

Osterville's Amie Bakery offers Amie Académie, an immersive set of classes for baking and cooking enthusiasts to learn the secrets of the professionals.

Comfort Food

By Julie Craven Wagner ~ Photos by Meghan Murphy



In the spring of 2022, the staff at Cape Cod Life Publications attended a course offered in the Amie Académie curriculum on making fresh pasta. Since most of us are pasta enthusiasts, despite our various levels of culinary acumen, the thought of making our own pasta appealed to the fantasy we have all held close at one point or another: Chuck it all and run away to the hills of Tuscany!

Haven't we all wondered what it would be like to live a carefree existence where we stroll to the village to buy a sack of semolina, collect eggs from the hens grazing the courtyard of our modest villa, and whip up a modest peasant's dish served in the finest restaurants around the world.

Well, here on Cape Cod, at least a small part of that dream can become a reality. Amie Smith opened Amie Bakery in the quaint village of Osterville in 2016. A frequent *Cape Cod LIFE* "Best of" winner in the category of Best Bakery, Smith has brought her passion for French baking and high-quality provisions to the Cape and inspired a legion of enthusiastic fans. In 2020, Smith expanded to a new facility she built a stone's throw from the village. Fully involved with the design and layout of the new bakery, Smith made sure the commercial kitchen was suited for an expanding Amie Académie schedule of classes.

Our pasta class began with donning baker's aprons to protect our clothes from the clouds of flour that were certainly about to take flight in the stainless steel baking emporium. We were allotted a certain number of grams of flour which we mounded into a small hill on the metal counter in front of us. And then, against everything we have been told since we were young children, we cracked an egg directly on the pillow of flour. Surprisingly, disaster did not ensue and using a standard dinner fork, we quickly mastered the technique of incorporating the egg into the flour, and to our collective shock, a mound of dough evolved from two disparate and simple ingredients.



Smith and her talented staff assisted each of us with the true art of the process as we created manageably-sized balls, that became strips, to feed through pasta presses—both manual and electric—and even learned the mystifying technique of rolling tortellini; the delicious, filled pasta whose shape is said to have been inspired by the goddess Venus' navel. One thing for certain, it makes sense that the goddess of love had something to do with the delicate pasta.

The camaraderie of co-workers eventually evolved into a sort of competition with unlikely participants mastering the art of the centuries-old artisan practice of rolling, cutting and shaping a humble two-ingredient dough. Smith's tips and tricks yielded

shock and awe when executed correctly, yet we were all relieved to be sent home with a robust packet of instructions and recipes. After exhausting the last ball of our dough, our pasta, freshly dusted with semolina, patiently dried on racks and sheet pans as we adjourned to the dining area of the bakery. Wine was opened, and since Amie Bakery offers full bar service at various events, a cocktail was also on the menu. After a short cocktail interlude, dishes started to arrive from the kitchen as we served ourselves, family-style the string,

stuffed, and rolled pasta we had just created with our own hands; now dressed in a variety of flavorful sauces. A sprinkling of freshly grated cheese was all anyone needed to complete their metaphysical journey to "Old Country."

At the end of the evening, as we departed company—bellies full, heads reeling from the laughter and the intoxicating experience—suggestions of the next Amie Académie course to conquer were tossed from friend to friend. That night at a beautiful French bakery in Osterville, while we hand-crafted the best Italy has to offer, we were all happily reminded we are living our best Cape Cod life. 🇮🇹

Julie Craven Wagner is the editor of Cape Cod HOME.

*“You don’t have to cook fancy
or complicated masterpieces—
just good food from fresh
ingredients.”* – Julia Child





Pasta with Boscaiola Sauce

5 lbs. mushrooms (assorted
button mushrooms, portabella,
and shiitake)

1 cup olive oil

Salt and white pepper to taste

½ lb. sliced prosciutto, chopped

1 qt. light cream

2 ½ lbs. vine-ripened tomatoes
(chopped)

½ tablespoon fresh sage leaves,
julienned and chopped

½ lb. Parmesan cheese rinds

For the garnish:

Parmesan cheese shavings

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 450° F.

Clean and dice mushrooms and coat in olive oil, salt and white pepper. Roast in the oven for 45 minutes, or until crispy. Set aside.

In a large saucepan, sauté prosciutto and half the sage until fragrant, about 5-7 minutes. Add the cream and bring to a boil, stirring often so the cream does not separate, turn the heat down to medium-low. Add the chopped tomatoes, Parmesan cheese rinds and the roasted mushrooms. Lower heat and simmer; reduce sauce for three hours, adding the remaining sage just before removing sauce from heat.

Remove the cheese rinds before serving. Serve with fresh wide-ribbon pasta. Sprinkle fresh sage on the pasta and a few thin shavings of Parmesan to garnish. Serves 10-12.

Recipe from *Nantucket Taste Memories: The DeMarco Restaurant Cookbook*. DeMarco Restaurant was an exceptional seasonal restaurant on Nantucket.

Alfredo Sauce

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons minced garlic
- ¾ cup heavy cream
- ¾ cup whole milk
- 1 ½ cups freshly, finely shredded Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- Parsley
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Melt butter in a large, deep skillet (or sauté pan) over medium heat. Add flour, cook for 30 seconds stirring constantly, then add garlic and sauté until flour and garlic are golden, about 30 seconds longer.

While whisking, slowly pour in heavy cream and milk. Cook stirring constantly until mixture simmers and thickens slightly.

Remove from heat, stir in Parmigiano-Reggiano. Return to low heat, stir and let cheese melt through.

Cover and keep warm over warm heat, stirring occasionally, until pasta is finished.

Recipe from Amie Academie.



Pesto alla Genovese

- 2 cups basil or spinach leaves
- 1 cup olive oil
- ¼ cup grated Pecorino Romano
- ¼ cup pine nuts
- 1 small clove garlic, peeled
- Salt

DIRECTIONS

Pick off the basil leaves from the branches. Discard any bruised or blackened leaves. Rinse the leaves in a bowl of cold water. Using a salad spinner, gently spin the leaves dry.

Place all the ingredients in the food processor except the olive oil. Turn on the processor and stream in the olive oil.

Pour the sauce into a small bowl, cover with plastic wrap and reserve until ready to use.

Yields 2 cups.

Recipe from Amie Academie.

Pasta Verdure Mista alla griglia

Vegetable broth

- 2 carrots, chopped
- 3 stalks of celery, chopped
- 1 large Spanish onion, chopped
- 3 cloves of garlic, smashed
- 2 quarts water
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- ¼ stalk of lemon grass
- ½ oz. ginger, roughly chopped

DIRECTIONS

Saute carrots, celery, onion, and garlic. Add water, herbs, and ginger. Simmer ½ hour. Strain and reserve broth. Discard vegetables.

Grilled Vegetables

- 1 zucchini, thinly sliced, lengthwise
- 1 yellow squash, thinly sliced
- 1 small eggplant, peeled and thinly sliced
- 4 tomatoes, halved
- Pinenuts
- Olive oil
- Fresh basil
- Salt & pepper

Slice vegetables. Brush vegetables with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Grill over charcoal (if possible) for 3-4 minutes. Cool and cut into strips.

Toast pinenuts for 7 minutes at 350° F and set aside.

Prepare pasta. Combine with ½ cup vegetable broth per serving with vegetables, fresh basil and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle pasta with toasted pinenuts.

Recipe is from DeMarco's Restaurant on Nantucket.

Tomato Sauce

- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 5 garlic cloves roughly chopped (use as much or as little as preferred)
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- 1-2 teaspoons dried red pepper flakes
- 1 28 oz. can whole peeled tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon sugar

DIRECTIONS

Heat oil in pan and add garlic cloves. Be careful not to burn the garlic, as it will become bitter. Once garlic is infused in the oil, remove from pan. Add the rest of the ingredients and simmer until sauce thickens.

TIP: to reduce some of the acid, add a teaspoon of baking soda to your sauce.

Recipe from Amie Académie.



Nat Rea



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Pasta with White Clam Sauce

- 1 ½ lbs. pasta, cooked
- 36 live small hard-shell clams
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, crushed to a paste
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- 1 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

Open the clams, cut out the flesh and discard the shells. Wash the clams thoroughly under cold running water. Melt the butter with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a small saucepan. Add the crushed garlic, pepper, parsley, oregano, wine and the washed clams. Cover and cook gently over low heat for 15 minutes. Toss pasta with remaining olive oil, sauce and serve.

Serves 6-8.

This recipe is from the Le Petit Café Cooking School.



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