



Culinary Institute
of America

Italian Cuisine

Best of Boot Camp



Key Points to Mediterranean Food

- Tied to nature, to seasons, to ripeness
- Simple food, simply prepared, with the best of fresh ingredients
- Reflecting the environment of sun-earth-sea
- Not overly refined by too much analysis
- A regional cuisine
- Not made frivolous by fussiness of presentation

Northern Italy

- Piemonte
- Liguria
- Lombardia
- Veneto
- Trentino-Alto
- Friuli-Venezia



The Cooking of Northern Italy

- Covered in steep hills and mountains
- Very little arable land
- Focus on grains, corn and wheat
- Rice from Po River valley
- French, Swiss and Austrian influence
- Butter is primary fat

Parmigiano Reggiano

- One of the finest cheeses in the world
- Hard cow's milk cheese
- Extremely versatile



Risotto

- Versatile
- Served as appetizer or entrée
- Arborio or carnaroli Rice
- Risotto Milanese



Emilia Romagna

- Arguably the most celebrated culinary region in Italy
- Boast a variety of cured/smoked meats such as Prosciutto di Parma, Prosciutto San Daniele
- Famous salumi include Mortadella, cotechino and zampone
- Known for its cheeses such as the prized Parmaggiano-Reggiano

Emilia-Romagna



Antipasti of culatello



Cotechino



Garganelli with rabbit



Pane
Bolognese

Area Specialties

- Warmer climate allows for more cultivation of land
- Hand shaped pastas, hearty red wines
- **Emilia Romagna:** Tuscany; Parmesan, balsamic, prosciutto de parma
- **Umbria:** Wild game, truffles, Perugina chocolate
- **Lazio:** Saltimbocca, pecorino romano

Culatello – The King of Salumi



Similar to
Prosciutto and
Speck

Tuscan Specialties



Ribolotta Bread
Soup



Aqua Cotta
soup



Grilled Porcini

Specialties of Umbria

- Wild game is popular and often spit-roasted with fennel
 - Porchetta
 - Cinghiale
(wild boar)
 - Mushrooms



Important Food Items in Southern Italy

- Tuna, mullet, dorade, scorpion fish (rascasse), sardines
- Preserved Items: Capers, anchovies, olives
- Cheeses: Ricotta; mozzarella; caciocavallo
- Produce: eggplant; tomatoes; peppers; zucchini; artichokes; lemons; oranges
- Pasta, couscous
- Sea salt; olive oil

Fresh vs. Dry Pasta

Fresh Pasta

- A mixture of hard wheat flour and softer wheat flour
- Usually contains egg
- Limited shelf life
 - Can be frozen

Dry Pasta

- 100% hard wheat
- Usually contains no egg
- Extended shelf life (2 to 3 years)

Pasta Shapes and Sauces

- A pasta's shape lends itself to certain dishes
 - Delicate pasta should be paired with delicate sauces
 - More robust pasta with hearty sauces
 - As the size of pasta increases, so can the depth and heaviness of the sauce



Pasta Cookery

1. Cook pasta in a large amount of boiling salted water, using a min. of 4 qt. of water and 1 - 2 Tbsp. salt for every lb. of pasta
2. Stir occasionally to keep pieces separated
3. Cook *al dente* or a little less if pasta is being held - it should be slightly chewy and firm but with no taste of raw flour – times vary depending on whether pasta is fresh or dried and the shape
4. Drain, toss with sauce and serve (if pasta will not be used immediately: lightly coat with oil, spread in a single layer on a sheet pan and **cool to room temperature**)
5. Transfer to a holding container, cover, and refrigerate until ready to serve
6. To serve reheat in simmering water **or pasta water**





Sicily, Apulia, Calabria; Campania; Basilicata

- Sicily: Largest island in the Mediterranean
- Smaller areas in southern region rely on subsistence farming
- Warmer Mediterranean climate allows for greater focus on produce
- Most dishes contain olives, capers, citrus, oregano, wheat and artichoke



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Any Questions?