



SPOONS OF ITALY

*The Perfect Way of Creating your very own
Italian Food Safari*

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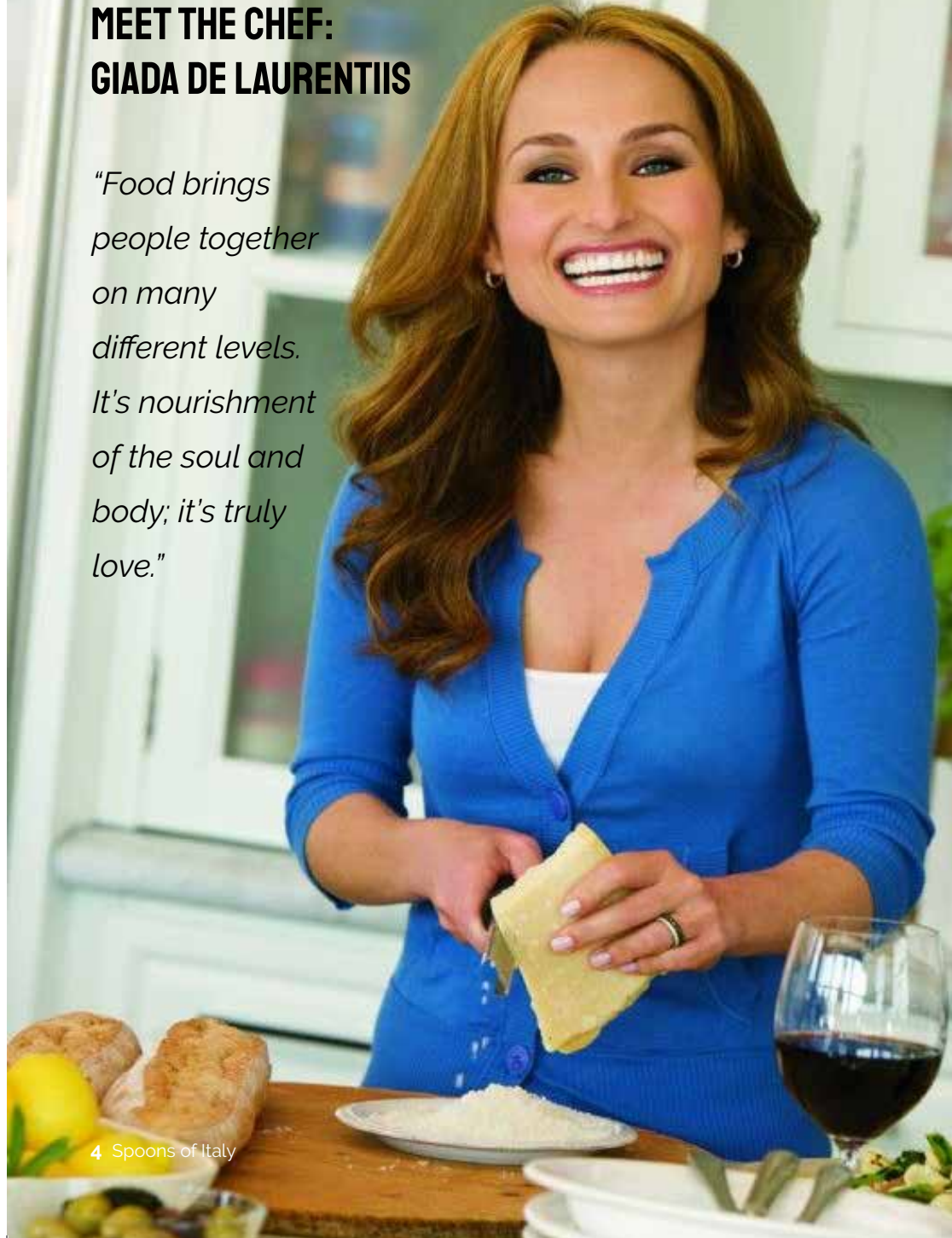
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MEET THE CHEF: GIADA DE LAURENTIIS

"Food brings people together on many different levels. It's nourishment of the soul and body; it's truly love."



Giada Pamela De Laurentiis is an Italian-born American chef, writer, and television personality. She is the host of Food Network's *Giada at Home*. She also appears regularly as a contributor and guest co-host on NBC's *Today*. De Laurentiis is the founder of the catering business GDL Foods. She is a winner of the Daytime Emmy Award for Outstanding Lifestyle Host, the Gracie Award for Best Television Host, and in 2012, she was inducted into the Culinary Hall of Fame.

Making her debut in 2003, De Laurentiis hosted *Everyday Italian*, a half-hour cooking show. The naturally shy chef has admitted that it took some time for her to get comfortable in front of the cameras. Petite, warm and friendly, De Laurentiis soon became a fan favorite on the Food Network. The 2005 companion cookbook for the series became a hit as well.

De Laurentiis landed on the best-sellers list with 2006's *Giada's Family Dinners* and 2007's *Everyday Pasta: Favorite Pasta Recipes for Every Occasion*. Also in 2007, she debuted a new food-and-travel themed show, *Giada's Weekend Getaways*, on the Food Network, which ran for several years.

Branching out, De Laurentiis has served as a mentor and judge on the television competition, *Next Food Network Star*, with Bobby Flay. She

also became a correspondent for the *Today* show during the 2006 Olympics. Since then, De Laurentiis has been a regular contributor and co-host on the show.

In 2010, De Laurentiis launched a new cooking series called *Giada at Home*, along with a cookbook by the same title. Both the program and the cookbook have enjoyed enormous success. That same year, De Laurentiis partnered with Target stores to sell her own line of food items and kitchen tools.



IS ITALIAN REALLY ITALIAN?

Italian cuisine has developed over the centuries. Although the country known as Italy did not unite until the 19th century, the cuisine can claim traceable roots as far back as the 4th century BCE. Italian food started to form after the fall of the Roman Empire, when different cities began to separate and form their own traditions. Many different types of bread and pasta were made, and there was a variation in cooking techniques and preparation. The country was split. Regional cuisine is represented by some of the major cities in Italy. For example, Milan (north of Italy) is known for its risottos, Bologna (the central/middle of the country) is known for its tortellini and Naples (the south) is famous for its pizzas and spaghettis.

With culinary traditions from Rome and Athens, a cuisine developed in Sicily that some consider the first real Italian cuisine. Arabs invaded Sicily in the 9th century, introducing spinach, almonds, and rice. During the 12th century, a Norman king surveyed Sicily and saw people making long strings made from flour and water called *atriya*, which eventually became *trii*, a term still used for spaghetti in southern Italy. Normans also introduced casseroles, salt cod (*baccalà*) and stockfish, which remain popular.

Preserving food in Italian cuisine became quite important over the years. Food preservation was either chemical or physical, as refrigeration did not exist. Meats and fish would be smoked, dried or kept on ice. Brine and salt were used to pickle items such as herring, and to cure pork. Root vegetables were preserved in brine after they had been parboiled. Other means of preservation included oil, vinegar or immersing meat in congealed, rendered fat. For preserving fruits, liquor, honey and sugar were used.

Till this day, Italian food has always focused on the ingredients and never on the outcome, because in the end with fresh and premium ingredients, how can a dish not be delicious?



ITALIAN BASIC INGREDIENTS

Olive Oil

The liquid gold that holds all Italian cooking together. Italian food just wouldn't taste the same without olive oil.

Balsamic Vinegar

Balsamic vinegar is produced in the Italian region of Modena or Emilia-Romagna. This dark, well-aged vinegar is used in marinades and dressings.

Garlic

Garlic is one of the most popular ingredients throughout the country, especially sautéed in olive oil to create a flavorful cooking base.

Pasta

Popular types include spaghetti (long, thin strands of pasta); penne (tube shapes from Liguria); tagliatelle (thin pasta ribbons from Bologna); fettuccine (long, flat pasta from Rome); and pappardelle (flat, wide pasta ribbons from Tuscany).

Fresh Tomatoes

The reason for the red on the Italian flag, the beating heart of *Bella Italia*, the start and finish of every great pizza or spaghetti dish; Italian cooking wouldn't be Italian without tomatoes!

Porcini Mushrooms

Porcinis, either fresh or dried, are added to sauces cooked in risotto, or simmered in a wine sauce to add texture to a dish.

Italian Cheese

Hard cheeses have a grainy texture and are shaved over salads or grated over pasta. A soft cheese like mozzarella is used to melt over meals, like lasagna and pizza.

Wine

Italians drink wine and also use it to simmer meat dishes and add another layer of flavor to a red sauce.





CARBONARA ARANCINI

Total time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Serves: 12

Calories: 549

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 50 grams pancetta, cut into 1/4 inch dice
- 1/2 small onion, finely chopped
- Kosher salt
- 150 grams + 1 tablespoon all purposes flour
- 125 ml milk
- 50 grams finely chopped parsley
- 150 grams + 2 tablespoons grated pecorino cheese + more for sprinkling
- Pinch of crushed red pepper
- 450 grams cooled cooked white rice
- 3 large eggs, 1 beaten and 2 separated
- 150 grams plain dry breadcrumbs
- Canola oil for frying
- Chopped mint and coarse sea salt for garnish

Method:

- Cook pancetta over high heat until browned. Transfer to paper towel to drain.
- Cook onion with pinch of salt over moderate heat, until onion softened and browned. Add 1 tablespoon flour and cook till pasty. Whisk in milk, and bring to a simmer. Cook with low heat and whisk till thick.
- Mix onion béchamel, pancetta, parsley, 2 tablespoons of cheese, 1/2 teaspoon salt and the crushed red pepper together. Let filling cool.
- In a bowl, mix the rice, beaten egg and 2 egg yolks until evenly coated. Stir in 150 grams of pecorino cheese until rice is sticky.
- Line baking sheet with wax paper. Scoop 3 tablespoons of rice mixture and press it in to a round. Scoop 2 teaspoons of the cooled filling and wrap the rice around it. Transfer to the baking sheet and repeat.
- Dip the balls in the egg whites and roll in breadcrumbs.
- Fry arancini ball till golden brown.





PROSCIUTTO & ARUGULA PIZZA

Total time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Serves: 6

Calories: 900

Ingredients:

Crust:

- 8 grams active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon white sugar
- 250 ml warm water (About 25 seconds in the microwave will do)
- 375 grams unbleached all purposes flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil + 1 tablespoon for greasing pans

Toppings:

- 1 large sweet corn cob
- 2 tablespoons melted butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano + More for garnish
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh red onion + 1/2 red onion slices
- 150 grams prosciutto, separated into two 75 grams portions
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 75 grams parmesan cheese, shredded or sliced thinly
- 3 tablespoons olive oil

Method:

- Make pizza dough, roll the dough to create crust.
- In a bowl, mix together corn, salt, pepper, red pepper flakes, oregano, red onion, prosciutto, and melted butter.
- Drizzle olive oil over the pizza dough and top corn mixture.
- Bake for 18-22 minutes, until crust begins to brown
- Mix together arugula, 1 tablespoon olive oil, salt and pepper to taste, red onion, and tomato
- Remove the pizza and top with the arugula salad. Slice and enjoy!





CLASSIC MUSHROOM RISOTTO

Total Time: 50 minutes

Serves: 2

Calories: 257

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 shallot or 1/2 white onion diced
- 3 garlic cloves minced
- 100 g button mushrooms thinly sliced
- 100 g risotto rice
- 500 ml vegetable stock
- 1/2 tablespoon white wine vinegar (Optional)
- 4 tablespoons nutritional yeast flakes (Optional)
- Fresh parsley to serve
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method:

- Heat the olive oil in a large saute pan. Add the shallot and garlic and cook on a medium-low heat until softened.
- Add the mushrooms and cook for a further minute.
- Stir in the risotto rice and immediately pour in the stock and vinegar (if using). Bring to a
- boil then reduce to a simmer for approximately 30 minutes or until all the liquid has been absorbed and the rice is cooked. Add more hot water, if necessary.
- Once cooked, stir in the nutritional yeast (if using), stir in a handful of chopped fresh
- parsley and season with salt and pepper.
- Serve and enjoy!





INDIVIDUAL TIRAMISU

Total Time: 45 minutes

Serves: 6

Calories: 550

Ingredients:

- 15 lady fingers, store bought or homemade
- 250 ml espresso
- 4 egg yolks
- 75 grams sugar
- 250 ml + 2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream
- 200 grams mascarpone, store bought or homemade
- Cocoa Powder for dusting

Method:

- Soak lady finger in espresso.
- Place the egg yolks, sugar, and 2 tablespoons of the heavy cream in a small saucepan and whisk together well. Place over medium heat and whisk until the sugar is dissolved and the custard thickens. Scrape into bowl and let cool completely.
- Beat the remaining heavy cream to stiff peaks. Set aside.
- Add the mascarpone to the cooled custard and whisk together until smooth. Gently fold in the whipped cream until well combined.
- Place one ladyfinger in the bottom of each serving dish. Pipe a layer of filling over the top of each ladyfinger. Continue to layer espresso-soaked ladyfingers and mascarpone filling until you reach the top of the serving dish.
- Scrape the top with knife to leave a smooth surface. Dust the top with cocoa powder.
- Refrigerate overnight & enjoy!





STRAWBERRY ITALIAN CREAM SODA

Total Time: 30 minutes

Serves: 4

Calories: 39

Ingredients:

- 230 g strawberries, hulled and sliced
- 1 tablespoon good quality balsamic vinegar
- 50 ml wildflower honey (or maple syrup for a vegan version)
- 2 tablespoons or 30ml filtered water
- 125 ml regular coconut milk whipping cream
- Sparkling water or club soda for serving

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 400°F.
- Toss the strawberries with the balsamic vinegar, honey and water in a shallow oven-proof dish.
- Roast until the strawberries are soft and the juices are bubbling, about 20 minutes.
- Let cool slightly. Strain through a fine mesh sieve (pressing hard on the solids to extract as much juice as possible) and refrigerate syrup until completely cool.
- Place a few tablespoonfuls (about 2 to 3) of the cooled balsamic strawberry syrup in the bottom of a glass. Add crushed ice and sparkling water. Top off with 2 Tablespoons (or more if you'd like it creamier) of the coconut milk.
- Serve with a spoon. Stir when ready to drink.



TIPS & TRICKS FOR THE PERFECT ITALIAN CUISINE

Keep It Seasonal

Wherever possible, ingredients should be bought in season as the typical Italian diet uses fresh produce. This helps to give dishes a fantastic flavour and means you don't have to add loads of fat, salt or sugar to improve taste. Fresh, seasonal ingredients are also usually more nutrient dense and therefore better for you.

Don't Overdo Your Pasta

When you are preparing to cook pasta you shouldn't allocate more than 120g of dried pasta per person. Take care not to overcook your pasta as al dente (firm to the bite) pasta has a lower glycemic index than soft, overcooked pasta - so it is good for filling you up and keeping you satisfied for longer.

Watch Your Sauces

Italians lightly coat their pasta instead of drowning it with sauce. Excessive smothering just piles on the calories and fat content without adding any extra flavour.

Don't Buy Pregrated Cheese!

Look for blocks of cheese and stay away from the already grated kinds, which are less fresh and less flavourful. Grate cheese using a

microplane or grater for small shreds, or a vegetable peeler if you want to top your dish with larger shavings.

Keep It Simple

Italian food is all about simple recipes that showcase fresh, good-quality ingredients. Look for the best ingredients you can find, even if that means using them in smaller quantities.

Never Rinse Your Pasta!

If you want your sauce to stick to your pasta, don't rinse the noodles when you strain them. You can also reserve a bit of the pasta water to incorporate when you toss the pasta in the sauce. Ideally, you don't want the sauce to slide right off and pool in the bottom of the dish. It's never recommended to put naked pasta on a plate with just a dollop of sauce on the top.





ENJOY THE WONDERS OF A TRUE ITALIAN CUISINE IN THE COMFORTS OF YOUR OWN HOME!

Bring to life your very own Italian food safari with the recipes of *Spoons of Italy* - that you, your friends and family can genuinely enjoy!

Spoons of Italy offers you:

- A great insight into Italian cuisine and ingredients
- 5 incredible Italian recipes to help bring to the dining table the essence of Italy
- Tips and tricks on bringing to life the perfect Italian cuisine

With this cookbook booklet, you will find yourself falling in love with food all over again!

