onion
- 2 celery stalks
- 2 leeks
- 1 carrot
- 1/2 red bell pepper
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp tomato extract
- 9 oz/250 g broccoli
- 2 oz/50 g green peas

PREPARATION

1. Put the beans in a bowl, cover them with water and soak overnight, then drain them and cook them in the broth until they are tender. Foam several times while cooking. Once they are ready, remove from heat and set aside.
2. Slice the onion, celery and leek. Cut the carrot and pepper in small cubes and mince the garlic. Spray a skillet with oil and cook all the vegetables for 10 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon.
3. Dissolve the tomato extract in 1 cup of broth, add to the vegetables and cook for 2 to 4 minutes. Incorporate the beans and broth and allow to cook for another 10 minutes. Add the peas, salt and pepper to taste, and cook until all the vegetables are tender. Serve hot.

This is a hearty and tasty soup, rich in vitamins and minerals provided by the different vegetables. Due to its low calorie value, it is an ideal meal when on a diet to lose weight, being both nourishing and satisfying.





CHAPTER 5: SAUVIGNON BLANC

Sauvignon Blanc is a greenish-skinned grape which comes from the French region of Bordeaux. This grape most likely took its name from the French words *sauvage* (“wild”) and *blanc* (“white”), due to its primitive origin in the southwest of France.

Depending on the weather, its flavors can range from aggressively herbaceous to sweetly tropical. In colder climates, the grape tends to produce wines with remarkable acidity and flavors of green grass, green peppers and tropical fruits, such as passion fruit, as well as floral notes, such as elderflower. In warmer climates it can develop tropical fruit flavors but with the risk of losing aromas due to over-ripening, when only aromas of grapes and tree fruits, such as peach, remain.

Experts have favorably described Sauvignon Blanc wine from the Loire Valley and New Zealand as refreshing and fresh.

Sauvignon Blanc wines are usually taken as appetizers, pairing with olives, salted fish, seafood, and soft creamy cheese. They also combine very well with starters based on salads with fruits, raisins, peppers and tomatoes, and pair perfectly with steamed or grilled seafood, without sauces that distort the wine. As for entrées, we can have Sauvignon Blanc wine with pasta and light meat.

Sauvignon Blanc wine was one of the first, along with Riesling, to be bottled with a screw cap to be commercialized. It began to be marketed like this especially in New Zealand. This wine is usually consumed young, since it does not especially benefit from aging. With prolonged aging, the monovarietal Sauvignon Blanc tends to develop vegetable, green pea and asparagus aromas.



Origin:
BORDEAUX,
FRANCE

RICOTTA CHEESE BALLS

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup breadcrumbs
- 6 oz/170 g Ricotta cheese
- 3 1/2 oz/100 g cream cheese
- 2 1/2 oz/70 g grated cheese
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 6 tablespoons sesame seeds

PREPARATION

1. In a large bowl, combine ricotta cheese, cream cheese, grated cheese and breadcrumbs. Add salt and pepper to taste. Mix well.
2. Shape the mixture into walnut-sized balls. Roll half of the cheese balls over chopped parsley until coated. Roll the other half over sesame seeds.
3. Serve cheese balls with crackers, grapes, pâté, toast and dips.



Elegant and fun, ideal to put on the table and enjoy something delicious

CRISPY FISH — TEMPURA —

SERVES 2 · Preparation time: 25 minutes



A good option, is before cooking the fish, let it marinate for a few hours in lemon to incorporate its flavor that combines so well

INGREDIENTS

- Oil for frying
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 5 1/2 oz/150 g firm white fish, in chunks
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup cold water
- Lemon wedges, to garnish
- Mayonnaise, to garnish

PREPARATION

1. Heat oil to 370°/ 190°C F over medium heat in a deep fryer or a deep, heavy skillet. Season fish with salt. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, combine flour and baking powder. Pour in the water and whisk until fully incorporated.
3. Dip the fish chunks into the batter, gently shake off any excess batter and drop into the oil. Work in batches so the oil temperature does not drop. Fry each piece of fish for 2 to 4 minutes, or until slightly golden.
4. Remove fish from heat and dry on paper towels to soak up any excess oil. Serve immediately, decorated with lemon wedges and mayonnaise.

STRIP LOIN MEDALLIONS

WITH CHEESE

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1.3 lb/600 g lean strip loin
- Salt and pepper
- Spray oil
- 1 egg
- 2 oz/50 g grated gruyere cheese
- 2 oz/50 g bread crumbs
- 1 tbsp chopped chives

Sauce:

- 2 shallots
- 2 tbsp sherry
- 3.5 fl oz/100 ml low fat beef broth
- 3.5 fl oz/100 ml light cream
- 1 oz/30 g blue cheese
- Salt and pepper

PREPARATION

1. Cut the strip loin in 4 medallions the same size, add salt and pepper to taste and sear in a skillet sprayed with oil until their surface is browned all over. Allow them to cool. Mix the grated cheese, bread crumbs and chives. In two shallow bowls, put the half beaten egg and the crumb mixture. Dip the medallions in the egg first and then in the crumb mixture, pressing well to coat.

2. Place the medallions in a baking pan and cook in a preheated oven at 460°F/240°C for about 10 minutes, or until browned. Remove from heat and keep warm.

3. For the sauce, chop the shallots and sauté in a skillet sprayed with oil until golden. Add the sherry and cook until the alcohol has evaporated. Pour in the broth, cream and blue cheese. Cook at low temperature until it comes to the boil, and add salt and pepper to taste. Serve the medallions bathed in sauce with steamed green beans and sautéed grapes on the side.



Beef dishes are all time favorites. Here we present these delicious medallions with a light and tasty cheese sauce to offer your family a nutritious and attractive meal.





CHAPTER 6: RIESLING

Riesling white wine is originally from the Rhine Valley, in Rheingau (Germany) and the first notice there is of its existence dates back to the fifteenth century. The Riesling grape belongs to the same family as famous Chardonnay, Aligoté or Gamay, among others.

It is undoubtedly a very aromatic variety. Fruity and floral, in the cool climates where it grows so well it can have notes of green fruit and touches of citrus. In warmer climates, citrus and pitted fruit aromas are more pronounced, and if the area is warmer and the autumn long and sunny, the aromas can remind of tropical fruits. Its characteristic high acidity allows long evolutions in the bottle that can lead to honey, toast and even smoked flavors.

Riesling, as well as Chardonnay, expresses extremely well the soil on which it grows and the region where it is found. Its character is always fruity and floral, which makes it very easy to drink and very valued, but the different types of soil and maturity of the grapes yield different results, a very interesting range of variations. Its freshness, pronounced acidity and variety of aromas makes it to the taste and pleasure of a large number of people.

Due to its great variety, this wine can be easily paired with a wide range of foods, such as fish, shellfish and crustaceans. It also goes very well with poultry, white meats or even strong cheeses. When elaborated with late harvests which produce a sweeter result, it pairs well with citrus desserts, or can even be used as a dessert itself.

In short, it is a capricious, complex and challenging strain, with very intense flavors and penetrating acidity, which faithfully reflects its terroir, and evolves when stored in bottles for several years. A great variety for all wine lovers.



Origin:
**RHEINGAU,
GERMANY**

BLUE CHEESE BRUSCHETTA

SERVES 8 · Preparation time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 apples
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 8 baguette slices
- 7 oz/200 g blue cheese
- Sage leaves, to decorate

A delicious, easy and sophisticated entrance to receive your guests.

PREPARATION

1. Wash the apples, remove the stems, cut in half and take out the seeds. Cut each half in slices, about 1/1 cm thick.
2. Heat the butter in a large frying pan and brown the apple slices on both sides. Sprinkle with sugar and allow to caramelize.
3. Toast the bread in the oven at high temperature, 430°F/220°C, or in a toaster, until golden and crisp. Cut the blue cheese in 8 even slices.
4. Place the caramelized apple slices on the warm toast, distribute the cheese slices on them, decorate with sage leaves and serve immediately.



GNOCCHI WITH TOMATO SAUCE AND CHERRY TOMATOES

SERVES 6 · Preparation time: 45 minutes



This dish is both delicious and healthy. Ideal for winter dinners with friends.

INGREDIENTS

- Gnocchi:**
- 1 kg ricotta cheese
 - 1 pinch nutmeg
 - Salt and pepper
 - 2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
 - 2 eggs
 - All purpose flour, as needed

- Sauce:**
- 1 clove garlic
 - 2 tbsp olive oil
 - 18 oz/500 g cherry tomatoes
 - 1 bunch fresh basil
 - Grated Parmesan cheese

PREPARATION

1. In a bowl, mix together the ricotta cheese, nutmeg, Parmesan cheese, and add salt and pepper to taste. Add the eggs and combine, and incorporate flour one spoonful at a time, until a tender dough that does not stick to your hands is obtained.
2. Take portions of the dough and roll them out forming long cylinders about 1 inch/2,5 cm thick. Use a knife to cut pieces every 1/2 inch / 2 cm. To shape the gnocchi, roll them firmly against the tines of a fork or a gnocchi board, using your thumb to press in and down the length of the fork or board. The gnocchi should curl into a "C". Set the gnocchi aside and dust with more flour so that they don't stick.
3. In a large pot, bring water with salt to the boil. Drop in the gnocchi, and as soon as they float, take them out with a skimmer spoon and place them in an oven pan.
4. To make the sauce, sauté the minced garlic in a frying pan with olive oil. Add the cherry tomatoes and cook for a couple of minutes, until they are soft. Add the fresh basil cut in strips. Pour the sauce over the gnocchi and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese

OYSTERS

— AU GRATIN —

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 50 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 24 oysters
- 1 red bell pepper
- 3.5 oz/100 g bacon
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 egg yolks
- 3.5 fl oz/100 ml dry white wine
- 2 tsp Tabasco sauce
- Salt and pepper
- 3.5 fl oz/ 100 ml heavy cream
- Sea salt or Kosher salt

PREPARATION

1. Scrape the oysters with a knife under cold tap water to clean the shells. Lay the oyster in your hand on a piece of cloth with the flat side up. Insert the tip of an oyster knife into the hinge and gently twist the edge of the knife to pry it open. Holding the oyster firmly, slide the knife around the lip of the oyster until you reach the other side of the hinge. The oyster should remain level so that you don't lose the liquid inside. Separate the shells and strain the liquid through a sieve covered with cheese cloth to discard any sand or grit. Use the knife to detach the oyster from the bottom shell. Never wash the oysters after they have been opened, it alters their flavor. Refrigerate the oysters and their liquid. Discard the flat shells and clean the concave ones well.

2. Cut the pepper and bacon in fine strips and sauté in a frying pan with olive oil. In a bowl, mix the egg yolks with the wine and Tabasco sauce and place on a double boiler. Beat with an electric beater until it doubles in bulk. Remove from heat and add salt and pepper to taste. Continue beating until the mixture reaches room temperature. Beat the heavy cream until soft peaks form, then add to the egg mixture. Set aside.

3. Put the oysters and the liquid in a small pot and cook over low heat for one minute, so that they don't get hard. Remove from heat, place one oyster into each shell and put all the shells in a baking pan over a layer of sea salt or Kosher salt. Pour the liquid on the oysters, distribute the pepper and bacon on top and finally spoon some egg mixture on each one. Cook in a preheated oven at high temperature, 430°F/220°C, for 2 or 3 minutes or until golden on top. Remove from heat and serve immediately.



This dish is both delicious and healthy. Oysters are rich in Omega 3, an indispensable substance to care for our cardiovascular system as well as to raise our defenses against cancer.



— RISOTTO — WITH MUSSELS

SERVES 8 · Preparation time: 50 minutes



This is a light dish, full of colors, textures and aromas. This easy recipe results in a hearty, healthy, nutritious and tasty meal that will be the whole family's delight.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 2/3 cup Carnaroli rice
- Fish broth
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 cans mussels in oil or 10.5 oz/300 g fresh cooked mussels
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup arugula leaves
- Freshly ground black pepper

PREPARATION

1. Finely chop the onion. Heat the olive oil in a skillet and cook the onion stirring occasionally until it is translucent. Add the rice and cook for 2 minutes, stirring constantly.
2. Cover with fish broth. Cook for 20 minutes over low heat, until the rice is done. Add more broth while cooking if necessary. Remove from heat and add the butter, stirring until it melts.
3. Add the mussels (drain the oil if canned mussels are being used) and the Parmesan cheese, and mix well. Wash the arugula and add to the risotto. Sprinkle with olive oil and grind abundant black pepper on top. Serve immediately.

CHICKEN CUTLETS ON GREENS

SERVES 5 · Preparation time: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2.2 lb/1 kg chicken breasts
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tbsp all purpose flour
- 4 eggs
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 tbsp mustard
- Oil to fry

Side greens:

- 1 small onion
- 3/4 lb/350 g baby spinach leaves
- 3 celery stalks
- 3.5 oz/ 100 g blue cheese
- 2 oz/50 g chopped walnuts

PREPARATION

1. Cut the chicken breasts in slices about 1/4 "/1 cm thick, and remove all visible fat. Flatten them slightly and add salt and pepper to taste.
2. Mix the eggs with the minced garlic, mustard, salt and pepper. In two separate shallow bowls put the flour and the egg mixture. Dip the chicken breasts first in flour, pressing to coat, then in egg.
3. Fry immediately in hot oil. Cook on both sides until golden and crisp. Remove and dry with paper towels to absorb excessive oil.
4. For the greens, peel the onions and cut in thin slices. Slice the celery stalks as well. Wash spinach leaves and remove stems. Mix all the vegetables, and add the blue cheese cut in small triangles and the chopped walnuts. For the dressing, whisk together oil and lemon juice. Add salt and pepper to taste and mix well. Dress the salad and serve with the cutlets.



Making cutlets is a different way of including chicken in our every day menu, which consist of dipping the meat in flour and egg before frying. In this case, we flavor it with garlic and mustard.



CHAPTER 7: CHIANTI

Slightly astringent and with a typical Italian finale: such is Chianti. This famous wine is produced in Tuscany, that lovely Italian region with ancient villages scattered among hills, cypresses and olive groves. It is one of Italy's most prestigious and well-known variety and belongs to the group of Tuscany wines.

It has been historically produced in three villages in the province of Siena: Radda in Chianti, Castellina in Chianti and Gaiole in Chianti, all situated in the gentle hills of Chianti. The best Chianti wines are produced according to Chianti Superiore norms, and therefore receive the designation of Chianti Superiore.

Chianti wines are elaborated with 80 to 100% of Sangiovese grape. Production norms vary within each area and category, being Chianti the more lenient ones and Chianti Superiore the more severe. They may contain up to 10% of more fruity varieties, such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot or Syrah.

Chianti may present different qualitative variations, among which can be found notes of plum, with a slight acidity that shifts into a sweeter flavor when produced in a more traditional way.

Since it is considered a well balanced table wine that reaches all kinds of public, it is the ideal pairing for Italian food: tomato-based pasta sauce, rice, pizza, mildly seasoned meats, dark roasted meats, lamb, pork, blood sausage, grilled chicken, aged Italian cheeses, charcuterie, stuffed pepper, Asian dishes and fried, grilled or marinated fish.

To pigeonhole Chianti into only one organoleptic pattern is to limit its whole magnitude. To fully enjoy it will depend on palates able to appreciate the distinctive nuances that follow from its common features.



Origin:
TUSCANY,
ITALY



TOMATO & BASIL PIZZA

SERVES 6 - 8 · Preparation time: 30 minutes, plus resting time

INGREDIENTS

For the dough:

- 1.7 oz/ 50 g fresh compressed yeast or 0.9 oz/25 g dry yeast
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 10 fl oz/300 ml milk
- 4.5 oz/130 g rice flour
- 6 oz/165 g cassava flour
- 9 oz/250 g corn starch
- 1 tsp salt
- 3.5 oz/100 g butter
- Oil spray

For the topping:

- 3 tomatoes
- 1/2 chopped onion
- 1 tsp parsley
- 1 tsp oregano
- Salt and pepper
- 7 oz/200 g cherry tomatoes
- 7 oz/ 200 g mozzarella cheese
- 12 basil leaves

PREPARATION

1. Dissolve the yeast in the milk and add the sugar (the milk should be at room temperature, not cold). Let stand for 5 minutes, until it begins to foam. In a food processor, mix together the yeast mixture, flours, salt and butter at room temperature, until a smooth dough is formed. Put in a bowl sprayed with oil and let it rise covered in a warm place, until it doubles in bulk.
2. Punch down the dough, roll it out, put it in a pizza or oven pan sprayed with oil and let it rise again. Cook in a preheated oven for about 7 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.
3. For the topping, cut a small X in the bottom of the tomatoes, plunge them in boiling water for 2 minutes, remove, rinse with cold water and peel the skin off. Blend them together with the onion and cook the purée in a small skillet for 7 to 10 minutes. Season with the herbs, salt and pepper. Cover the half-cooked dough with the sauce, distribute the halved cherry tomatoes and the grated mozzarella cheese on top, and put in the oven again until the cheese has melted. Remove from heat, decorate with basil leaves and serve.



A new version of classic Italian cuisine pizza, this recipe combines the fragrance of basil, the color of tomatoes and the flavor of mozzarella. The dough can be refrigerated ahead of time, ready for a healthy meal when needed.

CHICKEN & GREEN PEA RISOTTO

SERVES 6 · Preparation time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can green peas
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp wasabi
- Salt and pepper
- 3 chicken breasts
- Oil spray
- 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 qt/ 1 l vegetable broth
- 1 onion
- 2 cups rice
- 2 oz/50 g butter
- 3.5/ 100 g Parmesan cheese

PREPARATION

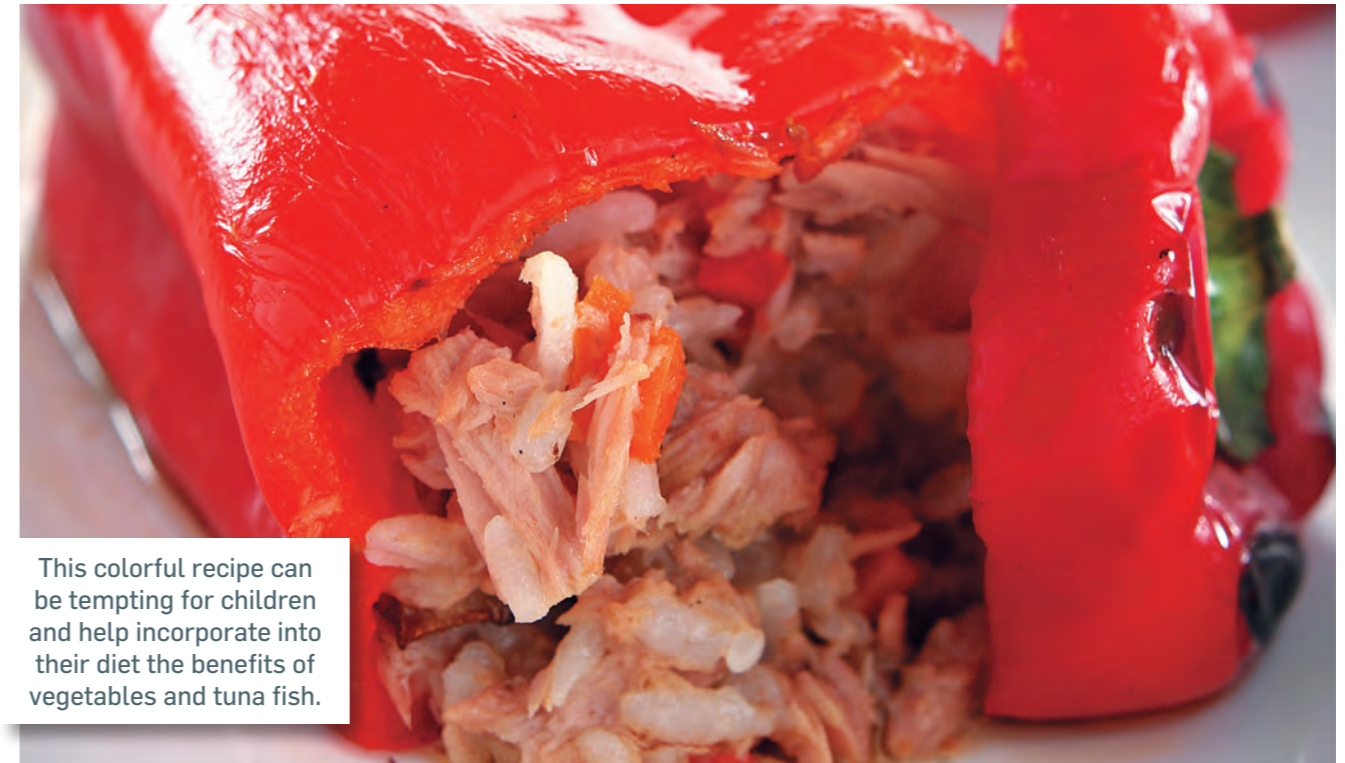
1. Drain the peas and put in a food processor together with the wasabi and olive oil. Process until smooth and add salt and pepper to taste.
2. Remove all visible fat from the chicken breasts and cut in small cubes. Sauté in a frying pan sprayed with oil, add salt and pepper, balsamic vinegar and cook for another 2 minutes.
3. Heat 2 tbsp of broth in a skillet and add the chopped onion. Cook until translucent. Add the rice and cook for a couple of minutes. Add the rest of the hot broth and cook over low heat for about 20 minutes. If necessary, add more broth. The rice should be thoroughly cooked and have a creamy texture.
4. Remove from heat, add the butter and stir with a wooden spoon until completely melted. Incorporate the green pea purée, the chicken and the cheese. Mix well and serve.

This risotto is an ideal recipe for cold days. It is both tasty and light due to the original combination of green peas and chicken.



PEPPERS STUFFED WITH SPICED RICE

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 40 minutes, plus 30 minutes baking time



This colorful recipe can be tempting for children and help incorporate into their diet the benefits of vegetables and tuna fish.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion
- Oil spray
- Salt and pepper
- 1 carrot
- 1 zucchini
- 1 celery stalk
- 1 1/2 cup rice
- Vegetable broth
- 2 cans tuna fish in oil
- 4 bell peppers
- 1 tbsp olive oil

PREPARATION

1. Chop the onion and cook in a frying pan sprayed with oil until it is translucent. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add the grated carrot and zucchini, and the finely chopped celery. Cook over medium heat for 5 minutes.
2. Incorporate the rice, cook for 2 minutes and cover with vegetable broth. Cook over low heat adding more broth as needed for approximately 20 minutes, until the rice is cooked. The rice must absorb all the liquid.
3. Remove from heat, add the tuna and mix well. Wash the peppers and remove the stems cutting around them to make a lid. Remove the seeds and ribs inside, hollowing out the peppers. Stuff them with the rice and cover with the lid.
4. Place the peppers in a baking pan sprayed with oil, drizzle with olive oil and cover with foil. Cook in a preheated oven at medium temperature, 356°F/180°C, for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and serve immediately.

RED & GREEN RAVIOLI

SERVES 6 · Preparation time: 50 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 14 oz/400 g ricotta
- 3.5 oz/100 g grated goat cheese
- 1.5 oz/40 g grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp fresh chopped basil
- 1 egg
- 1 pinch nutmeg
- Salt and pepper

Dough:

- 10.5/ 300 g all purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 eggs
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 beaten egg, to brush

Red and green pesto:

- 4 garlic cloves
- 1.5 oz/40 g fresh chopped basil
- 1 oz/30 g fresh arugula
- 3 oz/80 g sun dried tomatoes in oil, drained
- 2 oz/50 g Parmesan cheese
- 3 oz/80 g chopped walnuts
- 2/3 cup olive oil

PREPARATION

1. For the filling, mix in a bowl the ricotta, goat cheese, Parmesan cheese, basil and egg. Add nutmeg, salt and pepper to taste. Set aside.

To make the dough, put the flour and salt on a work surface forming a mound and make a well in the center. Put in the middle the slightly beaten eggs and the oil. Work with your fingertips from the middle outwards, incorporating the flour until a coarse dough forms. Use your other hand to keep the mound steady as you work. Knead the dough for about 10 minutes, until smooth and elastic. Divide in two, wrap with film and refrigerate for 20 minutes.

2. Roll out each piece of dough into a rectangle about 1/16" thin. Brush one of them with the egg wash and drop the filling on the dough by teaspoonfuls, about 1" apart and 1" from the edges. Cover with the other sheet of pasta, pressing out the air from around each portion of filling.

3. Cut the ravioli with a knife or pasta cutter and let them dry on a floured surface. Boil in abundant water with salt for about 4 minutes or until they float and they are "al dente". Drain well.

4. For the pesto, put in a mortar or food processor the garlic cloves, basil, arugula, sun dried tomatoes, Parmesan cheese and walnuts. Process well, and with the machine on gradually add the oil until obtaining a smooth and creamy mixture. Remove and add salt and freshly ground pepper to taste. Serve the hot pasta with the red and green pesto and sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese if desired.

In case you want, the correct and most lasting way to preserve the ravioli is by freezing them, but you must let the dough of the fresh pasta dry and that it hardens at room temperature before taking them to the fridge.





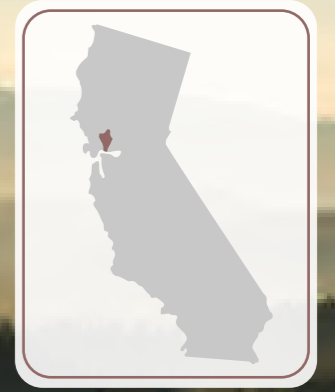
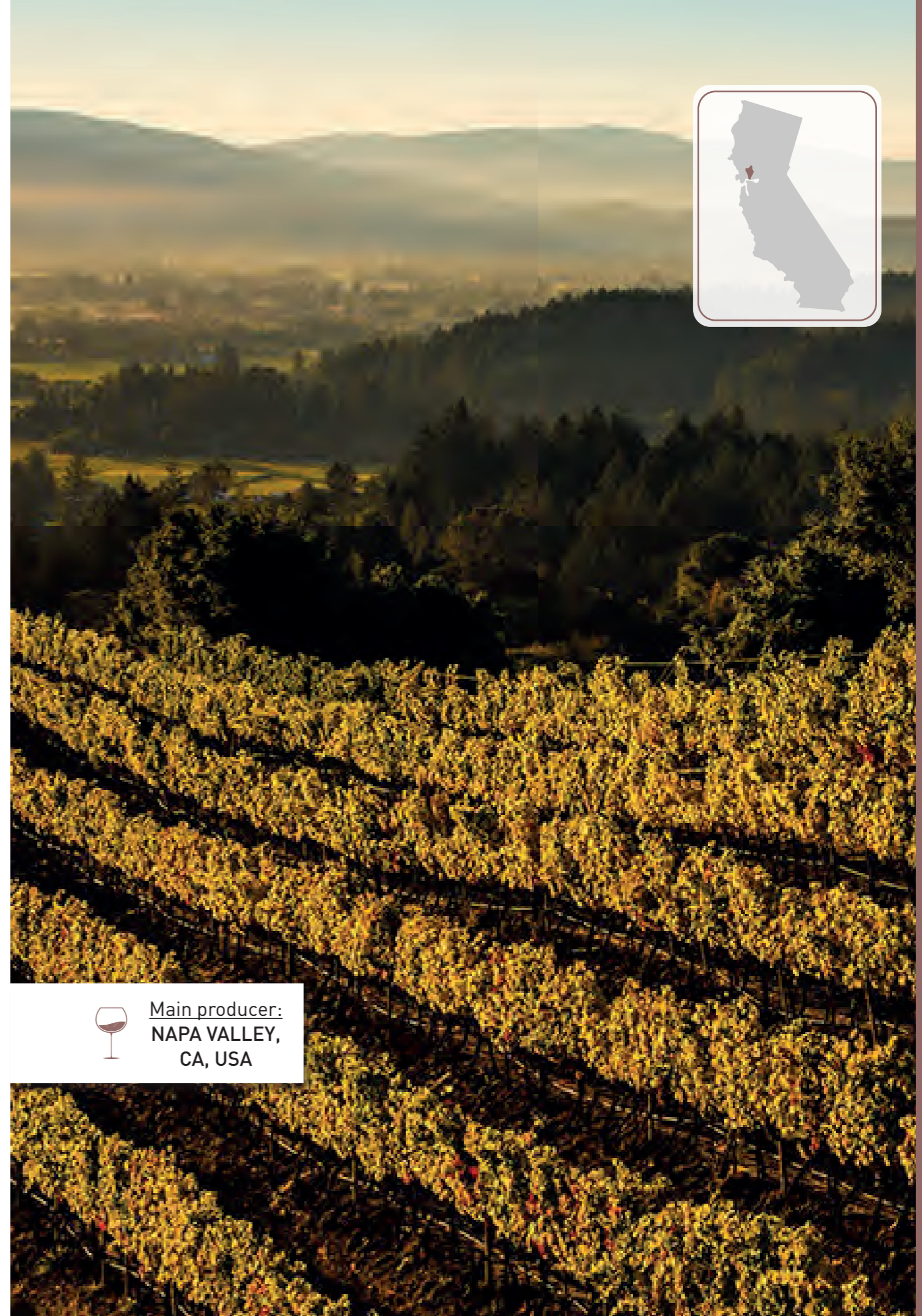
CHAPTER 8: PINOT GRIGIO

A clear, pale lemon wine in appearance, close relative of Pinot Blanc, Pinot Grigio has recently become a very popular varietal not only in Italy but also in the U.S., specially in Napa Valley, California, where it has yet to succeed in making wines comparable to those in Northern Italy. The Oregonians call their version Pinot Gris, and have accomplished a wine with stronger flavor and richer body.

This wine offers a clean nose with medium intensity. Aroma notes include red apple, grass, lime zest and flinty minerals. On the palate it is off dry, with medium acidity, alcohol, body and flavor intensity, and a long finish.

Because it does not present prominent fruit flavors, this wine is easy to pair with food. The drier, more acidic versions match shellfish and other seafood. The fuller-bodied versions produced in Oregon can accompany pasta, pizza and poultry.

Many experts consider that Pinot Gris has reached its pinnacle in Alsace, France. Alsacian Pinot Gris grapes appear in dry, acidic wines or late harvest styles. Across the border, in Germany, Pinot Gris is known as Grauburgunder and is also very popular.



Main producer:
NAPA VALLEY,
CA, USA

ORIENTAL FISH — CUTLETS —

SERVES 4 • Preparation time: 55 minutes + marinate

INGREDIENTS

- 4 turbot or red snapper cutlets
- 1 tablespoon tomato puree
- 1 tablespoon light soy sauce
- 60ml/2fl oz freshly-squeezed orange juice
- 60ml/2fl oz water
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 4 spring onions, chopped
- 2 teaspoon grated fresh root ginger
- 2 potatoes

PREPARATION

1. Arrange fish in a baking dish large enough to hold them in a single layer.
2. Put tomato puree in a jug or bowl and stir in soy sauce. Add orange juice, water, garlic, spring onions and ginger. Mix well.
3. Pour mixture over fish, cover and marinate in refrigerator for at least 2 hours.
4. Preheat oven to 180° C/350° F/Gas 4. Bake fish, covered, for 30 minutes or until cooked. Garnish with roasted potatoes.



Keep fresh root ginger in the freezer. Not only will this preserve it in pristine condition, but it can easily be grated or sliced into fine slivers while frozen.

PESTO — PASTA —

SERVES 4 • Preparation time: 20 minutes



Spinach pesto makes a tasty alternative when fresh basil is unavailable. To make, use fresh spinach in place of the basil and add 1 teaspoon dried basil.

INGREDIENTS

- 500 g/1 lb fettuccine or other pasta of your choice

Basil and garlic pesto:

- 1 large bunch fresh basil
- 1/2 bunch fresh parsley
- 60 g/2 oz grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
- 30 g/1 oz pine nuts or almonds
- 2 large cloves garlic, quartered
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup/90 ml/3 fl oz olive oil

PREPARATION

1. To make pesto, place basil leaves, parsley, Parmesan or Romano cheese, pine nuts or almonds, garlic and black pepper to taste in a food processor or blender and process to finely chop. With machine running, slowly add oil and continue processing to make a smooth paste.
2. Cook pasta in boiling water in a large saucepan following packet directions. Drain and divide between serving bowls, top with pesto, toss to combine and serve immediately.

SEAFOOD

— KEBABS —

SERVES 4 • Preparation time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 16 mangetout, trimmed
- 60g/2oz butter, melted
- 3 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh mint
- 2 tablespoon finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 16 scallops, rinsed and deveined
- 16 uncooked king prawns, peeled and deveined, tails intact
- oil for greasing

PREPARATION

1. Soak 8 wooden skewers in warm water for 1 hour. Blanch mangetout in boiling water then drain and refresh under cold water. Drain again.
2. Combine butter, lime juice, mint and Parmesan cheese.
3. Wrap each scallop in a mangetout. Thread two prawns and two mangetout-wrapped scallops onto each drained skewer.
4. Brush kebabs generously with butter mixture. Barbecue on an oiled grill over moderately hot coals for 2 minutes each side or until tender, brushing with the butter mixture.



It is an alternative to the typical meat kebab, ideal to surprise your guests



CHICKEN —PAPRIKA—

SERVES 4 · Preparation time: 40 minutes



The paprika is the result of letting the peppers dry and then grind it. On this occasion, seasoning the chicken with this species will give it a unique flavor.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, sliced
- 250g/8oz button mushrooms, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 4 chicken breast fillets
- 250ml/8fl oz chicken stock
- 125ml/4fl oz soured cream

PREPARATION

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Add the onion and mushrooms and cook for 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic and paprika and cook for 1 minute. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the vegetable mixture to a bowl and set aside.
2. Add the chicken fillets to the fat remaining in the pan and brown on both sides over moderate heat.
3. Return the vegetable mixture to the pan with the chicken stock. Bring to the boil, lower the heat and simmer for 5-8 minutes until the chicken is cooked.
4. Just before serving, stir in the soured cream. Reheat without boiling. Serve hot, with noodles if liked.

CRISPY PIZZA —ROLLS—

MAKES 8 · Preparation time: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 large wholemeal pitta bread rounds, split
- 4 tablespoons tomato paste (purée)
- 1/2 green pepper, chopped
- 2 slices reduced fat ham, chopped
- 2 spring onions, chopped
- 60 g/2 oz reduced fat Cheddar cheese, grated

PREPARATION

1. Spread each bread round with 1 tablespoon tomato paste (purée) leaving a 2 cm³/₄ in border. Sprinkle with green pepper, ham, spring onions and cheese.
2. Roll up bread rounds and cut in half. Secure with a wooden toothpick or cocktail stick.
3. Place rolls on baking trays and bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 20 minutes or until bread is crisp. Serve hot or cold.

For a vegetarian version of this snack simply omit the ham. Baked beans, artichoke hearts, avocado or fresh mushrooms can be used instead, if you wish.



Wine, Bites & Appetizers

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