

CIAO FLORENTINA

ISSUE 1 VOL. 1

PEACE, LOVE & FOOD!

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-Florentina's Favorite Things

-Chow Ciao Cooking Show with
Chef Fabio Viviani

-Holiday Cocktails with Master
Mixologist Jacopo Falleni

-Thanksgiving Spices



7 Beauty Uses for Extra Virgin Olive Oil

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It seems like the dust hasn't even settled on the holiday decorations and I have to take them out again. Time seems to pass by quicker and quicker every year, like sand through our fingers while we keep looking for ways to make the best of it.

Naturally around Thanksgiving time we think of family and what that really means... Is it our DNA that establishes who's in and who's out...? Or are there deeper bonds that we form along the way in this journey called life... bonds that stand the test of time and earn their place in our souls for eternity...

For me, family is a little bit more than blood, it's a best friend who's there for you in the darkest hour, to listen, comfort and love you unconditionally without any expectation. The ones who are on a journey with you and help you grow into that which you are meant to be, the ones that help you get up and keep going when you feel you've got nothing left to give.

How many people can you call at 3 a.m. and know they'll be right there? Be honest with yourself and don't be surprised if you can only name a few... That still means you are very blessed!

Time flies, so don't wait for Thanksgiving and Christmas day to roll around, but make time today for the ones you love, do stuff together, share a meal, make memories because in the end: only that which is in your soul will last for eternity.

Set the table, Light a candle, Dare to love someone!

FLORENTINA LILE





Roasted Butternut Squash and Apple Soup Recipe

(Serves 8 +)

- 1 Butternut Squash (3 lb.) -peeled, seeded & cut into one inch pieces
- 2 Apples -Granny Smith -cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 Medium Onion -diced
- 1 Carrot -sliced
- 4 tbsp. Butter
- 1/2 c White Wine
- 3 c Vegetable Stock or Chicken Stock
- 1/2 c Heavy Cream
- 1 tsp. Sea Salt + more to taste
- Black Pepper to taste -freshly cracked
- 1/2 tsp. Red Pepper Flakes + more to taste
- 7 Thyme Sprigs -only leaves
- 1 Bay Leaf
- Chives
- Freshly Grated Nutmeg

1. Preheat your oven to 400 F. In a large baking dish toss the apples, butternut squash, carrot slices, red pepper flakes, bay leaf, sea salt, pepper and thyme with 1 tbsp. of melted butter. Roast uncovered for 30-45 minutes or until tender.

2. Heat up the 3 tablespoons of butter over medium-low flame in a cast iron pot. Sauté the diced onions with a pinch of sea salt until translucent. Add the wine and let it reduce by half. Add the roasted squash and apples to the pot together with the vegetable or chicken stock. Bring to a simmer and allow to cook together for 5 minutes. Discard the bay leaf and using a hand held blender puree the soup until smooth. Add the cream and cook an additional 3 minutes.

3. Adjust seasonings and serve hot with a drizzle of cream, snipped chives and a pinch of freshly grated nutmeg.



Blood Orange Cranberry Sauce Recipe

(Serves 4)

- 12 oz. Fresh Cranberries
- 1/4 c Granulated Sugar
- The Juice from 2 Blood Oranges
- The Zest from 1 Orange
- 1 tsp. Vanilla Extract

Add the cranberries, sugar and orange juice to a sauce pan. Bring to a simmer and cook on low flame for 5 minutes or until the cranberries pop and start to soften. Stir in the vanilla & orange zest and cook for one more minute. Allow cooling then serving at room temperature or refrigerate.

Tip: The sauce will thicken as it cools down.



Blueberry and Ricotta Muffins Recipe

(Makes 12)

Dry Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 c Flour
- 3/4 c Sugar
- 1/2 tsp. Sea Salt
- 2 tsp. Baking Powder

Wet ingredients:

- 1/3 c Canola Oil
- 5 tbsp. Whole Milk
- 2 tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 1 Egg
- 3/4 c Ricotta Cheese
- 1 c Fresh Blueberries

Streusel Topping:

- 1/4 c Sugar
- 2 tbsp. Flour
- 1 tbsp. Butter

1. Mix the dry ingredients and the wet ingredients separately then using a spatula stir the two together until incorporated. Don't over mix.

2. Fold in the blueberries then fill 12 muffin silicone cups 3/4 of the way full. Top with 1 tbsp. of streusel topping if desired or just sprinkle some sugar on top then bake @ 375°F for 20 min or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean.

3. Cool in the muffin cups on a wire rack for 10 min. Turn upside down and the muffins will slide out.



THANKSGIVING ALLA FLORENTINA





Tradition is a beautiful thing but since there are literally thousands of Thanksgiving turkey recipes circulating the web, I decided to go with a collection of fall recipes that can grace your dinner table not only at Thanksgiving but for the months to come.

Such is this "Blood Orange Beef Stew with Butternut Squash" one of my favorite things to make once the weather cools down.

The sweetness and nuttiness of the butternut squash paired with the tenderness of grass fed beef and the exquisite flavor of blood oranges will really take your taste buds on a trip to Paradise.



Blood Orange Beef Stew with Butternut Squash Recipe (Serves 4)

- 1/4 c Olive Oil
- 1 Small Onion -diced
- 5 Large Garlic Cloves -whole
- 2 lb. Organic Chuck Roast -cut into 1 1/2 inch cubes
- 2 lb. Organic Butternut Squash cut into 1 1/2 inch cubes
- 4 Blood Oranges
- 1 Large Carrot or 2 smaller ones -sliced into 1/2 inch rounds
- 6 Thyme Sprigs
- 1/4 tsp. Red Pepper Flakes + more to taste
- 3 Whole Cloves
- 1 tsp. Sea Salt
- 1/4 tsp. Black Pepper -freshly grated
- 1 1/2 tbsp. Balsamic Vinegar
- 2 Bay Leaves
- Nutmeg -freshly grated
- 1/4 c Italian Parsley -chopped
- 3 tbsp. All-purpose flour
- 3/4 tsp. Sweet Paprika
- 3 cups Water -filtered



1. Mix the flour and paprika together in a plastic bag. Season the beef with the sea salt and black pepper and transfer them to the plastic bag. Toss everything together to coat.

2. Heat up 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a cast iron Dutch oven over medium flame. Add the garlic cloves and sear until golden on both sides. Transfer to a bowl. Shake any excess flour from the beef and sear each cube for a couple of minutes until golden brown at the edges. Work in batches so you don't overcrowd the pot and add 1 tablespoon of olive oil in between batches if necessary. Transfer them all to the bowl with the garlic and cover with plastic wrap to keep warm.

3. Add one more tablespoon of olive oil to the pot and sauté the onion with a pinch of sea salt until translucent. Add the red pepper flakes and cook one additional minute.

4. Meanwhile save two strips of orange peel from the blood oranges and zest the rest and reserve. Squeeze 1 cup of juice from the oranges and add it to the pot together with the balsamic vinegar. Using a silicone spatula make sure to scrape all the brown bits from the bottom. Add the bay leaf, cloves, thyme sprigs and orange peels and allow simmering for 3 minutes.

5. Add the beef cubes with all the juices and the garlic back to the pot and stir to combine. Add the water and bring to a simmer. Cover with a tight lid and transfer to a 350 F degrees oven. Let it cook for 2 hours.

6. Add the butternut squash and carrots to the pot, give it a good stir, cover tightly with the lid and let cook in the oven for an additional 45 minutes or until the meat and vegetables are tender. Discard the bay leaf and thyme sprigs and gently stir in 1/2 teaspoon of the reserved orange zest. Serve hot sprinkled with the parsley and a pinch of freshly grated nutmeg and bruschetta.



PEARTINI



Jacopo Falleni's Peartini

- 1 1/4 oz. (5 counts) Pear Vodka
- 1 oz. (4 counts) Fresh pear nectar
- 1/2 oz. (2 counts) Homemade sweet & sour
- 1/4 oz. (1 count) Triple sec
- 1 Lime Wedge (squeezed)

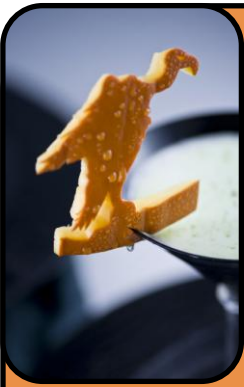
- 1 Bosc Pear
- 1 Cantaloupe Melon
- Cinnamon Powder
- White Sugar



Grab the mixing glass and pour 1 1/4 oz. of the infused pear vodka then 1 oz. of pear nectar. Make sure it is nectar and not juice otherwise your drink will be runny and flavorless instead of smooth and slick.

Now add 1/2 oz. of sweet and sour, triple sec and lime juice. Shake it and pour it in a chilled sugar /cinnamon rimmed martini glass and ... Salute!





Pumpkin Pie Martini

- 1 1/4 oz. 3 tbsp. Vanilla Vodka
- 1 1/4 oz. 3 tbsp. Godiva – Dark Chocolate liqueur
- 1 tbsp. Whipped cream
- 1 tsp. Pumpkin spice
- Gram cracker rim



Fill the shaker with ice. Add the Vodka and the Chocolate Liquor, the cream and the pumpkin spice, shake briskly. Strain into a chilled graham cracker rimmed martini glass garnish and serve.



Ginger Cranberry Margarita

- 2 oz. 4 tbsp. Tequila
- 1oz 2 tbsp. Triple Sec
- 1/2 oz. 1 tbsp. Cranberry juice
- 1/2 oz. 1 tbsp. Ginger syrup
- 2 Lime wedge
- Green Sugar



In a mixing glass ... Following the recipe add Tequila, Triple sec, fresh cranberry juice and the squeeze of two limes.



Fill the shaker with ice. Shake it until cold, and then strain into a chilled apple sugar rimmed long drink glass.



FLORENTINA'S FAVORITE THINGS



Joe - The Good, The Bad, The Sexy

If you watched the World Series Baseball Championship then without a doubt you noticed the impeccably dressed gentleman and his smooth and simply amazing rendition of the National Anthem right before the iconic Game 6 between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Texas Rangers.

The 7 time Grammy nominated recording artist and record producer also delivered like only he can with his 9th studio album "The Good, The Bad, The Sexy" which topped the charts coming in #8 on Billboard's Top 200, #1 on the Indie chart, and #2 on the R&B chart and now #1 on the Ciao Florentina chart!

One of my favorite things this year for too many reasons to list here, besides the fact that Great music and Great food are a match made in heaven.

Get yours from [itunes](#), [Amazon](#) or [Target](#) and while you're at this I also recommend you get my all-time favorite album "[Signature](#)", which itunes named "The best R&B album of the year." in 2009. Get ready for some goose bumps!

Play The Music, Set the table, Light a candle, Dare to love someone!



O -Blood Orange Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Oprah Loves It and Florentina Loves It -Enough Said!

Available from:

www.Gourmet-Delights.com



Kitchen Aid Mixer

Making pasta and pizza by hand is a favorite past time of mine, it could be so much fun and even therapeutic, but to be honest who has time to do that every week? Not this girl, so you must invest in one electronic gadget that is safe to say will last you a lifetime: the Kitchen Aid Mixer! I love mine!

Available at <http://www.kitchenaid.com>

Whiskey Shots

Ever tried to find a cool gift for a whiskey lover but didn't really feel like dropping hundreds or thousands of dollars on a nice aged bottle of malt? Worry no more because Master of Malt does cool samples and tasting sets of some of the world's rarest, most expensive and legendary drams.

Just love this site: <http://www.masterofmalt.com/tasting-set/super-premium-whisky-tasting-set/>



Nutella

It saddens me deeply every time I run into someone that has never tried or heard of Nutella. I grew up with it like kids in America grow up with peanut butter and to this day it is one of my favorite things. Try watching a movie one night with a jar of Nutella on your lap and a spoon in your hand. There's nothing like it on Planet Earth!

www.nutellausa.com





RECIPE FOR NUTELLA BISCUITS:

- 2 cup of Flour
- 2 tsp. of Baking Powder
- 1 tsp. of Salt
- 3 tsp. of Butter at room temperature
- 4 tbsps. of Nutella
- 3/4 cup of Milk

Directions:

1. Start by combined all the dry ingredients
2. Add Butter and Nutella.
3. Blend, and then add Milk.
4. Mix and place the Dough on top of a floured board and knead few times.
5. Pat to 1 inch thickness and cut with Biscuits cutter.
6. Place them in a oven tray Bake at 450 for about 15 minutes.





THE PERFECT ITALIAN MEATBALLS

Recipe by Fabio Viviani

Cook time: 25 Minutes

Yield: 8 meatballs

- 1 lb. ground beef (90/10)
- 4 oz. whole milk ricotta cheese
- 1 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 egg
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 shallots, minced
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- salt & fresh cracked pepper to taste
- fresh parsley for garnish

- Place all above ingredients in a medium sized bowl and mix thoroughly by hand until they are completely combined and the mixture is uniformly firm.
- Coat your hands in olive oil, and using your hands form mixture into 3-4 oz. balls.
- Drop the meatballs into Fabio's tomato sauce and add some water so that the sauce can reduce and simmer - let cook for about 10 minutes on one side.
- Turn them over, add some more water and cook for another 10 minutes, covering in the sauce with a spoon as they simmer.
- Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.
- Garnish with chopped parsley, salt and pepper, more shaved parmegiano reggiano and a drizzle of olive oil, of course!

MANGIA!





OLIVE OIL

If someone offered to pay me in Extra Virgin Olive Oil I would probably say yes. Actually now that I think about it I know there were a couple of occasions when I did.

Do you still wonder why you should use extra virgin olive oil? Because it is unrefined, cold pressed from the first pressing of the olives. By not using heat it conserves all the nutrients, antioxidants and vitamins, something that can't be said about any refined oil including plain olive oil.


Besides being healthy oil with countless health benefits, Extra Virgin Olive Oil has many beauty uses as well, and what woman doesn't want to be and feel beautiful...

7 BEAUTY USES FOR EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

1. **Eating.** Olive oil is one of the three foods permitted by the FDA to contain a health claim benefit on its label. Drizzle it over salads, grilled vegetable, meats and bruschetta to improve your health and have radiant skin.
2. **Shaving.** Use olive oil instead of shaving cream for an extra smooth and silky finish. However your shower could become quite slippery so be careful getting in and out.
3. **Dry Scalp Relief.** Condition your scalp with warm olive oil & massage it in as a relief for dry scalp. Leave it on for 20 minutes then wash your hair as usual.
4. **Make Up Remover and Face Moisturizer.** Use olive oil filled with Vitamin E and antioxidants instead of your regular makeup remover and moisturizer to hydrate and renew, smooth and heal the skin, especially acne scars.
5. **Cuticle Oil.** Use it to help moisturize, repair and protect the cuticle against damage.
6. **Soothing Oil.** Apply to rashes for soothing, like diaper rash and sun burn.
7. **Anti-Frizz.** Apply a couple of drops in the palm of your hand, rub gently and run your fingers through frizzy hair to tame it, add shine and condition.

Image: Idea go / FreeDigitalPhotos.net





Favorite Fall Spices:

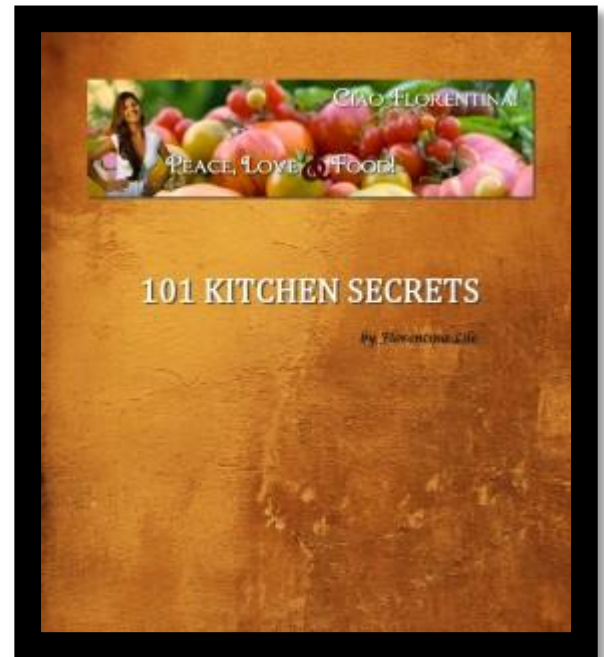
Nothing says fall and holidays better than some Cinnamon and Nutmeg. From flavored teas and coffee to stews, roasts and pies these flavors remind us that it's time to celebrate. I mean really, can you imagine the holidays without these two?

Here are some fun things to know about fall's staple spices Cinnamon & Nutmeg:

- Cinnamon has a warm taste with hints of citrus and clove. Its scent helps boost brain activity.**
- Cinnamon is one of the oldest spices known to mankind**
- When buying ground cinnamon keep in mind that it loses its flavor very quickly, the paler its color the finer the quality.**
- In very large quantities Nutmeg has a hallucinogenic effect.**
- Nutmeg is a highly aromatic spice with a woody bittersweet flavor and a rich warm aroma.**
- Whole nutmeg keeps almost indefinitely stored in airtight containers, but just like cinnamon -ground nutmeg loses its flavor very quick.**



COMPLIMENTS FROM US TO YOU! CIAO!



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