

Rita Monastero

Rita Monastero, also known as The Lovely Cheffa, is a cooking instructor and author. She collaborates with various cooking schools, including Il Gambero Rosso, offering classes for both professionals and enthusiasts. Rita also teaches Italian cuisine in Bangkok and contributes articles on Italian cuisine to the Bangkok Post.

The Lovely Cheffa has authored 13 cookbooks published by Gribaudo-Feltrinelli, with her 11th book released in March 2019. One of her books, “I Pani dimenticati”, was translated into Turkish. She regularly appears on TV shows, including “La Prova del Cuoco” on Rai1 and “Geo” on Rai3, and works as a food stylist for several Rai programs.

She promotes a balance between looking good and feeling well. For her, food is not just nourishment but also an experience that engages the senses. Through her work, she combines culinary passion with an emphasis on well-being and aesthetics.



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The Italian Cultural Institute of Washington is an office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Italian government, dedicated to the promotion of Italian Culture in the United States through the organization of cultural events.

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Music and Chocolate

MASTERCLASS with Italian Chef RITA MONASTERO

Potato-cocoa dumplings with sage and butter

Gnocchi di patate al cacao,
burro e salvia



INGREDIENTS

250g potatoes
150g flour
10g cocoa powder
25g egg (optional)

50g butter
sage leaves
salt and pepper
grated parmigiano

METHOD

Boil, peel and mash potatoes; pour mashed potatoes on a clean working surface. With your fingers, gently make a well large enough to hold the egg - if used- which will act as a binder to hold the potatoes together. Add flour.

Do not overwork as this would cause dumplings to melt into the water.

Take some dough and form long cylinders, cut them in to small pieces of equal length and streak them with a fork to shape the gnocchi.

In a large pan, melt the butter with the sage leaves; boil the gnocchi, drain, and sauté them in the pan with the melted butter, adding some of the boiling water to get a creamy and light sauce. Serve with grated parmigiano.

Sweet and sour eggplants and chicken stew with dark chocolate

Caponatina di melanzane e pollo
con cioccolato



INGREDIENTS

1 eggplant
150g chicken breast
1 celery stick
40g pitted green olives
300g tomato purée
10g capers, pickled or salted
10g pine nuts
fresh basil leaves

30g raisins
30g crushed almonds
30g onion
2 spoons vinegar
1/2 spoon sugar
20g dark chocolate
frying oil
salt

METHOD

Cut the chicken breast into strips and set aside; chop the eggplant into cubes, sprinkle with salt and leave it to drain water on a paper towel, then wash to remove excess salt, and then deep-fry.

Cut and fry the celery sticks. Stir-fry the onion, add the chicken breast and sauté until well done, then add capers, chopped olives, pine nuts, raisins and tomato purée.

Simmer gently for a few minutes, then season with salt and pepper and add sugar and vinegar, the fried eggplants and the celery.

Let it simmer for a while, then switch the heat off and add plenty of basil, chopped toasted almonds and some chopped chocolate.

This dish is best when eaten the day after being prepared.

Mascarpone cheese and chocolate mousse

Crema di cioccolato e mascarpone



INGREDIENTS

125g mascarpone
100g dark chocolate
150g vegetable cream
chocolate drops

METHOD

Melt the chocolate and set it aside to cool; in the meantime, combine mascarpone cheese and cream and beat until soft peaks form.

Fold the melted chocolate into it and combine well. Serve into glasses, decorating with chocolate drops, biscuits and whipped cream.

*Music and
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