

In the Italian Spirit of St Joseph's Day here are a few recipe ideas to explore. The altar tradition is meatless but foods from all heritages are welcome.

Zeppole di San Giuseppe

(Makes about 12 (2-1/2-inch) zeppoles)



Ingredients:

Pastry:

1 cup water
3 tablespoons butter
1/2 teaspoon sugar
Pinch of salt
1 cup flour
4 eggs

Filling:

1/4 cup sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 cup whole milk
2 egg yolks
1/2 tablespoon dark rum
1 teaspoon grated orange zest
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3/4 cup heavy cream, whipped

Confectioners' sugar for dusting
Maraschino cherries

Directions:

To make the pastry:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a medium saucepan, combine water, butter, sugar, and salt. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat. With a wooden spoon, beat in flour all at once. Return to low heat. Continue beating until mixture forms a ball and leaves side of pan. Remove from heat. Beat in eggs, one at a time, beating hard after each addition until smooth. Continue beating until dough is satiny and breaks in strands. Allow the mixture to cool.

Transfer the dough to a pastry bag with a large star tip. For each pastry, pipe a 2-1/2 -inch spiral with a raised outer wall on the baking sheet. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes until golden brown. Remove and allow to cool before filling.

To make the filling:

Combine sugar and cornstarch in a saucepan. In a bowl, whisk together milk and egg yolks. Whisk milk mixture into sugar mixture. Place the saucepan over medium heat. Bring the mixture to a boil, whisking constantly. Boil for 1 minute; remove from heat. Stir in rum, orange zest, and vanilla. Transfer the pastry cream to a bowl. Place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface. Allow to cool for 30 minutes and then refrigerate until cold. Fold in the whipped cream.

To assemble the zeppole:

Cut the pastries in half horizontally. Transfer the filling mixture to a pastry bag with a star tip. Pipe some of the filling onto the cut side of the bottom half of each pastry. Place the top half of the pastry on the filling. Pipe a small amount of the filling into the hole in the center of each pastry. Place a maraschino cherry in the middle. Dust the pastries with confectioners' sugar.

St. Joseph's Day Bread

Pan di San Guiseppe



St. Joseph's Bread is a bread that is traditionally served on St. Joseph's feast day (Feast of San Guiseppe) which is March 19. The dough is shaped into a variety of designs for loaves that will adorn the St. Joseph's Table. Traditional forms are crowns, crosses, staffs, wheat sheaves, images of St. Joseph, and braids of the Blessed Mother. The bread has a texture similar to a good homestyle white bread with a slightly sweet taste. Since St. Joseph was a carpenter by trade, breadcrumbs and sesame seeds signify sawdust.

Some St. Joseph's Day breads also include raisins. If you wish to add them, use 1/2 to 3/4 cup of golden raisins soaked in hot water for about 30 minutes to plump them. Drain them and add them to the dough after the first rise and before you form the dough into ropes. Our recipe directions are for making the dough with an electric stand mixer but, of course, you can mix and knead the dough by hand and shape into other designs. This bread is nice with butter or jam; it also makes a good sandwich bread, and a delicious French toast.

St. Joseph's Day Bread

(Makes 1 loaf - approx. 18-inches in length)

Ingredients:

2/3 cup warm milk, 105 - 115 degrees F.
1 (1/4-ounce) package dry active yeast
3 cups bread flour, divided
1/4 cup sugar

1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons melted butter
2 eggs
1/2 teaspoon anise seed or 1 teaspoon anise extract

Egg wash: 1 egg mixed with 1 tablespoon water
Sesame seeds

Directions:

Stir the yeast into the warm milk and allow to rest for 10 minutes.

Pour the yeast mixture into the bowl of an electric mixer. Add 1 cup of flour, sugar, salt, and melted butter. Beat the mixture with the paddle attachment for 2 minutes. Add the eggs, anise seed or extract, and another cup of flour. Beat for 2 more minutes.

Change from the paddle attachment to a dough hook. Add the remaining flour, 1/4 cup at a time, until the dough starts to come together. You may not need to add all of the flour. Then allow the dough hook to knead the dough on medium for 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer the dough to a greased bowl. Cover and allow to rise in a warm place until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.

Punch the dough down and divide it into 2 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a 20 - 22-inch rope. Place the 2 ropes on a parchment lined baking sheet. Loosely twist the ropes together, tucking the ends under. Cover and allow to rise until doubled in size, about 30 - 40 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
Brush the loaf with the eggwash and sprinkle liberally with sesame seeds.
Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until golden brown. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.



St. Joseph's Pants

Nov 16, 2005 SAVEUR

MAKES 5 DOZEN

At Rizzo's Malabar Inn in Crabtree, Pennsylvania, chef Rizzi DeFabo makes 3,000 of these goodies to give away each Saint Joseph's Day.

For the dough:

3/4 cup granulated sugar

3 eggs

1 cup milk

1/3 cup vegetable oil

2 tsp. vanilla extract

5 cups flour

For the filling:

2 15-oz. cans chickpeas, drained	3 tbsp. granulated sugar
3 tbsp. honey	Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice	1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract	Vegetable oil
3 tbsp. light brown sugar	

1. For the dough: Whisk sugar, eggs, milk, oil, and vanilla together in a large bowl. Add flour and stir until a stiff dough forms. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth, about 5 minutes. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and let rest for 15 minutes.

2. For the filling: Purée chickpeas, honey, lemon juice, and vanilla in a food processor until smooth. Transfer to a medium bowl and add brown sugar, granulated sugar, lemon zest, and cinnamon. Stir until well combined and set aside.

3. Divide dough into 8 equal pieces, flatten each into a rectangle, then cover with plastic wrap. Working with 1 rectangle at a time, feed wide side of dough through smooth cylinders of a hand-crank pasta machine set on widest setting. Decrease setting by 1 notch and feed narrow end of dough through cylinders again. Repeat 2 more times, decreasing setting by 1 notch each time. Lay dough out on a lightly floured surface. Using a 3" round cookie cutter or an inverted sturdy glass, cut out as many rounds as sheet of dough will permit, setting dough scraps aside. Put 1 heaping tsp. of the filling into center of each round, fold dough in half, firmly press edges together to seal, then crimp edges with a fork. Transfer pastries to parchment-lined sheet pans and cover with clean damp dish towels. Repeat rolling, cutting, filling, and crimping process with remaining dough and filling, gathering scraps from each piece of dough together and rerolling them once to make more rounds.

4. Pour oil into a wide pot to a depth of 2" and heat over medium heat until temperature reaches 375° on a candy thermometer. Deep-fry pastries in batches, turning often, until golden brown all over, about 1 1/2 minutes per batch. Drain on paper towels. Serve at room temperature.

St. Joseph's Day Soup

Yield:

Serves 10 to 12

Ingredients

- 4 ounces chickpeas
- 4 ounces **cannellini beans**
- 4 ounces dried peeled fava beans
- 4 ounces lentils
- 4 ounces split peas
- 1 medium **fennel** bulb, finely chopped

- 1 cup chopped canned Italian peeled **tomatoes**
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 8 ounces **borage**, **escarole**, or other leafy green vegetable, trimmed, rinsed, and cut into 1-inch pieces
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- About 2 cups **Italian bread** cut into bite-size cubes
- 1/4 cup olive oil

Directions

Place the chickpeas and both beans in a large bowl, add water to cover by several inches, and refrigerate for several hours or overnight; drain.

In a large pot, combine the **chickpeas** and beans, add cold water to cover by 1 inch and bring to a **simmer**. Cook for 1 hour, adding more water if needed. Add the **lentils**, split peas, fennel, tomatoes, onion, **olive oil**, and water to cover as necessary. Cook for 1 hour more. Add the greens and salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 30 minutes, or until the soup is thick and all of the **legumes** are tender. (The **fava beans** and split peas will break apart and thicken the soup.)

Spaghetti with Anchovies and Breadcrumbs

(Serves 4)

Ingredients:

12 anchovy fillets in olive oil, drained
 Salt
 1 pound spaghetti
 1/2 cup olive oil
 6 large garlic cloves, minced
 Large pinch of red pepper flakes
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
 2/3 cup toasted fresh breadcrumbs

Directions:

Finely chop 6 anchovy fillets; cut the remaining 6 into 1/2-inch pieces; set aside. Cook the pasta in boiling salted water until al dente.

While the pasta is cooking, heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add the garlic, red pepper, and finely chopped anchovies. Cook, stirring until the anchovies dissolve. Remove the skillet from the heat. Stir in the parsley and remaining anchovies.

Reserve 1 cup of the pasta water and drain the pasta. Add the pasta to the skillet with the anchovy sauce. Toss until the strands are well coated. Add some of the reserved pasta water if the mixture seems too dry. Set aside 2 tablespoons of the toasted bread crumbs. Add the remaining crumbs to the skillet and toss the pasta again. Transfer the pasta to individual serving bowls. Top each serving with a sprinkling of the reserved toasted fresh bread crumbs.

St Joseph's Sawdust Toasted Fresh Bread Crumbs

(Makes about 3/4 cup)

Toasted breadcrumbs can be made by sauteing them in a skillet or baking them in an oven.

In a skillet:

Warm 2 tablespoon olive oil in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat. Add 3/4 cup of fresh breadcrumbs and stir to coat with oil. Cook, stirring constantly, until the crumbs are golden brown and crunchy, about 5 minutes.

In the oven:

Place 3/4 cup of fresh bread crumbs in a bowl with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Using your hands, gently combine the ingredients. Spread the breadcrumbs on a baking sheet and place in a 350 degree F. oven. Bake about 8 minutes, stirring a couple of times, until golden brown and crisp.