

Some traditional recipes from the Roman countryside

ROMAN ARTICHOKE

Ingredients: quantities for 4 people: 8 artichokes, 2 cloves of garlic, 1 small bunch of mentuccia (local mint), parsley, 1 lemon, 1 glass of extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Clean the artichokes by removing the tough outer leaves and the prickly choke with a small sharp knife. Place them in water with lemon (to prevent discoloration). Mince the softer part of the stems along with the mint, garlic, parsley and season it with oil, salt and pepper. Fill the inside of the artichokes with the mixture and salt them lightly on the outside. Put the artichokes, head down, in a pan, drizzle the oil and add 6 tablespoons of water, cover them and let them cook on a medium heat for 40 minutes. Remove them when tender and the water has completely evaporated.

JEWISH STYLE ARTICHOKE

Ingredients: Roman cimaroli artichokes, olive oil for frying them, 1 lemon, salt and pepper.

Preparation: remove the outer tougher leaves and cut the stalk. Cut the top part of the bracts with a sharp knife, place them in water with lemon, drain them and let them dry. Delicately squash the artichokes on a board, head down, until the bracts open like a flower. Warm up plenty of oil in a saucepan, place the artichokes head-down and once they are well browned, turn them upside-down and let them cook until the heart is tender. Drain them on kitchen roll and add salt and pepper only when you are ready to serve them.

OMELETTE WITH COURGETTES

Ingredients: quantities for 6 people: 6 eggs, 150 g smallish Roman courgettes.

Preparation: clean, rinse and slice the courgettes into small discs; put them in a warm pan with oil and water, and place it on the gas ring. Once you have cooked the courgettes, pour the beaten eggs on top, a pinch of salt, chopped parsley or basil. As an alternative, once the courgettes are cooked, you can add peeled tomatoes.

COURGETTES STUFFED WITH MEAT, ROMAN STYLE

Ingredients: quantities for 6 people: 12 courgettes, 200 g lean beef, 1 egg, 2 tbs. grated Parmesan cheese, soft part of the bread, ham, salt, pepper, 1 tbs. lard or 30 g. butter, onion, parsley, ham fat, tomato sauce.

Preparation: rinse the courgettes, cut off the ends and remove the inside with a courgette-emptier. For the stuffing: mince the lean meat, add the whole egg, grated Parmesan cheese, the soft part of the bread which you have previously soaked in water and squeezed, some pieces of ham, salt and pepper. Mix everything together and stuff the courgettes with it.

Place the lard or butter in a baking tin, brown the onion, parsley and some of the minced ham fat in it: then add the tomato purée. Add one or two ladles of water, salt and pepper and when the sauce has boiled, place the courgettes in the tin. Continue to boil, cover the tin and place it in a moderately heated oven for about an hour.