

AUTUMN HARVEST - PUMPKIN, LEEKS AND TOMATOES

Fall is here... enjoy the colors and flavors of the season!

Pumpkin with browned butter, sage, and asiago

1 medium (about 2lbs) sugar pumpkin or butternut squash
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
8-10 fresh sage leaves minced
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 1/2 ounces Asiago cut into shavings

Preheat the oven to 400. Cut the squash in half and scoop out the seeds and fibers. Place the cut side down on a greased baking sheet with a rim and bake until tender about 40 to 50 minutes. Remove from the oven, let cool slightly, and cut into serving-size pieces. Scoop the pumpkin from the shell and place on a serving dish.

In a saucepan melt the butter over a medium heat until it begins to brown. Pour about 3 tablespoons over the squash. Add the sage to the remaining butter in the pan and heat until the sage crisps. Spoon over the pumpkin and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Scatter the cheese over the top.

Polenta con la Zucca (Polenta with Pumpkin)

1 small pumpkin
1 cup polenta flour
salt

Peel a pumpkin weighing about 1 1/4lbs and boil it in salted water until tender. Puree the pumpkin and set aside. Bring 3 cups of salted water to a boil add the puree and slowly add 1 cup of polenta flour and stir constantly. Be very careful, as that the hot liquid can bubble up. Crush lumps as they form and continue to stir for about 50 minutes. The bottom of the sauce pan becomes encrusted while cooking. When the Polenta begins to lift away from the bottom of the pan you will know it is done. When done turn out onto a board and cool. Serve with hot milk.

Spaghetti alla Trapanese

14 oz spaghetti
salt
2 lbs ripe peeled tomatoes
2 garlic cloves chopped into small pieces
1 small bunch of basil leaves, roughly chopped
Sheep's cheese crumbled
1 cup of extra virgin olive oil
freshly ground pepper/ freshly grated parmesan cheese

Cook spaghetti in salted boiling water until al dente and then drain. Finely dice the tomatoes and mix them with garlic, basil, sheep's cheese, and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper and serve with the spaghetti. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese before serving.

More recipes on other side...

Merluzzo ai Porri (Cod with Leeks)

1/4 cup butter
4 leeks sliced white parts only
3 small fresh carrots
1/2 cup all purpose flour
1 egg
1 cup bread crumbs
olive or vegetable oil for deep frying
4 5-ounce cod fillets
salt and pepper

Melt butter in a pan and add the leeks and carrots cooking over medium heat for 5 minutes stirring occasionally. Lower the heat and cook very gently for 15 minutes, then season with the salt and pepper. Spread the flour in a shallow dish, beat the egg in another dish and spread out the bread crumbs in a third. Heat the oil in a deep pan. Dip the cod in the flour, then the egg and then the bread crumbs. Fry in the oil for 10 minutes turning occasionally until golden brown and cooked through. Using a slotted spatula, drain on paper towels and season with salt. Arrange on a serving dish surrounded by the leeks.

Provençal Tomatoes

3 large tomatoes
1 tablespoon olive oil
Sea Salt
freshly ground black pepper

...for the persillade

4 cloves of peeled garlic
Italian flat leaf parsley
Tablespoon of olive oil
Tablespoon of butter

The Tomatoes: Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Core the tomatoes and cut them in half crosswise. Heat a pan over medium-high heat and add the olive oil, coating the bottom. When hot, sauté the tomatoes cut side down 3 to 5 minutes without moving the halves until they are well seared. (use a non stick pan.) Arrange the halves in a baking dish seared side up and season with salt and pepper. Bake about 10 minutes in the oven until the tomatoes are soft and hot but still have their shape.

The persillade; While the tomatoes are baking, smash the garlic and chop with a large knife. Pile the parsley on top of the garlic and finely mince both. When the tomatoes come out of the oven, heat both the oil and butter in a medium sauté pan, add the persillade and saute over medium heat for about 30 seconds, shaking and stirring the mixture until hot and fragrant. Top each tomato half with a tablespoon or more of the persillade and serve.