



MAIN COURSES

Arista Al Forno (Castello Banfi)

Legend has it that this boneless pork roast got the name "Arista," a word used exclusively in Tuscany, when the Archduke of Tuscany held a banquet at which the Greek Patriarch was in attendance. After being served this dish, he exclaimed his delight with the Greek term "aristos," a praise of the highest caliber. The Tuscans mangled the pronunciation a bit, but the meaning is there, and the dish is truly exalted!

4 leaves of sage 4 sprigs of rosemary

peel of 1/4 lemon pinch each of fine salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 boneless pork loin (1-1/2 lbs to 1-3/4 lbs - or 750 grams) 2-3 tablespoons extra-vergine olive oil

2 garlic cloves 6 oz (200 grams) Fontanelle Chardonnay

Finely chop the sage, rosemary and lemon peel, mix with the salt and pepper, and rub into the pork roast--you can alternatively make long but shallow incisions in the meat to rub the herbs into. Place the roast in a baking pan with the olive oil (coat the pan and sprinkle some on top of the roast), and cook for about 1-1/2 hours on low heat--about 325-350°F/160-175°C. Turn the roast and pour the wine over it. Increase temperature (to about 425°F/220°C) until the wine evaporates, approximately ten minutes. Remove from the oven and let sit for a few minutes before slicing and serving with its juices. Suggested wine pairing: Brunello di Montalcino, Tavernelle Cabernet Sauvignon, Mandrielle Merlot, or SummuS. Serves 5

Cinghiale in Scottiglia (Castello Banfi)

The Tuscan countryside is rich with various types of game and poultry, so the "scottiglia" method of stewing probably originated in this part of Italy. Different types of meat can be prepared "in scottiglia," including chicken, guinea hen, rabbit, lamb, pheasant, wild boar, etc. The method is the same for all with the exception of wild boar which, because of its gamy character, must be marinated overnight, first browned on its own to remove excess liquid from the marinade, and finished with the addition of a small amount of milk. The following recipe for wild boar in scottiglia can be adapted to other meats by eliminating those three steps.

1 lb (1/2 kilo) wild boar, cut into small pieces

10-1/2 oz (300 grams) extra vergine olive oil

finely chopped aromatic herbs, including: 3 cloves garlic, 3 medium sized carrots, two stalks celery, 1 medium onion a few sprigs each of sage, rosemary, and parsley, and a few whole Bay leaves

salt, pepper, and spicy pepper (peperoncino)

1/3 cup (75ml) of whole milk

10 oz (300 grams) peeled or fresh tomatoes

1 bottle (750ml) Brunello di Montalcino

Soak the meat overnight in a liquid composed of about 1/4 bottle of wine, about 100ml of water, and one third of the aromatic herbs. Remove the meat from the marinade, and place it in a frying pan with another third of the aromatic herbs (but no oil) and a tablespoon of salt, cooked over a medium flame allowing the liquids from the marinade to "sweat out" of the meat (about 10 minutes). Remove the meat from the pan and rinse the liquid and herbs from the meat as well as discarding the contents of the pan. Place the meat in a clean pan with olive oil, and gently brown, then add the aromatic herbs, peperoncino, salt and black pepper to taste. Continue cooking a few minutes more, then add an abundant glass or two of Brunello, leaving to simmer until the wine evaporates. Finally, add the tomato and cook until a dense but abundant sauce is formed, finishing with a small amount of milk in the last few minutes of cooking. Serves 4

Fagiano in Scottiglia (Castello Banfi)

The Tuscan countryside is rich with various types of game and poultry, so the "scottiglia" method of stewing probably originated in this part of Italy. Different types of meat can be prepared "in scottiglia," including chicken, guinea hen, rabbit, lamb, pheasant, wild boar, etc. The method is basically the same for all, with minor variations--for example, for game birds a bit of their liver and some pork sausage is used to make a flavorful sauce.



1 lb (1/2 kilo) wild ring-neck pheasant, separated into pieces
liver of the same pheasant
10 oz (300 grams) extra vergine olive oil
meat of 2-3 italian-style pork sausages
finely chopped aromatic herbs, including: a clove of garlic, a medium sized carrot, a stalk of celery, 1 medium onion
a few sprigs each of sage, rosemary, and parsley, and a few whole Bay leaves
salt, pepper, and spicy pepper (peperoncino)
1/3 cup (75 ml) of whole milk
10 oz (300 grams) peeled or fresh tomatoes
1 bottle (750ml) Brunello di Montalcino

Place the meat in a frying pan with the aromatic herbs, oil and a tablespoon of salt, cooked over a medium flame to gently brown the meat. Add the liver, finely chopped, and sausage meat, with peperoncino, salt and black pepper to taste. Continue cooking a few minutes more, then add an abundant glass or two of Brunello, leaving to simmer until the wine evaporates. Finally, add the tomato and cook until a dense but abundant sauce is formed, finishing with a small amount of milk in the last few minutes of cooking. Serves 4

Filetto di Maiale al Brunello (Ristorante Boccon DiVino, Montalcino)

2 heads cauliflower
6 red apples
2 ounces dry white wine
salt
sugar
1 teaspoon fennel seeds or fennel pollen
viniagrette of oil, balsamic vinegar, black pepper, salt
2-1/4 lbs (1 kg) pork filet
butter, flour
5 ounces Brunello

Clean and chop the cauliflower, boiling it for 8-10 minutes in salted boiling water. Clean and slice the apple and place in a buttered roasting pan with a bit of white wine, salt, sugar and herbs, baking for 10-15 minutes at 180 degrees celsius. Prepare the viniagrette, mixing the ingredients with a fork. Slice the filet and dredge in flour, placing it in a frying pan with a bit of butter and cook until a light crust is formed on both sides. Add the Brunello and reduce. On the serving plate, position three apple slices and two pieces of cauliflower dressed with the viniagrette; top the fillet with some of its cooking sauce. Suggested wine pairing: Brunello di Montalcino or Rosso di Montalcino. Serves 10

Filetto di Sogliola al Tartufo (Ristorante Boccon DiVino, Montalcino)

4 filets of sole
4 eggs
1/2 cup (100 grams) flour
1/2 cup (100 grams) butter
1 cup (250 grams) besciamelle sauce
1 teaspoon truffle cream
salt

Clean the sole well; hard-boil two of the eggs and remove the yolks with a fork. Beat the remaining raw eggs, then dredge the fish first in the flour, then egg, then bread crumbs, and fry in the boiling butter until golden brown on both sides. Salt to taste. Serve topped with besciamella sauce and crumbled egg yolk, with shaved truffles and chopped parsley. Suggested wine pairing: Fontanelle Chardonnay or Centine Rosso. Serves 4



Stinco di Vitello al Brunello (Castello Banfi)

one whole veal shank
one bottle of Brunello di Montalcino, moderately aged
3 medium onions, coarsely chopped
5 medium carrots, coarsely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 branch of fresh rosemary
1 branch of fresh sage
4 bay leaves
10 cloves
1 cinnamon stick, 1/2 to 3/4 inch long
3-1/4 quarts (3 liters) meat stock
2 tablespoons flour
salt and pepper to taste

In a small, but deep pot, gently sauté the chopped vegetables. Add herbs and season. In a sauté pan, brown the shank on all sides, and then transfer it to the pot with the vegetables and add the wine. Cover and let simmer until the wine reduces by half. Add the flour and mix in well, then add enough of the broth to completely cover the meat. Be sure that the shank is upright in the pot. Finish cooking, and add more broth, then season with salt and pepper to taste. The cooking process should take about three to four hours depending on the tenderness of the meat. When it is done, remove the meat and pass the stock and vegetables through a food mill to make a sauce. Boil the sauce for a short while further and adjust seasoning. Serve the meat hot, slicing at the table, dressing with sauce to taste, and serve with soft polenta. Suggested wine pairing: Brunello di Montalcino Serves 8-10

Stracotto al Brunello (Castello Banfi)

2-1/2 lbs (1 kg) beef fillet or similar cut for stewing 1 16 oz (450 grams) can of peeled tomatoes
1 large glass Brunello di Montalcino 1 medium onion
2 stalks celery 3 medium carrots
2 cloves garlic 1 cup (250 grams) olive oil
salt, black pepper to taste

Score the meat and fill with a mixture of salt, pepper and crushed fresh garlic. In a casserole, add the olive oil and gently sauté the chopped vegetables until they soften, then add the meat and brown it slowly on all sides. Add the Brunello and cook until the wine is completely evaporated. Add the tomatoes and cook on low heat for about 1 hour, adding water as needed. Remove from heat and cut the meat in thick slices and cover with sauce. Serve over toasted slices of Tuscan bread. Serves 6

Herb-Crusted Rack of Lamb with Mediterranean Vegetables and Rosemary Sauce

Rich tender lamb encrusted with aromatic herbs, accompanied by lightly sautéed vegetables, is the quintessential dish for spring and summer. The bold, deep, black-fruit flavors make this perfectly structured blend of Cabernet and Merlot the ideal accompaniment, a concert in elegance.

For the lamb:

2 racks of lamb, six to eight chops each: Ask butcher to "French" the racks, reserving scrap and bones for the sauce.
1 medium-sized carrot minced 1 celery rib minced
1 onion minced 1 clove garlic
1 bouquet garni 2 fresh tomatoes diced
6 to 8 ounces Cum Laude, Mandrielle or ExcelsuS 4 cups water
2 ounces unsalted butter 2 sprigs rosemary

Procedure : In a 6-quart Dutch oven, lightly toast the scrap meat and bones in a 400° oven until golden brown. Add the minced carrot, celery, onion, and garlic. After 15 minutes, add the bouquet garni and the diced tomatoes. After 15 minutes more, deglaze with the red wine and reduce.



Add the water, cover, and bring it to a boil for at least one hour. Strain through a fine sieve. Simmer, reducing the broth to about one quarter of its original volume.

To finish, gently fry the rosemary with the butter without letting the butter turn too brown. Strain and chill the aromatic butter. Before serving, whisk pieces of the butter into the reduced broth, with salt to taste, to make the sauce.

For the crust:

10 slices of home-style white bread, crusts removed 8 to 10 leaves basil

1 sprig rosemary 5 sprigs thyme

1 sprig tarragon 3 sprigs parsley

1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard 3 ounces melted butter

Finely chop the bread and cleaned herbs together in a food processor. Reserve mustard and butter for finish.

For the vegetables:

1 clove garlic 1 bouquet garni of rosemary, thyme and basil

1 red bell pepper 1 yellow bell pepper

1 medium-sized eggplant 3 medium-sized zucchini

3 small vine-ripened tomatoes, seeded and juiced salt

pepper olive oil

Coarsely chop the vegetables. In a pan, sauté the garlic and bouquet garni. In order, add first the peppers, then after two minutes the eggplant and finally the zucchini, being careful that they remain firm. Add the tomato, salt and pepper. Finish cooking for another 2 to 3 minutes.

Finish:

Season the racks with salt and pepper, gently brown them in a roasting pan with a drizzle of oil. Spread the mustard on the meat and cover it with about . of the herbed bread crumbs; drizzle the melted butter over it and add the balance of the herbed bread crumbs. Bake at 425° F for about 15 minutes until the crust is golden and the meat is medium. Let rest for 5 minutes. Place the vegetables in the middle of the plate, decorate with the sauce, place the sliced ribs over the vegetables and serve with Cum Laude, Mandrielle or ExcelsuS. Serves 8

Bistecca Fiorentina

1 T-bone steak, 2 to 2 1/2 inches thick

1/3 cup Extra Vergine Olive Oil

1 clove garlic, crushed

2-3 whole sprigs fresh rosemary

1 Tablespoon coarse sea salt

1/2 Tablespoon freshly ground black pepper or to taste

4-6 lemon wedges

Bring the steak to room temperature. Let the garlic and the tips of the rosemary sit in the olive oil for at least 1/2 hour. Build a fire in a charcoal grill or hearth and let it burn down until the embers glow red; alternatively, pre-heat a gas grill with all burners on high, or pre-heat a ridged cast-iron grilling skillet on a high flame on your stovetop.

Pat the steak dry with paper towels and place it alongside the heat source, on an adjacent table or counter top, for about 10 to 15 minutes to warm the meat.

Sprinkle about 3/4 of the salt on top of the steak and place on the grill for about 6 to 8 minutes.

Flip the steak, and using the rosemary sprigs as a brush, baste the cooked side with the garlic-infused olive oil, using all but a tablespoon or two of the oil. Sprinkle remaining salt on top and continue to grill for about 6-8 minutes.

Flip the steak again. Brush with the remaining olive oil, grind black pepper over it to taste, and remove from the meat from the grill.

Let the steak rest for about 8-10 minutes, lightly tented with aluminum foil and kept close to the heat.

Slice, following the grain of the meat, and serve with lemon wedges.

Note: Grilling times are for medium rare.



SALSA BALSAMICA ETRUSCA IN CUISINE

In the use of Balsamica in cooking two main rules should be considered: unprocessed, it is very "individualist" (it easily covers other condiments), whereas on cooked foods, tradition calls for Balsamica almost always last in the sequence of the ingredients foreseen in a recipe. Balsamica enhances the flavors of the single ingredients and enriches the following dishes which are superbly accompanied by our wines. Your own imagination will provide the rest!

Carré di Manzo in crosta alla Balsamica (beef fillet in puff pastry)

1-1/2 lbs (700 grams) beef fillet
1/6 lb (70 grams) thin slices bacon
1/2 lb (200 grams) puff pastry
3 Tbsp (50 grams) Salsa Balsamica
2 Tbsp Castello Banfi "Extra-Virgine" olive oil
15 grams mustard
1 Tbsp Worcester sauce/demiglacé
1 beaten egg
Flour, salt, pepper

Remove fat and skin from the fillet with a sharp knife. Season with salt and pepper and brown with oil in a very hot oven for 8-10 minutes. Put aside and keep cool. In the meantime, on the side, brown bacon on moderate heat, add mustard, Worcester sauce and Salsa Balsamica. Reduce the sauce by two thirds and baste the browned meat. Put the remaining sauce back on the burner, stretch with the demiglacé, season and adjust density and keep warm. Roll pastry to 1/8 inch (1.5 mm), at this point wrap the fillet first with the bacon, then with the puff pastry, close well, brush with egg and bake in oven until the pastry is golden. Suggested wine pairing: Tavernelle Cabernet Sauvignon
Serves 4

Straccetti alla Balsamica (veal émincé)

1 lb (400 grams) tender veal Castello Banfi "Extra-Virgine" olive oil
1 garlic clove

For the sauce:

1 cup (1/4 liter) milk 2 Tbsp Salsa Balsamica
Salt

Cut the meat in fine strips, then heat the oil in a pan with the garlic clove. When it sizzles, add the meat and cook for 2 minutes. At this point, add the previously mixed sauce and cook for 1 minute. Suggested wine pairing: Colvecchio Syrah. Serves 4