

Cassandra Mengarelli



52 recipes 52 STOCKFISH





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Ancona, a seaside town, has found? in stockfish, a fish dried in the cold air of Norwegian springs, of its most traditional dish for over four hundred years.

Much has been said and written about stockfish; however, no one had previously come up with the idea of creating a book that would collect the recipes from the Ancona tradition and further afield, which have this cod from the northern seas as their main interpreter. When Cassandra Mengarelli illustrated her editorial project to me, saying that she would like to donate it to the Accademia dello Stoccafisso all'Anconitana, I thought she was suggesting publishing a collection of recipes selected here and there.

I couldn't have been more wrong, because the 52 recipes in this book that, today, I can say that we were missing, are the result of her personal culinary experience, of the memory of the flavors and aromas of her childhood and growing up her parents' restaurant where, in addition to good food, of which stockfish was one of the main interpreters, there was an air imbued with culture and an immense appreciation for figurative and abstract art.

Most of the recipes contained in this book, apart from some older ones sourced through careful historical-gastronomic research, are the result of the experience of several decades of a true passion for stockfish and the experiments are worthy of a Michelin-starred chef.

One recipe per week for each of the 52 weeks of the year; this is the gift that the author wanted to give to our Academy and to all those who appreciate the most traditional dish of our town.

*President Avv. Pericle Truja Accademia dello
Stoccafisso all'Anconitana*

According to the ancient Greek Σοι πάει το βασίλειο, The Kingdom passes from Father to Son, that is, one does not escape from their family destiny. Whereas I, instead, escaped the fate of my father, my grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather, all restaurateurs from a past generation.

For me a completely different fate awaited, a demanding career, but never as much as managing a restaurant and with all that running a family-run restaurant entails in which you must be ready to take on any kind of role, from that in the kitchen to those in the dining area. Notwithstanding this, it is the most exceptional job in the world, as it certainly allows you to cultivate many kinds of relationships with people from all occupations.

Just as I graduated from university, my family restaurant closed its doors, but the imprinting had already taken place. For as long as I could remember, the love for cooking, the knowledge of ingredients and their excellence had educated my taste buds to appreciate certain dishes and severely disdain others. Because at home there was also an education in the appreciation of excellent food, which was sought after when the family's holidays allowed it, by dining at famous restaurants that for that time would have been considered the same level as those that are starred today. Il Pappagallo e il Diana in Bologna, Casali in Cesena, Ö Battj in S. Margherita Ligure, La Colomba in Venice, il Dotto in Padua...

Born and raised in Ancona, a food dear to local tradition and to me, stockfish, prompted me to dust off the old notebooks left to me by my aunt Bruna, a wonderful cook; memories of dishes from my family tradition which also includes an oriental Sicilian component on the maternal side, recipes prepared and tested by my father to be included in the menu of our restaurant and recipes created and tested by myself.

The result of which is this collection of 52 recipes for 52 weeks of the year. Almost all of them are simple to prepare and making them your own, read them, try them, taste them.

Cassandra Mengarelli

Stockfish

The scientific name for stockfish is *Gadus Morhua* and it is found along the European coasts of Ireland, the North Sea, the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea and along the southern coasts of Greenland, as well as in the upper part of the American coasts, those extending from New England to Labrador.

The cold clear waters of Norway are the first guarantee for the cod that lives in these waters.

Then, to maintain excellent product quality, there needs to be a variety of checking and controlling.

The first is certainly linked to the quality of the water which must be continuously monitored with sampling referring to marine biota, sediments, radioactive contaminants, PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons).

The second is represented by both the fishing methods, which must guarantee sustainable fishing, and the seriousness exercised in safeguarding the fishing areas. From the first moment, the traceability of the product must take place, which means information from the entire supply chain, from the boat used for fishing, to the equipment used in it, the choice of the catch area, always with the aim of putting a top-quality product on the market.





The Recipes of Cassandra



Bastoncini di stoccafisso fritti ***Fried stockfish sticks***



Ingredients

- 250 gr. approximately per person of soaked, cleaned stockfish
- 1 whole egg
- flour
- breadcrumbs
- peanut oil
- salt
- pepper

Method

Cut the fish into stick-like strips and boil in salted water for about 10 minutes. Drain the fish and let it cool.

Place in the fridge for 30 minutes.

Beat an egg with salt and pepper.

Remove the stockfish sticks from the fridge, dip them in the flour, then in the beaten egg and finally in the breadcrumbs.

If desired, to give the sticks more consistency, you can dip them in the egg and breadcrumbs again.

Firm up the sticks by pressing them lightly in your hands.

Fry in abundant oil until they reach a nice golden colour.

Drain well and add salt.





Stoccafisso all'anconitana del vecchio Ristorante Tonino

Ancona style stockfish

from the old Tonino Restaurant



Ingredients

- 300 gr. per person of soaked, cleaned stockfish
- 250 gr. of yellow-flesh potatoes
- cherry or cherry tomatoes
- Verdicchio white wine
- carrot, celery, onion
- 1 clove of garlic
- extra virgin olive oil
- chili pepper
- rosemary
- salt
- pepper



Method

All the ingredients must be prepared and placed in a single large pan raw and then cooked together.

Put some extra virgin olive oil in the bottom of a large pan. Fill one side of the pot by laying the pieces of stockfish which have been previously cut. On the opposite side, instead, lay the potatoes cut into pieces of about 3 or 4 centimetres thick.

Finely chop carrot, celery, onion, a clove of garlic, and spread over the stockfish and potatoes..

Add the salt, pepper, chilli, if you like, the cherry tomatoes cut in half in equal quantities on the stockfish and the potatoes and a sprig of rosemary. Add some good Verdicchio wine and cover with water.

Avoid touching the various pieces in the pan which can break during cooking.

Check the cooking of the potatoes and stockfish with a fork. Move the pan by turning it from time to time to check that nothing sticks to the bottom. If you see that the ingredients are drying too much, slowly add a little hot water and correct the sapidity.

After about 1 ½ - 2 hours, it can be served.



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