

Swiss Chard with Borlotti Beans

(Verdure con Fagioli)

SERVES 6-8; PHOTO ON PAGE 55
COOK TIME: 2 HOURS 25 MINUTES,
PLUS OVERNIGHT SOAKING

Winemaker Emidio Pepe's wife, Rosa, folds sautéed garlic and aromatic vegetables into this brothy beans-and-greens side dish to add body and an earthy depth.

- 2 cups dried borlotti or cranberry beans, soaked overnight and drained
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 7 lb. Swiss chard, trimmed, leaves and tender stems roughly chopped
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 12 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 4 stalks celery, cut into 1/4" pieces
- 3 carrots, cut into 1/4" pieces
- 1 medium yellow onion, cut into 1/4" pieces
- 2 cups chicken or vegetable stock

Boil beans and 6 cups water in a 6-qt. saucepan. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, covered, until beans are tender,

about 2 hours. Drain beans; set aside. Fill saucepan with salted water; boil. Cook chard until wilted and stems are tender, 4-6 minutes; drain and transfer chard to an ice bath until chilled, and then drain and squeeze dry. Add 1/4 cup oil and the chile flakes to saucepan; heat over medium. Cook garlic, celery, carrots, and onion until golden, 8-10 minutes. Add reserved beans and chard, the stock, salt, and pepper; simmer until stock is slightly reduced, 6-8 minutes. Transfer to a serving dish; drizzle with remaining oil.

Porchetta-Style Chicken

SERVES 4-6; PHOTO ON PAGE 55
COOK TIME: ABOUT 2 HOURS

Inspired by the traditional pork classic, tender marinated chicken breasts are spread with garlic paste, herbs, and salty pancetta before being rolled and grilled in this recipe adapted from one used at Taverna 58, a restaurant in the seaside town of Pescara.

- 2 1-1/2 lb. boneless, skin-on double (attached) chicken breasts
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1/2 cup olive oil

- 1/3 cup honey
- 3 tbsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 2 tbsp. minced rosemary, plus 1/4 cup packed leaves
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
- 3 lb. Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1" pieces
- 12 cloves garlic (6 peeled and smashed, 6 mashed into a paste)
- 1 tbsp. ground fennel
- 3 oz. (about 12 slices) thinly sliced pancetta
- Butcher's string, for tying

1 Using the flat side of a mallet, pound flesh side of chicken until 1/4" thick; set aside. Whisk wine, 1/3 cup oil, the honey, 3 tbsp. salt, the minced rosemary, and 1/2 tsp. pepper in a bowl. Add chicken and toss to coat; cover with plastic wrap and chill 1 hour.

2 Heat oven to 400°. Toss remaining oil, the rosemary leaves, potatoes, smashed garlic, salt, and pepper on a baking sheet. Roast, stirring as needed, until golden and just cooked, about 1 hour; keep warm.

3 Meanwhile, heat a charcoal grill or set a gas grill to medium-high. (Alternatively, heat a cast-iron grill pan over medium-high.) Remove chicken from marinade and pat dry. Place 1 piece chicken skin side

Spaghetti alla Chitarra with Lamb and Sweet Pepper Ragù

(Ragù d'Agnello e Peperoni)

SERVES 6-8; PHOTO ON PAGE 52
COOK TIME: 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES

Lighter than the rich beef and pork ragùs of other Italian regions. Here, bell peppers are mixed into the sauce and cooked briefly so they retain their shape and lend a pop of sweetness. It is typically served over spaghetti alla chitarra (pasta from Abruzzo that is shaped on a tool that resembles a guitar), though it makes a delicious sauce for almost any type of long noodle.

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 lb. ground lamb
- 3 bay leaves
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1 1/2 cups lamb or chicken stock
- 1 (15-oz.) can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand
- 2 large red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded, and sliced 1/4" thick
- 1 large yellow bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and sliced 1/4" thick
- 1 lb. spaghetti alla chitarra (eataly.com) or thick spaghetti
- Grated Pecorino Romano, for garnish

1 Heat oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high. Cook lamb, stirring and breaking up meat into small pieces, until browned, 6-8 minutes. Add bay leaves, garlic, salt, and pepper; cook until garlic is golden, 2-3 minutes. Stir in wine; cook until reduced by half, 2-3 minutes. Add stock, tomatoes, salt, and pepper; bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce is slightly thickened, 35-40 minutes. Stir in peppers; cook until peppers are tender but not falling apart, 4-6 minutes. Discard bay leaves.

2 Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta until al dente, 10-12 minutes. Drain pasta and transfer to pan with sauce. Add salt and pepper and, using tongs, toss pasta in sauce. Divide pasta between bowls; garnish with pecorino.

Crespelle en Brodo

(Broth with Crêpes)

SERVES 6-8; PHOTO ON PAGE 52
COOK TIME: ABOUT 5 HOURS

The key to producing this robust, deeply golden-hued broth, from winemaker Emidio Pepe's wife, Rosa, is taking the time to properly brown the chicken wings and beef bones. The rendered fat develops sucs, or fond, the browned bits of meat left in the pan that increase the broth's flavor.

For the brodo:

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 lb. chicken wings
- 1 lb. beef bones, cut into 2" pieces (ask your butcher to do this)
- 2 carrots, roughly chopped
- 2 large yellow onions, roughly chopped
- 2 stalks celery, roughly chopped
- 1 clove garlic, unpeeled, crushed
- 3 sprigs parsley
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 plum tomato, cored and halved

For the crespelle and serving:

- 1/4 cup minced parsley, plus more
- 5 tbsp. flour
- 1 tbsp. grated parmesan, plus more
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 5 eggs
- Freshly ground black pepper, for serving

1 Make the brodo: Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high. Working in batches, cook chicken wings and beef bones until browned, 35-40 minutes; transfer to a bowl. Add carrots, onions, celery, and garlic to pan; cook until golden, 6-8 minutes. Return wings and bones to pan. Add parsley, bay leaf, tomato, and 20 cups water; simmer, skimming as needed, for 4 hours. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean saucepan; keep warm.

2 Make the crespelle: Whisk parsley, flour, parmesan, oil, nutmeg, eggs, and 1 cup water in a bowl until smooth. Heat an 8" nonstick skillet over medium-high. Working in batches, pour 2 tbsp. batter into skillet while tilting skillet to let batter cover bottom completely. Cook until crespelle is golden on the bottom, 1-2 minutes. Flip and cook 1 minute more; transfer to a plate. Roll each crespelle into a cigar shape. To serve, divide crespelle cigars between shallow bowls and ladle reserved brodo over top; garnish with parsley, parmesan, and pepper.

He assures me that the best way to sample various facets of *la tradizione* is by getting a tasting menu. He starts by sending out *arrosticini*, a local specialty of flame-grilled mutton skewers, followed by charcuteries and terrines, all of which pair splendidly with a Montepulciano d'Abruzzo by the legendary winemaker Emidio Pepe. Older vintages of Pepe's wines are the ones more likely to make their way to the U.S., fetching hundreds of dollars per bottle, but one of the joys of coming to Italy is that Pepe sells young vintages of his earthy, bold, untamed wine in abundance here, and at much lower prices.

With the stage set, the main course arrives, Taverna 58's chicken "in porchetta style." The recipe begins with chicken marinated in olive oil, honey, fresh rosemary, salt, and white wine. When it's ready, the chef ties it up like a porchetta, using raffia to wrap it around bamboo rods, and grills it. As good as it is, juicy with crackling skin, the pièce de résistance for me comes at the end of the meal, when Marrone wheels a cart to the table and whips up some fresh zabaglione with marsala—"con grande passione," as he puts it.

The next day, crossing more *regi tratturi* (centuries-old *transumanza* pathways), I drive southwest to meet Nunzio Marcelli, president of the Abruzzo Shepherds Association. I've never met a shepherd before, let alone an alpha shepherd president. I suppose I'd been visualizing a man leaning on a wizened hazelnut crook wearing a long gray cloak, but when Marcelli comes out to greet me, he strolls over in a simple polo shirt and jeans. Even shepherds have Casual Fridays, it seems—although Marcelli assures me that many traditions remain intact here. "Just wait until you try our cheeses," says Marcelli, a bearded, tanned, potato-fingered outdoorsman.

After we amble around his rustic *agriturismo*—filled with sheep, goats, chickens, dogs, and children—we join a colleague of Marcelli's bringing a herd of goats down the hill. The shepherd's job is to keep his flocks healthy and protect them from predators (these woods are still home to bears, wolves, and wild boars). Historically, the region was known for wool, but today, sheep and goats are mainly used for culinary purposes, as

