

Made with Love - The Italian Way - Three Grandmothers from Tuscany

Larraine Segil

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Three grandmothers from Tuscany, Mimma and Franca, sisters, with their very close cousin Lele, grew up in family that cooked together – as do most Italian families. They were career women in other fields, and followed their husbands across the world to Kenya, London and Brussels in their careers. However in their 60's they began to spend more time cooking for family and friends, then friends of friends and soon people were coming to their glorious homes and guest houses in Tuscany from Australia, Canada and the USA, and the magic began. They realized that it was not the cooking lessons that people remembered – although of course they cooked and used the tips and recipes. The magic was in the warmth of human contact, the fact of being hugged, touched and loved, encompassed in the atmosphere of joy that these women created in their homes for their own families and guests. It was the feeling of being accepted by these grandmothers for who they were, no matter their ages or circumstances. It was not their status or wealth that mattered when they gathered around the kitchen table - many of the guests were captains of industry, career women and men at the peaks of their careers, but rather who they were. Over the week that these guests spent with the grannies cooking in their Tuscan homes, each individual opened his or her life, soul and relationships to the group. People spoke about long lost loves, about pain and pleasure, children who took the wrong path, and those who found their way.

And then the guests returned home. But the memory of their Tuscan moments of closeness accompanied by the smells of good food in a kitchen full of wine, laughter and tears, remained with them for decades. The cards, notes, emails, photos keep coming – many years later – from families who relate to these grandmothers as if they were indeed their kin, updating them on births, marriages, lives and deaths. And what Franca, Mimma and Lele realized was that they had tapped into a huge need, a deep wanting in those of the Anglo Saxon cultures, for all the things the grannies represented which many guests felt they lacked - namely

- Family connections and closeness
- Using cooking to transform someone from sadness and depression into happiness and peace of mind
- Building confidence and self esteem through cooking for children and teenagers
- Multi generational respect and love

This book is their stories - their recipes, and a sense of their lives as they cook for family and friends, and teach how to make food with love, the Italian way. Larraine Segil, the author, was privileged to cook with the grandmothers, learn from them, and be inspired to spend more time with family and friends spreading love and good healthy and delicious food, grown fresh, cooked healthily and enjoyed slowly. The sharing of these experiences around a warm and loving table, makes every moment spent together with those one cares for, a pure jewel of memory, sensitive to the taste, the heart and the soul - just what we all need as we rush and stress through our busy lives. The recipes are easy, the stories universal, and the pictures scrumptious.



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