

Italian Christmas

For Italians, Christmas is no joke. It is one of the most important days of the year. Why you may ask? THE FEAST OF THE SEVEN FISHES! It's a big meal where family members come together, talk, connect and most importantly cook and eat. The seven fish consist of cod or halibut, clams, mussels, calamari, scallops, anchovy, and shrimp. While some technically aren't fish, they are during the feast.

When we come together we have around 40 people, 10 of which are usually in the kitchen. We start out with the bacalao - don't forget to soak the fish. This fish can be very salty so changing the water is very important. Soaking should take at least 8 hours (can be more) with changing the water 2 to 3 times. When the soaking process is done we start the sauce. When the sauce is done, dump it on the cod and add a garnish of lemon.

My grandma makes this dish every year and people only love it more and more. My grandma takes pride in her cooking. She not only makes food taste good but the looks are just as great.

This next dish consists of multiple fish. Her seafood salad is loaded with shrimp, calamari, clams, mussels and sometimes cuttlefish. Served cold and with a vinegary sauce. All seafood is boiled til cooked and then put in the salad.

Now is the big hit everyone loves, pasta sarde. This is a kind of pasta that contains anchovy and or sardines and is eaten with spaghetti noodles and bread crumbs. The fish give it this salty fishy flavor and the bread crumbs give a nice crunchy texture to the dish.

Over the years we've added more dishes but the tradition remains the same; and there is no better time to enjoy food than Italian Christmas.



