

**Myerberg Center – Cooking with Chef Alba**  
**“Easy Holiday Entertaining Dishes”**

**Strudel con Ricotta e Spinach**

1 sheet of puff pastry  
6 ounces whole ricotta cheese  
1 whole egg  
1 pound baby spinach  
½ cup grated parmesan cheese  
1 clove garlic, minced  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
Salt and black pepper  
Ground nutmeg

For brushing:

1 yolk for brushing  
1 tablespoon milk for brushing

1. Preheat oven to 375F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Add butter to a skillet, went hot, add the garlic and spinach. Add salt, cover with the lid, and cook over medium-low heat for about 4-5 minutes. Place the spinach in a colander drain to remove the excess liquid, if necessary, press it a little with a spoon, then let it cool.
3. When the spinach is well drained, chop it with a knife then transfer to a large bowl, add the grated cheese and egg. Incorporate the ricotta, salt, pepper, and grated nutmeg. Mix well.
4. Roll out the dough on a sheet of parchment paper, pour the filling only on one half giving it a rectangular shape and leaving about ½ inch edge from the lower and side edge, fold the lower edge. Fold the side flaps. Using the parchment paper, turn the strudel upside down so that the filling is completely wrapped in the pastry, with the closure at the bottom
5. In a small bowl, combine an egg yolk, milk, and mix. Brush the surface of the strudel with the milk and egg yolk mixture. Make a few cuts on the surface of the strudel and transfer the strudel to the baking tray. Bake for about 25 minutes, or until evenly golden browned. Remove from the oven, let cool

**Pere al Miele al forno**

2 slightly ripe pears, cut in half lengthwise  
4 ounces Gorgonzola dolce cheese  
Honey  
1-1 ½ minced chive

Drizzle extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and black pepper  
10-12 coarsely chopped walnuts

1. Preheat oven to 350F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Season the baking sheet with oil, salt, and pepper.
2. Cut the pears in half lengthwise and remove the core and a small part of the pulp to obtain the "boat" effect (space for more filing) .
3. Bake for 10 minutes or until it is just softened. Remove pears from the oven and cool.
4. Cut a small slice from the bottom of each pear so that it will be stable on the pan.
5. Bake in a preheated oven for 10 minutes or until just softened. Remove them from the oven and cool.
6. Stuff the cooked pears with the cheese, add the walnuts, drizzle honey on top with minced chive.

## Salad Nicoise Tray

### For the Salad:

4 hard-boiled eggs  
4-6 ounces green beans  
6 ounces whole baby potatoes red or white  
1 head soft lettuce butter, Boston, or Bibb  
1 cup cherry tomatoes halved  
½ English cucumber halved lengthwise, sliced  
½ cup Niçoise or Kalamata unpitted olives  
4 ounces oil or water packed quality tuna  
Few caper berries, *optional*  
Chopped fresh basil or parsley

Place a pot of water to boil. Add the potatoes and green beans. Boil until the green beans are al dente and the potatoes are fork-tender, about 4 minutes for the green beans and 12 minutes for the potatoes. As soon as each is finished cooking, scoop it into the ice bath, then let sit in the ice water a few minutes to chill down. Drain and pat dry.

To serve, arrange the salad leaves on a big serving platter. Halve the eggs and potatoes, then arrange them on top of the leaves, along with the tomatoes, cucumbers, olives, and tuna. Drizzle the dressing over the top. Allow guests to add more dressing to individual portions as desired.

### For the Dressing:

½ - 1 fresh lemon juice  
1-2 teaspoons Dijon mustard  
1 garlic cloves, grated  
Salt and black pepper  
Extra virgin olive oil  
Drizzle of maple syrup, optional

Whisk together lemon juice, Dijon mustard, garlic, and salt. Use a medium bowl and whisk together the non-oil ingredients first.

Whisk in olive oil gradually until it thickens. Just whisk in the olive oil 1 tablespoon at a time until that creamy emulsion forms!

And a surprise Prosecco Cocktail for a happy Ending!

**HAPPY AND SAFE HOLIDAYS TO EVERYONE AND THANK YOU FOR A GREAT YEAR!**

**CHEF ALBA**