Eel Bisentina-style: “Anguilla alla Bisentina”

Italian Eel Recipe from the Lazio Region

Medium | 4 Servings | 30 min.

This traditional eel recipe comes from the Lazio region in central Italy. More specifically, from the northernmost corner between Tuscany and Umbria, where the volcanic lake “Lago di Bolsena” is located. Lake Bolsena is the largest volcanic lake in Europe and one of the cleanest in Italy. Pike, perch, and especially eels thrive in these waters. By the way, Bisentina is the name of one of the islands in Lake Bolsena.

“Anguilla alla Bisentina” is a regional fish specialty made with just a few ingredients. The subtle acidity of the tomatoes and the heat of the chili enhance the flavor of the eel. Thanks to the bay leaf, this eel recipe offers subtle notes of nutmeg and lemon, and it also aids digestion.

Ingredients

2 kg fresh eel, ready to cook (available at select fishmongers)

800 g ORO di Parma chopped tomatoes, spicy

2 sprigs of rosemary

5 sage leaves

2 bay leaves

dry white wine (to taste)

6 cloves of garlic

100 ml olive oil

Salt

freshly ground black pepper

Step 1: The Preparation

Wash the eel thoroughly and cut it into pieces about 5 cm long. Now wash the fresh Italian herbs and pat them dry. Peel the garlic cloves and crush them with the side of a knife.

Step 2: The Eel

Now you can season the eel with salt and sear the pieces in olive oil over high heat. It's best to use a slightly deeper skillet or saucepan for this—since you'll be adding the sauce later.

Step 3: The Sauce

Deglaze the eel with a little white wine, then add ORO di Parma chunky tomatoes (hot), the garlic, the herbs, and a little olive oil. Season the sauce with freshly ground black pepper. Let it simmer for about 10 minutes, adding white wine or, alternatively, warm water as desired.

Step 4: The Finale

The eel is now ready to serve! Remove the garlic cloves from the pan or casserole dish before serving. This dish tastes best when served hot with plenty of sauce. Serve with freshly baked Italian bread (such as ciabatta) or creamy polenta. Eccelente!

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