

## David Rocco's Dolce Vita Show August 21, 2011

The Roccos travel to Sicily to visit the Planetas-a Sicilian noble family of winemakers. A tour of exotic vineyards, some family recipes, and wine tasting on a yacht, these are some of the ingredients of a full day that ends with a feast and a bonfire on a secluded Sicilian beach.

### 1. Simple Ricotta Antipasto by David Rocco

#### Ingredients

1 pound/450 g fresh sheep's milk ricotta cheese  
Freshly ground black pepper  
Freshly grated zest of 1 lemon  
Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling

#### Directions

Whisk the ricotta cheese in a mixing bowl until creamy. Then add the pepper and lemon zest. Mix well and plate. Top with more lemon zest and pepper. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil.

### 2. Artichokes Cooked in Ash by David Rocco

#### Ingredients

8 artichokes  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling

#### Directions

Open up the artichoke by hitting the artichoke head on a flat surface. Sprinkle the artichokes with salt and pepper. Drizzle each artichoke with extra-virgin olive oil. Carefully place the artichokes on hot ashes and cook for approximately 20 minutes or until the artichokes are tender. Serve immediately.

### 3. Sautéed Sea Snails by David Rocco

#### Ingredients

3 pounds/1.36 kg fresh sea snails, in shells  
1/4 cup/58 ml extra-virgin olive oil  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 fresh chile pepper, chopped  
1 cup/235 ml white wine

Salt, to taste

Bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley, leaves picked and chopped

\* Special equipment: Thin wooden skewers or sturdy toothpicks \*

#### Directions

To clean and cook sea snails: Boil the snails for approximately 20 minutes in a pot of water. This will remove the sand and grit trapped inside the shell and cook the snail meat.

In a saucepan, heat up the olive oil and saute the garlic and chopped chile pepper. Then add the snails. Add the wine and cook for a few minutes. Add salt, parsley and toss together well. Serve immediately.

\* Cook's Note: Provide guests with thin wooden skewers or sturdy toothpicks so that they can easily pick the snails out of the shells.

#### 4. Vittorio's Meatballs by David Rocco

##### Ingredients

2 pound/914 g ground beef

1 cup/235 ml freshly grated Parmigiano cheese

1 cup/235 ml finely grated bread crumbs

1 teaspoon/5 g freshly grated nutmeg

Bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley, leaves picked and chopped

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

3/4 cup/176 ml milk

1/4 cup/58 ml extra-virgin olive oil

Large lemon leaves, 2 per meatball

##### Directions

Put the ground beef, Parmigiano cheese, bread crumbs, nutmeg, parsley, salt, pepper, milk, and extra-virgin olive oil in a mixing bowl. Mix all the ingredients together well.

Heat a grill.

Scoop the mixture into the palm of your hands and form a meatball. Then flatten out the meatball so that it resembles a meat patty. Place the meat patty between 2 lemon leaves. Repeat the process with the remaining beef mixture.

Cook the patties on a hot grill for a few minutes on each side. As they cook, the oils from the lemon leaves will infuse the meat patties with lemon flavor. Use tongs to securely lift and turn over each meat patty so that it remains sandwiched between the two lemon

leaves as it cooks. Transfer the meat patties, still sandwiched between the lemon leaves, to a serving platter and serve immediately.

Cook's Note: Your guests should discard the lemon leaves and eat the meat patties.

## 5. Aunt Carolina's Pasta by David Rocco

### Ingredients

1 pound/450 g spaghetti

Extra-virgin olive oil, for frying

4 zucchini, sliced

Salt

2 tablespoons/28 g chopped capers, plus extra whole capers for topping

Small bunch fresh mint leaves, finely chopped

### Directions

Cook the pasta in a pot of boiling salted water. Stir immediately to prevent the strands from sticking together.

In a large saucepan, heat up the olive oil and fry the zucchini until golden brown . Place the fried zucchini on an absorbent paper towel to drain the excess oil. Add the salt to the zucchini while they are still hot and set aside the saucepan with the zucchini-flavored oil for later.

Drain the pasta just before it is 'al dente' and add it to the saucepan with the zucchini-flavored oil. Add the fried zucchini, chopped capers and 3/4 of the chopped mint. Mix well so that the flavors are evenly distributed. Add more salt, if necessary. Transfer the spaghetti mixture to a large serving bowl, top with a few whole capers and sprinkle with the remaining mint. Serve immediately.