

# Quick and Easy Antipasti

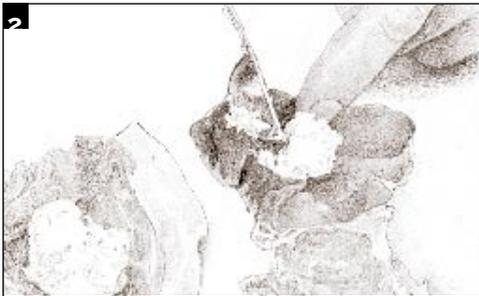
Italian antipasti consists of a group of small dishes set out before the meal—or, as the name implies, before the pasta course. The recipes illustrated below were developed by Michelle Scicolone, author of *The Antipasto Table* (Morrow, 1991). Use them alone or together as appetizers, cocktail snacks, or to make a light meal with salad and pasta.

## PROSCIUTTO AND GOAT CHEESE ROULADES

Serves 8



1. Mix 8 ounces of mild fresh goat cheese, 2 tablespoons of minced fresh parsley leaves, and 1 small minced garlic clove in a small bowl until well blended. Cut 12 strips of prosciutto in half, forming 24 strips, each about 3 inches by 1½ inches. (You'll need about 4 ounces of prosciutto in all.)



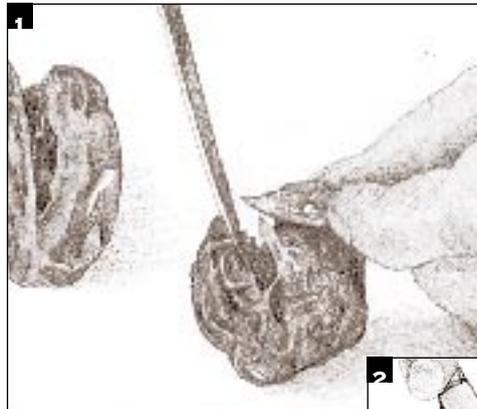
2. Place about 2 teaspoons of the cheese mixture on each prosciutto strip.



3. Fold the sides of each strip over the cheese mixture, then fold one end over, forming a roll. Arrange the rolls on a plate and sprinkle them with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, 1 tablespoon of fresh lemon juice, and ground black pepper to taste. Serve them at room temperature.

## PARMESAN WITH DATES

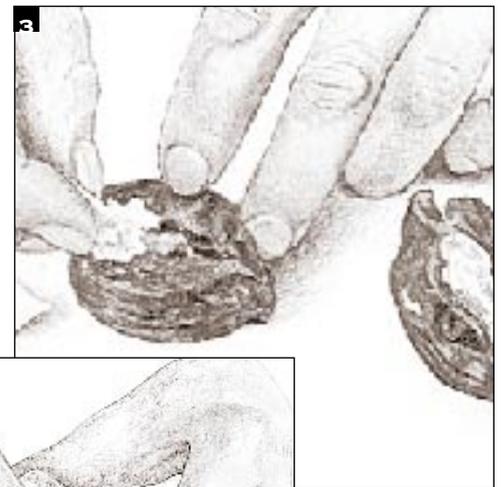
Serves 8



1. Slit each of 16 large dates (such as medjool) lengthwise and remove the pits.



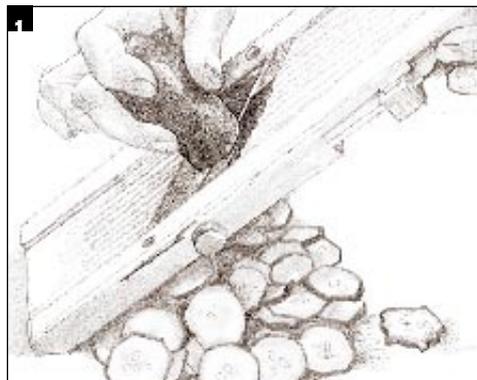
2. With a small almond-shaped cheese knife, cut or break 4 ounces of room-temperature Parmigiano cheese into thin pieces roughly the same length as the dates.



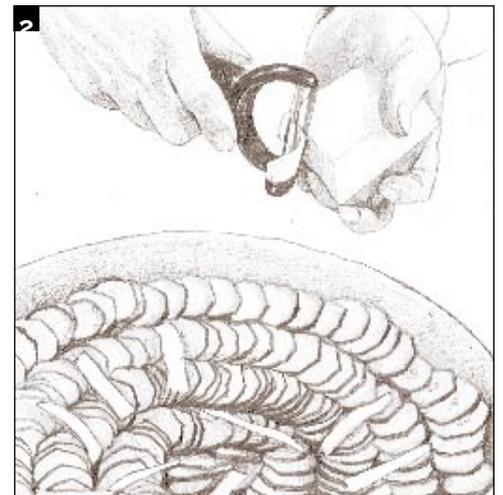
3. Place a piece of cheese in each date, close the date around the cheese, and serve.

## MARINATED ZUCCHINI WITH PARMESAN

Serves 8



1. Using a mandolin, V-slicer, or food processor, slice 1 pound of well-rinsed zucchini into very thin slices.



2. Arrange the slices, overlapping them slightly, on a shallow platter. Drizzle the zucchini with ½ cup of olive oil, 3 tablespoons of fresh lemon juice, and salt and pepper to taste. With a vegetable peeler or a small, sharp paring knife, shave 4 ounces of Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese over the zucchini. Serve.

## CRISPY CHEESE WAFERS

Makes about 2½ dozen



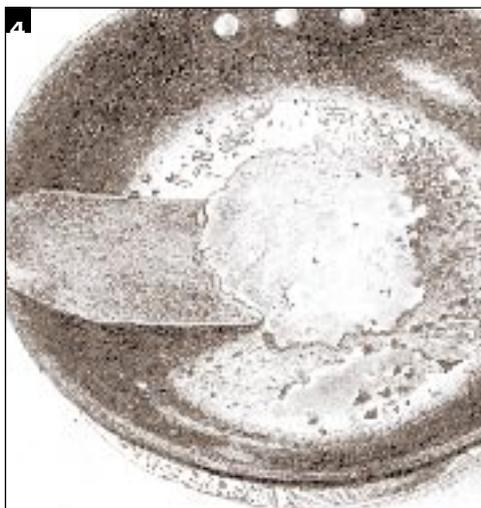
1. Grate 1 pound of Parmigiano-Reggiano or Montasio cheese on the largest holes of a box grater.



2. Heat 1 teaspoon of butter in a medium skillet over medium-low heat, coat the pan bottom with butter, and pour out the excess. Sprinkle a 3-inch area of the pan with a pinch of cornmeal. Spread 2 tablespoons of the grated cheese in the 3-inch circle. (Do not make the layer of cheese too thick or the wafer will be chewy instead of crispy.)



3. Cook the cheese, flattening it with a spatula if necessary, until melted and golden on one side, about 2 minutes.



4. Carefully flip the wafer over and cook until it is golden and set, about 1 minute more. Do not let the wafer brown or it will become bitter. Transfer the wafer to a paper towel to drain. Wipe out any crumbs from the pan and repeat with the remaining cornmeal and cheese.

## GRILLED MOZZARELLA AND SUN-DRIED TOMATO SKEWERS

Serves 8



1. Cut 1 pound of fresh mozzarella into sixteen 1-inch cubes. (*Ciliegine*, that is, small, 1-ounce fresh mozzarella balls, can be used in place of the cut cheese.)



2. On each of 8 short bamboo or wooden skewers, alternately thread marinated sun-dried tomatoes, mozzarella, and basil leaves. Brush the cheese with some tomato oil, then grill or broil the skewers until the cheese just begins to melt, turning once. Serve immediately.

## ARTICHOKE CROSTINI

Makes 8 crostini



1. Remove the leaves from 4 steamed and cooled artichokes. Reserve the leaves for another use.



2. Scrape the fuzzy choke away from the artichoke heart.



3. Mash the artichoke hearts and stems with a fork. Stir in 1 to 2 teaspoons of lemon juice, 2 tablespoons of olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. (Can be covered and kept at room temperature up to 3 hours.)



4. Grill or broil 8 slices of 3-by-2-by-½-inch Italian or French bread on both sides. Rub one side with a peeled garlic clove.

5. Spread the artichoke mixture on the toast. Serve immediately.

