SPECIAL TRAVEL ISSUE

FOOD & WINE

WHERE TO GO NEXT
OUR ALL-TIME FAVORITE HOTELS FOR AMAZING FOOD

You’ll fall hard for this spiced lamb pizza from Tel Aviv.
RECIPE P. 82

LIVE TO TRAVEL

LOVE TO EAT

175 WAYS TO COOK YOUR WAY AROUND THE GLOBE

MAY 2017

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home away from home
How many expats does it take to turn on an Italian oven?

If it's a deck or an oven, there's no room left for anything else. The writer who would be met gave up almost instantly on its digital readout and push buttons and returned to picking parsley. The chef (the unapologetic Chris Beke, executive chef of the American Academy in Rome's Sustainable Food Project) was also unimpressed and went back to stonking and getting scorecards, ignoring what would be the only decent hitch in a few days at cooking in a stunning Sicilian farmhouse. We were living this kitchen even more than we'd imagined we would when we booked it for a few months price. There were acres of countertops, soft, pliant pea stone floors, and two sets of tall French doors thrown open to a sun-dappled terrace fringed with all the mint, basil, and oregano we could grow. We'd even been buzzed by the E.V.'s massive stovetop firepower; we just hadn't yet used the oven, and now the gale of needed roasting meant we were arriving in an hour.

It was the scallops in our group—us, E.V.'s—who figured out how to turn on the oven, saving the day. This made a certain sense; once she was responsible for us being here at all. Last spring, E.V. was awarded a coveted Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, which bestowed on recipients (and their spouses) room, board, and an enormous studio in a 17th-century pumpkin-shaped palace above the Trastevere for a year. For the first few months away from our home in Brooklyn, we were more than content to feast on the fantastic Cal-Italian cooking Chris served up all day. After all, he'd come to the project, which was founded under the guidance of Alice Waters, with an impressive pedigree, having cooked at Alba and foQ in San Francisco, and in New York City. But pretty soon all the local pantoccheto and formaggi she was serving stole our own culinary ambitions, and we set about getting back into the kitchen ourselves, to eat a place somewhere nearby for a few days and cook up a storm.

If my years as a textile writer have taught me anything, it's just how readily you get to the heart of a place through its food—especially if you cook it yourself. For me, the journey where I've had the chance to take on someone's kitchen is a special one, and this is the artist's quarrel in Giverny, France, with the haphazard White facade of a 19th-century farmhouse, and in the hills of Andalucía, where the kitchens were blanked with all the charm of an English-classic lounge.

When I asked Chris if she had any tips, she said she'd recently traveled to Italy where we were cooking, through the baroque town of Ragusa, and she'll end up taking us to the small, intimate kitchens of the Ragusa cheese. That is to say how E.V. and I ended up staying there from Catharine in Italy with the Produce Cafe in Ragusa, where we could look out onto the hills, fields, and woods where we kept our ovens. For a few days, we had a small kitchen in the area and fell in love with a ramshackle group of huts and sheds set in the fields overlooking the Strait of Sicily. They are a beautiful reconstruction of the old Italian houses that are more like local charcoal and adding the latest domestic comforts: radiant-floor heating, blinding clean, an amazing kitchen.

When we arrived, we found a basket with their own market. In Sicily, the main Crop and the E.V. at the market in Sicily, Chris Beke, sugo with brussel sprouts, eggs, and a sunny breakfast eggplant (p. 107) with its various greens.
we shopped for diamond-eyed santeri that were as fresh as if we’d bought them off the deck of a fish boat. We dropped into the barque hill town Ragusa Isla, Sicilli and Noto, their tall, ornate churches like elaborate wedding cakes in pastel-colored facade climbing precariously to the hillside. Down a narrow lane, we thrilled to find first-of-the-season artichokes sold from a three-wheeled Piaggio Ape—the live child of a Vespa and a pickup truck. From the supermarket, a big box store by a busy traffic circle, was a chocolate brownie with prosciutto (pecan). And, of course, we ended up in a Ragusa traffic jam behind a farmer peddling a herd of dairy cows from one pasture to another.

The meals we made at first were impromptu—grilling boards of salami with arugula and zucchini fritters and the like. We cooked a rice salad stuffed with cacciatore, sopressata and fresh fennel (p. 100) for lunch one day, and an eggplant and tomato sauce salad (p. 107) on another. In between, we drank oceano of the Occhipinti Spumante Bianco.

It felt great to be in cooking mode, to fall into a rhythm with Chris, and by our last day we were ready to cook for a crowd. In our new home, Chris planned the ghirlanda, a rare earth of round from a Ragusa steek, with green tomato sauce served almost like a condiment, and a slaw of spring salads. One friend brought their own Sicilian treats, Duradino.

Bucorma from Occhipinti arrived bearing an open-top bottle packed in ice, the winery's gift from the winery of Francescographe. With great fortune, he dispensed the yeast from the bottle into a bowl of water. Orange, cloudy and lightly effervescent, peaches floral but with a bracing tartness, this was a wine so delicious you could drink it with a straw.

Chris's friend Bettina Carli, a wine education based in Catania, arrived with the producer Antonio Bernetti, who brought bottles from his winery on Mount Etna. With the sardines and artichokes, we drank Pietramonina, a crisp white blend, and with the beef, a fusty Serra della Contessa, made of Nerello Mascalese. The wines were so good, we decided our next Sicilian cooking vacation might have to be on the slopes of Etna.

Our guests raved about the food, especially the show-stopping ghirlanda with green tomatoes (p. 94), and when we told them about the dilemma with the oven, Bucorma asked, "Could you have just used the grill?"

Ah, yes! We’d forgotten all about the outdoor kitchen.

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**Shaved Artichoke Salad**

**Active** 25 min

**Total** 45 min

Serves 4

- ⅛ cup plus 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 lbs. baby artichokes (about 8)
- Kosher salt and pepper
- One 8 oz. bunch of arugula, stemmed and chopped, or 4 packed cups of baby arugula
- 1 head of radicchio (9 oz.) halved, cored and sliced
- ½ cup parsley leaves
- ¼ cup small dill sprigs
- 5 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

**Instructions**

1. Pour the lemon juice into a large bowl. Work with an artichoke at a time, pull off the fleshy outer leaves. Using a small knife, slice ⅛ inch from the top of each artichoke, then trim and peel the stems. Very thinly slice each artichoke lengthwise and add to the bowl. Toss with the lemon juice and ½ teaspoon of salt. Let stand for 30 minutes, tossing occasionally.

2. Spread the arugula and radicchio on a platter. Using a slotted spoon, lift the artichokes from the lemon juice and scatter over the greens. Sprinkle with the herbs.

3. Whisk the olive oil with the remaining lemon juice in a large bowl and season with salt and pepper. Toss in the dressing over the salad served.

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**Asparagus-and-Zucchini Frittata**

**Active** 20 min

**Total** 45 min

Serves 6

- 1 medium asparagus, halved lengthwise and sliced ⅛ inch thick
- 6 oz. asparagus-trimmed, stems sliced ⅛ inch thick
- 3 slices of mozzarella
- 1 cup chopped ricotta (8 oz.)
- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

**Instructions**

1. Preheat the oven to 325° in a medium sauté pan. In a large bowl, beat the eggs with ⅛ teaspoon of salt and ⅛ teaspoon of pepper. Stir in the vegetables. In a bowl, season the ricotta with salt and pepper.

2. In a 12-inch ovenproof non-stick skillet, heat the oil. Add the egg-vegetable mixture and cook over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until starting to set at the edge. 3 minutes.

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**Tips for traveling cooks**

The best strategy is to abandon notions of becoming the region’s most authentic cook in four or five days. Instead, emulate your time in this new food culture as an opportunity to have your own kitchen experiment for the next level by the local ingredients and conditions you encounter. Here, four expert tips for making your time productive and fun.

1. **Pack Light**

Your chef’s knife and pairing knife. Freshly sharpened knife. Essential. Consider how much you have to eat and drink. We never leave home without our Ebazid salt.

2. **Personalize It**

It’s important to make a kitchen item feel like your own. If using it when you cook, bring a portable thermos with a lid. Similarly, bring easy-to-pack ingredients you might not find. We never leave home without our Ebazid salt.

3. **Assess the Scene**

Before you shop, note quantities of any non-perishable or produce checkers. Make sure the available ingredients align with your ambitions.

4. **Be Social**

Ask the low-end for a list of the top cooks. For the best, ask the local town for directions to the area. Don’t be shy! Get to meet local people to tell you what they do with the ingredients they specialize in and to share your favorite recipes.
make yourself at home

AREAS

The THINKING
TRAVELLER

More rental companies than ever are geared toward travelers who love to cook. Here are four
worth checking out for a difference of their own: summa-worth kitchens, with foodsandhome.com
rocking creations.

RARE ROAST BEEF with
PICKLED GREEN TOMATOES

Active 30 min; Total 3 hr plus overnight soaking; Serves 6

In the kitchen of Cari, a pickling expert, the pickles are delicious and serve well in room temperature. The fla-
that comes from the pickles doubles as a finishing sauce.

One 3/4-lb. beef eye of round roast, trimmed and tied
Kosher salt
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 tsp. sugar
1/4 cups white wine or apple cider vinegar
2 tbsp. canola oil

Flaky sea salt, for serving

1. Season the beef with kosher salt and transfer to a large plate.
2. Place in the refrigerator, uncovered, for at least 12 hours or up to
24 hours. Bring to room temperature before cooking.

2. Meanwhile, in a large sauté

Haricots Verts and
Potato Salad with Peas

2 cups peas
1/2 cup green onion
1/2 tbsp. olive oil
1/2 tbsp. dry mustard
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. cayenne
1/4 cup red wine
1/2 cup red at the table.

Haricots Verts

16 oz. haricots verts, trimmed and halved
crosswise

16 oz. small fingerling, or new
tomatoes

1 large garlic clove
1 cup pine nuts (3/4 oz.)
1 oz. finely grated Grana Padano cheese (1/2 cup)

2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for

Kosher salt and pepper
1/4 cup roasted unsalted almonds (2 oz.), chopped

1. Fill a large bowl with ice water. In a large saucepan, add salt to the
water. Bring to a boil.
2. In a small bowl, add the salt to the

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A perfect showstopper with green 90%-less-sodium salt, nova roe, capers, and
single (yet modest) chocolate cake by Michael. 8075

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