

Incredibly Italian

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with

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Ricotta & Sage Meatballs

Pasta e Fagioli

Italian Bread

Fruit salad

Hazelnut Torta



Ricotta & Sage Meatballs

Hors d'oeuvres

INGREDIENTS

- 1/3 cup whole-milk ricotta
- 2 tablespoons vegetable plus more for frying
- 1 clove garlic, through a garlic press
- 2 teaspoons fennel seeds, toasted & lightly crushed
- 1 teaspoon dried sage or 4 fresh sage leaves
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 teaspoon Kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 pound ground pork
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 cups panko breadcrumbs

DIRECTIONS

In a large mixing bowl combine the ricotta and 2 tablespoons of oil until smooth. Mix in the garlic, fennel, sage, red pepper, salt, and pepper. Add the pork and fold until combined.

Scoop out a scant tablespoonful and with damp hands, shape into a 1" ball. Place on cookie sheet.

Place beaten eggs and panko breadcrumbs in 2 separate bowls. Working with a few meatballs at a time, dip in egg and then roll in breadcrumbs. Return to cookie sheet and repeat until all meatballs are breaded.

Attach a candy thermometer to the side of a medium pot. Pour in oil to a depth of 2". Heat to 350 degrees.

Working in batches, fry meatballs until golden and crisp, about 1-2 minutes, until golden brown. Always test the first one to make sure that it is cooked through. Set on rack on top of cookie sheet. Let cool. This can be done well ahead. Meatballs can be frozen.

To reheat, preheat oven to 275. Bake meatballs about 15 minutes until warmed through.

May be served with some type of sauce such as marinara.



Pasta e Fagioli

★★★★★

Beans, Soups

Servings: 4

INGREDIENTS

4 ounces pancetta, diced
1/4 cup olive oil
1 medium onion, diced
2 carrots, shredded
2 celery ribs, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
4 tablespoons flour
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 tomato, diced
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, minced
4 cups chicken broth
2 cans cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
salt and pepper to taste
1 pound soup pasta such as ditalini or small shells
grated Parmesan

DIRECTIONS

Add pancetta and oil to the soup pot and cook over low heat until cooked through and crispy. Add the onions, carrots, celery and sauté until softened, about five minutes. Add the garlic, and rosemary. Cook for one more minute. Sprinkle the flour over the vegetables, stir and cook for about two minutes. Add the tomato paste and diced tomatoes. Turn down heat and begin to stir in chicken broth 1/4 cup at a time at first. Combine until well blended before the next addition. Bring to a boil, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes.

Add one can of beans to the pot.

Purée the other can of beans in a blender or food processor and add to the pot. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes, just long enough to heat everything through.

In the meantime, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente. Drain and add to the individual soup bowls. Add soup to the bowls. Serve with grated Parmesan.



Fruit Salad - Macedonia

Salad

Servings: 64

INGREDIENTS

2 cups watermelon, cut into 1 inch squares

1 cup green grapes, cut in half

1 cup blueberries

1 mango, cut into 3/4 inch cubes

1 cup pineapple, cut into 1 inch pieces

1 cup strawberries, hulled and halved

3 tablespoons sugar

10 mint leaves, chiffonade

2-3 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons your favorite liqueur such as Southern Comfort or Grand Marnier (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Add the fruit, sugar, and mint to a large bowl, top with sugar and lemon juice, and gently fold together with a rubber spatula. Allow to sit for 10 minutes to dissolve the sugar.

Refrigerate or serve immediately. Plate the fruit. Drizzle with balsamic glaze and sprinkle with Kosher salt before serving.

Other options: kiwi, strawberries, oranges, grapefruit, blackberries, raspberries, apple, cantaloupe, honey dew, peaches

Fruit should be well ripened but firm. Do not use bananas, ripe pears, or any other fruit that will mash or get too soft when mixed.

NOTES

Select your fruit based on what's in season and freshest.



Hazelnut Torte

Cakes, Desserts

Servings: One 10-inch cake **Source:** Marthastewart.com

INGREDIENTS

6 tablespoons butter, room temperature, plus more for pan
2 cups pastry flour, plus more for pan
1 1/2 cups hazelnuts, toasted and skins removed
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup plus **2** tablespoons sugar
3 large eggs
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon hazelnut extract
1/2 tablespoon finely grated orange zest
1 cup milk, room temperature
1/4 cup semisweet chocolate mini chips
Confectioners' sugar, for garnish (optional)
Whipped cream, for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter and flour a 10-inch springform pan; set aside.

Place hazelnuts in the bowl of a food processor; process until coarsely chopped and set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt; set aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, mix together butter and sugar until light, smooth, and fluffy, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary. Add the eggs, olive oil, hazelnut extract, and orange zest, mixing well on slow speed after each addition.

With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture in 3 parts, alternating with milk and beginning and ending with flour; beat until just combined. Scrape down sides of bowl and beat on high speed about 2 minutes; fold in nuts and chocolate chips.

Pour batter into prepared cake pan, smoothing top with a spatula. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean and the top is light brown and just springs back when lightly touched, about 45-50 minutes.

Transfer cake to a cooling rack; let cool 30 minutes. Run a paring knife around the edge of the pan to loosen it. Remove outer ring of pan. With a paring knife, gently loosen the cake from the bottom of the pan. Have a cooling rack ready. Gently place an open hand on top of the cake and turn it upside down onto your hand. Place the cooling rack upside down on the bottom of the cake. Flip everything over so that the cake is now right side up on the cooling rack. Allow to cool completely.

Cut into wedges and serve dusted with confectioners' sugar or whipped cream, if desired.

Or, wrap in plastic wrap and then in foil. Freeze until ready to use.



Hard Whipped Cream

Desserts, Miscellaneous

Prep Time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

8 ounces mascarpone

1/4 cup sugar

1 cup heavy cream

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, whisk together the mascarpone and sugar until well blended and fluffy.

In a chilled bowl, whip the cream to stiff peaks. Fold the whipped cream into the mascarpone until combined.