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Foreword

It's seven o'clock on any night at Carlow Cookery in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, and cooking classes have begun. An assemblage of culinary enthusiasts—novice to advanced—sit around the chef, who sets the stage for tonight's topic. The participants are eager to learn, prepare, and taste whatever the class is offering.

The focus could be on the techniques of international cooking, or maybe terrific tapas. The class might cover knife skills (that's one that I need to continually enroll in). My favorite class would demonstrate fantastic wine and food pairings. All this and more, under the tutelage of the chef who orchestrates it all: Denis Chiappa. It was in the last of these classes that I had the good fortune to meet, and ultimately work with, Denis.

We met through a mutual friend who wanted to couple my wine knowledge with Denis's food expertise. He thought we would make a fun and informative team of food and beverage educators at his store, Carlow Cookery. Denis and his business partner, Liam Keegan, had built a fabulous demonstration kitchen smack-dab in the middle of their fine retail culinary establishment. Many years prior, they had facilitated numerous culinary classes as the food scene was exploding with popularity. Their reputation soared. I was honored to be a small part of their success.

When wine became America's beverage of choice in the last decade, Denis had the foresight to integrate wine classes into the schedule. These themed classes paired regional wines with Denis's recipes, much to the delight of his customers. These classes are—and continue to be—some of the most enjoyable hours of my life.

And although the wines were usually delightful and thought-provoking, it was Denis's food that was consistently recognized and praised. I learned so much from him—everything from how to make a simple beurre blanc sauce to the proper roasting of a turkey. The chorus of requests to share his recipes after class was constant, always ending with a rousing ovation for the chef.

Now you can enjoy some of Denis's favorite recipes in his first cookbook. These recipes will be a valuable resource for you, and I can guarantee that each and every dish you make from Denis's repertoire will be delicious. Yes, this is his first cookbook, but I don't think it will be his last!

Cheers,
Mike Conti
Wine Educator - From Stem to Learn
Wine Consultant – Vintage Imports

Charred-Tomato, Goat-Cheese, and Anchovy Bruschetta

This recipe is a perfect example of how good-quality ingredients can be simply prepared and still be delicious. Make sure the plum tomatoes are ripe but still firm and the goat cheese is fresh. Spanish (white) anchovies are preserved in oil, vinegar, and herbs, yielding a more delicate texture than traditional anchovies. They can be found in the refrigerated section of gourmet and specialty shops. **Serves 8**

- 6 ripe plum tomatoes, halved crosswise
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for griddle
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh oregano
- sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 baguette, sliced
- 3 ounces fresh goat cheese, crumbled
- 10 Spanish anchovy fillets, chopped

- ☞ Place a well-seasoned cast-iron griddle on the grill and preheat to medium heat. Brush with oil.
- ☞ Place the tomatoes cut-side down on the griddle. Cook until charred and softened, 5–7 minutes. (Do not turn or try to move them.) Remove from griddle, transfer to a cutting board, and let cool.
- ☞ Chop the tomatoes and transfer to a mixing bowl. Stir in the vinegar, oregano, and 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.
- ☞ Remove the griddle from the grill. Brush the baguettes with the remaining olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill the bread, turning once, until it is nicely toasted and the edges are charred.
- ☞ Serve the grilled bread topped with the tomatoes, goat cheese, and anchovies.

Spanish-Style Meatballs

I fell in love with *albondigas*, a version of meatballs often enjoyed at tapas bars throughout Spain, from the first bite. Unlike their Italian counterparts, these tasty treats are simmered in a rich brown stock that has just a touch of tomato. Soaking the bread in milk before adding it to the filling keeps the meatballs moist and tender as they cook. *Makes 24 meatballs*

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| 2 tablespoons | olive oil |
| 1 | small onion, minced |
| 1 | carrot, minced |
| 2 | garlic cloves, thinly sliced |
| 2 tablespoons | flour |
| 1/2 cup | dry white wine |
| 3 cups | brown stock |
| 1/4 cup | tomato sauce |
| | sea salt and freshly ground pepper |
| 3 1/2 ounces | Italian bread, crusts removed |
| 1/3 cup | whole milk |
| 1 pound | ground beef (80%/20% mix) |
| 1 tablespoon | finely chopped parsley |
| 2 cloves | garlic, finely chopped |
| 2 | egg yolks |
| 1/4 cup | vegetable oil, or as needed, for frying |
| 1/4 cup | finely chopped fresh cilantro |
| | crusty bread |

- Bring a saucepan to medium heat and add the olive oil. Cook the onion, carrot, and garlic until light golden brown. Add the flour and cook 1 minute. Add the wine and cook until thickened. Add the stock and tomato sauce; bring to a simmer and cook until flavors combine and the sauce is thickened, about 20 minutes.
- Soak the bread in the milk; gently squeeze out any excess. Add the bread to a mixing bowl and break up with a spoon. Gently work in the beef, parsley, garlic, egg yolks, and 1 teaspoon salt. Form the mixture into meatballs approximately 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Refrigerate until ready to cook.
- Bring a sauté pan to medium-high heat and add just enough vegetable oil to coat the bottom of the pan. Cook the meatballs in batches, turning occasionally, until nicely browned.
- Transfer the meatballs to the warm sauce. Gently simmer until completely cooked through and nicely tender, 1 1/2–2 hours.
- Season with the cilantro, salt, and pepper. Transfer the meatballs to a wide, shallow serving bowl; ladle sauce over the top. Serve with the bread.