At trattoria Santo Palato, Sarah Cicolini embraces the soulful simplicity of Roman dishes and Abruzzo's peasant classics.
Santo Palato is in service or not, you’ll likely find Cicolini in its small dining room or even smaller kitchen receiving deliveries or prepping ingredients. Santo Palato’s dimensions keep the menu limited (used throughout). Glass from Ditali & fusilli (used throughout). Dulux Gold Treasure paint from Porters Wood (20 minutes). Remove from heat and stir in basil. For tomato sauce, stir oil and garlic in a large saucepan over low heat until golden (5 minutes). Add tomatoes, season to taste, and cook, stirring occasionally, until falling apart (8 minutes). Add passata and simmer until thickened (20 minutes). Remove from heat and stir in basil. 3 For fresh cherry tomatoes, halved 800 ml tomato passata 1 cup (loosely packed) basil, torn 1 For pasta dough, place flour in a well in the centre. Place eggs and yolks in the centre and gently beat together with a fork, slowly incorporating the flour to form a dough, then knead vigorously by hand until smooth and elastic (10 minutes). Wrap dough in plastic and rest for 1 hour in the refrigerator. Feed dough through pasta machine, starting at the widest setting, reducing settings notch by notch until the second-last setting. Cut pasta into twelve 12cm-long pieces (you may have some pasta dough leftover, which can be frozen for another time). Place on a floured tray and cover with a tea towel. 2 For bechamel, combine butter, flour and nutmeg in a cold saucepan over low heat. Whisk until mixture begins to brown (4 minutes). Gradually add milk, whisking constantly until smooth, then bring mixture to a simmer. Remove from heat, season to taste, and continue stirring for 2 minutes until bechamel is thick but still a bit liquidy. 3 For beef filling, heat oil and butter in a large saucepan over low heat. Add onion and stir occasionally until translucent (10 minutes). Add beef, season to taste, and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned (15 minutes). Cool, then add ricotta, nutmeg, Parmigiano-Reggiano and 2 tbsp bechamel, stirring to combine, then fold in spinach and basil. 4 For tomato sauce, stir oil and garlic in a large saucepan over low heat until golden (5 minutes). Add tomatoes, season to taste, and stir occasionally, until falling apart (8 minutes). Add passata and simmer until thickened (20 minutes). Remove from heat and stir in basil. 5 Preheat oven to 180°C. Blanch two pieces of pasta at a time in a large saucepan of salted boiling water (2 minutes). Drain and lay out cooked pasta on a clean, dry surface and distribute beef filling evenly, along the centre of each sheet. Roll into semi-tight tubes and place, seam-side down, in a lightly oiled tray or large baking dish to fit snugly. Cover evenly with tomato sauce, cheese and remaining bechamel and bake until the cheese is melted and edges are golden (25 minutes). WINE SUGGESTION Fresh dry Lambrusco. WINE SUGGESTION Fresh dry Lambrusco.
**Lasagne with Romanesco**

SERVES 6 // PREP TIME 30 MINS // COOK 1 HR 45 MINS

“Amatriciana is always made with meat, but I often swap it for romanesco (see note), Roman cauliflower, which I cook beyond the point of doneness,” says Cicolini. “The longer cooking time pushes the romanesco past its natural sweetness and pulls out all these savoury flavours. It’s a complex dish with layered flavours to season to taste.”

155 ml extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing 180 gm white onion, finely chopped 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped 5 small anchovy fillets 900 gm (2 large heads) romanesco (see note), florets and stalks separated and chopped 400 gm (1½ heads) cauliﬂower, ﬂorets and stalks separated and chopped 400 gm (5 cups) Parmigiano-Reggiano, ﬁnely grated 400 gm smoked provolone or scamorza, cut into 2.5 cm cubes

**BESCIAPELLA**

500 gm (3⅓ cups) “00” flour 180 gm (about 3) eggs 100 gm (about 5) egg yolks 180 gm (about 3) eggs 500 gm (3⅓ cups) “00” flour 120 gm unsalted butter 90 gm “00” flour, sifted 1 small nutmeg, ﬁnely grated 1 litre (4 cups) milk, at room temperature

1 For pasta dough, place flour in a work surface and form a well in the centre. Place eggs and yolks in the centre and gently beat together with a fork, slowly incorporating the flour to form a dough, then knead vigorously by hand until smooth and elastic (10 minutes). Wrap dough in plastic and rest for 1 hour in the refrigerator. Feed dough through pasta machine, starting at the widest setting, reducing settings notch by notch until the second-last setting. Cut pasta into twelve 35 cm x 12 cm sheets, then place on ﬂoured trays and cover with tea towels.

2 For béchamel, whisk butter, flour and nutmeg in a cold saucepan over low heat until beginning to brown (4 minutes). Gradually add milk, whisking constantly until smooth, then bring to a simmer. Remove from heat, season to taste, and continue stirring for 2 minutes until béchamel is thick but still a bit liquidy.

3 Preheat oven to 180°C. Heat 150 ml oil in a large saucepan over low heat. When oil begins to shimmer, add onion, garlic and anchovies, and stir occasionally, until onion is translucent (15 minutes). Add romanesco and cauliflower, ﬂorets and 250 ml of water, then season to taste, cover, and cook until tender (25-30 minutes).

4 Meanwhile, add stalks to a saucepan and cover with cold water. Lightly salt water, bring to a boil, then cook until stalks are tender (20 minutes). Drain, then return stalks to pan with remaining oil. Purée with a stick blender and season to taste.

5 Blanch pasta sheets two at a time in salted boiling water (2 minutes). Drain and set aside on sheets of baking paper.

6 Lay two pasta sheets in the base of a greased 35 cm x 25 cm baking dish to ﬁt neatly. Spoon a little béchamel onto the pasta, then a ﬁfth of the ﬂorets into the pasta, then a little of the puree, béchamel and cheeses. Continue layering, reserving a little béchamel, cheeses and ﬂorets for the topping. Bake for 25 minutes, then increase oven to 200°C and bake until edges are crisp and top is browned (10-20 minutes). Note Romanesco is available from select greengrocers. Substitute broccoli.

**Wine suggestion** Orange wine from Friuli.
PASTA CECI E PANCETTA AFFUMICATA

Ditali with chickpeas and smoked pancetta

SERVES 4-6 // PREP TIME 5 MINS // COOKTIME 1 HR 5 MINS (PLUS SOAKING, COOLING)

“I learnt this recipe from my grandmother,” says Cicolini. “She would make this classic soup with pancetta leftover from charcuterie plates. I add dried sweet peppers, but you can also use dried chilli flakes.”

Start this recipe a day ahead to soak the chickpeas. Pictured p30.

200 gm dried chickpeas, soaked overnight
1 small onion
1 carrot
1 leek, halved lengthwise
180 ml (3/4 cup) extra-virgin olive oil
180 gm smoked pancetta (see note) or pancetta, cut into 5mm dice
2 garlic cloves, diced
2 sun-dried tomatoes, diced
180 gm dried chickpeas, soaked overnight

1. Drain chickpeas and transfer to a large saucepan. Add twice the volume of water as the chickpeas, then add onion, carrot and leek. Bring to the boil and cook until tender (30 minutes). Season to taste, then cool (40 minutes). Drain, discarding vegetables and reserving cooking water.
2. Heat oil in a large saucepan over low heat. When oil begins to shimmer, add pancetta, garlic, tomatoes and paprika, stirring occasionally to prevent burning, until pancetta is browned (about 5 minutes). Add chickpeas, cooking water (about 800ml) and bring to a simmer over low-medium heat, then add chickpeas and return to a simmer. Cook for another 15 minutes, add chilli, season to taste, then add dried chilli flakes to taste. Cook until ditali is just short of al dente (3 minutes less than cooking time on packet). Remove from heat and cover for 3 minutes to finish cooking. Serve topped with black pepper to taste.

Note: Smoked pancetta is available from select Italian delicatessens.

Beer suggestion: Nutty amber ale.

MEZZE MANICHE ALLA GRICIA

Mezze maniche with guanciale, Pecorino Romano and black pepper

SERVES 4-6 // PREP TIME 10 MINS // COOK TIME 2 HRS 10 MINS

“In Rome, gricia is just as famous as carbonara or cacio e pepe,” says Cicolini. “It’s got all the classic Roman ingredients: guanciale, Pecorino Romano and black pepper.”

1 tbsp black peppercorns
400 gm (5 cups) Pecorino Romano
320 gm guanciale (see note), cut into lardons
500 gm dried mezze maniche (see note)

1. Dry-roast peppercorns in a small frying pan over low heat, swirling until very fragrant (5 minutes; see cook’s notes p176). Cool, then coarsely grind with a mortar and pestle.
2. Grind guanciale to medium heat. Add pasta water as needed to keep the pan from burning, until guanciale is crisp (7 minutes). Leave guanciale in pan with 2 tbsp fat and reserve 1 tbsp fat separately.
3. Cook pasta in a large saucepan of salted boiling water until just short of al dente (2 minutes less than the time on packet instructions). Drain, reserving 1 litre pasta water.
4. Return pan with fat and reserve 1 tbsp fat to saucepan. Return pan with fat to medium heat. Add pasta and a ladleful of pasta water, then increase heat to high and stir constantly, adding pasta water as needed until pasta is al dente (2 minutes). Remove pan from heat and gradually stir in pecorino mixture, reserving a little extra to serve. Add reserved fat, and stir constantly until emulsified, adding a little more pasta water if needed. Serve immediately topped with remaining pecorino mixture.

Note: Mezze maniche, a short tubular pasta, is available from Italian grocers. Guanciale, cured pork cheek, is available from cheese shops or delicatessens.

Wine suggestion: Crisp white Frascati.

100 ml extra-virgin olive oil
2 onions, diced
2 carrots, diced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 bay leaf
450 gm coarsely minced lamb
or mutton (see note)
250 ml dry white wine

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over low-medium heat. When oil begins to shimmer, add onion, carrot, garlic, bay leaf and a pinch of salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened (15 minutes). Increase heat to medium-high, add lamb and fry, stirring occasionally, until almost cooked (5 minutes).
2. Add wine and simmer until almost cooked (5 minutes).
3. Add 250ml warm water, then reduce heat to low, cover with a lid, and simmer, stirring occasionally, and adding water as needed to keep the pan from drying out, until lamb is browned and flavours are infused (1½ hours).

Note: Mutton gives this ragù a stronger flavour than lamb; it’s available to order from select butchers. Cicolini uses 60-month aged or 36-month aged Parmigiano-Reggiano. It’s unavailable, substitute with Parmigiano-Reggiano made from the milk of vaccina rosse (red cows), which is available from cheese shops such as Formaggi Ocello.

Wine suggestion: Rich red Montepulciano.

FUSILLI CON RAGÙ DI AGNELLO

Fusilli with lamb ragù

SERVES 4-6 // PREP TIME 10 MINS // COOK TIME 2 HRS 10 MINS

“In Abruzzo we eat a lot of lamb and mutton; it turns up roasted, stewed and simmered in sauces,” says Cicolini. “This dish riffs on this classic Abruzzese pasta accompanied by adding a little lemon rind for fragrance and flavour, and the thyme evokes the wild herbs that the sheep encounter as they graze through the mountains.”

Pictured p30.

2 tbsp black peppercorns
500 gm (8½ cups) Pecorino Romano, finely grated
120 gm Parmigiano-Roggiano, finely grated
500 gm dried fusilli

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat, swirling until very fragrant (5 minutes; see cook’s notes p176). Cool, then coarsely grind with a mortar and pestle.
2. Grind guanciale to medium heat. Add pasta water as needed to keep the pan from burning, until guanciale is crisp (7 minutes). Leave guanciale in pan with 2 tbsp fat and reserve 1 tbsp fat separately.
3. Cook pasta in a large saucepan of salted boiling water until just short of al dente (2 minutes less than the time on packet instructions). Drain, reserving 1 litre pasta water.
4. Return pan with fat to medium heat. Add pasta and a ladleful of pasta water, then increase heat to high and stir constantly, adding pasta water as needed until pasta is al dente (2 minutes). Remove pan from heat and gradually stir in pecorino mixture, reserving a little extra to serve. Add reserved fat, and stir constantly until emulsified, adding a little more pasta water if needed. Serve immediately topped with remaining pecorino mixture.

Note: Mezze maniche, a short tubular pasta, is available from Italian grocers. Guanciale, cured pork cheek, is available from cheese shops or delicatessens.

Wine suggestion: Crisp white Frascati.

100 ml extra-virgin olive oil
2 onions, diced
2 carrots, diced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 bay leaf
450 gm coarsely minced lamb
or mutton (see note)
250 ml dry white wine, such as fiano
500 gm dried fusilli
75 gm Parmigiano-Roggiano (see note), finely grated
Finely grated rind of 1 lemon

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over low-medium heat. When oil begins to shimmer, add onion, carrot, garlic, bay leaf and a pinch of salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened (15 minutes). Increase heat to medium-high, add lamb and fry, stirring occasionally, until almost cooked (5 minutes).
2. Add wine and simmer until almost cooked (5 minutes).
3. Add 250ml warm water, then reduce heat to low, cover with a lid, and simmer, stirring occasionally, and adding water as needed to keep the pan from drying out, until lamb is browned and flavours are infused (1½ hours).
4. Meanwhile, cook pasta in a large saucepan of salted boiling water according to packet instructions until al dente. Drain, reserving 1 litre pasta water. Add pasta and half a ladle of pasta water to the ragù, stir to coat, adding a little more pasta water to loosen the sauce if needed. Season to taste and serve immediately topped with Parmigiano-Reggiano and lemon rind.

Note: Mutton gives this ragù a stronger flavour than lamb; it’s available to order from select butchers. Cicolini uses 60-month aged or 36-month aged Parmigiano-Reggiano. It’s unavailable, substitute with Parmigiano-Reggiano made from the milk of vaccina rosse (red cows), which is available from cheese shops such as Formaggi Ocello.

Wine suggestion: Rich red Montepulciano.