

Grandma Marie's Strufoli

5 lb. flour	2 tsp. vanilla
5 c. sugar	Milk (as needed)
8 large eggs	Vegetable oil for frying
5 tsp. baking powder	2 c. honey
3 sticks butter	Colored sprinkles

Place flour on board with sugar and baking powder; mix well. Melt butter. Make a well with flour mixture and put eggs, vanilla, and melted butter. Use a fork and mix all ingredients together. Start to knead the dough until it all comes together. Add milk, if needed. Place dough on floured board and cover. Cut chunks of dough and roll into strips; continue until all dough is finished. Cut each strip into small pieces and place on a dish. Heat vegetable oil and put small pieces of dough into hot oil until lightly browned. Remove strufoli and put in large bowl lined with paper towels to absorb excess oil. Heat honey and place a batch of strufoli into pot of honey. Remove with slotted spoon and sprinkle with colored sprinkles. Continue until all are coated and decorated. Serve and enjoy.

I had always made this recipe with my mother when I was young and continued when I was married with my children. A few years ago I broke my arm and could no longer do this alone. My two young grandsons, Michael, now 13, and Daniel, now 9, would always help me during holiday time. We all called it "cookie therapy" because the whole process helped me use my arm once again, and enjoy making these wonderful cookies.

Marie Salerno

Pizza Dolci

(Italian Cheese Cake)

2 lb. Ricotta cheese
1½ c. sugar
½ c. heavy cream
8 eggs
1 Tbsp. flour

1 Tbsp. orange rind
1 Tbsp. lemon rind
1 Tbsp. Grand Marnier, anisette,
Amaretto, or vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°. Butter a 9x3 inch spring form pan. Blend Ricotta with sugar and heavy cream until smooth. Beat egg yolks and white separately. Fold egg yolks into the Ricotta mixture followed by the whipped egg whites and mix well. Add flour gradually, and mix. Add orange and lemon rind and choice of flavoring. Blend cake mixture well until smooth. Pour mixture into spring form pan and bake for 1 hour and 20 minutes, or until it begins to pull away from sides of pan and toothpick comes out clean when inserted in center. Cool completely and dust with confectioners sugar.

This holiday treat was brought to America by Mamma Grace DeMarco who emigrated from the Puglia Region of Italy. Each time it is served, you can't help but remember family holidays of the past.

Lucrezia Gallelli

Sweet Pies

Ingredients for Dough:

2 c. flour, sifted	¼ c. butter
½ c. sugar	3 egg yolks
Pinch of salt	1 Tbsp. milk

Ingredients for Filling:

2 lb. Ricotta cheese	1 Tbsp. vanilla
6 egg whites	1 small bag chocolate chips
Sugar to taste	

Need one large bowl, wooden spoon, and two 8 inch cake pans.

Directions for Dough: Sift flour, sugar, and salt into bowl. Cut butter into small pieces and distribute evenly into flour mixture using a fork or hands. Stir in egg yolks, one at a time, using either a wooden spoon or your hands until dough is manageable. Add milk if needed. Chill in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Roll out dough using some flour, if needed. Fit dough into the 8 inch cake pans (should be enough dough for two pies). Cut strips from the leftover dough to cover top of pies.

Directions for Filling: Mix Ricotta and egg whites with electric beater and slowly add sugar. Add vanilla and chocolate chips. Pour into cake pans and crossover top of pies with strips of dough. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes or until top crust is golden brown at 350°.

While growing up my mother, Angie, and my older sister, Marie, always made these pies at Christmas time. They were a real treat for me, my two sisters, and three brothers. Since there were so many of us my mother would make six pies at a time and all of us really enjoyed having them. I hope you enjoy them, too.

Theresa McGowan

Aunt Lena's Chicken

1 lb. chicken breasts and legs, cut into small pieces	1/8 c. red wine vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste	1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 large onion or 2 small onions, cut into strips	1/2 tsp. paprika
2 small garlic cloves, coarsely chopped	1 tsp. dried oregano
Juice of 1/2 lemon	1 tsp. dried basil
	4 or 5 bay leaves
	About 1/4 c. vegetable or other light oil

Need a glass baking dish, frying pan, and plastic wrap.

Liberally salt and pepper the chicken. Marinate in a glass baking dish containing onion, garlic, lemon juice, vinegar, and spices. Stir chicken in marinade until it is evenly coated. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Pour oil into large frying pan and heat to searing. Drain chicken and discard marinade. Brown chicken on each side. When all pieces are brown, place in baking dish and bake in oven at 425° for 15 to 20 minutes.

My Aunt Lena would make this chicken on each holiday to supplement the roast beef, turkey, lasagna, antipasto, artichokes, sweet potatoes, string beans, and, of course, Italian bread, served during Thanksgiving and Christmas. It was always a treat for me to see my Aunt Lena (she was actually my great aunt who lived to be 100 years old) carry a tray of her famous chicken down the stairs and into the crowded basement where 35 of us were crammed around three or four make-shift tables. I always skipped the lasagna to keep enough room for the chicken.

Aunt Lena never left a recipe for this dish. It was passed on by word of mouth. I hope I have done her justice.

Jeanine Prezioso

Veal Spiedini alla Nonna

2 lb. veal scallopini, pounded thin and cut in 2 inch squares	2 garlic cloves, chopped
2 onions, sliced thin	1½ c. Parmigiano cheese
3 c. seasoned bread crumbs, plus 1 c. for breading	1 c. marinara sauce
	½ c. olive oil
	Bay leaves
	1 onion, sliced in chunks

Need skewers.

Saute garlic in ¼ cup of olive oil. Add marinara sauce and cook for 20 minutes. Saute onions in remaining olive oil until translucent, about 5 minutes. Remove onions from pan and add bread crumbs to toast lightly. To make stuffing, place bread crumbs, onions, and marinara sauce in a bowl. Mix until moist, but not loose. Once the mixture is cooled, add Parmigiano cheese. Place one table-spoon of stuffing on the center of each piece of veal. Roll it up and secure with a toothpick. Once all the meat is stuffed, place on skewers alternating with onions and bay leaves. Once on skewers, rub the meat with olive oil and bread the outer sides of the meat with bread crumbs until well coated. Heat broiler to 400° and place skewers beneath for 5 to 6 minutes on each side until meat is cooked and browned.

My name is Kristin Molini and I am 21 years old. I am currently on a transplant list for four organs. I can't eat much of anything and haven't for many years, but I love to cook. This recipe has been in my family for many years. My Nonna has been teaching me so much about our family recipes and this is one of my favorites. I hope you love it as much as my family does.

Kristin Molini