

UTOPIA

Cookbook

Sustainable Recipes

Brezita Fetahu

La Città dell'Utopia presents



UTOPIA COOKBOOK



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My inspiration for writing this cookbook came during the first months of my long term volunteering at La citta dell'Utopia where I had the chance to cook, explore and experiment with different vegetarian and vegan recipes together with other volunteers and many activists.

As I arrived at La citta, I was introduced to the kitchen (called BIOSTERIA) and the very first dish I helped cook was homemade gnocchi.



From that day, I had the chance to meet many volunteers and activists who had a huge passion for cooking, providing them the opportunity of creating new recipes, cooking with local and organic food, and always promoting sustainability of food among the local community of Rome.

A special thanks goes to Mattia Leoni and Ariane Jovovic with whom I have created many recipes and through food we brought joy to many people who joined our events during the whole year. I cherish many beautiful memories of us that without them, cooking in Biosteria would be meaningless.



Many thanks to my flatmates/long term volunteers, Vesna, Tabata, Tanya and Julien who despite everything, always cooked with us and were ready to help. Without their support we wouldn't have been able to bring to life many amazing events, not just within cooking but more generally in keeping this project alive and always ready to blossom with their amazing ideas. Marta and Fabrizo, my biggest supporter, my dear friends of La citta dell'Utopia and SCI Italy.

I thank you for accompanying me during this journey of mine. Salah, for teaching me many new recipes and techniques of cooking. Fabio and Giulio for helping and showing us unique Italian recipes. Anna, my dearest friend, helped during many events including the Balkan festival and taught us many Greek recipes.

Finally, I would like to thank all the activists who helped during the festivals that we organized throughout this year such as No Border fest, Festival della Zuppa and Balkan festival. All the international volunteers and local activists who helped Festival della Zuppa, as it remains our biggest festival of Citta dell'Utopia. Luca Boccoli, Luca Guidi and Marta Micheli who not just helped, but from us learned new Balkan recipes during the Balkan fest.

My coordinators from SCI Gaia Kosovo, Maja and Helena who have supported me through my long term volunteering and continue to inspire me through their amazing work. I thank all my friends, colleagues and passionate food lovers who keep inspiring me to continue writing about the importance of food.

INTRODUCTION

This cookbook serves as a tool for future long term volunteers of European Solidarity Corps and new activists of La citta dell'Utopia to have a deeper understanding of the project and its aims as well as for them to get inspired by our recipes and continue on creating new ones.





Dear Reader, before you continue reading further I must warn you this book isn't simply a cookbook with traditional recipes and techniques of cooking. It aims to bring you on a journey of the past, present and future of life itself. Additionally, it intends to explore food culture through social and cultural events which happened and continue to do so at La citta dell'Utopia. While you immerse yourself in this book, allow me to introduce you to the storytelling of La citta dell'Utopia house and the project. This is a description of what I have observed and attained during my ESC long term volunteering in Rome.



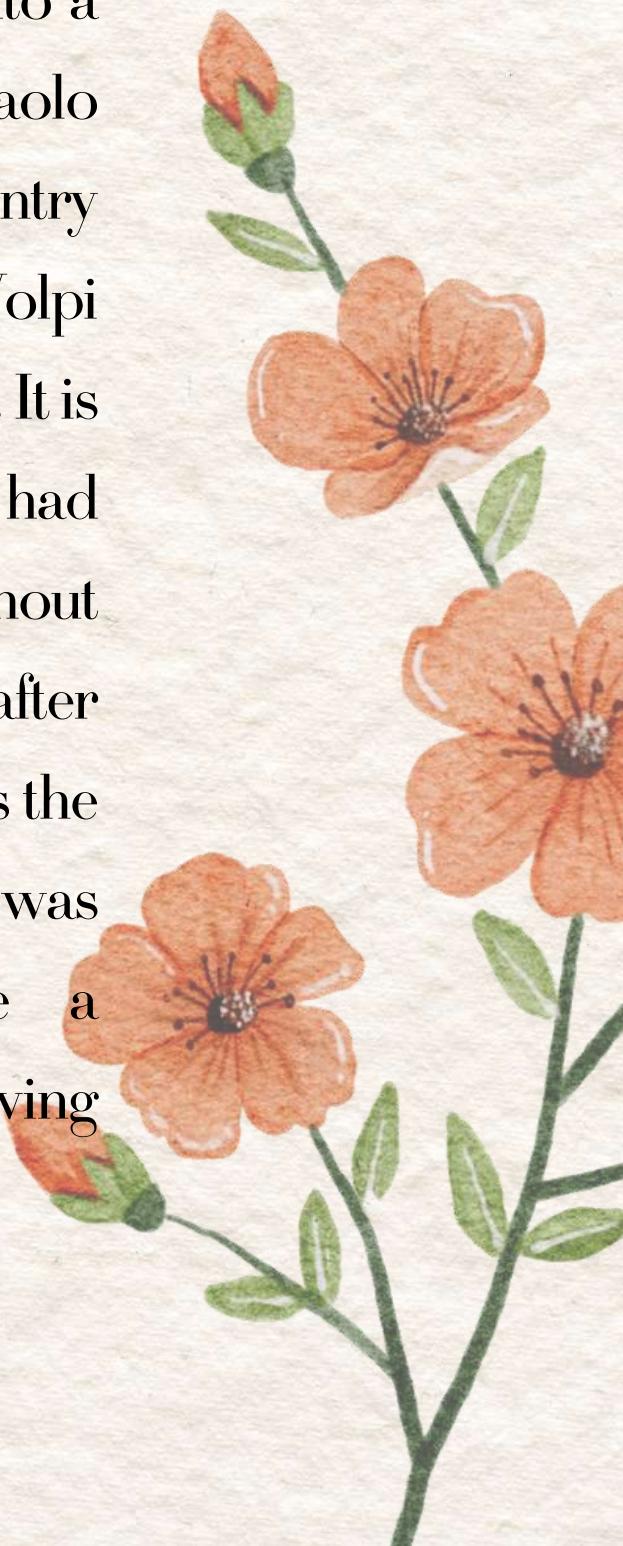
Imagine living in a 18th century old house in the middle of Rome, with a significant history where many people have lived, worked and contributed to the betterment of society throughout all centuries. Personally, I would have never imagined living in such a place, mostly because I did not know of the existence of this kind of place, and partially because it sounds so very utopic and dreamy to live in.

One of the reasons I chose to do my long term volunteering year in Rome was the history of the house and the project of La citta dell'Utopia, which was created by volunteers of SCI Italy. Before I go deeper into why I decided to write this cookbook and explain what La citta dell'Utopia or SCI Italy is, it is important to share with you the story of the house, as well as provide an overview of it and its many changes that have occurred during all these years.

Casale Garibaldi



This remarkable house, located in a hill of San Paolo, South of Rome, has been serving as a living house with a panoramic view of Basilica San Paolo, later to be transformed into a restaurant. At that time, San Paolo was a rural area and this country house was bought by Augusto Volpi who later created Trattoria Volpi. It is important to know that this house had many different owners throughout the centuries, before and after Augusto Volpi but this owner was the most significant one since it was named after him and gave a remarkable meaning to it by having his own trattoria.



Trattoria Volpi

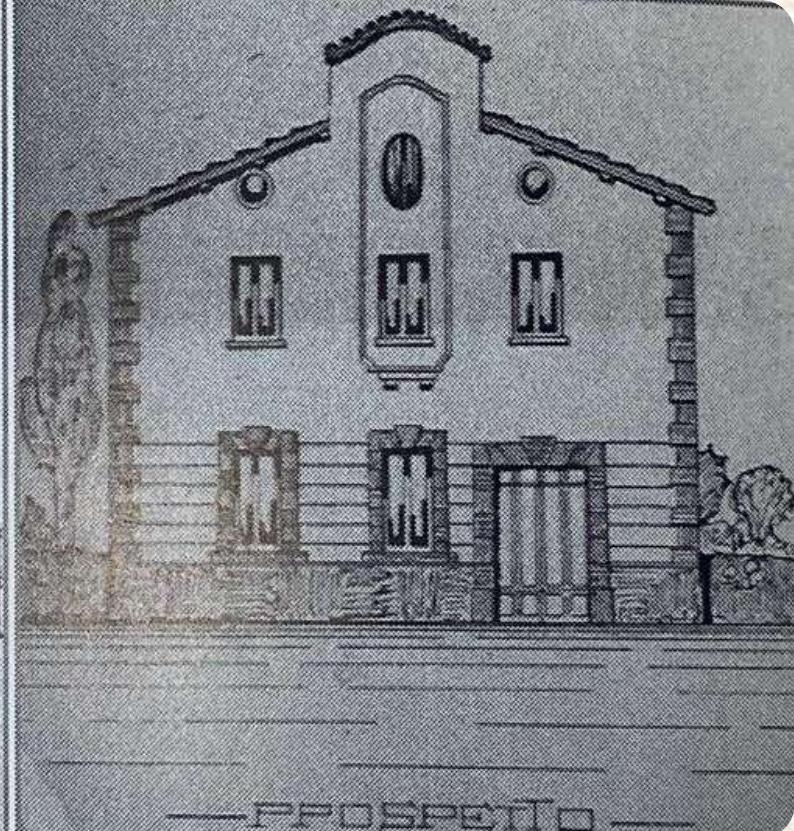
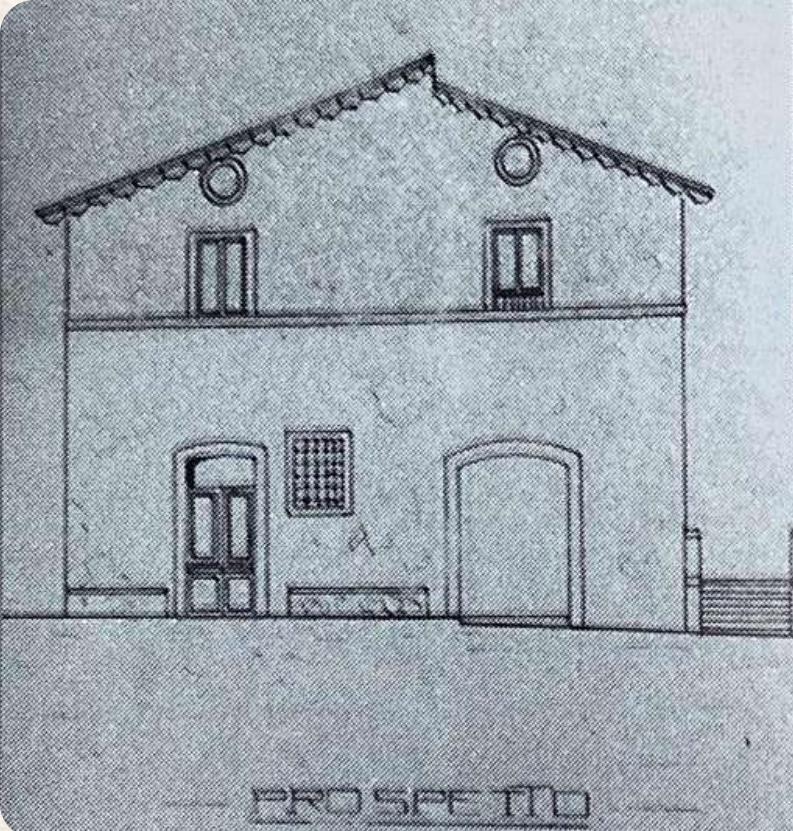
Volpi was an anarchist and anti fascist, as well as an entrepreneur from Acuto, who already owned some properties and bought this house, later deciding to open the Trattoria Volpi and became famous not just for the neighborhood of San Paolo, but also other neighborhoods around.



The house itself had many different namings mainly because of socio-cultural events that happened here. Some people knew it as Casale Volpi (in Italian Casale means country house), Casale Garibaldi or simply Casale. The reason why it was called Casale Garibaldi is because it is believed that Giuseppe Garibaldi has slept a night here. Although there is no evidence that this historical event happened, many people continue calling it so.

Trattoria Volpi, 1907





Modified Casale by Oreste Giacobbi, 1928

Just like the name, the house itself had some structural changes especially after Augusto Volpi was no longer the owner. When urbanism started taking over and the city was expanding, the house was surrounded by buildings, making it look like a hidden place. While other old houses were demolished, the construction of a new neighborhood and new infrastructure made Casale lose its magnificent panoramic view, isolating it from surrounding buildings.

Now, you may ask why did this place survive in the midst of many other houses being destroyed to create urban areas and expand the city? Simply, this was one of the oldest houses in the San Paolo neighborhood and its significant history caused the municipality of Rome to spare this house from demolition.



Abandoned Casale



Augusto Volpi

This house also served as a meeting point for antifascists during the fascist regime, especially because of a cave which is under the structure of the house. Nowadays, the cave remains closed and it's impossible to enter due to garbage and many other things accumulated there.

For a period of time the whole house was abandoned and was not being used until SCI Italy brought it back to life with its project called La citta dell'Utopia. Service Civil International is a peace organization that has been promoting peace through voluntary activities, camps, training and youth exchanges.

Casale in early 2000





Volunteers during an event at La citta dell'Utopia

The Italian branch SCI Italy was created in 1948 and ever since that contributed to international volunteering and continues to do so whilst advocating for human rights, social inclusion and climate justice. Through these activities and the dedicated work of SCI volunteers, La citta dell' Utopia project was born.

This project was founded in 2003 as a social laboratory, a space where international volunteers and local communities meet to share and create many ideas, events on global issues, sustainability, climate change and other social aspects.

Lunch during an event at La citta dell'Utopia



The project was located in Casale to give life to this abandoned country house with many purposes as mentioned earlier, but the main one remains to bring the local community and international one together, exchanging culture through art, crafts, cooking, debates and many other activities. Meaning that the local and international communities share the same urban living space and get together to contribute to the betterment of the society through social cultural events.





Volunteers cooking in Biosteria

As an international organization, SCI has been promoting peace through culture and social aspects, climate issues as well as sustainable and organic food. Through La citta dell'Utopia, SCI Italy had the chance to advocate more on these topics especially on sustainability of food and food consumption and show practically that you can make a difference by utilizing vegetarian and vegan recipes with local and organic food.

This came as a result of having the space to cook, as La citta dell'Utopia house, or as for some people simply known as "Casale", already had a kitchen. As the house was restored by the municipality of Rome and maintained by volunteers and activists, La citta dell'Utopia managed to adopt a professional kitchen where this group of volunteers decided to name it Biosteria.

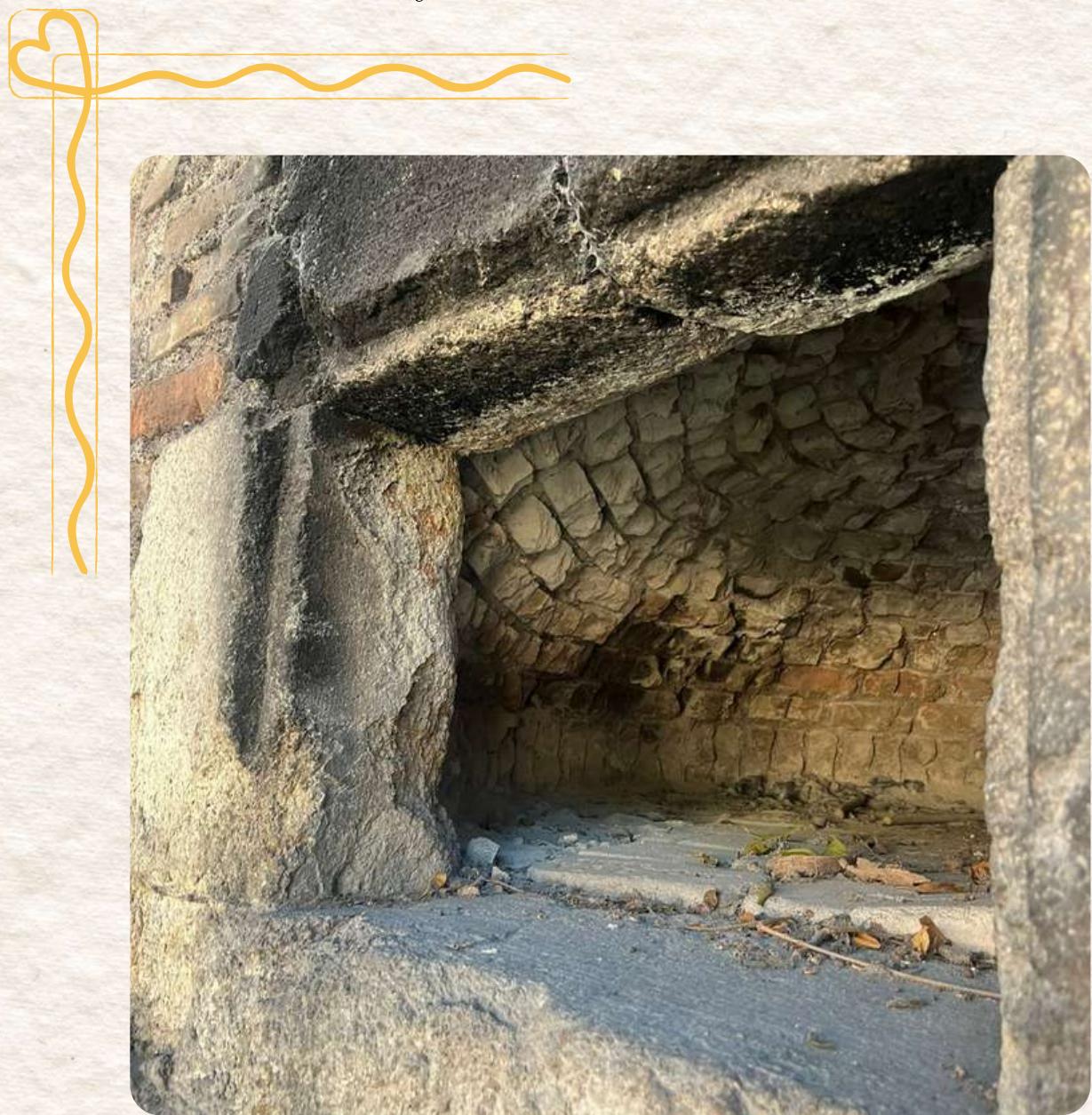


Volunteers serving food

This compound noun was created as a concept of “Bio” and “Osteria”. It is important to understand the difference between a Trattoria and Osteria which nowadays in Italy these two are very similar to each other but in the past Trattoria served as family owned restaurants with local recipes (As Volpi’s Trattoria), whereas Osteria was a wine bar with a very simple menu which would change daily and have a fixed price with a glass of wine.

Inspired by this, the volunteers named the kitchen Biosteria to cook sustainability with local organic food for events and training which are organized by SCI Italy and La citta dell’Utopia. This part of the project aims to offer a social inclusion through cooking.

At La citta dell' Utopia you can also find an old stone oven which was used to make pizza and bake different kinds of breads which unfortunately it can not be used anymore since we live in the city and it is forbidden to do so.



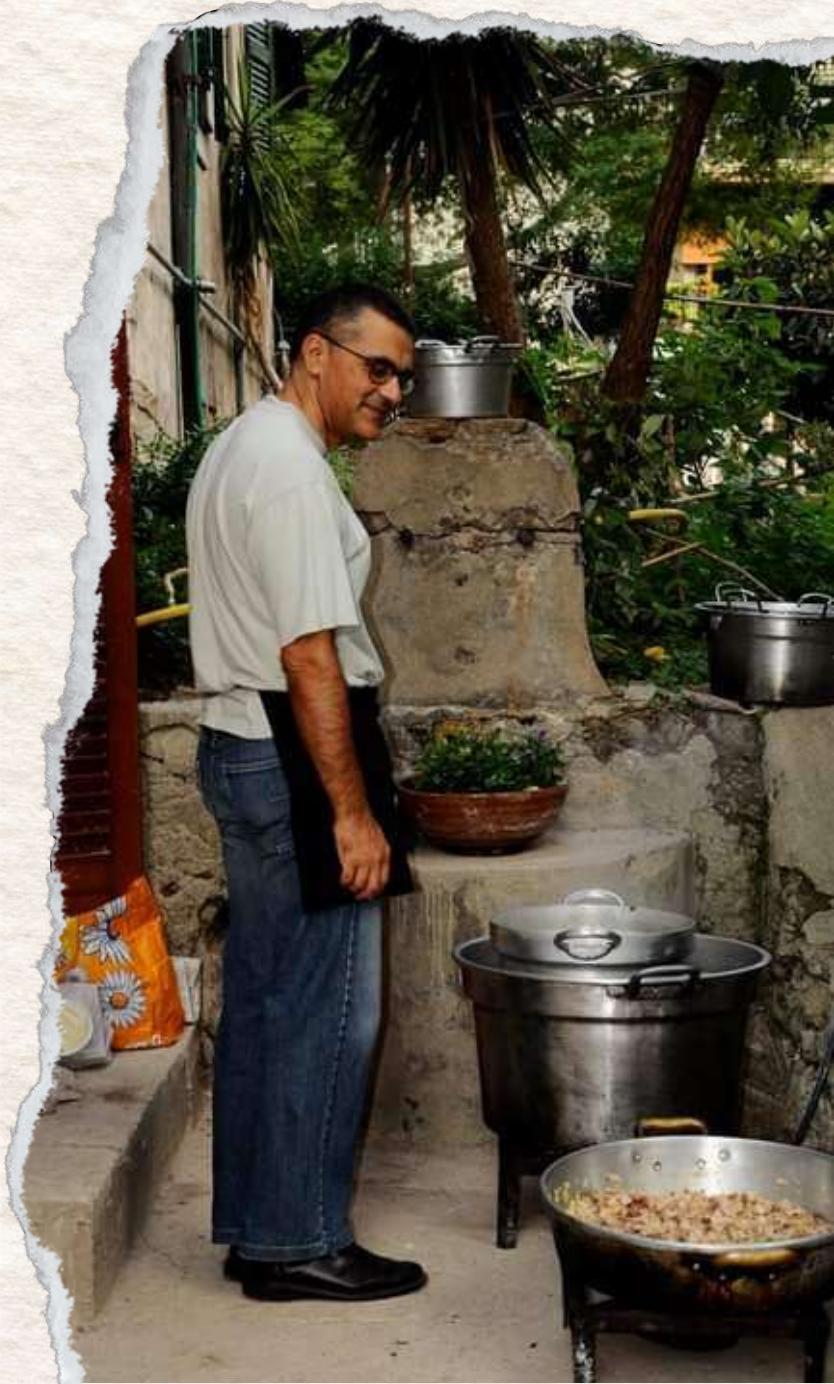
When it comes to social inclusion, it is crucial to mention one of the most important festivals held by activists and volunteers; International Festival della Zuppa of Rome originally inspired by Soup Festival of Lille, France which aims to have a social/cultural integration through creating a competition of soups where people can participate and it is followed by a program of music and dancing. For 16 years this festival has been having different themes on different social, cultural, environmental and political issues related to food.



Winners of Festival della Zuppa 2023

Throughout the years the volunteers and activists have contributed in gardening, as they had the space to plant different herbs, fruits and vegetables. Today, the place owns a beautiful garden with tomatoes, aubergines, zucchini, peppers and many other veggies, fruits which the volunteers are able to use for cooking sometimes in the events they organise.

An activist cooking outside Bisoteria





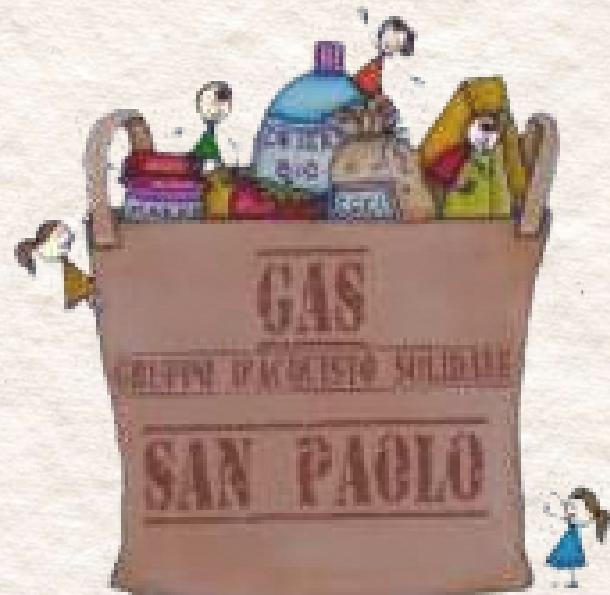
However, this isn't enough since the garden is small and does not produce enough for cooking in large quantities. Therefore, La citta dell'Utopia is provided with seasonal organic vegetables by GAS which allows us to create many dishes combining Italian traditional recipes with dishes from different cultures. It is crucial to mention one of our monthly events, an artigianal market which Citta dell'Utopia hosts. This market is organised by terraTERRA where local farmers of Rome come to sell their local products as well as homemade food and DIY products. This, all thanks to our volunteers, local people, activists and partners of La citta dell'Utopia and SCI who continuously help and advocate on food sustainability.

GAS AS A SOCIAL FOOD PRACTICE IN ROME

GAS is an acronym of “Gruppo di Acquisto Solidale” and stands for Solidarity Buying Groups.

Previously I've mentioned GAS as the main provider of fresh, seasonal vegetables and fruits which are used at La citta dell'Utopia. I must say, before I came to Italy I wasn't familiar with this term and I had no idea what GAS stands for. While doing my long term volunteering I have encountered this interesting concept of GAS and I realized that not only La citta dell'Utopia but also many individuals who decided to be part of it and sustain themselves with seasonal vegetables and fruits each week which makes this social practice expand among the society of Rome.

To be part of GAS requires to have an understanding of its purpose, to subscribe and preferably to participate in regular meetings of the network activities. People who are willing to participate might be interested in local consumption of food or they already have a knowledge and value the importance of local production. For this, La citta dell'Utopia has been collaborating with GAS for many years now as we also believe and advocate in sustainability of food and support local farmers who are producing organic products without using pesticides and other chemical fertilizers which are harmful for human health and contribute to pollution of the environment.



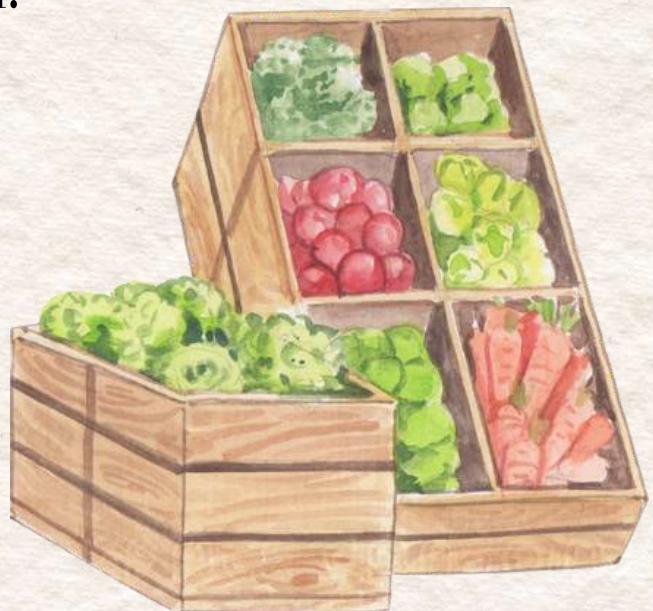
Thanks to GAS, we've been creating many seasonal dishes which I will be including the recipes in this cookbook. We encourage everyone who would like to learn more about local production and sustainability of food to participate in GAS as it helps them to understand more not just theoretically but also practically.



TERRATERRA: A FARMERS MARKET

Nowadays, in most parts of the world people intend to go for groceries in a supermarket where they can find everything in one place. Due to intensity of work, and many other factors people find it less time consuming to buy once all they need from a supermarket.

While this sounds quite convenient, this does not necessarily mean that you are buying local or organic food, as these supermarkets work with big corporations who work on large scale and mass production food.



Which leads to using a lot of harmful chemicals and many other chemical ingredients both for humans and the environment. Although you find products that are bio, organic and fair traded sometimes this is classified as greenwashing just for the sake of selling and making more profit. Therefore it is important to understand if these products are really organic and fair trade. Another important matter is to mention the fact that sometimes these big corporations have been known for treating their employees unfairly and giving them late monthly salaries.



While all this is happening, there are quite a lot of people around the world who are interested in local markets and support through buying food from there. At La citta dell'Utopia we have the chance to host one of these marvelous markets called Mercato terraTERRA. While researching for this market, I came across a slogan on their website which says: "The land is not a supermarket, food is not a commodity". It made me think of the importance of food and how people neglect this necessity of life by choosing to ignore it, not willing to understand the impact of agriculture on the environment or the sustainability of food.



This market was born in 2004 and continues to grow in all parts of Rome; which aims to promote local food production with a view on social and environmental justice. Organized by a group of local farmers of Rome, the market operates once a month in a different place of Rome. For example, each third Saturday of the month it is located at La citta dell'Utopia where we host in our little Piazza (square).

The farmers come and offer to sell their seasonal local products such as vegetables and fruits, cheese, bread and sometimes homemade ready meals. They also often sell artisanal products such as olive oil, jams, different homemade soaps and other homemade products. After the market, during lunch time you will be able to enjoy lunch at La citta dell'Utopia cooked by the volunteers with very reasonable prices.



**terra
TERRA**
PER UN' ECONOMIA SOLIDALE

Indeed, food is a necessity, a basic human need which we are able to transform it into a commodity by creating different recipes and elaborating them. During my volunteering year each lunch of terraTERRA market we have created many seasonal dishes together with other volunteers and activists where you have the chance to enjoy simple dishes together with the local community and many other friends who have been coming to our events. Also, in each market we have young artists who perform through theatrical shows or music bands that accompany us with good music. This market is open to all groups of ages and we organize different activities for children.



UTOPIC RECIPES

All the recipes included in this cookbook have been cooked at Biosteria during my long term volunteering program. It is a collection of recipes made by the volunteers, staff of SCI and activists of La Citta dell'Utopia throughout the events that we organized. Through out my volunteering year I was told several times that food isn't the most important thing in events we held, although it certainly played a significant role in italian culture, community and people who participated in our events.



Therefore, the main purpose of the cookbook is to help the future volunteers to get inspired and continue to create sustainable dishes and transform cultural dishes by experimenting with food. My main advice to all of you is don't be afraid to experiment, explore and socialize with other volunteers in Biosteria through cooking which will bring you closer than ever. And remember, above all, food is everything!



UTOPIA MENU

Starters

Soups

Main dish

Side dishes

Desserts

Aperitivo

Drinks



STARTERS

Bruschetta with hummus

Bruschetta with hummus is a recipe we have made during a market together with Salah, an activist who has been volunteering in cooking at Biosteria for over 9 years now. Salah has been accompanying us in the kitchen ever since we started volunteering. During this time, we learned a lot of cooking techniques from him and many new recipes.



Ingredients

1 bread
1 kg dried chickpeas
1 lemon
1 jar of tahini
3 cloves of garlic
salt
black pepper
olive oil

Instructions

Soak the chickpeas in water for 24 hours (preferably overnight) and boil it the next day for 2 hours until the chickpeas get softened. Once it softens, add the garlic, lemon, tahini, salt and pepper.

Use a hand blender to mash it until it gets creamy enough and let it cool down a bit. Spread the hummus in medium sliced bread and you are ready to serve!



Bruschetta with cavolo nero and pecorino cheese

This recipe was made by Mattia, an activist and a very dear friend of mine, for “Cena di Autofinanziamento” (self financed dinner) during the Christmas period.

Mattia, Ariane and I made many other recipes together which made our friendship grow even more! They say, when these three cooked together magic was created in Biosteria and people could taste food made with love!



Ingredients

1 bread
500 gr of Cavolo nero (kale)
Pepper flakes (either dry or fresh)
2 cloves of garlic
slices of Pecorino cheese to decorate
olive oil

Instructions

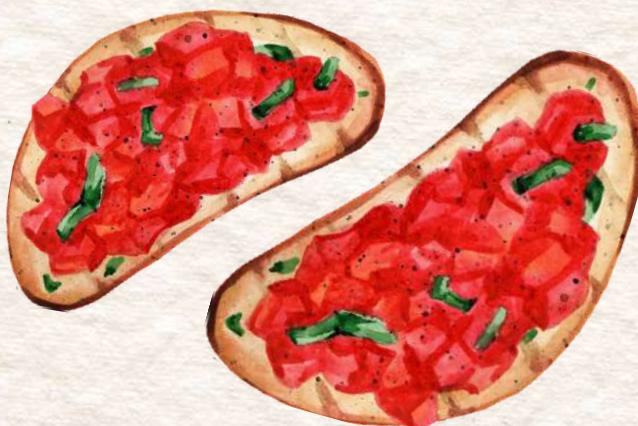
Wash Cavolo nero (kale) and remove the central rib so you can use only the dark part of the leaf. Boil the leaves until it becomes soft and transfer them in cold water.

Meanwhile, in a pan put olive oil, garlic and the pepper flakes and fry on medium heat for 5 mins . Add cavolo nero and continue frying for another 5 min. When ready, place cavolo nero in medium sliced bread and decorate it with slices of Pecorino cheese.



Bruschetta marinara

We prepared this starter dish with one of the ESC volunteers from Spain. On our first days of volunteering Tabata and I had the idea to make a vegan version of Bruschetta, a simple and very light starter for summer.



Ingredients

1 bread

500 gr tomatoes

2 cloves of garlic

olive oil

fresh parsley

oregano

Instructions

Chop the tomatoes in very small cubes. Mash the garlic, chop very finely parsley and oregano and add olive oil. Transfer this to a bowl and give it a good mix. Place it in sliced bread and you are ready to serve!

Involtini di verza

This is a dish that Mattia and I decided to make in one of the events. Involtini di verza is an Italian version of spring rolls with cabbage leaves and other veggies inside. As in many other cultures in the world, these rolls are very famous amongst Italian cuisine. Although originally this recipe is not vegetarian, we made a vegan version of it.

Ingredients

Cabbage leaves

carrots

potatoes

zucchini

Tomato sauce

Salt

Pepper

olive oil



Instructions

Boil the cabbage leaves until it gets semi soft (around 10 mins in medium heat) and leave them aside. To prepare the filling, grind the carrot, potatoes, zucchini and fry it all in the same pan one after another. Add salt, pepper and oregano. Start filling the cabbage leaves with the filling and roll them nicely. Place them in a pan and bake them for 40 mins. Meanwhile, in a pot prepare the Tomato sauce and heat it with salt, pepper, olive oil and oregano. Once they are baked, pour the sauce on top and serve it.



Marinated red peppers

This dish was made during the Balkan fest where we made several Balkan dishes. It is a very common summer starter in Albanian and many other Balkan cultures.



Ingredients

Red sweet
peppers (as
much as you
like)
4 cloves of
garlic
olive oil

Instructions

Grill the red peppers until they turn into black and then rip it out. Wash them with cold water and add the garlic and olive oil. Transfer them into a container and let them marinate overnight. Serve them with a piece of bread.

Sarma

Sarma is a starter dish which is made all over the Balkans as well as the Middle East countries. The recipes of this dish may vary from different cultures in the Balkan by using cabbage leaves or grape leaves, meat or vegetarian versions. During Balkan fest, we prepared the vegetarian version of it. Thanks to Anna, Luca Boccoli and Luca Guidi we managed to roll more than 300 sarmas.

Ingredients

1 jar of grape leaves

200 gr white onion

300 gr bulgur

300 gr rice

3 tablespoons pepper paste

3 tablespoons tomato paste

salt/pepper oregano

mint

water

lemon

olive oil



Instructions

Place the grape leaves in a bowl of hot water and leave them to rest while you prepare the filling. Chop finely the onion and fry them in medium heat, later add tomato paste and pepper paste. Once the onion is fried add rice, bulgur, salt, pepper and the herbs. While frying all these together add a glass of water it becomes softer.

You will need 10 mins to fry everything and once it's done you let it cool down. Take the grape leaves and start filling and rolling them. Place all of them in a pot, put olive oil and add lemon and water until they get covered. Add a plate on top to cover them so they don't open while boiling. Boil for 30 mins in medium heat and serve them warm.



SOUPS

As in every food culture, soup is a very important dish all over the world. La citta dell'Utopia, inspired by a soup festival in Lille, France, has been organizing an International Soup Festival here in Rome for 16 years now. For volunteers of La citta dell'Utopia, soup has been a very important dish where all of us have been making different seasonal soups. During this festival people have the chance to participate by making a soup and people tasting it and vote for the best soup.



Finocchio Soup

Finocchio soup might not be a common soup but definitely it is very popular amongst Italian cuisine. We have been making the finocchio soup quite often and I must say it is one of those soups you will end up loving. It is very suitable for autumn, winter as well as spring.

Ingredients

4 large fennel bulbs

2 leeks

300 gr potatoes

1 onion

garlic

olive oil

salt, pepper

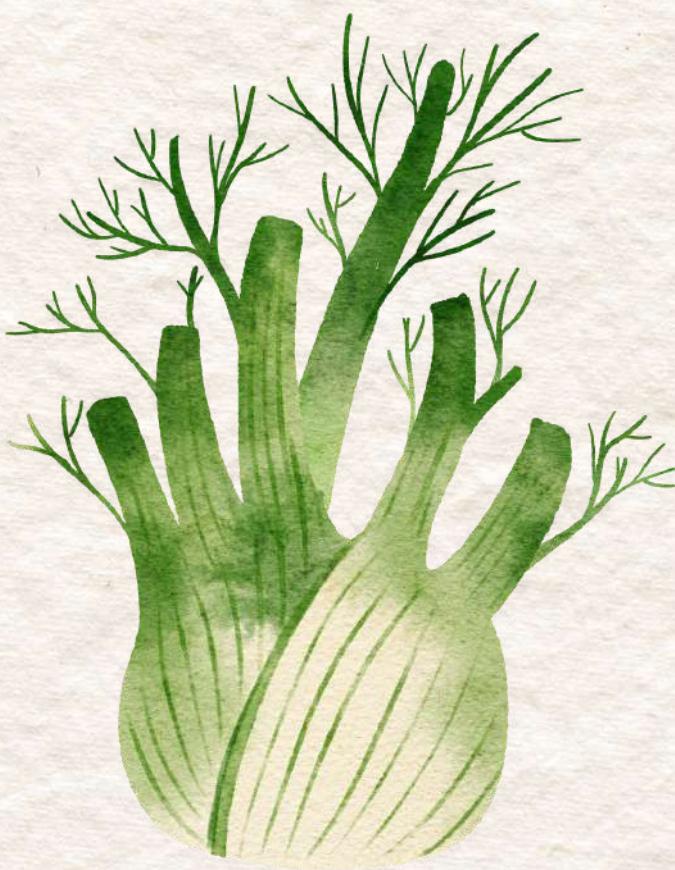
toasted bread cubes

spices of your taste



Instructions

In a pot fry onion and garlic with olive, and slowly add fennels and leeks which should be already cut. Add the diced potatoes and add water based on your pot you will use. Add salt, pepper and spices of your choice. Boil it for 30-40 mins and use a blender. To make it more creamy you can add some milk or heavy cream. To decorate you can use some fennel leaves and toasted bread cubes.



Pumpkin Soup

Pumpkin soup is one of the most popular ones especially during autumn. We've been making this during many events not only in autumn but also winter time and it is everyone's favorite. It's sweet and spicy at the same time and very enjoyable for the season.



Ingredients

300 gr onion
1 garlic clove
1 pumpkin
500 gr potatoes
vegetable broth
cumin
coriander
nutmeg
salt, pepper
olive oil
fresh parsley to decorate

Instructions

Chop finely onions, garlic, add olive oil and fry them directly in the pot. Meanwhile, peel the potatoes and pumpkin. Both of them should be diced and ready to add to the pot. Add salt, pepper, cumin, coriander and nutmeg and the vegetable stock or broth. Add water according to your pot size, until you cover everything. Boil it for about 30 min and blend it. Serve it with some finely chopped parsley on top.



Leek Soup

This soup was made by Mattia and I during several events and people had the chance to enjoy it during the winter season.



Ingredients

4 leeks
500 gr potatoes
200 gr onion
1 clove garlic
vegetable stock/broth
salt, pepper
olive oil
nutmeg

Instructions

Start by frying the onion and garlic in the same pot as where you will make the soup. Cut the potatoes and leeks and wash them well. When done with cutting add them in the pot with onions and add salt, pepper, nutmeg and vegetable stock. Add water according to the pot you are using. Boil it for 30 mins and blend it to make it more thick and creamy.

Deep Purple Soup

This is absolutely one of the most unique soups that we ever made in La citta dell'Utopia. It was once created by Mattia, Ariane and I during a lunch of terraTerra market but we didn't reach the result we were looking for.

During the festival of Soup, Fabio and his friends (activists of La citta dell'Utopia) were contestants in the competition and were competing with this wonderful soup. Mesmerized by the amazing aesthetics of this soup, perfectly flavored and extremely healthy recipe, this soup has won the prize of the popular vote at the festival.

Ingredients

1 purple cabbage

400 gr red onions

1 l almond milk

250 gr pistachios

250 gr chives

olive oil

salt,pepper

1 lemon juice



Instructions

Chop red onions and the cabbage. Fry the onions with some olive oil and add cabbage. Fry all together for some minutes until it gets brown and add the almond milk.

Leave the cabbage to soften up at least for an hour. Add salt, pepper and blend it very well at high speed in order to not have lumps. This creamy soup will create a beautiful deep purple color. In a bowl set aside some of the cream and add some lemon juice which will create a fuchsia color (you will need it for decoration). Crush the pistachios and chop finely the chives. Place your soup in a bowl and add the fuchsia color as decoration, the pistachio and chives. Enjoy this marvelous soup!



Dolce Arancio

This recipe was given to us by Carole, an ex ESC long term volunteer of La citta dell' Utopia. This soup was created by her while living in Casale with her flatmates and then later decided to compete with the same recipe for the festival of soup 2022 and it won the price of jury of quality in the second place of that year.

Ingredients

1 big sweet potato

2 potatoes

2 carrots

3 onions

2 garlic cloves

olive oil

salt, pepper

curry

coconut milk (optional)



Instructions

Peel the potatoes, carrots and the onions and keep the skins. With the remaining skins bring it to boil with water and create a vegetable broth. Cut the onions and fry them with olive oil. Cut carrots, the sweet potato and the potatoes in medium pieces. Once the onions get golden, add chopped garlic, carrots and some curry. Fry them for a bit and add both potatoes. Add the vegetable broth and let it boil for 35 mins. Once ready, blend everything and add some coconut milk for decoration.



MAIN DISHES

Polpette with lentils and sugo

This was a main dish that Mattia and I created during the Christmas dinner. Traditionally, poplette is a type of meatball in Italy but we decided to make the vegan version of it. It is a very rich and nutritious dish suitable for each season.

Ingredients

500 gr lentils

2 onions

500 gr carrots

2 sticks of celery

2 cloves of garlic

tomato paste

300 gr breadcrumbs

parsley

salt, pepper

tomato sauce

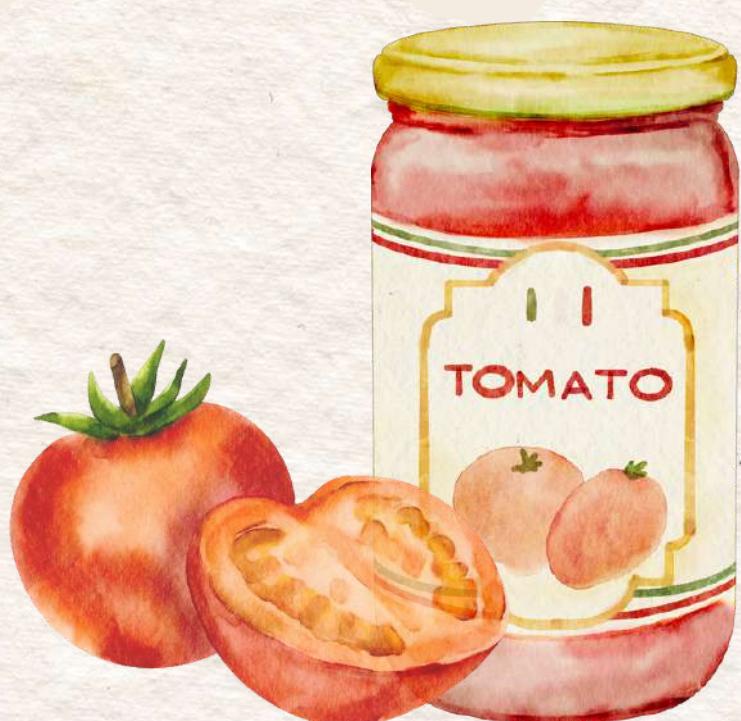
basil

oregano



Instructions

Boil the lentils for 30 mins until it gets soft. Chop finely the onions, garlic, carrots, celery sticks and parsley. In a bowl put boiled lentils and all the vegetables chopped. Use a hand blender and add some tomato paste, salt and pepper. Once it's all blended well add breadcrumbs and start forming little balls (the polpette) and place them in a pan. Add them in the oven for 20 mins under 200 degrees. To create the sugo (tomato sauce) add some fresh basil, oregano salt and pepper. Cook the tomato sauce for at least 10 mins. When the little balls are baked, place it on a plate and add a spoon of tomato sauce on top.



Vegan patties

These vegan patties are very nutritious, healthy and easy to make. We made these during a Yoga Master class with Salvadore (our yoga teacher) and everyone enjoyed these patties. You can use these to make sandwich or burger or simply enjoy it with a salad.

Ingredients

500 gr chickpeas

500 gr kidney beans

tomato paste

200 gr red onions

200 gr carrots

200 gr breadcrumbs

salt, pepper

sweet paprika powder

cumin

coriander



Instructions

If you use dried chickpeas and kidney beans, soak them in cold water a night before you make this recipe. Next day, boil them separately in two different pots for about 2 hours until they get soft. Once they are boiled, add them in a bowl and use a hand blender to smash it. Chop red onions and carrots finely and add the spices, salt and pepper. Add some tomato paste, bread crumbs and start making the patties shape. Bake them for 30 mins in 200 degrees and you are ready to serve!



Note: You can use canned chickpeas and kidney beans but we recommend using dried ones.

Dahl and basmati rice

This Indian recipe was made by Mattia, Ariane and I during the No border fest lunchtime and it was very suitable for the autumn season. It is a very easy and quick recipe which warms you during cold weather.

Ingredients

500 gr red lentils

300 gr white onions

300 gr tomatoes (you can use

500 ml tomato sauce)

3 cloves of garlic

curry powder

1 bay leaf

turmeric powder

cumin

coriander

salt and pepper

Olive oil

300 gr basmati rice



Instructions

Chop the white onions in any form you prefer. Fry them together with garlic and some olive oil. When it gets golden brown, start adding the bay leaf and other spices, salt and pepper. Dice the tomatoes and add it to fry together with onions. Before adding the red lentils, rinse them well. Add it to the pot with some water until you cover it completely. Let it boil for about 30 mins. For the basmati rice you need a large pot of cold water. Once the water starts boiling add some salt and rice. Boil it for 8 minutes and once the rice starts rising it is ready. Immediately drain it out and serve it together with dahl.



Chana masala with basmati rice

This is another Indian dish that we cooked several times in La citta dell'Utopia. I made this dish for the ESC Zuppa team right before the soup festival. It is a very easy dish to make, filling and nutritious.



Ingredients

300 gr chickpeas
200 gr white onions
200 gr tomatoes
garam masala
curry powder
salt, pepper
300 gr basmati rice

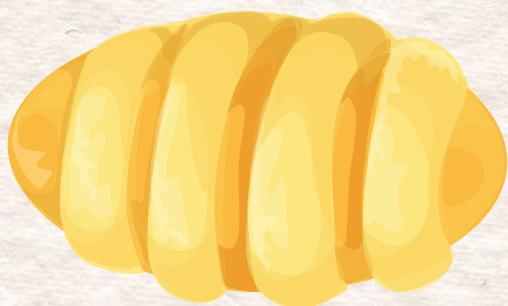
Instructions

Soak the chickpeas overnight and boil them the following day for 2 hours (until they soften). In a pan fry the onions until golden brown and add the garam masala, curry powder, salt and pepper. Dice the tomato and fry together with onions. Add the chickpeas and three glasses of water. Let it boil for 20 mins and add it to a plate with basmati rice.

Gnocchi con broccoletti

When you live in Italy, who doesn't want to learn how to make good gnocchi? Making fresh gnocchi from scratch with any type of sauce makes you fall in love with it. It's all about the soft chewy taste of it and a perfect sauce that makes you love this pasta even more. In all honesty, it doesn't take much time to prepare good fresh gnocchi.

Once you learn, you will always want to make it. This recipe was made by Mattia with help of many volunteers who were learning from Mattia's gnocchi workshop. Although it wasn't officially a workshop, it did feel like it since we were all learning together. I am quite happy to share Mattias' recipe in this book as all of us volunteers shared good moments and memories while making this dish.



Ingredients

1 kg potatoes

500 gr flour +more for dusting

nutmeg

salt, pepper

Sauce

Broccoli

salt, pepper

pepperoncini

olive oil



Instructions

Dice and boil the potatoes with a pinch of salt for 20 mins. Let it cool down for a bit and mash it. Add some nutmeg, salt and pepper and start adding flour. Knead it on a surface dusted with flour for about 5 mins. Divide the dough in 4 pieces and roll it in long form (kind of like a sausage) and cut them into small pieces.

To shape them you can just roll them a bit with the palm of your hand while they are still on the surface. Place them in a pan or plate dusted with a bit of flour. In a pot add some water, once it starts boiling add the gnocchi. It only needs two mins until they rise up and they are ready. For the sauce you can use any but we recommend broccoli sauce. Boil the broccoli until it gets softened, mash it and add some olive oil, pepperoncini, salt and pepper. Mix it together with the gnocchi and enjoy.



SIDE DISHES

Purè di fave

This dish was made by Fabio, an activist of La citta dell'Utopia during the Christmas dinner. It is a typical dish with a specific type of bean called fave which you can enjoy in a cold winter season.



Ingredients

500 gr Fave
beans

200 gr potatoes
Salt

olive oil

Instructions

Soak the fava beans at least for 2-3 hours. Peel potatoes, add to boil together with fava beans for 2 hours. While boiling add some salt as you prefer. Once it is soft enough add some olive oil and blend until it becomes creamy.

Chicory with red onions, vinegar and olives

This is a side dish that goes perfectly with pure di fave. In fact it was made by Fabio together with pure di fave but I decided to separate it as you can use it as a side dish if you want any other pure of your choice!



Ingredients

800 gr of Chicory

50 gr of large olives

400 gr of red onion

vinegar

olive oil

salt, pepper

1 bay leaf

Instructions

Slice the onions very finely soak it in water for 30 mins, take out the water and season it with oil, vinegar, salt and pepper and leave aside. Wash the chicory thoroughly and boil them until the leaves get soft and drain them. In a pan fry the olives with some salt and the bay leaf for 5 mins.

Place them all in one plate together next to your preferred pure!

Cavolo Nero - A vegetarian potato salad with spicy (kale crisps)

This recipe was created by Ariane during No Border fest of 2022. It is a very light, easy one to make and very enjoyable for any season. And as Fabrizio used to say : It's absolutely delicious!

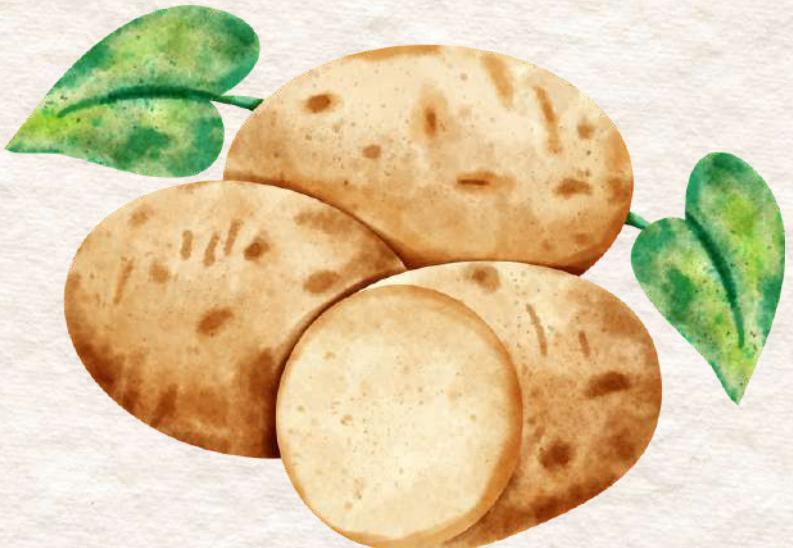


Ingredients

Potatoes
Red onions
Fresh parsley
green olives
mayonnaise
pepper and salt
Kale, olive oil and
pepperoncini

Instructions

Some ingredients could be substituted by others, it's mostly about ingredients going well with potatoes and kale. In my opinion a good salad combination is about contrast : something a bit more crunchy with something more soft, some kinds of pickles or olives, something fresh, different colors... maybe adding some kind of seeds or nuts could be good. Peel, boil and cut the potatoes. Put the Kale in the oven with olive oil and pepperoncini, salt and pepper, let it cook until it dries and turns into crisps. Add mayonnaise in the potatoes. Mix it with everything chopped to the size you want (except the kale). When you serve, sprinkle some fresh parsley on it with some kale crisps.



Marta's Tortilla

Marta, the communication officer of SCI Italy, has been cooking with us many times during several events. She has a huge passion for creating different healthy recipes but we must say one of her significant dishes is absolutely the Spanish tortilla which was everyone's favorite.



Ingredients

500 gr
potatoes
300 gr
sweet
onions
10 eggs
Salt

Instructions

Slice onions, potatoes in medium size pieces and thinly. In one pan add olive oil and cook the potatoes. Cook them for 20 mins and take it out of olive oil, transfer it into a bowl to cool down. Cook the onions in the same pan with olive oil until golden brown. After cooking let the onions cool down and in the meantime whisk eggs into a large bowl. Add potatoes and onions into the egg mixture and stir them constantly. Once you have your batter ready add it into a frying pan. When cooked on one side, flip it so the other side cooks too. Place it into a big plate and cut it into wedges.



DESSERT

Note: All the desserts, cookies and sweets throughout my volunteering year at La citta dell' Utopia were made by Ariane Jovovic as she had a huge passion for baking and her cakes were simply amazing! Therefore, the cake recipes are written by her in order to remain original.

The suzy cake - Le gâteau de suzy

This is a cake inherited from my mom that used to live in her university days at her parents friend's place: Suzy. Suzy used to make this cake and she gave the recipe to my mom.



My mom never really liked to cook and but she would do that cake often when we were kids. It is a very easy cake to make! It's very simple and the total opposite of dry. It goes well with tea or warm with some vanilla ice cream or whipped cream. It was a huge hit in La Città !!! My biggest success actually.

Ingredients

4 big apples or 5 small ones

egg

6 big spoon of milk

6 big spoon of neutral oil

6 big spoon of flour

6 big spoon of sugar

1 small pack of baking powder

1 other egg + 80 grams + 100
grams of sugar of butter to
golden the cake at the end



Instructions

Preheat the oven at 180 degrees. Peel and Cut the apple in cubes, put them aside. In a bowl mix all of the other ingredients until you obtain a slightly liquid consistency. Put the apples in the mixture, it's okay if it looks like there is not a lot of paste, put everything on a buttery mold and put it in the oven for around 25 minutes. When the cake looks quite cooked add the mixed eggs, butter and sugar on top of the cake and put it for another 15 minutes in the oven until the cake looks golden, even a little bit light brownish.

The chocolate fondant cake

This is my dad's favorite cake. A simple dark chocolate fondant. It is also very easy to make, in my opinion simple cakes are often the best and the most efficient to please a large number of people.

Ingredients

200g of butter

200g of dark chocolate

5 eggs

100g of sugar

1 big spoon of flour



Instructions

Preheat the oven at 190 degrees. Take a pot and put it in a “bain-marie” so nothing burns and it cooks slowly, put the butter and the chocolate in the pot, stir until it is melted, then you can add the sugar and stir again. Add the spoon of flour and mix. Let it rest a little bit so it’s not too hot. Add the eggs one by one and incorporate them with a wooden spoon. When you’re done the texture should be a bit like liquid slime. Put everything in a mold with some oven paper. Let it in the oven for 22 minutes. It should be a bit trembling and slightly undercooked. Take it out of its mold not too long after (be careful the cake is a bit fragile and soft). It’s better if you make it the day before you eat it and don’t put it in the fridge.



A fake sacher cake

This is also a chocolate cake. I made it for team building. What I like about it is that the use of eggs in snow is giving it a very nice fluffy texture. It's a base that can be used to make the Austrian sacher torte... But I don't like it and there are less steps so it's easier but you can still add apricot jam inside if you want or another filling...



Ingredients

6 eggs
150 g sugar
150 g dark chocolate
120 g butter
100 g flour
1 pinch of salt

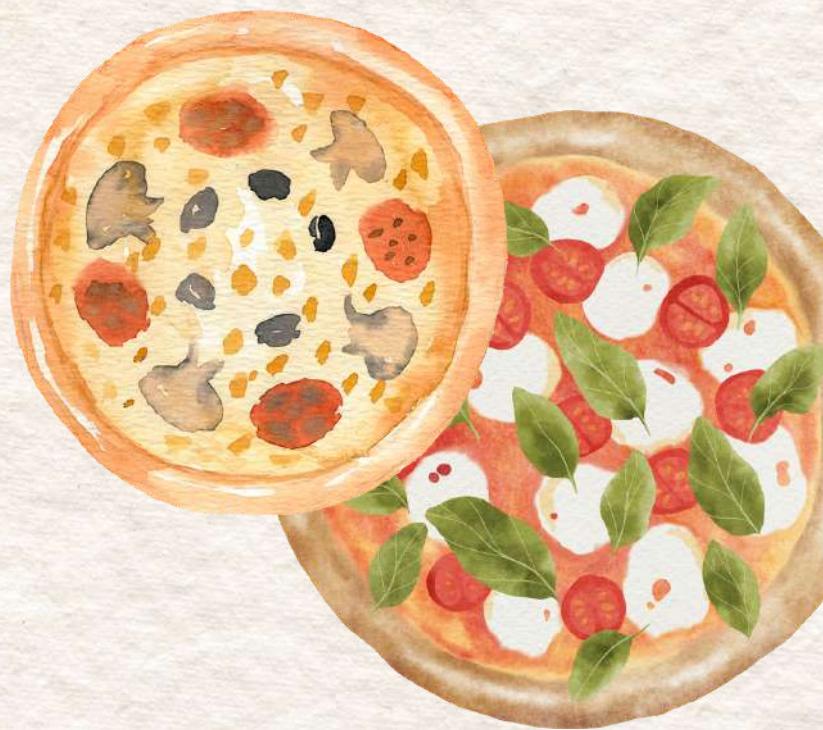
Instructions

Put the oven on 150 degrees. Separate the white from the yellow in the eggs. Put the yellow with 100g sugar and beat them until it's getting a bit foamy. Then melt on a pot the chocolate and butter, preferably with a bain-marie. When it has melted, add it gradually to the yellow/sugar while beating it until you have a shiny and smooth texture.

Take the white of the eggs and make them into snow with the help of a pinch of salt. Add gradually the rest of the sugar. It needs to be firm. Get one third of the snow, add it to the chocolate/ yellow base and stir delicately. Then add the second third and incorporate it very gently to not break the snow too much. Add the flour using a sieve and stir very gently. Add the last third of the snow while incorporating it very gently. Let it cook for 50 mins.

APERITIVO

If you are living in Italy you can not escape without experiencing an aperitivo night with your friends. An aperitivo is a small meal accompanied by some light alcoholic drinks such as spritz or light beers/wines before dinner. At La citta dell'Utopia we have been organizing several aperitivo for different events. This is a very famous recipe of small pizzas which was created by Ariane, Mattia and I for Julien's Jam session that was his personal project for ESC. Pizzettes are small pizzas that can be with different types of filling; in our case marinara (just tomato sauce and herbs), one with potatoes and one without any filling or as known in Italy Bianca (white pizza/pizzette).



Ingredients for the dough

1kg flour

700 ml warm water

1 tsp yeast

3 tsp sugar

1 small cup of olive oil

1 tsp of salt



Ingredients for the filling

500 ml Tomato sauce

200 gr of potatoes

sage

basil

oregano

olive oil

sat, pepper



Instructions

Prepare the dough by mixing flour, water and yeast, a bit of sugar, salt and olive oil and knead the dough, let it rest preferably overnight or minimum 3 hours. After that start making small balls of dough and make small pizzas. In the meantime, put tomato sauce in a bowl and add a bit of basil, oregano, salt and pepper. Slice the potatoes very finely and chop the sage, a bit of oregano. Divide some pizzas with tomato sauce, some with only potatoes and some with sage, oregano and olive oil. Bake them at the same time for 20 mins and serve them warm.





Farro the funky dish

Before I came to Italy, I had never heard of farro before.

It took some time for me to get used to it and explore different recipes of Farro. It's a very fresh grain that goes well mostly in summer dishes and you can create very healthy salads with it. This recipe was created with

Tanya, Julien and I, during many events that we organized in the summer. It is a very adaptable dish that you can change it by adding more ingredients, using seasonal veggies so that's why I love to call it a **FUNKY DISH** like these two volunteers who helped creating it and bringing joy to the kitchen and dish itself.

Ingredients

Ingredients

500 gr farro

200 gr red onion

200 gr olives

200 gr carrots

200 gr peppers

200 gr courgettes

parsley

basil

oregano

1 tsp vinegar

1 tsp pomegranate molasses

drizzle olive oil

salt, pepper



Instructions

In a pot boil farro with some salt according to the instructions on the package (usually 15 mins). Once it's cooked, take out the water and let it cool down. Dice in cubes all red onions, olives, carrots, peppers, courgettes. In a pan fry for 8 mins the courgettes with some olive oil, salt and pepper until it becomes slightly soft. Finely chop fresh parsley, basil and oregano. Toss everything in one bowl with rest of veggies, herbs and add vinegar, olive oil, pomegranate molasses, salt and pepper for your own taste. It goes very well with some lemon or lime too.



Patate al forno

This dish goes very well for aperitivo and it is very easy to make!



Ingredients

500 gr
potatoes
rosemary
sweet paprika
powder
salt, pepper
olive oil

Instructions

Peel and cut potatoes into chunky cubes. After peeling, wash them thoroughly with cold water and add them into a pan. Add olive oil based on how much you need and fresh rosemary (or powder one), sweet paprika powder, salt and pepper and bake it for 40 mins at 200 degrees. Please keep in mind that baking sometimes can depend on your oven so adjust the temperature according to your oven.

DRINKS

When it comes to drinks, La citta dell'Utopia has been always serving sustainably produced wine, beer and coffee. Although during my volunteering year we haven't created much drinks, we have one amazing recipe by our volunteer who used to make this drink in wintery cold days. Its crucial to mention that we distribute Tatawelo Cafe, a coffee sustainably produced and fairly traded by Zapatista Indigenous Communities of Chapas in Mexico. The alcoholic drinks we serve are sustainable wine locally produced in Italy and artisanal beer which was inciated by Staffetta Sanitaria di Rete Kurdistan Italia, a network of people and associations which supports health system in Rojava.



Vin brule

Vin brule or mulled wine, was always made by Vesna (long term volunteer) as she has a huge passion for wine. This drink is perfect for cold winter days to warm up and also has very low alcohol content since it will boil for at least 30 mins.



Ingredients

- 1 l red wine
- 100 gr sugar
- 2 oranges
- 2 apples
- 1 lemon
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 star anise

Instructions

Cut the oranges, lemon and apples, put the cinnamon stick, star anise in a saucepan and add sugar. Add the wine and let it boil for 30 mins on medium heat. Once boiled, take out the fruits and spices and serve it hot.

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