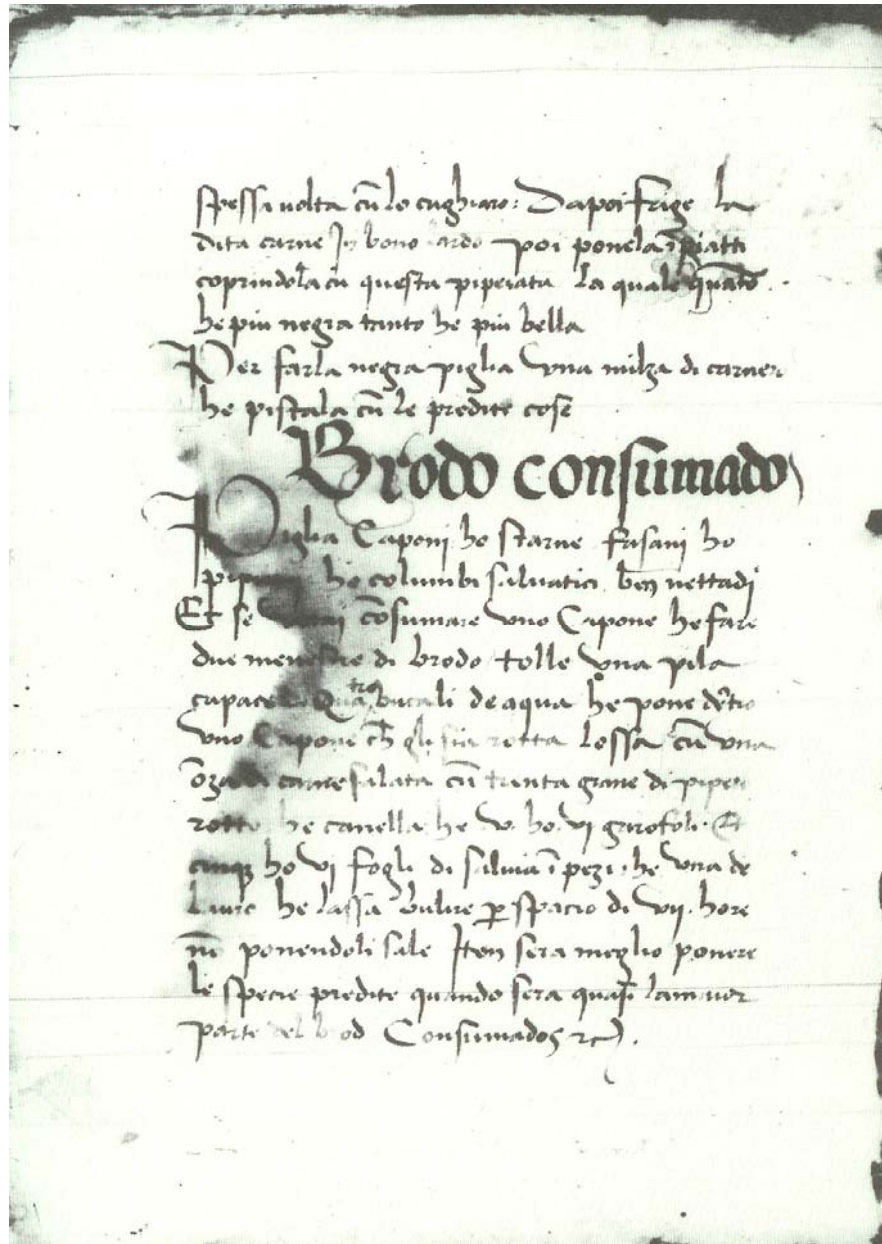


Presenting  
an  
Italian feast  
for  
the AS 40 fall  
Academy



## Introduction

Recipes were taken either from the ancient and venerable source of Apicius' *De re coquinaria* or from the scandalously modern *De arte coquinaria* by Maestro Martino of Como (as presented by Ballerini and Parzen in *The Art of Cooking*). Apicius was a 1<sup>st</sup> century AD Roman epicure who contributed to the first written book of recipes that we have. Martino was a 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian "chef" whose recipe collection was immortalized in Latin by Bartolomeo Sacchi (aka Platina) in his book *On Right Pleasure and Good Health*. Other versions of *The Art of Cooking* have been subsequently found in Italian and published by Ballerini as well as a Neapolitan collection translated and commented on by Terence Scully. Recipes were redacted by members of the guild of St. Lawrence in the Shire of Abhainn Ciach Ghlais in September and October of 2005.

## The Menu



### First course

Fresh Fruit  
Bread  
Olive Oil and Butter  
Lettuce salad  
Bolognese Torte

### Second Course

Catalan Mirause  
Young Cabbage Sprouts, Another Way

### Third Course

A Dressed Roast  
with two sauces from Maestro Martino:  
Gold of Pleasure Sauce  
Mustard  
Carrots and Parsnips with a wine sauce

### Afters

Pears in wine must, dates and figs

**The Recipes  
as prepared  
with commentary and ancient wisdom  
where available**

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**Bread**

A conventional white loaf.

Platina notes that bread should be made with "flour which is well-ground from wheat" and that the bread should have neither "too much or too little leaven." It is also not "especially nourishing when made from very fresh wheat" [Platina, 121]

Olive oil and butter on the table

**Lettuce Salad** (Galen, on Lettuce, 40 and Apicius 110)

*Apicius: Lettuce salad – With vinegar dressing and a little brine stock; which helps digestion and is taken to counteract inflation.*

1 bunch of lettuce greens  
Oil  
Balsamic vinegar  
Salt

Platina notes, when describing what should be eaten first at a feast, that food that is "of light and slight nourishment" is "more pleasantly eaten in the first course." He notes that apples, pears and lettuce served raw with vinegar and oil are "served very appropriately to guests" [Platina, 123]

Galen notes in "On Lettuce" that "Many physicians prefer this vegetable to all the others" and that it "generates blood." [Galen, 99] We know that the fires of digestion are served by blood, so eating lettuce at the beginning of the meal would serve to stoke the furnace.

**Bolognese Torte [Martino, 80]**

*Take the same amount of cheese, as in the recipe above for white torte, and grate. Note that the fatter the cheese, the better; then take some chard, parsley, and marjoram; once cleaned and washed, chop well with a knife and add to the cheese, crushing and mixing it with your hands until well incorporated, adding four eggs and as much pepper as necessary, and a bit of saffron, and likewise some good rendered lard or fresh butter, mixing and incorporating all these things together as I have said. Place this filling in a pan with a crust below and above, applying medium heat. When it appears to you that it is half-cooked, to give it an even more handsome appearance, make it yellow by brushing it with an egg yolk that has been beaten with a bit of saffron. You can tell that it is done when the crust on top rises and puffs up; it is best to remove it from the flame at this point.*

From "White Torte" (referred to as "the recipe above", [Martino 80]) *Take a libra and a half of good fresh cheese, finely chop...*

A libra and a half (18 oz) of fresh cheese (whole milk ricotta)  
4 oz. of de-veined chard or spinach leaves.  
¼ bunch of parsley, stemmed and chopped  
marjoram  
4 eggs + 1 egg yolk for decoration.  
2 T. butter (melted)  
1/8<sup>th</sup> tsp. black pepper.  
a few threads of crushed saffron  
top and bottom pie crusts

Drain the ricotta if needed. Beat the eggs together with the melted butter. Chop the spinach, parsley and marjoram together. Mix all the wet ingredients together with the spinach and spices and fill the bottom crust. Cover with the top crust and bake for 30-40 minutes. Brush the top crust with the egg yolk beaten with a few threads of saffron, and bake another 5 to 10 minutes, or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean.

Platina notes that this pie is "even worse" than the white torte, which is "very nourishing, is digested slowly, warms the liver, but it causes blockages, generates stones, and is bad for the eyes and nerves"



## Second Course

### Catalan Mirause (Martino, p54)

*First, take some squab, or pullet, or capon, and dress as you would a roast, and then roast on a spit, and when half cooked, remove from the spit and quarter, and then cut each quarter into four parts and place them in a pot. Then take some almonds that have been toasted under hot ashes and rub them with a clothe without cleaning them otherwise, and crush; and then take two or three slices of slightly toasted bread and three or four egg yolks, and crush together with the almonds; and then add a little good vinegar and some broth, and pass through a stamine; and then put this mixture in the pot over the meat, adding some good spices and a generous amount of cinnamon, ginger, and a generous amount of sugar. Then put the pot over some hot coals and boil for an hour, stirring continuously with a spoon. As soon as it is done, serve this mirause on platters or in bowls, whichever is more appropriate.*

Whole "roaster" chicken  
1 cup almonds  
3 slices white toast  
4 egg yolks  
½ cup vinegar  
1 cup broth  
"good spices"  
cinnamon, ginger, sugar

Split and joint the chicken, and roast in a 375° oven for 45 minutes. Toast the almonds in the oven at the same time, until lightly browned on the inside. Crush up the almond coarsely in either a food processor or a mortar along with the toast. Lightly beat the eggs, and mix with the almonds and toast crumbs. Add the egg mixture along with the vinegar, broth and spices to a Dutch oven or roaster. Add the chicken and cook over low heat for 30 minutes, or until the chicken is done and the sauce has thickened.

Paltina notes that he "remember[s] having eaten nothing more pleasant with my friend ... It is very nourishing, digests slowly, warms the liver and kidneys, makes the body fat, and stimulates the passion." [275]

### **Young Cabbage Sprouts, Another Way (Apicius 89 and 92)**

*Prepare the sprouts in the above way {The cooked stalks are placed in a dish; moisten with stock and pure oil, season with cumin, sprinkle with pepper, leeks, cumin and green coriander chopped up}, cover them with boiled spelt and pine nuts and sprinkle them with raisins*

Note: We debated a while on what to use for this recipe. Giacosa blithely mentions that broccoli is "a member of the cabbage family" [150] and writes the recipe with no further explanation. The Brothwells, in *Food in Antiquity*, have a description of Roman cabbage that certainly sounds like a broccoli-like stalked cabbage was consumed by the upper class. [117] The couscous is an addition by Giacosa, and it's tastier and far more thrifty than using spelt.

2 or 3 (small) heads Broccoli  
2 ½ cups broth  
1 Tbsp. Olive oil  
dash of cumin, pepper  
1 leek, sliced and sauted  
1 Tbsp. fresh cilantro  
1 box couscous  
½ cup pine nuts (about 2 oz) cooked with the couscous  
½ box raisins (about 4 oz.) cooked with the couscous

Bring 1 1/2 cups of broth to a boil, add the couscous, pine nuts and raisins, cover and let sit for 15 minutes. Steam the broccoli in another cup of broth and olive oil, tossing to coat well. Season the broccoli with the spices and sauted leek, and cover with the warmed couscous just before serving.

Cato praises Roman cabbage (*brassica*) as a medicine and gives many examples of it promoting good health. Pliny defines a possibly different plant (*cauliculi*) as "delicate and tender" and calls it a "table luxury." [Brothwell, 118]



## Third Course

### A Dressed Roast (Suckling Pig) (Martino, p 55)

#### *How to dress a Roast Suckling Pig*

*First, make sure that it has been well skinned and that it is white and clean. Then slit the suckling pig lengthwise along the chine and remove its innards and wash well. Remove the innards and finely chop with a knife together with some good herbs, and take some finely chopped garlic, and a bit of good lard, and a little grated cheese, and a few eggs, and crushed pepper, and a bit of saffron, and mix all these things together and put the mixture in the suckling pig, inverting it and turning it inside out as you would with a tench. Then sew it together and tie it up well and cook on a spit or on a grill. But cook it slowly so that the filling is as well cooked as the suckling pig. Make some brine with vinegar, pepper and saffron, and add two or three sprigs of laurel, or sage, or rosemary, and baste the suckling pig repeatedly with this brine.*

4 lb boned pork shoulder or picnic (about 4 lbs.)

½ lbs chicken liver

bunch of sage

1 Tbsp chopped garlic

1 Tbsp lard

¼ cup grated parmesan cheese

1 raw egg

2 hard boiled eggs

pepper

for the brine:

¼ cup salt

2 cups wine vinegar

pepper, saffron

1 bay leaf

sage, sprig rosemary, chopped coarsely

Hard to find suckling pigs these days. Bone and butterfly your pork roast to leave a pocket. Mix the coarsely-chopped liver, sage, garlic, lard, cheese and raw egg together. Stuff the roast as best you can with the liver mixture, and crumble the hard-boiled eggs over the stuffing. Tie up the roast and place seam-down in a roasting pan. Roast in a 350° oven for 45 minutes uncovered. Mix the salt, vinegar, pepper, bay leaf, rosemary, sage and saffron together for the brine, and pour some over the roast every 5 minutes or so until it's all in the roasting pan. Cover and continue to bake until the roast reaches an internal temperature of 160°F. Decant the brine before serving.

Platina notes "that this is of poor and little nourishment, digests slowly, and harms the stomach, head, eyes and liver. It makes obstructions, creates stones, and increases phlegm." [277]

### Gold of Pleasure sauce (Martino, p.76)

*Take some raisins and crush well. Take two or three slices of toasted bread that have been soaked in red wine, adding more or adding less, as needed. Crush all the above things together. Then take a little red wine, some sodden wine and verjuice, and for those who do not like verjuice, use vinegar, making it sweet or tart as you wish. Pass all of this mixture through a stamina, adding a generous amount of good cinnamon, a few cloves, and some crushed nutmeg.*

½ cup golden raisins  
3 slices toast, soaked in a few Tbsp. of red wine  
¼ cup red wine  
¼ cup sherry  
¼ cup red wine vinegar  
sugar, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg to taste

### Mustard

*Take some charlocks and soak for two days, changing the water often so that it becomes whiter; and take some almonds that have been properly peeled and crushed. Once they have been well crushed, add them to the mustard and then crush together well. Then take some good verjuice or vinegar and crush some bread white in it; then thin and pass through a stamina. Make it as sweet or as strong as you wish.*

Note: "charlocks" is a wild mustard seed.

¼ cup whole mustard seed  
¼ cup crushed, blanched almonds  
red wine vinegar  
¼ cup plain bread crumbs  
sugar or poudre forte to taste.

Mustard, notes Platina, "warms {the} stomach and liver, reduces the spleen, creates thirst and stimulates passion." [357]

### **Carrrots and Parsnips (Apicius 122)**

*Carrots or Parsnips are fried [and served] with a wine sauce*

#### **a wine sauce (Apicius 33)**

*Wine sauce for truffles. Another way: Thyme, savory, pepper, lovage, honey, broth and oil [added to Oenogarum]*

6 parsnips  
3 large carrots  
Thyme, savory, pepper  
1 Tbsp honey  
1 Tbsp broth  
1 tsp olive oil  
¼ cup wine

Tbsp Thai fish sauce

Parboil the parsnips and carrots before frying. Blend the herbs in a food processor, adding the honey, broth, oil and fish sauce until you reach a good texture.

Platina notes under carrots and parsnips that parsnips "settles cough, pleurisy, and dropsy, and arouse passion." As for carrots, "there is nothing is more pleasant to eat than this" and "it is good for people in two respects, for represses bile and moves the urine." [227]



## Afters

### **Pears in wine must (Martino, p120)**

*How to prepare ... Pears*

*Clean the pears well and then toast over hot coals; and when they have been toasted, put them in wine or water; then clean them with your hands and cook them in boiled must with a generous amount of cinnamon.*

2 pears, peeled, cored and halved  
1 cup of wine  
1 cup of must (grape juice)  
cinnamon

Soak the peeled pears in the red wine for about 24 hours. Add the pears and wine to the must and simmer for about 10 minutes. Sprinkle liberally with cinnamon. Remove the pears, and reduce the must and wine by 1/2. Pour the reduced sauce over the pears and serve.

Platina has much to say about pears. He notes they "are binding if eaten as a first course, which is contrary to good health," and that "pears nourish the body better than other fruits." [137]

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