

Nonna Virginia & Nonno Oscar's Baccalà

Soak dried Baccala for up to 4 days in water

(Change water daily, some change it every 8 hours))

Beat gently with hammer, try not to break skin

Remove bones (Tie bones in calico or double muslin & discard fins)

Cut into 3-4cm pieces

For 1kg dried Baccalà: (vary quantities to taste)

- ❑ ¾ cup olive oil (not EVO)
- ❑ 3 med. finely diced onions
- ❑ 4++ cloves crushed garlic
- ❑ 2 cups diced celery
- ❑ 12 small (double) salted anchovies, washed, filleted & chopped
- ❑ 2 tblspns *conserva* (tomato paste)
- ❑ 1 cup water
- ❑ 1½ L full-cream milk
- ❑ 500 mls water
- ❑ ½ bunch Italian parsley, chopped
- ❑ 1 tspn each of cinnamon, salt & white pepper (to taste)
- ❑ 200mls cream

Fry onion & garlic in oil.

Add celery & anchovies.

Add Baccalà. (Some cooks dust Baccalà in flour)

Dissolve *conserva* in 1 cup water, then add to pan.

Add ½ tspn salt/ pepper/ cinnamon and parsley.

Bring milk and water to boil.

Add to heated Baccalà – also add bones tied in calico or muslin.

Bring to boil and simmer for 2-3++hrs or until tender.

Taste. Add ½ tspn more salt/ pepper/ cinnamon and parsley.

Add cream at end.

* Remember to freeze bones etc until rubbish day!

Other dishes served with Nonna Virginia and Nonno Oscar's Baccalà

We usually serve Baccalà with Polenta (50 white semolina/50 yellow corn meal) and mum's vegetable dishes: – spinach and silver-beet cooked down with onion; peas cooked with onion, garlic, tomato and parsley; beans cooked with onion, tomato and parsley; *peperonata*; mushrooms cooked with onion, a little garlic and parsley; and finally dad's favourite which is savoy cabbage cooked with onion and seasoned with cinnamon and white pepper.

These vegetable dishes, slow-cooked in a little olive oil, are very simple and highlight the true flavour of the vegetable. They will live on into the next generation; everyone in our family has a favourite.