

Inntraveller

Tasting notes...

An insight into Austrian wine

Volcanic vines of Lanzarote

The man from Piemonte



“The Man from Piemonte”

He has cooked for Sophia Loren and Giorgio Armani, and appeared on American cookery programmes, yet **Carlo Zarri** of the Villa San Carlo in Piedmont remains surprisingly grounded...

Amongst the photographs on the villa's website of Carlo with Italian celebrities, you will find even more images of him smiling warmly at the camera alongside people with no claim to fame. To this affable man, a guest is a guest; hospitality is in his blood – the Zarri family has been running inns for four generations.

Hospitality is not the only tradition he is preserving, either. The dishes that he lovingly crafts are based on age-old Piedmontese recipes.

In Piedmont, good food and wine (in this case, Barolo) go hand in hand, and Carlo is also a trained sommelier. It is he who carefully selects the wines for the cellar, which has won awards over the years and earned Carlo the role of Ambassador for Italian Wine. Quite how he fits it all in is a mystery (he has also been heavily involved in the catering for the Italian team at previous winter Olympic Games), yet he still finds time to talk to his guests. For a man with so many strings to his bow, it's hospitality that comes first and foremost.

Carlo's hazelnut gnocchi

INGREDIENTS (serves 4)

500g potatoes
250g superfine plain flour
100g ground hazelnuts
1 egg
10g salt

To serve

60g butter
Fresh sage leaves
Extra virgin olive oil
Grated parmesan

METHOD

Leaving the skins on, boil the potatoes for 30 minutes. Peel and mash them, then leave to cool.

Combine the mashed potato with the flour, ground hazelnuts, egg and salt. Mix well.

Form the mixture into 'sausages' approximately 1cm in diameter. Cut into walnut-sized pieces.

Cook the gnocchi in lightly salted boiling water until they rise to the surface. Drain, return to the pan and toss with the butter and a drizzle of olive oil. Serve garnished with a handful of grated parmesan and torn sage leaves.

CARLO'S TIPS

Don't use new potatoes for this recipe, as they won't produce the right consistency. As for the ground hazelnuts, any type will do, but if you can find some grown in Piedmont, so much the better!



Sample Carlo's cooking for yourself

Villa San Carlo is the starting point for our **Piedmont's Hills & Vineyards** walking holiday (7 nights from **£750pp**; 1 May-30 Jun & 24 Aug-31 Oct), and is the base for our **Piedmont & the Barolo Vineyards** break (3 nights from **£282pp**; 1 May-31 Oct).