

THE FEAST OF THE *Seven Fishes*



BY MICHELE & JOE BECCI
OUR ITALIAN TABLE



EXTRA FISH PERMITTED

The Italian tradition of serving fish on Christmas Eve was always a big deal for our family growing up as second-generation Italian-Americans in Phillipsburg, New Jersey. The eve before Christmas was usually spent at our Uncle Nelson's apartment which was within walking distance of the church where we attended Midnight Mass. Uncle Nelson owned a liquor store, named Family Liquors (a name that would never fly in today's world 😊), that was just below the apartment. Our first stop was always to see our uncle, still at work in his store, where we would race to the back to see all the tall brightly colored liquor bottles. We would then head up to the apartment where we were greeted by our aunt; the apartment filled with the aroma of baccala and fried smelts while in the background a film loop of a yule log burning and crackling in a fireplace played on the TV. Numerous courses of fish ensued. My Aunt Mary's famous eggnog was poured and poured some more. Then around midnight, we would bundle up against the cold and head out for the short walk to the church for Mass where we inevitably nodded off long before communion was served.

Over the years, our tradition evolved into a proper Italian-American Feast of the Seven Fishes – a feast not actually celebrated in Italy but rather based on the long-held Italian tradition of eating seafood on Christmas eve, abstaining from meat until the big meal on Christmas Day. (There are multiple theories as to the reason for serving seven fish – possibly the seven Sacraments or the seven hills of Rome.) We lovingly planned courses, counted fish, and jokingly printed menus in the exact format which you see on the following page. One year, as we settled into our seats at the table, our little Aunt Annie sat quietly reading the menu. She suddenly looked up and jokingly declared that we had exceeded the fish count by 2 - there were 9 fish, not 7, on the menu. Subsequent years required us to provide a disclaimer on the menu - extra fish were always permitted.

So, from our table to yours, wishing you the merriest of holidays. May they be spent savoring long conversations over food and friendship with those that you cherish most...

Buon Natale!

Michele and Joe





Feast

of the Seven Fishes



APERITIVO

THE FIZZY FISH

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CALAMARI SALAD WITH CHICKPEAS AND GREEN OLIVES
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CLAMS OREGANATA

AT THE TABLE

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PRIMO

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UNA PAUSA

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ROASTED SEA BASS WITH POTATOES AND LEMON
WINTER LETTUCES WITH ANCHOVY VINAIGRETTE

DOLCI

AFFOGATO



EXTRA FISH PERMITTED





THE FIZZY FISH

We love pomegranate season and what better than to mix up a delicious festive cocktail with its juice. We tend to like our cocktails less sweet, so we have used a ratio of 1 cup water to ½ cup sugar in the rosemary simple syrup. If you like your cocktails sweeter, increase the amount of sugar used to make the simple syrup, up to a 1:1 ratio. Salute!

| INGREDIENTS | DIRECTIONS |
|--|---|
| <p>For the rosemary simple syrup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 cup water• ½ -1 cup granulated sugar• 2 sprigs fresh rosemary <p>For each cocktail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 ounces store-bought pomegranate juice (such as POM)• 2 ounces vodka• 1 ounce rosemary simple syrup, or to taste• Prosecco <p>For garnish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pomegranate seeds• Fresh rosemary sprigs | <p>1. Prepare the simple syrup: In a small saucepan, combine the sugar, water, and fresh rosemary sprigs. Heat over low heat. Stir occasionally and cook until the sugar has dissolved. Let stand until cool. Pour into a jar. (Extra can be stored in the fridge for more cocktails and will last for several weeks.)</p> <p>2. For each cocktail: Fill your favorite rocks glass with ice. Add the pomegranate juice, vodka, and simple syrup. Stir to combine. Top off with prosecco (as much as you like!)</p> <p>3. Garnish with fresh pomegranate seeds and fresh rosemary sprigs. Salute!</p> |



CALAMARI SALAD

WITH CHICKPEAS AND GREEN OLIVES

The calamari is the star of this salad so it is very important not to overcook - a quick simmer (60 seconds) will ensure it stays tender. Adding the warm calamari to the dressing will allow it to absorb the delicious vinaigrette flavors. If you have time, chill for at least a few hours to allow the flavors to develop.

MAKES 6-8 APPETIZER PORTIONS

INGREDIENTS

For the dressing:

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 large clove of garlic
- Black pepper

For the calamari salad:

- 1-pound calamari, bodies and tentacles, cleaned
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 lemon
- ½ cup very thinly sliced red onion
- 1 (15 ½-ounce) can chickpeas, drained
- ½ cup celery, thinly sliced crosswise, leaves reserved
- ½ cup green olives such as Castelvetrano or Cerignola, pitted
- Kosher salt and black pepper

To serve:

- Frisée lettuce
- ½ lemon
- Kosher salt

DIRECTIONS

1. In a bowl large enough to hold the calamari, mix together the olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar and salt. Using the side of a knife, mash the clove of garlic to a paste with a little bit of salt. Add to the bowl. Stir to incorporate. Season to taste with black pepper. Set aside.

2. Cut the calamari bodies crosswise into 1/3-inch-wide rings. Halve the tentacles lengthwise, if large. Fill a medium pot with water. Add in the salt and bay leaf. Squeeze the lemon into the pot and toss in the lemon. Stir to combine. Bring to a boil.

3. Add in the calamari and cook, uncovered, until just opaque, only about 60 seconds. Drain thoroughly in a colander. Immediately transfer the warm calamari to the bowl with the dressing. Stir to combine.

4. Add in the red onion, chickpeas, celery, and green olives. Stir. Taste and adjust salt and pepper if necessary. Cover bowl and refrigerate for up to a day in advance or at least 30 minutes to allow the flavors to develop. Bring the salad to room temperature before serving. Taste and adjust flavors if needed. Add a sprinkle of red wine vinegar or lemon if needed. Adjust salt and pepper to taste.

5. To serve, drizzle the frisée lettuce with the juice of ½ lemon and a few pinches of salt. Toss to combine. Plate the lettuce on a serving platter or individual serving plates. Spoon the calamari salad over the lettuce, Sprinkle with the reserved celery leaves and serve.

Make-ahead:

You can make this salad up to a day in advance through step 4 and allow it to chill in the fridge.



FRESH COD CAKES

WITH SALSA VERDE

These delicious cod cakes use fresh cod instead of the more classic holiday *baccala* (salted cod). This makes for a much simpler and faster preparation (and save your fridge from smelling like fish for months). We have paired the cod with the briny Italian sauce, salsa verde, made from parsley, anchovies, olive oil, and garlic. This sauce is all about the quality of the olive oil so use the best quality that you have on hand to prepare.

MAKES 6-8 APPETIZER PORTIONS

INGREDIENTS

For the salsa verde:

- Leaves from 1 medium bunch Italian flat-leaf parsley
- 1 tablespoon brined capers, drained
- 2 oil-packed anchovy fillets
- 2 cloves garlic
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- 1 small lemon
- Best quality extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper

For the cod cakes:

- 2 large potatoes, such as russet
- 2 ½ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 6 peppercorns
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 lemon, cut into 4 wedges
- 1-pound fresh cod, skinless
- ½ cup Italian flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon brined capers, roughly chopped
- Zest of ½ lemon
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- Olive oil
- Panko breadcrumbs

To serve:

- Fresh chopped parsley
- Remaining lemon wedges

DIRECTIONS

1. Make the salsa verde:

On a large cutting board, place the parsley, capers, anchovies, and garlic. Give them a medium chop. Precision is not important here. You want small chucks but not minced.

2. Place the chopped ingredients in a small jar, add a pinch of crushed red pepper and the lemon juice.

3. Add just enough extra virgin olive oil to cover the ingredients. Close the jar and shake vigorously. Taste and add salt and pepper to taste (the anchovies and capers will have added a lot of salt already). If using within a few hours, set aside. Otherwise, refrigerate.

4. Make the cod cakes:

Peel and cut the potatoes in equally sized chunks. Put the potatoes in a medium saucepan and cover with cold water. Add 1 teaspoon kosher salt. Bring to a boil and boil until potatoes are tender. Drain and place in a large bowl. Mash with a fork or potato masher. Set aside.

5. Next poach the fish:

In a shallow, wide pan with high sides, add about an inch of water and set over medium heat. Add the peppercorns and bay leaf. Squeeze 1 wedge of lemon into the water and add the squeezed lemon to the pan. Bring the pan to a simmer. Place the cod into the pan and simmer until the fish is cooked through, about 8 minutes. Carefully remove the fish from the water. Place on a dish and set aside to cool.

6. To the bowl with the mashed potatoes, add in the parsley, capers, lemon zest, remaining 1 ½ teaspoons salt, and pepper. Stir to combine. Flake the cooked fish into the bowl and gently mix to incorporate. (You want to keep the fish flakes as whole as possible.)

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FRESH COD CAKES

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7. Form the mixture into 6 to 8 small patties. Place them on a baking sheet. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

8. Warm a few tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat in a sauté pan. Once the oil is shimmering, carefully add the cod cakes to the pan. Do not crowd – you may need to do this in batches. Sauté the cod cakes until they are golden brown, about 4 minutes per side. Carefully flip and sauté the other side.

9. As they finish, remove them to a serving platter. (You can also keep the cod cakes warm in a low oven 250 degrees Fahrenheit until ready to serve.) Sprinkle with fresh chopped parsley. Serve with the remaining lemon wedges and the salsa verde on the side.

Make-ahead:

The salsa verde can be made 3 or 4 days in advance. Refrigerate and bring to room temperature before serving. Cod cakes can be made and formed a day in advance. Bring the cakes to room temperature before cooking.



Salsa verde, served with the cod cakes in this recipe, is an Italian staple that is typically served alongside a dish of boiled meats called *bollito misto*.

However, it's bright and briny flavor brightens up many a dish and can be drizzled over roasted meats or chicken, on eggs or grilled veggies. or slathered on your favorite sandwich or pizza. Don't hesitate to experiment a bit by adding in other herbs that you might like such as mint.





SICILIAN SAUTEED SHRIMP

WITH ALMONDS

On my first trip to the little island of Pantelleria, I had the most delicious dish served with shrimp, almonds and topped with toasted breadcrumbs. I have never forgotten that meal. This dish echoes those amazing flavors and is the simplest to prepare. Do not skip those toasted breadcrumbs (*muddica atturrata* in Sicilian dialect) as they add the perfect crunch to the shrimp

-Michele

MAKES 6-8 APPETIZER PORTIONS

INGREDIENTS

For the breadcrumbs:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium clove garlic
- ½ cup panko breadcrumbs
- Pinch red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt

For the shrimp:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium clove garlic
- 1 pound jumbo shrimp, peeled, tail left on, deveined
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- ½ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup Italian flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- ¼ cup sliced almonds

To serve:

- Lemon wedges

DIRECTIONS

1. Make the breadcrumbs:

Heat the oil in a small pan over medium-low heat. Give the garlic clove a smash with the side of a chef’s knife. Discard peel. Add in the garlic and cook until it sizzles and is fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add in the breadcrumbs. Stir to combine. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the breadcrumbs are golden and toasted. Watch very carefully as the breadcrumbs can burn very quickly. Remove from the heat. Remove the smashed garlic clove. Season lightly with salt. Place the breadcrumbs in a bowl and set aside.

2. Cook the shrimp:

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Give the garlic clove a smash with the side of a chef’s knife. Discard the peel. Add the garlic to the pan and cook until it sizzles and is fragrant, about 30 seconds. Remove from the pan.

3. Add in the shrimp. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Cook until the shrimp just turn pink, about 2 minutes each side.

4. Add in the wine and parsley and stir until the wine has evaporated.

5. Plate the shrimp. Sprinkle with the breadcrumbs and sliced almonds. Serve immediately with lemon wedges.

Make-ahead:

The breadcrumbs can be made up to 3 days in advance. Place in an airtight container and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before using.



CLAMS OREGANATA

This classic Italian American dish is always a hit for holidays and parties. Ask your fishmonger for similar sized clams. These are great as part of a Seven Fishes menu as you can stuff the clams the day before and pop them in the oven just prior to serving.

MAKES 6-8 APPETIZER PORTIONS

INGREDIENTS

- 12 large clams such as littleneck or cherrystone – ask for clams that are large and of similar sizes
- Dry white wine
- ¾ cup panko breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons parsley, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 large garlic clove, minced or pressed through a garlic press
- Pinch crushed red pepper (optional)
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- Extra-virgin olive oil

To serve:

- A bed of coarse salt (optional)
- Lemon wedges

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare a large bowl of cold water with lots of ice cubes. Add the clams and leave for 1 hour to allow them to expel their sand.
2. In a wide shallow pan with a lid, add about ¼-inch of white wine. Lift the clams from the cold water, leaving the sand behind, and place in the pan with the wine. Empty and rinse the bowl that held the clams for the next step.
3. Cover the pan and heat over medium-high heat. The clams will open in about 3-5 minutes. Check occasionally and remove clams that have opened to the cleaned bowl. If the wine starts to evaporate, add more wine or some water. Discard any clams that do not open.
4. When the clams are cool enough to handle, tip the clams so any juice drops into the bowl. Remove the top shell and free the clam from the bottom shell with a butter knife. Place each clam in its half shell on a baking sheet.

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5. To strain any sand from the clam juice, use a fine mesh strainer lined with a coffee filter. Pour in the liquid left in the pan and in the bowl. Let it drip through. If it's not dripping, gently squeeze the paper filter to push the liquid through. (Alternatively, pour the liquid into a bowl and allow to settle for about 10 minutes. Gently pour the liquid into another bowl leaving the sand at the bottom behind.)

6. Prepare the filling in a small bowl by combining the breadcrumbs, parsley, oregano, garlic, and red pepper. Add about ½ of the collected liquid and mix to combine. The mixture should clump together when pressed. If dry, add more of the liquid. If there is not enough liquid, add a little olive oil. Taste the mixture and add salt and pepper to taste.

7. Holding each clam in its half shell over the bowl with the filling, gently pack the filling in each shell covering the clam from edge to edge in the shell. Place each filled clam back on the baking sheet.

8. Place a rack in the middle of the oven and turn on the broiler. Drizzle olive oil on the clams and broil for 5-10 minutes until the clams are crispy brown. Keep a close eye on the clams. Depending on the distance between broiler and pan, the clams can quickly go from pale to burnt.

9. Let the clams cool. Plate on a bed of coarse salt. Serve with plenty of lemon wedges.

Make ahead:

You can prepare the clams up through filling the clams, step 7. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to cook or overnight.





PROSCIUTTO-WRAPPED SCALLOPS ON A SHAVED FENNEL SALAD

This crispy shaved fennel salad is the perfect backdrop to the salty prosciutto and tender, sweet scallops. Be sure to dry your scallops thoroughly so you develop a beautiful golden crust on their surface.

MAKES 6-8 APPETIZER PORTIONS

| INGREDIENTS | DIRECTIONS |
|--|---|
| <p>For the shaved fennel salad:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 large fennel bulb• ¼ cup fresh mint leaves• ¼ cup fresh parsley leaves• Zest and juice of ½ lemon• 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil• Kosher salt• Black pepper <p>For the scallops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 medium dry scallops, side muscle removed• 12 slices prosciutto• 2 tablespoons olive oil• 2 tablespoons unsalted butter• Kosher salt• Black pepper <p>To finish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extra virgin olive oil• 1 tablespoon shelled pistachios, finely chopped• Zest of ½ lemon• Fennel fronds | <p>1. For the salad: Remove the stalks and fronds from the fennel bulb. Reserve the fronds. Cut the fennel bulb in half and remove the core. Prepare a large bowl of ice water. Using a mandoline (or break out those knife skills!), very thinly slice the fennel and add to the ice water bath. Soak the fennel slices for at least 20 minutes. (This helps keep the fennel crisp).</p> <p>2. For the scallops: Place the scallops on a small baking tray or plate and blot away any moisture using a paper towel to ensure they are dry. (This will ensure a beautiful sear.) Season both sides of the scallops with salt and pepper. Fold each prosciutto slice in half lengthwise and wrap each scallop with 1 slice of prosciutto, overlapping the ends. (You may need to trim the slices of prosciutto depending on length.)</p> <p>3. Heat the oil and butter in a large, non-stick skillet over medium high heat. Once hot, add the scallops being sure not to crowd them in the pan. (You may need to cook in batches.) Cook, without moving, until golden brown on the bottom, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip the scallops and cook until just opaque, another 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer the scallops to a platter and tent with aluminum foil to keep warm.</p> <p>4. Finish and assemble: Drain the fennel from the ice bath and dry thoroughly. In a medium bowl, combine the fennel, mint, parsley, zest and juice of the lemon and olive oil. Toss. Season to taste with salt and pepper.</p> <p>5. Plate the salad on a serving dish. Top with the scallops. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil and garnish with pistachios, lemon zest and fennel fronds. Serve immediately.</p> <p><i>Make-ahead:</i> You can slice the fennel the day prior and refrigerate until ready to dress the salad.</p> |



PASTA CON LE SARDE

.This pasta is one of Sicily’s signature dishes and one we grew up eating frequently. When made in Sicily, wild fennel, which grows everywhere on the island, and fresh sardines are typically used – neither of which are readily available back here at home. However, we have found that using higher quality canned sardines and supermarket fennel comes pretty close to approximately the uniquely Sicilian flavors in this pasta – flavors that highlight the different cultures that have dominated Sicily throughout history. Sweet fennel and raisins soften the brininess of the sardines. Bucatini is typically the pasta of choice for this recipe but feel free to substitute spaghetti or other long dried pasta for this dish. Although you may be tempted to skip the breadcrumb topping, don’t! Their crunch adds wonderful texture to the dish.

MAKES 4-6 PORTIONS

| INGREDIENTS | DIRECTIONS |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ½ cup raisins or currants• Large pinch of saffron threads (optional)• ½ cup dry white wine or water• Extra virgin olive oil• ½ cup panko breadcrumbs• Kosher salt• 1 large fennel bulb, cored and chopped, fronds reserved• 1 large onion, chopped• 6 oil-packed anchovy fillets• 2 tablespoons tomato paste• 3 (4 ounce) cans of sardines packed in olive oil• ½ cup pine nuts• Black pepper• 1-pound bucatini | <p>1. In a small bowl, add the raisins and saffron to the wine (or water). Set aside to soak.</p> <p>2. <i>Make the breadcrumbs:</i> Heat a few tablespoons of olive oil in a small pan over medium-low heat. Add in the breadcrumbs. Stir to combine. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the breadcrumbs are golden and toasted. Watch very carefully as the breadcrumbs can burn very quickly. Remove from the heat. Season lightly with salt. Place the breadcrumbs in a bowl and set aside.</p> <p>3. In a large saucepan, heat about 2 tablespoons olive oil over medium heat. Add in the fennel and onions and cook until softened, about 8 minutes. Add in the anchovies and cook, stirring occasionally, until dissolved in the oil.</p> <p>4. Add in the tomato paste and stir to incorporate. Cook until the tomato paste melds into the onion/fennel mixture, about 2 minutes. Add in the raisin/saffron mixture, and the pine nuts. Stir to combine and cook the mixture for another few minutes. Add in the sardines with their oil. Stir gently. Taste. Add in a few grinds of black pepper and adjust salt if needed. Remove from heat until the pasta is finished cooking.</p> <p>.....continues on next page.....</p> |

PASTA CON LE SARDE

(CONTINUED)

5. While the sauce is cooking, make the pasta. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil Add in the pasta and cook until according to package directions until al dente. Reserve ½ cup of the pasta cooking water. Drain the pasta. If removed from the heat, rewarm the sauce over medium low heat. Add the pasta to the pan with the sardine mixture.

6. Gently toss everything together. If sauce seems a little dry, add a small amount of the reserved pasta water. To serve, sprinkle the pasta with the reserved fennel fronds and prepared breadcrumbs. Serve with remaining breadcrumbs on the side.

Make-ahead:

This dish is best prepared when serving immediately. However, you can toast the breadcrumbs up to a few days in advance. Place in fridge and bring to room temperature before cooking.



Toasted breadcrumbs, known as ***muddica atturrata*** in Sicilian dialect, are a staple in Sicilian cooking and found in many traditional Sicilian recipes. They are known as 'poor man's cheese' as the poor could not afford the more expensive grated cheese typically sprinkled over pasta

pasta and other dishes so they found a worthy substitute in toasting leftover day old bread. It also was a way of ensuring no crumb went to waste. The breadcrumbs add wonderful crunchy texture to any dish. We suggest doubling the recipe and keeping some on hand to sprinkle over your favorite pasta!





LEMON THYME GRANITA

Granita is very easy to make at home and such a beautiful palate-cleanser, especially for a large meal such as Seven Fishes. This adult version, made with wine, can be made non-alcoholic by simply replacing the wine with water. Make the granita when you have other things to do in the kitchen. This makes it easy to remember to give the mixture a stir while in the freezer in order to create the delicious shards of ice that form.

MAKES 4-6 PORTIONS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups dry white wine
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup sugar
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 sprig of thyme
- 1 cup of lemon juice (6 to 8 lemons)
- Pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Stir together the wine, water, and sugar in a small saucepan over low heat. Add in the lemon zest and thyme. Cook just until the sugar melts, 1-2 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.
2. Once cool, stir in the lemon juice and a pinch of salt. Remove the thyme sprig. Pour into a freezer-safe shallow glass dish or metal pan no more than a few inches high and carefully place flat in the freezer.
3. Let it alone for about an hour. Ice crystals should be starting to form. Scrape the granita with a fork to create shards. Keep scraping every half hour or so, until the granita is completely frozen, and you have light, fluffy crystals. (Note: Don't panic if you forget to scrape! Just remove it from the freezer, allow the granita to thaw slightly. Scrape away and place back in the freezer – back in business!)
4. Serve in your favorite glass or bowl!



ROASTED SEA BASS

WITH POTATOES AND LEMON

This recipe was inspired by a menu posted by Jul’s Kitchen back in 2018. The dusting of breadcrumbs and pistachios adds wonderful texture to the dish. Be sure to have your fishmonger clean and descale the fish for you. Any fresh whole fish works great in this recipe – we especially love using a sea bass or branzino. Don't let the prospect of filleting a whole fish scare you away - there are great videos on You Tube on how to do so - but if the idea of having to clean a fish at the table is not your thing, you can substitute skin-on fillets in this dish.

MAKES 4-6 PORTIONS

| INGREDIENTS | DIRECTIONS |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ¼ cup panko breadcrumbs• ¼ cup crushed pistachios• Extra virgin olive oil• Kosher salt• Black pepper• 6 medium or large red potatoes• 2 lemons• Sprigs of fresh thyme• Extra-virgin olive oil• Whole sea bass, cleaned and scaled | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.2. In a small bowl, mix together the breadcrumbs and pistachios. Moisten with a drizzle of olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and toss. Set aside.3. Slice the potatoes and lemons crosswise into ¼ to ½ inch slices. Reserve 6 lemon slices. Place remaining lemon and potatoes in a large bowl. Toss in a few sprigs of fresh thyme. Drizzle generously with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Toss to combine.4. Arrange the potatoes and lemons on a baking sheet or pan large enough to accommodate the fish. Roast in the oven for 20 minutes.5. Meanwhile, prepare the fish. Generously season both sides of the fish and cavity with salt and pepper.Place 3 lemon slices inside the cavity and 3 lemon slices on the outside of the fish and tie at intervals to close the cavity. Drizzle entire fish with olive oil.6. Remove the potatoes and lemon from the oven after 20 minutes. Toss. Move aside to the edges to make room for the fish. Place the fish in the center of the baking sheet. Return the baking sheet to the oven.7. About 10 minutes before the fish is done, sprinkle the entire baking sheet with the breadcrumb/pistachio topping. Roast until the fish is just cooked through, about 20-30 minutes or until it reaches an internal temperature of 145 degrees Fahrenheit. (Cooking time with vary according to the size of your fish.)8. Remove from oven and fillet fish.9. Place filleted fish on a serving platter. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive and a sprinkle of salt. Serve alongside the roasted potatoes and lemons. |



WINTER LETTUCES

WITH ANCHOVY VINAIGRETTE

This briny and bright winter salad is the perfect complement to a Seven Fishes menu. You can even count the anchovy as one of your seven fishes or as a bonus fish! The pomegranate seeds add a nice, sweet note to the saltiness of the dressing. Look for pomegranate seeds in your market to save you the time of cleaning a whole pomegranate.

MAKES 4-6 PORTIONS

INGREDIENTS

For the vinaigrette:

- 4 oil-packed anchovies
- Zest and juice of ½ lemon
- 1 ½ tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 small clove garlic, grated
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

For the salad:

- About 8 cups of winter salad greens, such as frisée, arugula, radicchio
- ½ cup red onion, thinly sliced crosswise
- ½ cup pomegranate seeds

To serve:

- Additional oil-packed anchovies
- Pomegranate seeds

DIRECTIONS

1. *Prepare the vinaigrette:*

In the bowl of a food processor or blender, combine the anchovies, lemon zest and juice, red wine vinegar, garlic, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Blend until combined. Taste and adjust salt and pepper if needed. If using immediately, set aside until ready to dress the salad or transfer to a container or glass jar and refrigerate until ready to use.

2. *Assemble the salad:*

Place the salad greens in a large bowl. Sprinkle with the sliced red onion and pomegranate seeds. Drizzle with about ½ the dressing and toss gently. Add more dressing to taste. Serve with a small bowl of anchovies and additional pomegranate seeds on the side.

Make-Ahead:

Dressing can be prepared up to 3 days in advance. Bring it to room temperature before dressing the salad.



AFFOGATO

Affogato (translation: ‘drowned’) is the simplest of desserts with only a few ingredients – gelato, espresso and a shot of liqueur, such as Amaretto – but when the hot bitter espresso melds with the cold sweet gelato, it becomes a mixture of pure creamy heaven. We love this as a dessert as it allows guests to choose – the full effect with espresso and Amaretto or perhaps just the gelato. We have topped the affogato with shaved dark chocolate and although not traditional, it adds a nice touch to the creamy gelato.

| INGREDIENTS | DIRECTIONS |
|---|--|
| <p>For each serving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 double shot (2 ounces) hot espresso or strong coffee• About 2 scoops of your favorite gelato (vanilla bean works great)• Amaretto (optional)• Shaved dark chocolate | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Prepare the espresso or strong coffee.2. When ready, put 2 scoops of gelato in a small shallow serving bowl (clear glass if possible so you can watch the gelato melt together with the coffee.) Add a healthy splash of Amaretto if using. Pour about 2 ounces of espresso over the gelato.3. Top with shaved dark chocolate. Enjoy! |

Buon Natale!

FROM OUR TABLE TO YOURS,
XX MICHELE AND JOEY



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