



— A Fall Favorite—Carrot Walnut Cookies with Creamy Apple Cider Icing!

Sun-Kissed Sweetness – European Preserved Tomatoes

Posted on December 11, 2019 by Annette O. Corona

Sun-Kissed Sweetness – European Preserved Tomatoes

I think everyone would agree that, as with all great culinary art, less is more. It does not matter in what form, raw or cooked, the humble tomato brings a sweet, slightly tangy flavor to so many dishes that it has become one of the strongest and most unifying symbols in any contemporary diet. I remain convinced I will never taste a more intensely-flavored fruit than a ripe tomato —to me tomatoes mean *amore* at first bite!

My next series of blog posts will be about **preserved** or **canned tomatoes**. I am working with the “Greatest Tomatoes From Europe” campaign, which is a European Union funded project to promote European and Italian canned tomatoes in the USA. There will be discussion about the versatility of canned tomatoes, interesting information about the tomato processing industry abroad, and of course recipes-lots and lots of recipes! Scattered amongst these subjects will be quotes, historical facts, folklore, and helpful cooking tips and strategies.



Greatest Tomatoes From Europe Campaign

Preserved Tomatoes

When fresh tomatoes are not available, a can of good quality preserved tomatoes is invaluable and lends itself to infinite options. Today the most loved and most used canned tomatoes are the classic whole peeled tomatoes, chopped tomatoes, pureed tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, and tomato paste. Each product has its own personality—its own special taste, and choice should be tailored to the recipe at hand.

Whole peeled tomatoes...

Elongated whole peeled tomatoes are canned as they are harvested: whole, just briefly boiled, peeled, and conserved in their own juice. Quick cooking is best here and will keep their flavor unchanged—a perfect balance between acidic and sweet. Whole peeled tomatoes are best for classic Italian meat sauces (ragu) for pasta, pizza, soups and stews, and meat or fish dishes, although are also very tasty with egg and vegetable dishes.

Chopped tomatoes...

Chopped tomatoes are peeled tomatoes de-seeded and chopped in their juice. They make an excellent base for quick recipes—like fish dishes because their freshness and slight acidity provide a nice balance between the taste of the tomato and the delicate flavor of the fish. By quickly reducing the watery content of chopped tomatoes, they can also provide one with a flavorful sauce in just minutes.

Pureed tomatoes...

Pureed tomatoes are pulverized and heated briefly to a very high temperature, so the nutrients are not altered, then sieved, lightly concentrated, and usually bottled. Pureed tomatoes or *Passata*, has a creamy density and intense flavor marked with a sweet note. It is perfect for briefly-cooked recipes like cold soups, and red sauces that go with boiled meats and the classic Italian dish “Panzanella” made with Tuscan bread.

Cherry tomatoes...

Cherry tomatoes are small and round and firm-fleshed. They are canned in their own juices just after harvesting, keeping intact their sweet delicate flavor. Cherry tomatoes are perfect for oven baking and quickly-cooked sauces that will give color to vegetable dishes.

Tomato paste...

Tomato paste is made from reduced tomatoes. In terms of processing, the tomatoes are minced and then sieved, with the resulting juice heated to temperatures between 195 degrees F to 212 degrees F. The tomatoes are moved to an evaporator and the juices pass through different stages where its concentration level will gradually increase until the required density is obtained. Lengthy cooking is needed in connection with tomato paste such as in meat sauces, casseroles, soups and stews.

“A tomato is a bit like a mother: always there for you, giving joy and happiness, bringing comfort and reassurance, doing you good.” -- @greatesttomatoesfromeurope.com

Click to Download all 4 Recipes: **EUROPEAN TOMATOES CAMPAIGN-RECIPES-BLOG POST #1**

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Turkey with Potatoes

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Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey

Annette will be appearing at The Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey on Thursday November 29, 2018. The event is open to the general public. There will be a luncheon from noon until 1 p.m., and afterwards she will be giving a lecture, answer questions, and sign copies of her cookbook from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. Reservations can be made by contacting the Center at www.uaacnj.org or by calling (973) 585-7175. The address is: 60 N. Jefferson Rd.; Whippany, New Jersey 07981-1030.

TV Appearance on WFMZ with Annette Ogrodnik Corona—“The New Ukrainian Cookbook” Winner of the 2012 Gourmand Cookbook Award for Best Eastern European Cuisine book in the USA



“Not everyone would sell their business to work on an organic farm, but Annette did just that!” View her appearance on WFMZ TV 69 News, talking about how she got back to her roots, wrote a book, and why one should strive to cook “in sync with the seasons”—the subject of her next cookbook!

Click on the WFMZ link to watch Annette cook Tuscan-Style Chicken Sausage with Grapes, and to get the complete recipe for this delectable dish: www.wfmz.com

Reserve a Cooking Demonstration & Book Signing Date with Annette

Annette O. Corona believes anyone can cook and homemade meals with good quality, seasonally-sensitive ingredients not only shows a connection to nature, but is one of the greatest pleasures in life. She has written for many food publications over the years and has cut her teeth working in professional kitchens and in her own catering business. Annette employees the “Farm to Table” philosophy of sustainable living, and is now working on another cookbook—a seasonal meal-planner of sorts, that illustrates how real people live and eat. Culled from her own extensive culinary repertoire, but leaving plenty of room for creativity, she believes we can change and impact the world—starting at the dinner table.

Annette also encourages exploration of different cultures and introduces readers to her Ukrainian heritage in her first cookbook, doing numerous book signings at well-known places like Moravian Book Shop and Barnes & Noble stores. She is the author of the blog, “Refueling Your Fork in Sync with the Seasons” which encourages people to use seasonal, local ingredients as much as possible. She also discusses and illustrates how to implement various cooking strategies and techniques so readers and home cooks alike can organize.

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Serves 4

The holidays are upon us and many people also serve turkey at Christmastime, which usually means leftovers! Of course, some of us eat turkey all the time, so I wanted to share this lovely recipe. Turkey breast is combined with potatoes, fresh herbs, and pureed tomatoes creating a perfect stew of sorts that will surely warm one up on a cold winter's night! May I suggest some steamed broccoli to accompany and lots of crusty bread to sop up all the delicious juices.



*** The featured **preserved tomatoes** are **Passata**, or **pureed tomatoes**, which add a silky, creamy backdrop to this recipe, taking it from homey to refined.

2¼ pounds turkey breast (boneless, skinless)
1½ pounds potatoes
1 white onion
1 carrot
½ cup plain flour
12 ounces **Passata** or **pureed tomatoes**
12 fl. ounces beef broth
1½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
3 sprigs of rosemary
3 sprigs of thyme
Salt and pepper to taste

First prepare the beef broth (or use store-bought), then chop the vegetables for the sauté: peel and dice the carrot and onion. Tie together the sprigs of thyme and rosemary with kitchen string, then cut the turkey breast into even pieces about {¾-inch} thick. Heat the oil in a flame-proof casserole dish, add the carrot and onion and sauté over medium-high heat for about 5 minutes, stirring often to prevent from burning.

Then add the turkey, let it brown for a couple of minutes, then add the flour and toast it for another 2-3 minutes, stirring often. When it is absorbed, pour the pureed tomatoes and the beef broth into the casserole, add salt and pepper, add the bunches of aromatic herbs (thyme and rosemary), cover and cook on low heat for 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, peel the potatoes and cut them into regular {½ inch} cubes. After 40 minutes, add the cubed potatoes and cook for another 20 minutes, always on low heat.

Then turn off the heat, remove the bunches of aromatic herbs and the turkey stew is ready to be served!

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Spaghetti Frittata

Serves 4

For many people, this recipe is an oldie, but goodie. A frittata is not difficult to make and is delicious, especially when served with a crisp salad on the side and some fresh fruit for dessert. Frittatas also make a lovely brunch dish with wedges positioned alongside of bowls of vegetable soup.



***The featured **preserved tomatoes** are **whole, peeled tomatoes** which make the quick sauce. This frittata is equally good served hot or cold.

12 ounces spaghetti
7 ounces **canned whole tomatoes**, drained, de-seeded and chopped
1-2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 garlic clove, finely-chopped
2 fresh basil leaves
Pinch of sugar
4 ounces freshly grated parmesan cheese or pecorino romano cheese or a mixture
4 eggs
(1) 4-ounce piece of mozzarella cheese
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
Salt, pepper to taste

First of all, prepare the tomato sauce. Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat and sweat the garlic for a few minutes until soft and starting to caramelize. Add the tomatoes, half the basil and a pinch of sugar. Season with salt. Simmer over a gentle heat for at least 15 minutes.

After the sauce has been simmering for 10 minutes, cook the spaghetti in plenty of boiling salted water and drain al dente, put the spaghetti in a large heat-proof bowl and add the warm tomato sauce. Mix well and let the pasta cool slightly. Slice the mozzarella thinly. Mix the eggs in a bowl with the grated parmesan cheese, salt and pepper and add the eggs to the spaghetti when still slightly warm.

Heat the oil in a non-stick, deep frying pan, take it off the heat and add half the egg and pasta mixture, spread the sliced mozzarella over it and then cover with the remaining pasta. It should be about {2.5 inches to 3 inches high}.

Put the frying pan back on the heat and cook the frittata evenly on one side, then slide it onto a lid. Place the frying pan on top of the lid and with one swift move, carefully flip the lid so that the uncooked side is now in the pan, and finish off cooking it until crisp and golden-brown on both sides. The frittata can be served warm but is very good cold.

prepare, and present healthy and nutritious meals to their families and friends all year long.

To arrange a cooking demonstration or book signing with Annette, please see the contact information in the header of this blog.

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Quinoa with Tomato Sauce and Shrimp

Serves 4

Quinoa is a whole grain relatively high in protein and fiber. It has been steadily gaining popularity because it contains healthy fats such as omega-3 and omega-9 fatty acids, iron and potassium, and few people seem to be allergic to it in some sort of way. With that said, it has become extremely popular and here it is combined with shellfish. This dish would make a very nice first course to a more formal dinner, or a good lunch accompanied by a simple side such as carrots, peas, or cauliflower, and some crackers or biscuits.



***The featured **preserved tomatoes** used are **pureed tomatoes** and this dish cooks up in less than an hour.

COOKING NOTE: *It should be noted that the recipe as written suggests 1 cup (scarce) shrimp tails—I am going to assume that this means about 4 medium shrimp per person.*

1¼ cups quinoa
1 cup (scarce) shrimp tails
7 ounces tomato *Passata* or **pureed tomatoes**
27 fl. ounces vegetable broth
½ onion
2 tablespoons of finely chopped parsley
4 basil leaves
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt to taste

Rinse the quinoa well in a fine sieve. Finely chop the onion and soften it in a saucepan with tablespoons of olive oil, then add the quinoa and stir for a few minutes. Then add the pureed tomatoes and a ladle of warm broth. Cook 15 minutes adding more broth as it is absorbed.

In the meantime, peel the shrimp tails (and leave whole or cut into pieces). Once the quinoa is cooked, add the shrimp, sprinkle with parsley and a few basil leaves, and if needed a dash of broth. Stir to mix well and serve.

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Octopus in Tomato Sauce with Capers and Black Olives

Serves 4

Octopus is a popular food all around the Mediterranean basin and yet elsewhere it is often, for some reason, 'controversial'. Many people who will happily feast on fried calamari will shudder at the thought of eating its close cousin, which is too bad, because octopus is one of the finest fruits of the sea.



When properly cooked, it is perfectly delicious, tasting much like squid but... more so, with a deeper flavor and in a good way. I love octopus and when I saw this recipe listed by the campaign, I just had to share it with all of you.

Served with any sort of pasta, this dish is amazing and one of my favorites of the collection. I like to serve it as a main course with plenty of toasted bread and a simple green salad of tender lettuce leaves dressed in a mild, sweet vinaigrette—simple elegance!

***The featured **preserved tomatoes** used are **cherries tomatoes** and are added towards the end of cooking time retaining their sweet flavor. I cannot praise this dish enough—you simply must try it!

COOKING NOTE: *Pantelleria, the ancient Cossyra or Cossura, is an Italian island in the Strait of Sicily in the Mediterranean Sea. Capers are the flower buds of the caper plant, picked before they fully bloom. The island is famous for the capers that are picked and made there. Gaeta is a coastal city in central Italy, south of Rome. Gaeta olives are small black Italian olives which may be brine or salt-cured. The olive is used as an appetizer, in salads or chopped and used in a tapenade.*

1¼ pound octopus
18 ounce can of **cherry tomatoes**
4 garlic cloves
A small bunch of flat-leaf parsley
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and black pepper to taste
1 fresh hot chili
1 tablespoon of *Pantelleria* capers
2 tablespoons of *Gaeta* olives 4 slices of French bread (baguette)

First clean each octopus (if not already cleaned when bought), open up the head at the side and remove the innards. Then remove the eyes and beak, wash each octopus very well under running water to remove any sand residue, especially between the suction cups of the tentacles. Clean the inside of the head very well which will be used for the filling. Before starting cooking, fill the head of each octopus with a few whole olives, parsley, two cloves of garlic, half the capers and close with one or two toothpicks, then put the octopus to cook head down in a large saucepan with a little oil, fresh chili pepper, ground pepper, and a little chopped garlic; when the octopus are well browned, lower the heat and cook about 30 minutes. With this cooking method, the skin of the

octopus tends to remain attached, without coming undone.

In the meantime, in another saucepan, heat a little oil and saute 2/3 chopped garlic clove, add the cherry tomatoes and salt lightly. Cook for about 20 minutes, crushing them to lose water. After the initial cooking time for the octopus, when it is tender, add the remaining olives and capers and a handful of fresh parsley, then about halfway through cooking the tomatoes add them to the octopus and continue cooking another 20/25 minutes.

At this point prepare the toasted bread: cut the slices of bread diagonally and toast them in the oven at 350 degrees F for 5/7 minutes. Serve the octopus in a deep dish, covered with its sauce, accompanied with the slices of toasted bread.

Stay tuned for the next amazing posts all about the greatest tomatoes from Europe! Please feel free to leave comments and questions...thank you for stopping by!

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Comments Sun-Kissed Sweetness – European Preserved Tomatoes – 2 Comments



Ralph schoch on December 11, 2019 at 9:50 PM said:

Very interesting

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Annette O. Corona on December 11, 2019 at 11:24 PM said:

Thank you! Stay tuned as this post was just an introduction to the campaign. The @greatesttomatoesfromeurope has so much to offer. In the future I will be including my own signature offerings.

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