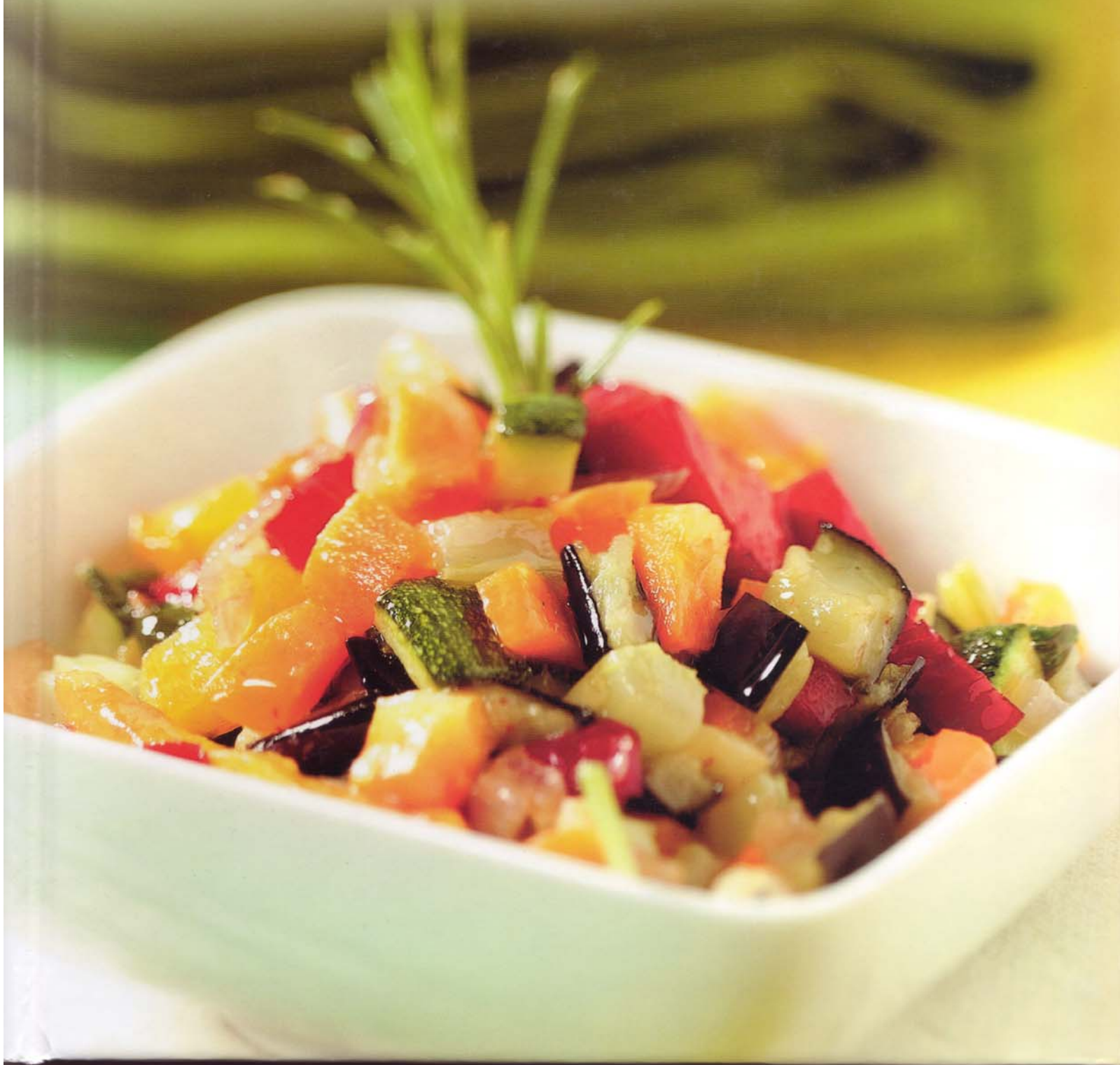


ANTIPASTI

MORE THAN 80 DELICIOUS RECIPES FOR WONDERFUL APPETIZERS, SMALL PLATES AND MORE





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PRESENTATION

The antipasti are the first course to come to the table and, as such, they prepare the appetite for what is to follow. But the role of the antipasti isn't solely culinary—its colors should attract the attention, its aromas must be seductive, and its flavors should stimulate the imagination. As a result, the preparation of antipasti requires the same care that is devoted to the main dishes. A fundamental rule is that antipasti should be presented in small, inviting portions that are a feast, first and foremost, for the eyes. It is generally considered proper to serve antipasti on small plates that can be filled easily, giving the impression of abundance. Similarly, tarts, puffs,

open-faced canapés, and the like should be

arrayed on separate trays, from which

they can be taken directly with the

hands. Olives should be served in

a bowl with a spoon, while sardines

and caviar are served on a plate with a

caviar knife or sardine fork. Pâté, on

the other hand, should be presented

on a plate with a pâté knife or similar

instrument. Molds and timbales are

more spectacular if they are plated in

single-serving portions and enhanced by

decorative garnishes (such as vegetables

or fines herbs) and accompanied by a

colourful and aromatic sauce. Creams,

purées, and pâtés become irresistibly

inviting if they are offered in fluffy

mounds or dollops created with a

pastry bag or arranged in pastry cups

or barquettes of fruit and vegetables.

With regard to the presentation of cold

cuts, hard sausages, and salamis, and



smoked and cured meats in general, remember that sliced meats lend themselves well to being wrapped around cut vegetables or thin bread sticks and can also be filled with a wide variety of ingredients. Antipasti prove to be quite practical dishes as well because the vast majority of them can be prepared in advance. Terrines and pâtés are even more flavorful if they are made a day ahead of time. The same is true of cream-based preparations and sauces, though these should be removed from the refrigerator at least a half-hour before serving. Finally, savory meat or vegetable pies and tarts, quiches, pasties, and the like can easily be reheated a few minutes before they are to appear on the table.

PASTRY CRUSTS: THE FUNDAMENTALS

Pasta Sfoglia: Puff Pastry

Puff pastry dough is the literal “base” of many recipes. It is extremely light and flaky and can be used in a multitude of dishes, both sweet and savory.

Ingredients

1 ½ cups (200 g) all-purpose flour

2 ¼ sticks (250 g) margarine

⅓ cup (100 ml) water

a generous pinch of salt

1. Mound the flour on your work surface and



Shrimp Mini-Quiches

Serves 6

For the shortcrust pastry:

2 1/3 cups (300 g) all-purpose flour
1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp white wine
1 1/3 stick (150 g) butter
1 whole egg, plus 1 egg yolk
salt

For the filling:

2/3 lb (300 g) shrimp
3/4 lb (320 g) red radicchio
1 Tbsp parsley
3 Tbsp cream
1 Tbsp white wine
1 egg
2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
salt and pepper

Pour the flour into a bowl, add the butter softened at room temperature, the salt, the white wine, the whole egg, and the egg yolk. Finally, add the olive oil and mix together quickly to blend the ingredients well.

1. Place the dough in a plastic bag and let stand in the refrigerator for twenty minutes. Clean the radicchio and discard the white center rib in each leaf. Cut the red portion of the leaf into thin strips.

2. Brown the radicchio in a sauté pan with the oil and the chopped parsley. Lightly season with salt and pepper. After a few minutes, add the wine. When it has evaporated, add the cream, mix, and allow to thicken. Break the remaining egg into the sauté pan, remove from heat, and mix rapidly.

3. Place the brisée dough on your work surface. Roll out the dough with a rolling pin to a thickness of approximately 1/4 inch (1/2 cm). Butter and flour small baking tins or ramekins and line them with the dough (Picture 1). In each, arrange the already-cleaned shrimp (Picture 2), then fill with the sautéed radicchio and its cooking liquid (Picture 3). Bake at 350°F (170°C) for twenty-five minutes. Serve warm.

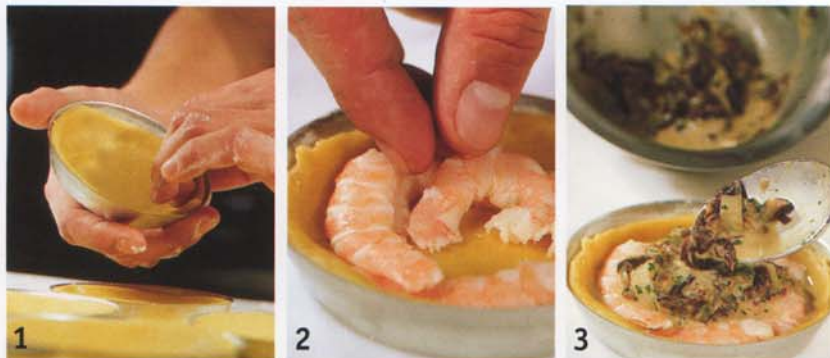
Preparation time: 25 minutes

Cooking time: 35 minutes

Difficulty: Medium

Calories: 549

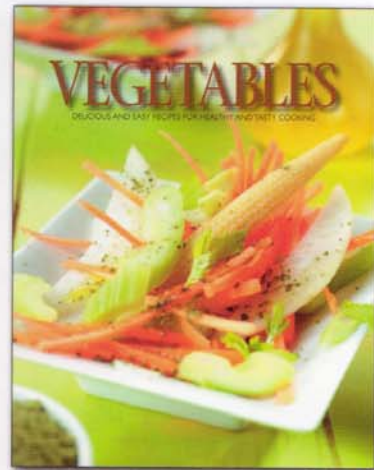
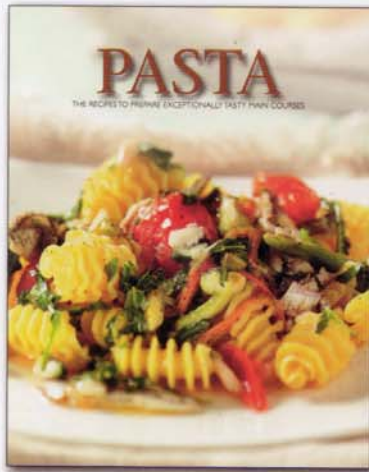
Wine: Alto Adige Gewütztraminer



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