



RECIPES

TORTA AL CIOCCOLATA E OLIO DI OLIVA

OLIVE OIL CHOCOLATE CAKE

This is an amazing cake for cheats. The oil keeps it very moist but instead of real chocolate you use drinking chocolate powder.

Serves 10

Preparation time 15 minutes. Cooking time 60 minutes.

REQUIREMENTS

7 eggs, separated. 1 cup castor sugar. 125mL (1 2/3 cups) VOG Manzanillo extra virgin olive oil. 1 cup self raising flour, sifted. 1¾ cups drinking chocolate (not cocoa), sifted. 125 ml (1/2 cup) warm water. ¼ cup castor sugar when beating egg whites.

METHOD

Preheat oven to 180C (375F).

Beat yolks with castor sugar until fluffy. If mixture tends to be thick add 1 tblspn of warm water. This will help the mixture turn fluffy again.

With beater on medium speed add olive oil, bit by bit, like making mayonnaise. Add dry ingredients to mixture on low speed until all combined. Add the water.

Whip egg whites until thick, add the sugar and beat until it dissolves.

Pour chocolate mixture into a large bowl and gently but swiftly fold in the egg whites. When well combined pour into a greased 23cm (9") cake tin and bake for 1 hour or until cooked.

Stefano

This recipe was taken from Stefano de Pieri's latest book - ["Modern Italian Food"](#). Get your own copy to delve into more of Stefano's Modern Italian food.



PANCOTTO CON PATATE E RUCOLA

BREAD POTATO AND ROCKET "SOUP"

I have waxed lyrical about the virtues of old bread. Crusty, homemade bread, not thin white slices. It is even a pity to throw the stale bits away. For this recipe it is worth letting some bread go old. The combination of bread and potatoes is, for me, a paradise of starch. This is my variation on Valentina Harris's recipe, which she has taken from the Apulian tradition.

INGREDIENTS

500 g (1 lb) potatoes, peeled and thickly sliced. 500 g (1 lb) rocket. 300 g (10 oz) crusty old bread. 100 ml (3 1/2 fl oz) extra virgin olive oil. 3 cloves garlic, whole. 1 red chili, whole (optional). Salt

Serves 6. Preparation time 1 hour.

METHOD

Cover the potatoes with cold water in a saucepan and cook until soft. Add the rocket and bread and keep cooking until the bread is quite soft. You may need to add more water to the pot during cooking.

Heat the oil in a pan and fry the garlic and chilli, if using. Discard the chilli. Pour the oil and garlic over the soup. Season with salt.

Traditionally the soup is not served with cheese, but I like to add some strong pecorino.

Stefano

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Orange, fennel and green olive salad

When the oranges are raging from June onward and fennel bulbs are pushing their way out of the winter-cold ground, it is time for this wonderful Sicilian salad. It is a refreshing dish, more of a stand-alone than a side show. The sweet and sour orange flavour blends beautifully with the salty olives and fruity olive oil. Fennel provides crunch and a refreshing anise quality. I like to serve it as part of an antipasto – perhaps with some prawns or marinated fish.

SERVES: 6

6 navel oranges

1 large fennel bulb or 2 smaller ones

24 green olives

extra-virgin olive oil

salt flakes

Use a sharp knife to slice off both ends of the oranges. Peel each orange, then carefully cut away all the pith. Cut the oranges into slices and arrange on a large serving platter.

Cut the fennel in half lengthwise, then cut each half into thin wedges and arrange on top of the orange slices.

Scatter on the olives. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle on salt to taste.

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BAKED PENNE

This is a dish for late summer when Roma (plum) tomatoes are cheap and very, very ripe. Read on because it is not the usual recipe. Choose good quality penne – the short, smooth pasta tubes.

Serves 10.

Preparation time 30 minutes. Cooking time 45 minutes.

REQUIREMENTS

1 kg (2lb) penne. 500mL VOG extra virgin olive oil. 3 kg ripe Roma tomatoes, skinned, seeded and chopped. 2 cups Parmigiano-Reggiano. Salt. ½ cup torn basil leaves. 2 cups cubed Mozzarella.

METHOD

Place uncooked penne in a 40 x 30cm (16x12”) baking dish and pour over the oil. Stir from time to time; in a few hours they will have absorbed most of the oil. Keep turning to prevent drying out.

Preheat oven to 180C (350F).

Add tomatoes and Parmigiano to the baking dish. Toss and add salt as you go – a good sprinkle is necessary.

Cover with aluminium foil and bake for 45 minutes or until cooked. Check after 25 minutes to ensure penne are still moist; that you do not need more tomato and that the top is not too dry. I advise stirring the penne with a spoon. Taste for salt and return to oven. This dish should taste fresh and creamy. Some basil and Mozzarella on top will finish the dish.

Stefano

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SPAGHETTI AL PESTO DI ROSMARINO

SPAGHETTI WITH ROSEMARY PESTO

Many people make pesto with basil and pinenuts. An interesting pesto is one with rosemary pounded with garlic and cooked briefly in a little butter and oil together with some fresh tomato.

It is the starch in the potatoes and the flavour of the beans that add complexity to the dish. Resist the temptation to cook separately and add them at the end; it will not be the same.

Serves 6. Preparation time 20 minutes. Cooking time 20 minutes.

REQUIREMENTS

Salt. 500gm (1 lb) spaghetti. 2 cups diced potatoes. 1 cup fresh green chopped beans. 3 tablespoons fresh rosemary needles. 4 cloves garlic. 125mL (1/2 cup) VOG extra virgin olive oil. 2 cups diced fresh tomatoes. 1 cup grated parmesan.

METHOD

Bring some salted water to the boil in a pot. Add the spaghetti and the potatoes. Some spaghetti take 7 minutes to cook which should be enough for the potatoes. Two minutes before the spaghetti is ready add the green beans. Make sure that all the ingredients are perfectly cooked. Drain and set aside.

In the meantime finely chop the rosemary leaves and pound them with the garlic in a mortar and pestle. Heat some olive oil in a pan and fry the paste. Add the tomatoes and cook briefly or until all the aromas have been released.

Toss the sauce with the spaghetti and vegetable adding extra oil to moisten if necessary. Our Harvest Blend oil, flavoursome and yet delicate, is ideal. Finish with the cheese. ENJOY

Stefano

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Penne Pasta with Tomatoes

An ideal dish to make at the height of summer when tomatoes are abundant, ripe and juicy.

Peel a couple of kilograms of tomatoes (plunge them in boiling water first, to make this easier), then slice. Meanwhile, toss 400g of raw penne in 100 ml olive oil and leave them for 2 hours to absorb as much oil as possible.

Layer the bottom of a baking dish with slices of tomato followed by a layer of pasta. Repeat until all the pasta and tomatoes have been used.

Season with salt and pepper as you go.

Cover with aluminium foil and bake in a pre-heated (180 degrees Celsius) oven for 25 minutes.

The result should be a lovely, soft and juicy dish. If it is too wet, return to the oven for a little longer.

As you serve, scatter on a generous handful of torn basil leaves and plenty of freshly grated parmesan (or bocconcini or buffalo mozzarella). A slug of your best olive oil would also be good.

As you can tell, there are many variables to this dish. And it is well worth making over and over again until you perfect it!

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Pollo Al Forno Con Patate - Baked Chicken with Potatoes

*This dish was shown in **Gondola on the Murray** and it took the fancy of many viewers. I have been asked many times to supply the recipe because it really is the simplest way to cook chicken -- there's nothing to it! Come to think about it, it is a formula that can be successfully used to cook lamb or goat.*

SERVES 4

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINS

COOKING TIME: 40 MINS

One 1.5kg chicken
5 potatoes, cut into wedges
125ml (1/2 cup) olive oil
1/2 cup grated pecorino
1/2 cup bread crumbs
2 cups peeled, seeded and chopped tomato
2 tablespoons dried oregano of the best quality
5 cloves of garlic
salt and pepper
250 ml(1 cup) water
125 ml (1/2 cup) white wine

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius.

Cut the chicken into pieces of equal size and place in a baking dish.

Distribute the potato wedges here and there snugly, wherever they fit. Pour the oil all over.

Sprinkle cheese and breadcrumbs all over, followed by tomato, oregano, garlic, salt and pepper.

Finally, pour in the water and wine gently in one place so that it seeps under the chicken pieces.

Cover with foil and bake for about 35 minutes. Remove the foil to brown all over until cooked.

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Crispy Skin Sea Farmed Barramundi Fillet With Coconut and Lemon Myrtle Rice

Taste of the islands merge with traditional Australian bushtucker

Serves Four

Ingredients

4 x 200g Barramundi fillets (Skin on but scaled. Skin requires scoring in lattice pattern about 1' apart).

100g cornflour

150g Jasmin rice

50ml coconut milk

80ml VOG Lemon Myrtle infused olive oil

Sauce Ingredients

1 large fresh beetroot (boil until cooked for 1.5 hours. Use plenty of water and do not allow to boil dry)

50g sliced peeled ginger

80g castor sugar (in a small pot or fry pan simmer so sugar melts. Do not burn or reduce to toffee, just allow to become golden. It takes about 10 minutes. Strain into the ingredients below when it has cooled slightly).

50ml tomato sauce

50ml sweet chilli sauce

40ml rice wine vinegar

10ml light soya sauce

50ml beetroot cooking water

10g fine julienne fresh ginger

cooked beetroot cut into batons

(Mix all ingredients for sauce at room temperature and set aside).

Method

Cook rice with coconut milk, lemon myrtle, a little salt and sugar and suitable amount of water.

Pre heat oven to 180 degrees c.

Place oil in fry pan, place on low flame, dust barra fillets with flour, place flesh side up in pan for 1 minute to cook slightly, turn over to skin side, place in oven for 5 minutes.



Put pan back onto moderate flame and allow skin to crisp up - takes about 3 minutes.

Place fish onto paper towel to absorb oil.

Warm sauce to simmer.

Serving Suggestion

Place rice on plate.

Place fish skin side up on rice.

Spoon sauce around plate; arranging beetroot neatly.

Garnish with fresh coriander.

Chef: Craig Squire

Craig is a chef at the Red Ochre Grill restaurant in Cairns.

This recipe featured by Sharon Molloy ABC Far North Qld