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 Preparation time
10 minutes

 Resting time
30 minutes

 Cooking time
25/30 minutes
for tarts and
pies

 Cooking time
10 minutes
for cookies

SWEET SHORT CRUST PASTRY

Short crust pastry is one of the basic and **most versatile doughs** in traditional pastry-making. With a good short crust recipe, a thousand delicious pastries can be yours: perhaps even more! You can even use it for cookies. Its exact origin is unknown, but European artisans were already making it in the year **1000 AD**, using cane sugar imported from the **Middle East**. The French cook Guillaume Tirel was the first to describe how to make a sweet short crust in his manuscript *Le Viandier*. Later, a **Bartolomeo Scappi**, a Master of the art of cooking in Renaissance Italy, included it in a chapter of his monumental cookbook, *Opera dell'arte del cucinare*. This cookbook is still considered today one of the most accurate portraits of **Italian Renaissance culinary culture**.

INGREDIENTS FOR A TART OR PIE SERVING 6-8 OR ABOUT 20 COOKIES OR TARTLETS

- 1 cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons butter, preferably unsalted
- 3 large eggs
- 4 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- a pinch of salt
- grated zest of 1 lemon



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TWO METHODS: CLASSIC OR CRUMB METHOD

CLASSIC METHOD

Using a mixer, mix the sugar together with the butter (but don't whip it). When it is well combined, add the eggs one at a time, mixing a little, then add the next egg.

Sift the flour, then add it along with the salt and grated lemon zest and continue to mix until it forms a smooth, compact and soft pastry dough. If making by hand, do not handle the dough too much or it could result in a tough texture.

Place the dough in the refrigerator for 30 minutes to chill.

Roll out to the desired thickness, to make pies, tarts, cookies, tartlets, anything your heart desires, crust-wise.

CRUMB METHOD

Sift the flour, then place it on a work surface in a mound. In the center, make a well, and into this well add the butter. Start working it with your fingertips until it forms a shaggy mixture, then add the salt, sugar, eggs, grated lemon zest and knead quickly, without letting the dough warm up. The pastry should be crumbly.

Put the dough in the refrigerator for 30 minutes before rolling out.

USEFUL TIP

Whichever method you choose, once the resting time has elapsed, take the short crust pastry and knead it for a minute with your hands or in a stand mixer before you then roll it out with a rolling pin on a pastry board/work surface.

 Preparation time
10 minutes

 Resting time
30 minutes

 Cooking time
25/30 minutes
for tarts and
pies

 Cooking time
10 minutes
for cookies

ORGANIC SEMOLINA SHORT CRUST PASTRY

Short crust pastry made with organic semolina has a lovely crumbly texture, and is especially tasty. Semolina gives the pastry a rustic flavor, indeed, it gives your crust the same importance as your filling.

Ideal for preparing pies, cookies, tarts and other baked goods, it is based on semolina, fat (butter or lard) and eggs, with added aromatics such as vanilla or citrus peel. requires just a few ingredients: semolina, salt, butter or lard and eggs. For sweet crusts, sugar and aromatics such as vanilla or citrus zest, usually orange or lemon, are often added.

INGREDIENTS TO MAKES A TART OR PIE TO SERVE 6-8, OR ABOUT 20 TARTLETS/COOKIES/PASTRIES

- 4 cups organic semolina
- 1 ½ cups confectioners (powdered) sugar
- 1 ¼ cups butter
- 1 pinch of salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 eggs
- Grated zest of 1 lemon



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METHOD

Sift the semolina and the confectioners sugar together, into a large bowl.

Add the butter and rub with your fingers until everything is well-combined, and the mixture is crumbly.

Add the salt, baking powder, eggs, and lemon zest and mix together well.

Place this dough on a lightly floured work surface and knead it quickly until smooth. Do not overwork the pastry or it will become tough.

Wrap it in plastic wrap and leave it to relax it in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes. Use for any sweet pie, tart, tartlet, even cookies, or anywhere you would use a sweet shortcrust pastry



 Preparation time
20 minutes

 Rising time
4 hours

 Cooking time
40 minutes

SEMOLINA BREAD

Bread has accompanied the history of humankind for at least ten thousand years, sustaining people throughout the abundance and scarcity of other foods. For this reason, bread is often spoken of as “the staff of life”. It was during the transition between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic times (between 10,000 and 8,000 BC) that people began to cultivate cereals--wheat, rye and spelt, eaten as a sort of porridge or a flat unleavened loaf. Archaeologists agree that in the ancient Western world it was **the Egyptians** who first used early forms of leavening, which gave baked dough the new dimension in both shape and texture that we now know as bread. It was embraced by later civilizations and spread geographically--throughout Europe, especially, but also the middle east. Bread is still cherished, perhaps even more, today, and from country to country covers a multitude of textures and tastes, whether complex or basic. This following recipe is for a basic, semolina, bread. While fine wheat flour—00, made from low gluten soft wheat—can be used for bread baking, semolina is the best choice when making a bread that depends on structure and a more rustic, bread-like flavor. Semolina comes from high protein durum wheat (hard wheat) but is not to be confused with durum wheat flour. Durum wheat flour is milled multiple times, with a texture smoother, finer, and more suitable for pasta-making, while semolina is less finely milled and coarser in texture--just what your bread needs. And remember: organic is best for both humans and the earth, so choose organic semolina!

INGREDIENTS FOR 3- 3 ½ LBS OF BREAD

- 2 cups lukewarm water
- 2 envelopes (4 1/2 teaspoons) active dried yeast
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 8 cups Italian organic semolina
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt



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METHOD

Dissolve the yeast and sugar in a bowl in about 1/3 of the warm water. Mix in the oil and stir well to combine.

Place the semolina and salt in a separate bowl then add the dissolved yeast, water and oil mixture.

Add the rest of the water, and mix together until you get a soft, dry dough.

Place the dough on a lightly floured work surface and knead by hand until it is smooth and elastic in texture.

Transfer the dough to a large bowl, cover with a damp cloth and let rise for at least 4 hours.

Remove the dough from the bowl, punch it down and return to the work surface. Fold the dough on itself a couple of times, a gentle knead, then reshape the dough into a loaf shape that you prefer: round, oblong, rectangular, square, as you desire, or that fits the loaf pans you will be using. You may also make the bread free-form, on a large baking sheet, allowing space for expansion.

Using a sharp small knife such as a paring knife or box cutter, score the shape of a cross into the top of the round shape, or several slits in the top of the loaf shape. Preheat the oven to 375°F degrees.

Bake the bread for 40 minutes, then raise the oven temperature to 475°F-500°F for a few minutes, to brown the crust.

Remove from oven, place the bread/s on a rack to cool and dry. Enjoy at room temperature, in all ways that you enjoy bread.



 Preparation time
10 minutes

 Resting time
2 hours

 Cooking time
20 minutes

GRISSINI TORINESI

These **Grissini** – aka thin, crisp, breadsticks – were created in northern Italy, in the city of Turin. The name grissini derives from the word "**gherssa**", a traditional bread that is prepared in the Piedmont region, similar to a baguette, and the Torinesi, refers to Turin.

Antonio Brunero, the baker of the House of Savoy, invented them on the advice of the royal doctor, so that young Vittorio Amedeo II could eat bread. The child, in poor health, could not digest the fluffy inner part of the bread, so Brunero baked these loaves from a finely milled soft wheat. They had no crumb at all, so he could eat the crunchy breadsticks which were indeed crisp and tasty.

INGREDIENTS FOR 20 GRISSINI

- 1 envelope (2 1/3 teaspoons) active dried yeast
- 1 cup lukewarm water
- 1 3/4 teaspoons salt
- 4 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour, sifted
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for brushing
- semolina flour, as needed



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METHOD

Dissolve the yeast in about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the warm water; set aside for a few moments. Meanwhile, in another bowl, dissolve the salt in the rest of the water.

In a large bowl combine the flour and yeast mixture and start to mix; when its well combined, add the oil and salted water and knead together until the dough is smooth and elastic. You can do this by hand, or in an electric mixer.

Form the dough into a square shape, brush with extra virgin olive oil, sprinkle with a little semolina and let it rest, lightly covered with a damp cloth in a warm place for at least 2 hours, until doubled in volume.

Push the dough down to rid it of its bubbles, then cut it into strips of about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick.

Now take each end, one in each hand, and stretch it until it reaches the length of the baking pan you are using. Line the pan with a sheet of parchment and place each breadstick after stretching onto it.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400°C (375°F if it runs hot).

When all of the dough is stretched into narrow lengths, bake for 15–20 minutes or until golden brown.

Remove from the oven and let them cool on wire racks.



🕒 Preparation time
10 minutes

🕒 Resting time
2 hours

👤 Cooking time
20 minutes

SEMOLINA GRISSINI: CRISP, CRUNCHY BREADSTICKS

Grissini are made from what is basically a bread dough, but being a long narrow thin shape means that it's all crust, and bakes into a crisp and crunchy texture. Made with hard wheat, high protein semolina, the sturdy dough baked up into an especially crunchy, hearty, cracker-like bread, almost like a tubular cracker.

Several historical figures were true grissini enthusiasts. King Charles Felix, Duke of Savoy, is said to have munched on them ravenously, even during the operas at the Teatro Regio in Turin. Napoleon Bonaparte adored them so much, he established at the beginning of the 19th century, a transport service between Turin and Paris dedicated almost exclusively to bringing what he called "les petits bâtons de Turin" (the little sticks of Turin).

It's no wonder really: a crisp grissino is super with a glass of wine, and a plate of cheese, or cured meat, or a handful of olives. And yes: many, even today, find it hard to stop eating them, they are so crunchy-delicious.

INGREDIENTS FOR 20 GRISSINI

- 1 ½ teaspoons active dry yeast
- ¾ cup lukewarm water
- 3 cups organic semolina
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 3 ½ - 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt



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METHOD

Dissolve the yeast the water and leave for a few minutes.

Place the semolina in a large bowl, then mix in the dissolved yeast and water, as well as the honey; when it forms a dough, begin to knead it.

Add the oil slowly, as you knead, then do the same, adding the salt as you knead, until the dough becomes elastic and smooth.

Place the dough in an oiled container or bowl, cover with plastic wrap and leave to rest for about 2 hours or until doubled in volume.

Place the dough on a work surface, then roll it out with a rolling pin to a thickness of about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch or slightly more.

Cut the dough into strips $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide, then roll slightly to smooth and round them. Place the thin tubes of dough, well-spaced out, on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake in a preheated oven at 400°F for 20 minutes.

When they are golden brown the grissini are ready.



🕒 Preparation time
2 hours 20 minutes

🕒 Resting time
2 hours

👨‍🍳 Cooking time
20 minutes

FRISELLE TOPPED WITH TOMATO SALAD

Friselle with tomatoes is a typical dish of the **Mediterranean diet**, **crunchy-hard twice-baked rusks**, topped with a **savory salad**, similar to the **Greek Dakos**.

Its origins date back to the 10th century when the "frisa", the twice baked biscuits—was a food taken on long voyages to nourish travelers and sailors. Before a frisa could be eaten, it needed to be softened (with sea water), it was then seasoned it with oil, salt and in more recent times, since their arrival in Europe, tomatoes. Its shape recalls its practicality: the friselle has holes in the center, to thread on a cord, and hang like a necklace, making them perfect for transporting.

The recipe for the dough is similar to ordinary bread, but it is shaped into doughnut or bagel shaped rounds, and baked for a shorter time. After this first baking, it is cut into halves, and baked once again to give that characteristic crunchiness.

INGREDIENTS FOR 6 FRISELLE

FOR THE DOUGH:

- 1 ¼ cups organic semolina
- 1 ¼ cups organic Italian 00 flour
- 1 sachet, or 2 1/4-2 ½ teaspoons active dried yeast
- 1 cup lukewarm water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

TO SEASON:

- About 3 cups quartered cherry (or grape) tomatoes
- 6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Large pinch dried oregano leaves, crushed between your hands or handful fresh sweet basil leaves
- Salt, to taste



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METHOD

Combine the semolina, 00 flour, and the yeast and stir together. Incorporate the warm water a little at a time; when its mostly mixed together, add the salt.

Start kneading with your hands, adding the oil after a few minutes, to make the dough more elastic. Knead until the oil is completely absorbed.

Cover the dough with a damp cloth and let it rest for at least two hours.

Place the dough on a work surface, knead it for a few seconds to make it smooth then press or roll it out onto a flat disc.

Using a pastry cutter or rim of a glass, make six circles, then give each frisella the shape of a donut or a bagel by making a hole in each center.

Place the dough shapes on a baking sheet covered with parchment paper and let them rest for another 20 minutes.

Bake at 350°F for 10 minutes, then remove from oven. While still hot but able to be handled, cut each in half horizontally.

Lay each half onto the baking sheet, cut side up, and bake again at 350°F, this time for 20 minutes, or until the friselle are golden brown.

Friselle with Tomato Salad

Soften each friselle in water for a few seconds, shake off excess, then top with the cherry tomatoes, oil, salt, and a sprinkling of oregano or fresh basil.



 Preparation time
20 minutes

 Resting time
30 minutes

 Cooking time
4 minutes

ORGANIC SEMOLINA SEEDED CRACKERS

Crackers, crisp savoury wafer-thin crunchy flatbreads, are eaten all over the world now, but here is their origin: they were invented in **1792** by Theodore Pearson in Massachusetts (USA), in an effort to create a hard, long-lasting ship's biscuit for **American sailors and soldiers** during long trips.

At first it was only **flour, water and salt** and existed purely for survival when fresh food was not available or to supplement the fresh food that was. As it happens, though, crackers were oh so tasty. In 1801, they broke out of the survival mode of army and navy travels, and became a commercial success. We have a baker, **Josiah Bent**, to thank for bringing these crisp tidbits from sailors to ordinary people, who began producing him in his bakery oven.

Today: everyone, everywhere, loves crackers. They last a long time, and if properly packaged, stay crunchy. Another part of their appeal is versatility: munch a handful alone unadorned as a snack, serve them with a dip, or top them with a savory morsel or two. They are good with sweet things too: try jam, mild milky cheese, or dark chocolate. A favorite topping in the USA is cream cheese or mild goats' cheese, topped with sweet- spicy chili pepper jam. With a batch of tasty crackers on your shelf or table, you are always ready for a snack: sociable or solo. And while store-bought crackers are always available, making your own is just so satisfying, and delicious!

INGREDIENTS FOR 20 CRACKERS

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups organic semolina
- 7 fl oz / $\frac{7}{8}$ cup water
- 1 envelope dried yeast
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 2 tablespoons oil
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup pumpkin seeds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup untoasted, hulled, sesame seeds
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup whole flaxseeds



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METHOD

Dissolve the yeast in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup tepid or slightly warm room temperature water.

Pour the semolina onto a work surface, then create a well. Into this well, add the dissolved yeast and water, plus the remaining water, as well as the salt. Quickly begin to incorporate the semolina into the liquid to form a dough. Knead until it is smooth, and firm then cover loosely and let it rest for 30 minutes.

Divide the dough into about 4-6 parcels or just the right amount that you are able to work with on your surface.

Working one at a time, roll out thinly, to make long thin sheets; a pasta machine works really well for this instead of hand-rolling. The thinner the sheets, the crispier the crackers will be.

Place the sheets on a baking tray lined with parchment paper, prick them all over with a fork. Then brush the surface with oil. Using a pastry wheel cutter, cut the sheets into crackers.

Sprinkle with salt and the seeds and bake at 400°F degrees for about five minutes or until golden at their edges; they cook very quickly.

Remove and leave to cool on wire racks, then store in an airtight container.



 Preparation time
50 minutes

 Resting time
1 hour

 Cooking time
30 minutes

TARALLI

Taralli are the distinctive, crunchy, savory and dry cracker-like breads, made in the **Puglia** and **Campania** regions in Southern Italy. They make a wonderful snack and are at their best with a glass of wine to relax over.

Both Campania and Puglia, though the cracker-like snack is similar, are said to be the result of two separate traditions, one, from a professional baker's kitchen and one from a home. The first uses lard and second, olive oil.

In Campania, it was the **Neapolitan bread-makers**, not wanting to throw away any odds and ends of leavened dough from bread-baking, began, at the end of the 1700s, to make salted, twisted rings with the addition of **lard and pepper**. By the 19th century adding almonds, also became part of the tradition. In Puglia, however, legend tells of a **mother**, having nothing to feed her children, prepared small rings of dough with the few ingredients in her pantry, simply kneading flour, olive oil and a pinch of salt, then baking them until crunchy (which also made them longer lasting).

INGREDIENTS FOR 20 TARALLI

- ¾ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1/3 cup water
- 4 cups Italian organic 0 soft wheat flour, sifted
- 2 teaspoons fine salt



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METHOD

Combine the oil, wine and water in a bowl and mix together with a fork. Add the flour and knead the mixture until it starts to come together.

Add the salt and mix well with your hands until you get a smooth and compact dough. Place the dough in a clean bowl sealed with plastic wrap and leave to rest for at least an hour.

Take the dough from the refrigerator, cut and roll into small strips about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick. Using your hands roll it into a long cylinder or thick thread shape, then form a circle and close each by pressing the ends together-- in Puglia tradition dictates that you use with a key, though you can use only your fingers if you prefer.

If using a key, place one end of the dough strip on top of the other and press with the bit or cylinder of the key (not the bow where you hold the key) and make a small cut on the dough. Meanwhile, bring a pot of water to a boil and boil/simmer the 4 -5 taralli at a time. As soon as they rise to the surface, drain and put them to dry on a tea towel, taking care to turn them over so that they do not stick. Let them dry for a couple of hours and, once dry, place them on a baking tray and bake at 400F for about 30 minutes.



 Preparation time
20 minutes

 Rising time
2 hours

 Cooking time
40 minutes

SEMOLINA POPPY SEED ROLLS

Bread in its most basic, has, throughout human history, been the symbol of culture, history and anthropology, hunger and wealth, war and peace. At the beginning it was a simple mixture of mashed grains and water, baked into cakes or loaves. Over the millennia it evolved and developed however, into the amazing and beautiful wealth of breads we enjoy today. The **Renaissance** was especially important, with the introduction of leavening. Using yeast made the bread softer and lighter; at first brewer's yeast (not nutritional yeast, often called brewer's yeast): a complex processing of natural yeast and malt, the main ingredient for producing beer. But it was also discovered that these yeasts could exist on the skins of grapes or other fruit. Today it is easily available to purchase the type of yeast most practical for you. Over the years, generations, centuries, new shapes and new breads were created: using oil, butter, olives, aromatic herbs, seeds such as sesame or poppy, as well as sweet breads with chocolate, candied fruit, or raisins.

INGREDIENTS FOR 10 ROLLS

- 1 cup lukewarm warm water
- 1 ½ sachet (3 teaspoons) active dried yeast
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 4 cups organic semolina
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1-2 tablespoons poppy seeds



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METHOD

Place about a third of the warm water into a bowl. Add the yeast and sugar then mix well with a fork, taking care to dissolve all the ingredients well.

Place the semolina in a large bowl then add the rest of the water as well as the oil. Mix together, then add the dissolved yeast mixture a little at a time and knead it all together until it forms a smooth dough.

Add the salt and knead for another ten minutes.

Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let it rise in a warm, dry place for at least two hours or until doubled.

Gently punch the dough down and form 10 balls in the shape of rolls. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, brush the surface with oil and sprinkle with the poppy seeds. Leave for about 20 minutes in a warm place.

Preheat the oven to 375-400°F.

Bake for about 20 minutes or until golden and crunchy.



 Preparation time
15 minutes

 Resting time
1 hour

 Cooking time
25 minutes

 Serves
6-8 people

EMILIAN FRIED GNOCCHI

This fried dough, part like a flat dumpling, part like fried bread, is typical of the **Emilia-Romagna region**. You see it offered everywhere, often served as an appetizer with cheeses, cured meats, even vegetables like cooked spinach (and delicious with ricotta).

The origins of gnocchi fritti are very ancient, dating back to the **Lombards** who occupied these lands after the fall of the Roman Empire. They had a secret ingredient for making it so succulent, which they were kind enough to pass down through the centuries: **lard (though butter or olive oil may also be used)**.

INGREDIENTS

- 7/8 cup milk or water
- 1 teaspoon active dry yeast
- 2 ½ cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour and a little more to sprinkle
- 4 tablespoons room-temperature melted lard (or butter or olive oil)
- salt to taste
- oil, or the traditional lard, for frying: (about a quart of liquid fat)
- Fresh cheeses and sliced cured meats to serve with the gnocchi



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METHOD

Warm the milk until it is lukewarm.

Pour into a large bowl; mix with the yeast and let it rest for 10 minutes, then add in the flour, lard or oil, two pinches of salt and knead for 10 minutes.

Form the dough into a loaf, then dust with flour, put it in a bowl and cover with a cloth. Leave it to rest and rise for an hour or so.

Roll the dough out on a lightly floured work surface to a thickness of about a quarter inch. Then, using a cutting wheel or sharp knife, cut into diamond shapes. Depending on the size of your work surface, you might need to do this in batches. Set aside one batch then roll and cut another, until the dough is all used up.

Heat the frying fat (lard or oil) in a saucepan, wok, or whatever pan you use for frying. When it is hot enough, a tiny chunk of dough will sizzle immediately and turn golden. You're ready now to fry them all.

Working with only enough of the dough shapes so as not to crowd the pan, fry the gnocchi, turning them several times. They are ready when they are puffy and golden.

Remove with a slotted spoon, letting the excess fat drip off, then put them to dry on a piece of kitchen paper towel.


Serve the crisp, irresistible Emilian fried gnocchi warm with fresh cheeses and cured sliced meats.



 Preparation time
40 minutes

 Resting time
4 hours

 Cooking time
30 minutes

 Serves
6 people

FOCACCIA PUGLIESE - WITH TOMATO, OLIVE, AND OREGANO TOPPING

The first we know of focaccia (ie, a chewy, quick-baked Italian flatbread) was the ancient Phoenicians who prepared a bread like this. It is said to have been brought over, from the Middle East, in the Phoenicians' seafaring travels.

In the second century BCE, **Cato** described this—then called “**libum**”— as a mixture of millet, barley, water and salt.

In ancient Rome, focaccias were used as an “**offering to the gods**”. By the time of the Renaissance, focaccias had become a speciality for wedding banquets, paired with wine.

Over time, focaccia became an important everyday food for travelers and fishermen: it was compact, long lasting, and if it turned stale, could be moistened and eaten as fresh—making a satisfying meal with whatever else could be found. Fishermen especially, were fond of focaccia, as it is perfect with fish.

Another story (and perhaps they are all true?) about the Italian origins of focaccia is attributed to the long nights work of the bakers. To pass the time, they would make little parties for themselves, or perhaps a sustaining middle of the night dinner, or even a solitary snack. They took small pieces of the dough and baked them directly on the base of the oven. In only a few minutes they were cooked through, and made a meal with whatever else the baker could find: vegetables, cured meats, cheeses.

Soon the bakers began selling this puffy flatbread to their customers.

Two regions, **Puglia** and **Liguria**, claim focaccia as their own; each claiming that not only did focaccia originate in their own region, it is more widespread and popular than in the other, though there are regional differences, especially in the toppings: some top it with onions, herbs, potatoes, and so forth, but what is more Pugliese (and delicious) than bright tomatoes, oregano, and olives?



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INGREDIENTS

FOR THE FOCACCIA:

- 1 envelope (2 1/4-2 1/2 teaspoons) active dried yeast
- 1 1/2 teaspoons of sugar
- 2 1/2 cups water
- 4- 4 1/2 cups organic semolina
- 2- 2 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 2 1/2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil

FOR THE TOPPING:

- 2-3 cups cherry tomatoes, halved or quartered
- 2/3 cup pitted and halved green or black olives
- 2 teaspoons dry oregano leaves, coarsely crushed between your hands
- salt as desired, for sprinkling
- 3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil

METHOD

Mix the yeast and sugar in 1/4 cup lukewarm water. Set aside for 5-10 minutes or until the yeast dissolves.

Place the semolina in a large bowl, add the yeast mixture, 2 cups of the water, and knead until you get a very soft dough.

Next, dissolve the salt in the remaining water (1/4 cup) and add it to the dough, then mix it in.

Slowly add the oil, continuing to work the dough vigorously, until it is smooth and firm.

Place it in a well-oiled large flat baking pan and let it rest for at least two hours, or until it has risen until doubled.

When risen, gently press the dough with your generously oiled hands, so that the dough covers the entire surface of the baking tray. Top with the cherry tomatoes, olives, oregano, salt and oil then leave to rise again for another two hours until doubled.


Bake in a preheated oven at 500°F for about 30 minutes, or until the dough is cooked through (the tomatoes will be as well).

Eat right away, warm, or enjoy cool; it should last for several days.

 Preparation time
2 hours 30 minutes

 Resting time
2 hours

 Cooking time
30 minutes

 Serves
8 people

LIA'S SAVORY BRIOCHE

Everyone knows **rum baba**, though internationally many do not realize that it is a symbol of Italian and - in particular Neapolitan - cake-making. Often, it is thought of as French. This makes sense: it was invented in **France** in the early **1600s**. But its international citizenship goes further: it was Stanislaw Leszczyński, the Polish king in exile, who—along with his chef—wanted to make the traditional Alsatian cake, “kugelhopf”, less dry and juicier. He decided to drench the somewhat dry cakes with a sweet rum-enriched syrup. The baba arrived in **Naples** at the end of the eighteenth century with Marie Antoinette, wife of Louis XVI, and by end of the nineteenth century, baba au rhum had become the favorite dessert of the aristocracy. But the baba didn't stop at rum, and it didn't stop at sweet. After all, this is Naples: when it comes to delicious food, enthusiastic chefs and bakers know no limits. The sweet cake family evolved to include a **savory cake**, baba or brioche, whichever you prefer to call it. But it is not the French brioche, it is a typical Neapolitan savory cake, shaped like a ring (in a Bundt pan). And unlike any other brioche, this one is full of salami and cheeses—perfect for an aperitif, a picnic, or to serve at a festive table. Here we give you the recipe from a talented Napolitana, famous for her irresistible savory brioche: Lia Arciello.

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE DOUGH:

- 1 envelope active dry yeast (or 2 ¼ teaspoons)
- 1 cup whole milk
- 4 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour, plus a little extra if/as needed
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 6 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon of salt
- 4 large eggs

FOR THE FILLING:

- 1 cup diced Neapolitan or other air dried, tasty, salami
- 4 oz or about a cup diced Italian Provolone Piccante cheese (or other aged, flavorful cheese such as aged asiago, pecorino, aged gouda, aged white cheddar, dry Monterrey Jack, for instance)
- 4 oz or about 1 ½ cups diced fontina, Emmental, Monterrey Jack, mild Asiago, or other meltable mild white cheese
- 1 cup whole milk, or as needed



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METHOD

Warm the milk until it reaches just body temperature, that is lukewarm or tepid—if it is hot, it will kill the yeast. If it is too warm, do not add the yeast immediately, but wait a few minutes until it cools.

Dissolve the yeast in the warm (but not hot) milk; set aside while you sift the flour with the sugar.

Combine and mix, then knead and slowly add the milk; this is best done in an electric mixer, preferably one designed for bread.

Pouring down the side of the mixer, add the 6 tablespoons of oil and the salt. When this is mixed in, slowly, one at a time, add the eggs. If the dough becomes too thick, add a little more milk and knead until the mixture is smooth and creamy.

Next, add the diced salami and cheeses and mix together well, adding a little bit of milk to help hold it together.

Prepare a Bundt pan by buttering and flouring it.

Pour the mixture into the prepared Bundt pan then cover with plastic wrap. Leave it to rest for at least two hours or until the dough rises to reach the top edge of the pan.

Preheat the oven to 350°F degrees. Bake for about 30 minutes. Check for doneness after the first 20-25 minutes, by inserting a knife or skewer into the dough. Be sure to check several times as the dough can be a little wet from the cheese which will give the wrong results.

When cooked through, remove from the oven and cool a few minutes, then invert onto a wire rack to cool all of the way through.

Serve in small slices with cocktails, aperitivo, or a glass of wine.



 Preparation time
10 minutes

 Resting time
1 hour

 Cooking time
2-3 minutes

PIADINA ROMAGNOLA

Piadina is a thin, round, supple, pancake-like flatbread, somewhat like the Mexican flour tortilla is size and texture. Popular throughout Italy (and beyond) these days, the origins of piadine are ancient, narrating the story of the Romagna region: its people and their traditions.

The term "**piada**", as stated by the Consorzio Piadina Romagnola PGI which protects and promotes this traditional product, was given by poet Giovanni Pascoli, who Italianized the Romagna dialect word "piè".

The poet goes on, famously, to **praise the Piadina**, as ancient as humanity, defining it as "**Romagna's national bread**", celebrating the indissoluble link between the food and the territory it comes from. Its origins go back to the flat breads—made from raw flour and cereals—of the Etruscans who lived in the areas that are now modern Romagna. The first literary traces were found by Pascoli himself in the **Virgil's Aeneid in the seventh canto** when he referred to "**exiguam orbem**": a thin disc, baked then divided into large squares.

These days piadine are most often an individual flatbread, eaten wrapped around cured meat, salad, vegetables or cheeses.

INGREDIENTS FOR 6/8 PIADINE

- 4 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour, plus extra for sprinkling
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup softened (warm or room temperature) lard or extra virgin olive oil



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METHOD

Sift the flour, baking soda and salt into a large bowl. Make a well in the center, add the water and lard or oil, then mix together until it comes together in a dough.

Knead this dough vigorously, adding a sprinkling of flour as you go to keep the dough from becoming sticky—you want the dough soft, but not sticky.

Once the dough is smooth, cover it with plastic wrap, and let it rest at room temperature for about 40 minutes.

Take the dough from the bowl, squash it down with your hands, then knead it for a few seconds without flour to obtain a smooth ball.

Divide it into 6-8 portions; roll each into a ball and leave rest for 20 minutes covered with plastic wrap.

Roll out the balls on a work surface, using a rolling pin to flatten them into disc-shaped rounds of about 1/8 inch thick.

One at a time, in a non-stick pan or on a very hot baking stone, cook each flat disc over moderate heat for about 1-2 minutes, then flip onto the other side and cook for about 50 seconds.

The piadine are ready to be served hot, stuffed as desired with salami, ham, cheese, vegetables, or just delicious on their own. You may stack them and eat them later (reheated or at room temperature); piadine also freeze well.



 Preparation time
30 minutes

 Resting time
10 + 30 minutes

 Cooking time
5 minutes

 Serves
4-5 people

— CAVATELLI WITH BAKED CHERRY TOMATO SAUCE —

Cavatelli, originally from the **Molise** region, are perhaps the **oldest cut of pasta in Italy**. Originally from the Molise region, they are dumpling-like shapes, much like small gnocchi, prepared by hand using organic durum wheat semolina. It is not known exactly when this fresh pasta was first made, but it was already present on the tables of Southern Italy, the cradle of culture and history, during the reign of **Frederick II, Duke of Swabia in 1200**.

The Italian term indicates their "**hollow**" shape, a pasta that is chewy yet has a pocket inside that collects whichever delicious ragu and sauce you might toss it with.

This is a classic recipe for the cavatelli, a recipe handed down for centuries. Tossed in a roasted cherry tomato sauce, with mozzarella and basil, it tastes of the very essence of Southern Italy.

INGREDIENTS

TO MAKE CAVATELLI:

- 3 cups (plus a little more if/as needed) organic semolina
- 1 ¼ cups water (plus a little extra, if/as needed)
- Salt to taste

FOR THE BAKED TOMATO SAUCE:

- 1 lb fresh cherry tomatoes
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 pinch of sugar
- 2 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 whole or lightly smashed clove of garlic
- 1 Italian dried red chili pepper or pinch of dried chili flakes
- 3 ½ oz mozzarella, diced
- fresh basil leaves, to taste, torn at just the last minute



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METHOD

TO MAKE CAVATELLI

Mix the semolina and salt in a bowl, then add the water slowly and knead with your hands until the semolina has absorbed all the liquid.

Place the dough on a work surface. Fold it 3–4 times then let it rest for 10 minutes. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Remove the dough from the refrigerator and cut a piece about the size of a large walnut or a small lemon. Roll it out into a rope-like strip about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, then cut into pieces about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. The unique shape is made by taking a piece of dough and, using your thumb, press and drag the dough forward: the dough will curl, creating a handmade cavatello. Repeat until the dough is all used, remembering to sprinkle the worktop with a little semolina from time to time to prevent the cavatelli from sticking. Place each one carefully on a tray, and when finished, set aside while you make the sauce.

THE BAKED TOMATO SAUCE

Place the cherry tomatoes in a pan, season with salt, pepper, a pinch of sugar and a tablespoon of olive oil. Bake at 350–375°F for 30 minutes.

Place half of the roasted tomatoes in a blender and whirl to puree until it forms a smooth sauce. Heat the remaining tablespoon of olive oil in a skillet with the garlic and chili pepper for a minute or so. When the garlic is golden, add the pureed tomato sauce, season with a pinch of salt and cook for five minutes. Meanwhile, heat a large saucepan of water until boiling, then add salt and the cavatelli. Halfway through cooking – about 2 minutes – drain and keep some of the pasta water aside. Add the half-cooked cavatelli to the sauce in the skillet, and heat together for a minute or two, adding a ladle of the hot pasta water as you do, then add the diced mozzarella and basil. Pour onto a platter, spoon the reserved roasted cherry tomatoes over it, and serve with love.

 Preparation time
30 minutes

 Cooking time
10 minutes

 Serves
4 people

— ORECCHIETTE WITH BROCCOLI AND RICOTTA —

Orecchiette may have originated in the **Middle Ages** in **Provence**, with a disc-shaped pasta pressed and thinner in the center; its name, orecchiette, means “little ears” in honor of its ear-like shape. **In the local dialect of the city of Bari**, they are called "strasc'nat", literally "**strascinati - dragged**", describing how each piece of pasta is dragged with your finger on a table to obtain the classic **round and concave shape**.

From Provence to Puglia, the orecchiette's travels were likely a result of the Angevin domination of the region in the 12th and 13th centuries. Today, this pasta is **typical of Southern Italy**, often served with rustic greens such as broccoli.

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE ORECCHIETTE:

- 3 cups organic semolina
- a pinch of salt
- 1 cup water

FOR THE BROCCOLI SAUCE:

- 1 lb broccoli, cut into florets, and including the stems, cut into bite sized pieces
- 1 medium sized onion, chopped finely
- 1 Italian dry red chili pepper, whole (or any not too hot dry red chili pepper, or a pinch of red chili flakes)
- salt, to taste
- extra virgin olive oil, as desired
- 1 lb ricotta cheese, about 2 cups, or as desired
- 4 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese, or as desired



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METHOD

Put the organic semolina on a work surface, mound it up, and form a well in its center. Add the salt, then add the water a little at a time until it is completely absorbed and forms a dough.

Knead with your hands until the dough is smooth and firm, then let rest for about ten minutes.

Working one batch at a time, cut or break off a chunk of dough, then knead it until it becomes about 1/2 inch thick.

Now, make the dough into small individual cubes of about 1/2 inch in size.

Then, using the smooth blade of a knife, press each one into a small shell and drag it backwards with your fingertips towards you, on the lightly floured work surface so that it curls a little. Turn the shell and you will have formed the typical orecchietta. Set aside, toss lightly in flour, and leave on a lightly floured work surface while you repeat, until all of the dough is used.

Set aside while you prepare the broccoli sauce.

Boil the broccoli in salted water for five minutes, then drain using a slotted spoon, keeping keep the cooking water.

Sauté the onion in a skillet with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil, then add the boiled, drained, broccoli florets. Stire, and cook for a few minutes over high heat, then add a ladle of the cooking water; cover and lower the heat. Cook for 15 minutes, stirring and adding more water if necessary. Season with salt and add the chili pepper. Set aside.

Meanwhile, in a wide bowl, mash the ricotta with a fork until it becomes creamy. Set aside.

Heat the broccoli cooking water until it comes to a boil, then add the pasta and cook for several minutes, stirring if needed, until the pasta is al dente; check after a minute or two for its progress.

Drain, reserving the cooking water, and add the pasta to the skillet with the broccoli sauce. Toss well then add the ricotta and a little pasta water, stir for a minute and serve steaming hot with a sprinkling of grated Parmesan.



🕒 Preparation time
60 minutes

👩‍🍳 Cooking time
8-9 minutes

👤 Serves
4-5 people

FARFALLE WITH PESTO ALLA TRAPANESE

Farfalle - "little butterflies" - is a type of pasta made of flat dough ribbons, cut into shortish lengths to form rectangles, then pinched in the middle to resemble their namesake, the butterfly. In America, they are often called "bowties" as they so resemble the neck-ware of the same name. They are among the most popular of pastas, since their shape gives two textures: flat and pinched, and sauce clings differently to both. And they are so very attractive, and delicious with a wide variety of sauces, vegetables and cheeses. They are said to have originated in the regions of **Emilia-Romagna** and **Lombardy**. The sauce, on the other hand, "Pesto alla trapanese" comes from the **western part of Sicily**, prepared with almonds and tomatoes instead of the basil and pinenuts of the famous "pesto alla Genovese". It's no coincidence: over the centuries, Ligurian sailors travelled the surrounding sea, often landing in port cities until they were sailing again. In Trapani, it is said that they couldn't find the ingredients they needed to make pesto, and so "made do" with local products, which as it happens, are also delicious.

INGREDIENTS

FOR PASTA DOUGH:

- 3 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 5 large eggs
- Teaspoon salt

FOR THE PESTO:

- 25-30 raw, ripe, cherry or grape tomatoes, quartered or halved
- 30 medium large basil leaves, or several handfuls if the leaves are small (and so, too hard to count—about $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 cup loosely packed)
- About $\frac{2}{3}$ cup whole almonds, blanched and peeled
- 5 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- a pinch of salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup grated pecorino cheese
- 2 cloves of garlic, cut up
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Parmesan cheese



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METHOD

Put the flour on the work surface and form a well, add the eggs in the center, season with the salt, mix the ingredients and knead by hand until you get an elastic and smooth dough. Cover it with a cloth and let it rest while you prepare the pesto alla trapanese.

Place the tomatoes and almonds in a mortar or liquidizer and pound or pulse until it forms an uneven paste. Add in the olive oil, salt, pecorino cheese and keep pounding or pulsing, then add the garlic and continue pounding or pulsing until you get a thick and tasty pesto sauce. Set aside while you make the pasta.

Roll the dough out with a rolling pin then either continue rolling until it reaches the desired thickness or use a pasta machine.

Cut the flat wide ribbon of dough into rectangles of 1 ¾ – 2 inches in length by 1- 1/12 inches in width. Pinch each rectangle in the center to obtain the characteristic butterfly form—and voila! --the handmade farfalle are ready. Bring to the boil a large saucepan of water; when its boiling, salt the water, then add the farfalle. Cook until al dente—it will only take several minutes; test for doneness after 2-3 minutes.

Drain the pasta al dente, saving a little of the cooking water. Toss the hot pasta with the pesto alla trapanese, a few spoonfuls of the cooking water, and finish with a sprinkling of parmesan.

Some like to add a few basil leaves, or even a mint leaf, to garnish.



🕒 Preparation time
60 minutes

👩‍🍳 Cooking time
30 minutes

👤 Serves
6 people

GNOCCHI ALLA SORRENTINA

Legend has it that the dumplings we know as gnocchi date back to the 16th century. It was in Sorrento, Italy, in an old tavern, and the cook was searching for inspiration in ways to cook **potatoes**. So, he boiled a few potatoes, crushed them into a mash, added a little flour, and decided this would be a perfect pasta-like dumpling—unheard of until that moment!

He rolled them into small round balls, figuring (correctly) that the shape would help prevent the dough from falling apart. After he fished a few out of the bubbling water, and tasted them, realizing they were good, he gave them a name: gnocchi, from the Italian word for nut “nocciolo”, referring to their size and shape (though another legend tells that the gnocchi were invented in the north and named gnocchi after the word for “lump”).

Now: what to do with these small dumplings? The cook had the happy idea of layering it with the gorgeous local tomatoes, mozzarella from the nearby town of Agerola, fresh basil and grated Parmigiano cheese, all popped into the oven to brown and become gratin-like. When you are in Sorrento, this is what to order! And when you are not in Sorrento, you can make them at home!

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE GNOCCHI:

- 2 ¼ lbs potatoes, whole and unpeeled
- 2 ½ cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 1 egg
- salt, to taste

FOR THE TOMATO SAUCE:

- 3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 clove of garlic
- 2 ½ cups canned peeled tomatoes, including their juices
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 4 leaves of fresh basil

TO GARNISH:

- 1 cup, or more, as desired, shredded mozzarella
- 1 1/2-1 ¾ cup parmigiano



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METHOD

Wash the potatoes, then boil in their skins for about 30 minutes, until soft. If they are not soft, continue cooking until they are.

Drain the potatoes, and when cool enough to handle, peel, then mash--while still hot-- until smooth.

Place the mashed potato on a work surface and work in the flour and salt. Make a well and add the egg. Mix the ingredients well, first with a fork, then with your hands, working the mixture quickly until you get a soft and non-sticky dough.

Cut the dough into 4-5 portions and knead each portion individually, ending up by rolling them into a long strip with a thickness of about 1 inch. Cut each strip into pieces about 1/2-3/4 inches and continue until all the dough is finished.

Now, take each piece, working one at a time, and roll the dough in the palm of your hand; pressing lightly with the tines of a fork or the traditional tool known as "rigagnocchi", to obtain the classic slightly concave and striped shape of the potato gnocchi. As each is ready, place well-spaced out on a floured tray; continue until all of the dough is made into dumplings; they are ready to be boiled. Set them aside while you make the sauce.

For the sauce: sauté the garlic clove in the extra virgin olive oil in a large non-stick skillet; when it starts to sizzle, add the tomatoes, salt, pepper and fresh basil leaves. Reduce heat and cook over a low to medium heat for about twenty minutes, or long enough to reduce the liquid in the sauce and make it thick and deliciously flavored. Set aside while you cook the gnocchi.

Cook the gnocchi in abundant salted boiling water. Remove as they rise to the surface. Drain and toss the gnocchi with the tomato sauce. Then, in a large baking dish, layer the gnocchi with the mozzarella and parmesan. Bake for 20-25 minutes in a preheated oven at 375F, until the cheese melts and the whole things melts together. Serve piping hot.



🕒 Preparation time
60 minutes

👩‍🍳 Cooking time
a few minutes

👤 Serves
4 people

RAVIOLI

Ravioli are a **typical, plumply filled, Italian pasta**. It is said that their origins date back to the **12th and 13th centuries** when their popularity spread from the city of **Genova** to **Parma**. **Boccaccio** mentions them in the **Decameron**, while describing the delicacies of the imaginary place **Paese della Cuccagna**.

Ravioli can be **round or square**, with a filling usually made with ricotta, spinach and nutmeg or with ham or meat. Serve in soup, with sauce of choice, or simply melted butter.

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE DOUGH:

- 4 cups organic semolina
- 5 eggs
- 1 pinch of salt

FOR THE FILLING:

- 3 ½ ounces prosciutto (Italian raw ham)
- 4 tablespoons grated parmesan
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 2 cups (arox 16 fl oz) whole milk ricotta

TO TOSS:

- 4 oz butter, melted
- 5 fresh sage leaves
- About 4 tablespoons freshly grated parmesan, or as desired



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METHOD

Place the semolina on a work surface and form a mound; in the center of this make a well and add the eggs and salt. With a fork, beat the eggs, mix with the semolina flour and then knead vigorously until you get a smooth and compact dough. Seal it with plastic wrap and let it rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine the prosciutto, parmesan, milk and a spoonful of ricotta in a blender. Pulse smooth and then add the mixture to the rest of the ricotta, stirring until everything is mixed well to make the filling.

After resting it, roll the dough out on the work surface with a rolling pin. To roll out a perfect egg pasta sheet, the secret is to start from the center, sliding the rolling pin in all directions towards the edges to obtain a uniform sheet. To turn it, wrap it on the rolling pin and rotate it 90°. Continue to roll out until you reach a thickness of 1/8 inch thick.

Use a serrated dough wheel to cut each sheet into strips of about 2 ½ inches wide; arrange the filling in small balls on top, spacing them 1/2- 2 inches apart. Cover with a second strip of the dough and, pressing with your fingertips, seal the dough around the filling so that all the air escapes. Using a dough wheel, cut the ravioli, place them one by one on a floured work surface, and continue until all the ingredients are used up.

Cook the ravioli in boiling water for a only few minutes or until just cooked through, then drain and toss with the melted butter, sage and grated parmesan cheese.



 Preparation time
30 minutes

 Resting time
6/8 hours

 Cooking time
10 minutes

PIZZA MARGHERITA

The pizza Margherita was created in Naples in 1889 by legendary pizza maker: Raffaele Esposito. When the King of Italy Umberto I of Savoy visited Naples, Esposito was invited the lavish Royal Palace of Capodimonte, to cook for the Royal Family. Esposito, working with his wife, prepared three types of pizza but it was his new creation, inspired by the Italian flag, topped with red tomato, white mozzarella and green basil that won the hearts of all, most especially the Queen. In her honor, Esposito named this pizza: Margherita. This instant classic has been delighting eaters ever since. On 9 December 2017, the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage met on Jeju island in South Korea. With 2 million signatures on the petition, the Neapolitan pizza and its tradition was recognized as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO. The art of the Neapolitan pizzaiuolo—pizza maker-- has now become a cultural heritage to be safeguarded.

INGREDIENTS FOR 4 PIZZAS

FOR THE DOUGH:

- 4 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour more if/as needed
- 1 ½ cup lukewarm water
- 1 teaspoon active dried yeast
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 2 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon of salt

FOR THE TOPPING

- About 2 ½ cups canned peeled tomatoes, pureed or blended until it forms a chunky or smooth puree (to your taste)
- 2- 2 ½ cups shredded mozzarella
- extra virgin olive oil, as needed
- a few leaves of fresh basil
- salt, to taste
- grated parmesan, to taste



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METHOD

Add the yeast and sugar to the lukewarm water and stir to dissolve.

Put the flour in a mound on a pastry board, make a well in its center, and little by little slowly pour on the water/yeast/sugar mixture, using a wooden spoon and then your hands, to combine completely.

Add the oil and salt, then knead the dough for at least twenty minutes, until it is very smooth and elastic. Put the dough in a bowl, cover it with a cloth and let it rise for at least 6/8 hours, in a warmish place, away from cold drafts.

When ready to bake the pizzas, place each ingredient for the topping in small bowls next to where you will be working.

Preheat the oven, if you are using a domestic one, to 500°F.

When the dough has finished resting, divide it into 4 portions. Pat each one into a flat round disc, then place each in a pizza pan and top first with the tomatoes, then the mozzarella, a pinch of salt, a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese, a few leaves of basil and a drizzle of oil.

Bake the pizzas for 10 - 15 minutes, or until puffy in places, the dough cooked through, the cheese melted. Serve right away, hot and irresistible!



🕒 Preparation time
30 minutes

🕒 Resting time
8 hours

👨‍🍳 Cooking time
10-15 minutes

SEMOLINA PIZZA MARINARA

Today the whole modern world is crazy about pizza! The most known and loved dish, however, is much older than you might think: older (far older) than Italy itself!

According to researchers, the **Etruscans** cooked a similar focaccia by putting the sauce on it, but **pizza as we know it today** was born in the **17th century in the Kingdom of Naples**. Until the **18th century**, it was still "white", that is, seasoned with garlic, lard and coarse salt in the everyday version or with cheese and basil in the richer version.

When tomatoes arrived from South America and were finally embraced as edible, pizza turned "red". Historically, the first documented "red" pizza is the "**marinara**" - topped with **tomato, olive oil, oregano and garlic**. One might ask, why is it named marinara, when it has no fish in it? The name comes from the fishermen's habit of making up the sauce when they returned from a night of fishing—whatever they hauled up from the sea tasted delicious in the garlicky tomato sauce.

In **1889**, the pizza "**margherita**" was created when Queen Margherita of Savoy, Wife of Umberto 1, visited Pizzeria Brandi (still there!), and fell in love with this pizza. With the colors of the Italian flag, tomato basil and mozzarella, and the Queen's love of it, named in homage **to Queen**. There is a plaque on the wall, and if you ask, the owner will happily tell you all about it.

INGREDIENTS FOR 10 ROLLS

FOR THE DOUGH

- 3 teaspoons active dried yeast (1 ½ envelopes)
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- 8 cups organic semolina
- 1 ½ tablespoons salt
- 2 ½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

FOR THE MARINARA TOPPING

- 1 can whole peeled tomatoes (about 14 oz), pureed until chunky-smooth
- oregano, to taste
- 1 clove of garlic (or more, to taste), chopped or grated
- salt, to taste
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil



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METHOD

Dissolve the yeast in 1 ½ cups of the lukewarm water, then add it to the semolina, in a large bowl. Mix until smooth and well-combined.

In another bowl, dissolve the salt in the remaining water, then add it to the semolina mixture along with the extra virgin olive oil and knead with your hands to mix all the ingredients.

At this point, put the dough on a work surface dusted with a little semolina and continue to knead until you get an elastic dough. Place it in a floured bowl and cover with a clean cloth or cling film; leave to rise for about 8 hours until doubled.

Remove the dough from the bowl and cut it into 4 pieces. Sprinkle the work surface with a little semolina flour, and working one at a time, roll out each piece with a rolling pin.

Place on a baking sheet, spread each with a quarter of the tomatoes, then sprinkle with salt, garlic and oil.

Bake the pizzas for 10 - 15 minutes at 450°F, until the dough is puffed up and cooked through. Eat right away, deliciously fragrant and hot!



🕒 Preparation time
30 minutes

👨‍🍳 Cooking time
10 minutes

CHURROS

Churros are long squiggles of **fried dough** dusted in sugar and cinnamon, eaten for breakfast, afternoon tea, or anytime—in fact, they are considered as “sweet fried tapas”. The classic accompaniment is a cup of dark thick hot chocolate, perfect for dipping into with the pastry!

Churros are **among the most popular Spanish sweets in the world, a delicate dough much like France’s cream puff/ choux pastry.**

Their origin is said to date back to 1800 to the **nomadic life of Spanish shepherds.** Leading their flocks through the mountains of the Iberian Peninsula, they could not reach the towns to buy bread, thus they created a similar dough which could be **cooked** in a **skillet**. This story is supported by the existence of a breed of sheep, the "**Navajo churro**", descendant of the "churra" sheep, whose horns resemble churros fritters in their form.

The batter is not complicated, but their unique characteristic is a **cylindrical shape**—obtained by using a **churrera**, which is a classic pastry syringe with a star spout. Squeeze the dough directly into the pot of boiling oil, and in a few minutes you have churros!

INGREDIENTS FOR 10 CHURROS

- 5 tablespoons of granulated sugar
- Powdered cinnamon, to taste
- 3 tablespoons of sunflower oil
- 1 ½ cups water
- 1 generous pinch of salt
- 1 5/8 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 2 eggs
- oil for frying, as needed



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METHOD

Mix the sugar and cinnamon in a shallow dish for dipping the hot churros and set to one side.

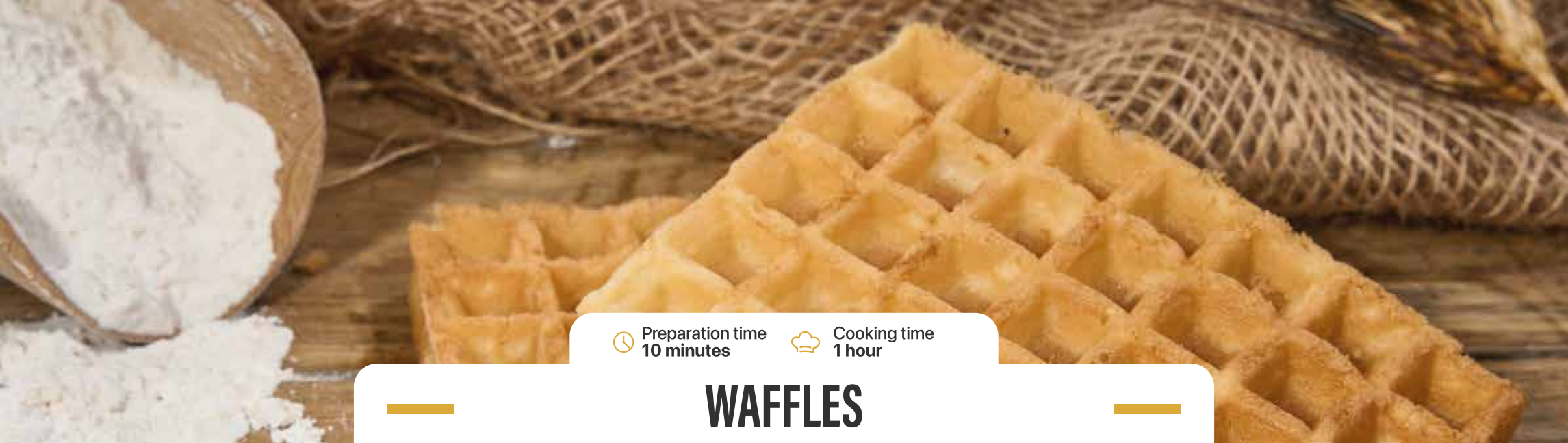
Mix the oil, water and salt in a saucepan, then bring it to a boil. As soon as it boils, add all the flour at once.

Lower the heat and quickly beat together, preferably with a wooden spoon, until the mixture is smooth and firm. Place this on the work surface to cool for a few minutes, then when it is cool enough to handle, place in a bowl.

Add the eggs and mix well together until the dough forms a smooth paste. Spoon the dough into a pastry bag with a 1.5 cm star nozzle, using only as much dough as can comfortably fit; you can add more as you go.

Heat the oil in a frying pan and when the hot enough for frying, pipe strips of dough of about 4 inches in length directly into the hot oil. As you go, cut each from the nozzle with a knife.

Depending on the size of your pan, fry 2-3 pieces at a time, more if you pan is large, over medium-high heat, for about 2 minutes. Once golden, remove from the hot oil with a slotted spoon, drain on absorbent paper, then dip into the sugar and cinnamon mixture.



🕒 Preparation time
10 minutes

👨‍🍳 Cooking time
1 hour

WAFFLES

The first **waffles** were made in Greece, called **obelias** (offerings) and were **cooked over an open fire between two hot iron plates** with long handles; from there, the Roman legions are believed to have spread waffles throughout Europe. During the **Middle Ages, in Belgium**, a Cistercian abbot created a **honey-sweetened dough** and cooked it on the plates used for the preparation of communion wafers.

At first, waffle irons were **simple cast iron plates in the shape of a beehive**, which contributed to its current name: "**wafła**" and "**gaufra**" mean honey, sweet, beehive in medieval French.

Because the essence of a waffle is its grid of indentations and peaks, which give a wide variety of textures to delight in, you need a waffle iron or waffle maker to make them. Without a waffle iron, the batter would simply be fat pancakes.

MAKES ABOUT 15 WAFFLES (DEPENDING ON SIZE OF WAFFLE MAKER)

- 4 eggs, yolks and whites separated
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 2 cups whole fat milk
- ¾ cup butter, melted and cooled
- 2 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour, sifted
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 4 tablespoons sunflower oil



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METHOD

Whip the egg yolks in a large bowl with half the sugar, a pinch of salt and the vanilla. Next, add the milk, cooled melted butter, sifted flour and baking powder and blend until smooth and lump-free.

In a separate bowl, whip the egg whites until stiff, slowly adding the other half of the sugar as you go (starting once they are foamy and have started to thicken and whip).

Fold the whipped egg whites, a spoonful at a time to start, then more as you go along, into the egg yolk mixture, taking care to fold with a slow movement from bottom to top, to maintain the airiness of the beaten egg whites. Once all the egg white has been incorporated, the waffle batter is ready.

Brush each side of the waffle iron with a teaspoon or so of the oil, then heat the waffle iron (usually a light will come on to tell you when its ready to add your batter)

When the waffle iron is hot and ready, add about 2 ladles of batter to the center of the bottom plate. Leave about 1 inch around the edge so the batter doesn't ooze out when you close the top of the waffle iron.

Now, close the waffle iron gently (do not press shut) and cook for about 2-3 minutes. Open gently, and peek in to see whether the batter has formed a waffle and is golden browned; If not, close it up and cook a short time longer.

Modern electric waffle irons do not need turning over in order to cook each side as they cook both sides at the same time, so directions depend upon the type of waffle maker that you have. When golden and lightly browned, remove to a plate and continue making waffles until the batter is all used up.

Waffles are best freshly made, so have your eaters gathered at the table, and ready to eat!

Serve the waffles sweet or savory. Sweet: butter, a dusting of confectioners sugar, honey, melted chocolate, diced fresh fruit, jam, whipped cream, ice cream. Savory: fried chicken, spiced butter, sauteed mushrooms, a few browned small sausages, a fried egg, chili sauce; truly, the creative choice is up to you!

 Preparation time
20 minutes

 Resting time
30 minutes

 Cooking time
15 minutes

MADELEINES

Proust evocatively described his famous madeleine moment as follows: "And soon, without thinking, ... I raised to my lips a spoonful of the tea in which I had soaked a morsel of the cake. No sooner had the warm liquid, and the crumbs with it, touched my palate, then a shudder ran through my whole body, and I stopped, intent upon the extraordinary changes that were taking place."

Madeleines are small, seashell-shaped French cakes, with an intense almond aroma and the double texture of tender delicate sponge in its center with its edges slightly crisp. The characteristic shape comes from the Madeleine molds in which the little cakes are baked. The shell shape has religious origins, having always been the symbol of pilgrims.

Though Proust made them so famous, the cakes were first made in **Commercy**, in the north-east of France. According to some scholars, their origins are linked to Christianity, the cakes made in honor of **Mary Magdalene**, the first evangelist of France. This is also the origin of their name: "madeleine".

INGREDIENTS FOR 20 MADELEINES

- 4 large eggs
- 1 ¼ cup sugar
- almond extract—several shakes depending upon its strength and your own taste
- a pinch of salt
- 1 ¼ cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 7/8 cup melted, cooled, butter, preferably unsalted



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METHOD

Whisk the eggs and sugar together, beating well, until the mixture is puffy and fluffy. Add the almond extract, a pinch of salt, the flour and the baking powder and mix until the ingredients are all well combined.

Next, add the melted butter and continue to mix for a few more minutes.

Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and put it in the refrigerator for half an hour.

Carefully spoon the mixture into madeleine molds, taking care not to overfill as they will rise slightly (mostly in the middle). Bake at 350°F for 8-10 minutes. Then lower the oven temperature to 325°F and cook for another 5-6 minutes.

Remove the madeleines from the oven, leave them to cool and then serve with a cup of tea, à la Marcel Proust.



🕒 Preparation time
15 minutes

👩‍🍳 Cooking time
40 minutes

👤 Serves
6 people

YOGURT LOAF CAKE

What could be tastier, softer and more fragrant than a classic loaf cake? It's perfect for breakfast (especially with a cup of coffee), an afternoon snack with a glass of milk, or as a sweet with a cup of tea anytime.

This recipe of English origin comes to us from the eighteenth century, but as with so many things, once it reached Italy, it was transformed over the centuries by adding a variety of delicious ingredients to the original.

Ricotta, fruit, chocolate, dried fruit or flavorings all help it become the masterpiece of goodness and simplicity that we all love. Yogurt, especially, makes a very tender cake, as in the recipe below.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 1/3 cups plain yogurt
- 2/3 cup sunflower (or any mild, unflavored vegetable) oil
- 2 1/2 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour, sifted
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- a pinch of salt



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METHOD

Whisk the eggs together with the sugar until very well mixed. Add the yogurt and oil and mix together until smooth and well-combined.

Add the sifted flour a little at a time and continue mixing, finally add the baking powder and salt and mix it in. Pour the mixture into a prepared (floured and buttered loaf, preferably lined with parchment/baking paper) pan.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Bake for about 40 minutes, or until a tester comes out clean.

Remove the cake from the oven, leave it to cool, and enjoy your breakfast, snack or dessert.



🕒 Preparation time
20 minutes

👩‍🍳 Cooking time
35 minutes

👤 Serves
6 people

SEMOLINA STRAWBERRY LOAF CAKE

Originally this cake, from Germany, was called "**Pflaumenkuchen**" or **plum cake**. Rectangular in shape, it was made of shortcrust pastry and pieces of plum. It delighted visitors to the country and its popularity spread, especially in English-speaking countries.

A curious theory has it that this cake was originally **a dish based on meat cooked in wine**, seasoned with plums and spices but was transformed into a sweet dish in the **Victorian era**. In England it was known as a "**poundcake**", thanks to fact that the same unit of measurement was used for each ingredient (one pound of flour, one of eggs, one of butter, one of sugar and one of fruit) so as to make it easier to remember the quantities of the ingredients. (American poundcake is named for the same reasons, but contains no fruit, meat, etc).

INGREDIENTS

- about 2 cups of strawberries
- 2 large eggs ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup strawberry yogurt
- 2 ¾ cups organic semolina
- ¼ cup mild vegetable or nut/seed oil
- ½ cup water
- grated zest of 1 lemon 1 pinch of salt
- 2 ¼ teaspoons baking powder
- semolina to sprinkle, as needed
- confectioners' sugar (powdered sugar), to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped almonds



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METHOD

Quarter or thickly slice the strawberries and set aside.

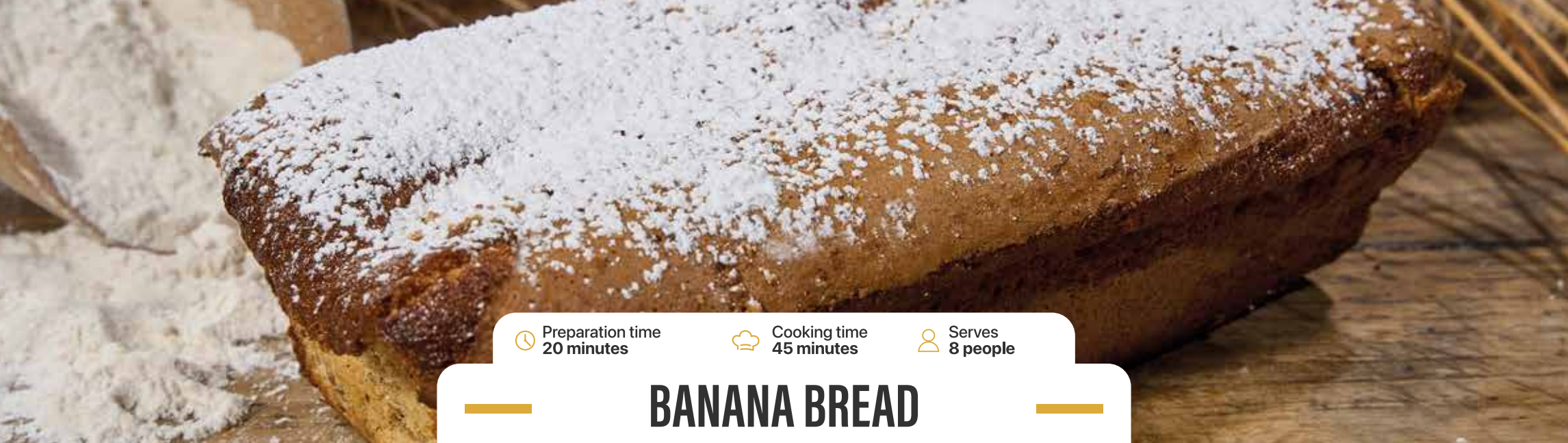
In a bowl, whisk the eggs with the sugar (it works best with an electric mixer) until frothy.

As you are whisking, add the yogurt, until that it absorbed. Sift the semolina and add that, a little at a time, alternating it with the oil poured slowly, until they are completely mixed. Now, do the same with the water: drizzle it in slowly and continue mixing. Next add the lemon zest, salt and baking powder.

Toss the strawberry pieces in a little semolina flour to keep them from sinking to the bottom of the batter as the cake bakes, then gently stir the strawberries into the batter.


Preheat oven to 350°F.

Pour into a greased and floured loaf tin, sprinkle with the chopped almonds and bake at for 35 minutes. Once cooked, take it out of the oven, let it cool and sprinkle generously with confectioners/powdered sugar.



 Preparation time
20 minutes

 Cooking time
45 minutes

 Serves
8 people

BANANA BREAD

A delicious, tender cake that is perfect for breakfast, or as an afternoon snack. Simple to make, it perfumes the whole house with the sweet smell of bananas and baking. It keeps for several days after baking; the next day, sliced, toasted and buttered, it may be even better! **Banana bread** first appeared in the **USA** in the **1930s**, during the **“The Great Depression”** when **nothing was wasted, especially not the wholesome, tasty and nutritious banana**. When it became overripe, housewives discovered one could mash them and bake them into a very tasty cake. People loved it and banana bread became a modern American classic. In fact, a special day is set aside for it: **“National Banana Bread Day” (February 23rd)** but really, it’s wonderful whatever day of the year you make it. And it’s a beautiful, no-waste way to use up overripe bananas.

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup salted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cups + 2 tablespoons golden brown sugar (or half white or golden sugar and half dark brown sugar)
- 3 large eggs
- 4 ripe bananas (if bananas are small, use 5 instead of 4)
- 1 2/3 cup Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 1 level teaspoon baking powder



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METHOD

Beat the soft butter with the brown sugar in a bowl until the mixture is light and fluffy.

Add the eggs--one egg at a time—and mix well before adding the next egg. Mash the bananas with a fork and set aside for a minute while you sift the flour with the baking powder.

Combine butter-sugar mixture with the bananas, then add the flour mixture, continuing to mix until it is smooth and creamy.

Pour the cake mix into a floured and buttered loaf pan.

Bake at 350F degrees for about 45 minutes, taking care to check that it is cooked in the center (test for doneness using a bamboo skewer, a cake tester, or a piece of raw spaghetti. When it comes out, it should not have cake batter sticking to it).

Remove from the oven and leave it to cool.

Serve a lovely slab of the cake with a cup of tea, a mug of coffee, or a glass of cold milk.



🕒 Preparation time
20 minutes

👨‍🍳 Cooking time
40-45 minutes

👤 Serves
8 people

PUMPKIN CAKE

Halloween is all about pumpkin, carving it, decorating with it, and eating it! Indeed, when Thanksgiving comes around, pumpkin pie is one of the traditional desserts! A crisp short pastry shell filled with a rich, and fragrantly spiced, pumpkin custard, and baked until it firms up. Eat chilled, with a big dollop of whipped cream!

But **Pumpkin cake** is not relegated to any holiday or celebration: as soon as pumpkins are in season, you're ready for this cake. Its soft and moist, delicious sprinkled with powdered sugar or iced with a thick cream cheese frosting.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ lbs raw pumpkin (or hubbard, kabocha, any autumn squash), peeled and diced
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar
- Grated nutmeg, to taste
- Ground cinnamon, to taste
- 1 cup of sunflower oil
- 2/3 cup milk
- 2 ½ cups of Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 3 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- a pinch of salt



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METHOD

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Cook the pumpkin or squash in boiling water for 20 minutes, or until soft. Drain and leave to cool.

Puree with a blender/stick blender and set aside.

Whisk the eggs with the sugar, nutmeg and cinnamon until frothy, add the oil, milk, then pumpkin puree and set aside.

Combine the flour, baking powder, and salt, then sift them together and add to the liquid mixture; mix until smooth.

Pour batter into a prepared (buttered and floured) cake pan, then bake for about 40–45 minutes or until a cake tester comes out clean.

If you are going to ice the cake, let it cool completely on a wire cooling rack.

Use your favourite cream cheese frosting (usually $\frac{1}{2}$ unsalted butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ cream cheese, whipped together with lots of powdered sugar and a splash of vanilla extract). Or you can skip icing the cake altogether and simply dust generously with powdered sugar.

Happy Halloween!



🕒 Preparation time
25 minutes

👩‍🍳 Cooking time
40-45 minutes

👤 Serves
6-8 people

— CHOCOLATE SEMOLINA SPONGE CAKE —

In the mid-1500s Europe began to discover entirely new ingredients as expeditions set out to explore a here-to-fore unknown world, the Americas. Thus began a huge revolution of cooking, in which ingredients were discovered one place, transported to another, and in the process transformed complete cuisines. (Tomatoes to Italy, for example). Then there was the bitter substance known as chocolate/cocoa, drunk as a liquid in The Americas, embraced by France, Spain, Italy, in fact, all of Europe and beyond. It was transformed into a powder, mixed with sugar, and discovered to be absolutely delicious! The discovery of chocolate helped Europe evolve a form of modern patisserie.

When sponge cakes—so perfect for layered with fruit, creams, frostings, and so forth-- became favored for cake-cooking, among the flavoring ingredients was chocolate. In fact, today, chocolate sponge-cake, or just chocolate cake, is not only a childhood treat, but an adult one too. Frost it with chocolate icing, layer it with whipped cream, glaze it with a shiny chocolate covering...sprinkle it with cocoa and sugar, chocolate jimmies, or...why not add a handful of chocolate chips into the batter itself? Even just plain: there is no finer cake than this classic.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 large eggs
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sunflower or other mild vegetable/seed oil
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cartons of plain yoghurt (each 6 oz)
- 300 cups organic semolina , sifted
- 2 heaping tablespoons of bitter cocoa powder, sifted
- 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons baking powder, sifted
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups chopped, toasted, almonds icing (confectioners, also known as powdered)-sugar (as desired, to sprinkle)



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METHOD

Combine the eggs and sugar in a bowl and beat until the mixture is soft and fluffy. Mix in the oil and milk, and when mixed in, then add the yogurt and continue mixing.

Beat in the semolina, cocoa powder and baking powder, a little at a time. Finally, add the toasted, crushed almonds. Set aside while you prepare the pan.

Grease and flour a 10-inch cake pan.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Pour the cake batter into the prepared pan and bake for about 40–45 minutes. Test it for doneness using a skewer.

Remove from the oven, let the cake cool a few minutes. When cool enough to handle, loosen with a knife all around between the pan edges and cake; turn it over and unmold on a wire cooling rack.

Sprinkle with icing sugar and serve warm or wait until it cools.



🕒 Preparation time
30 minutes

👩‍🍳 Cooking time
30 minutes

👤 Serves
8 people

SEMOLINA COCONUT CAKE

Semolina is excellent to use for “snack” cakes, that is, a cake to have on hand (that doesn’t stale quickly, due to semolina’s high capacity to absorb water); a cake that is not overly fancy but is delicious—and nutritious: with the high protein of semolina, as well as the nutrition of the coconut.

The addition of fine grated, dried (desiccated) coconut perfumes the cake with a tropical scent.

Coconut is considered a “functional food”, with many benefits; in its native countries the coconut plant itself is called “the tree of life” because of its high nutrition, and many uses, both savory and sweet. Pairing it with semolina makes the perfect combination of well-being and tastiness.

For us not near the lands where fresh coconut grows, we can enjoy shredded or grated desiccated coconut made from the dried fruit, delicious in cakes and also savory dishes.

INGREDIENTS

- ¾ cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 1/3 cup fine desiccated coconut, plus a little extra for sprinkling
- 1 ½ cups organic semolina
- 3 tablespoons sunflower oil
- 1 ¼ cup water
- 2 ½ teaspoons baking powder



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METHOD

Blend the sugar and the eggs until they become light and frothy.

Add the desiccated coconut, the organic semolina and the oil and mix, either by hand or a mixer, adding the water a little at a time. Finally, mix in the baking powder and blend well.

Pour the mixture into a 9–10-inch cake mold greased and floured with a little semolina flour then bake in a preheated oven at 350F for about 30 minutes.

Once done—you may test it with a cake tester, (or simply a strand of raw spaghetti), to see if it comes out clean-- remove from the oven and let it cool.

Sprinkle with a little more desiccated coconut and serve.



🕒 Preparation time
15 minutes

👩‍🍳 Cooking time
40 minutes

👤 Serves
6 people

ITALIAN PARADISE CAKE

This **traditional Italian cake**, from the Lombardy region, is made with eggs, butter, flour—and potato starch, which gives the cake a unique texture. The recipe dates back to **1800**, created by **Enrico Vigoni, a pastry chef from Pavia**. It became popular almost immediately--its curious name "Paradise Cake" coming from the enthusiasm of a noblewoman who, upon tasting the cake, exclaimed "This cake is Paradise".

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ¼ cup butter, softened
- 4 eggs (whole)
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 ¼ cup sugar
- grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1 cup Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour, sifted
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2/3 cup potato starch
- icing sugar, to dust



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METHOD

Beat the softened butter until it becomes light and creamy, then beat in the eggs and the egg yolks, continue to blend until it is smooth and creamy.

Beat in the sugar and lemon zest, then mix in the flour, baking powder and potato starch until it is smooth and soft.

Preheat the oven to 350F.

Grease and flour a 9- or 10-inch cake tin, then gently pour the mixture into it, smoothing it until level.

Bake for about 40 minutes, or until it is no longer gooey inside; a cake tester comes out clean.

Remove from oven and leave to cool.

When you are ready for paradise, dust with icing sugar and serve on attractive cake plate.



Preparation time
10 minutes



Cooking time
30 minutes

CHOCOLATE LAVA CAKE

French Chef Michel Bras invented the famous molten chocolate cake in 1981, though for those who adore it, it seems like that brownie-like cake with the melting center has been with us forever. It's that classic.

When it was created, "**Coulant au chocolat**", or chocolate lava cake, or moelleux d'chocolate, swept the world of dessert-lovers. It was simple, yes: it was delicious, oh yes! And it was unique. Its creator worked "a little out of the box", as they say. He described his inspiration: "**It all started with a feeling that came over me**, having returned home after a day's cross-country skiing, during foul weather. Our frozen **family**, chilled to the bone, sat at the kitchen table in silence, thawing out with a hot chocolate which we held tightly to warm our hands, and sipped slowly, to savor the warming sweetness and bitterness of the chocolate. As the effect of the heat gradually permeated our bodies, we relaxed and felt like we were coming back to life. Tongues were untied, laughter was heard, and the ambiance warmed up all around us.

The cake represents my translation of that moment into a recipe. After two years of much thinking and testing, I felt a sense of enthusiasm and pride that one rarely experiences as a chef." In the original recipe, a cookie type dough, when placed in the oven from cold, forms a soft external crust during cooking, leaving its **internal heart of melting, dark chocolate**. And this dessert is perfect for all seasons served with vanilla ice cream.



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INGREDIENTS TO MAKES 2 LAVA CAKES

- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup (4 tablespoons) room-temperature butter
- ¾ cup Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- ½ cup bitter cocoa powder
- ¾ cup sugar
- ½ cup whipping cream
- 1 pinch of salt
- ¼ cup freshly brewed, strong, coffee such as espresso
- 2 teaspoons of bicarbonate of soda
- A small pinch of chili powder (cayenne)
- A pinch of cinnamon

METHOD

Combine the eggs and butter in a bowl whip or beat until smooth.

Sift the flour, then add it to the eggs and butter, along with the cocoa, sugar, cream, salt, and coffee, mixing well.

Finally mix in the baking soda, chili, and cinnamon.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Pour/spoon mixture into 2 large ramekins or 4 small ones, prepared by buttering the insides, then shaking a bit of sugar to coat it all lightly.

Bake for about 20 minutes (less if using 4 smaller ramekins, more if it doesn't cook in the allotted time). Do not overcook, you want the inside still squidgy, not solid.

Take it out, get your spoon ready, and enjoy.

🕒 Preparation time
20 minutes

👨‍🍳 Cooking time
10 minutes

— CRÊPES WITH CARAMELIZED BANANAS —

Crêpes, the thin, egg-and-butter-rich pancakes may have originated in France, but over the centuries, they have traveled the world and each country has adopted them into their own local flavors and cuisine. The word: **crepe** comes from the Latin "**crispus**", meaning "**curled**" as it is so thin and soft, omelet-like, it can be easily curled or rolled around a sweet or savory filling.

It is said that **the very first crêpes were made in the fifth century**, when **Pope Gelasius** ordered his cooks to prepare a simple but nutritious dish **to feed the French pilgrims** who arrived in Rome. They made **omelets**, enriched with **flour and eggs**, ideal to revive the weary travelers. **Crêpes** became a symbol of good wishes, and tradition evolved that during their preparation as they were being tossed in the pan, a wish was expressed. Still, to this day, crepes are as beloved as they once were centuries ago. In parts of France, there are crepe restaurants where you may order them for your meal, and then a different filling for dessert. Crepes are also a perfect street food, stuffed with jam, or lemon and sugar, with chocolate or for a savory filling, especially with cheese. Crepes are perfect all year round with whichever fruit the season brings, especially with **caramelized** bananas: they are **divine!**

INGREDIENTS

FOR 10 CRÊPES:

- 2/3 cup milk
- 5/8 cup Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 1 knob of butter for the pan (about 1 tablespoon)

FOR THE CARAMELIZED BANANAS:

- 2 bananas
- juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 pinch of cinnamon



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METHOD

FOR THE CRÊPES:

Put all the crêpe ingredients (except the butter for the pan) into a bowl and blend or whisk them until you have a smooth and lump-free batter. Let rest for about 10 minutes if you have time.

Heat a crêpe pan on the stove over a medium-low to medium heat.

Place the knob of butter into the pan once it is hot, and let it melt. Using a ladle, pour some batter into the pan for each pancake.

Rotate the pan so that the batter covers the entire bottom with a thin layer, pouring off any excess back into the bowl of batter. After a minute or so, the edges will turn a bit golden, and start to come off the pan. Insert a spatula under the crepe, turn it over and cook on its second side for another 60 seconds. Flip onto a plate and repeat until all of the butter is used up, adding more butter to the pan if needed.

FOR THE CARAMELIZED BANANAS:

Peel and slice the bananas and pour half the lemon juice over them to keep them from turning brown.

Heat the butter in the pan with the sugar, until the sugar melts and the butter sizzles; add the sliced bananas and cook for a few minutes until they begin to caramelize. Add the pinch of cinnamon, pour on the remaining lemon juice and continue to cook for about thirty seconds.

Fill the crêpes and serve with a kiss.



 Preparation time
20 minutes

 Resting time
30 minutes

 Cooking time
10 minutes

LEMON SEMOLINA COOKIES

Biscuits (in the UK, cookies in the USA) are one of the **oldest forms** of sweet baked goods. The term **biscuit** derives from the Latin **“panis biscoctus”**, meaning **“cooked twice”**. Legend has it that **Jason, leader of the Argonauts**, preparing for his expedition in search of the **golden fleece**, asked the cook to bake long lasting cakes which would serve as **supplies during the journey**. Something dry, that could last a long time and not get moldy.

The cook put the loaves in to bake, but while they were cooking, he fell asleep. They overbaked! (i.e., “twice baked”). Surely, they would be ruined! But when the cook checked the oven, they have reduced in volume and moisture, becoming thin and crumbly.

Tasting them, he realized that they were tasty and crunchy and perfect! And so, continues the legend, **the first cookies were created**.

INGREDIENTS FOR 30 BISCUITS

- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup granulated sugar (reserving 2–3 tablespoons for sprinkling over the cookies)
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- ½ cup sunflower or other mild vegetable oil
- 3 ¼ cup organic semolina
- 2 level teaspoons baking powder



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METHOD

Beat the eggs with $\frac{7}{8}$ cup of the sugar until creamy. Add the grated lemon zest and oil and beat together for a few minutes.

Add the semolina and baking powder; mix well until mixture is smooth and even. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Unwrap the dough, place on a pastry board. Form about 30 balls the size of walnuts, roll each in the remaining granulated sugar (adding a little extra if needed) and arrange on a baking tray lined with parchment paper.

Bake at 350°F degrees for about 10/12 minutes, or until they are golden-brown (Check after a few minutes).

Once golden, remove from the oven, leave to cool on a wire rack.

Serve right away on a decorative tray, or store in a ceramic cookie jar, or elegant tin.



🕒 Preparation time
10 minutes

🕒 Resting time
30 minutes

👨‍🍳 Cooking time
7-8 minutes

SEMOLINA CHOCOLATE COOKIES

There are many myths and legends about the invention of the cookie--some attribute it to a gourmet from ancient Rome named Apicius, who prepared a mash of wheat and flour: boiled first they were then set out into the sun to dry. When dried it was cut into squares, and then fried. By this time, they were golden brown, sweet, crumbly and crunchy: voila! the first cookies in history. In the **Middle Ages**, historical sources put the **art of cookie-making** in the convent kitchens: the monks of Reims, for example, famous for their skill in copying manuscripts, also invented a renowned honey and spice cookie.

Today, eating a cookie is one of everyday life's **sweetest moments**. A secret for the most crumbly, tasty cookie? **Organic semolina**.

INGREDIENTS FOR 25 COOKIES

- 2 ½ cups organic semolina
- 2/3 confectioners (powdered) sugar
- 1 cup room temperature butter
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 pinch salt
- zest of one lemon, grated
- 3/4-1 cup dark chocolate chips (according to preference—whether you prefer more or less chocolate)



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METHOD

Sift the semolina with the confectioners sugar on a work surface. Create a hole in the center, then add the softened butter, the eggs, baking powder, pinch of salt and the grated lemon zest and knead quickly until the dough is smooth and firm.

Place in the refrigerator for thirty minutes.

Place the dough on a floured board, add the chocolate chips, and with a heavy rolling pin, roll the dough out to a thickness of about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

Cut the dough into cookies using a cookie-cutter. Place the cookies on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

Bake at 350-375°F degrees for 7-8 minutes or until golden brown.

When golden brown, turn off the oven and leave the cookies to dry with the oven door half open for a minute or so.

Remove and cool on a wire rack. Enjoy with coffee, tea, milk, whatever your favorite cookie accompaniment is! Or store them in an airtight cookie jar or tin, until you wish to eat them.



 Preparation time
10 minutes

 Resting time
30 minutes

 Cooking time
15 minutes

SCONES

Scones—pronounced *scoons* in Scotland, *Scohwns* in the south of England, are a quintessential part of afternoon tea; served with thick clotted cream and strawberry jam they define the traditional “cream tea”. Scones are, however, eaten happily any time of day or night, no need to reserve them for tea.

Originally from **Scotland**, scones are **crunchy on the outside and tender on the inside**, much like American biscuits. Originally, the scone originally referred to a round, flat and unleavened cake, cooked on a griddle and served cut into triangular wedges. In this form it was known as a “**bannock**”—in Scotland the words are often used interchangeably.

Scones can have all sorts of additions, such as golden raisins or other candied fruit, and a hot scone seems to be perfectly made for a pat of butter to melt into it. But scones do not need to be sweet: savoury scones, especially containing green onions, Cheddar cheese, even hot pepper flakes, are popular too, and perfect for not only tea, but weekend brunch—topped with an egg, perhaps? Like all similar baked goods, scones can be dainty and petite, or huge—it’s your choice, though do adjust your baking times accordingly.



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INGREDIENTS FOR 20 SCONES

FOR THE DOUGH:

- 2 ½ cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 2 ¼ teaspoons baking powder
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 pinch of salt
- ¼ cup cold butter, cut into small pieces (preferably unsalted)
- 1/3 cup milk
- 2 large eggs

TO SERVE:

- 1 ¼ cups whipping cream, very cold
- 1 ¼-1 ½ cups jam or fruit preserves of choice

METHOD

Sift the flour together with the baking powder, sugar and salt.

Add the cold butter pieces and mix with a single turn of mixer or combine them with a knife. The consistency of the dough must be like fine sand.

Next, add the milk and eggs and pulse or mix until well blended.

Form the dough into a ball, seal with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Preheat the oven to 375°F.

After the resting time, roll out the dough with a rolling pin to a thickness of just slightly thicker than ½ inch.

Using a 2- 2 ½ inch round cookie cutter, cut the dough. Place each scone on a baking tray lined with parchment paper, brush with milk and bake for about 15 minutes. They will swell and slightly brown on the surface.

Remove from the oven and leave to cool on a wire rack.

Meanwhile, whip the cold cream until it forms lovely billows and is firm enough to hold its shape

To serve, split the scones in half and fill with a generous dollop of cream and a teaspoon of your favorite jam or fruit preserves. Close each scone with the cut top and your scones are ready to enjoy.



🕒 Preparation time
20 minutes

👨‍🍳 Cooking time
15 minutes

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

America's **iconic chocolate chip cookies** were created around the 1930s in the States, though surprisingly, by chance!

It was in **Boston, Massachusetts**, when the owner of the Toll House Inn, **Ruth Wakefield**, had run out of cocoa powder in the middle of baking butter cookies. She decided to finely chop a **chocolate bar** and add it to the dough, imagining that it would melt. But the chips remained intact, and her customers were thrilled. In fact, so excited were they, that news of Ruth's delicious new cookies was reported in the Boston newspaper, then on Betty Crocker's influential radio program: The Betty Crocker Cooking School of the Air.

And so, **one of the most famous cookies in the United States** was born: a butter cookie with chocolate chips. Of course, it was only a matter of time before this cookie embraced chocolate in the dough—like Ruth Wakefield's original—as well as in the chips studded through. Like the original they are luscious, even more luscious for being doubly chocolate. Irresistible!

INGREDIENTS FOR 30 COOKIES

- 9 oz dark chocolate
- 5 ½ oz butter (salted, preferably), at room temperature
- ¾-1 cup sugar (variation depending upon your taste)
- 2 whole large eggs plus 1 yolk
- 1 1/3 cups Italian organic 00 soft wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ cup chocolate chips



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METHOD

Melt the dark chocolate in a bain-marie /double boiler, then leave it to cool.

Whip the butter with the sugar, using an electric whisk or mixer, until well mixed and fluffy. Add the eggs and the yolk, mix well, then add the cooled melted chocolate, sifted flour, baking powder and about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the chocolate chips (set the rest aside to finish the recipe).

Line two baking trays with parchment paper; using a spoon, form balls about 1 inch in diameter, and place on the trays.

Sprinkle the cookies with the remaining chocolate chips and bake at 350°F degrees for 15 minutes.

Let them cool, then serve.





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