

Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

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There's nothing quite like a warm bowl of roasted butternut squash soup on a chilly day. This version roasts everything together – butternut squash, onions, garlic, sweet peppers, and carrots – for deep, caramelized flavor. Once roasted, everything is blended into a silky, naturally creamy soup that's comforting, wholesome, and full of fall goodness. It's a simple, rustic dish that tastes like something you'd get at a cozy café, yet it's easy to make right at home.

Things to know about this Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

- **Roasting Builds Flavor:** Roasting the squash, onion, garlic, peppers, and carrots together gives this soup a naturally sweet, caramelized depth you can't get from boiling.
- **Easy to Blend:** Once roasted, everything purees beautifully for a smooth, creamy texture – no need for added cream unless you want extra richness.
- **Customizable Broth:** Use vegetable broth for a vegetarian version or chicken broth for a heartier flavor.
- **Freezer-Friendly:** This soup freezes well for up to 3 months. Reheat gently on the stove and refresh with a splash of broth.
- **Perfect Make-Ahead Meal:** Roast the vegetables a day in advance, then blend and warm when ready to serve for a quick, cozy meal.

- **Italian Flavor Twist:** Add a drizzle of olive oil infused with rosemary, a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese, or a touch of crushed red pepper for that warm Italian flair.

If you love this cozy soup, you might also enjoy:

- Italian wedding soup
- Italian Escarole and Beans with Sausage
- Zuppa Toscana with Italian Sausage
- Vegetarian Mushroom Soup with an Italian Twist



Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

Servings: 4–6

Cook Time: 1 hour (15 min prep, 45 min roast)

Ingredients

- 1 large butternut squash, halved and seeds removed
- 1 medium onion, roughly chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, unpeeled
- 1–2 small sweet peppers (or bell pepper), chopped
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2–3 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 4 cups vegetable or chicken broth (as preferred)
- Optional: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon smoked paprika or pinch of chili flakes for depth
- Optional toppings: a drizzle of cream, toasted pumpkin seeds, or crispy sage

Instructions

1. **Preheat oven:** to 400°F (200°C).
2. **Prepare vegetables:** Place the cleaned, halved butternut squash on a baking sheet, cut side up. Fill each cavity with chopped onion, garlic cloves (still in skin), and peppers. Scatter the carrots around the pan.
3. **Season and roast:** Drizzle everything with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for about 45–50

minutes, or until the squash is tender and caramelized.

4. **Scoop and blend:** Once cooled slightly, scoop the flesh from the squash and squeeze out the roasted garlic. Add all roasted vegetables to a blender with 3 cups of broth. Blend until smooth, adding more broth to reach your desired consistency.
 5. **Simmer:** Pour the soup into a pot and warm over medium heat for 5–10 minutes. Adjust seasoning as needed.
 6. **Serve:** Ladle into bowls and top with a drizzle of cream or olive oil and your favorite garnishes.
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5 Cozy Italian-Inspired Fall Soups

5 Cozy Italian-Inspired Fall Soups

When the air turns crisp and the leaves start to fall, nothing warms the soul like a steaming bowl of soup. Over my years in Italian kitchens and running my restaurants, I've crafted many comforting soups that bring warmth and flavor to chilly days. These five cozy Italian-inspired fall soups are my absolute favorites – perfect for family dinners, casual weeknights, or when you just need a little comfort in a bowl.

Each one is packed with flavor and nostalgia, and I've linked each recipe so you can make them right at home. Plus, these

soups aren't just for fall – they'll keep you cozy all through the cold weather season!



1. Classic Italian Wedding Soup

Comforting, hearty, and filled with mini meatballs, greens, and pasta. Italian Wedding Soup Perfect for chilly nights, this traditional Italian favorite brings nostalgia and warmth in every spoonful.



2. Creamy Italian Sausage Zuppa Toscana

Creamy and savory with sausage and greens – tastes like fall in a bowl. Zuppa Toscana with Italian Sausage This restaurant-style soup is rich, comforting, and made easily at home.



3. Potato Leek Soup with Pancetta

- A restaurant classic – simple, silky, and full of flavor. Potato Leek Soup with Pancetta One of the most popular soups from my restaurant days, it's rustic yet elegant, and perfect for cozying up on a fall evening.



4. Split Pea Soup with Ham

- A hearty and rustic soup that feels like home cooking at its best. Split Pea Soup with Ham A longtime favorite from my restaurant menu, this one delivers rich, smoky comfort with every bite.



5. Escarole and Bean Soup with Italian Sausage

- A true Italian classic that's nourishing and full of flavor. Escarole and Beans with Italian Sausage Simple, healthy, and satisfying – this soup has all the soul of Italian home cooking.

Things to know about these 5 Italian inspired Fall soups

- **Use quality ingredients.** A great soup starts with a good base – use a rich homemade or low-sodium broth, fresh herbs, and real Parmigiano-Reggiano for authentic Italian flavor.
- **Layer your flavors.** Sautéing onions, garlic, and vegetables first helps develop deep, rich flavor before adding liquids.
- **Don't rush the simmer.** Many soups taste even better the next day as the flavors meld – perfect for meal prepping or easy leftovers.
- **Add pasta last.** For soups like Italian Wedding or Zuppa

Toscana, cook the pasta separately or just until al dente in the soup to avoid overcooking.

- **Freeze-friendly favorites.** Split Pea Soup, Escarole and Bean, and even the Italian Wedding Soup freeze beautifully – perfect for cozy nights when you don't feel like cooking.
 - **Garnish matters.** A drizzle of good olive oil, fresh herbs, or a sprinkle of cheese can turn a simple bowl into something restaurant-worthy.
 - **Pair with crusty bread.** No Italian soup night is complete without a loaf of warm, crusty bread or homemade baguette for dipping.
 - Try one and tag me on Instagram @ Lorianasheacooks – I love seeing your cozy soup
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Squash Varieties + Easy Cooking Ideas

Squash Varieties + Easy Cooking Ideas

Every fall, I look forward to squash season. Growing up, it was a staple at the market, and even now I can't resist filling my basket with all the different shapes and colors. Each variety has its own personality—some sweet and creamy, others nutty and hearty—and they all find their way into comforting dishes in my kitchen. From soups and pastas to

stuffed squash dinners, these vegetables bring warmth to the table.

Why Squash is So Special

Squash is more than just pretty on the counter—it's wholesome, versatile, and naturally comforting. Packed with fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants, it's a vegetable that feels indulgent while being nourishing. And I love how it works in both savory dishes (like roasted squash with herbs or creamy risottos) and sweet recipes (cakes, muffins, even cookies).

Things to know about Squash Varieties + Easy Cooking Ideas

Common Types of Squash

- **Butternut Squash**

Sweet, creamy, and one of the most popular varieties. Perfect for soups, roasting, or blending into a pasta sauce.

- **Acorn Squash**

Mild and nutty with a tender texture. Its natural "bowl" shape makes it perfect for stuffing with sausage, rice, or grains.

- **Delicata Squash**

Quick-cooking with edible skin, slightly sweet flavor, and beautiful striped skin. Great roasted in slices or tossed into salads.

- **Spaghetti Squash**

Once baked, its flesh turns into golden strands that mimic pasta. A fun and lighter way to serve saucy dishes.

• Easy Ways to Cook Squash

- Roast with olive oil, garlic, and fresh herbs.
- Stuff with sausage, rice, or seasonal vegetables.
- Puree into soups, sauces, or risottos.
- Toss into pasta or gnocchi.
- Bake into breads, muffins, or cakes.
- **How to pick:** Look for squash that feels heavy for its size, with firm skin and no soft spots.
- **Storage:** Whole squash keeps well on the counter for 1–2 months. Once cut, store in the fridge and use within a week. Cooked squash can be frozen for up to 3 months.
- **Peeling tip:** Microwave a whole squash for 2–3 minutes before peeling—it softens the skin and makes it easier to handle.

• A Cozy Recipe to Try: Creamy Butternut Squash Pasta with Italian Sausage

Now that we've explored the different types of squash and how versatile they can be, I wanted to share one of my favorite ways to enjoy butternut squash in the fall. It turns into the creamiest pasta sauce, and when paired with Italian sausage, it becomes the kind of hearty, comforting meal everyone loves.

- If you're ready to start cooking with squash, I've got a few more cozy recipes to get you inspired. My Italian sausage & spinach butternut squash

stuffed Roasted Butternut Squash Gnocch

Creamy Butternut Squash Pasta with Italian sausage

Ingredients

- 1 medium butternut squash (about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ –3 lbs), peeled, seeded, and cubed
- 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 lb Italian sausage (mild or spicy), casings removed
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chicken broth (or vegetable broth)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 12 oz short pasta (rigatoni, penne, or orecchiette work well)
- Fresh sage or parsley, for garnish

Instructions

1. **Roast the Squash:** Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Toss cubed butternut squash with 2 tbsp olive oil, salt, pepper, and crushed red pepper flakes.

Spread on a baking sheet and roast for 25–30 minutes, until tender and caramelized.

- 2. Cook the Pasta:** While the squash roasts, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta according to package directions until al dente. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, then drain.
- 3. Cook the Sausage:** In a large skillet, heat 1 tbsp olive oil over medium heat. Add Italian sausage, breaking it apart with a spoon, and cook until browned and cooked through. Remove sausage from the pan and set aside.
- 4. Make the Sauce:** In the same skillet, add onion and sauté until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook 1 minute more. Add roasted squash and broth. Simmer for 3–4 minutes, then blend (with an immersion blender or carefully in a regular blender) until smooth and creamy. Stir in the heavy cream and Parmesan.
- 5. Combine Everything:** Return the sausage to the skillet. Add cooked pasta and toss, adding reserved pasta water as needed for a silky sauce.
- 6. Serve:** Garnish with fresh sage or parsley, extra Parmesan, and a drizzle of good olive oil. Serve warm.

Storage

Leftovers keep well in the fridge for 3 days. Reheat gently with a splash of broth or cream to loosen the sauce.

Creamy Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

Creamy Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

It's no surprise most Italian restaurants have risotto on their menu, it seems too complicated for the home cook.

Well Am here to tell you this Homemade Restaurant creamy Mushroom and Italian sausage risotto isn't complicated at all.

Risotto is a northern Italian rice dish cooked with broth until it reaches a creamy consistency.

The broth can be derived from meat, fish or vegetables, I used chicken broth, if you are vegetarian you can use vegetable stock.

This is one of those recipes you make a enough of, for next day reheats or freeze for a quick ready made meal.

Plus, risotto is easy and versatile enough to have on your family weeknight meal plan. This restaurant quality recipe is also prefect for Holiday dinner with friends, to show off what a great home chef you are.

Things to know about this Creamy

Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

- **Rice Matters:** Arborio rice is best for risotto because it releases starch as it cooks, giving you that creamy texture. Don't substitute with regular long-grain rice.
- **Broth Temperature:** Keep your chicken broth warm. Adding cold broth slows down the cooking and can make the risotto less creamy.
- **Stir Often:** Risotto needs attention! Stirring helps release the starch from the rice and prevents sticking.
- **Sausage Options:** You can use sweet or spicy Italian sausage depending on your taste. Either works beautifully with the mushrooms.
- **Finishing Touch:** Stir in butter and Parmesan off the heat for an extra creamy, rich finish. A sprinkle of fresh parsley brightens the dish just before serving.
- **Make-Ahead Tip:** Risotto is best served immediately, but if you need to make it ahead, undercook it slightly, then reheat with a splash of broth to bring it back to creamy perfection.
- Craving more comforting Italian dishes? Check out my **Classic Chicken Parmesan**, **Creamy Italian Sausage mushroom Pasta**, or **Zuppa Toscana Soup** for more hearty, restaurant-style recipes you can make at home. Don't forget to **save this risotto recipe** so you can enjoy it any night of the week!

Creamy Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

Servings: 4

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 pound Italian sausage, casings removed
- 2 cups Arborio rice
- 8 ounces mushrooms, sliced (cremini, button, or mixed)
- 1 small shallot, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups chicken broth, kept warm
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 cup heavy cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet or saucepan. Add the sausage, breaking it up as it cooks, until browned.
2. In the same pan, add the remaining olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter. Sauté the onion until soft, then add garlic and mushrooms. Cook until mushrooms are golden.
3. Stir in the Arborio rice and toast for 1–2 minutes until

edges are translucent.

4. Pour in the wine, stirring until it is absorbed.
5. Begin adding warm chicken broth one ladleful at a time, stirring often. Allow each addition to be absorbed before adding more. Continue until the rice is creamy and tender, about 18–20 minutes.
6. Add the cream and simmer 5 minutes longer.
7. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately while creamy. ENJOY!!!!

Italian Sausage Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

Italian Sausage Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

When it comes to cozy Italian cooking, stuffed vegetables are always a favorite – from peppers to zucchini to eggplant. These **Italian Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms** bring that same rustic charm to the table, with hearty mushroom caps overflowing with savory sausage, herbs, spinach, and gooey melted cheese. They're comforting yet elegant, perfect as an appetizer for entertaining or a light main dish with a simple salad on the side. What I love most is how the mushrooms act like little "bowls," soaking up all the garlic, olive oil, and cheesy goodness. This same filling works wonderfully for stuffing smaller white or cremini mushrooms.

Things to know about these Italian sausage Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

- **Picking the right mushrooms:** Choose large, firm portobello caps with deep gills. They'll hold up better when stuffed and baked.
- **Drain excess moisture:** Mushrooms release water as they cook. To avoid soggy, brush them with olive oil and pre-bake for 5–7 minutes before adding the filling if you like them firmer.
- **Cheese options:** Mozzarella gives you that melty stretch, but you can also use provolone for a sharper bite or fontina for a creamier texture.
- **Breadcrumbs matter:** Italian-style breadcrumbs add great flavor, but panko makes the topping extra crispy.
- **Make it vegetarian:** Skip the sausage and add extra spinach, sun-dried tomatoes, and ricotta or cannellini beans for a protein boost.
- **Meal ideas:** Serve two stuffed portobellos per person with a side of roasted potatoes or a crisp Italian salad for a full dinner. They also work beautifully as a starter for a fall dinner party.
- **Mini version:** This same filling works wonderfully for stuffing smaller white or cremini mushrooms. Perfect for party appetizers or holiday platters. Follow the same instructions, and lower the cooking time by 5 -7 minutes.
- If you enjoyed these **Italian Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms**, be sure to try some of my other cozy Italian favorites:

- **Classic Orecchiette with Italian Sausage and Broccoli Rabe**
- **Creamy Sausage Tortellini Soup**
- **Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad**

They're all simple, full of flavor, and perfect for weeknight dinners or entertaining.

Italian sausage Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

Servings: 4

Cook Time: 30- 40 minutes

- 4 large portobello mushrooms, stems and gills removed
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup Italian breadcrumbs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1 cup finely chopped spinach
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tsp Italian herbs
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- My easy marinara sauce for serving

Instructions

1. **Prep the mushrooms:** Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Clean the portobellos by gently wiping them with a damp cloth. Remove stems and scrape out the gills with a spoon. Brush both sides with olive oil and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet or oven proof casserole dish.
 2. **Make the filling:** In a bowl, combine breadcrumbs, parmesan, garlic, parsley, thyme, salt, and pepper. Drizzle in 1 tbsp olive oil and mix until crumbly.
 3. **Stuff the mushrooms:** Divide filling evenly among the mushrooms, pressing lightly to pack. Top with shredded mozzarella or provolone if using.
 4. **Bake:** Bake for 20–25 minutes, until the mushrooms are tender and the tops are golden brown.
 5. Serve with my easy marinara sauce
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Creamy Italian Zuppa Toscana Soup

Creamy Italian Zuppa Toscana Soup

Whenever the weather turns chilly, I can't resist making a big pot of soup. Over the years, I've made so many different

kinds, both at home and in my restaurants, but this Zuppa Toscana has always been a favorite. Back when we were running our kitchens, soup was something I loved to feature because it brought people together – simple, comforting, and always changing with the season.

This version is one I make often for my family now. The smoky pancetta adds incredible depth, the sausage gives it that classic Italian heartiness, and the mix of kale and spinach reminds me of the rustic soups I grew up with. It's the kind of recipe that feels familiar yet special every time I serve it. And just like in the restaurant days, I can never resist pairing it with a warm loaf of crusty bread for dipping – because for me, that's where the comfort really begins.

Things to know about this Creamy Italian Zuppa Toscana Soup

- **Greens:** I like to use both kale and spinach – the kale holds up beautifully in the simmering broth, and the spinach adds a touch of delicate freshness. If you only have one on hand, either works fine.
- **Sausage:** Mild or spicy Italian sausage is your choice. In the restaurants, we always used a mix to balance flavors.
- **Pancetta:** Don't skip it! The little bites of pancetta add that smoky, salty depth that makes this soup taste like it's been simmering for hours.
- **Potatoes:** Thinly sliced potatoes cook quickly, but diced potatoes are great if you prefer chunkier bites.
- **Cream:** For a lighter version, I sometimes swap the heavy cream for half-and-half. It still gives that rich, cozy texture without feeling too heavy.

- **Serving suggestion:** Always serve with a warm slice of crusty bread or focaccia – it’s how we did it in the restaurant, and it makes all the difference at home too.

Variation ideas:

- Add a pinch of crushed red pepper for a little heat.
- Swap some of the potatoes for cannellini beans for extra protein.
- For a dairy-free option, use coconut milk instead of cream – it adds a subtle sweetness that pairs beautifully with the sausage.
- If you love this cozy Tuscan soup, try it alongside my creamy sausage tortellini soup or my classic Italian sausage risotto – both are perfect for a comforting meal any night of the week!”

Creamy Italian Zuppa Toscana Soup

Cook Time & Servings

- **Prep Time:** 10 minutes
- **Cook Time:** 30 minutes
- **Total Time:** 40 minutes
- **Servings:** 6

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 oz pancetta, diced
- 1 lb. Italian sausage (mild or spicy, casings

removed)

- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
 - 3 cloves garlic, minced
 - 4 medium russet potatoes, thinly sliced or diced
 - 6 cups chicken broth
 - 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
 - Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste
 - 3 cups chopped kale (stems removed)
 - 2 cups baby spinach
 - 1 cup heavy cream (or half-and-half for lighter)
 - Freshly grated Parmesan, for serving
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Instructions

1. Cook pancetta & sausage:

In a large soup pot, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add pancetta and cook until golden and crisp. Add sausage, breaking it apart with a spoon, and cook until browned.

2. Sauté aromatics:

Stir in onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute more.

3. Simmer potatoes:

Add potatoes, chicken broth, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 15–20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

4. Add greens:

Stir in kale and spinach; cook 3–4 minutes until wilted.

5. Finish with cream:

Lower heat, stir in heavy cream, and warm through without boiling. Adjust seasoning as needed.

6. Serve:

Ladle into bowls, sprinkle with Parmesan, and serve with crusty bread.

Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad

Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad

There's something about the combination of fresh green beans and tender potatoes that always takes me back to family gatherings and summer cookouts. This Italian-style salad is a dish I grew up eating, especially when green beans were plentiful in the garden and new potatoes were just dug up. Unlike creamy American-style potato salad, this version is light, bright, and dressed simply with olive oil, vinegar, garlic, and herbs. It's rustic, refreshing, and full of flavor – the kind of dish that tastes even better after it sits for a little while and the flavors have had a chance to mingle.

What I love most about this salad is its versatility. It's not just for summer picnics – it's perfect anytime of the year. In

warmer months, it shines as a light side dish for grilled meats or seafood, while in cooler months, it pairs beautifully with roasted chicken, baked fish, or even a cozy Sunday roast.

Things to know about this Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad

This salad tastes even better after a few hours in the fridge. The potatoes soak up the garlicky vinaigrette, and the green beans keep their crunch. Since it's made without mayo, it's perfect for picnics and potlucks, and it's just as welcome in the middle of summer as it is on a chilly autumn or winter day.

Variations to Try:

- Add a handful of kalamata or green olives for a briny bite.
- Make it heartier with canned tuna or sliced hard-boiled eggs.
- Swap the parsley for fresh basil or mint.
- Use fresh lemon juice instead of vinegar for a brighter flavor.

Love this recipe? Be sure to check out my other Italian-inspired sides like **Italian crispy roasted potatoes** or Fuyu Persimmon Walnut Salad.

Recipe: Italian Green Beans and Potato Salad

Servings: 6

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 pound baby potatoes (red or Yukon gold), halved or quartered
 - 1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed
 - 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
 - 1/3 tablespoons red wine vinegar (or white wine vinegar)
 - 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard (optional, for extra tang)
 - 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 - 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes (adjust to taste)
 - 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
 - Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
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Instructions

1. **Cook the potatoes:** Place the potatoes in a large pot of salted water. Bring to a boil and cook until just fork-tender, about 12–15 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove the potatoes and set aside, keeping the cooking water in the pot.
2. **Cook the green beans:** In the same pot of boiling water, add the trimmed green beans and cook for 3–4 minutes, until bright green and tender-crisp. Drain and plunge into a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking. Drain again.
3. **Make the dressing:** In a small bowl, whisk together the

olive oil, vinegar, garlic, mustard (if using), oregano, salt, and pepper.

4. **Assemble the salad:** In a large serving bowl, combine the potatoes, green beans, and sliced red onion. Pour the dressing over the top and toss gently to coat.
 5. **Finish & serve:** Sprinkle with chopped parsley and adjust seasoning with more salt, pepper, or vinegar to taste. Serve warm, at room temperature, or chilled.
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Italian Beef and Farro Soup

Italian Beef and Farro Soup

When the air turns crisp and the leaves start to fall, there's nothing better than a warm, hearty soup to bring everyone to the table. This **Italian Beef and Farro Soup** was a favorite in our restaurant's fall menu—rich, rustic, and packed with flavor. Tender cubes of sirloin simmer alongside sweet carrots, celery, and aromatic herbs in a savory tomato and beef broth, while pearled farro adds a nutty, chewy texture that makes every bite satisfying. It's the kind of soup that warms both the kitchen and the heart, perfect for a cozy weeknight or a Sunday dinner with family.

Things to know about this Italian Beef and Farro Soup

- **What is farro?**

Farro is an ancient Italian grain with a nutty flavor and chewy texture. It's a staple in Tuscan cooking and makes soups hearty without feeling heavy.

- **Can I substitute farro?**

Yes! If you don't have farro, barley works beautifully. Rice or small pasta can be used too, but they'll change the texture.

- **Best cut of beef:**

Sirloin works wonderfully here because it stays tender in a shorter simmer. You can also use stew meat, chuck, or even leftover roast beef.

- **Make-ahead friendly:**

This soup tastes even better the next day as the flavors develop. Farro holds up better than pasta, so it won't turn mushy.

- **Freezer tip:**

Freeze in portions without adding the parsley and Parmesan. Add those fresh when reheating for the best flavor.

- **Serving suggestion:**

A drizzle of good olive oil, a sprinkle of Parmesan, and warm crusty bread make this a complete meal

- **Craving more comforting Italian dishes?**

Try these reader favorites:

- [Mama's best Italian Meatballs](#)
- [Classic Italian Wedding Soup](#)

Ingredients

• Ingredients (serves 4–6)

- 1 pound sirloin, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
- 6 cups beef broth
- 1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, chopped (or $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup pearled farro
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- Freshly grated Parmesan, for serving

Instructions

1. **Brown the beef:** Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add sirloin cubes and sear on all sides until browned. Remove and set aside.
2. **Sauté vegetables:** In the same pot, add onion, carrots, and celery. Cook until softened, about 5–6 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 more minute.

3. **Build the soup base:** Return the beef to the pot. Stir in diced tomatoes, beef broth, thyme, and rosemary. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 25–30 minutes until the beef is tender.
 4. **Cook the farro:** Add the farro and simmer for another 20–25 minutes until the farro is tender but chewy. Stir occasionally and add a bit more broth or water if needed.
 5. **Season and finish:** Taste and adjust salt and pepper. Stir in fresh parsley just before serving.
 6. **Serve:** Ladle into bowls, sprinkle with Parmesan, and enjoy with crusty Italian bread.
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Italian Bracirole in Tomato Sauce

Italian Bracirole in Tomato Sauce

The first day of September always feels like the true start of my fall cooking. The air turns a little cooler, and I naturally begin to crave those cozy Italian dishes that remind me of home.

When I was growing up, Sundays meant sauce simmering on the stove. My mom usually made it with meatballs, ribs, sausage – or sometimes all three. But every once in a while, she added

braciolo, and that made the meal extra special. She would pound slices of beef thin, fill them with cheese, herbs, and breadcrumbs, then roll them up tightly. After slowly cooking in the sauce until tender, they became the kind of dish that felt like a celebration.

For me, braciolo will always mark the beginning of hearty, comforting meals – perfect for the cooler season ahead.

Things to Know About Italian Braciolo

What is Braciolo?

Braciolo (pronounced *brah-cho-lee*) is a classic Italian dish made with thin slices of beef rolled around a savory filling, then simmered slowly in tomato sauce until tender. Once cooked, the rolls are sliced and served with the rich sauce over pasta or alongside crusty bread.

Regional Variations

Every Italian family makes braciolo a little differently. In Southern Italy, you'll often find fillings with raisins and pine nuts for a sweet-and-savory touch. In other regions, it's kept simple with just breadcrumbs, garlic, parsley, and cheese. Some families also prepare braciolo with pork or veal instead of beef.

Cooking Low and Slow

The key to tender braciolo is patience. The beef needs time to soften as it gently simmers in the sauce, soaking up all that flavor. A heavy pot or Dutch oven works best for even cooking.

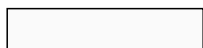
Perfect for Sunday Dinner

Braciolo has always been considered a special occasion dish, often reserved for Sunday dinners or holidays. Making it on the first cool days of fall captures that same cozy sense of comfort and tradition.

Make-Ahead Friendly

Like many Italian dishes, bracirole tastes even better the next day after the flavors have had time to meld. It's the perfect make-ahead meal – impressive for guests yet easy to reheat and serve

Ready to bring a little Italian tradition into your kitchen? Try this bracirole recipe for your next Sunday dinner – then let me know in the comments how your family enjoyed it! Don't forget to check out my other cozy Italian recipes like spicy Italian sausage gnocchi soup or easy crispy chicken parmesan for more fall cooking inspiration.



Servings: 4

Cook Time: About 2 hours (hands-on 30 minutes)

Ingredients

For the Bracirole:

- 4-6 thin slices beef top round (about 6–8 ounces each, pounded to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness)
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup breadcrumbs (preferably Italian seasoned)
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts (optional, but traditional in many regions)
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper
- Olive oil, for searing
- Butcher's twine or toothpicks for tying

For the Sauce:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- 1 can (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes
- 1 can 14 ounces tomato sauce
- ½ cup red wine
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano (or 2 teaspoons fresh)
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Fresh basil, for finishing

Instructions

1. **Prepare the filling** – In a small bowl, combine breadcrumbs, Parmesan, garlic, parsley, and pine nuts. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
2. **Assemble the rolls** – Lay each beef slice flat. cover with plastic wrap and pound thin divide the filling evenly in the center of each slice. Roll the beef tightly into a log and secure with twine or toothpicks.
3. **Brown the braciolo** – Heat olive oil in a large heavy pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Sear the beef rolls on all sides until browned, 6–8 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
4. **Make the sauce** – In the same pot, add more olive oil if needed. Sauté onion until soft, about 5 minutes, then

stir in garlic and parsley. Deglaze with red wine, scraping up any browned bits. Add crushed tomatoes and the sauce, oregano, red pepper flakes, bay leaf, salt, and pepper. and stir well, Simmer covered for 1 hour

5. Return the braciolo to the pot, nestling them into the sauce. Cover with a lid and simmer gently on low for about 1 hour, or until the beef is tender. Stir occasionally and add a splash of water if sauce thickens too much.
6. **Serve** – Remove the twine or toothpicks, slice the braciolo into rounds, and serve topped with sauce. Garnish with fresh basil and more grated cheese.

7. **More Serving Suggestions for Braciolo**

- **Over Pasta** – Toss the rich tomato sauce with spaghetti, rigatoni, or ziti, then serve the sliced braciolo on top.
 - **With Polenta** – Creamy polenta is a classic Italian pairing that soaks up all the delicious sauce.
 - **Crusty Bread** – A warm loaf is a must for dipping into the sauce.
 - **Vegetable Sides** – Pair with roasted broccoli, garlicky green beans, or a simple side salad for balance.
 - **Wine Pairing** – A medium-bodied red like Chianti or Montepulciano complements the richness perfectly.
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Crispy Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wing Recipe

Crispy Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wing Recipe

Some of our most-loved recipes have their roots in the kitchens of our restaurants, and these **Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wings** are no exception. Just like our **Smashed Italian Sausage & Pepper Sandwiches**, these wings quickly became a customer favorite – and later, a family favorite at home too.

Back in the restaurant, we made them the classic way: fried until golden and crispy, with that irresistible crunch that made them a staple on the menu. We kept the seasoning simple – salt, pepper, paprika, mustard, garlic powder, and a touch of cornstarch – but the result was magic. Crispy wings with just the right balance of smoky, spicy flavor that had people coming back for more.

Over time, I started making them at home too, sometimes grilling or baking instead of frying, but always keeping that same bold flavor. Whether served with a cold drink at the bar or around our own family table, these wings are the kind of dish that proves simple ingredients can deliver unforgettable flavor.

Things to Know About This Crispy Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wing Recipe

1. Restaurant roots: These wings were first made in our restaurants, where they were fried until golden, crispy, and irresistible. At home, you can fry, grill, or bake them for

the same bold flavor.

2. Simple seasoning, big flavor: A mix of salt, pepper, paprika, mustard, garlic powder, and cornstarch creates the perfect crust that makes these wings stand out.

3. Frying vs. grilling: While frying gives that signature crunch, grilling or baking makes them a little lighter without sacrificing flavor. Both ways are delicious.

4. Perfect for game day: These wings have always been a crowd-pleaser – whether served with a cold drink at the bar or a big platter for family and friends at home.

5. Dips and sides: Classic ranch or blue cheese dressing are perfect for dipping, and you can't go wrong serving them alongside celery sticks, fries, or even a fresh salad.

Ready to bring restaurant flavors home? Try these **Crispy Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wings** for your next game day, BBQ, or family dinner. Don't forget to check out our **Smashed Italian Sausage & Pepper Sandwiches** for another crowd-pleasing favorite!

Barbecued Buffalo Chicken Wings

Total time: About **40 minutes (grill)** or **55 minutes (oven)**

Servings: 4 (as an appetizer)

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. chicken wings, split into flats and drumettes
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp paprika (smoked if you like)

- 1 tsp dry mustard powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 2 Tbsp cornstarch
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- **Buffalo Sauce:**
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup hot sauce (like Frank's Red Hot)
 - 4 Tbsp unsalted butter
 - 1 Tbsp honey (optional, for balance)
 - 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

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