

# *European Dinner Parties*

## Italy

### Polly Erickson's Italian menu

- Prosciutto e Fichi
- Zuppa di polpettini - meatball soup
- Chicken Marsala with zucchini sauté
- Crostata di Marmellata

### Ingredients and cooking tips

#### **Appetizer: Prosciutto e Fichi**

##### **Ingredients:**

12 fresh figs  
12 slices prosciutto

Wrap a slice of prosciutto around a fig. Place on a large plate. Serve at room temperature.  
Serves 6.

#### **Soup: Zuppa di polpettini — meatball soup**

(Who says Italian does not sound like music...unlike meatball soup!)

##### **Ingredients:**

1/2 lb. lean ground beef	5 3/4 cups chicken broth
1 egg, slightly beaten	2 cups escarole or spinach, chopped
2 tablespoons bread crumbs	1/2 cup orzo pasta, uncooked
1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese	1/3 cup finely chopped carrot
1/2 teaspoon dried basil	Grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 teaspoon onion powder	

**Preparation:**

In medium bowl, combine meat, egg, bread crumbs, Parmesan cheese, basil and onion powder. Shape into  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch balls.

In large sauce pan, heat broth to boiling; stir in spinach, orzo, carrot and meatballs.

Return to boil; reduce heat to medium.

Cook at slow boil for 10 minutes or until orzo is tender.

Stir frequently to avoid sticking.

Serve with additional Parmesan cheese sprinkled on top.

**Main course: Chicken Marsala with Zucchini Saute**

**Ingredients: Serves 4**

4 boneless chicken breast halves without skin

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup all-purpose flour

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon dried leaf basil

3 tablespoons butter

3 tablespoons olive oil

4 to 8 ounces fresh mushrooms, sliced

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup Marsala wine

**Preparation:**

Pound chicken to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thickness between 2 sheets of plastic wrap.

Combine flour, salt, pepper, and basil; mix well.

Heat oil and butter in a heavy non-stick skillet over medium high heat.

Dredge chicken in seasoned flour mixture.

Cook chicken until lightly browned on first side, about 2 to 3 minutes.

Turn chicken and add mushrooms around the chicken pieces.

Cook about 2 minutes longer, until lightly browned; stir the mushrooms.

Add Marsala wine to pan.

Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and simmer 10 minutes.

**Zucchini Saute**

1 tablespoon olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$  red onion, diced

salt and pepper to taste

4 zucchini, halved and sliced

$\frac{1}{2}$  pound fresh mushrooms, sliced

1 tomato, diced

1 clove garlic, minced

1 teaspoon Italian seasoning

**Preparation:**

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat.  
Saute onion with salt and pepper for 2 minutes.  
Stir in zucchini and mushrooms.  
When zucchini begins to soften, add tomatoes, garlic and Italian seasoning.  
Cook until heated through.

**Dessert: Crostata di Marmellata**

**Ingredients:**

2 cups all-purpose flour  
 $\frac{2}{3}$  cup butter, room temperature for hand mixing, cold and in small pieces for food processor  
1 egg  
2 tablespoons sugar  
3 to 4 tablespoons chilled white wine  
1 (12-oz.) jar strawberry jam or other jam  
1 egg, lightly beaten

In a medium bowl using a pastry blender or in a food processor fitted with a metal blade, mix flour and butter until crumbly.  
Add egg, sugar and wine; mix until dough is completely moistened.  
Place dough on a flat surface and work into a ball.  
Wrap in waxed paper and refrigerate at least one hour.

Butter a 10-inch tart pan with a removable bottom.  
Preheat oven to 375 degrees.  
Reserve  $\frac{1}{3}$  of pastry for lattice decoration.  
On a lightly floured surface roll out remaining dough to a 12-inch circle.  
Place dough in buttered tart pan.  
Prick bottom of pastry shell several times with a fork.  
Spread jam in pastry shell.  
Roll out reserved dough  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch thick.  
Using a pastry cutter or sharp knife, cut dough into  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch strips.  
Lay strips across tart to make a lattice.  
Brush dough with beaten egg.  
Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until crust is golden brown.  
Let stand at least 30 minutes before removing from pan.  
Cut into thin slices...

and...

**Buon Appetito!**