

Pizza di Scarola: Classic Italian Savory Escarole Pie

Pizza di Scarola: Classic Italian Savory Escarole Pie

This post may contain affiliate links, that help support this blog. If you make a purchase through these links, I may earn a commission—at no cost to you. For more information read my disclosure policy.











Pizza di Scarola is a classic Italian savory pie filled with tender escarole, garlic, olives, capers, and anchovies, all wrapped in soft pizza dough. Rooted in Neapolitan cooking, this humble dish has been made for generations using simple pantry ingredients and seasonal winter greens.

Traditionally, Pizza di Scarola is prepared during the **Christmas season and enjoyed through Epiphany**, when Italian families gather to mark the close of the holidays. Its balance of bitter greens and savory flavors reflects both the season and the rhythm of Italian home cooking, making it a recipe that feels just as comforting today as it did centuries ago.

Often served warm or at room temperature, this savory pie is meant to be shared—whether as part of a holiday table or as a simple, satisfying meal any time of year.

Things to know about this Pizza di Scarola: Classic Italian Savory Escarole Pie

- **Escarole is traditional.** Its mild bitterness balances the salty olives, capers, and anchovies that define this classic pie.
- **Substitute greens, if needed.** While escarole is the authentic choice, endive, broccoli rabe, Swiss chard, or spinach can be used when escarole isn't available. Always blanch and squeeze the greens very dry to prevent a soggy filling.
- **Anchovies melt into the filling.** They don't make the pie taste fishy—just deeply savory. You can omit them if preferred, but they are traditional.
- **Make it ahead.** Pizza di Scarola is often prepared in advance and served warm or at room temperature. In fact, the flavors improve after resting.
- **Use pizza dough, not pastry.** This is a bread-style pie, not a puff pastry tart—keeping it rustic and true to its Neapolitan roots.
- Serve Pizza di Scarola as part of an Italian spread alongside a **simple citrus salad**, a bowl of **Italian wedding soup**, or one of my **easy Italian cookies** for dessert. It also pairs beautifully with other traditional recipes often served during the holiday season or for casual family meals.

Be sure to explore:

- My **Italian Wedding Soup**
- Persimmon carpaccio salad

- Creamy Italian zuppa Toscana

Pizza di Scarola (Italian Escarole Pie)



For the dough

- 1 lb pizza dough (store-bought or homemade), at room temperature
- Extra virgin olive oil, for brushing

For the escarole filling

- 2 large heads escarole, washed and chopped
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, sliced
- 4 anchovy fillets, chopped (optional but traditional)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pitted Gaeta or Kalamata olives, chopped
- 2 tbsp capers, rinsed and drained
- 2 tbsp pine nuts (optional)
- 2 tbsp raisins (optional, traditional sweet-salty touch)
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- Red pepper flakes (optional)

1. Prepare the escarole

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the escarole and blanch for 3–4 minutes until just tender. Drain well and squeeze out excess water. Set aside.

2. Cook the filling

In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté until fragrant. Stir in anchovies and let them melt into the oil. Add escarole, olives, capers, pine nuts, and raisins. Season lightly with salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes. Cook for 5–7 minutes until well combined and flavorful. Let cool slightly.

3. Assemble the pie

Preheat oven to **375°F (190°C)**.

Lightly oil a 9–10 inch round baking pan. Divide dough into two pieces, one slightly larger than the other. Roll out the larger piece and line the pan, letting excess hang over the sides. Fill with escarole mixture. Roll out remaining dough and place on top. Seal and crimp edges. Prick the top with a fork and brush lightly with olive oil.

4. Bake

Bake for 40–45 minutes, or until golden brown and cooked through. Let rest at least 20 minutes before slicing.

Traditionally served **warm or at room temperature**.