



*Divina Cucina's*

SWEETS

FROM

ITALY

Judy Witts Francini

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# divina ♥ cucina

## about me

I began my culinary career as a pastry chef at the Stanford Court Hotel in San Francisco. To me, dessert being the last thing you eat at dinner, has to be fabulous or the meal is ruined.

I have chosen some of my favorite and simple recipes to end a meal.

With Italian recipes, ingredients may vary from where you live, so I always suggest making the recipe once before you serve it for a party. I used grams on some of the recipes where I think it matters. Get a scale! It is worth it for pastry.

We use "00" flour which is now available in the USA. Ground almond flour is also more easily available.

The ricciarelli are a classic cookie from Siena. The Brutti ma Buoni, vary from town to town. I love the ones made in Prato using walnuts, feel free to use them. Panforte is another dessert from Siena, instead of the richer version with candied fruits, I prefer the simple fig and walnut version. This is perfect served in thin slices with cheese. Salami Dolce is a almost lost recipe, rarely found anymore, except in someone's home. Every Italian mamma has her version of Torta di Mele, this is my version, using tricks from several mamma's I have met. The final dessert is a special chocolate cake from the island of Capri off the coast of Naples and is also Gluten-free, as are the Ricciarelli and the Fig and Walnut Panforte.

Buona Cucina-

Judy

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# Ricciarelli



- 2 cups ground almond flour
- 2 cups powdered sugar (icing sugar)
- 2 medium egg whites
- 1 tsp almond extract ( I use bitter almond extract)
- 1 cup powdered sugar for rolling the cookies before baking

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

1. If you don't have almond flour you can make your own. I use a manual Swedish nut grinder, with a food processor, you need to grind with some sugar. If you are making your own almond flour, use peeled un-roasted nuts for the classic cookie.
2. Add the powdered sugar.
- 3 Beat the egg whites until stiff and mix into the almond mixture.
4. Add the almond extract and blend until you have a soft paste.
5. Place some powdered sugar on a clean, dry surface. Form one tablespoon of dough into a small ball, roll in the sugar and then form the traditional diamond shape, flattening the cookie with the palm of your hand. The cookies come out best if you let the dough sit for a few hours before baking.
7. Bake until the cookies crack on top. I like mine to get a little golden.

Serve when cool.

Lovely accompanied by Tuscan Vin Santo.

# Brutti ma Buoni



75 grams of egg whites  
150 grams of powdered sugar  
150 grams of ground toasted hazelnuts  
a drop of vanilla ( to taste)

Preheat oven to 300

Line cookie sheet with baking parchment

1 Whip the egg whites until lightly foamy. Add the powdered sugar and continue beating until thick.

2. Stir in the ground hazelnuts and mix well, Add the vanilla.

3. Place in a small saucepan and cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture is lightly browned.

4. While still warm, place in small walnut size mounds on the parchment paper on the cookie sheet. I use two spoons, one to scoop and one to push off the spoon.

5. Bake for about 15- 20 minutes.

Keep in a tin.

# Salumi di Fichi



1/2 pound dried figs

1/4 cup reduced vino cotto or ( prune juice 1/2 cup , boiled down to concentrate the flavors)

1/8 cup Anice liquor, Sambuca or similar ( or anice seeds)

1/2 cup walnuts, lightly chopped ( leave some pieces whole)

1. Take the hard stem end off the figs and cut into small pieces.  
Place in a pot for cooking.

2. Add the prune juice and liquor. Stir to combine well. If it seems to dry, add a tiny bit of water.

3. Cook, stirring to breakdown the figs.

4. Add the walnuts and mix well off the heat.

5. Place the mixture on non-stick baking paper and roll to create a salami like shape.

6. Tie like a salami and let rest a few days in the refrigerator before serving.

Lovely served sliced thinly with cheeses

# Salami dolce



6 ounces cookie crumbs

(best are small rectangular cookies called Marie in Italy, and Petite Beurre in the U.S.)

1/2 cup sugar

5 ounces melted butter

2 egg yolks

6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

1. Melt the butter and let it cool.

2. Beat the egg yolks with the sugar until it resembles cake batter.

3. Add the melted butter and cocoa powder.

(And more cocoa powder if you want it really dark.).

4. Crush the cookies in a food processor or with a rolling pin, leaving some pieces a little larger than others so they resemble the fat in a salame.

5. Form a salame-like shape and roll it in aluminum foil. Place in the freezer for 30 minutes or until firm. Unwrap and slice.

Serve with soft whipped cream and fresh berries.

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# Torta di Mele



- 5 Golden Delicious apples, peeled and sliced paper thin
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- 2 eggs, extra large
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 cup flour
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 cup pinenuts
- 1/4 cup raisins, soaked in 1/2 vin santo

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Butter and lightly flour two round pizza pans or a 9x13 lasagne pan.

1. Peel and slice the apples as thinly as possible. Squeeze lemon juice on top.

2. Beat the eggs and sugar together, add the oil, mix well. Add the flour, baking powder and raisins soaked vin santo with the vin santo. Mix well.

3. Add 3/4 of the apple slices and pour into the prepared pan. Arrange the remaining apples and top and sprinkle with the pinenuts and sprinkle with some granulated sugar before baking. Bake until a knife comes out clean. About 40 minutes.

# Torta Caprese

250 grams sugar  
(200 for the cake, 50 for the whites)  
250 grams butter  
250 grams peeled almonds, ground or almond flour  
125 grams bittersweet chocolate, melted  
5 eggs, divided

1. Beat 200 grams of the sugar with the butter.

2. Add the melted chocolate.

3. Add the ground almonds.

4. Beat in the egg yolks, one at a time.

5. Whip the egg whites with 50 grams of sugar until stiff peaks and fold into cake mixture.

Butter and flour a 12 in cake pan.

Bake at 300 degrees for an hour.

To be gluten-free, you can use sugar or GF flour to line the pan before cooking.