

# A Taste of

# ITALY

The Kitchen's Katie Lee revisits one of her favorite places—and comes home with some great recipes.



In Positano, Katie and a friend chartered a boat for a day on the Mediterranean Sea.

ITALY PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KATIE LEE.

**Katie Lee** is not at all Italian, but you'd never know it looking at the photos from her recent vacation. *The Kitchen* cohost grew up in a small West Virginia town, and her family didn't travel much. But when she studied abroad in Florence during college, she fell in love with Italy and has since made a half-dozen trips back. She now knows how to look like a local: She gets around on a bike, rarely carries a guidebook and only drinks cappuccinos before noon. "Espresso and pizza—that's how I deal with jet lag," Katie says. On this trip, she set off for Puglia in the southeast, a less touristy region she had never seen. It's perfect for someone like Katie who wants to eat and live like a native. On a whim, she ended her vacation by road-tripping from Puglia to the Amalfi Coast in the southwest—in part so she could spend some time on the water, but mainly so she could eat at one of her favorite old restaurants, Lo Scoglio in Positano. She came home with the best possible souvenir: a recipe for Lo Scoglio's famous zucchini pasta. "The owner said it wouldn't be the same because we don't have their zucchini in the States," says Katie, "but I think it's about 98 percent there!"

Turn the page for four recipes inspired by Katie's travels.







## SALAMI SALAD

ACTIVE: 15 min | TOTAL: 15 min | SERVES: 2 to 4

- 4 cups baby arugula
- 1 fennel bulb, quartered, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 ounces salami, thinly sliced
- Shredded parmesan cheese, for topping

**1.** Combine the arugula, fennel and tomatoes in a large bowl; season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with the olive oil and lemon juice and toss to coat.  
**2.** Top the salad with the salami and parmesan.



Katie borrowed a bike from Borgo Egnazia, her hotel in Puglia, and spent an afternoon exploring nearby olive groves. "I had to work off all the pasta and cheese!" she says.

FOOD PHOTOS: RYAN LEE; FOOD STYLING: ANNE DISKID; PROP STYLING: PAGE HICKS



One of Katie's favorite restaurants, Lo Scoglio, sits on a dock that stretches out into the water. "You feel like you're in some kind of alternate universe," says Katie.



## SPAGHETTI WITH ZUCCHINI

ACTIVE: 20 min | TOTAL: 20 min | SERVES: 2

- Kosher salt
- 8 ounces spaghetti
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, smashed
- 2 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
- 6 fresh basil leaves, torn
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup grated parmigiano-reggiano cheese, plus more for topping
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup grated pecorino cheese

**1.** Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the spaghetti and cook until al dente, 9 to 11 minutes. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, then drain the pasta.  
**2.** Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic; when it begins to sizzle, add the zucchini and sauté for a couple of minutes. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of the pasta water and cook until the zucchini is tender, about 5 minutes. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt and half of the basil. Remove the garlic.  
**3.** Add the pasta to the skillet along with about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the reserved cooking water; shake the pan vigorously, adding a little more cooking water if the pasta looks dry. Cook, tossing, until the liquid is absorbed, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the parmigiano, pecorino and the remaining basil; toss. Top with more parmesan.



## SPAGHETTI-STYLE GREEN BEANS

ACTIVE: 30 min | TOTAL: 40 min | SERVES: 4 to 6

Kosher salt

- 1 pound Chinese long beans (or green beans), trimmed
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 14.5-ounce can cherry tomatoes
- 3 fresh basil leaves, torn

Freshly ground pepper

- ½ cup shaved ricotta salata cheese (about 2 ounces)

**1.** Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the beans and cook until tender, about 2 minutes. Drain and dry well with paper towels.

**2.** Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil and the garlic in a medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring, until the garlic just starts browning, about 2 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes, basil, 1 teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Reduce the heat to low and bring to a low simmer. Cook, stirring, until the tomatoes start breaking down, 15 to 20 minutes.

**3.** Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the beans and stir-fry until slightly browned and hot, 1 to 1½ minutes; season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a platter and top with the tomatoes and ricotta salata. Season with more pepper.



Katie says the dinner she had here at Masseria Il Frantoio was one of the top five of her life. This green bean dish is a riff on one of the courses.



## PIZZA MARGHERITA

ACTIVE: 1 hr | TOTAL: 1 hr 40 min | SERVES: 4 to 6 (two 10-inch pizzas)

### FOR THE DOUGH

- 1 ¼-ounce packet active dry yeast (about 2¼ teaspoons)
- 2½ cups plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- Kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for brushing

### FOR THE SAUCE AND TOPPINGS

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh oregano
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh basil, plus sliced leaves for topping
- 4 ripe Roma tomatoes, diced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- Cornmeal, for dusting
- 8 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese, thinly sliced

**1.** Make the dough: Fill a small bowl with hot tap water. Let the bowl sit 2 minutes, then dump the water. In the warmed bowl, combine the yeast, 1 tablespoon flour, the sugar and ¼ cup warm water (105° to 115°). Let stand about 5 minutes. (The mixture will be creamy and slightly bubbly; if it isn't, start over with fresh new yeast.)

**2.** In a large bowl, mix 2½ cups flour and 2 teaspoons salt. Make a well in the center and stir in the yeast mixture, olive oil and ¼ cup warm water (105° to 115°) with a wooden spoon. Mix until the dough starts to come away from the side of the bowl (it will be sticky). Turn out onto a lightly floured surface; knead with floured hands until soft and elastic, about 8 minutes. Form into a ball.

**3.** Brush another large bowl with olive oil. Add the dough and roll to coat with the oil. Tightly cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, 1 to 1½ hours. Meanwhile, put a pizza stone on the lowest oven rack and preheat to 500°. Let the stone preheat, about 1 hour.

**4.** Make the sauce: Combine the olive oil, oregano, minced basil, tomatoes and ¼ teaspoon salt in a small saucepan over medium heat; bring to a simmer, stirring frequently. Reduce the heat to low and cook until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a food processor and puree until smooth. Return the sauce to the pan and cook over medium heat until reduced to 1 cup, about 10 minutes. Season with pepper to taste.

**5.** Transfer the dough to a floured surface and cut in half. Form each half into a disk and roll out into a 10-inch circle with a lightly floured rolling pin. (I like my pizza paper-thin!) Pinch around the edge to form a crust.

**6.** Sprinkle a pizza peel with cornmeal and carefully slide one round of dough onto the peel. Jerk the peel in a back-and-forth motion once or twice to make sure the dough does not stick. (If the dough is sticking, add extra cornmeal.) Drizzle the dough with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and top with half of the sauce, leaving a small border.

**7.** Transfer the dough to the hot stone in the oven, using a jerking motion to slide the dough off the peel. Bake 5 minutes. Using the peel, rotate the pizza for even browning and top with half of the mozzarella. Bake until the cheese melts and the crust is golden brown and crisp, 3 to 5 more minutes. Remove from the oven using the peel, transfer to a cutting board and scatter half of the basil on top. Repeat to make the second pizza.



Whenever Katie visits Rome, she gets a pizza at Da Baffetto—and then tries to replicate it when she gets home.

