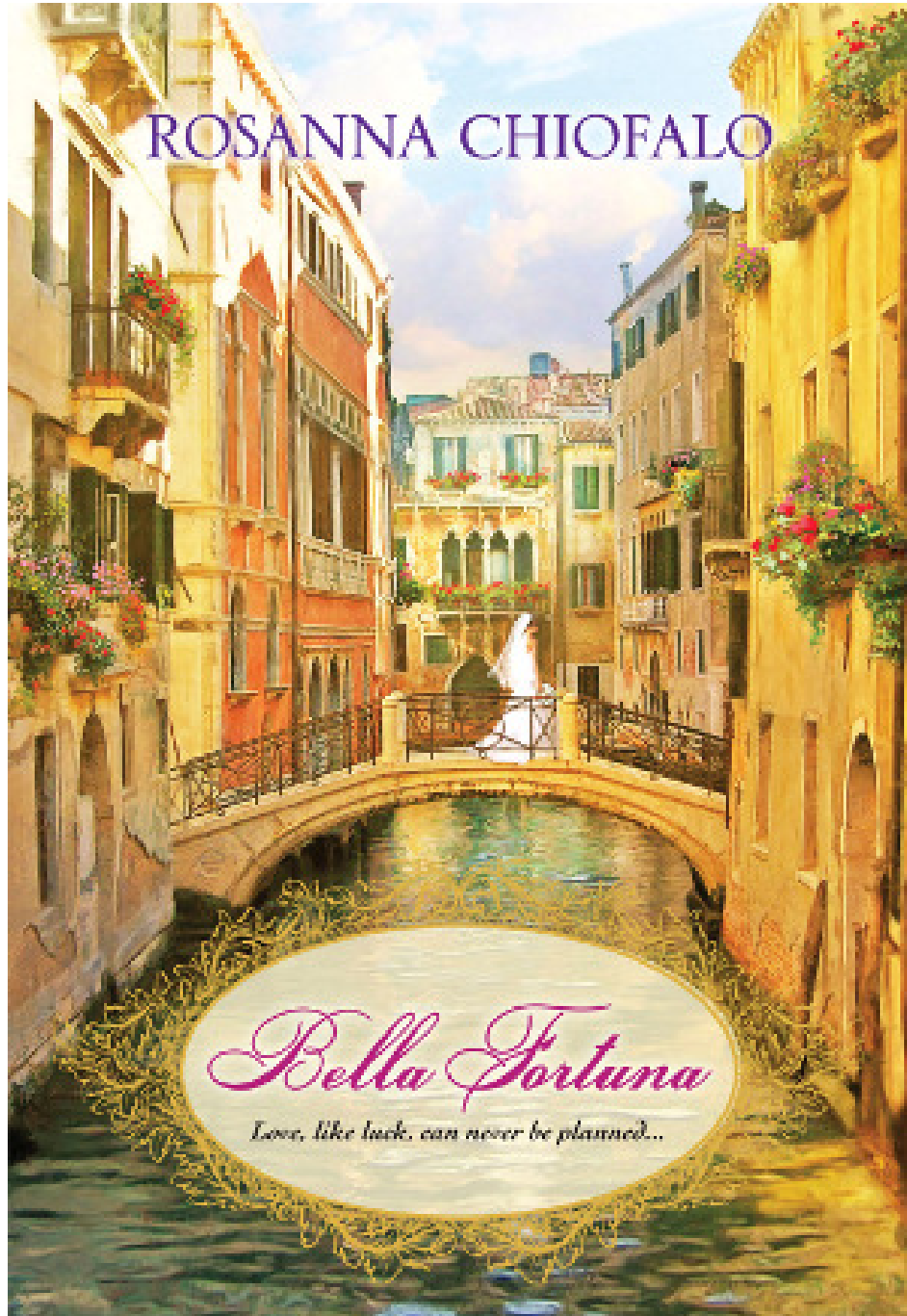


The following dishes are featured in my novel, *Bella Fortuna*.



Fried Meatballs

Serves 8 - 10

- **1 ½ pounds of ground beef (or whatever meat you prefer: turkey, veal, etc.)**
- **1 tablespoon of chopped parsley**
- **2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **1 cup of seasoned bread crumbs**
- **2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped**
- **2 tablespoons of pecorino romano cheese**
- **1 tablespoon of red cooking wine**
- **Ground black pepper to taste**

Place the ground meat in a large bowl. Add the remaining ingredients.

Using your hands, incorporate the ingredients into the meat. Keep kneading the meat until all of the ingredients are thoroughly blended into the meat.

Shape the meat into a large ball. If it seems too dry, add a teaspoon of water, then knead the meat again. (Be careful not to add too much water.)

Pinch off pieces of meat and shape into 2-inch balls.

Heat canola oil in a skillet over medium heat (about 1 minute).

Carefully lower meatballs into skillet. Cook until meat is firm and a deep golden brown (about 2 minutes). Turn meatballs over to cook the other side.

Drain cooked meatballs on paper towels in a plate.

Saltimbocca
Sautéed Veal with Prosciutto and Sage
Serves 4

- **1 pound thinly sliced veal cutlets**
- **¼ pound thinly sliced prosciutto**
- **Fresh sage leaves**
- **5 tablespoons olive oil**
- **½ cup dry white wine**

Place 1 or 2 sage leaves on each veal cutlet. Place pieces of prosciutto over the sage leaves; secure the layers with toothpicks.

Heat the oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the meat packets, veal side down, and cook until nicely browned, a minute or so, then turn and cook until the prosciutto is golden brown; take care not to overcook the meat.

Pour the wine into the skillet and scrape up any browned bits stuck to the bottom; cook until the wine is evaporated.

Place the meat on a platter, drizzle the pan juices over, and serve immediately.

Lemon Wedges in Olive Oil & Vinegar

Serves 4

- **2-3 large lemons (the larger the better)**
- **¼ cup extra virgin olive oil**
- **¼ cup red wine vinegar**
- **Salt to taste**
- **Loaf of crusty Italian bread**

Peel the lemons. Cut them into bite-size wedges. Sprinkle salt generously over lemon wedges. Drizzle the extra virgin olive oil and then the red wine vinegar over the lemon wedges. With salad prongs, toss the lemon wedges until they're coated evenly in the oil and vinegar dressing. (Depending on personal taste and how high your tolerance for sour foods is, you might want to add more salt or vinegar after tasting the lemon wedges.)

Break off pieces of bread and eat with the lemon wedges or dip the bread into the oil and vinegar dressing.

Cinnamon Vanilla French Toast

Serves 2 - 3

- **8 slices potato bread**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract (or to taste)**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon (or to taste)**
- **4 eggs**
- **¼ cup milk**
- **Butter or canola cooking spray**
- **Maple syrup**
- **Confectioners' sugar**

Beat the eggs in a large bowl. Add the milk, vanilla, and cinnamon, and stir until thoroughly combined.

Place a tablespoon of butter in a griddle or cast iron skillet and simmer until butter melts (if using canola cooking spray, spray the bottom of pan evenly).

Dip each slice of bread into the egg/milk batter and coat each side evenly. Immediately place the coated slices of bread into the griddle.

Cook about 3 minutes, or until batter turns a light golden brown on the side of bread that's face down on the griddle, and flip over with a spatula. Cook the opposite side for again 3 minutes or until batter is golden brown.

Transfer cooked slices of French toast into a Corning ware dish to keep warm until all of the slices of bread have been cooked.

Drizzle with maple syrup. Sprinkle confectioners' sugar. Enjoy!

Palline di Limone
Glazed Lemon Cookies
Makes 80

- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 tablespoon baking powder**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature**
- **¾ cup sugar**
- **3 large eggs, at room temperature**
- **1 tablespoon lemon extract**
- **2 teaspoons grated lemon zest**
- **1/3 cup milk**
- **Icing**
- **1 ½ cups confectioners' sugar**
- **3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**

Combine the flour, baking powder, and salt.

In the large bowl of an electric mixer, beat the butter and sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time, scraping the sides of the bowl as necessary, and beat until well blended. Beat in the lemon extract and lemon zest.

Stir in half of the flour mixture and then the milk. Add the remaining flour and stir until thoroughly incorporated. Cover and chill for at least 1 hour, or overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Pinch off 1-inch pieces of the dough and shape them into balls. Place the balls 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes, or until puffed but not browned. Transfer to wire racks to cool.

To make the icing: In a bowl, combine all of the confectioners' sugar and lemon juice. Stir in a few drops of water, or just enough to make the icing easy to spread. Brush the cookies generously with the icing. Let dry on wire racks.

Torta della Nonna
Grandmother's Cake
Serves 8

FILLING

- 1 cup milk
- 3 large egg yolks
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons orange liqueur

CAKE

- 1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into bits and softened
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 egg yolk beaten with 1 teaspoon water, for egg wash
- Confectioners' sugar

To make the filling: In a medium saucepan, heat the milk until bubbles form around the edges. Remove from the heat.

In a medium bowl, whisk the egg yolks, sugar, and vanilla until pale yellow. Whisk in the flour. Gradually add the hot milk, whisking constantly. Transfer the mixture to the saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until it comes to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 1 minute. Scrape the custard into a bowl. Stir in the orange liqueur. Place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface of the custard to prevent a skin from forming, and refrigerate until chilled, 1 hour or overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter a 9-inch round cake pan.

To make the cake: In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. With a pastry blender, cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add the egg and vanilla and stir until a dough forms. Divide the dough in half.

Press one half of the dough evenly into the bottom of the prepared pan and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch up the sides. Spread the chilled custard cream over the center of the dough, leaving a 1-inch border around the edges.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the remaining dough to a 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch circle. Drape the dough over the rolling pin and place it over the filling. Pinch the edges of the dough together to seal. Brush the egg wash over the top of the cake. With a small knife, make several slits in the top to allow steam to escape. Sprinkle the top with the pine nuts.

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until golden brown on top. Let cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Invert the cake onto a wire rack, then invert onto another rack to cool completely. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar before serving. Store in the refrigerator.