



La Vialla's Christmas Menu



Aperitivo (= Aperitif):

<<3 Crostini alla Giardiniera>>

Antipasto (= Appetizer):

<<3 Panettone - Non Panettone>>

Primi (= First course):

<<3 Cappelletti in Brodo>>

<<3 Maltagliati al Ragù di Polpo>>

Secondo (= Second course):

<<3 Arista in Salsa di Castagne>>

Contorno (= Side dish)

<<3 Insalata mista di Radicchi>>

Dolci (= Dessert):

<<3 Casetta di Biscotti>>

<<3 Torta di Arance caramellate>>

<<3 Mulsum>>



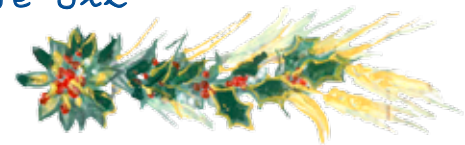


<<3 Crostini alla Giardiniera>>

(= Crostini with Giardiniera)

Ingredients for 4 people:

- 4 slices of homemade Tuscan bread
- 1 jar of Datterini Tomatoes in "Giardiniera"
- 2 tablespoons of low-fat yogurt
- 1 tablespoon of chopped parsley
- 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil
- Salt



Drain the contents of the jar in a strainer, rinse them briefly to remove the brine, then put the olives to one side for later and coarsely blend the rest until the mixture is relatively thick. Add 2 tablespoons of low-fat yogurt, the extra virgin olive oil, a pinch of salt, the chopped parsley and stir. Spread this mixture on slices of toasted Tuscan bread, decorate with the olives and serve the "Crostini alla Giardiniera" with aperitifs.



<<Il Panettone - Non Panettone>>

(= Panettone non-Panettone)

This is a savoury version of the traditional cake from Milan (or rather, that was born in Milan and has "migrated" all over Italy and abroad as well). It is made with a dough similar to that of the classic, sweet Panettone, but without candied peel and raisins. After baking, the "non-Panettone" is thickly sliced and filled, like a series of sandwiches, with various ingredients according to the taste, imagination and origins of whoever prepares it. Usually the fillings are alternated so that, with each slice, both eye and palate can enjoy all the colours and flavours.

Ingredients for 1 Panettone:

300 g of plain flour
(Italian type 0,
all-purpose)
300 g of plain flour
(Italian type 00,
finely milled)

250 ml milk
2 eggs
100 g butter
20 g brewer's yeast
50 g sugar
salt

For filling number 1:

Tuna sauce

130 g tuna (drained of
its oil or brine)
3 tablespoons of
mayonnaise
15 g capers
50 g "Giardiniera"
(mixed vegetables
in vinegar)

For filling number 2:

Salmon sauce

100 g butter
150 g smoked salmon

For filling number 3:

Salt cod and yogurt sauce

100 g soaked salt cod
80 g Greek yogurt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ clove of garlic
1 tablespoon of extra
virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon of grated
lemon rind (from
an untreated lemon)
1 teaspoon of lemon
juice

For filling number 4:

Prawn cocktail

150 g prawns
3 tablespoons of
mayonnaise
2 tablespoons of
ketchup
salt



The fillings, for this special occasion, are all rather "festive"; however you can use all kinds of cold meat, cheese (both fresh and mature), frittatas, hardboiled eggs, vegetables, salad leaves...

First of all prepare the Panettone dough, because it has to rise for a long time. Mix the two types of flour with the sugar; heap them up on the work surface and form a "well" in the centre. Dissolve the yeast in the warm milk and pour it into the well. Start mixing slowly, using the flour from the outside of the heap, a little at a time. Add the eggs, the



butter (kept out of the fridge for about 20 minutes beforehand) cut in pieces and the salt, and mix everything together; then continue to knead with your hands until the dough is soft and smooth. Put it in a bowl, cover with a cloth and leave it to rise for an hour, keeping it away from draughts.

Now let's move on to the fillings.

For the tuna sauce: put the tuna, capers and Giardiniera vegetables in the food processor and blend them, then carefully stir in the mayonnaise.

For the salmon sauce: blend the salmon with the butter (kept out of the fridge for 20 minutes beforehand).

For the third filling: cook the salt cod for 10 minutes in boiling water. Put it on a chopping board and, with the help of a sharp knife, remove the skin. Then, while it's still hot, break it into flakes using a fork. In a bowl, mix it with the lemon juice and rind, the yogurt, the garlic (put through a garlic crusher) and the olive oil. When the sauce becomes smooth and soft, almost like a mousse, the third filling is ready.

For the last filling: boil the prawns in salted water; when they are cooked, drain them and leave them to cool down. Mix the mayonnaise and ketchup together, and when the prawns have cooled down stir them into this sauce.

Put the fillings in the fridge, covered with cling film, until the "non-Panettone" is ready... and now let's get back to preparing it: after the dough has risen for the first hour, prepare a cylindrical cake tin (approx. 15 cm in diameter



and 20 cm deep) by greasing it with butter and carefully dusting it with flour. Put the dough in it, cover with the cloth again and leave it to rise for another two hours. When it has finished rising, bake it in a preheated oven, at 180 °C, for 35-40 minutes. When the Panettone comes out of the oven it'll be fantastic, soft, like the ones you buy in the shops! Wait for it to cool down and then remove it from the cake tin. Cut it horizontally into 8 slices, roughly 1 cm thick, plus the "hat" (the rounded top part) and then it's ready to be filled. On the first disc, the base, spread the salt cod mousse. Place two discs on top and spread the salmon sauce on the second one. Carry on with another two slices, the second spread with tuna sauce. Continue with two more, followed by the prawn cocktail, which you will then cover with the last remaining disc. Cut the Panettone into 4 quarters, forming your variegated sandwiches, 4 for each sauce. Finish the tasty tower by putting its "hat" on. The Panettone Non-Panettone is ready to be placed, proudly, on the table, in all its splendour!

PS: The trick for making this recipe turn out well is starting ahead of time. Prepare the Panettone and fillings the day before - the former will be easier to slice, the latter thicker and tastier.



<<§ Cappelletti in Brodo>>

(= Cappelletti in Broth)

Ingredients for 6 people

For the pasta:

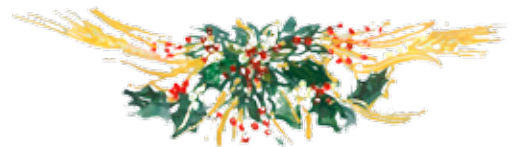
- 500 g plain flour (Italian type 0)
- 6 eggs
- 100 g durum wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil

For the filling:

- 300 g veal
- 200 g pork
- 100 g chicken breast
- 2 eggs
- 80 g grated Parmigiano cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ a carrot
- $\frac{1}{2}$ an onion
- 1 stalk of celery
- 3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- salt
- nutmeg

For the broth:

- 500 g muscle and brisket of beef (or mixed meats for broth, according to taste)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ a chicken
- 1 onion
- 1 stalk of celery
- 1 carrot
- 1 tablespoon of salt
- 3 litres of water





Put a saucepan on to boil with the water, vegetables (washed cleaned and cut into pieces), meat and salt. For a clearer broth, use a skimmer spoon to remove the "broth", which gradually forms on the surface when it begins to boil; then leave to simmer over a low heat for around 2 hours. In the meanwhile prepare the filling: after cleaning and washing them, cut the vegetables and the various types of meat into pieces and sauté them together in a heavy-bottomed frying pan with the olive oil. Season with salt and cook, stirring from time to time. When the meat is cooked, take the pan off the heat, leave it to cool and remove the vegetables. Mince the meat or, if you haven't got a mincer, blend it in a food processor, then put it in a bowl. Pour in the sauce that has formed in the bottom of the frying pan, stir well, add the eggs, Parmigiano and nutmeg. Stir the mixture until it's smooth and homogeneous. Leave it to rest and move on to preparing the "sheet" of pasta: pile the flour up on your work surface and make a "well" in the middle; break the eggs into it, add a pinch of salt and a tablespoon of olive oil. Start mixing slowly with a fork, and then use your hands until you obtain a smooth, compact ball. Roll out the pasta dough as thin as you possibly can. After you've let it rest for a quarter of an hour, dip the edge of a liqueur glass or a coffee cup (diameter



approx. 5 cm) in flour and use it to cut disks out of the sheet of pasta. With a teaspoon, take a small ball of filling and place it in the centre of each disk. Fold one edge over on top of the other and press them together with your fingertips. Attach the two ends together, folding them downwards and backwards, and then closing. Now lift the edge all around and you've got a little "cappello", which means hat in Italian and gives these mini delicacies their name. As you prepare them, place them on your work surface and sprinkle them with a bit of flour, so they don't stick together or to the work surface. Filter the broth through a strainer into another saucepan, put it on the stove and, when it come to the boil, delicately drop the cappelletti into it and cook them for 2 or 3 minutes. Serve them piping hot accompanied by a bowl of grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese. They're hard work to prepare, but heavenly, absolutely fit for a feast!





<<§ Maltagliati al Ragù di Polpo>>

(= Maltagliati Pasta with Octopus Ragu)

Ingredients for 4/5 people:

- 4 small octopuses (approx. 800 g) already cleaned
- 3 stalks of celery
- 3 carrots
- 2 onions
- 2 sprigs of parsley
- 50 g capers
- 2 anchovies
- 1 small handful of black peppercorns
- 500 g peeled tomatoes
- 5 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 1 hot chilli pepper (according to taste)

For the pasta:

- 3 eggs
- 300 g flour
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil





Boil the octopuses in plenty of salted water, together with 1 onion, 1 stalk of celery, 1 sprig of parsley, 1 carrot and the black peppercorns.

In the meanwhile prepare the pasta: put the flour on a pastry board or your work surface, heap it up and create a "well" in the centre, break the 3 eggs into it, and add a pinch of salt and a tablespoon of olive oil. Start mixing slowly with a fork, and then use your hands until the dough forms a smooth, compact ball. Roll it out with a rolling pin (it shouldn't be too thin), cut it into strips about 4 cm wide and then cut the strips into irregular diamond shapes...

"maltagliati" actually means badly cut! Put the Maltagliati on a tray or a chopping board, sprinkling them with a little flour so they don't stick together.

Now go back to the octopuses: after roughly 40 minutes test them with a fork to see if they're tender. Turn the heat off and leave them to cool in the water they were cooked in; then drain them and cut them into small pieces.

Finely chop the remaining vegetables and sauté them in a heavy-bottomed frying pan with the oil (and the chilli pepper, for those who like it). After 5 or 6 minutes add the capers and anchovies. Stir well and when everything is sautéed and the anchovies have "dissolved", tip the peeled tomatoes into the frying pan and season with salt and pepper. Mix everything together and cook for 15 minutes. Now add the pieces of octopus as well, stir thoroughly and leave to cook for another 5 minutes.

Cook the Maltagliati in plenty of boiling, salted water for 3 minutes; strain them and mix them with the octopus ragu in the frying pan. Serve nice and hot directly in the frying pan.



<<L'Arista in Salsa di Castagne>>

(= Pork Loin in Chestnut Sauce)

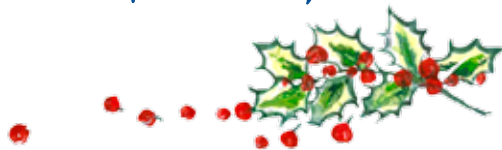
Ingredients for 4-5 people:

- 700 g pork loin
- 300 g chestnuts
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 teaspoons of chestnut honey
- 1 glass of dry white wine
- 2 sprigs of rosemary
- 8 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon of flour

- 1 glass of vegetable broth*
- Salt and pepper

*For the broth:

- 1 carrot
- 1 stalk of celery
- 1 sprig of parsley
- 1 onion
- 1 pinch of salt



The first thing to think about is the vegetable broth. Put a saucepan on the stove with the water, the vegetables, washed and cleaned, and a small pinch of salt; leave it to simmer slowly for about half an hour.

In the meanwhile, cut a slit in the rounded side of the chestnuts. If you have the possibility, roast them over a fire in a perforated pan; if not, in the oven at 200 °C, turning them over from time to time.

After roughly 20 minutes (half an hour, in the oven) see if they're cooked: if the

skin comes off easily it means that they're ready. Zip the chestnuts on to a damp cloth, wrap them up and leave them like that for 10 minutes, then peel them and put them to one side.

Tie up the pork loin with kitchen string. Crush the cloves of garlic with a garlic press or finely chop them; sprinkle the garlic all over the pork and season with salt and pepper. Insert the sprigs of rosemary between the meat and the string, one on top, one on the bottom. Use a fork to beat the oil and honey together in a bowl, and pour the mixture into the bottom of a baking pan. Put the meat in as well and cook it in the oven, at 180 °C, for about half an hour.

Check the pork in the oven: when the oil begins to sizzle take the dish out, pour the white wine over the pork, let it evaporate, then use the liquid that has formed to baste the meat. When it has browned, turn it over so that it cooks on the other side. After half an hour, put the roast chestnuts in the baking pan as well, mix them well with the oil and juices and put back in the oven for another 20 minutes. Then take the pan out of the oven: the pork should be nicely browned. Leave it on a chopping board to "rest" and pour all the liquid that has formed, along with the chestnuts, into a heavy-bottomed frying pan.

Add the broth and the flour (mixed with a tablespoon of broth), and simmer over a moderate heat until the sauce thickens. Remove the string from the meat and slice it. Place the slices on a dish and serve with the sauce, while it's nice and hot, and the chestnuts as a garnish.





<<S'Insalata mista di Radicchi>>

(= Mixed Radicchio Salad)

Ingredients for 4 people:

150 g red radicchio
150 g "sugarloaf" radicchio
150 g variegated radicchio
15 green grapes
3 tablespoons of
pomegranate grains

50 g shelled walnuts
50 g aged pecorino cheese
 $\frac{1}{2}$ a lemon, the juice
2 tablespoons of extra
virgin olive oil
salt

Divide the pomegranate into two halves. Tap on the outer skin of one half with a wooden spoon so that the grains fall out (work over a bowl or a plate, so that the grains fall onto it). Then put them in a strainer to drain. Wash all the types of radicchio, cut them into thin strips and put them in a large bowl together. Add the grapes, cut in half (if you don't like the seeds remove them with the tip of a knife), the grains of pomegranate and the walnuts. Beat the oil, salt and lemon juice together in a bowl; pour over the salad and mix well. Grate the pecorino in flakes and add it to the salad, leaving a handful to one side. Mix carefully and tip the salad onto a serving dish; before bringing it to the table, garnish with the remaining flakes of cheese.



<<Sa Casetta di Biscotti>>

(= The Biscuit House)

Ingredients

for the sponge (for an approx. 40 x 40 cm baking tin)

500 g of sugar

500 g of plain flour

20 eggs

1 sacket of baking powder for cakes



for the house

2 jars (290 g each) of "Sa 'briachella" (1)

2 jars (200 g each) of Viallella "fondente" or another good quality bittersweet chocolate spread

2 bags (500 g each) of Cantucci

1 bag (350 g) of Stracci

150 g of bittersweet chocolate

150 g of icing sugar

(1) "Sa 'briachella" contains Vin Santo. If there are children among your guests, substitute the 2 jars of "Sa 'briachella" with 600 g of Ricotta and add a little sugar or honey according to taste.

Prepare the Sponge Cake base: in a large bowl, beat the eggs and sugar with an electric whisk until you obtain a smooth, light mixture. Gradually add the flour, sieved together with the baking powder, stirring the mixture slowly from bottom to top.

Pour it into the baking tin lined with greaseproof paper, level the surface and bake in a preheated oven, at 180 °C, for 30 minutes. After this time the Sponge Cake will be a nice "biscuit" colour; remove it from the oven and leave it to cool down completely.

In the meanwhile, in a bowl, mix the Viallella with "Sa 'briachella" until you get a smooth cream. When the sponge is cold, use a sharp knife to cut it in half horizontally. Delicately put the "top" to one side, use a spatula to spread the mixture of Viallella and "Sa 'briachella" evenly on the bottom half, and then put the sponge back together by placing the upper part back on top.

Move on to building the house: break up the bittersweet chocolate and melt it in a bain-marie. Use a knife to cut the ends off the Cantucci, so their shape resembles that of small bricks. Dip the bottom of each biscuit in the melted chocolate and start to build the house, placing one "Cantuccio" on top of another (the chocolate works like "cement" for the bricks). You can choose the shape you prefer for your "construction", Francesco - it goes without saying - has recreated the Fattoria's "Bottega" and ancient oven!

When the walls have been completed, as for any house worthy of respect, you have to build the roof: take the Stracci (the "tiles") and, laying them on your work surface, join them together at the edges with melted chocolate. Create the roof according to the dimensions of the house that you've built. When you've finished, leave it to cool down on the work surface without moving it. Then, very delicately, place it on top of the house. If you have some Cantucci left over, you can use them for a chimney or put them all around the sponge cake base. Now it's time to have fun with the decorations - Francesco has chosen a tree and some lights, to create a warm Christmassy atmosphere. And to round off, dredge the house with icing sugar... a sprinkling of snow at Christmas time is absolutely perfect!





<<La Torta di Orange caramellate>>

(= Caramelised Orange Cake)

Ingredients for 8/10 people

For the shortcrust pastry,
for an approx. 24 cm
diameter cake tin:

- 300 g flour
- 150 g sugar
- 1 egg + 1 yolk
- 150 g butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ an untreated orange
- 1 pinch of salt

For the pastry cream:

- 2 egg yolks
- 2 tablespoons of flour
- 2 tablespoons of sugar
- 2 glasses of milk
- juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ an orange

For the decoration on the
top:

- 2 oranges
- 1-2 pinches of cinnamon
- 200 g sugar
- 1 glass of water



Prepare the shortcrust pastry: Pile the flour, sieved with a pinch of salt, on your work surface and create a "well" in it. In the centre put the softened butter (you must take it out of the fridge half an hour beforehand) cut in pieces, the egg and the extra yolk, the grated peel of the orange. Delicately mix the ingredients, first with a fork and then with your hands (if possible "cold"), without working the dough too much so that the pastry will be crumbly. Shape it into a ball, sprinkle lightly with flour and put it in the fridge, wrapped in cling film, for at least half an hour.



In the meanwhile prepare the pastry cream: boil the milk and then let it cool. In a small, deep saucepan beat the egg yolks and the sugar well; add the flour a little at a time, stirring carefully, then the juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ an orange and, very gradually, the cold milk. Put the saucepan back on the stove and keep stirring continuously; when the pastry cream thickens lift it, stir well, put it back over the heat and, just before it comes to the boil, take it off again. Cover it with cling film and put it to one side.

Take the shortcrust pastry out of the fridge and, using a rolling pin, roll it out into a round shape roughly 3 cm larger in diameter than the cake tin. Use your hands to stretch the pastry out on top of the cake tin (which you have buttered and floured) and line both bottom and sides. Prick it here and there with a fork and bake in a preheated oven, at 180 °C, for 15-20 minutes. Set it cool down, remove it from the tin, place it on a serving dish, pour the pastry cream into it and level the surface. Peel both the oranges completely (without leaving the white pith) and cut them into slices 5 mm thick. Place them delicately on top of the pastry cream, slightly overlapping, and sprinkle with the cinnamon. Put the sugar and water in a small saucepan; stir with a whisk until the sugar dissolves and then start heating the pan. Cook without stirring, until the sugar becomes caramelised and turns pale brown. Pour the caramel on top of the slices of orange, leave it to cool and... the cake is ready!



<<Յլ Mulsum>>

Ingredients:

- 1 jar of wildflower honey
- 1 litre of red wine
- Spices according to taste (cloves, cinnamon sticks, peppercorns)



Prepare your Mulsum at least 8 hours before serving it. In a glass jug, mix the honey with the red wine (perhaps from our "area") stirring until it dissolves. Now add a "bride's veil" of spices (1), cover the jug with a cloth and put it somewhere cool. Every now and again remember to stir it, with a wooden spoon, so the honey doesn't settle in the bottom.

(1) A "bride's veil" is a country-folks' name for the little cheesecloth or net bag, tied up with kitchen string, which contains the herbs and/or spices so that they don't "go astray".