

NORTHERN ITALIAN MEAT SAUCE FOR SPAGHETTI

Amount Measure

Ingredient

	SALT PORK
1/3 cup	fresh parsley, chopped
5 tablespoons	olive oil
	butter
2 large	onions
1 optional	carrot (chopped)
3 cloves	garlic
16 ounce can	whole plum tomatoes
3 tablespoons	tomato paste
2	bay leaves
1/2 teaspoon	pepper
1 teaspoon	sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons	salt
pinch	cinnamon
pinch	nutmeg
pinch	allspice
pinch	cloves
pinch	oregano



Measure the butter and salt pork according to the sizes of eggs.
The pork = a large egg and the butter = a medium egg! Now begin.

Mince the pork, parsley, carrot and onion.

Fry in the butter and oil mixture until the onion is golden.

Add the garlic (minced) near the end to it too can color up a bit.

Then add all of the remaining ingredients (except the steak).

Cook this slowly for an hour.

After the first hour add the steak (cubed about 1/3 inch).

Allow this to cook slowly for 1-2 more hours.

Occasionally, add water (total of 1 1/2 cups) to replace what is lost.

Cook 1 1/2 pounds of spaghetti and dress with sauce!

EDITH COUCHMAN'S cucina

EDITH SAYS, "This recipe was a favorite of my Aunt Ida (Edith) Pucci Movalli. It was passed along to her by her mother-in-law Christina Movalli Cividale who was born near Lake Lugano. This recipe fed and delighted Aunt Ida's family of 6 sons - and assorted guests and relatives - for over 60 years."

GARLIC GRAVY

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
2 tablespoons		fresh parsley, chopped
1 large		tomato
1 clove		garlic
4 tablespoons		olive oil

Cut tomato into small pieces.

Mince garlic.

Combine ingredients.

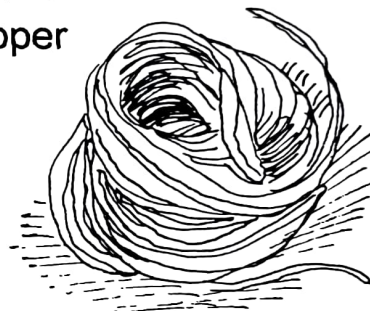
Pour over meat or bread and serve.

PATRICIA COBB'S cucina



POOR MAN'S SPAGHETTI SAUCE

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
	olive oil
2 cloves	garlic
1 large	red onion
1 pound	hamburger
4 oz.	mushrooms
2 teaspoons	salt
1/2 teaspoon	pepper
2 pounds	tomatoes
1 pound	tomato paste
1	green pepper
1 cup	water
1/4 cup	parsley



THE FIRST DAY:

Mince the garlic, dice the onion, chop the mushroom , peel and slice the tomatoes, dice the green pepper, and chop the parsley!

Then in a large saucepan:

Cover the bottom with oil and heat to hot.

Cook the garlic, onion, hamburger and mushrooms for 10 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper.

Stir twice every minute and ...run the fan if needed!

Add more oil if the mixture begins to stick.

Remove from heat.

Add the tomatoes, the paste, green pepper, water and parsley.

Simmer for 2 hours, stirring occasionally adding water if needed.

Cool overnight.

THE NEXT DAY:

Remove any visible fat, simmer for another hour.

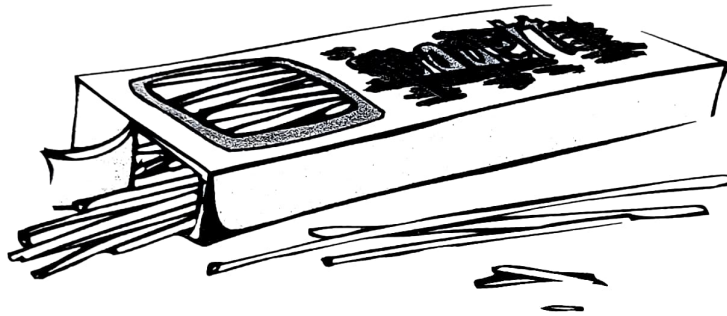
Cover your favorite pasta and eat elite!

JIM SAYS, "This was one of my grandmother's jealously guarded secret recipes. She never measured anything but relied on eyesight, feel and smell, so I experimented to get it right. It is inexpensive, easy and fun. Perhaps it is a tiny factor in how America got to be what it is today. My grandmother, Ernesta Benedetti, was born in 1882 in Quarasana, Italy, 4 miles from the well known Fivisano. She emigrated at the age of 14. She traveled alone on a 3 week sea voyage and a 1 week train trip to Sacramento, California with a sum of money equivalent to 1 week's pay at minimum wage. She would later say she felt emotions of excitement, wonder and terror. Upon arriving in Sacramento, she immediately looked for work and enrolled in English language class. A few years later she married, and she and her husband operated an Inn in Weed, California where cooking for large numbers was a valuable skill. She learned how to produce good dishes with doubtful materials. Still cooking for her family into her eighties, she would announce every third or fourth meal a new ingredient she used and wanted to know if it was good. When asked why someone so old would want to keep learning, her answer seemed more practical than philosophical. 'I am old and forgetful, so I have to keep learning to stay even!' "



VEAL SAUCE

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
1	pound	veal
1		onion (chopped)
1		garlic clove
		olive oil
1	teaspoon	tomato paste
1	teaspoon	flour
1	cup	boiling water
1/4 - 1/2	teaspoon	kitchen bouquet
		rosemary
		salt and pepper



Cut veal into 1 inch pieces.
Saute chopped onion and chopped garlic in oil.
Add the meat and brown.
Next add the flour and slowly add the boiling water.
Cook for a couple of minutes.
Add tomato paste, kitchen bouquet, rosemary, salt and pepper.
Cook covered until meat is tender, adding more water if needed.
Pour over pasta or polenta.

ANNA MARIE KEENE'S cucina

ANNA MARIE SAYS, "The sauce should be more brown in color than red. Also, use about 1 cup of water per pound of meat."

LUCIANO PAVAROTTI'S FAVORITE PASTA SAUCE

Amount Measure

Ingredient

gorgonzola

blue cheese

butter

parmesan cheese (grated)

fresh parsley, chopped

Use equal amounts (by weight) of butter and blue OR gorgonzola cheese.

Melt butter.

Add crumbled blue or gorgonzola cheese.

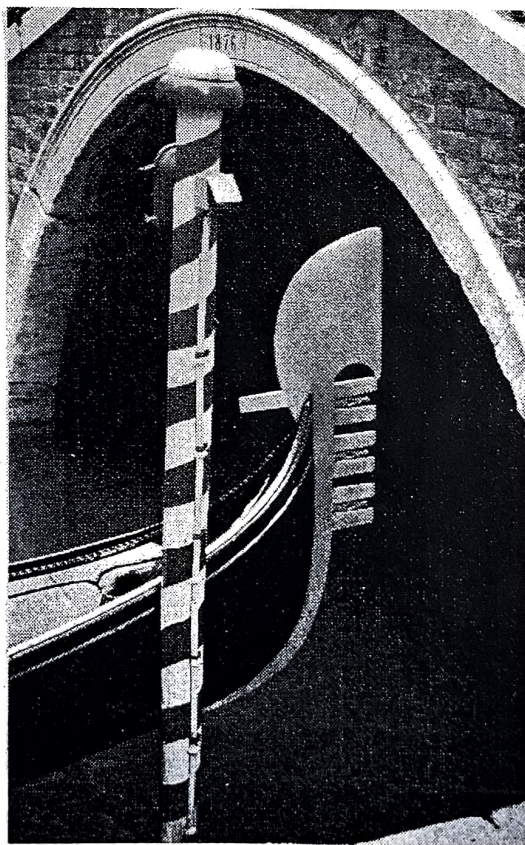
Stir to melt.

Whisk cheese/butter mixture until it is combined.

Serve over al dente pasta.

Sprinkle with parmesan cheese and parsley (optional).

GEORGE HEINEMANN'S cucina



TOMATO SAUCE A LA PIEMONTESE

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
10 sprigs	fresh parsley
5 sprigs	fresh basil
1/2 teaspoon	pepper
1/4 cup	butter
1/4 cup	olive oil
4 oz.	salt pork, diced
1/4 cup	onion (chopped)
1/2 pound	Italian sweet sausage
1/2 pound	lean beef, diced
2 cloves	garlic, crushed
18 slices	dried mushrooms
1 cup	water
2 cups	peeled plum tomatoes
2 large	ripe tomatoes, chopped fine
1/2 cup	dry white wine
1 teaspoon	tomato paste
1	bay leaf

Combine butter, olive oil and salt pork in a saucepan and heat. Add onions and saute slowly to a golden brown. Remove casing from the sausage and cut into 1/2 inch pieces. Add sausage and diced beef to the pan. Brown for 10 minutes. Chop garlic, parsley and basil together. Add to the sauce along with the bay leaf and pepper. Soak the mushrooms in the warm water for 20 minutes. Drain, saving the water, and chop the mushrooms. Meanwhile stir and cook the sauce for 20 minutes. Put canned tomatoes through a ricer or food mill and add to the sauce. Add the fresh tomatoes, wine, mushrooms and mushroom water. Stir and cook slowly for 1 hour. Cool for 10 minutes. Strain, put all solid pieces through a food grinder and return to sauce. Add the tomato paste, bring to a boil, and the sauce is ready!

JIM BEAUREGARD and his mom's cucina

JIM SAYS, " When my mom comes to visit, I do the cooking. Each time I make this recipe, I am ever grateful to those far-sighted Italians from the little village in Piedmont for bringing me into their traditions and giving me the means to pass it on to the next generation."

ROASTED GARLIC CREAM SAUCE

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
4 large	garlic bulbs
4 tablespoons	butter
1 tablespoon	onion (minced)
2 cup	heavy cream
1	chicken boullion cubes
	salt and pepper

MAKING THE ROASTED GARLIC

Lay the 4 large garlic bulbs roots down in a small pan.

Bake for 35-45 minutes at 375.

The bulbs should be very soft to the touch.

Let them cool for a few minutes.

Then cut off an 1/8 of an inch at the root and squeeze out the pulp.

MAKING THE CREAM SAUCE

Dissolve the chicken cube in 2 tablespoons of warm water.

Melt the butter and saute the onion.

Add the heavy cream and dissolved chicken cube.

Stir in the garlic pulp and season to taste.

Heat well and pour over Pollo Pasquale.

Buon Appetito!

PASQUALE CELONE'S cucina



SALSA DI NOCE, walnut sauce

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
20	walnuts
1 large	garlic clove
1 tablespoon	fresh parsley, chopped
1/4 cup	parmesan cheese (grated)
1/2 cup	olive oil
1/4 cup	light cream
	salt and pepper

In a blender or food processor, mix nuts, garlic, cheese, parsley and the salt and pepper. While blending, add the oil and cream (or ricotta) until a creamy mixture is obtained. Before draining the pasta, add a few tablespoons of the water to the sauce to lessen the density. Mix the sauce and pasta and serve.

DORA HASTINGS' COOKBOOK, A TASTE OF HOME

NOTE: Dora's Aunt Nuny used ricotta instead of light cream to reduce the cholesterol.

A MESSAGE FROM JOYCE

All four of my grandparents came to America from Italy in the early 1900s. Pasquale Melillo came here from Castelegrande, a small mountain town near Muro and Potenza, in the Province of Basilicata. In three years, working as a laborer, he had saved enough money to bring over his wife, Filomena, together with their five small children. My maternal grandmother, Lucia, was then 9 years old. The family settled in Greenwich, Connecticut. The story of Pasquale and Filomena's stormy marriage was the inspiration for my book, *UNA FURTIVA LAGRIMA* (One Furtive Tear), named for an aria from *L'Elisir d'Amore* by Donizetti. The family was poor, as were many of the immigrant families from Italy. Their foods were simple and inexpensive, and they tried to blend American ingredients into the familiar recipes from Castelegrande. Good Catholics did not eat meat on Fridays. Three of their Friday night "staples" were Pasta e Fagioli, Pasta e Cavolfiori, and Insulata con Patate e Tonno. They were cheap and filling and meatless. Other Friday night meals may have been Giambotta (vegetable stew), Minestra Lenticchie (Lentil soup), or Spaghetti Aglio e Olio (spaghetti with oil and garlic).

GRATIN DiFINNICCHIO al la SORRENTO

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
2	fennel bulbs
1 1/2 sticks	butter
1/2 cup	flour
1 cup	chicken broth
1 cup	grated cheddar cheese
1 cup	bread crumbs

(done)

JOYCE SAYS, " At one luncheon at the Hotel Michelangelo in Sorrento, Dora and I were served a dish that was so delicious that we asked the waiter for the recipe. I have served it many times since, and because it is so unusual I have taken the liberty to include it here. Dora Bella, this one is for you.



Butter the bottom of an oval, oven-proof serving dish.
 Cut the fronds and stalks off the fennel.
 Slice the bulbs into long thin slices.
 Put them into a frying pan and cover with water.
 Boil for 10 minutes or until the fennel is limp.
 Drain the water from the pan BUT SAVE THE WATER.
 Put 1 stick of butter on top of the fennel in the frying pan.
 Braise the fennel in the butter for 8-10 minutes.
 In a heavy medium sized saucepan, melt the remaining butter.
 Add the flour and cook the roux slowly until it loses its floury taste.
 Lighten the roux with the chicken stock.
 Add a bit at a time and stir constantly.
 Then add the cheese bit by bit and stir until the sauce is thick.
 Add some fennel water if the sauce is too thick.
 Put the buttered fennel into the gratin dish and pour the sauce over it.
 Top the dish with toasted breadcrumbs (fresh, if possible).
 Bake the gratin at 350 for 30 minutes or until bubbly. Enjoy!

JOYCE AND DORA'S cucinas

STUFFED ROLLED EGGPLANT

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
2 large	eggplant
3	eggs
1 cup	milk
2 teaspoon	garlic (minced)
2 teaspoon	onion (chopped)
1 teaspoon	fresh parsley, chopped
	flour
	olive oil

FILLING

1 1/2 pounds	Ricotta cheese
2	eggs
1 1/2 teaspoons	garlic powder
2 teaspoons	fresh parsley, chopped
8 oz.	shredded mozzarella
1/4 cup	parmesan cheese (grated)
	salt and pepper
	marinara sauce



Peel and slice the eggplant lengthwise into 16 slices (1/8"). Soak in salt water for 30 minutes. Drain well and pat dry. Mix together eggs, milk, garlic, onion, and parsley. Dip eggplant slices into flour and then the egg mixture. Fry in medium-hot oil until brown. Drain on toweling.

CHEESE FILLING AND PREPARATION

Mix together the filling ingredients.

In a cassrole dish, spread marinara sauce thinly on the bottom.

Place a spoonful of the cheese mixture on each slice of eggplant.

Roll each one up in jellyroll fashion.

Place seam side down in prepared baking dish.

Spoon more sauce over each roll and sprinkle with grated cheese.

Bake uncovered in a hot oven 14-18 minutes.

LUISA MATTA'S cucina

LUISA SAYS, "Make it easy on yourself. Buy the frozen, breaded eggplant. If you can't find the long slices, use the short round ones and put 2 together. Once they are baked, no one will notice."

CUCUZZA (Italian squash)

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
1		cucuzza squash
1	medium	onion
1/2		green pepper
1	large	tomato
1	clove	garlic
1/4	cup	olive oil
1	teaspoon	salt
1/8	teaspoon	black pepper
1		egg
		Romano cheese (grated)

First chop the onion and garlic and dice the tomato and pepper. Cut the ends off the squash and cut the squash into 3 inch pieces. This makes the squash easier to peel, so peel off the green skin. Rinse it and cut it into medium-size pieces. Put the squash, onion, green pepper, tomato, garlic and oil in a medium pan (3-4 quarts). Add a little water (1-2 tablespoons) and salt and pepper.

Stir vegetables and bring to a boil. Lower heat to medium-low. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally until squash is done, about 30 minutes.

Before serving, bring squash to a boil and slowly add a beaten egg, stirring until the egg cooks. Sprinkle Romano cheese over the squash when serving. This is good served over pasta. Makes 6 servings.

GENE KIEVIT'S cucina

GENE SAYS, "Cucuzza is an Italian variety of squash but technically it's in the gourd family. It is about 18" long, , about 2 " in the middle, and somewhat larger on one end. The peel is a distinct light green and unspeckled, and the flesh is white (much firmer than a zucchini) and stays firm when cooked. It has sort of a spongy pulp in the middle with a distinct fragrance."

OLD SICILIAN PROVERB!

Testa chi non parla, si chiama cucuzza!" which translates to "The head that does not talk, it is called squash!"

SLOW ROASTED TOMATOES

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
4	pounds	tomatoes
6	cloves	garlic
5	tablespoons	olive oil

Preheat oven to 200.

Cut the tomatoes in half lengthwise and mince the garlic.

Put the tomatoes cut side up in 2 large shallow baking pans.

Combine garlic and oil and spoon over the tomatoes.

Season them with salt and pepper.

Roast in the oven 6-8 hours (Yup, that's correct!).

The tomatoes will reduce in size but will retain their shape.

Cool.

They will keep in an airtight container, chilled, for up to 2 weeks.

Bring to room temperature before serving.

PATRICIA COBB'S cucina

ROASTED GARLIC

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
6	heads	garlic



Cut crosswise entire top portion so each clove is exposed.

Leave as much clove as possible.

Do NOT peel the cloves.

Put the cloves in a Corningware type covered dish.

Lightly drizzle olive oil over the exposed cloves.

Sprinkle with fresh cracked pepper on the oiled heads.

Add 1-2 tablespoons of water to the dish.

Bake covered at 350 for about 45-60 minutes.

Cloves should be soft and slightly golden brown.

Remove them from skins and mash.

This is wonderful any way you want to use it, especially on toasted bread!

PATRICIA COBB'S cucina

ROASTED POTATOES WITH ROSEMARY

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
	potatoes
	olive oil
	rosemary

Chop large white or red potatoes into wedges.

Small white or red ones can be left whole or halved.

Coate with olive oil.

Sprinkle with rosemary and toss.

Roast in a baking pan at 425 for 20-25 minutes (depending on size).

ANNA MARIE KEENE'S cucina

FENNEL, ONION AND PEPPER BAKE

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
2	fennel bulbs
1 large	onion
2 large	red peppers
2 tablespoons	olive oil
	salt and pepper
1 cup	hazelnuts

Grind hazelnuts, but not too fine.

Clean and slice the fennel, onion and peppers.

Mix all the veggies in a large bowl.

Sprinkle with olive oil, salt and pepper.

Place in a shallow "oiled" baking dish.

Cover with foil and seal the edges.

Bake at 375 until veggies are soft (maybe 90 minutes).

Uncover and sprinkle with hazelnuts.

Drizzle a small amount of olive oil on the top.

Continue baking until the nuts begin to brown.

Mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm. Delicious!

RUTH WESTON'S cucina



STUFFED ZUCCHINI

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
6 medium	squash
1	garlic clove (chopped)
3	eggs
handful chopped	parsley
2 slices	bread
6 slices	salami
	salt and pepper

Cut squash lengthwise.

Bring water to a boil, and cook squash 10 minutes.

Remove from pan and drain until cold.

Soak bread in milk and then break into pieces.

Scoop out the inside of the squash leaving only the green shell.

Put the "scooping" in a bowl.

Add the parsley, chopped garlic, bread, salami, salt, pepper and eggs.
Mix well.

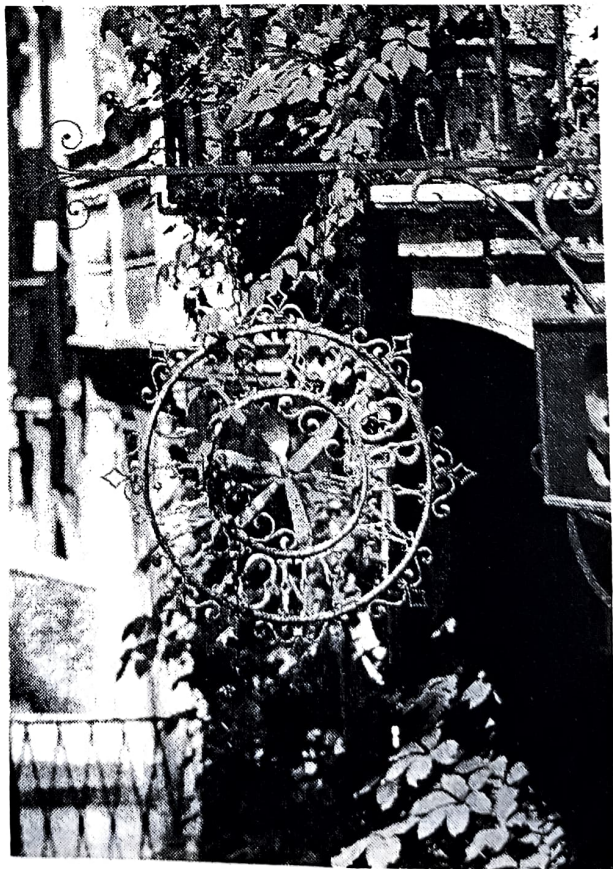
Stuff the squash shells with the mixture until level.

Fry in a pan with olive oil, stuffing face up.

Brown and then turn over slowly, browning the other side.

Remove from pan and serve (hot or cold).

JIM BEUAREGARD'S cucina, handed down from Mrs. Rose Masera Coppola



REVENGE alla TELEFONO, rice balls

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
2 packages	saffron
8 cups	chicken broth
2 cups	cooked risotto
4 oz.	mozzarella cheese (cubed)
3/4 cup	bread crumbs
	olive oil and butter
1 cup	shredded mozzarella
1	onion (chopped)
1/2 - 1 cup	white wine
5 cups	chicken broth

WALLY SAYS, "You make the rice first and when finished set aside, cool and refrigerate for the balls later. Incidentally, the best recipe for the balls is right on your Arborio rice bag - use it!

MAKING THE RICE

- 1) In a big saucepan melt some butter and mix with olive oil.
- 2) Throw in the finely chopped onion and cook til golden.
- 3) Add the rice and mix well, coating the rice thoroughly.
- 4) Keep chicken broth hot next to rice pan.
- 5) Add the wine and let the alcohol burn off.
- 6) Start adding broth, a cup at a time. Keep stirring.
- 7) When the broth has been absorbed, the rice should be tender.
- 8) Add 2 packages of saffron (either 2 envelopes or 1 vile needed).
- 9) Mix in well and the rice will turn a golden color.
- 10) On the side mix the shredded cheese with milk or cream.
- 11) Mix into the rice and cool overnight.

MAKING THE BALLS (ah, yes!)

- 12) Place bread crumbs (Italian flavored) in a dish to "roll" the balls.
- 13) Scoop out a handful of rice and put a cube of cheese in the center.
- 14) Roll the balls in the crumbs.
- 15) Fry the balls in VERY hot oil (375) or they will break up.
- 16) Drain on paper towels.

NOTES. . . You can use a lot of "Kentucky windage" meaning play it by ear when measuring ingredients and you'll get a feel for it. Also, when frying, cook 1 ball first. Then when the oil is right you can do 4-5 at a time. Buy low grade olive oil for frying.

ARANCINI . . . Rice balls

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
4 cups	cooked short grain rice
2 cups	shredded provolone
2 cups	shredded mozzarella
2	eggs (beaten)
4 chopped	garlic clove(s)
1 tablespoon	fresh parsley, chopped
	plain bread crumbs
	salt
	pepper
	basil
	olive oil

In a large bowl, place cooled cooked rice.

Add shredded cheeses, parsley, chopped garlic, and beaten eggs.

Add a dash of salt, pepper and basil seasoning.

With both hands mix well.

Tightly form into oval shapes slightly larger than a jumbo egg.

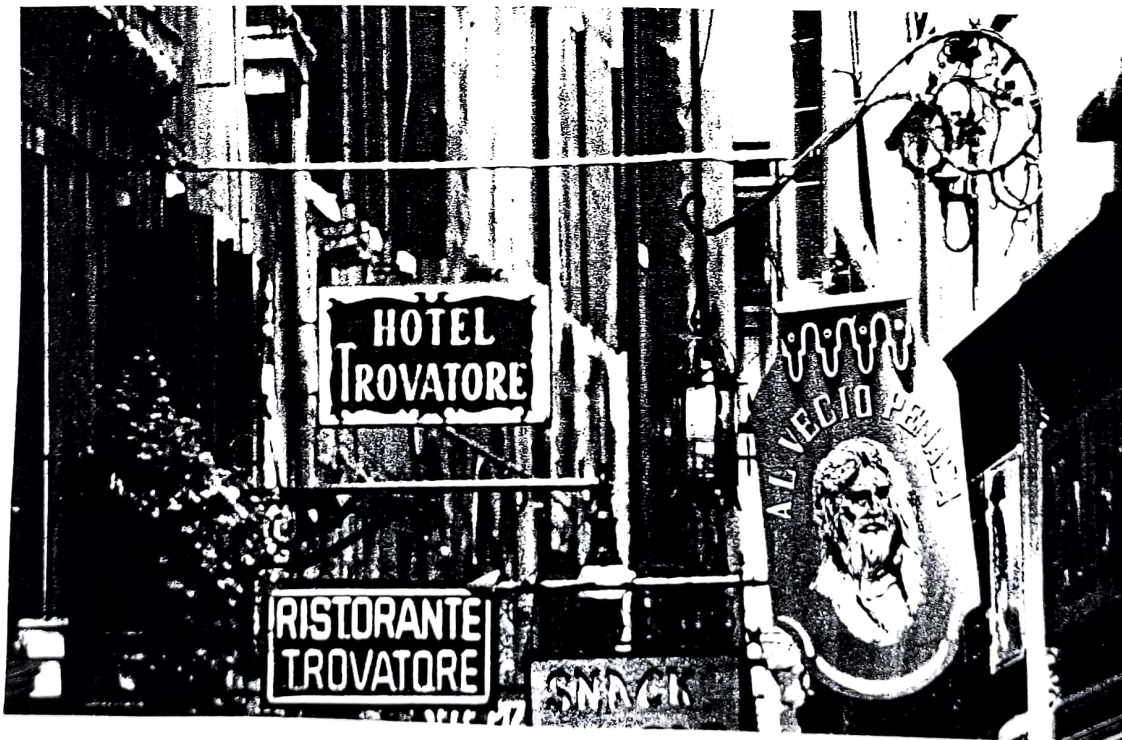
Dredge in plain bread crumbs.

Fry in olive oil until golden on all sides.

Drain on paper towels.

Depending on the size of the arancini, this makes about 1 dozen.

CECELIA PITARO'S cucina



RICE TORTA

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
1	cup	rice
1		red onion
6		green onions
1	small	garlic clove
1	package	frozen spinach
1	cup	parmesan cheese (grated)
3	large	eggs
1	teaspoon	salt
1/4	teaspoon	pepper
	pinch	thyme
		milk

AUDREY SAYS " This recipe was a favorite of Albina Pera, second generation San Francisco born circa 1890, who traveled extensively throughout the world and was considered a fine cook, indeed gourmet, by his friends. The recipe is timeless and easy!"

Preheat oven to 450F

Boil 1 cup of Uncle Ben's rice for about 20 minutes and drain.
Boil the spinach and chop.
Saute the garlic with red and green onions in olive oil and butter.
Add the spinach to the saute.
Next add the cheese and eggs.
Add enough milk to keep the mixture spreadable.
Season the mixture with the salt, pepper and thyme.

Grease the bottom of a 9x12 baking pan with olive oil and butter.
Sprinkle with cornmeal and flour.
Put into 450 oven and reduce to 375.
Bake for 1 hour.
Serve warm in 2 inch squares or cold in 1 inch squares.

AUDREY TOBONI'S cucina

EGGPLANT SQUARES, Genovese style

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
1 large	eggplant
4 extra large	eggs
1/2 cup	parmesan cheese (grated)
1 tablespoon	olive oil
pinch	salt and pepper
1 clove	garlic (minced)

Wash the eggplant and leave the skin on.

Cut into 1" cubes.

Steam until partially cooked.

Strain, then cool and squeeze out the excess liquid.

Put ALL of the ingredients into a food processor.
Pulse until the consistency is like oatmeal.

Pour the mixture into an oiled 9 x 9 pan.

Bake 45 minutes at 350 until the top is golden.

Cut into squares.

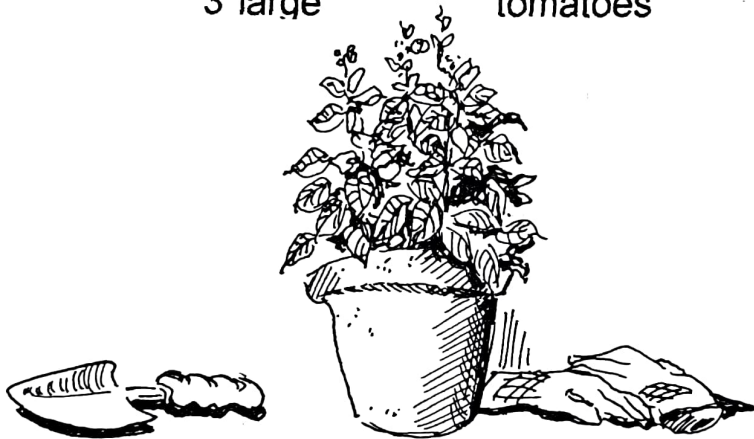
These may be eaten warm or cold as an appetizer or vegetable.
They can be made a day before, refrigerated and baked the next day.

HELEN DESMARAIS'S cucina



TOMATO BASIL STRATA (brunch dish)

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
2 tablespoons	olive oil
1 medium	onion (chopped)
1/2 cup	red pepper (diced)
1/2 cup	green sweet pepper (chopped)
2 cloves	garlic (minced)
2 cups	skimmed milk
1/2 cup	fresh basil
1/4 teaspoon	salt
1/2 teaspoon	pepper
6	eggs
1 loaf	Italian bread
2 cups	shredded cheddar
3 large	tomatoes



Saute garlic, onion, and red and green peppers in olive oil until tender.
In a large bowl, whisk together the milk, salt, pepper and eggs.
Stir in the "torn" basil.

Cut the bread into cubes.

Place 1/2 the cubed bread on the bottom of a 9 x 11 baking dish.

Pour 1/2 the egg mixture over the bread.

Top with sliced tomatoes and a cup of cheddar cheese.

Repeat the same layering, starting with bread and ending with cheese.

Chill at least 2 hours, best if overnight.

Bake uncovered at 325 for 45-50 minutes.

Serves 6-8.

LUISA MATTA'S cucina

ITALIAN CUCUZZA VEGETABLE HERB STUFFING

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
1	cucuzza squash
1 pound	mushrooms
1	green zucchini
1	yellow zucchini
1 pound	asparagus
1 medium	eggplant
1 large	onion
3	shallots
8 oz.	croutons
1 1/2 cups	bread crumbs
4 cloves	garlic
1 cup	olive oil
3 large	eggs
4 tablespoons	Pecorino Romano cheese
1 teaspoon	black pepper
1 teaspoon	basil
1 teaspoon	parsley
1 teaspoon	oregano



fresh basil
fresh parsley
salt

Simple garden vegetables combined with Italian squash make this stuffing unique and delicious. Surprisingly full of flavor, each morsel will never taste the same. Make sure you serve this next to your turkey any time of the year.

PREPARING THE VEGETABLES:

Cucuzza: Cut the tip with a knife and begin to peel off the tough outer skin. Slit the cucuzza in half and remove the inner core including all seeds. Dice the remaining squash into small cubes.

Asparagus: Trim 1 inch off the bottom stems of the asparagus. Boil for 3-4 minutes. Drain and set aside. Once cooled, cut into 1 inch pieces.

Zucchini, mushrooms and eggplant: Rinse clean and dice all 3 into small cubes. Keep the skin ON the eggplant. Set aside.

Dice the onion, shallots and garlic.

In a skillet, add olive oil, onion, shallots, garlic and salt. Saute until onions are translucent. Add all chopped vegetables (excluding the asparagus) and the dry herbs. Cook for 5-6 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add the asparagus and cook 2 minutes longer.

NOW FOR THE STUFFING!

In a large bowl beat 3 eggs, grated cheese, black pepper, fresh basil and fresh parsley. Add the mix from the skillet and toss. Add the croutons and the breadcrumbs. Place the mixture in a rectangular pan. Bake at in a preheated oven at 350 for 1 hour. Broil on high for 2 minutes for a crispy top. Serve hot.

GENE KIEVIT'S cucina

GENE SAYS, "When I was a young boy living in New Jersey next to my grandfather's house, I watched him do the annual planting along the fence of the venerable cucuzza plant. He would carefully cause it to grow in and around the white picket fence he built along the back of the property. In this VERY Italian neighborhood he could get the seeds at the green grocer down the street. When full grown, the leafy plant with huge fruits presented a nice contrast to the white fence. I remember them mostly over pasta but also as a stuffing. During the first year of the BICS club, I planted in my garden an entire package of these seeds which I found in the North End. It was a struggle to get them to grow, but finally I ended up with about a dozen plants. I remember giving a couple to Dora. She seemed pleased as she too remembered this odd plant.



FLORENTINE RICE QUICHE

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
4		eggs
2	cups	cooked rice
2/3	cup	grated Swiss cheese
1	package	spinach
2	tablespoon	butter
1/2	teaspoon	salt
1	cup	Ricotta cheese
1/4	cup	parmesan cheese (grated)
6	tablespoons	heavy cream
3	drops	hot pepper sauce
1/4	teaspoon	nutmeg

Preheat oven to 350.

Grease a 9 inch pie dish.

Beat 1 egg.

Add rice and Swiss cheese.

Stir and spread evenly in pie dish making a crust.

Refrigerate until ready to fill.

Cook spinach, and then drain and squeeze dry.

Add butter.

Beat remaining 3 eggs.

Stir in salt, remaining cheeses, cream, pepper sauce and nutmeg.

Add the spinach.

Pour the filling into the pie crust.

Bake for 30-35 minutes.

Cut into wedges.

TINA TERRAVECCHIA'S cucina



RISOTTO EGGS WITH SPINACH AND SHAVED PARMESAN

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
6 cups	spinach
3 tablespoons	extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup	onion (chopped)
2 cups	Arborio rice
6 cups	chicken broth
6 large	eggs
2 tablespoons	butter
3 tablespoons	pine nuts
3-4 ounces	shaved Parmesan cheese

BRING a quart of lightly salted water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Submerge the fresh spinach in the water all at once.

Immediately drain the spinach and refresh in a bowl of cold water. Squeeze dry and finely chop.

IN A LARGE SKILLET, heat the oil.

Add the onions and saute until transparent, 2-3 minutes.

Add the rice and stir to coat with oil.

Meanwhile, in a separate saucepan, bring the chicken stock to a boil.

Remove it from the heat and add 1 cup of it to the rice.

Simmer over medium heat, stirring occasionally.

Once most of the liquid is absorbed, add 1/2 cup at a time.

Continue the process until the rice is creamy and just tender.

This should take about 25 minutes.

IN A SMALL BOWL, whisk together the eggs.

Pour them all at once into the rice.

Stir rapidly to scramble and combine them.

Remove them from the heat.

MELT the butter in a medium saute pan.

Add the pine nuts and cook for a minute over medium heat.

Add the spinach and heat through, about 2 minutes.

DIVIDE the spinach among 6 plates, creating a well in each center.

Spoon the risotto and egg mixture into the center.

Sprinkle the cheese shavings on top and serve warm.

BRENDA GURALL'S cucina

NOTE: The risotto must be stirred constantly to achieve the right consistency. Resist the temptation to add more than a 1/2 cup of stock at a time, since the rice requires slow absorption to cook properly. Toward the end, taste a grain of rice every 1-2 minutes to ensure that the rice is tender and cooked through.

BAKED ASPARAGUS

<i>Amount Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
1 pound	asparagus
1 tablespoon	extra virgin olive oil
	black pepper
	bread crumbs
	butter

Trim the ends off the asparagus.

Arrange the asparagus spears in a 9 x 12 baking dish.

Drizzle olive oil and freshly ground pepper over them.

Toss them but keep them in a single layer.

Bake for 10 minutes at 400 degrees.

Using tongs, turn them so they will cook evenly.

Bake 2-5 minutes longer.

On the second turning you can add a *prepared topping.

*Saute bread crumbs in butter until golden and spread over asparagus.

LUISA MATTA'S cucina

