

Be Inspired

Food – Wine – Travel

Issue 015 | 08 Mar 2023



A month of

Ligurian

Inspired by **Lucio Galletto**



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How To Be inspired



We want to inspire your culinary adventures every way we can – **first you need to read the ingredients info on Page 3** – it's important!

If you're a skip-the-stories-and-just-get-on-with-it kind of cook, use the links in the contents table to go directly to this month's recipes with video links. If you like a printed copy, use the **PRINT-FRIENDLY** link below for a black & white pdf of just run sheets and recipes with video QR codes.

Our magazine-style recipe booklet sets the scene for this month's theme, including a video of our expert guide discussing their cuisine and a link to their playlist of favourite tunes to cook to. There's details on the food and wine we will be enjoying and some travel tips too for a vicarious holiday or to help inspire the next real one!

PRINT FRIENDLY RECIPES

Join the Be Inspired Community

On Line Forum [#Beinspiredfood](#)
[@beinspiredfoodwinetravel](#)

We have a very active online community of cooks, chefs and producers who love to share their inspiration, ask and answer questions, offer tips and substitution and sourcing ideas. [Please join us here.](#) If Instagram's your thing, we'd love to see photos of your creations. Please tag us [#beinspiredfood](#) and follow us [@beinspiredfoodwinetravel](#).

Join us at Our 'Graduation' Dinners

All of our kits are available for three months then, in the following month we hold a 'graduation' dinner with our expert guide. These are wonderful evenings full of food, wine and culinary camaraderie where we get to meet each other – and our chefs – and taste some dishes rarely seen on restaurant menus. Look out for your invitation!





Shopping List

Here's the ingredients you'll need for all four menus – those unlikely to last 4 weeks may be listed twice. Some are available from our Market Place, we've included preferred brands where we have them and you can read more about some of the awesome producers we work with on [page 55](#).

Category	Ingredient	Menu 1	Menu 2	Menu 3	Menu 4
100g	butter		✓		
330ml	milk			✓	✓
100g	Parmigiano Reggiano	✓	✓	✓	✓
50g	Pecorino Sardo, young	✓	✓	✓	✓
500g	ricotta			✓	✓
500g	calamari or squid	✓			
100g	beef mince		✓		
1	spatchcock, 600g			✓	
200g	veal backstrap		✓		
125g	chickpea flour				✓
800g	flour, plain	✓	✓	✓	✓
65g	icing sugar		✓		
1 tin	Mutti Polpa, 210g (crushed tomatoes)		✓		
60g	potato starch		✓		
250g	rock salt			✓	
25g	sultanas				✓
2g	yeast, dried	✓			
25g	almonds, slivered				✓
1	nutmeg		✓		✓
30g	pine nuts	✓	✓		
1	vanilla bean		✓		
60g	walnuts			✓	
1 bunch	asparagus, green		✓		

Category	Ingredient	Menu 1	Menu 2	Menu 3	Menu 4
	basil (20 small leaves)	✓			
	curly endive (about 270g)				✓
5	eggs		✓	✓	✓
1	fennel, baby			✓	
1 head	garlic	✓	✓	✓	✓
250g	green peas in the pod	✓			
1	leek, medium-size				✓
2	lemons		✓	✓	✓
1	onion, brown - small	✓	✓		
2	onions, red			✓	✓
1	orange			✓	✓
1	oregano		✓	✓	✓
1	parsley, flat-leaf		✓	✓	✓
1	potatoes, floury - 500g			✓	
2 sprigs	rosemary	✓			✓
100g	spinach, baby	✓			
6	zucchini flowers			✓	
	sourdough bread		✓		
250g	chestnut flour				✓
2	panini		✓		
15g	porcini mushrooms, dried		✓		
60g	castor sugar				✓

Visit our Market Place to Be Inspired

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Market place

Email Roberta with any questions about sourcing or substituting ingredients at roberta@food-wine-travel.com



Lucio Galletto

Lucio Galletto grew up in a family of restaurateurs, his parents opening a small beachside kiosk in Bocca di Magra on the eastern Italian Riviera in the 1940s, which evolved into a 200-seat restaurant that is now run by his cousin Mario.

Lucio earnt pocket money first chopping parsley and later waiting tables.

He followed his heart to Australia in 1977 when he met and married the vivacious Sally and they opened their first restaurant in Balmain in 1981, moving it to Paddington a couple of years later, where it remained for 38 years (closing in January 2021).

Neighbouring artists soon cottoned on to Lucio's seriously good food and hospitality and made it their local.

When Lucio framed a scribble Sidney Nolan left behind on one of his docketts, Nolan was so flattered that he presented Lucio with a painting, and so Lucio's fabulous art collection began and, over the years, the walls of the sunny corner terrace became covered with canvases large and small by Australian artists including John Olsen, Tim Storrier, John Beard, Garry Shead and Luke Sciberras.

In December 2021, the next generation of Gallettos, Matteo and Michaela, with Matteo's wife Dieuwke, opened Lucio's Marina in Noosa (see [page 12](#)).

This sun-filled spot on the waterfront channels all the best of Lucio's famed hospitality as well as keeping the legendary green tagliolini with crab and tomato alive.

Needless to say, Lucio can't help but make the odd guest appearance in the dining room there too.

Buon Appetito!



Ligurian Food

“It strikes me,” Lucio says, “that Australia and Liguria are very similar – pleasant climate, close to the sea, great produce, and regular infusions of new ideas from other places – which all make for interesting eating.”

“Ligurian cuisine is harmonious: all the ingredients are given a fair go, nothing is overpowering. It’s a green cuisine, simple, perfumed, subtle in the flavour combinations,” he adds.

Squeezed between the Mediterranean and the mountain chains of the Alps and Apennines, the Ligurians have learnt to make the most of every square metre of land by building steep terraces and foraging in the hills for aromatic wild herbs, green leaves, chestnuts and mushrooms – and along the shoreline for mussels, squid and small fish.

Traditionally the mountains, that were a barrier to the cold of the north, also meant it was often easier to trade across the sea than with neighbouring Italian regions.

Pecorino came from Sardinia and was incorporated into their famous

pesto along with pine nuts from Pisa; salted anchovies and cod from Spain were also readily embraced.

Ligurians have long been associated with the sea, but more as mariners than fisherman, Christopher Columbus the most notable among them.

After months at sea on preserved rations, sailors craved fresh vegetables and aromatic herbs and so, despite its long coastline, seafood didn’t play a strong role in the traditional diet.

Even within Liguria there are sub-regional differences, the coast is divided at Genoa into the Riviera di Levante (to the east named for the rising sun) and Riviera di Ponente (referring to the western setting sun).

Lucio’s hometown of Sarzana is in the east near the Tuscan border, in what was once Lunigiana – an ancient region straddling modern day eastern Liguria, northern Tuscany and western Emilia – which also has its own distinctive sub-regional cuisine.



Watch

Lucio and Roberta discuss Ligurian food



Listen

Lucio’s favourite music to cook to on Spotify



Explore

Reminisce at Lucio’s Paddington



Experience

Top 5 Italian Fine Diners

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BONUS

Avanti Potato Ricer

From the smoothest mash potato and lightest gnocchi to fruit purees, sauces, soups and impressive desserts (like chestnut mont blanc/vermicelles), you'll wonder how you ever did without this handy kitchen device.

Features include: Sturdy stainless steel
3 interchangeable disc blades
(fine, medium, coarse)

Long handles for maximum leverage with
integrated bowl rest

**Add an Avanti Potato Ricer to your next
Be Inspired Kit order for free delivery**



Image by @another_food_blogger

FREE GNOCCHI BOARD*

* For a limited time. With the purchase of an Avanti Potato Ricer from the Be Inspired Market Place. Conditions apply



Pesto

Lucio refers to pesto as *Sua Maestà il Pesto* (His Majesty the Pesto). Pesto means ‘to pound’, and a range of sauces are made by pounding ingredients together, but the one that springs most readily to mind is the basil pesto of Liguria and that’s what we’re discussing here.

The marble mortar and wooden pestle traditionally used are said to release the maximum aroma and flavour from the basil. Today many people use a blender, the cutting action of which may impede the release of the leaves’ full aroma, warn the pursists.

Here are Lucio’s tips for the perfect pesto:

Pesto is served *a crudo* (raw) so always stir it through the pasta off the heat.

If making pesto in a blender, add all the ingredients at once and pulse as

briefly as possible to minimise the heat generated.

Pine nuts are always added raw, not toasted.

Cheese is always a blend of parmesan (ideally Parmigiano Reggiano) and pecorino (ideally Sardo).

Pesto is traditionally used to dress a range of pastas, as well as being dolloped generously into minestrone. Some classic pesto and pasta combinations are:

Trenette, a hard wheat pasta cooked with green beans and potato.

Trofie, little twists of pasta traditionally made with wheat and chestnut flour.

Corzetti, fresh pasta either in the shape of a coin or a figure-eight.

Mandili di sea (literally ‘silk handkerchiefs’), very fine egg-based rag pasta.

Potato gnocchi
(see our recipe page 36)

And **testaroli**, Liguria’s ancient flatbread pasta.



Focaccia

Lucio calls focaccia ‘Liguria’s answer to pizza’ and I see what he means – it’s topped and stuffed with all sorts of simple ingredients to serve as an antipasto, as well as being eaten plain to soak up sauces and dunk into soups.

Authentic focaccia is quite different to some of the fluffy, tasteless bread sold under this name and is always made with a generous amount of olive oil in the dough and drizzled over the top.

Focaccia is often flavoured with herbs (notably rosemary, sage or marjoram), olives or thin slices of onion, and there’s even a version stuffed with soft stracchino cheese called Focaccia de Recco after the town that is now most famous for it.

Try these additions to our basic focaccia recipe on [page 24](#)

Rosemary – after adding oil and salt to the top of the dough, sprinkle on 1 tablespoon rosemary leaves

Olive – after adding oil and salt to the top of the dough, scatter with 2 tablespoons pitted Taggiasche olives

Onion – drizzle 1 tablespoon of oil over the top, sprinkle with salt, add 1 very finely sliced small red onion and drizzle with remaining tablespoon

of oil; bake until onion is slightly charred (maybe 5 minutes longer).

Potato – drizzle 1 tablespoon of oil over the top of the dough and sprinkle with salt. Toss 2 small, peeled, thinly sliced potatoes with 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil and arrange them on top. Drizzle with another tablespoon of oil. Bake for 20-30 minutes, until potato is golden; after 15 minutes or so baste the potato occasionally with the oil around the side of the tin.



Image by @another_food_blogger

Available at:

Be Inspired
Market place

FREE*When you purchase an
Avanti Potato Ricer

*Conditions apply

Gnocchi

Wonderfully light gnocchi are very impressive and very easy to make if you remember three simple guidelines: minimum moisture, flour and handling.

Rather than boil the potatoes, bake them on a bed of rock salt to draw out as much moisture as possible; a wooden work surface is also handy for absorbing moisture.

Make the dough while the potatoes are as hot as possible, giving off excess moisture via steam.

A ricer or mouli is best as you can pass the unpeeled potato through

them, alternatively wait until they're just cool enough to handle then peel and pass through a fine mesh sieve.

Use a pastry scraper or firm spatula to mix the dough so that you don't overwork it.

Add just enough flour to hold the dough together and use a minimal amount when rolling it.

Gnocchi can be cooked a day or even 2 ahead. Cool in a bowl of iced water, drain well, toss in a little olive oil, spread on a plate, cover and refrigerate. Reheat by adding to a large saucepan of boiling water for a minute or so.

Leftover gnocchi are great baked topped with cheese.



Italian Fine Dining Sydney-style

I love all things Italian. And Sydney is more spoilt for choice than ever before, with so many places serving authentic Italian food, lots of it regional. Our offering covers the full spectrum, from cutting-edge-modern to Nonna-style-traditional, from big-night-out to grab-a-bite-on-the-way-home. We have great pizze, pasta, gelati and so much more – and I love it all – but these are the tried and tested ones I find myself going back to for a fine dining experience Italian-style.



Pilu at Freshwater

Sipping a sbagliato negroni, nibbling carta di musica with house-made ricotta and watching the sunset colours over the ocean here is my favourite end to the week. Add pecorino brodo, Giovanni Pilu's roast suckling pig, deep-fried-cheese-filled-honey-drizzled seadas and a list full of little-known Sardinian wines and beers ... and you get the picture.



Buon Ricordo

There are few more comfortably familiar dining rooms than the beautiful, art-filled space created by Armando Percuocco in 1987 and passed on to his head chef David Wright 30 years later. The old (deep-fried harbour prawns) sits alongside the new (grilled scampi with a simple lemon and olive oil dressing). Pasta is still perfectly al dente, wine matches are spot on thanks to veteran sommelier Nick Caraturo and white jacketed waiters plate dishes tableside with old world flair.



a'Mare

Is a'Mare Sydney's most romantic restaurant? Glamorous harbour side setting, check! Caviar & Champagne, check! Old school table-side service, check! Superb food and wine, check! Ahhhh a'Mare... I think I'm in love!

Check out more Italian fine diners [here](#) and our fave casual Italian spots [here](#)
www.BelInspired.au



Inspired Drinks Pairing

In collaboration with Roberto Dessanti of Euro Concepts



[Order here](#)

Liguria's best-known wines grow on steep terraces around the famous 'five lands' of Cinque Terra. These cliff-side vineyards are famous for delicate white wines made from a blend of grapes including bosco, albarola and vermentino. The main red wine region is Dolceacqua on the French border; the local rossese grape is made into an aromatic, earthy red as well as often being used in rosés both in Liguria and Provence. Due to the limited land available, Liguria's wine production is small and most is consumed locally with very little exported. So we've rounded up some wines from neighbouring regions, which I really enjoy with this month's menu – I hope you will to.

Menu 1

Enrico Serafino Grifo del Quartaro Gavi di Gavi DOCG 2021

Made from 100% cortese grapes in neighbouring Piedmont, this pale dry white is a great allrounder. Its body and acid work beautifully with the richness of the squid dish, and it's also deliciously refreshing with the pie and has enough fruit to balance the orange in the spatchcock.

Menu 2

Tenuta di Burchino Chianti Superiore DOCG 2019

Made from mainly sangiovese, with a splash of cilieggiolo and canaiolo, this classic red wine from neighbouring Tuscany is perfect with our Ligurian tomoxelle (veal involtini). I like it with the pie too as it works well with the earthiness of the greens and the richness of the egg.

Menu 3

Domaine de Grandpré Cuvée Favorite Rosé Cotes de Provence AOP 2021

This rosé from just across the border in Provence is made from a blend of grenache, mourvedre and cinsault. I love the way its floral nose and slight fruitiness plays off the sweetness of the fennel and orange in the spatchcock dish, then wraps up with a good long, bone-dry finish. It's good with the pie and OK with the squid as well.

Menu 4

Luigi Bosca Cuvee Brut Nature de Monsieur Bosca

While all of this month's wines work nicely with the scarpazza (greens and egg pie), the stand out for me is this fizz from Asti in Piedmont. The acid works well with the rich olive oil pastry and the sweetness of the leek – and I like the contrast of some bubbles with such a rustic dish. If you're a fan of sparkling wine, you'll enjoy it with the squid and spatchcock too.



Lucio's Marina

Fancy a quick staycation? Head to sunny Noosa and lunch or dinner at Lucio's Marina.

Matteo Galletto grew up in the dining room of his parents' Paddington restaurant, doing his homework in the front room before helping set the tables for dinner service.

After finishing school he became a presence on the dining room floor, making a mean cocktail, advising on daily specials and following in his father's footsteps.

During the COVID lockdown, it was he and sister Michela who helped the family pivot so quickly

to a fine-dining take away model, turning that lovely front room into an impromptu store full of heat-and-serve meals then, as restaurants started reopening, The Thirsty Horse wine bar.

So when Lucio's Paddington closed in January 2021, it's hardly surprising that Matteo and his wife Dieuwke (who was a chef at Lucio's) opened Lucio's Marina on the Noosa River in November 2021, with a little help from Mum, Dad and sis.

This waterfront seafood trattoria has all the charm, and some of the artwork, of the original Lucio's, with a casual Noosa vibe and décor, killer cocktail list and wonderful raw seafood selection.

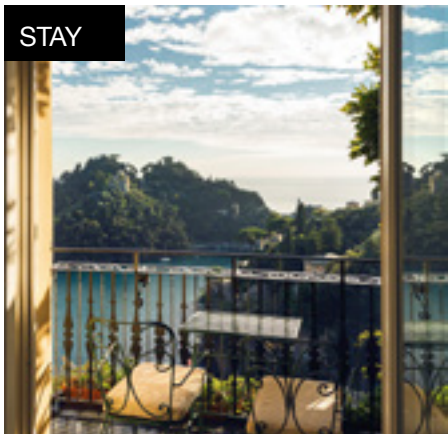
Lucio regulars, many of whom have retired to Noosa or visit regularly, are delighted that classics like the signature green tagliolini with crabmeat have made the journey north as well.

www.luciosmarina.com



Lucio's Liguria

STAY



Splendido, Portofino

Portofino, one of the best-known towns on the Italian Riviera, is home to the hilltop Splendido, a wonderful hotel full of old world charm. Enjoy lunch or dinner on the wisteria-covered balcony of their elegant La Terrazza restaurant overlooking the harbour and Mediterranean beyond.

EAT



Capannina Ciccio, Bocca di Magra

Started by Lucio's parents, aunt and uncle in 1950 as a small seafood and gelato shack on the banks of the Magra River. Today Ciccio's is a big bustling restaurant with bar, gelateria and barbecue, run by Lucio's cousin Mario. Lucio says the pasta, seafood and desserts are still as good as they were when his mama, Bruna, and Mario's mama, Anna, were in the kitchen. Be sure to tell them Lucio sent you!

DRINK



Vermentino from Giacomelli Azienda Agricola, Castelnovo Magra

The hilltop village of Castelnovo Magra has a special place in Lucio's heart – it's where he went to school and where he and Sally were married. It's named for the Medieval castle overlooking the Ligurian coastline. Just below the castle walls lies the historic Boboli vineyard where Roberto Petacchi grows grapes for his flagship Colli di Luni DOC Vermentino.



Be Inspired

Come and explore

A Month of Thai

inspired by

David Thompson

He's back... at least virtually! I've known David Thompson for over 25 years and (although I'd hate him to hear me say it), it's been a pleasure!

His passion for food and the Thai people, their rich history and traditions – combined with his erudite, articulate, quirky communication style – make every encounter a fascinating opportunity to learn. While he's spent much of the past 20 years globe-trotting or at home in Bangkok, this multi-award winning, Michelin-starred chef always finds time to share his inspiration and knowledge with the international community of passionate cooks who credit him with teaching them so much about the complex world of Thai cuisine.

Now I'm going to share his inspiration, recipes and cooking tips with you! Join us for a month of sweet, sour, salty, bitter, chilli-fuelled fun as we explore Thai salads, soups, curries, stir-fries and more.

Recipes+Video Pack available now

This Month's Menus

[PRINT FRIENDLY RECIPES](#)

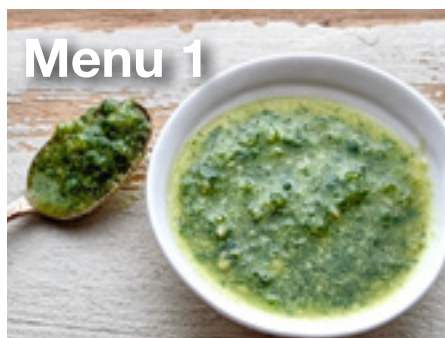
We generally design our month of recipes into four 2-course meals, with a suggestion for a simple third course and a link to that recipe on our website.

We want you to be inspired to cook at your own pace, to mix and match recipes to suit yourself, so feel free to go off menu, just check use-by

dates and storage notes on [page 3](#) as some ingredients have a shorter shelf-life than others.

The ingredients for Menus 1 and 2 are in your first fortnightly delivery, and those for Menus 3 and 4 in the second delivery.

Menu 1



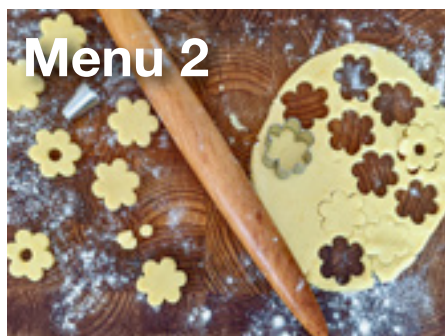
Primo [Testaroli with Pesto](#)

Secondo [Calamari with Peas & Spinach](#)

Contorni [Focaccia](#)

Suggested Dolce [Pine Nut Cookies](#)

Menu 2



Suggested Primo [Bruschetta with Broad Beans](#)

Secondo [Tomaxelle \(Veal Involtini\)](#)
[Tuna Involtini](#) (*pescatarian option*)

Contorni [Grilled Asparagus with Pecorino](#)

Dolce [Canestrelli \(Shortbread Cookies\)](#)

Menu 3



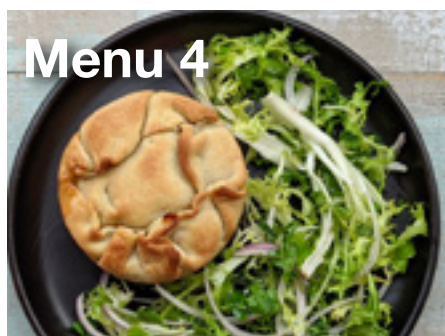
Primo [Potato Gnocchi with Walnut Sauce](#)

Secondo [Spatchcock with Fennel & Orange](#)
[Salmon with Fennel & Orange](#) (*pescatarian option*)

Contorni [Ricotta-Filled Zucchini Flowers](#)

Suggested Dolce [Spungata \(Apricot Tart\)](#)

Menu 4



Suggested Primo [Trofie with Pesto, Beans & Potato](#)

Secondo [Scarpazza \(Greens Pie\)](#)

Contorni [Escarole Salad](#)
[Farinata \(Chickpea Pancake\)](#)

Dolce [Chestnut & Ricotta Cake](#)

The recipes in this booklet are either from [Lucio's Ligurian Kitchen](#) by Lucio Galletto and David Dale (with minor adaptations) or by Roberta Muir inspired by Lucio's dishes and recipes.

Pesto Genovese



Although pesto means ‘to pound’, this classic Ligurian sauce is traditionally made by using a wooden pestle to crush (rather than pound) basil, pine nuts, garlic and cheese together in a marble mortar.

Crushing the basil this way releases the maximum aroma and flavour and also allows the cook to smell each ingredient as it’s added and adjust to taste, as every batch of basil, garlic, and even cheese, is slightly different.

Today, most people use a food processor, which is an acceptable shortcut as long as you pulse it for the minimum possible time so the delicate ingredients don’t heat up.

Every part of Liguria – possibly every Ligurian cook – has their own take on this classic sauce, often varying the amount of garlic and ratio and sharpness of the cheese; sometimes different herbs are added and walnuts used instead of pine nuts.

Near the Tuscan border, where Lucio comes from, the pesto is very delicate, made with the smallest basil leaves and just a hint of garlic, which is the recipe he’s sharing with us here.

See [page 7](#) for more tips on making the perfect pesto.

Basil Sauce

Pesto Genovese

Makes about ¼ cup (serves 2 as a pasta sauce)



Watch the recipe video

20	small basil leaves, stems removed
1	very small clove garlic, peeled
Salt flakes, to taste	
2 tsp	pine nuts
1 tbsp	freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano (about 3g)
1 tbsp	freshly grated young Pecorino Sardo (about 3g)
2 tbsp	extra virgin olive oil

Pinch any stems off the basil.

Cut garlic in half, remove and discard the centre germ, chop roughly.

Place basil, garlic, a good pinch of salt, pine nuts, Parmigiano and Pecorino in the bowl of a small food processor with about half the oil and pulse to combine.

Add remaining oil and pulse just enough to form a paste.

Roberta's Tip

If you're not using the pesto immediately, reserve a little of the oil, transfer pesto to a sterilised glass jar and gently drizzle reserved oil over the top to protect it from oxidising. Stored like this it will keep refrigerated for weeks.



- 1**
- Grasp the arms and tentacles. Pull firmly to separate the head from the tube (try not to break the ink sac).



- 5**
- Push your thumb between the tube and a side fin to break the skin.



- 2**
- Cut below the eyes. Discard the eyes and everything above them.



- 6**
- Holding the side fins, twist the tip of the tube to pull it away from the skin.

Grasp the side fins and pull down to peel off the skin around the tube.



- 3**
- Push the beak (mouth) out from between the arms.



- 7**
- If you are cutting rings, wash the inside well; otherwise, place the knife inside the tube to cut it open along the obvious seam. Lay the tube out flat and working across the tube (not top to bottom), wipe both sides firmly to remove any membrane.



- 4**
- Remove the quill from inside the tube.



- 8**
- To honeycomb the squid, hold the knife at 30-degrees angle and score inside the tube on the diagonal. Turn tube 180 degrees and score again to create a cross hatch pattern.

Menu 1



Primo

Testaroli with Pesto

Secondo

Calamari with Peas & Spinach

Contorni

Focaccia

Suggested Dolce

Pine Nut Cookies

Running Order

Day Before

- Make testaroli pancakes
- Make pesto
- Clean and cut calamari
- Make focaccia dough (refrigerate overnight)

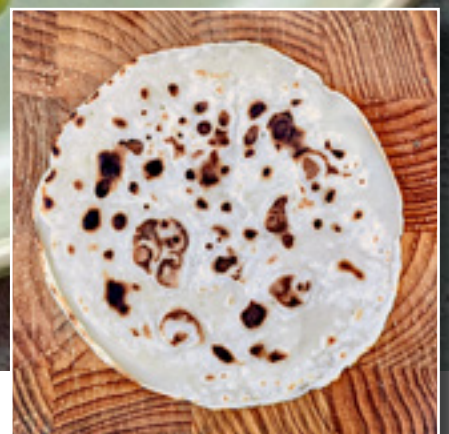
A Few Hours Before

- Bake focaccia

Just Before Serving

- Cook calamari (it can sit covered while you eat testaroli)
- Cut, boil and dress testaroli

Testaroli con Pesto



I remember the first time I ate testaroli, lunching with a friend at Lucio's restaurant.

I'd never had anything like it and the next night I took Franz there for dinner.

We ordered testaroli to start, then Franz promptly ordered another plate as a main course!

Testaroli is an ancient dish from Lunigiana, the historic mountainous

region straddling the corner where modern-day Liguria, Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna meet; this is Lucio's ancestral homeland.

A testarolo, named for the domed terracotta dish (testo) on which it was traditionally cooked, is a thick pancake or flatbread.

The testo was like a small portable oven used by shepherds to cook over hot coals.

They cooked focaccia, pies and meat in it as well as these pancakes which they traditionally cut into diamonds, boiled like pasta and dressed with simple sauces, most notably pesto.

Today testaroli is still prepared around the Tuscan-Ligurian border, usually cooked in a heavy black skillet, just as Lucio remembers his mother doing.

Savoury Lunigiana Pancakes

Testaroli con Pesto

Serves 2 as a starter

[Watch the recipe video*](#)

110g plain flour

¾ cup water

Salt flakes, to taste

Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

Pesto (see [page 17](#))

Freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano, for serving

Place flour, water and a pinch of salt in a mixing bowl and whisk until smooth. Set aside for 20 minutes or so.

Heat a heavy-based frying pan over medium heat, grease very lightly with oil.

Ladle in about half the batter, tilting the pan to spread it evenly to a thickness of no more than 5mm.

Fry for 3–5 minutes, until the base is lightly coloured.

Turn over and cook for another couple of minutes, until well coloured; if it puffs up, press gently with a spatula or egg lift to flatten it.

Transfer to a wire rack.

Wipe the pan with a little more oil and repeat with remaining batter.

Set aside to cool a little.

Meanwhile, bring a large saucepan of well-salted water to the boil (10g salt/litre water).

Cut pancakes vertically into strips about 3cm wide, then cut on the diagonal to create diamond shapes (see photo below).

Place a spoonful of Pesto in a large mixing bowl.

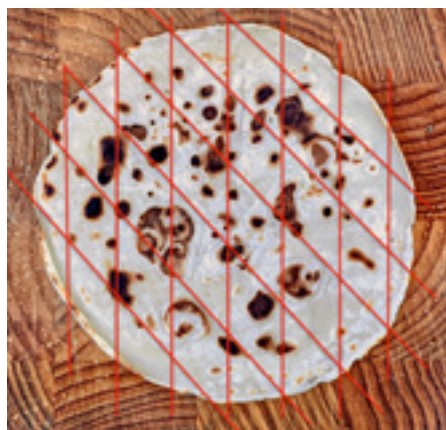
Add testaroli to the boiling water, return to the boil then cook for a further minute.

Using a slotted spoon to drain them, scoop testaroli out of the boiling water into the mixing bowl, transferring a little of the cooking water with them.

Add most of the remaining Pesto and a little cheese and toss gently to combine.

Spoon into flat bowls and serve drizzled with remaining Pesto and topped with more cheese.

How to cut testaroli



Roberta's Tip

The above quantity of batter makes 2 pancakes (using about 100ml each in a frying pan with a 20cm base; but you can make more or less testaroli based on the size of your pan; just don't make them too thick. It's easy to make a double quantity of batter and do a test batch first to perfect your technique. You can fry the testaroli, cool them then refrigerate in an airtight container lined with paper towel to absorb any moisture, with baking paper in between them for up to 3 days. When ready to serve, just cut and boil them.

*if you've already watched the pesto video, skip 5.15–13.12

Calamari con Piselli e Spinaci



This dish is inspired by two classic Ligurian dishes: seppie e piselli (cuttlefish and peas) and seppie in zimino (cuttlefish with spinach); both simple braises that work well with any cephalopods.

In Liguria, cuttlefish, chickpeas and salt cod are all often cooked 'in zimino' meaning braised with spinach or silver beet and sometimes tomato; zimino comes from the

Arabic word 'semin', meaning 'rich sauce' and the spinach in this dish is meant to be overcooked until it breaks down to form part of the sauce.

As for the peas, that depends on personal taste: if you like them very tender, almost broken down, add them with the spinach; I prefer a bit of bite so I like to put them in halfway through, especially if they're small.

Calamari is a generic Italian name for all squid (totani is another), but in Australia it refers to specific species that have long side fins coming almost all the way down their hoods, such as the beautiful southern calamari I like to use for this dish.

Squid with Peas & Spinach

Calamari con Piselli e Spinaci

Serves 2



Watch the recipe video

500g calamari, cleaned
(see diagram [page 18](#))

Slice the calamari hood and flaps into thin strips and quarter the tentacles. Set aside.

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

Heat oil in a heavy-based saucepan or cast-iron dish over low heat.

½ brown onion, finely
diced (save other ½
for veal rolls)

Add onion and a good pinch of salt, cover and cook for about 5 minutes, stirring often, until tender but not coloured.

Salt flakes, to taste

Add garlic and rosemary and stir for 30 seconds or so, until aromatic.

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 sprig rosemary, leaves
finely chopped
(about 1 teaspoon)

Add calamari, cover and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

¼ cup dry white wine

Add wine, increase heat to high and boil for a minute or so, stirring well.

100g baby spinach,
washed and dried

Add spinach, reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

250g green peas, shelled

Stir in peas, cover and continue cooking for a further 10 minutes or so until they are just cooked to your liking.

**Focaccia (see [page 24](#)),
for serving**

Serve with plenty of focaccia to dunk into the sauce.

Roberta's Tip

It's always best to buy green peas in the pod and shell them yourself, as they're fresher and sweeter that way; their sugars turn to starch much quicker once they're shelled. But, if shelled peas are all you find, you'll need about 100g for this recipe.



I love authentic focaccia, made with a generous amount of olive oil both in the dough and drizzled over the top before baking.

Lucio's recipe uses more water than many I've seen and his mother's recipe uses a lot more oil than most.

I've experimented with different recipes and I think the extra water and oil are the secrets to a soft open

centre and a delicious crisp golden brown crust; proving the dough for at least 2 hours improves the texture too.

The traditional dimples in the dough help trap the oil to give a perfect crust; you usually make them with your fingertips but, if you have long nails (like me), you can use your knuckles.

Focaccia is best eaten warm from the oven, it goes stale quickly but does keep well (especially refrigerated) and is great toasted.

You can also use leftovers to make delicious light croutons and breadcrumbs. See [page 8](#) for some great focaccia variations.

Ligurian Yeasted Flatbread

Focaccia

Serves 4–6 as a side dish

[Watch the recipe video](#)

¾ tsp dried yeast (about 2g)

Pinch sugar

⅔ cup warm water

250g plain flour, plus extra for dusting

Salt flakes, to taste

⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing

Combine yeast, sugar and ⅓ cup of the warm water in a small bowl and set aside for 10–15 minutes, until it starts to froth.

Place flour and a pinch of salt in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook.

Add yeast mixture, remaining water and 2 tablespoons of the oil and mix on low speed, scraping down the sides of the bowl until everything is combined.

Mix on medium speed for about 5 minutes, until smooth and elastic.

Shape into a ball, coat in oil and place in a clean bowl. Cover and set aside in a warm spot for at least 2 hours, until doubled in size.

Generously grease the base and sides of a baking dish (about 26 x 20cm, or 25cm diameter).

Place dough on a clean dry work surface, dry side down, and stretch (or roll with an oiled rolling pin) to roughly the size of the dish.

Put it in the dish, dry side down, and stretch it out to cover the base evenly.

Dimple the top with your fingertips or knuckles, cover and set aside for another 30 minutes or so.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 220°C.

Drizzle remaining oil over the dough and brush it across the surface evenly; sprinkle generously with salt.

Bake for 20–25 minutes until dark golden.

Cut into slices and serve warm.

Roberta's Tips

If it's a particularly cold day, it helps to warm the bowl before adding the yeast and water.

Dough can be refrigerated overnight after proving, either wrap the ball in plastic or spread into the baking tray and cover in plastic. Return to room temperature, drizzle with oil and continue with recipe.



Menu 2

Suggested Primo

Bruschetta with Broad Beans

Secondo

Tomaxelle (Veal Involtini)

Tuna Involtini (*pescatarian option*)

Contorni

Grilled Asparagus with Pecorino

Dolce

Canestrelli (Shortbread Cookies)

Running Order

Day Before

- Make stuffing for veal
- Bake canestrelli

A Few Hours Before

- Assemble veal rolls
- Make tomato sauce

Just Before Serving

- Cook veal rolls
- Grill asparagus



Lucio says these tasty parcels are an example of Liguria's 'cucina di recupero', the art of wasting nothing.

They were created to use up meat leftover from a previous meal as well as sometimes offal such as sweetbreads.

The Italian name comes from a Latin word for little sausages and these

parcels are a variation on the involtini seen in many Italian regions.

Tomaxelle (sometimes also written tomaselle) holds a special place in Genovese history.

In 1800 when the city was enduring a harsh famine, it was also under siege.

This humble dish of leftovers was fed to a group of captive Austrian officers who found it so delicious that they were unaware of just how close their captors were to being forced to surrender due to their impending starvation.

Stuffed Veal Rolls

Tomaxelle

Serves 2

[Watch the recipe video](#)

15g	dried porcini mushrooms
2 tsp	oregano leaves
¼ cup	extra virgin olive oil
½	small brown onion, finely chopped (saved from calamari recipe)
Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste	
200g	veal backstrap
100g	beef mince
1½ tbsp	dry white wine
1 slice	rustic bread, crusts removed, finely diced
1	egg, lightly beaten
15g	pine nuts, chopped
2 tsp	finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
Freshly grated nutmeg, to taste	
25g	freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano
1 clove	garlic, crushed
210g	canned crushed tomato

Crusty bread, for serving

Soak porcini in warm water for about 15 minutes.

Reserve a few small oregano leaves for garnish, chop the rest and set aside.

Heat half the oil in a small heavy-based frying pan over a medium heat.

Add onion and a good pinch of salt, cover and cook for about 5 minutes, until tender but not coloured.

Meanwhile, cut the veal into 2 pieces (if it isn't already) and pound with a meat mallet to flatten each piece very thinly. Cut each piece in half crossways to give 4 pieces in total.

Squeeze the porcini dry and chop finely.

Stir porcini into the onion, increase heat to medium-high and push to the sides of the pan.

Press mince into the pan and cook for a couple of minutes, until well browned. Turn it over, breaking it up, and cook for a further couple of minutes, stirring often until well browned.

Increase heat to high, add wine and stir well to remove any bits stuck to the base of the pan. Cook for a few minutes, until most of the wine evaporates. Set aside to cool a little.

Combine bread and egg and set aside for a few minutes.

Place chopped oregano, pine nuts, parsley, nutmeg, Parmigiano, salt and pepper into a large mixing bowl. Add bread and egg.

Add onion mixture to the bowl and set the frying pan aside to reuse (without washing it).

Use your hands to mix everything together into a well combined paste.

Place veal pieces on a workbench with the cut side facing away from you.

Spread the mixture evenly over the entire surface, except for a 1cm margin at the top.

Roll up to enclose the filling, place on a plate, seam side down and refrigerate for a few minutes.

Meanwhile, place remaining oil and garlic in the reserved frying pan over a low heat and cook for a minute or so, until aromatic.

Increase heat to high, add tomato, a tablespoon of water and a pinch of salt and stir to combine well and incorporate any bits stuck to the base of the pan. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 5 minutes.

Add veal rolls to the pan, seam side down, baste with the sauce, cover and cook for 15 minutes or so, basting occasionally, until veal is just cooked through.

Arrange rolls on a platter, spoon sauce over the top and around.

Sprinkle with reserved oregano leaves and serve with crusty bread.



Involtini di Tonno



Tuna is a great pescatarian alternative in red meat dishes, especially ones like our tomaxelle where it's wrapped around a tasty stuffing and poached in a rich tomato sauce.

As there isn't any mince in the filling to help bind it, it's best to blitz it in a food processor rather than mixing it by hand.

The cheese, herbs and umami-rich porcini make for a delicious vegetarian stuffing.

Tuna is more delicate than veal, so be gentle when pounding it into flat slices.

Tuna Rolls

Involtini di Tonno

Serves 2



PESCATARIAN OPTION

15g **dried porcini mushrooms**

2 tsp **oregano leaves**

300g **tuna steak**

¼ cup **extra virgin olive oil**

½ **small brown onion (saved from calamari recipe)**

Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1½ tbsp **dry white wine**

1 slice **rustic bread, crusts removed, finely diced**

1 **egg, lightly beaten**

25g **freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano**

15g **pine nuts, chopped**

2 tsp **finely chopped flat-leaf parsley**

Freshly grated nutmeg, to taste

1 clove **garlic, crushed**

210g **canned crushed tomato**

Crusty bread, for serving

Soak porcini in warm water for about 15 minutes.

Reserve a few small oregano leaves for garnish, chop the rest and set aside.

Meanwhile, cut the fish horizontally into 2 thin pieces then pound gently with a meat mallet to flatten each piece thinly. Cut each piece in half to give 4 pieces in total.

Heat half the oil in a small heavy-based frying pan over a medium heat.

Add onion and a good pinch of salt, cover and cook for about 5 minutes, until tender but not coloured.

Squeeze the porcini dry and chop finely.

Stir porcini into the onion, increase heat to medium-high and cook for 4-5 minutes, until onion starts to brown.

Increase heat to high, add wine and stir well to remove any bits stuck to the base of the pan. Cook for a few minutes, until most of the wine evaporates. Set aside to cool a little.

Place bread, egg, Parmigiano, pine nuts, parsley, chopped oregano, nutmeg, salt and pepper in the bowl of a small food processor.

Add the onion mixture and set the frying pan aside to reuse (without washing it).

Blitz to form a coarse paste.

Place tuna pieces on a workbench with the cut side facing away from you.

Divide the mixture between them. Spread it evenly over the entire surface, except for a 1cm margin at the top.

Roll up to enclose the filling, place on a plate, seam side down and refrigerate for a few minutes.

Meanwhile, place remaining oil and garlic in the reserved frying pan over a low heat and cook for a minute or so, until aromatic.

Increase heat to high, add tomato, a tablespoon of water and a pinch of salt and stir to combine well and incorporate any bits stuck to the base of the pan. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 5 minutes.

Add tuna rolls seam side down, baste with the sauce, cover and cook for 10 minutes or so, basting occasionally, until tuna is just cooked through.

Arrange rolls on a platter, spoon sauce over the top and around.

Sprinkle with reserved oregano leaves and serve with crusty bread.

Asparagi Grigliati



I love spring vegetables: zucchini flowers, broad beans, borlotti beans, artichokes and new season peas.

But my favourite is fresh green asparagus. Sure, you can buy asparagus all year round these days – but it's imported.

I'd rather wait and enjoy the seasonal treat of thin spears of local asparagus tossed with a drizzle of delicate new season olive oil, cooked quickly on a hot grill (they're great lightly steamed too) then topped with a few shavings of salty hard cheese,

whether it's Pecorino Sardo, Grana Padano or Reggiano.

When I can find new season broad beans or borlotti beans, I love to blanch a handful of them too and scatter them over the top!

Grilled Asparagus

Asparagi Grigliati

Serves 2 as a side dish



Watch the recipe video

1 bunch green asparagus

Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

Salt flakes, to taste

Pecorino Sardo or Parmigiano Reggiano, for shaving

Preheat a ridged barbecue plate or char-grill pan over medium-high heat.

Trim asparagus and toss with a generous drizzle of oil so they're well coated.

Grill asparagus for about 5 minutes, turning occasionally, until they have grill marks all over.

Arrange on a platter, sprinkle with salt and shave cheese over the top.

Serve warm or at room temperature.



Liguria and neighbouring Piedmont may argue over who invented these deliciously short biscuits, but people on both sides of the border definitely adore them.

I love their crumbly texture and classic lemony tang, though they're great with orange instead of lemon for an interesting variation.

The secret ingredient in the dough is hard-boiled egg yolk, something I've never seen used in baking anywhere else.

The dough is said to be best refrigerated overnight before baking, but I've cooked it after only a couple of hours in the fridge and it works just as well.

Because of the amount of butter in the dough, you need to work quite quickly once it's rolled out; if it does become too soft, pop it back in the fridge for a few minutes to firm up before continuing.

If your cookies are ready before the oven is hot enough, it's best to put them in the fridge until you're ready to cook them.

Ligurian Shortbread Cookies

Canestrelli

Makes about 25

[Watch the recipe video](#)

120g	plain flour, plus extra for dusting
60g	potato starch
50g	icing sugar, plus extra for dusting
Pinch	salt flakes, crushed
1	vanilla bean, split
1	hard-boiled egg yolk
1	lemon
100g	cold butter, diced

Sift flour, potato starch and icing sugar into a mixing bowl.

Add salt and scrape in vanilla seeds.

Pass egg yolk through a fine sieve into the bowl.

Grate in lemon zest.

Add butter and rub it in with your fingers until well combined.

Mix into a smooth dough.

Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least an hour, ideally overnight.

Remove dough from fridge an hour or so before baking.

Preheat oven to 180°C.

On a lightly floured work bench, roll out to 5mm thick.

Using a flower shaped cookie cutter (about 5cm wide), cut out cookies, then cut a small hole in the centre (a 1cm piping nozzle is good for this).

Place on a baking paper-lined oven tray.

Working quickly, or returning the dough to the fridge if it becomes too soft, roll out leftover dough and cut out more cookies.

Bake for 10–15 minutes, until firm but still pale.

Set aside to cool then serve dusted with icing sugar.

Roberta's Tip

I found [daisy-shaped cookie cutters](#) and a [1cm piping nozzle](#) at the Kitchen Warehouse.

Menu 3



Primo

Potato Gnocchi with Walnut Sauce

Secondo

Spatchcock with Fennel & Orange
Salmon with Fennel & Orange
(*pescatarian option*)

Contorni

Ricotta-Filled Zucchini Flowers

Suggested Dolce

Spungata (Apricot Tart)

Running Order

Day Before

- Make and boil gnocchi
- Make walnut sauce
- Make zucchini flower filling

A Few Hours Before

- Marinate spatchcock
- Fill zucchini flowers

Just Before Serving

- Put spatchcock in oven
- Cook gnocchi
(or blanch if already cooked)
- Put zucchini flowers in oven
- Dress and serve gnocchi while
main course is cooking

Gnocchi di Patate con Salsa di Noci



When I asked Lucio if gnocchi are popular in Liguria he replied “On special occasions, we say: ‘Come home Mamma’s making gnocchi.’”

Gnocchi are delicious dressed with any pasta sauce, including pesto (see [page 16](#)) or burnt butter & sage.

Another classic Ligurian sauce, often served with the local ravioli (pansotti), is made by pounding walnuts with milk-soaked bread and olive oil; the gnocchi provide enough carbs, so I’ve replaced the bread with creamy ricotta in this recipe.

Gnocchi can be prepared ahead of time: boil, chill in iced water, drain well, toss with olive oil and set aside for an hour or so, or refrigerate overnight. To serve, blanch them in boiling water for a minute or so (just until the first one floats).

Potato Gnocchi with Walnut Sauce

Gnocchi di Patate con Salsa di Noci

Serves 2 as a starter

[Watch the recipe video](#)

Rock salt, for baking

500g floury potatoes,
scrubbed well

75g plain flour, plus extra
for dusting

Pinch salt flakes, crushed

1 egg yolk, lightly
beaten

A few small oregano leaves

Walnut Sauce, for serving
(see [page 38](#))

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Spread rock salt onto a baking tray.

Place potatoes on the salt and bake for 60–90 minutes, until a wooden skewer easily passes in and out of them.

Sift flour onto a clean, dry work surface.

Cut potatoes in half and pass through a ricer onto the flour (or pass through a mouli or peel and press through a fine sieve). *Reserve skins to make [Savoury Potato Skins](#) if you like.*

Add salt flakes and use a pastry scraper to cut the flour into the potato.

Add egg yolk and continue mixing with the pastry scraper, then use your hands to bring the mixture together into a soft dough, without mixing any more than is necessary.

Divide into 3 portions.

On a lightly flour-dusted bench, use your hands to gently roll each portion into a 2cm-thick log.

Cut 2cm-long pieces, and roll them along a gnocchi board if you like.

Place on a flour-dusted tray and toss lightly in flour.

Bring a large saucepan of well salted water to the boil (10g salt for every litre of water).

Meanwhile, place Walnut Sauce into a large mixing bowl.

Boil gnocchi for a minute or 2, until they float.

Using a slotted spoon, scoop them out of the water into the mixing bowl, reserving the cooking water.

Gently toss gnocchi and sauce together, adding a tablespoon or so of the cooking water to give a creamy, coating consistency.

Spoon into warmed flat bowls and sprinkle with oregano.

Roberta's Note

In the video I refer to the cooking water as 'sauce' (which is how the Italians think of it). To clarify: scoop the gnocchi out of the cooking water into a bowl containing the walnut sauce, add a little of the cooking water and toss to combine well.



Walnut Sauce

Salsa di Noci

Makes about ¼ cup (serves 2 as a pasta sauce)



Watch the recipe video

50g **shelled walnuts**

½ clove **garlic, crushed**

25g **ricotta**

15g **freshly grated**
Parmigiano Reggiano

1½ tbsp **extra virgin olive oil**

1 tbsp **milk**

½ **small lemon, zest**
finely grated

¼ tsp **salt flakes**

Freshly ground black pepper,
to taste

Blitz all ingredients in a small food processor to form a paste.
Set aside.

Roberta's Note

Walnut Sauce is on the Gnocchi video from 1.51 – 4.39 minutes.

Galletto con Finocchio e Arancia



In a region where land is scarce and most farming is done on steep terraces, there's not a lot of room to raise livestock.

So Ligurian cuisine evolved using small domesticated animals, like chickens and rabbits, as well as those caught from the wild, including small migratory birds like the thrush (*tordi* in Italian).

You could use quail, duck or rabbit in this simple dish inspired by some of Liguria's favourite ingredients: fennel, oranges and oregano, which I think have a lovely affinity with each other, especially with a generous glug of delicate Ligurian-style olive oil.

Spatchcock with Fennel and Orange

Galletto con Finocchio e Arancia

Serves 2



Watch the recipe video

1 x 600g spatchcock
1 baby fennel
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tbsp oregano leaves, sliced
1 small red onion, halved and thinly sliced
½ orange, thinly sliced and halved (save other ½ for chestnut cake)
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Remove spatchcock from the fridge about 30 minutes before cooking.

Using poultry shears, cut in half, discarding the neck and backbone if you like.

Wipe the body cavity with paper towel to remove any remaining offal or blood, then cut each half into 4 pieces and place in a mixing bowl.

Reserve fennel fronds, thinly slice the bulb and add to the bowl.

Add garlic, oregano, onion, orange, oil, salt and pepper and toss to combine well. Cover and set aside, ideally for at least for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 200°C.

Remove spatchcock from the bowl, tip everything else into a small baking dish, scraping in as much of the juices as possible.

Arrange spatchcock pieces on top in a single layer, skin side up.

Bake for 25 minutes or so, until skin is well coloured and meat is just cooked through.

Scatter with some of the reserved fronds and serve.

Salmone con Finocchio e Arancia



The classic Ligurian ingredients used to flavour our spatchcock dish – fennel, oranges and oregano – are just as good with seafood, especially with a crisp-skinned piece of salmon.

If you don't like eating salmon skin, still cook it with the skin on as the oils add flavour to the flesh and help keep it moist during cooking.

As salmon takes less time to cook than spatchcock, cook the vegetables separately for 10 minutes or so before adding the fish.

Salmon with Fennel and Orange

Salmon con Finocchio e Arancia

Serves 2



PESCATARIAN OPTION

1 x 300g piece salmon fillet,
skin on, pin-boned

1 baby fennel

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 tbsp oregano leaves,
sliced

1 small red onion,
halved and thinly
sliced

½ orange, thinly sliced
and halved (save
other ½ for chestnut
cake)

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

**Salt flakes and freshly ground
black pepper, to taste**

Remove fish from the fridge about 30 minutes before cooking.

Wipe skin with paper towel to ensure it's dry and remove any remaining scales. Check for bones and place in a shallow bowl skin side down.

Reserve fennel fronds, thinly slice the bulb and place in a separate mixing bowl.

Add garlic, oregano, onion, orange, oil, salt and pepper to the fennel and toss to combine well.

Pour over the salmon, cover and set aside for 30–60 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 200°C.

Transfer everything except the salmon to a small baking dish and place in the oven for 10 minutes.

Wipe the salmon around the bowl to remove as much of the oil and juices as possible.

Place it in the baking dish on top of the vegetables, skin side up, and sprinkle skin generously with salt.

Bake for a further 15 minutes or so, until cooked to your liking, then turn the overhead grill on for 2–3 minutes to crisp the skin.

Scatter with some of the reserved fronds and serve.

A top-down view of a light-colored ceramic plate containing several baked stuffed zucchini flowers and baby zucchinis. The flowers are yellowed and slightly charred at the edges, revealing a white filling. The baby zucchinis are green and also show signs of roasting. The plate is set against a light blue and white textured background.

Fiori di Zucchini Ripieni di Ricotta

Colourful zucchini flowers are one of my favourite spring vegetables – especially filled with an aromatic stuffing and baked.

There are two types of flowers: female attached to a baby zucchini, and male attached to a thin stem.

I prefer female for this recipe to enjoy the different textures of the baby vegetable and the flowers' petals.

Use whatever herbs you like for the filling (such as oregano, marjoram, basil, thyme). I use about half parsley and half whatever else is on hand including a little mint from the garden.

Ricotta-Filled Zucchini Flowers

Fiori di Zucchini Ripieni di Ricotta

Serves 2 as a side dish or starter

[Watch the recipe video](#)

6	zucchini flowers	Preheat oven to 200°C.
100g	ricotta	Gently pull the petals apart and remove the pistil from the centre of the flowers.
2 tbsp	freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano (about 6g)	Combine ricotta, Parmigiano, Pecorino, walnut, herbs, lemon zest and juice, salt and pepper.
2 tbsp	freshly grated young Pecorino Sardo (about 6g)	Shape about a heaped teaspoon of ricotta mixture into a sausage shape and place it in the centre of a flower. Fold the petals around it to enclose it and squeeze gently to reshape it.
1 tbsp	finely chopped shelled walnuts (about 10g)	Place in an oiled baking dish.
1 tbsp	finely sliced herb leaves	Repeat with remaining flowers arranging them in the baking dish in a single layer (don't be tempted to overfill the flowers, just eat any leftover filling!).
½	lemon, zest grated (save other ½ for endive salad)	Drizzle with a little oil and bake for 15–20 minutes, until lightly coloured.
1 tsp	strained lemon juice	Serve hot or warm, drizzled with a little more oil.
½ tsp	salt flakes, crushed	
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste		
Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling		



Menu 4



Suggested Primo

Trofie with Pesto, Beans
& Potato

Secondo

Scarpazza (Greens Pie)

Contorni

Escarole Salad

Farinata (Chickpea Pancake)

Dolce

Chestnut & Ricotta Cake

Running Order

Day Before

- Make olive oil pastry
- Make pie filling
- Make farinata batter

A Few Hours Before

- Bake chestnut cake
- Roll out pastry, line tins, cover and refrigerate

Just Before Serving

- Cook farinata
- Fill pies while last farinata is cooking
- Put pies in oven
- Serve farinata as starter while pies are cooking
- Dress salad



Ligurians love stuffed foods, from baby vegetables filled with seasoned breadcrumbs, to a whole range of stuffed pasta and delicious pies filled with all manner of vegetables.

One Ligurian restaurateur described the local cooking to Lucio as 'la cucina dei ripieni', the cuisine of fillings.

This approach is typical of peasant cuisines where leftovers and excess produce had to be recycled into other tasty, filling dishes.

Scarpazza, one of my favourite Ligurian pies, is filled with whatever greens are in the garden or foraged from the nearby hills.

The eggs are typically beaten and mixed through the filling, but I've taken inspiration from the more complex torta Pasqualina made at Easter, where some of the eggs are left whole.

Use spinach, silver beet, chicory, cime di rapa or any fresh greens in this versatile pie.

Greens Pie

Scarpazza

Serves 2

[Watch the recipe video](#)

- 1½ tbsp** extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 1** small leek, washed, white and pale green finely sliced
- Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste**
- 1** head curly endive, washed and dried (about 270g)
- 1 clove** garlic, crushed
- 100g** ricotta
- ¼ cup** freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano (about 10g)
- ¼ cup** freshly grated Pecorino Sardo (about 10g)
- 2 tsp** finely sliced flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 tsp** oregano leaves, sliced
- Freshly grated nutmeg, to taste**
- Olive Oil Pastry**
(see recipe [page 48](#))
- 2** eggs
- Curly Endive Salad, for serving**
(see recipe [page 49](#))

Heat oil in a frying pan over low heat, add leek and a good pinch of salt, cover and cook for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tender.

Meanwhile, pick over the endive, discarding any discoloured pieces and reserving about 50g of the tenderest leaves for the salad. Chop the remaining leaves.

Stir garlic into the pan and cook for a further minute or so until aromatic.

Add chopped endive and cook for 5–10 minute, until wilted, stirring often. Set aside to cool a little.

Place ricotta, Parmigiano, Pecorino, parsley, oregano, nutmeg, salt and pepper in a mixing bowl.

Add cooled endive mixture and beat to combine well.

Preheat oven to 200°C.

Oil 2 x 10.5cm spring form cake tins or ovenproof dishes that are 1½–2 cup capacity.

Line the tins or dishes with the larger pastry discs, leaving any long bits hanging over the edges.

Spoon in the endive mixture, pressing it down to cover the bases evenly.

Make a well in the centre and break an egg into each one, sprinkle with salt, pepper and drizzle with a little oil.

Top with remaining pastry discs, and fold overhanging pastry over the top.

Brush generously with oil.

Bake for about 30 minutes, until golden.

Serve hot with Curly Endive Salad.



Olive Oil Pastry

Pasticceria all'Olio d'Oliva

Makes about 280g (enough for 2 individual pies)



Watch the recipe video

1.31-3.28 & 7.30-12.29

I love this pastry because it's so forgiving.

You can roll it out super thin and if it tears, just knead it back together and start again.

Because it is so thin, the base of the pies made with it tend to crisp up better than with most other pastries, even if the filling is a little moist.

As it's so stretchy, it does shrink back a little when you roll it out – so be patient, keep rolling, stretching and turning to get it as thin as possible.

This pastry is used to make the Easter tart, torta Pasqualina, which traditionally had 33 layers, one for each year of Christ's life, so you

can imagine how thinly each layer was rolled.

You can make this pastry the day before, wrap it and refrigerate overnight then roll it out when you're ready to assemble the pies.

175g **plain flour, plus extra for dusting**

½ tsp **salt flakes, crushed**

2 tbsp **extra virgin olive oil**

⅓ cup **warm water**

Place flour and salt in a mixing bowl.

Pour in the oil and water and mix with your hands to bring the mixture together.

Tip onto a lightly floured bench and form into a soft dough.

Knead for about 5 minutes by hand or using an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook, until it's smooth and elastic.

Wrap in plastic wrap and set aside for an hour or so.

Divide dough into 2 balls, 1 slightly larger than the other (about 160g and 120g).

Divide the smaller ball into 2 even-sized balls.

On a lightly floured work bench, roll these balls out as thinly as possible.

Place the cake tin (or pie dish) on top and cut around them to form lids for the pies. Cover and set aside.

Combine offcuts with the remaining dough and divide it into 2 even-sized balls.

Roll these out as thinly as possible into discs; these will be used for the base and sides of the pies. Cover and set aside.

Roberta's Note:

Pastry is on the Scarpazza video from 1.31–3.28 & 7.30–12.29 minutes.

Insalata di Scarole



You can serve any sort of salad with our Scarpazza.

In summer, when they're ripe and beautiful, a simple tomato salad is wonderful, and radicchio is great in winter.

I like to save some of the most tender curly endive leaves from the pie filling and turn them into a pretty salad to serve alongside; they have totally different flavours raw and cooked.

Curly Endive Salad

Insalata di Scarole

Serves 2 as a side dish



SIDE DISH

About 50g tender curly endive leaves (reserved from pie recipe)

½ small red onion, finely sliced

Small handful of herb leaves, sliced

Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

½ lemon (saved from zucchini flower recipe)

Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Place endive, onion and herb leaves in a mixing bowl.

Add a drizzle of oil, squeeze of lemon juice and sprinkle of salt and pepper.

Toss to combine well.

Serve.



This humble snack is also popular in Tuscany, where it's called torta di ceci or cecina, and in Provence, where it's known as socca.

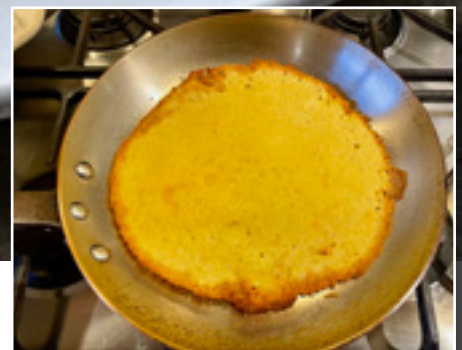
In Liguria it's typically cooked in a wood-fired oven on enormous tin-lined copper trays which conduct the heat beautifully; use an ovenproof copper frying pan or any flat, round, heavy-based metal pan.

Farinata should be thin, crisp and

golden with a slightly moist centre, so ensure the batter is as thin as possible in the pan while still covering the base evenly.

Better to make more pancakes in smaller pans than risk a soggy result by making them too thick (in the video I suggest 2 pancakes, but you can likely make 3 with this batter).

Batter can be made a day ahead and refrigerated overnight then returned



to room temperature before cooking; and leftover batter will keep in the fridge for a couple of days.

Cooked farinata reheat well in a hot oven.

I've tried both Indian besan flour and Australian chickpea flour and Australian gives far better results.

Chickpea Pancakes

Farinata

Serves 6 as a starter or side (makes 3 pancakes)

[Watch the recipe video](#)

1½ cups cold water

125g Australian or Italian chickpea flour

100ml extra virgin olive oil

Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Place water in a large bowl and slowly add the flour, whisking constantly to form a smooth batter the texture of single cream.

Cover and set aside in a warm place for 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 260°C if possible, otherwise as close as you can get.

Pour 1 tablespoon of oil into a round, heavy-based metal baking dish or ovenproof frying pan (ideally about 25cm wide) and place in the oven for 5 minutes or so, until very hot.

Skim any foam off the surface of the batter, then stir in a good pinch of salt.

Add 2 tablespoons of the oil and stir until completely incorporated.

Carefully remove the pan from the oven. Stir the batter and ladle about a third of it into the pan to just cover the base completely, tilting the pan to spread it out evenly.

Bake for about 10 minutes until set all over and crisp and lifting around the edges with a golden brown base.

Turn onto a chopping board and repeat with remaining oil and batter.

Serve warm cut into wedges and sprinkled with salt and pepper.

Roberta's Tip

The number of pancakes you make will depend on the size of your pan. I mention using half the batter in the video, but you should be able to make 3 pancakes in a 25cm wide pan with this amount of batter; the thinner the pancake, the crisper it will be. Ensure your pan is well-scrubbed or seasoned so the pancake doesn't stick. The exact cooking time will depend on the heat of your oven and the type of pan used; start with 10 minutes then cook for a minute or 2 more if need be until the pancake edges are really crisp and starting to lift.

Torta di Castagna e Ricotta



This is a very versatile cake, based on one that Lucio prepared for a Slow Food dinner celebrating the food of his ancient region of Lunigiana (where the modern regions of Liguria, Tuscany and Emilia meet).

Beyond the milk, sugar, ricotta and chestnut flour, the flavourings are all optional, though the rosemary on top is traditional and adds a lovely aroma.

I've used sultanas, almonds, rosemary and orange zest as that's what I had on hand, but it could just

as easily be some chopped candied fruit, pine nuts or hazelnuts and lemon zest or vanilla.

In fact Lucio's original cake didn't have ricotta in it but was served with a dollop of ricotta on top.

Chestnut & Ricotta Cake

Torta di Castagna e Ricotta

Serves 6–8

[Watch the recipe video](#)

1¼ cups milk

250g chestnut flour

¼ cup castor sugar

150g ricotta, plus extra for serving if you like

25g sultanas

25g slivered almonds

½ orange (saved from spatchcock recipe)

2 tsp delicate extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing

1 sprig rosemary, leaves picked

Preheat oven to 200°C.

Put milk in a bowl and slowly whisk in the flour, whisking well to remove any lumps.

Add sugar and ricotta and whisk until smooth.

Add sultanas and almonds and grate in the orange zest. Stir to combine well.

Grease an 18–20cm springform cake tin with a little olive oil.

Pour the mixture into the tin, drizzle the 2 teaspoons of oil over the surface and scatter with rosemary.

Bake for 30–40 minutes, until the top is cracked and dark brown and a wooden skewer inserted into the centre comes out almost dry.

Set aside to cool for 15 minutes or so then remove from tin.

Serve warm, with a dollop of extra ricotta if you like.

Thank You To Our Awesome Producers

Thanks to Lucio Galletto (@luciospaddington) for the inspiration. We're as much about awesome producers and provedores as we are about great chefs and restaurateurs. Here's who helped make this month's dishes so delicious; please look out for them when shopping and tag them in your social posts.



ALTO Olives

Robert Armstrong's commitment to his land and olive groves, in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range near Crookwell, has led to ALTO becoming Australia's most awarded extra virgin olive oil. See Robert's guided extra virgin olive oil tasting [here](#). His agrodolce (bitter-sweet) vinegars are the best Australian vinegars we've found too. [@altoolives](#)

Brasserie Bread

Their beautiful boulet is our favourite sourdough. [@brasseriebread](#)

Cheznuts

Jane and Brian Casey fell in love with chestnuts when they discovered some growing on their farm and realised how versatile they are. They're now chestnut experts, growing their own and importing the best European chestnut products, like the organic flour in this month's kit. [@austcheznuts](#)

Country Valley Dairy

We're excited to be sending you milk and cream produced by John and Sally Fairley on the dairy farm in Picton that John's family has operated since the mid-1800s. [@country_valley](#)

Eastland Supermarket

Thai Tran supplies Red Lantern and other leading Asian restaurants with Asian herbs, fruit and veg and specialty items. He provides most of our Asian herbs, vegetables and dry goods and would love to see you at his Cabramatta shop.

Formaggi Ocello

Carmelo & Sonja Ocello have the best range of specialty cheese we've seen this side of Europe. [@formaggiocello](#)

Get Fish

We're delighted to be sourcing our seafood from Frank Theodore whose family has been in the seafood business for many years. You can order all your favourite seafood online. [@getfishauu](#)

Grand Boulevard Bakery

Goran Petrovic, from Grand Boulevard Bakery, supplied Lucio's Italian Restaurant with fresh bread rolls for many years, which is all the recommendation we need! His bread is available at [Maloney's Grocer](#) and [QE Food Stores](#).

Harkola

This impressive warehouse with an impressive array of bulk nuts, spices, legumes and more is also the importer of Cortas and other leading Middle Eastern brands. Well worth a trip. [www.harkola.online](#) [@harkola.online](#)

Haverick Meats

A good butcher can be your best friend for great meals! This family business supplies many top restaurants and opens to the public every Saturday. [@haverickmeats](#)

Mutti

When it comes to canned tomatoes, they have to be Italian, and the best Italian canned tomatoes are Mutti! [@muttipomodoroau](#)

Olsson's Salt

We use natural sea salt from the Olsson family in all our cooking. We love their innovative and tasty salt as well as their commitment to sustainable production and packaging. [@olssonssalt](#)



Available at:

Be Inspired

Market place

Parisi

Father and son team Chris and Julian Parisi are at Flemington Produce Markets every day as well as working with an extensive network of growers to source all the great fruit and vegetables we need. [@parisiaustralia](#)

Pepe Saya

Artisanal butter maker Pepe Saya batch churns from single origin cream to produce a unique product that we're proud to share with you. [@pepesaya](#)

Spice & Co.

Chef Mike Tafe and his wife Stacey source and supply a range of the most commonly-used cooking spices to independent grocers (like Harris Farm and IGAs). For Mike it's all about quality supply and fast turnover so that spices reach cooks as fresh as possible. We like that! [@spiceandcomerchants](#)

The Gourmet Potato

Annette and Wentworth Hill work with small producers to source the best potatoes we've ever tasted – winner of the 2020 Delicious Produce Awards and praised by chefs like Neil Perry and Lennox Hastie. Available from Harris Farm and select butchers as well as Carriage Works and North Sydney Produce Markets. [@thegourmetpotato](#)

Vannella Cheese

Giuseppe Minoia and his team are as passionate about cheese as we are, especially all things stretched curd! [@vannellacheese](#)

Windy Hills Farm

Germaine Borg grows our wonderful potted herbs on her family farm near Camden, they last for weeks on your kitchen counter, and months in a garden bed. See stockist page on her website. [@windyhillsfarmnsw](#)

Euro Concepts

We're proud to collaborate with wine importer and distributor Roberto Dessanti to bring you delicious [wine matches for our recipes](#). [@euroconcepts](#)

Planet Protector

We couldn't bring all of this awesome produce to you without great insulated packaging, which comes from an innovative company diverting wool destined for landfill into sustainable packaging. [@planetprotectorpackaging](#)

Measurements

All cup and spoon measurements used are Australian standard:

1 cup = 250ml

1 tablespoon (**tbsp**) = 20ml

1 teaspoon (**tsp**) = 5ml

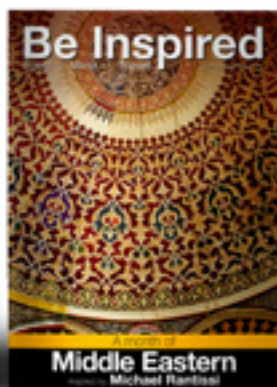
To measure in grams, refer to the weight:volume tables for [dry goods/meat](#) or for [fruit and vegetables](#).



Be Inspired

Come and explore a new destination each month

Be Inspired connects passionate home cooks like you with great chefs and awesome producers so you can confidently experiment with new ingredients, cooking styles and cuisines in your own kitchen at your own pace. Each **Recipe Kit** or **Recipes+Videos Pack** includes detailed written recipes, step-by-step videos and a full-colour e-magazine with extra recipes and food, wine and travel information.



Fortnightly and monthly Recipe Kits contain all the premium fresh produce and pantry items needed for a fun hands-on cooking experience each week resulting in generous, restaurant-quality 2-course meals for two people. Delivery is included throughout greater Sydney and ACT and each kit is sold separately – no ongoing subscriptions!

Recipes+Videos packs allow cooks to source their own ingredients, are suitable for anyone anywhere in the world and include email access to cookbook author, recipe writer and *Be Inspired* founder, Roberta Muir, for cooking questions including sourcing or substituting ingredients.

www.Belnspired.au