

# Incredibly Italian

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With

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Gorgonzola Popovers

Pasta alla Puttanesca

Torta con Rum

# Gorgonzola Popovers

Hors d'oeuvres

**Prep Time:** 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 20 minutes **Servings:** 24 pieces **Source:** Williams-Sonoma Hors D'oeuvres

## Ingredients

1 cup all purpose-flour

1/2 tsp salt

1/4 tsp white pepper

1 tablespoon parsley, finely chopped

1 1/4 cup milk, at room temperature

2 eggs, at room temperature

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted

3 ounce Gorgonzola, or crumbly blue, crumbled

## Directions

Position an oven rack in the bottom third of the oven and preheat to 425.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, white pepper, and parsley. In a large measuring pitcher, whisk together the milk, eggs, and melted butter. Pour the wet ingredients over the dry ingredients and whisk together until just combined (don't worry if a few lumps remain). Pour the batter back into the pitcher. Pour the batter into the muffin cups to within about 1/4 inch of the rim. Place a scant teaspoon crumbled cheese in the center of each filled cup.

Bake for 10 minutes. Do not open the oven door during this time. Reduce the heat to 350 and continue to bake until brown and crusty and fully puffed, 8-10 minutes longer.

Remove from the oven and immediately transfer to cooling rack or napkin-lined bowl. Serve at once. Or, let cool on a racks for up to 2 hours, then reheat in a 350 degree oven for 10 minutes.

## Notes

You can use any blue cheese - Roquefort, Gorgonzola, or blue cheese.

# Pasta alla Puttanesca

Italian

**Cook Time:** 23 mins **Servings:** 4 **Source:** [themediterraneandish.com](http://themediterraneandish.com)

## Ingredients

1 pound spaghetti, penne, ziti, or rigatoni

### For the sauce:

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

4 to 8 anchovy fillets, use to your liking

1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes, optional

4 to 5 large garlic cloves, minced

1 28-ounce can whole peeled San Marzano tomatoes, chopped

1/2 cup pitted Kalamata olives, sliced

3 tablespoons capers

1 teaspoon dry oregano

Kosher salt

1/4 cup chopped parsley

1/2 cup Pecorino Romano cheese, grated

## Directions

In a large, deep pan, heat 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil. Warm the oil over medium heat and add the anchovy fillets and red pepper flakes. Cook for about 2 minutes tossing the anchovies around (they will somewhat melt into the oil infusing it with flavor).

Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds, until fragrant, then add the tomatoes, olives, and capers, and dried oregano. Bring the mixture to a simmer, while using your cooking utensil to break up the tomatoes.

Lower the heat and cover the pan part-way. Allow the sauce to cook 20 to 30 minutes or until thickened to your liking. Add the parsley.

While the sauce is cooking, cook the pasta in boiling salted water to al dente.

When the pasta is ready, drain and reserve about 1 cup of the pasta water. Transfer the pasta to the pan with the sauce and toss well. If it appears too dry, add a little of the pasta cooking water. Taste and adjust the salt, if needed.

Plate and serve with Pecorino Romano cheese.

## Notes

Do not salt until the end of cooking. Anchovies and olives are very salty.

# Torta con Rum

★★★★★

Cakes, Desserts

**Servings:** 12

## Ingredients

Small amount of butter and flour for preparing the pan

### Batter:

1 cup walnuts or pecans, coarsely chopped

1 (15 ounces) packaged yellow cake mix

1 package vanilla instant pudding

4 large eggs

½ cup water

½ cup vegetable oil

½ cup light or dark rum

### Glaze:

½ cup unsalted butter

¼ cup water

1 cup granulated sugar

½ cup light or dark rum

### Chantilly cream:

1 cup heavy cream

2 tablespoons sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

## Directions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare one 9 or 10-inch fluted tube pan; generously grease the pan with butter and dust with flour. Spread the nuts over the bottom of the prepared pan. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, combine cake mix, instant pudding, eggs, water, vegetable oil, and rum; beat until thoroughly mixed.

Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Spoon the batter over the nuts and smooth the surface with the rubber scraper.

Bake for 1 hour or until a long toothpick inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool for 10 or 15 minutes. With a small serrated knife, cut a thin layer off of the top of the cake.

#### **Glaze:**

While the cake is baking, make the glaze. In a small saucepan over low heat, melt the butter. Stir in water and sugar; bring to a boil and boil for 5 minutes stirring constantly so the mixture does not burn. Remove from heat. Stir in the rum (carefully as it will bubble up).

Use a long toothpick or skewer to poke several small holes in the top of the cake. Spoon the warm glaze over the top of the cake and allow it to soak in. Repeat until the top of the cake is saturated; using about half of the glaze. Place a cake platter upside down on top of the cake and flip over to unmold the cake. Poke more holes into the cake. Drizzle the rest of the glaze into the cake.

Beat the heavy cream, sugar, vanilla, and Whipit in a chilled bowl to stiff peaks.

Serve the cake with a dollop of whipped cream.

#### **Notes**

There is a higher incidence of allergy to walnuts compared to pecans so I prefer to use pecans.