

Mangia! ...Y'All

There are recipes that I really count on from time to time that are only partly about good food. A bigger part of the recipe is the special person who shared it with me and the memories of when we first enjoyed the food together.

I'm sure most of you have some treasures tucked away in a drawer, scribbled out on old, yellowed index cards that go back many years. Aren't they amazing? I found out a while back while I was recopying some favorites into my personal working cookbook that I just could not part with the originals, particularly those that were hand written by old friends or family.

Just think about the power of great foods and the sharing involved. We can be transported back to a special moment with extraordinary people simply by looking at a recipe we were given. They do in fact become small legacies of the people we share our lives with over the years. And if you're like me, these are the most important recipes I have.

The way I figure it, if I share only two or three recipes per week with you, I'll still have enough to keep at this for several years. This week I'm pulling out some really great ones that have served me extremely well when I've used them. The first one was a gift from a dear friend and devoted patron of our restaurant. Her family still lives in New York City and this particular recipe was an old Italian favorite that will knock your socks off!

Sizzling Angel Hair

(will serve 4 to 6 persons)

1 lb. good quality angel hair pasta, cooked al dente
2 cups Roma tomatoes, diced
10 cloves fresh garlic, finely diced
6 tablespoons chopped fresh Basil or 3 tablespoons dried Basil
½ cup extra virgin light olive oil
freshly ground black pepper
grated aged Pecorino Romano cheese

In a glass bowl mix diced tomatoes, garlic and Basil at least one hour before serving the pasta to allow all of the flavors to blend. This should set in a cool but not refrigerated area before serving.

Prepare your pasta so that it is ready when you are planning to serve. Avoid holding the pasta and do not over cook. The timing for your dish is one of the most important details for great results. Heat your olive oil in a small saucepan to medium high and remove from the heat before it begins to smoke.

Place your pasta in a large bowl, top it with your garlic, Basil and tomato mix and just before bringing the bowl to the table, pour on the hot oil. Your pasta will sizzle as you bring it out and your presentation will be at least half the fun! Toss the pasta mixing

everything, place on individual plates and add grated Pecorino Romano cheese to taste along with some freshly ground black pepper. Serve with good, crusty Italian bread and you'll know..."Life is Good!"

Now we've taken care of the "Mangia" part of our meal and we're going to move to the "Y'All" finish with a dessert that smacks of simple tastes taken well past the decadent level. If this dessert didn't come out of the South, it should have! The first contact I had with it was when a friend, Pat, served it at a church dinner. No wonder Christian women have such a great reputation in the kitchen!

Krispy Kreme Bread Pudding

(serves 6 to 8)

9 Krispy Kreme glazed doughnuts, one day old
2 large eggs
2 egg yolks
½ cup sugar plus 1 tablespoon more
1 ½ teaspoons vanilla
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon fresh ground nutmeg
½ teaspoon cinnamon
3 cups ½ and ½

Cut doughnuts into ¾ inch cubes and spread them out on a buttered 2 quart baking dish. Whisk together all of the remaining ingredients and pour them over the doughnuts. Let the doughnut mix relax for 1 hour.

Preheat your oven to 350°F and place a water bath for your pudding in the oven. This is done by using a medium baking pan into which you place your bread pudding pan. Add warm water to the lower pan until it is almost full.

Bake in oven for 70 to 75 minutes, just until center is set and firm. Can be served warm or cool. (I think you'll want to keep this recipe in your wallet in case of emergencies!)

With the Sizzling Angel Hair dish we would recommend a cold and refreshing glass of Pinot Grigio and we have three we would like to suggest you should try. The Canaletto Winemaker's Selection Pinot Grigio is bright and zesty with lots of refreshing fruit acidity. It has just enough fruitiness to keep it fun and comes in with a bargain pricetag.

The Elena Walch 2003 Alto Adige Pinot Grigio has extraordinary complexity with hints of ripe pears and a big, buttery texture. This is a serious dry white wine and I would be hard pressed to compare it to any other Pinot Grigio. I can see this wine being evaluated next to a top quality white Bordeaux or one of the small production artisan quality dry Pinot Gris crafted in Alsace. This wine could spoil you!

Finally, there is a small amount of Pinot Grigio finding its way to the U.S.A. from Germany and one we are excited about is the Franz Reh 2002 Pinot Grigio. There's a unique styling to this one that includes brilliant fruit acidity and hints of melon along with a subdued grassy character. It's really intriguing and sure to be a wonderful addition to your wine cellar. Buy it when you can find it as quantities are tiny.

Have a great week and wonderful meals filled with fellowship and quality family time!
Cheers!

Remember we are happy to help you with your wine questions at 888-288-0668.