

Welcome to the "Good Life Page" by US Best Capital Partners

Recipe of the Month – April, 2011: Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce

Wine Pairing: Colosi Nero D'Avola Sicilia

After Dinner Pleasures: Jose Marti & Biscotti Liqueur



Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce

"Easter Sunday is such a joyous day in the Italian culture. After the somber Lenten season, it was magical to walk into my mother's kitchen and take in the wonderful aromas of the soon to be devoured feast. Making gnocchi (*pronounced "nyah-kee"*) for Easter Sunday is a long-standing tradition in my family and was always such a fun family project. A few days before Easter, Mom would gather my two sisters and me into the kitchen (Somehow my father and three brothers would mysteriously disappear!). Mom would prepare and roll the dough, Carla, the oldest, would do the cutting, and Jo-Anna, the youngest, and I would roll the

gnocchi on a cheese grater until we thought our little fingers would fall off! The reward came when Mom would fix us a little sampling of our efforts tossed with a little butter and cheese...and it was just at sampling time that my father and brothers would miraculously find their way back into the kitchen! Serve with a bold red wine, such as [Colosi Nero D'Avola Sicilia](#) and follow up with an after dinner treat of [Jose marti and Biscotti Liqueur](#). From our family to yours, we wish you a most blessed Easter and Spring season. Buon Appetito!" **Natalie**

Let's Make the Gnocchi!

1 1/2 lbs Baking Potatoes (about 3 medium)
1 tsp. Salt
1/4 tsp. Pepper
1 tbsp. Extra Virgin Olive Oil
2 Large Eggs
About 2 Cups of All Purpose Flour (plus plenty extra for flouring hands and surface)



Bake or boil potatoes until tender (about 20 minutes). Skin potatoes while still hot. Place potatoes in a fine sieve or a ricer or mash. Place in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper, stir in the olive oil and let cool. Make a well in the center and add eggs, slightly beaten. Stir potatoes and eggs until well blended. Stir in 1 cup of the flour until well blended. Turn onto a floured work surface and knead in as much of the remaining flour as necessary to make a soft dough; it should be slightly sticky. The trick is to add just enough flour so that the gnocchi hold their shape when cooked but not so much that they become heavy. Wrap dough in plastic and let rest for at least 15 minutes.

Divide dough into four sections. Roll each section into a rope about 1/2 inch in circumference. Cut rope into 3/4 inch long pieces and dust with flour. To shape gnocchi, hold a cheese grater with the finest side up. With the thumb and forefinger, place the dough on the grater. Being careful not touch the grater with your thumb, press the dough with the thumb in a downward rolling motion. Allow the gnocchi to fall onto the floured surface.

To cook the gnocchi, drop into boiling water until they float to the top (just a few minutes). Drain. Top with tomato sauce (recipe follows).

Ingredients for the Sauce:

1/4 Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 Spanish Onion, chopped
4 to 6 Garlic Cloves, chopped (I personally go with 6!)
2 (28-ounce) cans crushed tomatoes

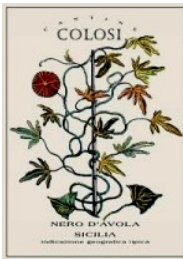
1 (28-ounce) can petite diced tomatoes
1/2 tsp. fresh ground pepper
Salt to taste
5 tbsp chopped fresh basil
Freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

In a 4-quart saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, and cook until golden brown, about 10 minutes or so. Add the tomatoes and salt to taste. Bring to a boil, then cook over a low heat for approximately 30 minutes, stirring often. Turn off the heat and stir in the fresh basil just before serving (save a few pieces for garnish).

Place the gnocchi onto a serving patter and top with the tomato sauce and freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese. Enjoy! Serves approximately 4.

Suggested Wine Pairing:

By Bruno Schirripa



Colosi Nero D'Avola Sicilia

"The wine I have selected to accompany Mom's Easter gnocchi is COLOSI NERO D'AVOLA SICILIA. This Sicilian born wine has a bit of a fruity aroma yet a bold flavor that really enhances this special holiday dish. The well balanced tannins blend beautifully on the palate with both the texture and rich flavors of the gnocchi. Grab a bottle or two for after the meal also. It drinks beautifully solo as well."

After Dinner Pleasures:

By Bruno Schirripa



Jose Marti

"After a delightfully filling meal with family and friends, I enjoy a fine cigar and a fine wine or liquor on the deck. I have found that a good cigar does not have to be expensive, you just need to know where and how to look!

For this month's Easter Sunday meal, I recommend one of my all time favorites - a Nicaraguan grown and hand-wrapped smoke, the **Jose Marti** torpedo wrap. The torpedo wrap starts wide at the lit end and tapers to a very nice tip that when clipped with a guillotine cutter opens up a great portion and clear draw. This delightful smoke can be found in most town humidors for about \$5 bucks, but it smokes like a million bucks!"



Faretto Biscotti Famosi Liqueur

"Pair this great smoke with a delightful after dinner liqueur called "**Biscotti.**" It has the flavor of grandma's biscotti, but with a kick. In a snifter and paired with a few tokes of the **Jose Marti** - it will put a smile on your face as you enjoy the evening air and the glow from the fire pit."

The "Good Life Page" is sponsored by:

Natalie (Schirripa) Decker
Managing Partner
US Best Capital Partners, LLC



"Sometimes we get so busy with business that we forget to stop and enjoy the good things in life - "la vita bella", as we call it in Italian. So, I thought it would be fun to share one of my favorite passions with you each month - authentic southern Italian recipes - just like my mother and grandmothers taught me growing up. My brother, Bruno Schirripa, and I love to cook together, so I am thrilled that he will be contributing the monthly wine pairing and after dinner cigar pick to accompany my recipes. My husband, Steve, is not much into the cooking aspect, but he is definitely an expert "tester" and especially enjoys the after dinner pleasures. We hope you will enjoy and share it all each month with your family and friends!"

[Sign up here to receive our monthly "Good Life Page" and free product updates](#)

Archives:

March, 2011: *Italian Biscotti* [print this recipe](#)

Copyright 2011. Natalie Decker/US Best Capital Partners, LLC. All rights reserved.