

Nonna's Infamous Stuffed Artichokes

6 large artichokes
1 1/2 cups olive oil, plus more for stuffing
1 large loaf of Italian bread, cubed
Salt and pepper
1 1/2 tablespoons garlic powder
1 1/2 tablespoons onion powder
1 large onion, chopped
3 or 4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 can pitted black olives, chopped

Cut off stems of artichokes and set aside.

Cut off top of artichoke leaves, creating a flat top.

Cut thorns off top of each leaf on artichoke.

Gently stretch artichoke from inside to create hole for stuffing.

Cut away little purple/white thorny leaves in center.

Peel away outer skin of stems so that it is fresh all around. Chop stems into small cubes for stuffing.

In a large bowl drizzle olive oil over bread cubes until they're moist. Add salt & pepper, chopped onion and garlic, sliced olives and chopped stems. Work together with hands. Check olive oil content by squeezing stuffing into a ball in your hand. If it sticks together, there's enough oil, if not, add more. \

Stuff mixture tightly into center of artichokes -- as tightly as possible.

In a large stove top pot (ie. Dutch Oven) add water half way up artichokes.

Artichokes should be firmly together in pan. Add salt and 1 1/2 cups of extra virgin olive oil to water. Make certain water is high enough but not beyond half way.

Bring water to a slow boil in covered pot. Baste leaves around stuffing with broth from the pan every 15 to 20 minutes for approx. 2 hours. When outside leaves are tender they're done. Before removing from pan, baste stuffing one last time, then pack down stuffing with a fork. Serve with a little bit of broth in bottom of bowl.

Gina's Special Clam Sauce

Extra virgin olive oil
Salt and Pepper
2-3 cloves of garlic
2 large carrots
2 large stalks of celery
1 medium white onion
2 can of mined clams
2 cans of chopped clams
2 cans of baby whole clams
Grated parm/Romano mix
2-3 jars of clam stock or approx 16 oz

Add olive oil to coat bottom of deep sauté pan.

Add salt and pepper to season oil.

Bring to medium heat and add 2-3 cloves of chopped garlic. Sauté' garlic until soft.

Lower heat

In a food processor, add 2 peeled carrots, 2 stalks of celery and 1 onion. Pulse until finely chopped.

Raise the heat under the pan to medium and add the mirepois (carrot, celery and onion). When the ingredients in the pan start to simmer and steam, add 1/3 of your clam stock. Bring to a simmer again and add another 1/3 of clam stock. Bring to a simmer for the 3rd time and add the remaining clam stock, if needed.

Once these ingredients are simmering, add all of your clams, including the liquid from the cans. Bring all ingredients to a simmer and allow it to simmer for 10-15 minutes.

Reduce the heat to low for 5 mins and then add 1 ½ cups of grated cheese. Keep heat on low, stirring occasionally for 10-15 minutes.

Cook pasta, drain, place pasta on a serving tray and then pour the clam sauce over the pasta. Crusty bread for dunking in sauce is a good idea!!