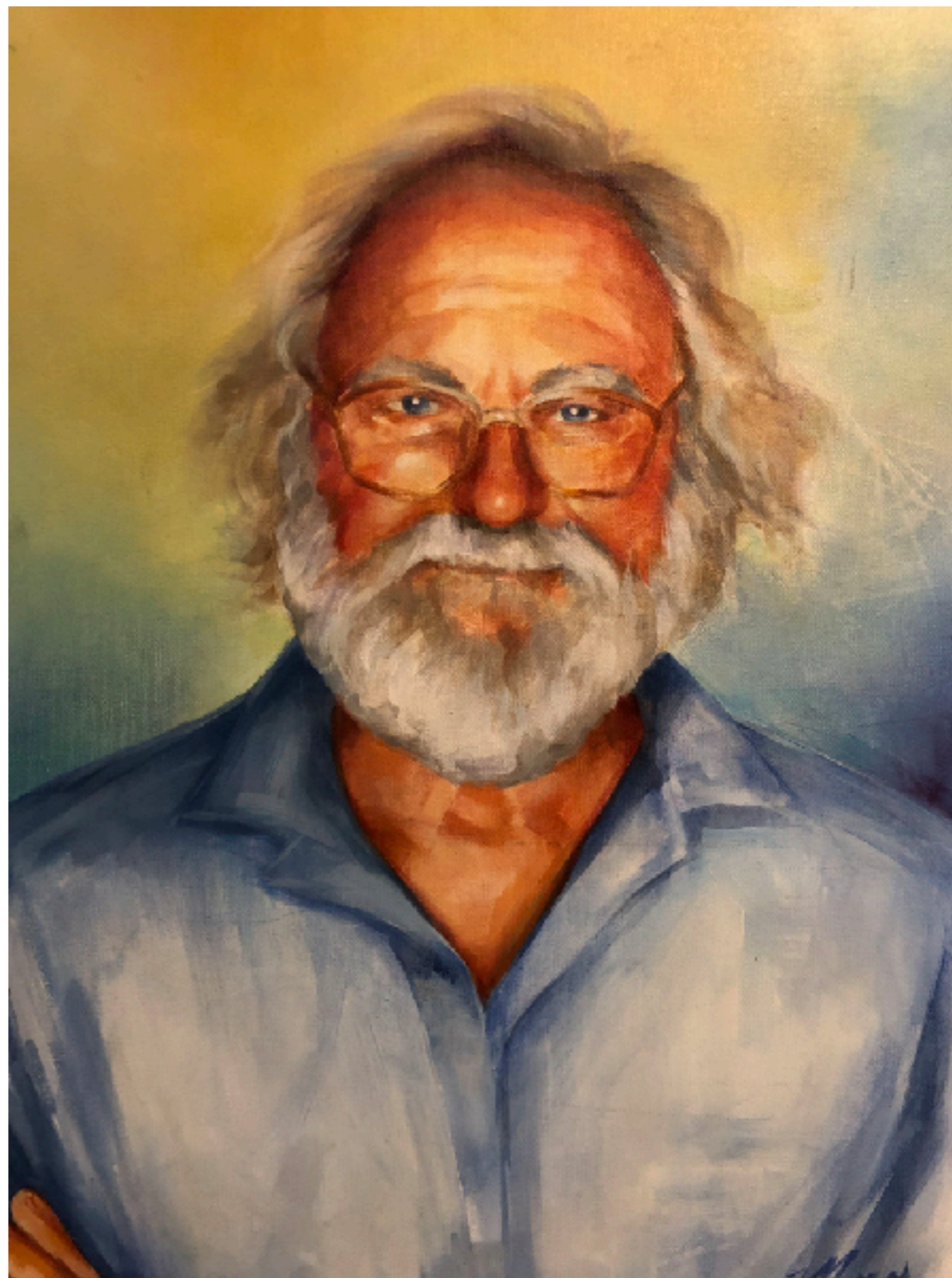


A Tavola

Recipes of Adriano Garsia



Painting by Maya Santangelo

Introduction

Everything involves lots of olive oil, lots of salt, nothing is actually measured, and everything is cooked at 400 degrees.

You have to be patient. The meat must be very well done. You must have fresh, highest quality ingredients. Check the eyes of the fish before you buy it, and the gills. The gills should be red, the eyes should be clear.

No nibbling! No appetizers! Adriano's mother made everyone wait for the dinner she worked hard to create. At 90, he still agrees. You can make your guests wait too. Good food is worth the wait. It tastes better when you are hungry.

Cooking is one of the few times Adriano is not doing math. He likes to eat well, so he really focuses. "I eat for taste, not for health!" says Adriano.

Diane says: "It was a seducing quality when we first met in Montreal in 1972."



Adriano's Ten Commandments of Cooking

First, no snacking before a meal.

Second, buy an extra box of salt.

Third, have lots of olive oil on hand. Don't use "extra virgin" oil. Bertolli is a good brand. "My father had 800 acres of olive trees. That produced a lot of olives. The oil was obtained by two huge rotating granite wheels that made toothpaste out of the olives. If you pushed your fist into the paste, then the virgin oil was at the bottom of the hole. I enjoyed dipping pieces of fresh bread into the virgin olive oil. I loved it! You enjoyed it from the paste. Then the paste was put into torus shaped containers which were stacked and then compressed. The Romans used gravity to separate the oil from the paste in a system of vats. At the end of the chain of vats, the liquid was all oil. In the farm, there was just too much to do this way so we used presses. But, the presses produced oil that was slightly acidic. Most of the virgin olive oil now is just fake. It seldom tastes like the kind I ate from the hole in the paste. Most of the time now, the virgin oil is not better it is worse!"

Fourth, never rinse the pasta.

Fifth, use a whole handful of salt in the water before you cook the pasta. Don't worry, it doesn't all go into the pasta, it is not all absorbed. No other salt goes on the pasta.



Sixth, no oil in the pasta water.

Seventh, garlic in large quantities won't kill you. You just might smell bad.

Eighth, always use red wine vinegar. Never use balsamic vinegar.

Ninth, when the pasta is boiling in the pot, the people should be sitting at the table. Try to get the guests to the table early. Nothing is worse than cold pasta.

Tenth, respect diets directed by physicians, but not diets directed by obsessions.

And, it helps to have a sous-chef around to help too.

Risotto with Pork Tenderloin

Ingredients:

- 1.5 lbs pork tenderloin
- 6 medium onions, sliced
- 1.5 cups rice
- herbs de Provence
- Dijon mustard
- 2 cups rice
- 24 oz sour cream

Cut pork in rounds 1" thick. Spread mustard rather thickly on both sides of each round. Fry the rounds until they are brown on all sides. In another frying pan, fry sliced onions and herbs de Provence in olive oil until translucent. You can add some red pepper flakes to the onions as they cook if you want a little extra kick. Combine onions and pork and continue to fry until liquid is absorbed.

In the meantime, cook the rice. When the rice is ready, add it to the meat/onion mixture. Mix well. Add the sour cream and mix well again.

Adriano adds: The pork tenderloin comes in the shape of a long sausage. The cut pieces are "round". To make them the right shape you may have to do your cutting only every 1/2 inch if the diameter of the sausage is only 2 inch. So the "rounds" are flat 2 inches round pieces of diameter 2 inch and 1/2 inch thick. This given, you spread your mustard rather thickly on both sides. You may end up using a lot of mustard... But don't worry, the more the mustard the better the taste. You do all this BEFORE you start the frying. The smell is great!"



Beef Rib-Eye with Linguini

(Christmas time 2018)

Ingredients:

- 3 good quality ribeye steaks about 1 pound each
- 5 medium white onions (“don’t worry, it’s good” says Diane)
- 6 cloves of garlic (or one head of garlic)
- 1 26 oz box Pomo chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 3 Tbsp Herbs de Provence
- Red pepper flakes to taste
- olive oil
- linguini
- grated imported provolone cheese (or hard Italian cheese)



Chop onions in Cuisinart (if possible). Fry in a generous amount of olive oil until they are golden. (It took 60 mins when I watched -- Sara). Add red pepper flakes and 3 Tbsp Herbs de Provence to onions as it is frying. Cook until the water has evaporated. Make sure the onions don’t stick to the frying pan as it cooks.

Fat adds taste to the meat, but you may trim some of it off. Fry the ribeye steaks in oil in a separate pan from the onions. Remove some of the extra water as they cook so the meat will brown. Purée the Pomi tomatoes lightly with the garlic in Cuisinart. Combine onions, meat, tomatoes and garlic in a Pyrex dish. Sprinkle 1/2 Tbsp salt on the meat. Add 1/2 cup red wine to the pan and swirl to clean up the juices. Add to Pyrex dish.

Cook in oven at 400 degrees for about 1 hour 20 minutes. Remove the steaks from the sauce and keep them warm. Use the sauce for the pasta.

Cook the pasta al dente. Note, Adriano does not break the pasta. “Americans do that.” Mix sauce with pasta. Serve with grated cheese. After the primo, serve the meat for secondo. There is apparently no explanation or apology for this custom in Italy.

Notes: This was Adriano’s version of Nonna’s “Eye of the Round”. It goes well with the Tunisian carrots.

Bolognese

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs lean ground beef
- 2 cups celery hearts chopped fine
- 2 cups carrots chopped fine
- " 4 medium onions chopped fine
- 2 tsp nutmeg
- 2 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1 ½ Tbsp fresh marjoram
- red wine
- 1.5 boxes of Pomi chopped tomatoes



Use the Cuisinart to chop all of the vegetables. Fry the vegetables in oil one at a time until they have some golden color, “be excessive like Adriano”. Combine onions, carrots, and celery in one frying pan and set aside.

Fry the beef in oil until brown and all water has evaporated. Adriano uses a whisk to remove the meat lumps. Add Pomi and break up the pieces with a knife. Add the spices: salt, nutmeg, red pepper flakes, fresh marjoram. Mix well.

Clean out the frying pans with a splash of red wine and add to other mixture.

Combine all ingredients in a Pyrex dish and place in oven at 400 degrees. Cook for 1.5 hours. This could be done on the stove top if you stir often. Cook until oil raises to the top.

Notes: Adriano tried to recreate the taste of Bolognese while eating in Italy. This sauce can be frozen for future meals.

Game Hens

Ingredients:

- 2 Cornish game hens
- 20 medium size, ripe tomatoes
- 2 heads of garlic, peeled
- „ herbs de Provence
- bay leaves
- whole allspice
- olive oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Use a Cuisinart to finely chop tomatoes and garlic along with 1/2 cup of oil. This sauce could also be done in a blender.

Wash the hens and dry them with paper towels. Use sharp scissors to cut the hens in half. You may need a meat cleaver.

Place hens close together in an Pyrex oven proof dish and pour sauce on top. Sprinkle with herbs de Provence, salt and pepper. Add a few bay leaves and a few whole allspice seeds.

Cook for one hour, then turning the hens once. Check the temperature and continue cooking if necessary for up to one more hour.

This dish goes well with steamed Yukon potatoes. First, steam the potatoes until slightly soft. Then fry in olive oil until golden brown. Adriano says it is ok to use Pomi peeled chopped tomatoes in a box, if you can't get enough fresh ripe tomatoes. Use blender to mix in the garlic as above.

Quail

Ingredients:

- 8 quail
- 2 onions
- 1 lb hard Italian cheese like Provolone
- 8 bay leaves
- pancetta
- potatoes (optional)
- olive oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Wash and dry the birds. Put a bay leaf, a wedge of an onion, and a finger size slice of cheese into the cavity of each quail. Place quail in Pyrex dish.

Slice the potatoes into wedges and place in spaces between the birds. Cover with lots of pancetta. Drizzle with oil. Cover with aluminum foil and place in oven. After 1 hour, remove the foil and continue to cook in the oven until the quail have browned on top. Turn the quail over and continue to cook. They are done when both sides are brown and the pancetta is crisp.

Servings: 4 people, 2 birds each.

Adriano's Cherry Duck

Approximate ingredients:

- 1 whole duck cleaned and quartered or 8 duck thighs
- 8 lbs fresh pitted cherries
- 2-4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 tablespoon crushed red pepper
- 1/2 bottle of Marsala wine

Serve with rice.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Roast duck for 1 hour on a rack with a pan below to catch the drippings. At the same time, cook cherries and wine in a separate pan. Add sugar to the cherries before cooking. After 1-1.5 hours, combine cherry stew and duck pieces in one large roasting pan. The duck should be buried in the cherries, one layer deep. Cook cherries and duck together for another 1-2 hours (still at 400 degrees). Stir the mixture every 15 minutes or so to prevent the cherries from burning.
Cook until the duck meat looks black

Adriano says you cannot over cook duck, but the cherries can burn if they get dried out. He also reminded me to watch the oven because the duck grease can catch on fire.

Adriano's updates:

1) the purpose of the preliminary cooking is not only cooking. It is also degreasing the meat. Duck meat contains too much fat and it is good to get rid of some of it... but not all! Save about 1/4 of it to be added to the cherries before the final cooking.

2) I have never succeeded in getting enough dried cherries to make as much marmalade as is needed. So I only do the cherry duck when fresh cherries are available and cheap.

3) Unfortunately preparing the cherries is usually the most laborious part of the recipe. The reason is that the cherries each need to be pitted. There should be enough cherries to make marmalade to cover all the duck. Now pitting a lot of cherries is a demanding and serious task. The quality control must be perfect ...Not one pit is allowed in the marmalade period! You do not want one of your dinner guests to break a tooth!!

Diane found a fast cherry pitter that really cuts the preparation time to 1/4. But quality control is difficult to achieve witness the amount of pits that ended up in the marmalade when she used it. I suggest that pitting is best done by hand.

4) The sugar added must be double of what is stated in the recipe if you want "candied duck" to come out of the cooking.

5) The quantity of cherries may depend on the size of the cooking pyrex or whatever is used. The reason is that I need to cook the duck submerged in the marmalade. An important detail I may not have mentioned is that the time you place the duck pieces into the marmalade, the latter should not have any residual water in it otherwise you are going to get "boiled" duck and not candied duck.

Roasted Chicken with Vegetables

“First, have lots of olive oil on hand. Second, buy an extra container of salt. It helps to have a sous-chef around to help too.”

Ingredients:

- 2 whole chickens (roughly 3 lbs each)
- 2 15 oz packages butternut squash cubed
- 6 red bell peppers
- 3 onions
- herbs de Provence (buy at least 35 grams)
- crushed red pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup olive oil (generously used)
- 1 lb of carrots
- 3 lbs small potatoes
- 3 heads of garlic (or 3 packages of pre-peeled)
- 4-8 packages of pancetta (uncooked, in thin slices)
- 1 bottle cheap dry white wine like a pinot grigio

Find a large baking pan like you might use for a turkey. Remove the gizzards and place around the pan (one layer). Wash the chicken well, dry with paper towels. Put 2 chickens in roasting pan breast side up. Liberally sprinkle chickens with herbs-de-Provence, about 2 tablespoons per chicken. Add crushed red pepper to taste. Salt each chicken (about 3x more salt than a typical person would use). Douse the chickens with olive oil, approximately 1/4 cup per chicken.



Roasted Chicken with Vegetables (cont.)

Sharpen large knife. Cut ends off 3 onions, cut each onion in half (not along the equator, but the other way). Peel off skin. Cut into semi-circles about 1/4 inch wide. Place onions all around the chickens. Cube 15 oz of butternut squash (or buy it cubed) and spread around the pan with the chickens.

Get out the Cuisinart with the standard blade. Chop carrots in Cuisinart to less than 1cm diameter each. Sprinkle carrots around the pan with care.

Wash and dry red peppers. Cut tops off red bell peppers. Slice longwise to avoid getting the white stuff. Trim to remove white stuff and seeds. Chop coarsely and put in Cuisinart and pulse about 14 times to chop about the same size as the carrots. Spread red peppers over the other vegetables.

Peel and mince garlic in Cuisinart. Put half of it around on top of vegetables.

Use small peeled potatoes. Cut potatoes in half and spread on top of vegetables.

Pour 3 tablespoons olive oil over vegetables. Liberally salt. Pour 1/3 bottle white wine over the vegetables for moisture.

Using 4 packages of pancetta, cover each breast with one package of pancetta -- do not separate the slices -- use it as you find it in the package.

Cover chicken and vegetables with tinfoil. Place the full baking pan in the oven at 400 degrees on the middle rack. Cook for 1 hour, remove tinfoil after 1 hour, cook for 1 more hour.



Roasted Chicken with Vegetables (cont.)

Cook remaining vegetables in a separate large glass or ceramic baking dish. Follow the same sequence with vegetables, salt, oil, wine, but add the herbs de Provence directly to the veggies. Salt liberally (use the box not a little salt shaker in the Adriano way). Then place the remaining 4 packages of pancetta over the vegetables. Cover the vegetables with tin foil and place in the oven below the chicken pan.

After 1 hour, take off the tin foil to crisp the pancetta. Continue cooking 30 more minutes. Adriano says "The pancetta will crisp up like bacon all over the place". Then turn the chickens over and cook 30 more minutes.



Adriano, Mike, Martin, Marisa and Sara
Dec. 19, 2017, photo by Diane.

Couscous

Let me explain how to cook the couscous needed for the next few recipes. What we say here applies to all couscous dishes, whether lamb, chicken or fish.

You will need to steam the grain. That should take about 30 minutes. To begin, moisten the grain by mixing into it one or two cups as needed of already cooked soup. Once this is done pour the grain into the top part of the steamer. See the picture of the steamer we use.

There is an important caveat that must be mentioned. That is how much water should be put in the bottom part (blue in our display). There should be a sufficient amount for 30 minutes of steaming, but not so much that boiling water ends up wetting the grain. This creates lumps of wet grain that must be discarded.

In restaurants the couscous grain is served separate from the soup. But in my home whether we did it ourselves or it was a gift the couscous dish was served with most of the soup absorbed by the grain. This process cannot be rushed. Add a little soup at each time, waiting in between for the mixture to do the absorbing.

Once the grain has absorbed the soup, we are ready to serve the fish or meat in a bed of couscous.



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Fish Couscous

Ingredients:

- 1 big tomato per person
- lots of olive oil for frying each vegetable
- carrot (½ per person)
- large red peppers (½ per person)
- white onions (½ per person)
- parsley (large bunch)
- salt
- cayenne pepper to taste
- garlic (¼ bulb per person)
- fish (salmon) - 1 steak per person or whole fish filleted, remove scales and bones
- couscous (⅓ lb per person)



For the fish and sauce:

Chop the tomatoes and carrots finely. Sauté with plenty of oil and half of the garlic.

Chop the capsicum (red bell peppers) into chunks and cook in a separate pan in oil until soft. Add these to the tomato sauce.

Chop the onions and again sauté in a pan with the garlic until golden (roughly 15-20 minutes). Add parsley to the onions and fry for a few minutes longer.

Add the pieces of fish to the onions and sprinkle with cayenne pepper. Cook for roughly 15 minutes, turning frequently. Move the fish and onions to the tomato sauce mixture. Allow the fish to cook in the sauce.

Fish Couscous (cont.)

For the couscous:

See the directions for steaming couscous earlier in the book. The couscous is served with the fish and sauce on top.

Mayonnaise on the side would then make the fish delightful. See the recipe for home made mayonnaise in this book.

Sara's story: Around 2006, Adriano came to visit and we decided to cook this fish couscous for a big crowd of mathematicians. We spent the morning looking at every fish and every vegetable in Pike Place Market. Adriano was so excited about the options available. He forever changed my impression of this market. We get home with our beautiful salmon, and Adriano asks if I have a wooden bowl. "No wooden bowl! We cannot cook couscous without a wooden bowl. Ok, I will buy you one." So we go around to many shops looking for a big enough wooden bowl. No shop has one big enough. We try the local thrift store and sure enough they had it! See picture.

***Ask Michelle about her fish scaling story!



Lamb Couscous, Traditional for Easter

3 hours of preparation time

Ingredients:

- 7 artichokes
- 7 medium carrots
- 7 green peppers
- 7 eggplants, Japanese or Graffiti
- 2 celery hearts only (not stalks)
- 5 large, white onions
- 9 medium tomatoes
- ½ box/can of chopped tomatoes-Pomi
- Lamb, ½ lb per person, sliced 2 ½ to 3 inch slices
- ½ tsp ground cloves
- 1 tbs whole allspice ground fresh to a fine powder
- 1 tbs red pepper flakes
- 2 ½ sticks cinnamon ground fresh to a fine powder
- 6 cups couscous

Pare down 7 artichokes to their hearts. Look on the internet for directions on paring artichokes if you were not raised to do it.

Peel 7 medium carrots. Wash 7 green peppers, 9 medium tomatoes, and 7 eggplants. Keep the carrots, green peppers, tomatoes whole for while frying.

Fry whole carrots until golden. Fry whole peppers until lightly crusted and brown. Fry artichokes until golden. Cut eggplant in half lengthwise and fry until golden. Cut celery hearts into thin

strips and fry until golden. Put every vegetable in a separate bowl once cooked.

Put 5 large, white onions in Cuisinart and chop finely. Chop tomatoes and put in a separate bowl. Fry onions until golden.

Fry lamb in a big pot with oil and sprinkle the meat with the crushed spices. Add salt. Add warm water to cover the meat in the pot. Add the onions, then add the fresh and boxed tomatoes.

Now add celery to the meat and cook 20 minutes. Add artichokes, then carrots and cook for 20 minutes, then add peppers and cook 30 minutes, add eggplant last.

Grain: Fill a steamer with the couscous. Put water in the steamer. “Call for directions” says Diane, or see the additional pages on cooking couscous. Steam for 30 minutes. When the grain is cooked, put it in a large wooden bowl.

Remove vegetables from the broth pot. All of the soup should be absorbed by the couscous grain. This must be done slowly, to permit the grain to do the absorbing. Little soup at each time is best. Waiting in between for the mixture to do the absorbing

Ladle soup into the grain and mix well. Let it rest for a while before you serve it with the meat and vegetables. “Harissa is must for enjoying Adriano’s couscous.”

Pasta a la Norma

Ingredients:

Olive oil

2 lbs eggplants, preferably graffiti but Japanese or Chinese is ok

2 boxes of Pomi tomatoes

15 medium cloves of garlic

Basil fresh

Salt and red pepper flakes



Cut the eggplant in approximately one inch size pieces. Fry in plenty of olive oil until golden on all sides. Then put garlic in cuisinant processor and blend the Pomi if it is the chopped tomatoes. Just add the chopped garlic if you used the strained Pomi. Put in a frying pan and add half a cup of olive oil. Add salt and red pepper flakes.

Use medium high heat and simmer the sauce for at least an hour and until the oil raises to the top. Once the sauce is cooked add the fried eggplants and cook for another 15 minutes. Turn the heat off. Finally add loosely chopped fresh basil. Add lots of basil and mix well into the sauce.

Pasta alla Matriciana



Ingredients:

- 1 large onion finely cut
- olive oil
- 5 good sized tomatoes peeled and chopped (or chopped Pomi tomatoes)
- 1 red bell pepper cut into strips
- crushed red pepper to taste
- herbs de provence
- 1-2 packages of pancetta

Cut the pancetta into strips of similar size as the red bell pepper.

Cook onions in a pan with olive oil and peppers and fry a bit over high heat (but watch carefully). Add the pancetta and fry a little more. Cook the mixture, adding the crushed red pepper and herbs de provence. You can add a little water if it seems too thick, but be careful not to add too much.

Add the tomatoes and cook over medium high heat, adding more water to prevent from burning if necessary. Serve over pasta. Linguine cooked al dente goes well with this sauce.

Pasta alla Carrettiera

Adriano: "The carrettiere is the guy that guides th carretta. He doesn't have much time, so he has to cook fast."

Serves 2

Ingredients:

5 ripe good sized, fresh high quality red tomatoes

Two handfuls fresh basil,

1 head of garlic, minced

½ cup olive oil

Salt

Course ground pepper (good for any pasta)

Capelli d'angelo pasta (angel hair)

Chop the tomatoes and garlic in the Cuisinart. Add the olive oil, salt, pepper and run the Cuisinart again. Cut the fresh basil with scissors and mix with the sauce.

Cook the pasta following the Adriano's Ten Commandments. Angel hair pasta cooks very fast, so get everyone to the table early!

Diane: "This was the first dinner that Adriano made for me in Montreal in October 1972."



Tunisian Carrots

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ lbs small carrots
- 2 small lemons (or one large)
- 1 head of garlic, peeled and minced (packaged is ok, use whole package)
- ½ tbsp red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¾ tbsp salt
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1 tsp caraway seeds (use fresh seeds)
- 1 tsp coriander seeds (use fresh seeds)

Cut carrots in ½-inch pieces. Steam until tender. Test they are soft, not al dente. Let carrots cool a bit. Then add olive oil, minced garlic, and red wine vinegar. “Fork the juice of the lemon(s).” For the spices, take an equal amount of caraway and coriander seeds and grind in a coffee mill. Add to carrots. Salt to taste. Optional, sprinkle red pepper flakes to spice it up a little.

Adriano reconstructed this recipe from Nonna’s way of preparing carrots (without the red pepper flakes). Everyone loves these!



Avocado Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 avocado
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 T red wine vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Cut avocado in half and remove the stone but leave the skin of the avocado on. In each of the halves of the avocado, cut the flesh into thin slices. Rotate 60 degrees and cut again into slices. Rotate again 60 degrees and cut again into slices, or simply mash the avocado. Drizzle olive oil, red wine vinegar and salt and pepper on each half of the avocado and serve.



Mayonnaise

Ingredients:

- 3 egg yolks
- Dijon mustard
- red wine vinegar
- olive oil
- salt
- lemon juice

Mix yolks. Add oil, little by little, whisking all the time until it is nasty looking (my guess is that this phrase is Jennifer's interpretation). Add a little vinegar, some mustard, a little salt and some lemon juice. Whisk slowly until thickened. This takes time and patience.

Pesto

Ingredients:

- Lots of chopped fresh basil
- Chopped walnuts
- Grated imported Provolone
- Olive oil
- 2 heads of garlic

Combine equal volume of basil, walnuts and grated cheese in Cuisinart. Add garlic and olive oil to make the mixture into a paste. It's delicious!

Adriano uses walnuts instead of pine nuts because the pine nuts tend to be rancid in the US. They were better in Tunisia. They were different there.

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Bon Appétit !