

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a white lace dress and a white cardigan, is dancing joyfully with her arms raised. She has a wide smile and her eyes are closed. The background is a warm, dimly lit room with other people and tables, suggesting a social gathering or event.

FRANNIE'S FAMOUS FOOD

Every Meal Needs A Pinch Of Amore

Italian Home Cooked Dishes
By Frances Brooks

Chicken Cutlets

Ingredients

- 1 lb chicken breast (filet into 1/2 thick)
- 2 eggs
- Milk
- Salt
- Pepper
- Oregano
- Italian bread crumbs
- 1-2 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 onion
- Crisco oil

Directions

- Beat eggs, combine with milk, salt, pepper, and oregano
- Mix italian bread crumbs with the flour
- Dip the chicken into the egg mixture, then coat in the bread crumbs (pat on both sides)
- In pan, heat 1/2 cup crisco oil over medium heat
- Fry onion in the oil (until golden)
- Fry the chicken for 3-5 minutes on each side (remove with a fork)
- Place the chicken on top of paper towels onto a plate (keep covered)



Eggplant Parmigiano

Ingredients

- 2 eggs, beat with milk
- 2 medium eggplants (1 lb)
- Salt
- Olive oil or vegetable oil (for pan frying)
- 2 1/2 cup marinara sauce
- 8 ounces mozzarella, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Pecorino Romano or Parmigiano-Reggiano
- Italian flour
- Bread crumbs

Directions

- Trim the eggplants and cut them into 1/4-inch thick slices. Layer the slices in a strainer then sprinkle each layer with salt.
- Let drain for 30 minutes
- Rinse the eggplant and pat dry
- Dip each piece of eggplant into the eggs and bread crumbs
- Pour 1/2-inch oil into a large deep skillet and heat over medium. Fry the eggplant slices in batches, in a single layer, turning once, until browned on both sides.
- Drain on paper towels
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees fahrenheit
- Spread a thin layer of oil on the bottom of the pan
- Spread a thin layer of tomato sauce in a shallow baking dish
- Make a layer of eggplant slices, overlapping slightly
- Top with a layer of mozzarella, sauce, and sprinkle grated cheese
- Repeat the layering to your liking
- Bake for 45-60 minutes or until the sauce begins to bubble and the mozzarella is melted



Pasta Fagioli

Ingredients

- 8 ounces (1 cup) dried cannellini or 3 cups canned beans
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, lightly crushed
- Salt
- 1/4 cup (or a little more) olive oil
- 1 cup peeled, seeded, and chopped fresh tomatoes
- 1/2 cup (or a little more) water
- 1 heaping teaspoon tomato paste
- 1 small dried peperocino, crumbled
- 8 ounces ditalini or spaghetti

Directions

- Place beans in a bowl with cold water and let stand for 4 hours
- Drain the beans and place them in a pot with fresh water covered by 1/2 inch
- Bring water to a boil over low heat
- Cover the pot and cook for 1 hour or until the beans are soft
- When the beans are almost done, cook the garlic in olive oil in a large saucepan on medium heat
- Add celery after garlic cooks
- When the garlic is golden, remove and add tomatoes, tomato paste, water, peperocino, and salt
- Simmer for 10 minutes until sauce thickens
- Add beans to the tomato sauce and cover with a lid
- Bring to a simmer and mash some of the beans with the back of a spoon
- Stir in the pasta and cook until pasta is al dente
- Mixture should be very thick when done



About

Frances Brooks was from Nutley New Jersey, her family originating in Rocchetta Italy. She got her cooking skills from her mother and she always loved sharing her recipes with her family. The three dishes, chicken cutlets, eggplant parmigiano and pasta fagioli were all favorites of her family members. Frances put love and passion into everything she did, always presenting herself with a smile. She left a lasting impact on each life she encountered, lifting spirits with her positivity, bubbly personality, and kind heart. She and her husband Paul shared a bond like no other, making it so special watching them cook in the kitchen together. This cookbook is in remembrance of the loving Frances Brooks and her amazing Italian meals filled with love.

