

mario world

His empire stretches across the globe, from New York to LA, Las Vegas and now Singapore, delivering the signature robust Italian flavours Mario Batali is famed for.



RECIPES MARIO BATALI WORDS JACQUI GAL COHEN FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY BEN DEARNLEY STYLING DAVID MORGAN

Whether it's at upmarket Babbo on Washington Square Park in New York or Singapore's new Osteria Mozza, reservations at Mario's restaurants are in hot demand.

olive oil fried eggs with umbrian lentils

Serves 4

140ml extra virgin olive oil,
plus extra to drizzle
80g prosciutto, finely chopped
in a food processor
1 red onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 carrot
1 celery stalk
2 tbs tomato paste
250g whole green Puy-style lentils
1.5L (6 cups) chicken stock
4 eggs
1 bunch rocket
Good-quality balsamic vinegar, to drizzle
Grated parmesan, to serve

Heat $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (80ml) olive oil over medium-low heat in a large casserole. Add the prosciutto and cook for 3-4 minutes, stirring, until the fat has rendered. Add the onion and garlic, then season with salt and pepper and cook for 2-3 minutes until translucent and fragrant.

Finely chop the carrot and celery in a food processor, then add them to the pan and cook for 5-6 minutes, stirring constantly, until softened. Add the tomato paste and cook for 1 minute further.

Stir in the lentils and add enough chicken stock to just cover. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, for $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 hours, stirring occasionally. Continue adding chicken stock, a little at a time (about every 15 minutes), to keep the lentils just submerged. The lentils will be ready when they are creamy and just tender, but they still maintain their shape. Keep warm.

For the eggs, heat the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60ml) olive oil in a large frypan over high heat for 1-2 minutes. When the oil is hot, break 1 egg into a small bowl, season with a pinch of salt and pour into the pan. When

it begins to set around the edges, break a second egg into the bowl, season and pour into the pan (this prevents the eggs from sticking). Cook for about 1-2 minutes, until the edges are golden and crispy, the whites are set and the yolks are still runny. Remove the cooked eggs to a warm plate and repeat with the remaining 2 eggs.

Divide the lentils among 4 plates and top each with a fried egg. Place rocket on the side of the plate and drizzle with balsamic vinegar and extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle parmesan over the eggs, lentils and rocket, then serve immediately.

orecchiette with cavolo nero and pork sausage

Serves 4

1 bunch (about 200g) cavolo nero*,
trimmed
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (165ml) extra virgin olive oil
1 red onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
400g (about 4) good-quality pork
sausages, casings removed
1 cup (250ml) tomato passata (sugo)*
400g orecchiette (or other short pasta)
1 cup (70g) fresh sourdough breadcrumbs
50g Pecorino Romano*, finely grated
50g Parmigiano Reggiano*, finely grated

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil over high heat. Blanch the cavolo nero for 3-4 minutes, until just tender but still bright green. Remove with tongs and immediately plunge into a bowl of iced water. Reserve 1 cup (250ml) of the blanching liquid. Once the cavolo nero is cool, drain, finely chop and set aside.

Heat 3 tbs oil in a pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic, then season and cook, stirring, for 4-5 minutes, until onion is translucent, but not coloured.

Add sausage meat and cook, breaking up any lumps, for 6-7 minutes or until browned. Add cavolo nero and cook for a

further 4-5 minutes, then add passata and cook, stirring, for 1-2 minutes to combine.

Add reserved cooking liquid and bring to a simmer. Cook for 2-3 minutes or until slightly reduced, then set aside.

Cook the orecchiette in a large pot of salted boiling water according to packet instructions until al dente. Drain.

Heat 3 tbs oil in a pan over medium heat. Add breadcrumbs and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring, until golden and crispy, then set aside.

Add pasta and remaining 2 tbs oil to sauce and toss to combine. Stir in the cheeses. Divide pasta among 4 bowls and scatter over the breadcrumbs to serve.

* Cavolo nero is Tuscan black cabbage available from selected greengrocers; substitute silverbeet or chard. Sugo is sieved tomatoes, available bottled from selected supermarkets. Pecorino Romano and Parmigiano Reggiano are from delis; substitute parmesan.

mozzarella di bufala with anchovies and celery & herb salad

Serves 4

2 spring onions, thinly sliced on an angle
3 celery stalks, peeled, thinly sliced on
an angle, plus $\frac{1}{4}$ cup celery leaves
(use only the pale green leaves)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chervil* leaves
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup tarragon leaves
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flat-leaf parsley leaves
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup micro basil leaves (or the smallest
basil leaves you find in a bunch)
10 chives, cut into 5cm lengths
1 tbs lemon juice
2 tbs extra virgin olive oil
1 Meyer lemon*, sliced
into thin wedges
250g buffalo mozzarella*
12 salt-packed anchovies*, rinsed,
backbones removed
2 hard-boiled eggs

guest chef.



Sicilian-style
grilled veal rolls

Combine spring onion, celery, celery leaves and herbs in a large bowl. Whisk together the lemon juice and olive oil, and season. Toss with the salad.

To serve, divide lemon wedges among 4 plates. Tear the mozzarella into pieces and divide among plates. Place 3 anchovy fillets on each plate and scatter over some salad. Using a fine grater, grate half an egg over each plate, then serve. * Chervil is from greengrocers; substitute flat-leaf parsley. Meyer lemons are from selected greengrocers in season. Salt-packed anchovies and buffalo mozzarella (substitute bocconcini) are from delis

sicilian-style grilled veal rolls

Serves 4

4 x 150g veal scallopini
1/2 cup (40g) grated Pecorino Romano*
2 tbs fresh breadcrumbs
1/4 cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

2 tbs pine nuts, toasted
2 tbs dried currants, soaked in warm water for 1 hour, drained
Extra virgin olive oil, to brush
Micro salad leaves* and lemon wedges, to serve

Preheat a chargrill to medium-high. Place the veal on a board between 2 sheets of plastic wrap. Beat with a rolling pin to flatten each piece to 3mm thick.

In a bowl, combine the Pecorino, crumbs, parsley, pine nuts and currants. Season the veal and spread a thin layer of the mixture on each piece of veal.

Starting from the short edge, tightly roll up the veal and secure with a toothpick. Season and brush with oil.

Grill for 3-4 minutes each side until charred and cooked to medium, or until cooked to your liking.

Rest, loosely covered with foil for 5 minutes, then slice each roll on an angle into 3 pieces and place on

plates. Serve with the micro salad leaves and lemon wedges.

* Pecorino Romano is from delis; substitute parmesan. Micro salad leaves are from selected greengrocers and growers' markets.

nocino panna cotta

Serves 4

400ml thickened cream
100ml milk
1/4 cup (55g) caster sugar
2 tbs nocino* (optional), plus extra to drizzle
2 sheets titanium-strength gelatine*
Walnut praline (recipe follows), to serve

Place the cream and milk in a saucepan with the sugar. Cook over low heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar, and bring to just below boiling point, then turn off the heat. Whisk in the nocino, if using.

Meanwhile place gelatine leaves in a bowl of cold water for 5 minutes to soften. Squeeze excess water from the gelatine and add the leaves to the warm cream mixture, stirring to dissolve.

Strain and leave to cool slightly before dividing among four 200ml serving glasses. Refrigerate for 2-3 hours or until just set.

Serve drizzled with some extra nocino, if using, and shards of walnut praline.

* Nocino is an Italian walnut liqueur. Titanium-strength gelatine is from delis.

walnut praline

Serves 4

1/4 cup (25g) walnuts, toasted
1/2 cup (110g) caster sugar

Place the walnuts on a baking tray lined with lightly greased foil. Place the sugar and 1/4 cup (60ml) of water in a pan over low heat. Cook for 3-4 minutes, stirring to dissolve the sugar, then increase the heat to medium and cook until golden. Quickly and carefully pour the caramel over the walnuts to completely cover. Set aside until completely cool, then break into pieces and serve. Store leftover praline for 1 week in an airtight container.

guest chef.



Manzo restaurant inside Eataly



Clockwise: Marina Bay Sands; Eataly is an Italian food emporium; Osteria Mozza in Singapore; Eataly partners Lidia and Joe Bastianich with Mario and Oscar Farinetti.



ENTER MARIO'S EMPIRE

With a persona that's larger than life, from a bright red ponytail down to signature orange Crocs, Mario Batali is a man proudly at the top of his game. His passion for the great Italian traditions of hospitality and top-quality food means a serious spread for anyone at his table. Naturally, no foodie visiting New York would be satisfied without a visit to at least one Batali restaurant – and there are plenty to choose from.

Whether it's the upmarket Babbo on Washington Square Park, chic Del Posto in the Meatpacking District or pizza, pasta and gelato haven Otto, reservations at Mario's restaurants are in hot demand. Roman-style trattoria Lupa and Casa Mono – Mario's nod to Spain, where he lived for several years as a teenager – complete his empire state. Most of these restaurants are partnerships with restaurateur Joe Bastianich and Joe's mother Lidia – Italian restaurant royalty in Manhattan. Mario also has a stake in the enormously popular West Village gastropub, The Spotted Pig, with British chef April Bloomfield.

The latest Batali-Bastianich collaboration is Eataly, a Midtown outpost of a prodigious food and wine emporium that was first opened in Turin, Italy, by Oscar Farinetti (who is also an Eataly NYC partner). The expansive space encompasses several restaurants, cafes, a gelateria and floor-to-ceiling shelves of artisanal Italian goodies and fresh food. Customers can buy mozzarella pulled to order from a cheese counter, warm bread direct from a woodfired oven or have their produce sliced and prepped on the house, by the on-site 'vegetable butcher'.

"It's all about the celebration of cooking," says Mario. "In the restaurants we cook for the guests, but at Eataly, the fundamental ideology is to support and drive good home cooking. It's about providing the best potential in your own home, with flair and seemingly effortless presentation."

These days, however, the empire has grown beyond the Big Apple. Mario has opened restaurants in Las Vegas, LA and

most recently, Osteria Mozza at Singapore's Marina Bay Sands resort. It's a boon for Australians, who can now experience the Mario magic much closer to home.

Guests enter Mozza through a glitzy shopping mall, but once inside the mood is undeniably Manhattan chic – a phenomenon that Mario puts down to "the menu, music and lighting".

Forget about eating 'local' at Mozza, the restaurant's signature mozzarellas are imported from Italy and California, and a large proportion of the menu is dedicated to showcasing these creamy, ethereal cheeses. "I'm a big fan of the crazy dairy products that we can source from Italy, such as burrata [buffalo mozzarella], burricotta [mozzarella with a ricotta centre] and different kinds of robiola [a tangy, soft cheese made from a combination of cow's, goat's or ewe's milk]," says Mario.

But how can the chef possibly cultivate a restaurant's character and assure quality, with his enterprises spread across countless kilometres? It's surely a mix of good staff, simple food that's based on great produce and, frankly, the fact that there's plenty of Mario's passion to share around. **d.**

Thanks to Marina Bay Sands (visit: marinabaysands.com) and Qantas (visit: qantas.com.au) for their help with this feature.