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DINER À LA MAISON TODAY

foreword
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A
PARISIAN'S
GUIDE TO
COOKING
AND
ENTERTAINING
AT
HOME



RIZZOLI
NEW YORK



FUSILLI WITH SAUSAGE

This is one of the best, easiest, and most satisfying meals you will ever make. My grandmother made a version of this, which I have always remembered, and Sicilian friends helped me rediscover this as well. It's another "comfort" dinner that you will make often for family and friends. Serve with a simple broccoli salad dressed with a fresh lemon juice vinaigrette. Fresh strawberries drizzled with aged balsamic vinegar make a light, delicious dessert!

TO SERVE 4

2 heaping teaspoons fennel seeds

Olive oil

3 Toulouse sausages or other good-quality pork sausages

1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, ideally pepperoncino

1 small glass dry white wine

1 teaspoon dried oregano

Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon

1 pound (450 g) good-quality fusilli

2 tablespoons butter

4 oz. grated Parmigiano

A few sprigs flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Crush the fennel seeds using a mortar and pestle. Heat a drizzle of olive oil in a large skillet. Remove the sausage filling from the casings and place it in the skillet. Cook over medium high heat, stirring constantly, for a few minutes, until the meat has colored. Crumble it with a fork so that you don't have any large pieces. Add the fennel and crushed red pepper and continue cooking until the meat is well browned. Deglaze with the white wine and allow the liquid to reduce by half. Stir in the oregano and the lemon zest and juice. Reduce the heat to low while you cook the pasta, so the mixture stays warm.

In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook the pasta according to the directions on the package. Drain in a colander, reserving some of the cooking liquid.

Combine the pasta with the meat in the skillet and stir in the butter, Parmigiano, and parsley. To ensure that your sauce is lovely and shiny, stir in 2 tablespoons of the pasta cooking liquid. Salt and pepper to taste. Serve, topped with a sprinkling of grated Parmigiano.







COD WITH CILANTRO PESTO
WATERCRESS SALAD WITH MUSHROOMS, CUCUMBERS, AND AVOCADO
BERRY TRIFLE

This is an easy, delicious, healthy dinner for weekdays or weekends. The watercress salad, with buttery avocado and a Dijon dressing, will likely become a favorite, prepared to accompany roasted chicken, grilled steaks, or other grilled or baked fish dishes. I enjoy finishing the meal with this berry trifle, a simple dessert that looks more sinful than it actually is!

TO SERVE 4

FOR THE SALAD

1 bunch watercress	2 tablespoons old-fashioned (grainy) Dijon mustard
2 Persian cucumbers	Juice of ½ lemon
1 bunch cilantro	⅓ cup (75 ml) olive oil
6 medium-sized mushrooms	Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 ripe medium-sized avocado	

Wash and drain the watercress and remove any thick stalks. Peel the cucumbers, cut them in half lengthwise, and scoop the seeds out with a teaspoon. Cut the cucumbers into half-moons that are fairly thick. Wash the cilantro and chop it roughly. Wash the mushrooms under cold running water, trim the bottom of the stems, pat them dry using paper towels, and slice them. Halve the avocado, remove the pit, and dice the flesh. Combine all the ingredients in a large salad bowl. To prepare the dressing, mix together the mustard, lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper to form an emulsion. Pour it over the salad at the last moment and toss gently just before serving.

FOR THE COD

2 tablespoons court-bouillon mix (contains coarse salt, spices, and assorted herbs); Old Bay Seasoning may also be used

1 thick cod fillet (1 to 1½ pounds / 455 to 680 g), cut into 4 portions

1 bunch cilantro

½ garlic clove

3 tablespoons olive oil

Juice of ½ lemon

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a large pot, bring water flavored with the court-bouillon mix to a boil. Gently place the fish portions in the pot and cover with the lid. When the water returns to a boil, remove the pot from the heat and let the fish poach. Your fish needs only 10 minutes to be perfectly cooked; it will remain slightly translucent.

While the fish is cooking, combine the cilantro with the garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper to taste and puree to make a green coulis—your cilantro pesto.

Spread the pesto over the bottom of a serving dish. Carefully remove the fish from the court-bouillon using a slotted spoon and place it on the bed of pesto. Serve with new potatoes that require no more than simple boiling.

FOR THE BERRY TRIFLE

Store-bought meringues

1 package fresh red currants, strawberries, or other berries of your choice

Whipped cream

Store-bought red berry coulis or purée

With your hands, crumble the meringues into large pieces. Reserve some of the berries for the garnish. Arrange some meringue crumbles as the base in four dessert bowls, then divide the coulis and berries among the bowls, alternating with additional crumbled meringue to create layers. Finish with a lovely dollop of whipped cream and decorate with the few remaining berries.









**TREVISO SALAD WITH ANCHOVIES
OCTOPUS, POTATOES, AND PIMENTÓN
ESPRESSO AFFOGATO**

A crunchy treviso salad with a warm anchovy-sherry vinaigrette followed by delicious poached octopus, served on a bed of smoky paprika potatoes, celery, and red onion, makes a delightful summer lunch or dinner menu.

“Dessert” is an espresso served with a small scoop of vanilla gelato. Bravo!

TO SERVE 6

FOR THE TREVISO SALAD

**1 or 2 heads radicchio lettuce, depending
on their size**

⅓ cup (90 ml) olive oil

2 cloves garlic, chopped

6 anchovies, packed in oil

3 tablespoons (45 ml) sherry vinegar

Wash the radicchio. Cut the large leaves into pieces but keep the smaller ones whole. Place all of the leaves in a salad bowl.

To make the vinaigrette, heat the oil in a small skillet over low heat and add the garlic and anchovies. The anchovies will disintegrate when exposed to heat. Increase the heat and add the vinegar, which will evaporate as it cooks. Remove the skillet from the heat, pour the hot vinaigrette over the radicchio leaves, and serve.

FOR THE OCTOPUS

2¼ pounds (1 kg) octopus, or several small octopuses

1½ pounds (750 g) medium-sized potatoes

1 spring or small red onion

1 bunch flat-leaf parsley

2 stalks celery

Olive oil

Juice of 1 lemon

1 tablespoon pimentón or smoked paprika

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Begin by cleaning the octopus: first turn the hood inside out and slice it off, then remove the eyes and the beak at the base of the hood. You may also ask your fish monger to clean them.

Place the octopus in a large pot and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil and cook for 40 minutes. The octopus is done when a knife inserted into the meat slides in as easily as if it were softened butter. Allow the octopus to cool in the cooking water.

Meanwhile, bring a pot of salted water to a boil and cook the potatoes for 15 minutes. When they are tender, cut them into fairly thick slices. Rinse the octopus under running water, remove the skin, and cut the meat into bite-size pieces leaving tentacles a bit longer. Chop the spring onion, roughly chop the flat-leaf parsley, and cut the celery into small pieces.

Combine all of these ingredients in a bowl, season with the olive oil and lemon juice, and then with salt and pepper. Sprinkle evenly with pimentón. Transfer to a serving platter.

This dish may be eaten either still warm or at room temperature.

Another version of the recipe calls for cooking the octopus in a court-bouillon, with the classic aromatics of carrot, celery, onion, and bouquet garni. If you opt for this method, the octopus will be even tastier.

FOR THE ESPRESSO AFFOGATO

For each person, prepare one serving of espresso coffee. Place a scoop of vanilla ice cream in a sturdy glass, add a dash of amaretto, and pour over the hot coffee. Serve immediately, adding roasted sliced almonds or crumbled almond cookies, depending on your preference.









PASTA ALLA NORMA

A classic Sicilian pasta featuring tomatoes, eggplant, and ricotta salata named after the composer Vincenzo Bellini's opera Norma. Every cook needs some go-to pasta dishes and this can easily become one to add to your repertoire. Serve with a simple rocket salad seasoned with lemon juice, olive oil, salt and freshly ground black pepper, and topped with shaved Parmesan. A glass of red wine and you are set!

TO SERVE 4

2 large eggplants

Olive oil

1 garlic clove, peeled and finely chopped

Leaves of 1 bunch basil

1 teaspoon dried oregano

**1 pound (450 g) whole peeled tomatoes,
or 2 cups (500 ml) passata (uncooked
tomato purée)**

**A little white wine vinegar, about 1
teaspoon**

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 pound (450 g) dry penne

**5 ounces (150 g) ricotta salata or pecorino,
grated (about 1 cup)**

Cut each eggplant lengthwise into 4 pieces. Then cut the pieces widthwise to make large cubes. Preheat the oven on the broil setting. Arrange the eggplant cubes in a baking dish and drizzle generously with olive oil, mixing with your hands to ensure that all the pieces are well coated. Place the baking dish in the middle of the oven and broil for at least 20 minutes, turning them over halfway through the cooking process, until nicely golden all over.

While the eggplant bakes, drizzle a little olive oil in a large skillet and sauté the garlic with the basil leaves (set some of the smaller leaves aside for garnish). Add the tomatoes and oregano and adjust the heat to low, and allow the liquid to reduce for about 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and add a dash of white wine vinegar. Lastly, stir the finished eggplant cubes into the sauce and cook for an additional 10 minutes.

In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook the pasta according to the directions on the package. When the penne are al dente, drain them in a colander, reserving a little of the cooking liquid. Return the pasta to the pot and place over medium low heat and immediately add the sauce, as well as 2 tablespoons of the reserved cooking liquid, and mix well. Scatter with the reserved basil leaves, grated cheese, and a last dash of olive oil.



