

## 06. HOLIDAY MENU

### THE GRAND ITALIAN AMERICAN FEAST

By Sara Hauman & Jordan Mackay

Religious significance aside, for gourmets and gastronomes, nothing speaks to the holidays more than an expansive, multi-course meal that allows home cooks the opportunity to stretch their aprons by orchestrating a procession of courses that tell a tale of diverse flavors and textures. Such meals also delight wine lovers, offering unmatched opportunities to unleash their inner sommeliers by selecting and opening a procession of complementary bottles. Wonderful holidays with built-in multi-course meals include Thanksgiving and Passover, but the king of them all is The Feast of the Seven Fishes, traditionally cooked and devoured on Christmas Eve.

But traditionally cooked by whom? The origins of The Feast are murky. While it clearly has Italian DNA, mention it to the average citizen of Bologna or Padua, and they've probably never heard of it. Indeed, the Feast as we know it is probably a creation of early Italian Americans, who emigrated in waves largely from southern Italy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. They brought with them traditions — including holiday seafood banquets — but also embraced the American spirit of novelty and freedom, molding them into something extraordinary and Italianate, yet quintessentially American, much like fettuccine Alfredo or spaghetti and meatballs.

Likely a new-world creation (and no less legit because of it), The Feast of the Seven Fishes clearly follows the Catholic tradition of not eating fish the day before the holy holidays. Contrary to popular belief, abstaining from meat before sacred days is not a health-related notion but stems from trying to avoid the carnality and horniness our ancestors believed meat stimulated. The number of courses in this meal remains a mystery. Still, if you must assign one number to a capacious religious feast, it's not hard to arrive at the number seven, a digit oft repeated in the Bible and in history (both Rome and Jerusalem are said to be built on seven hills, as is, for what it's worth, San Francisco).

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While consuming seven different kinds of seafood in one meal can theoretically be done in one course, it's much more fun to stretch it out. The course number needn't be seven, though, only the minimum tally of seafood. The well-balanced and easy-to-execute meal presented here involves six courses and exactly seven "fish" — clams, cod, squid, scallops, shrimp, anchovies, and Branzino — while hitting on several of the most traditional forms to serve them in: croquettes, salad, pasta, and zeppole (with anchovy-enhanced caramel sauce!) for dessert. While there's a lot to execute, much of the work can be done ahead of time. For instance, most of the work required for the clams, croquette batter, Branzino, and seafood salad can be prepped in advance, leaving only the oven and stovetop to finish the job. Only the Shrimp Fra Diavolo with spaghetti should be fully cooked and assembled in one go.

Wine-wise, this is a food symphony asking white wine to be the featured soloist. In general, try to find whites of contrasting texture and flavor, from sparkling to light, crisp, and mineral, to things richer and weightier. If you want to be authentically southern Italian, you can choose amongst wines like Greco, Fiano, Falanghina, Etna Bianco and Etna Spumante, and many more. But, since the Feast is Italian American, aficionados of American wine can also have their day. Indeed, no meal more thoroughly calls for Massican's quintessential Italian American wine style — as these dishes are natural outlets for Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and richer blends like Annia and Gemina.

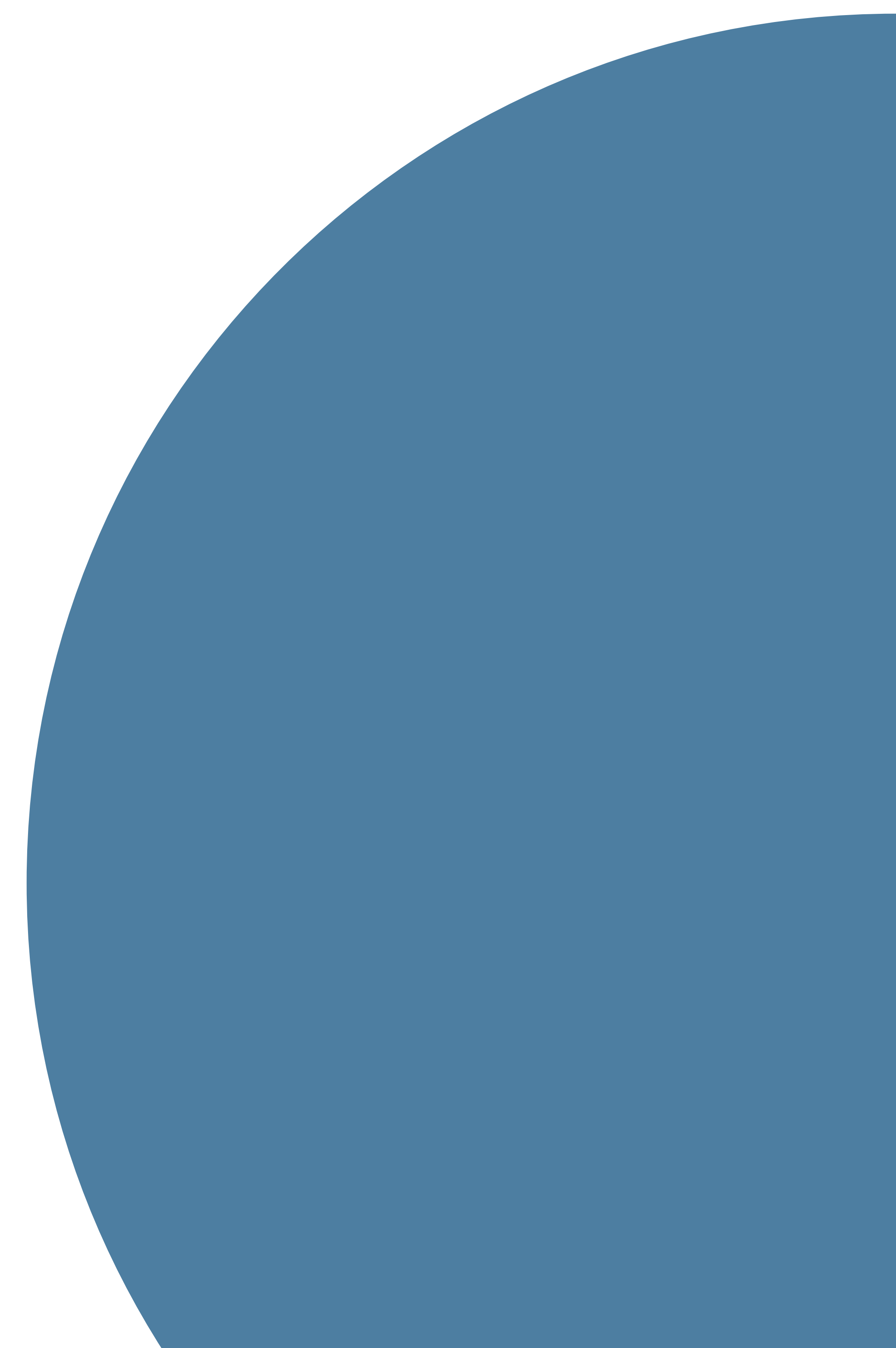
No matter what wines you choose, the goal of this dinner is to bring people together for waves of delicious food, thoughtful drinking, and hours of conversation and laughter. Have a great Feast!

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### ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

Chef Sara Hauman's career is sprinkled with culinary accolades: Eater Young Gun, Zagat 30 under 30, and Bravo Top Chef contestant. Having cooked in kitchens from Spain's famed Asador Etxebarri to San Francisco's Octavia, she now resides in Portland, OR.

Jordan Mackay is a James Beard award-winning writer covering wine, spirits, and food. He has written for the New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, and Food & Wine magazine. Jordan has penned countless books including Secrets of the Sommeliers, The Atlas of Taste, Franklin Barbecue, Franklin Steak, and the pending Maison Premiere Almanac.

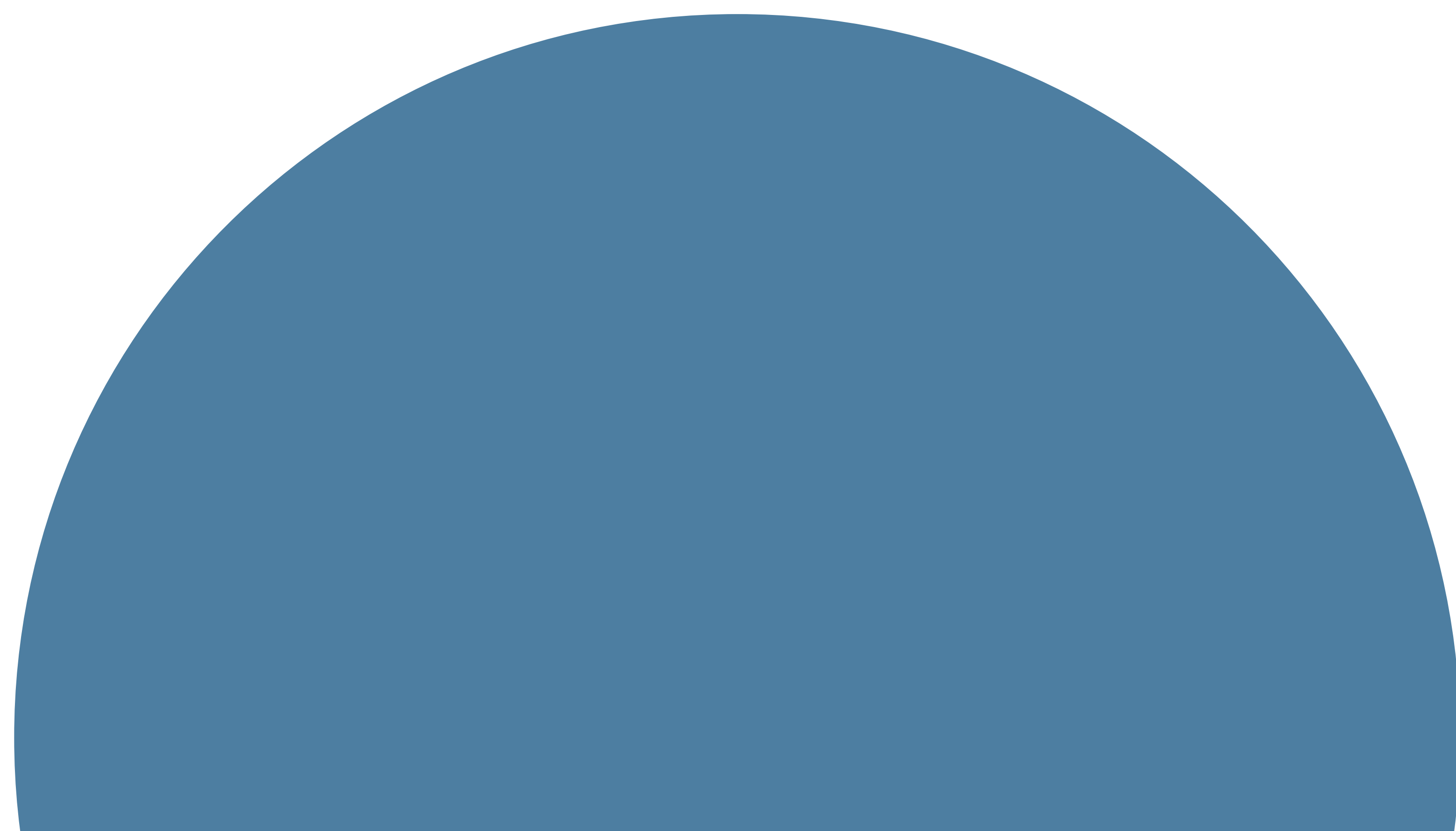


## 06. **HOLIDAY MENU**

### **OUR FEAST OF THE SEVEN FISHES MENU**

Serves 6-8

- Appetizers: BAKED CLAMS
- Appetizers: SALT COD CROQUETTES
- Salad: INSALATA DI MARE (SCALLOPS AND SQUID)
- Starter: SHRIMP FRA DIAVOLO WITH SPAGHETTI
- Main Course: LEMON-STUFFED BRANZINO WITH BREADCRUMBS
- Dessert: MINI ZEPPOLE WITH COLATURA CARAMEL SAUCE



## 06. HOLIDAY MENU

### BAKED CLAMS

Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

- 2 dozen littleneck clams
- 1 cup plain breadcrumbs
- 1 Tbsp grated pecorino
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp parsley, chopped
- 1 tsp aleppo (red) chili flakes
- 4 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Salt
- 1 lemon

Preparation:

1. Wash the clams and then carefully shuck them, leaving the flesh of the clam on one half of the shell and discarding the other half.
2. In a bowl, mix the breadcrumbs, pecorino, garlic, parsley, chili flakes, olive oil, and a pinch of salt.
3. Lay the clams, flesh side up, on a baking sheet using a piece of crumpled aluminum foil to hold the clams in place.
4. Add about 1 teaspoon of the bread mixture to the top of the clams, making sure the clams are completely covered.
5. Place the clams on the middle rack in your oven and broil on high for 3-5 minutes, rotating the baking tray halfway through cooking.
6. Once golden brown, place the baked clams onto a large serving plate and zest 1 lemon over the top.
7. Cut the same lemon into wedges and serve alongside the baked clams.

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### SALT COD CROQUETTES

Makes 20-24

#### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. dried salt cod, rinsed 3 or 4 times in cool water and soaked in water overnight
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp ice water
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced small
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small red bell pepper, diced small
- 1 Tbsp Calabrian chili, minced
- 1 Tbsp oregano, chopped fine
- 2 Tbsp parsley, chopped fine
- Vegetable oil for frying

#### Preparation:

1. Remove the cod from the soaking water, rinse, and pat dry.
2. Shred the salt cod into very small pieces using your fingers.
3. In a bowl, whisk together the flour and baking powder.
4. Add in the ice water and eggs and whisk until just combined.
5. Fold in the salt cod, onion, garlic, bell pepper, Calabrian chili, oregano, and parsley.
6. In a large, deep, heavy-bottomed pot, heat at least 1 inch of the oil to 375F.
7. Gently place tablespoon-sized mounds of the salt cod fritter mixture into the oil and fry until completely golden brown, about 1 ½ - 2 minutes.
8. Remove the croquettes from the oil and place them onto a paper towel to remove any excess oil.
9. Serve while still hot.

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### **INSALATA DI MARE**

Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. scallops
- 2 Tbsp grapeseed oil
- A few sprigs of thyme
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 lb. squid tubes and tentacles, rinsed and cut into 1/2" rings
- 3-4 lemons, cut into wedges
- 1 head frisee, trimmed and washed
- 1 head radicchio, trimmed and washed
- 1/2 cup green olives, pitted and crushed
- 1 cup parsley leaves
- 3/4 cup of olive oil
- Salt

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### INSALATA DI MARE

Serves 6-8

Prepare the scallops:

1. Season the scallops with salt and let sit for 10 minutes.
2. Heat the grapeseed oil in a medium saute pan.
3. Pat the scallops dry with a paper towel.
4. Once the oil begins to smoke, lower the heat, and add the scallops to the pan.
5. Toss the thyme and garlic into the pan and cook the scallops until they are golden brown on each side, about 2-3 minutes per side.
6. Remove the scallops from the pan after they have fully cooked and set aside.

Prepare the squid:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Add one of the quartered lemons to the water along with the squid.
3. Let the squid cook for 2-3 minutes, then remove from the water and place onto a baking tray lined with a linen tea towel in a single layer.
4. Cool the squid in the refrigerator until fully chilled.

Prepare the salad:

1. In a large bowl, add the frisee, radicchio, green olives, parsley, and chilled squid.
2. Drizzle a healthy amount of good olive oil into the bowl, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup depending on how large your heads of greens are.
3. Season with salt and freshly squeezed lemon juice as desired.
4. To serve, arrange the marinated squid and radicchio salad onto a large serving plate or bowl.
5. Arrange the cooked scallops around the serving plate and serve with more lemon wedges on the side.

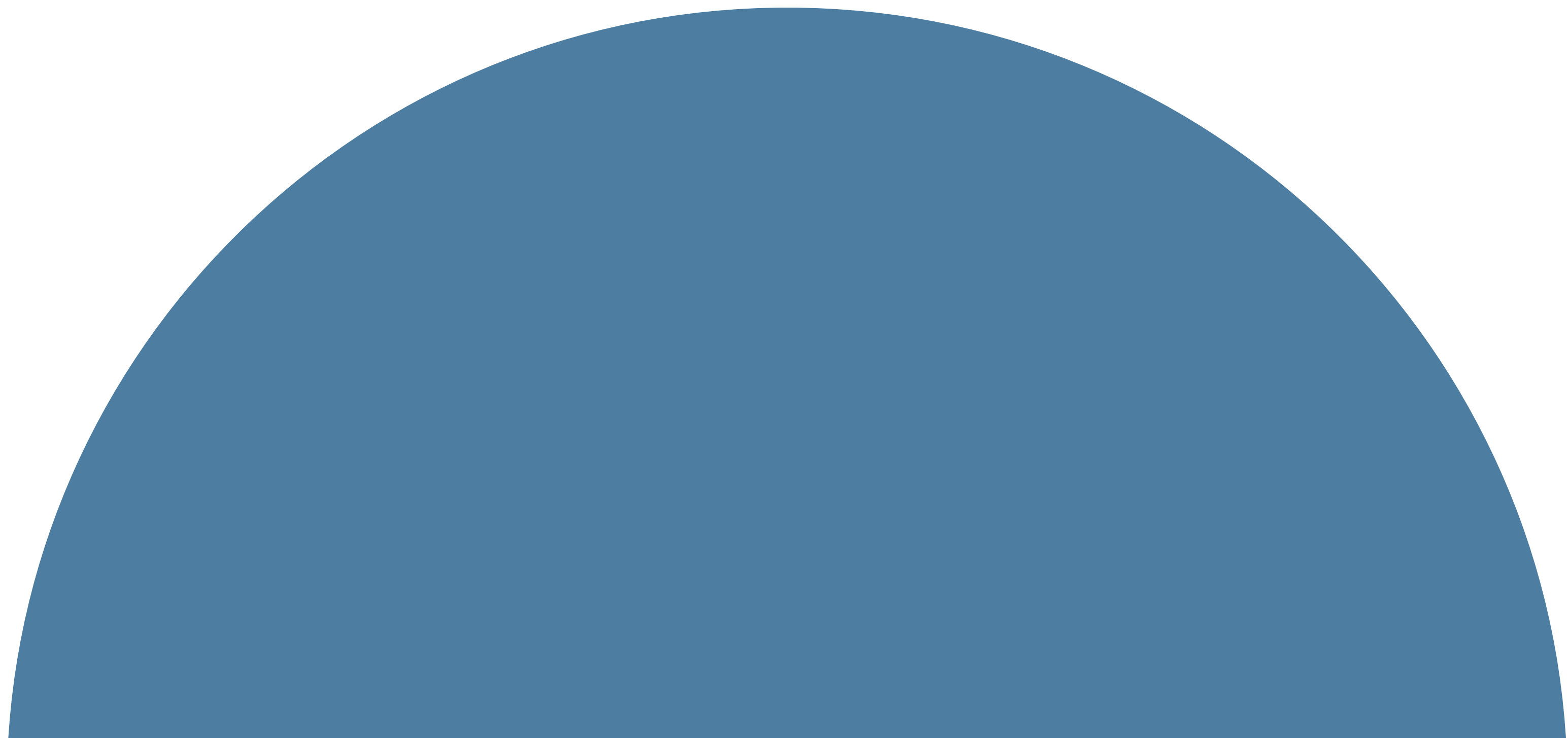


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### **SHRIMP FRA DIAVOLO WITH SPAGHETTI**

Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup olive oil
  - 2 sprigs thyme
  - 1 lb. shrimp, peeled and deveined
  - 5 cloves garlic, minced
  - 4 anchovy filets, in olive oil
  - 1 Tbsp aleppo (red) chili flakes
  - ½ cup dry white wine
  - 1 28-ounce can of peeled San Marzano tomatoes, crushed by hand
  - Salt
  - 12 oz dried spaghetti
  - ½ cup basil, roughly chopped
  - Good olive oil
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### SHRIMP FRA DIAVOLO WITH SPAGHETTI

Serves 6-8

Preparation:

1. Heat half of the olive oil, about one ounce, in a large saute pan on medium-high heat.
2. Add in the sprigs of thyme, immediately followed by the shrimp, making sure not to overcrowd the pan.
3. Cook the shrimp until golden brown on one side, about 2 minutes, then transfer to a plate or baking tray.
4. Using the same pan, add in the remaining olive oil, garlic, aleppo pepper, and cook for about a minute until the garlic has toasted.
5. Add in the wine, then the anchovy filets, and cook until the wine has almost evaporated.
6. Add the tomatoes and a pinch of salt to the pan, bring to a simmer and continue to cook for about 15 minutes until the sauce has thickened.
7. While the sauce is cooking, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
8. Add the spaghetti and cook until al dente, making sure to reserve at least ½ cup of the pasta water.
9. Once the pasta is cooked, drain it and add it to the tomato sauce along with the reserved pasta water and shrimp.
10. Cook all the ingredients together, tossing the pasta to emulsify the sauce and let the pasta absorb as much flavor from the sauce as possible.
11. Remove from the heat after a couple minutes, stir in the chopped basil and season with salt as desired.
12. Finish the pasta with a drizzle of good olive oil and another pinch of red chili.
13. Serve immediately.

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### LEMON-STUFFED BRANZINO WITH BREADCRUMBS

Serves 6-8

#### Ingredients:

- 3 whole branzino, scaled, gutted, heads and tails removed
- Salt
- 6 thyme sprigs
- 1 lemon, sliced thinly
- ½ lb. cipolini onions, sliced into 1/16” rings
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 3 Tbsp capers, drained
- ½ cup unseasoned breadcrumbs
- Lemon wedges

#### Preparation:

1. Liberally season the branzino with salt.
2. Evenly divide the thyme, lemon and cipolini onions and stuff the cavities of each fish.
3. Fasten a few pieces of butcher’s twine around the branzino to keep the stuffing intact.
4. Place the fish onto a baking tray and then drizzle with a few tablespoons of olive oil.
5. In a medium saucepan, add the rest of the olive oil, garlic cloves, and capers.
6. Cook on medium heat until the capers begin to get crispy and golden brown.
7. Remove the garlic cloves. Add in the breadcrumbs and let them absorb all the olive oil.
8. Cook on medium heat, stirring frequently until golden brown.
9. Transfer the toasted breadcrumb to a paper towel lined baking tray or plate and season as desired with salt.


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### **LEMON-STUFFED BRANZINO WITH BREADCRUMBS**

Serves 6-8

Preparation (continued):

10. Place a rack in the middle of your oven, then set the broiler to the high setting.
  11. Cook the branzino under the broiler for about 6-8 minutes, rotating as needed to cook evenly, or until the skin becomes crispy.
  12. Remove the fish from the oven when it is fully cooked and flaky.
  13. Carefully place the fish onto a serving platter and sprinkle the toasted caper breadcrumbs on top.
  14. Serve immediately with a few lemon wedges on the side.
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## 06. HOLIDAY MENU

### MINI ZEPPOLE WITH COLATURA CARAMEL SAUCE

Serves 6-8

Ingredients for the zeppole:

- ½ cup water
- ½ cup whole milk
- 8 Tbsp butter
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 eggs
- Vegetable oil for frying

Preparation:

1. In a large sauce pot, add the water, milk, butter, and sugar and bring to a boil.
2. Lower the heat, then add in all the flour, stirring vigorously with a wooden spoon or spatula for about 2 minutes.
3. The dough will begin to take the shape of a ball and will be smooth.
4. Transfer the dough to a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment.
5. On medium speed, begin to mix the dough.
6. Let the steam release from the dough for a minute or two, then begin to add the eggs one by one, ensuring that each is fully incorporated into the dough before adding the next.
7. In a heavy bottomed pan, heat at least 1 inch of oil to 375F.
8. Using two spoons, drop small mounds of dough into the hot oil and fry for 4-5 minutes or until golden brown.
9. Remove the zeppole from the oil and transfer to a paper towel to let the excess oil drain off.

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### **MINI ZEPPOLE WITH COLATURA CARAMEL SAUCE**

Serves 6-8

Ingredients for the colatura caramel sauce:

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup water
- ½ cup colatura or fish sauce

Preparation:

1. Add the sugar, lemon juice, and water to a heavy bottomed saucepan and bring to a boil.
2. Cook the caramel undisturbed until it becomes a deep amber color.
3. Remove the pan from the heat and add in the colatura or fish sauce.
4. Whisk to dissolve.

To serve:

- While the zeppoles are still hot, pile them all onto a serving plate or bowl.
  - Drizzle as much warm colatura caramel as you like over the top or serve on the side as a dipping sauce.
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