

10 Recipes from Stanley Tucci's 'Searching for Italy'

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April 2, 2021

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Get an Italy fix with these 10 recipes for dishes featured on Stanley Tucci's 'Searching for Italy.'



Missing Stanley Tucci's *Searching for Italy*? We understand. For six weeks straight, the [actor and author](#) transported viewers to Italy, uncovering history, humanity, and culture through the lens of food.

While we've got you covered for [all the places to hit up on your next trip](#), we realize that a trip to Italy might be on hold for the foreseeable future – but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy the dishes that dazzled Tucci's palate in *il bel paese*. Here are 10 recipes from Stanley Tucci's *Searching for Italy* that you can make at home.

1. Spaghetti alla Nerano

Here's our [spaghetti alla Nerano recipe](#), the spaghetti with fried zucchini he enjoyed at Lo Scoglio on the Amalfi Coast during the episode dedicated to Campania. [Plus some tips for perfecting the dish](#).

2. Tagliatelle al ragù

This meat sauce (which some might refer to as bolognese) tossed with silky ribbons of fresh tagliatelle is an indisputable Italian classic. In the Emilia-Romagna episode, Tucci enjoys it at Casa Artusi, named for the late and great [Pellegrino Artusi](#). Here's our [tagliatelle al ragù recipe](#).

3, 4, and 5. Roman pasta trinity: Cacio e Pepe, Amatriciana, and Carbonara

Cacio e pepe, amatriciana, and carbonara comprise the [holy Roman pasta trinity](#), and Tucci samples all three during the Rome episode. Here are our recipes for [cacio e pepe](#), [amatriciana](#), and [carbonara](#).

6. Pasta alla Norma

This pasta with tomatoes, fried eggplant, and [ricotta salata](#) cheese is one of Sicily's most beloved dishes – and one of the most simple to recreate at home. Here's our [pasta alla norma recipe](#).

7. Cotoletta alla Milanese

The Milanese-style veal cutlet is a must-eat in Milan. During the Lombardy episode, Tucci visits Ratanà restaurant where he prepares the dish with chef [Cesare Battisti](#). Here's our [cotoletta alla Milanese recipe](#).

8. Cacciucco alla Livornese

When in Tuscany, Tucci sampled this historic fish stew from the port city of Livorno, and it stole his heart. Here you'll find our [cacciucco alla Livornese recipe](#).

9. Bistecca alla Fiorentina

In the final Tuscany-themed episode, Tucci enjoys *bistecca alla Fiorentina*, the traditional Florence-style steak, with chef Fabio Picchi. Here's you'll find our [bistecca alla Fiorentina recipe](#) along with some [tips for perfecting the steak](#).

10. Delizia al Limone

Here's [Sal de Riso's recipe for Delizia al Limone](#), an exquisite representation of the Amalfi Coast in the dessert form. The region's storied lemons, [Limone Costa d'Amalfi PGI](#), are what makes the dessert so particular – if you can't find them, Meyer lemons are a nifty substitute.

Spaghetti alla Nerano



Pasta alla Nerano is a Campania dish invented in the Mariagrazia restaurant, in Nerano in 1952. The traditional recipe calls for a few simple and delicious ingredients such as spaghetti, fried zucchini and provolone cheese.

Cooks in: 50mins

Levels: *Medium*

Serves: 4

LIST OF INGREDIENTS

- 20 OZ. of zucchini
- 12 OZ. of spaghetti
- 6 OZ. of Provolone cheese
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 bunch basil leaves
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt
- Pepper

METHOD

1

Thinly slice the zucchini. Fry the pieces in plenty of hot oil, a few slices at a time. They're done as soon as they turn a golden shade. Drain them on a paper towel as they are ready. Sprinkle the zucchini with torn [basil](#) leaves, finely grate the provolone, and set it aside.

2

Cook the spaghetti in salted boiling water and strain once [al dente](#), setting aside two ladlefuls of the cooking water.

3

Sauté the garlic clove in a pan with a bit of oil. Remove the garlic and add the zucchini, spaghetti, 1 ladleful of the cooking water, and half the provolone.

4

Finish cooking the pasta over low heat, adding the second ladleful of water gradually along with the remaining provolone, mixing until it forms a creamy sauce.

5

Serve immediately with a generous amount of freshly ground pepper.

Spaghetti alla Nerano is so much more than [pasta with fried zucchini](#). It's made with Provolone del Monaco, a cheese that melts into the pasta to add more flavor to the dish.

A staple of the cuisine of [Campania](#), Spaghetti alla Nerano was invented in 1952 at [Ristorante Maria Grazia Nerano](#). The recipe calls for classic spaghetti as the sauce wraps around it to perfection, but it's also nice with short pasta.



Provolone del Monaco has nothing to do with the principality on the French Riviera that's less than a half-hour from the Italian border. It's so-called

because centuries ago, cheesemakers would sell their product in Naples. They'd arrive from the countryside at dawn draped in sackcloth cloaks that resembled the attire of monks – hence the name “del monaco.”

This semi-hard provolone is a *pasta filata* (stretched curd) cheese that's aged and produced in the Sorrento Peninsula with raw milk.

Spaghetti alla Nerano recipe

The recipe for [spaghetti alla Nerano](#) is straightforward and also quick to make. Instead of quantities, you can just use your judgment and measure by eye. First, thinly slice the zucchini. Taste a raw piece before frying – only use the zucchini if it's sweet. If it has a bitter aftertaste, don't use as it will ruin the dish.

Once fried, drain and dry them with paper towels.

In the meantime, bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add salt. Cook the spaghetti until al dente. Drizzle a saute pan with olive oil and cook two cloves of garlic in the pan.

Drain the al dente pasta and set aside some of the cooking water.

Remove the garlic from the pan and finish cooking the spaghetti in the saute pan with the oil.

Add a few knobs of butter and then the zucchini.

Finish with grated provolone cheese. (If you can't find Provolone del Monaco, just use regular provolone).

Top with fresh basil and serve.

Spaghetti alla Nerano: Mistakes to avoid

Choose small and sweet zucchini and be careful not to burn them.

Fry them in hot extra virgin olive oil (never seed oil!), and don't let them darken too much.

If you need to replace the provolone with another cheese, we suggest caciocavallo, otherwise, the result won't be the same.

This spaghetti should be served hot otherwise it will lose its creaminess.

Please pay attention to the cooking water, it is essential to keep it aside for the *risottare* of the pasta.

Don't skip the fresh basil garnish. It adds fragrance and color.

Tagliatelle (al Ragù) Bolognese



Bolognese ragù is said to have originated in the 16th century in the wealthy courts of noble families, according to Lynne Rossetto Kasper, author of *The Italian Country Table*.

The first evidence of the use of ragù in pasta, and not as a main course, was by [Pellegrino Artusi](#). Although it is difficult to identify an "original" recipe for the meat sauce, the Italian Academy of Cuisine's Bolognese delegation [officially defined the recipe](#) in its most "authentic" form at the Bologna Chamber of Commerce in 1982. Though, as is the case with most recipes, they vary from family to family, so not necessarily adhering to the "rules" doesn't render a preparation any less meaningful or delicious.

Pasta selection is also essential for the success of the dish, only second to the sauce. Any cook (amateur or not) from Bologna and its surroundings will tell

you that the pasta meant for Bolognese ragù is undoubtedly [tagliatelle](#) – better yet, one made from egg as it's more porous and therefore perfect for soaking up the sauce. And if you have any sauce leftover, don't be shy... scoop it up with some bread and *fare la scarpetta!*

Tagliatelle Bolognese

Skill Level: Medium

Time: 3 hours and 30 minutes

Ingredients for 4

1 lb. fresh egg tagliatelle

3/4 lb. ground beef

1/3 lb. pancetta

1 1/4 cups puréed tomato passata

3/4 cup beef broth

2 carrots

2 celery stalks

1/2 small onion

1/2 cup red (or dry white) wine

1/2 cup milk

extra-virgin olive oil

salt – pepper

Directions:

Chop the pancetta. Trim the celery, carrots, and onion, and mince them all into fine pieces.

Heat a pan with a drizzle of oil, sauté the pancetta, add the vegetables and gently sweat until soft.

Add the meat and sauté for 5 minutes.

Add 1/2 cup wine and allow to completely evaporate.

Add the tomato passata and stir for a few minutes. Add 1/2 cup milk and cover with the broth.

Cook the meat sauce for 2-3 hours, adding more broth every now and then while adjusting the seasoning.

Cook the tagliatelle in salted boiling water for 3-4 minutes, drain and serve with generous amounts of sauce.

Buon appetito!

Cacio e Pepe Spaghetti



Cacio e pepe pasta is an iconic Roman pasta. From saucy and luscious to dense and dry, no one is the same. Deceivingly simple, the secret to this dish is in the 'cremina' cheesy sauce.

Cooks in: *15mins*

Levels: *Easy*

Serves: *4*

LIST OF INGREDIENTS

- 12 OZ. of spaghetti
- 4 OZ. of Pecorino Romano
- salt
- black peppercorns
-

METHOD

1

Bring water to a boil in a large pot and season with salt. Add the [spaghetti](#) and cook until al dente.

2

Meanwhile, grate the Pecorino Romano to a fine powder and grind plenty of black pepper in a serving bowl, where you will toss the pasta.

3

Drain the spaghetti reserving 1 cup of cooking water. Transfer to the bowl with 2 small ladles of cooking water (around 1/2 cup) to help melt the cheese and create the sauce. Immediately add the Pecorino Romano, stirring quickly with a wooden spoon until the cheese is completely melted.

4

Top with extra Pecorino Romano and black pepper to taste and serve immediately

Best Bucatini all'Amatriciana



Bucatini all'Amatriciana is a Roman trattoria staple. Its origins lie outside of the capital in the town of Amatrice, hence the name. Although the main ingredients are Pecorino Romano, guanciale and tomato, no one recipe is the same..

Cooks in: 1h

Levels: *Easy*

Serves: 6

LIST OF INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. bucatini
- 7 oz. guanciale (salt-cured pork jowl)
- 1 lb. onions, sliced
- 1 lb. tomatoes, peeled
- Pecorino Romano, grated

- dry white wine
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed
- extra-virgin olive oil
- salt
- pepper
- red chili pepper

METHOD

1. Scoprite con noi come si prepara il più e classico e buono dei piatti di bucatini all'amatriciana. Eliminare la cotenna del guanciale | e tagliarlo prima a fette, poi a bastoncini. | Soffriggere i bastoncini in casseruola con l'olio e uno spicchio di aglio schiacciato. | Quando l'aglio sarà imbiandito, eliminarlo e aggiungere peperoncino a piacere e la cipolla a fettine. Farla appassire, quindi sfumare con il vino bianco secco, alzando un po' il fuoco per farlo evaporare. | Una volta evaporato il vino, unire i pomodori freschi, privati della pelle e tagliati a spicchi. Coperchiare e cuocere per 50' circa (i tempi però variano secondo il grado di maturazione dei pomodori).
 - Discover with us how to prepare the most classic and good of bucatini all'amatriciana dishes. Remove the rind from the bacon | and cut it first into slices, then into sticks. | Sauté the sticks in a saucepan with oil and a clove of crushed garlic. | When the garlic is golden, remove it and add the chili pepper to taste and the sliced onion. Let it dry, then deglaze with the dry white wine, raising the heat a little to allow it to evaporate. | Once the wine has evaporated, add the fresh tomatoes, skinned and cut into wedges. Cover and cook for about 50 '(however times vary according to the degree of ripeness of the tomatoes).
2. Lessare i bucatini, scolarli al dente, rimetterli nella casseruola calda e condirli subito con il sugo. Servirli immediatamente con il pecorino grattugiato e una macinata di pepe.
 - Boil the bucatini, drain them al dente, put them back in the hot casserole and dress them immediately with the sauce. Serve immediately with the grated pecorino and a grind of pepper.

Classic Carbonara Recipe



A plateful of pasta [carbonara](#) can transport you to a Roman trattoria. Made with just a few ingredients, it's simple to recreate at home. Read on for the classic carbonara recipe.

Let's start with the ingredients to make carbonara

To do as the Romans do, pick up some [guanciale](#) and [Pecorino Romano cheese](#). If you can't find them, just substitute bacon and [Parmigiano Reggiano](#). In regard to pasta, the classic shape is tonnarelli, a long pasta, but spaghetti, mezze maniche, and [rigatoni](#) also work well. And don't forget the eggs and freshly ground black pepper.

Classic Carbonara Recipe

4 Servings

Ingredients:

12 oz. tonnarelli, spaghetti, mezze maniche or rigatoni

4 oz. guanciale or rindless bacon

1/4 cup grated Pecorino Romano (or Parmigiano Reggiano)

4 fresh large egg yolks

salt

black pepper

Method:

Cut the guanciale into ¼" layers, then into long, 2" strips.

Combine the egg yolks with the grated cheese and a pinch of black pepper.

Brown the strips of guanciale for 2 minutes in a pan, until crisp, then turn off the heat and leave to cool.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add salt. Cook the pasta, setting aside a ladleful of the pasta cooking water, until al dente. Drain.

Pour the reserved hot water into the frying pan with the cooled guanciale, then transfer the pasta to the same pan and mix together. Add the yolk and cheese mixture, stirring rapidly.

In the warm pan with the hot pasta, the eggs will cook gently and become creamy – don't stir over heat otherwise the carbonara will become lumpy. It's important to stir quickly to prevent the yolks from congealing and taking on the texture of scrambled eggs.

Season with freshly milled black pepper and serve immediately on heated plates.

The Ins and Outs of Pasta alla Norma



Eggplant, tomatoes, basil, and ricotta salata – these four ingredients are the fundamentals of pasta alla norma, a dish that originated in Catania, a city on [Sicily](#)'s west coast.

So, who's Norma? It's said that Catanese composer, playwright, and poet Nino Martoglio (1870 -1921) was so impressed by the pasta that he called it Norma after fellow Catania native Vincenzo Bellini's opera. Legend says that Martoglio exclaimed, “*Chista è ‘na vera Norma!*” (This is a true Norma!)

Another tale dates back further, stating that the pasta was created for *Norma*'s opening night, which premiered on December 26, 1831.

Pasta alla Norma Tips

1. Before frying the [eggplant](#), cut it into slices or strips. Place them in a colander, sprinkle with coarse salt, and press under a weight for 30 minutes. This lets the salt draw water from the eggplant which extracts some of its naturally bitter flavor. After draining, rinse the eggplant slices then dry them one by one with paper towels.
2. When frying the eggplant, use only [extra-virgin olive oil](#). After frying, don't wash the pot – pour out the oil then cook the tomatoes in the same pot.
3. Use fresh [tomatoes](#). Prepare them in advance by cooking them in a little water and then running them through a food mill.
4. Staunch traditionalists won't use any cheese except [ricotta salata](#), which is made from sheep's milk. If you can't find it or you're just not into it, substitute [Pecorino](#) and/or [Parmigiano](#).

The Simple Pleasure of Ricotta Salata

It's still [ricotta](#), but doesn't have the classic soft texture. Ricotta salata is hard and is therefore southern Italians often grate it over different dishes, such as *pasta alla norma*, the tomato and fried eggplant pasta typical of Sicily. Conical in shape, the cheese is made from leftover whey, which is heated again to 185-195°F (hence the name, ricotta means “recooked”).

A recooked dairy product

When whey protein reaches 195°F, it separates from the curds, which rise to the surface. At this point, the remaining curds are collected and stored in small containers to create ricotta, which is left to cool and then sprinkled with coarse salt. Ricotta treated in this way then rests for up to 30 days. The paste hardens and the salt accelerates the dehydration process, leading the ricotta to lose up to 50% of its liquids.

Sheep's milk

Ricotta salata is made mainly from sheep's milk, which has much more fat than and twice as much protein as cow's milk.

Ricotta salata in the kitchen

The versatile ricotta salata enhances the flavor of pasta and vegetable first courses. As mentioned, it's always grated over a plate of pasta alla Norma, but it can also add a special touch to a simple dish of spaghetti with tomato sauce and basil as well as a savory [zucchini](#) and pancetta pie. Ricotta salata also enhances the flavor of cannelloni and baked pasta if grated in large amounts, and is perfect on any vegetable, whether sautéed or au gratin.

How to Cook a Milanese Cotoletta to Perfection



The origins of the *cotoletta alla Milanese*, a staple of [Lombardy](#) cuisine, are still not entirely clear. The debate has always been whether the Milanese cotoletta or Wiener Schnitzel came first, but it's said that the dish actually originated in France. A recipe from 1735 and the 1749 book *The Science of a Maître d'Hôtel* both mention breaded and fried cutlets. When they reached Milan, they were called "Cutlets of the French Revolution." (From Milan, it likely went to Austria.)

The main difference is that the meat for the Milanese cutlet is marinated in melted butter, salt, pepper, cloves, and herbs before being passed in flour, egg, and bread crumbs. Regardless, the Milanese cotoletta is a meat dish that is anything but overlooked on the menus of the best restaurants in Lombardy (and beyond).

Yet despite the numerous variations around, it has one and only one identity. The real Milanese cotoletta consists of a bone-in veal loin just over half an inch thick – all others are imitations.

And before breading it, you should make small incisions in the meat with a sharp knife, slicing along the connective edge to make sure it doesn't curl over while cooking.

Ingredients

- 4 veal chops, such as bone-in rib eye
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup (125 grams) breadcrumbs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (6 ounces or 170 grams) clarified butter

Directions

1. Pat the veal chops well with kitchen paper so they are as dry as possible. In a shallow bowl, crack the eggs and beat. In another bowl, place the breadcrumbs.
2. Dip the chops in the beaten egg, letting any excess egg drip off before placing in the breadcrumbs to coat entirely. Pat down the breadcrumbs well. Rest in fridge for at least 30 minutes.
3. Place the clarified butter in a skillet over medium heat. Fry the chops until golden brown. Turn the chops once and continue frying until cooked through, about 6-8 minutes per side. You may need to cook just two chops at a time; if doing this, use half the butter for each pair of chops.
4. Remove from the pan and place on a wire rack to rest the meat. You may want to place it somewhere to keep warm, such as in a low oven (or an oven that was heated and then turned off), but do not cover it or place it directly on a plate as it will become soggy. Season with salt and serve warm with a wedge of lemon if desired.

Cacciucco alla Livornese Recipe



If you caught the Tuscany episode of Stanley Tucci's *Searching for Italy*, you'll know that *Cacciucco alla Livornese* is so much more than fish soup. The recipe captures the flavor and spirit of Livorno, a port city in Tuscany, located on the spot where the border between the Tyrrhenian and Ligurian Seas is blurry.

The hearty fish stew dates back 500 years and like most old-school Italian dishes, was created to prevent unused fish scraps from going to waste, but nowadays recipes also call for fine finfish and shellfish. While preparations vary, cacciucco always bursts with flavor from the tomatoes, garlic, white wine, chili peppers, and fresh herbs that cook with the seafood.

Our recipe for cacciucco alla Livornese follows. The beauty of cooking is that it's ever-evolving, so you can use this as a guide to creating your own. To uphold Livornese tradition, though, just make sure to use at least five different types of fish – one for each “c” in its name.

Cacciucco is not one of those stews where all the ingredients are added at one time, then it sits and cooks for hours. You have to pay attention to the cooking times, starting with firm fish then adding softer fish later. It's always ladled on top of a toasted slice of garlic-rubbed bread, which is placed in the bowl just before serving.

Cacciucco alla Livornese

Ingredients for 6

Time 2 hours

2 lb. scorpionfish

1 lb. tub gurnard

1 lb. cuttlefish

1 lb. goatfish

10 oz. rockfish

8 oz. angler

7 oz. smooth-hound

7 oz. octopus

6 thick slices of bread

6 shrimp

1 onion

1 carrot
1 celery stalk
2 lb. tomatoes
1 cup dry white wine
parsley garlic
fresh chilli pepper
extra-virgin olive oil
salt

Fillet the scorpionfish, tub gurnards, and – if you want – the goatfish. Scale and remove the bones from the fillets, clean the cuttlefish, octopus, and shrimp. Set the scraps aside. Chop the celery, carrot, and onion, lightly fry them in a wide pan with 4-5 Tbsp. olive oil, add the chopped cuttlefish and octopus, wine, and 1 cup water. Simmer for 20 minutes, remove the cuttlefish and octopus, and set aside.





Add the tomatoes, chilli pepper to taste, fish scraps, the goatfish (if you filleted it, add the fishbones and keep the fillets for later), and the rockfish. Cook for 30 minutes, adding water if necessary.

Filter and place back over the

heat.



Add the cuttlefish and octopus, then the rest of the fish from the less to the most tender every 10 minutes – scorpionfish and angler, smoothhound, tub gurnards, and the shrimp (and goatfish fillets), which will cook in 5 minutes. Season with salt and add the chopped parsley. Toast the bread slices, flavor them

with a garlic clove and place one in every bowl. Pour the soup into the bowl and serve.



Florentine Steak



Florentine steak is undoubtedly one of Florence's gastronomic jewels! If you love meat, you should definitely try this fantastic recipe.

Cooks in: *20mins*

Levels: *Easy*

Serves: *4*

LIST OF INGREDIENTS

- 2 of Florentine steaks (3 lb each)
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt
- Pepper

METHOD

1

Sprinkle both sides of the meat with a drizzle of high-quality extra-virgin olive oil. Place the steaks on a red-hot grill and roast over a very high heat for 3-5 minutes – depending on how you like your steak cooked. (A true Florentine steak must be rare, however.)

2

Then turn them over and salt; continue cooking for another 3-5 minutes. Rotate them once more to salt the other side.

3

Once the steaks have finished cooking, let the meat rest for a few minutes before cutting it, so that its juices are redistributed inside. Transfer to the serving dishes and season with a drizzle of oil, ground pepper and some roasted porcini mushrooms, potatoes or cannellini beans (depending on personal preference).

How to Cook a Bistecca alla Fiorentina to Perfection

Bring a taste of Florence to your table with some tips for cooking your steak Florentine.

In essence, grilled steak, or *bistecca*, is simple to make, but it's also easy to botch. here are some tips to cook yours perfectly, [Florence](#)-style.

Perfect cooking for every steak cut

Hardcore meat lovers prefer their steak rare, and its cooking time depends not only on personal taste but also on the meat cut. Those from the lower back or ribs cook quickly while the neck and round cuts need a longer cooking time. A true *bistecca alla fiorentina* is a cut of Chianina loin with a T-shaped bone in the middle that divides the tenderloin from the sirloin. It's cooked very little over live embers, 3 minutes per side and then 5 minutes standing on the bone. It should have a nice crust on the outside, but inside it is red, soft, and juicy.

Tips for a perfect steak

Cooking meat is an art, one that's based on chemistry. A theory called Maillard's reaction is a chemical reaction responsible for the crust that forms



around the steak. Once the meat reaches 284°F, sugars start reacting with the proteins and amino acids. Make sure you bring the steak to room temperature before cooking it over high heat and on a hot pan or grill. Also, don't overfill the grill or pan. This risks lowering the temperature too much.

Secondly, dry the teaks with paper towels. Humidity doesn't jive well with the Maillard reaction and it can adversely affect the crust. Do not worry if you have some strands of fat from the meat: melting in cooking will help to have a soft and tasty steak.

Salting the meat only after cooking is an urban legend. On the contrary, salt the pan before placing the meat, it will then help to detach it better. Do not add salt to it while marinating or long before cooking it.

The meat should only be turned once, but some choose to turn it every 30-60 seconds with a spatula so as not to pierce it to keep the temperature of the steak constant on both sides.

After cooking, cover the meat with aluminum foil and let sit for 5-10 minutes so that the juices and flavors sit and intensify. We know that the scent is irresistible, which makes the wait even more worth it.

The Lemon Dessert That Will Transport You to the Amalfi Coast



The Delizia al Limone dessert pretty much tastes like the Amalfi Coast on a fork.

Delizia al Limone is [Sal De Riso](#)'s most famous dessert, but the renowned Italian pastry chef didn't actually invent it. It was created for the first time in 1978 by Carmine Marzuillo, a pastry chef from the [Amalfi Coast](#), and immediately became one of the most popular and appreciated [desserts](#) in [Campania](#). Then Sal De Riso made them even more famous. Here's the recipe so you can try it at home.

Sal De Riso's Delizia al Limone

For the assembly:

Sponge cake

Lemon cream

Custard cream

Whipped cream (infused with lemon zest)

Limoncello Sal de Riso

Limoncello water

Lemon glaze

For the sponge cake:

4 large eggs

1 large egg yoks

4 oz sugar

2¹/₂ oz flour

2¹/₂ oz cornstarch

1 Bourbon Island vanilla bean

1 grated lemon

Beat the eggs with the sugar, grated lemon and vanilla bean. Combine the flour and sifted starch; pour ingredients into 8-10 cm diameter silicone baking molds. Bake at 320°F (160°C) for 8-10 minutes.



Delizia al Limone (ph Pasticceria Sal De Riso - Minori via facebook)

For the lemon cream:

3 oz. egg yolks

3 oz. sugar

3 oz. Amalfi Coast lemon juice

¾ stick unsalted butter

1 Bourbon Island vanilla bean

Mix the sugar with the egg yolks. Boil the lemon juice, add it to the yolks and cook until it reaches a temperature of 175°F (80°C). Let cool and add the (softened) butter. Mix to combine.

For the lemon-infused cream:

1 lb heavy whipping cream

Peel of 3 lemons

Allow the peels of 3 lemons to infuse with 1 lb of heavy whipping cream in the refrigerator for at least 5 hours. Then strain and whip until stiff peaks form when it's time to assemble the dessert.

For the custard cream:

6 oz milk

3 oz heavy cream

3 oz egg yolks

3 oz sugar

¾ oz cornstarch

1 Bourbon Island vanilla bean

1 pinch salt

Peel of 3 lemons

Boil the milk and cream with the vanilla bean and the peel of three lemons. Mix the egg yolks with the sugar, starch and salt. Add the boiling milk and heavy cream. Cook the cream and let it cool.

For the Amalfitano Limoncello water:

3 oz water

3 oz sugar

5 oz limoncello

The peel of 1 lemon, thinly sliced

Boil the water with the sugar and lemon peel, cool and add the limoncello.

For the filling:

1 lb custard cream

10 oz lemon cream

11 oz lemon-infused whipped cream

For the lemon glaze:

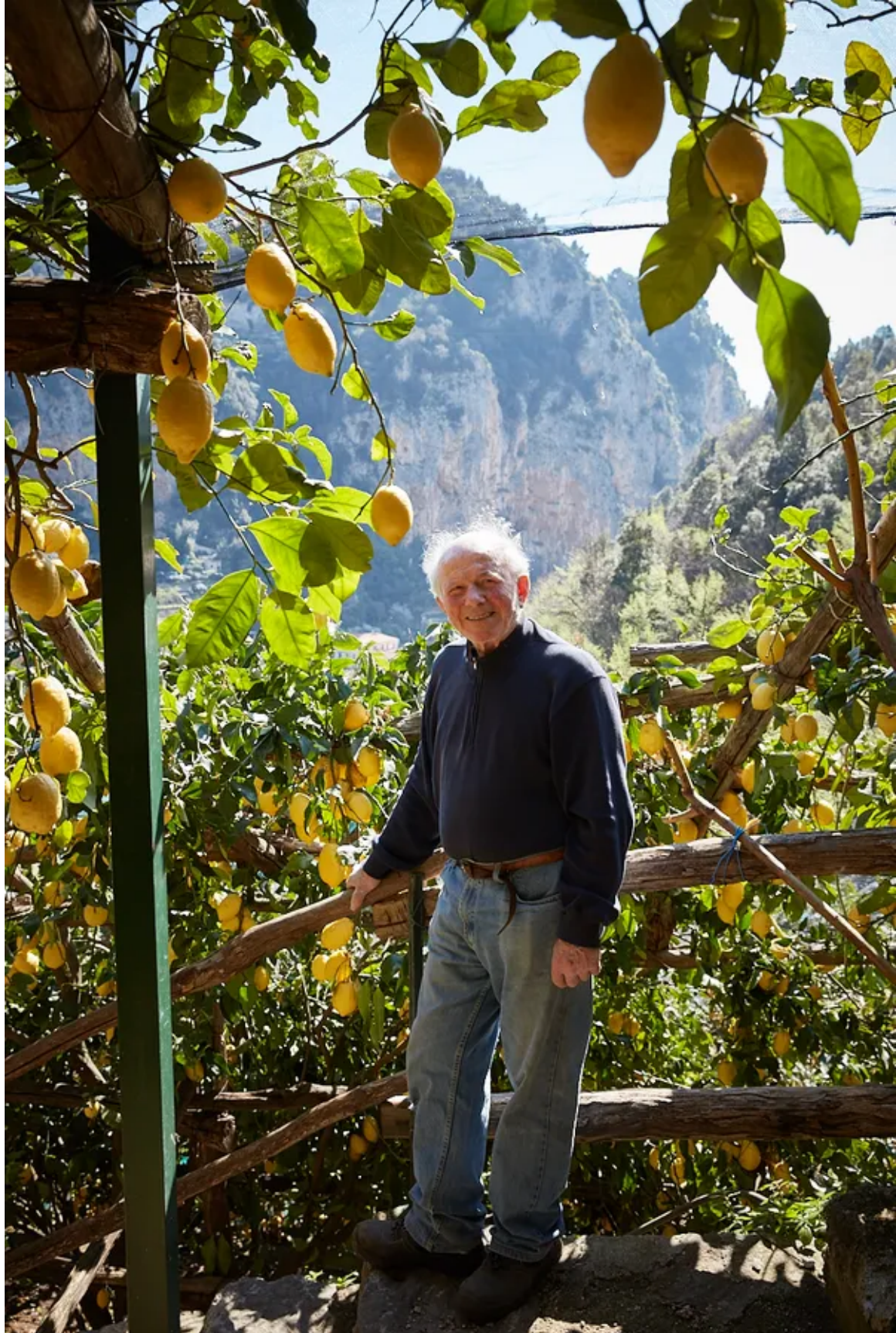
Mix some lemon-infused whipped cream and a little milk to dilute it. Use this mixture to glaze the dessert. Finish with a dollop of whipped cream and julienned lemon peel.

The Lemons of the Amalfi Coast

A day with the Aceto family, who've been harvesting lemons on the Amalfi Coast since 1825.

Lemon farming on the [Amalfi Coast](#) has always been linked to the Aceto family, who have been operating for five generations. "Salvatore Quasimodo, do you know what he said? That we Amalfitans don't notice when we go to Paradise because we've already spent a lifetime there." Luigino Aceto (known as Gigino) is 84 years old, and he laughs as he freely quotes the Sicilian poet who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1959.

Along with his two sons, Gigino Aceto is the owner of [Azienda Agricola Salvatore Aceto](#), the renowned farm founded in 1825 by Gigino's ancestor. Nowadays, they are specialized in the organic cultivation of a particular type of lemon, the *Sfusato Amalfitano*, unique in the world for the quality and organoleptic characteristics – also known as *L'Oro di Amalfi*.



Luigino Aceto (ph Sabrina Rossi)

Today, it's my turn. I'm on my way with Gigino Aceto to pick lemons at sunrise, sporting a leather belt equipped with shears. Gigino lists the various types of lemons he cultivates, like a grandfather citing the names of his grandchildren. The majority of the production concerns the Lemons Costa d'Amalfi PGI in the varieties: *Sfusato Amalfitano*, *Zagara Bianca*, *Verdello*. There are also the *Cedro Profumato d'Amalfi*, the *Ponziro*, and the *Limone Gigante*.



Sara Tieni picking lemons (ph Sabrina Rossi)

We begin to work in this Garden of Eden by moving the chestnut poles used to build the pergolas that help the trees rest their branches while also sheltering them from the elements. The lemon trees must be carefully supervised, protected with plastic sheets from hailstorms. "Here, there are grafted plants

up to 280 years old. When one of them dies, we mourn. On the other hand, there 500-year-old lemon trees in another grove, 230-feet high, overlooking the port of Amalfi."



The Amalfi Lemons (ph Sabrina Rossi)

We move to the upper grove to admire the rare giant lemons that are almost as large as melons. Though the view is breathtaking, there's no room for distraction. Lemon farming on the [Amalfi Coast](#) has been rightly defined as *Agricoltura Eroica* (Heroic agriculture) because all the cultivation is located on vertical soils, which thin out from the hills of the Lattari Mountains to the sea.

"The lemon trees must be continually cleared of wild grass," Gigino chimes in, inviting me to imitate him. I raise my gaze and above me, I see rows of



intertwined branches laden with ready-to-pick lemons. I start by dressing properly because "you have to protect yourself from thorns," Gigino warns me, showing me the "war" wounds on his head and hands. He treats them with lemon juice. "It's miraculous," although, he admits, a little painful. A very personal homeopathic remedy valid for everything, "including stomach problems," he adds.

Smiling and dusty, Gigino is a true local legend: it's no

coincidence that he was named a "Living Heritage of Humanity" by the European University Center for Cultural Heritage in 2018. This man is a treasure within a treasure - the Amalfi Coast is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Aceto family is the promoter and founder of the Consortium for the Protection of the Amalfi Coast IGP Lemon, which is dedicated to "promoting and disseminating this product's unique characteristics of excellence among consumers, traders, professionals, media and tour operators. " For his numerous activities in the field of *limonicultura*, Gigino Aceto has been awarded the titles of Official Knight of the Republic and *Cavaliere del Lavoro* (Order of the Merit for Labor).

But I shouldn't be distracted: the branches have to be pruned now. The *passata*, or harvesting of the largest fruits, begins in February and continues until August or September. Once the fruit is loaded into the baskets, we place them in boxes that reach the valley via a pulley system. I'm thirsty, so they give me a *limone scoperchiato*, which is a lemon stripped of its pulp and filled with water and wine — "the pickers use it as a glass," I am told. They also eat the peel, which is sweet and aromatic as soon as it is picked. Balancing on a ladder, I pick fruit the entire morning.



Chef Stanzione with Sara Tieni (ph Sabrina Rossi)

Where will all those glorious lemons end up? From Limoncello, the Amalfi Coast's signature liqueur, to all over the world. I hand over part of the harvest to Giuseppe Stanzione, the chef at another Amalfi institution, the five-star luxury hotel [Santa Caterina](#). With a spectacular view of the Gulf of Salerno,

Santa Caterina was founded in 1904 by the Gambardella family, famous hoteliers on the Coast. This magical place was recently enriched by a plantation of 500 lemon trees and a vegetable garden, both organic. Here, Amalfi Coast lemons are definitely the star of the table: *Tagliolini Bianchi e Neri al Limone Amalfitano* has been on the menu of Glicine, the hotel's gourmet restaurant, for over 40 years. Lemon zest, pulp, and juice are also used in the [Al Mare](#) restaurant's delicious dishes. Located on a terrace, the restaurant is so close to the water that you can smell not only the perfume of the *Sfusati* lemons but also the aroma sapphire blue of the sea.