



# Sweet Memories Cooking

## Newsletter

Issue XIXII Holiday Edition 2010

### Ciao!! Benvenuti...Welcome To Our Family Kitchen!!

In this Special Holiday Letter, we invite you to join us as we celebrate

#### ***A Traditional Southern Italian Christmas!!***

In an Italian family, love is expressed not only in hugs and kisses, but also in our kitchens. We're sharing a few of our family favorites. Festive and traditional dishes we love and remember from our childhood. We suspect they'll become some of your favorites too!

*"From Our Holiday Table To Yours... We wish you a Joyous, Healthy, and Merry Christmas, and a Very Happy, and Prosperous New Year!!"*



### What's Cooking

*We're counting our blessings...here's what's on the menu for our flavorful Christmas Table...*

#### APPETIZERS

Dad's Cardoons\*\*

"Italian Style" Stuffed Dates

WHITE WINE - *Fiano di Avellino*

#### DINNER

RED WINE - *Taurasi*

Our Holiday "Gravy"

Home Made Pasta\*\*

Mixed Green Salad with Red Onion and

Tangerine Segments with

Oil & Vinegar Dressing

Warm Garlic Baguette

*(bread slathered with Garlic Compound Butter\*\*)*

#### DESSERT

Tiramisu\*\*

Fresh Roast Coffee with *Sambuca* Liqueur

"Sweet Memories" Italian Lemon & Chocolate Cookies

Fruit Basket and Roasted Chestnuts\*\*



**\*\*You'll find these recipes on our website**  
[www.sweetmemoriescooking.com](http://www.sweetmemoriescooking.com)

## *This Is How We Do It:*

### **"ITALIAN STYLE" STUFFED DATES**

An "homage" to my sister-in-law, Dana

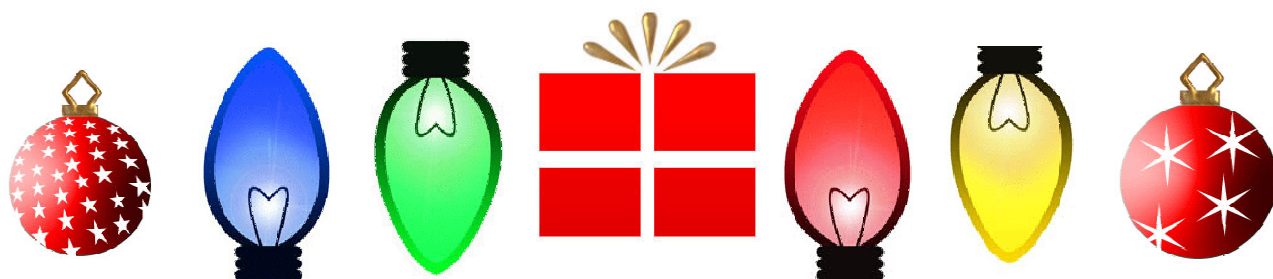
#### **Ingredients:**

¼ cup Goat Cheese, at room temperature	16 Pitted Dates
¼ cup Mascarpone Cheese, at room temperature	8 slices Prosciutto, halved lengthwise
¼ cup fresh chopped Chives	16 cocktail toothpicks
Kosher Salt, fresh ground Black Pepper	

#### **Directions:**

In a small bowl, mix together the cheeses and chives. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Open the dates, and spoon in about ½ tsp. of the cheese mix. Close the dates around the filling. Wrap each date with the prosciutto and secure with a toothpick. Arrange on a platter and serve.

This recipe travels well and serves 4-6. You can easily double, or even triple the recipe. Chopped basil can be substituted for the chives for a different flavor. Why not make some of each!!



### ***OUR HOLIDAY "GRAVY"***

***AN ESSENTIAL FIRST STEP...put on your favorite Frank Sinatra or Tony Bennett CD...To achieve the richest flavor, you MUST sing along while you stir the sauce...***

#### **Ingredients:**

2 lbs. Beef Spare Ribs or Short Ribs	3 tbsp. Tomato Paste, ¼ cup water
1 lb. hot or sweet Italian Sausages	3 - 35 oz. cans Italian Plum Tomatoes, (hand crush & reserve juices)
½ cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil	Kosher Salt & fresh ground Black Pepper, to taste
4 Garlic Cloves, peeled	Your favorite home made meatballs

#### **Directions:**

With a paper towel, pat the meat dry. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic and toss to coat. Cook the meat, a few pieces at a time, in the oil for about 5 minutes, turning frequently, until browned on all sides. Remove browned pieces and set aside. Remove garlic cloves when they begin to brown and discard.

Combine tomato paste and water and stir into the oil. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2-3 minutes.

Stir in the tomatoes and the juices. Raise the heat and bring to a boil. Using one of your tomato cans, add 2 cans of cold water to the pan and bring all to a boil. Return the beef ribs to the sauce, add salt and pepper and return to a boil. Boil for 5 minutes. Turn the heat down, partially cover the pan, and simmer, stirring occasionally, for about 2 hours, or until the meat is almost falling apart and the sauce is thick. (If sauce is too thick, add water, ¼ cup at a time) ***One hour before sauce is ready, add sausage and meatballs.***

Remove meat from the sauce, place in a warmed serving dish.

Serve along side your *lovingly-prepared gravy* over your pasta.

This recipe makes about 3 quarts of sauce.

Buon Appetito!!



**Cloves...**are the aromatic dried flower buds of a tree in the family *Myrtaceae*. They are used all over the world either in whole or in ground form. Use sparingly, as they are quite strong, in desserts, marinades, baked hams, stocks, and spiced drinks...

**You'll Love this... "Spiced-Up" Wine**

On a frosty winter day, what could be more comforting than snuggling up with a hot mug of **Mulled Wine**, or as they say in Italy, **"Vin Brule"**. Mulling wine is quick and easy. Pour your favorite red wine into a pot and bring it to a boil. Immediately reduce the heat to a slow simmer, adding a few cinnamon sticks and **cloves**, a dash of nutmeg, and lemon zest. Steep about 10 minutes, or until the wine acquires a fabulous, zesty fragrance. Strain, and your home made mulled wine is ready. You can substitute different spices or fruits, use your imagination...Salute!

**Did You Know...** **Fiano di Avellino** is southern Italy's leading dry white wine. It is delicate with overtones of pear and almonds.

**Taurasi** is a bold red wine made from Aglianico grapes.

The wines of Southern Italy are full-bodied and satisfying. The region has been producing wine for over 4000 years. The Greeks call Southern Italy **"The Land of Wine"**.

**Sambuca** is commonly served "neat" with three floating coffee beans dropped in. The beans can be chewed to increase the taste of the anise. It is said that the beans represent health, happiness, and prosperity, or *The Trinity*. **Perfect for the Holiday Season!**



**Just Sayin'...**

**You Know You're Italian When...**

- Your grandfather had a fig or an apricot tree.
  - You eat Sunday dinner at 2:00.
  - Plastic on the furniture is normal.
  - You've been hit with a wooden spoon.
  - There are more than 28 people in your bridal party.
- And, of course,*
- Your mom's meatballs are the best!



**Chef's Corner  
With Chef Patrick Gifaldi**

**Perfect Pasta Pairings...**

Some pastas are best served with lighter sauces and some with heartier meaty sauces. Here are a few varieties.

**Who doesn't love Spaghetti?** - one of the most versatile, it's best with a classic tomato or a creamy sauce.

**Tagliatelle** - wonderful with heavier cream-based sauces, they also do very well with a chunky ragu.

**Cappellini** - also called "Angel Hair". They are so delicate and are best with a light olive oil based sauce, such as a fresh tomato basil and garlic sauce.

**Penne** - the ridges will hold a chunky meat, fish or vegetable sauce nicely. These are also perfect for pasta salads.

**Fusilli** - This "corkscrew-shaped" pasta is complemented by a sauce that has more texture, such as mushrooms or broccoli raab.

**Happy Holidays! Mangia!!**

Chef Patrick is a Certified Culinarian and graduate of Le Cordon Bleu Coking Academy



**John's  
Kid Quotes**

"I have a Great Idea!! I'm asking my teacher if we can have everyone in our class bring a toy to give to **Toys for Tots** so that all kids can have a fun Christmas.

I think this will make Santa very happy too!

*Don't forget to leave out treats for Santa and his reindeer on Christmas Eve. I'm sure they'll be hungry and won't have time to stop to eat.*

Merry Christmas...see you next year!!"

**This Month's Bookmark ...**



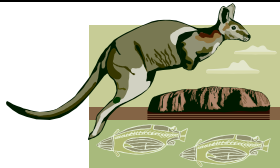
**JOHN'S  
JOURNAL...**

In these difficult times, where many people don't know where their next meal is coming from, the holiday season is especially difficult. Unfortunately, most of us know a family who could use a helping hand, or two. While preparing your dinner, why not make double batches of your holiday dishes, half for you and half to share. Include those which may have a special meaning for your friends, and that travel well.

Our dad used to put together packages of fresh oranges and apples to give at Christmas. **A simple, but wonderful, way we serve oranges during the holidays is to slice them, arrange them on a plate, drizzle with extra virgin olive oil, and top with a little salt and freshly ground black pepper. Great as an appetizer or enjoy at the end of your meal!**

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

You are Cordially Invited to Attend Our  
International New Year's Party!!  
We're checking out Cocktails and Customs with a few  
of our friends in some of our favorite  
Cities Around the Globe.  
After all, It *IS* 12 Midnight  
Somewhere in the World!



**AUSTRALIA**

## One of the first cities to celebrate is...Sydney, Australia.

A shout out to Margo, who says an authentic New Year's Eve celebration *has* to include Shrimp on the Barbie, a really great Australian Red, and certainly, an Australian Beer, *or two...* it's breakfast time in New York, so "Cheers, Margo!"

We're off to a good start!



## Our next stop is, *where else?* Naples, Italy, just in time for lunch.

We clink our glasses filled with *Franciacorta*, an Italian sparkling wine, and toast the New Year with Paolo and Cecelia. We are steeped in tradition as we enjoy *Cotechino* and *Lenticchie* (salami and lentils), and sweet *Panettone*. Italians believe that the lentils, shaped like coins, will bring you good fortune and prosperity in the New Year.

*Buona Fortuna Paolo and Cecelia!!*



## *Bon Jour, Dominique* in the "City of Lights"...Paris, France.

A flute of Champagne and a tour around the café. Mouth-watering oysters, smoked salmon, and foie gras catch your eye. Lobster, turkey, an array of French cheeses...enough said...*Merçi, Dominique. Bonne Annee!!*

## *Time for a Siesta or we'll never make it...*



**It's Almost Midnight in New York City!!...As we're waiting for the ball to drop in our home filled with family and friends, we propose a heartfelt toast.**

***"We wish you All the Best in the New Year no matter how you say it...Cheers...Buona Fortuna...Bonne Annee...Happy New Year!!"***

### **Fun Fact...**

*The first country to celebrate the New Year was Egypt! They made up the calendar, along with the Greeks.*

### *We've Got You Covered...*

go to "The Basics" Page on our website  
[www.sweetmemoriescooking.com](http://www.sweetmemoriescooking.com) for  
...Bar Set-Up ...Party Planning ...Wine and Cheese Pairings, *and more.*



### **What Else Is NEW?...**

We are so excited to announce that our i-phone application *Time2Eat (Italian)* with **John and Patty** is now available for \$1.99. It's compatible with the i-phone, i-pod touch, and i-pad.

***We're taking you to Italy...you'll find menus, shopping lists, and "how-to" videos. It's fun and easy to create these delicious dishes and drinks at home!!***