

KAUFMAN'S KITCHEN

Travel to Rome Without Leaving Home

In Rome: Fresh Flavors & Forgotten Recipes from an Ancient City" by Katie Parla and Kristina Gill (Clarkson Potter Publishers), two American women living in Rome celebrate the city's lost recipes and contemporary innovations and share dishes and stories that only a fully versed Rome dweller could know—until now!



By SHEILAH KAUFMAN

Katie Parla moved to Rome in 2003 after graduating from Yale. She holds a sommelier certificate and a master's degree in Italian gastronomic culture. Katie has written about restaurants, drinks, and food culture for more than a decade. She often appears as a Rome expert on the History Channel, Travel Channel, and the university lecture circuit.

Kristina Gill is a food and travel photographer, and the food and drinks editor at DesignSponge.com, a home and lifestyle site with over 1.2 million readers per month. Her original recipes and those she selects from celebrated authors, chefs and readers have appeared weekly as the "In the Kitchen with" column since 2007.

In sharing Rome's celebrated traditional dishes, innovative street foods, and forgotten recipes, Katie and Kristina showcase the city's allure and uncover its highly evolved food culture—a culmination of 2,000 years of history. Their recipes acknowledge the foundations of Roman cuisine while demonstrating how it has transitioned to the variations found today, ranging from genuine classics to the fascinating but largely undocumented Sephardic Jewish fare to centuries-old offal preparations, and much more. Delve into recipes like Rice Croquettes with Pecorino Romano and Black Pepper; Vito Bernabei's Porchetta; Summertime Amatriciana; Honey-Soaked Matzo Fritters; Chicken Meatballs in White

Wine Sauce; Beef Tongue in Salsa Verde; Fennel, Radicchio, and Pear Salad; Sheet Pan Pizza, Two Ways; and Thin Crust Roman-Style Pizza (with four variations).

Little Puff Pastry Pizzas

These simple and savory puff pastry snacks pair perfectly with a fresh beer or cocktail.

Makes 32 pizzette

1/3 cup tomato paste
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano (optional)
1 pound rough puff pastry, homemade (recipe follows) or store-bought

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a small bowl, stir together the tomato paste, olive oil, salt, oregano (if using), and 2 to 3 tablespoons water to make a thick but brushable liquid.

Roll out the puff pastry into a rectangle that is approximately 10 × 20 inches and 1/4-inch thick. Using a 2½-inch round cookie cutter, cut out 32 pizzette. Place on the prepared baking sheet, leaving about 1/4 inch between each. Place any that don't fit on the tray in the refrigerator until you are ready to bake them. Brush the center of each pizzetta with the tomato paste, leaving a small border around the edge.

Bake for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the pizzette puff up and turn golden. Transfer to a serving tray and bake the remaining pizzette.

Serve immediately, or allow to cool to room temperature and store in an airtight container for up to three days.

Rough Puff Pastry

Makes 2 pounds 3 ounces (1 kilogram) puff pastry

4 cups (500 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
1 teaspoon (5 grams) sea salt
2 cups plus 3 tablespoons (500

grams) cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

1 cup (240 grams) ice-cold water

Sift the flour and salt onto a clean, dry surface and make a well in the middle. Add the butter to the well and begin to work the butter into the flour by hand, squeezing the pieces flat as you go. Continue to mix quickly and lightly with your fingertips until the butter is grainy and resembles flour-covered cornflakes in spots.

Sprinkle half the ice water over the mixture and gather the dough into a ball. Add additional water by the teaspoon until a shaggy dough forms. (You may not need all the water.)

Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Remove the dough from the refrigerator and, on a lightly floured surface, working in only one direction, roll the dough into a rectangle that is approximately 16 × 8 inches.

With one short edge facing you, fold the top third farthest from you toward the middle, and then the bottom third over that. Turn the dough clockwise a quarter turn, so that an open side faces you. Repeat the rolling-and-turning process. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Repeat the rolling and folding process one more time and allow the dough to chill for at least 30 minutes in the refrigerator before using. It will keep for up to three days in the refrigerator or up to four weeks in the freezer.

Leonardo Vignoli's Cacio e Pepe

Cacio is the local Roman dialect word for Pecorino Romano, a sheep's-milk cheese made in the region since ancient times. Like carbonara, cacio e pepe is a relative newcomer to the Roman repertoire, first appearing in the mid-twentieth century. Pasta is tossed with an emulsified sauce of Pecorino Romano and

black pepper that is bound by starchy pasta cooking water. Depending on the cook, the results range from dry to juicy. We love Leonardo Vignoli's saucy version at Cesa al Casaletto. He uses ice in a hot pan to obtain a creamy sauce, but we have adapted his recipe to obtain more consistent results in a home kitchen. Finely grated Pecorino Romano and very hot water are essential to a smooth sauce, while fresh, coarsely ground black pepper gives flavor and texture. The most important component of a flawless cacio e pepe, however, is speed. If the water cools before melting the cheese, the sauce will clump.

Serves 4 to 6

Sea salt

1 pound spaghetti or tonnarelli
2 cups finely grated Pecorino Romano
2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste

Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil over high heat. Salt the water. When the salt has dissolved, add the pasta and cook until al dente.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine 1½ cups of the Pecorino Romano, the pepper, and a small ladle of pasta cooking water. Using the back of a large wooden spoon, mix vigorously and quickly to form a paste.

When the pasta is cooked, use a large strainer to remove it from the cooking water and quickly add it to the sauce in the bowl, keeping the cooking water boiling on the stove. Toss vigorously, adjusting with additional hot water a tablespoon or two at a time as necessary to melt the cheese and to obtain a juicy sauce that completely coats the pasta.

Plate and sprinkle each portion with some of the remaining Pecorino Romano and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

Editor's note: For more edible delights by Sheilah Kaufman, go to www.cookingwithsheilah.com.

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