In the Footsteps of Nonna: Recipes and Ramblings in Southern Italy and Sicily

Bill Abruzzo
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Passion for his Italian heritage and its food routed Bill Abruzzo out of his lawyer’s suits and into chef’s whites. He has traveled widely and often to the Italian peninsula, retracing the youthful foodcentric vacations he shared with his grandmother with his adult palate and eyes, and exploring new regions and products. This book is the first planned in his Recipes and Ramblings series, and in it he takes readers on an exuberant tour of the regions of Calabria, Apulia, Abruzzo, Campania, Lazio, Molise, Basilicata, and Sicily.

Abruzzo’s energetic descriptions of the local food markets, fishing villages, street vendors and agriturismi (farmhouse resorts) introduce each chapter and recipe. He shares his authoritative knowledge about regional culinary history and techniques with vivid imagery and anecdotes, which are further illustrated with his many color photographs of each dish and of Italian scenes.

The book is a great combination of informal travelogue and top-notch recipe instruction. American home cooks who have not yet experimented with salt cod, octopus, rabbit, tripe, or other infrequently employed foods will be lured by Abruzzo’s patient, uncomplicated instruction and tempting descriptions. He’s learned from a large circle of friends and local food producers throughout southern Italy and refreshingly always credits his mentors.

The author is not only a professional chef, but operates a specialty food business from his small Virginia farm. Herbs and Italian vegetables feature prominently in this cookbook, and his brimming enthusiasm for the freshest ingredients, and for making breads, pastas, and soups from scratch, will have readers running for their rolling pins.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (Summer 2016)

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