

R I V E R

C A F E

C O O K

Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers

B O O K

T W O

Contents

Cover

List of Recipes

Title Page

Introduction

Drinks

Salads mozzarella frittata

Pasta polenta

Risotto

Soups stocks

Wood-roasted vegetables

Vegetables in padella

Fish shellfish

Pork chicken duck game

Bread pizza bruschetta

Sauces

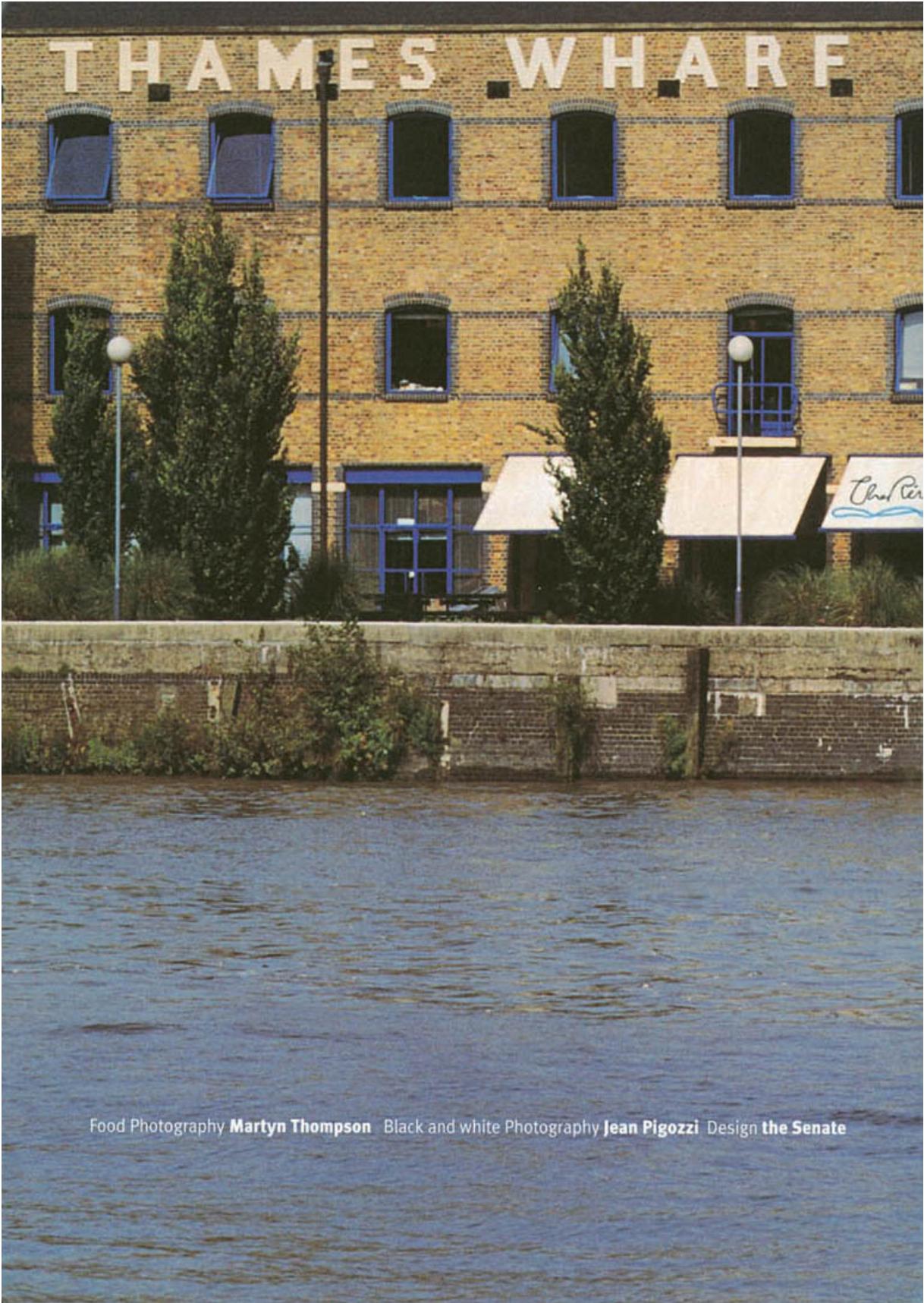
Cream tortes fruit ice cream

Notes

Suppliers

Acknowledgements

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List of Recipes

cquacotta

mond tart

mond, lemon and ricotta cake

rchovy and rosemary

rchovy-caper mayonnaise

ricot, nectarine and plum bruschetta

rlichokes baked in foil with thyme

rlichokes braised with white wine

sparagus and mint frittata

sparagus risotto

aby beetroots baked in foil

aked dried cannellini beans

aked fresh borlotti beans

aked mozzarella with trevise

aked mussels with zucchini, capers and peppers

aked pears with valpolicella

aked peppers with tomatoes and anchovies

aked red onions with thyme

aked trevise wrapped in pancetta

aked whole loin of tuna with coriander

alsamic red peppercorn

arley soup

asil mayonnaise

asil, olive and anchovy

etroot, ricotta and beet leaf salad

ellini I

ellini II

utter chocolate roasted hazelnut torte
utter chocolate truffles
blackberries and prosecco
blackcurrant ice cream
blackcurrants and prosecco
blood oranges and prosecco
brailed duck with chicken and cotechino
brailed lemon and artichoke heart salad
braised bitter cicoria
braised broad beans, peas and artichokes
braised cavolo nero with fennel seeds
braised cime di rapa
braised leeks and artichokes
bresaola, beetroot and horseradish salad
broad bean and pecorino salad
broth with cannellini beans and ciabatta
bruschetta
bruschetta with anchovies marinated in wine
bruschetta with cavolo nero and oil
bruschetta with dried broad beans and chilli
bruschetta with dried herbs
bruschetta with mashed broad beans
bruschetta with anchovies and pangrattato

brannellini bean and bitter cicoria soup
chestnut, pumpkin and farro soup
chicken stock
coffee granita
coppa with winter leaves and mustard
crab risotto
crab salad

rostini

rostini of chicken livers with anchovies

deep-fried shrimps

fish soup

fish stock

fish broad bean soup

fish horseradish

fish pasta

fish red chilli and fennel

green chilli and lemon peel

green herb and pine nut

green risotto with herbs

green risotto with pancetta

green sauce

grilled aubergines with tomato-chilli paste

grilled bresse pigeon marinated in vin santo

grilled marinated pork chops

guinea fowl pan-roasted with milk and marjoram

hazelnut ice cream

jerusalem artichokes and parmesan

layered sardine sandwich

lemon and ricotta ice cream

lemon granita

lemon risotto with basil

linguini with fresh broad beans

loins of venison wrapped in coppa

marinated lobster spaghetti

marinated mozzarella and crème fraîche
ascarpone cream
melon and prosecco
monte bianco
moscato d'asti with fresh lime

new olive oil mayonnaise

agnotta

anna cotta with caramel

anna cotta with grappa and raspberries

appardelle with cavolo nero and lentils

each sorbet

enne with broccoli and green olives

enne with zucchini and ricotta

peppers in olive oil

pink grapefruit and prosecco

sellini, fave e lenticchie sott'olio

pizza dough

pizza with mozzarella, trevise and anchovies

pizza with potato, taleggio and white truffle

pizza with robiola, white truffle and rocket

pizza with taleggio, artichokes and prosciutto

pizza with trevise, pancetta and rosemary

rum ice cream

romegranate and prosecco

romegranate granite

ork tonnato

potato and anchovy gratin

potato sourdough starter

potatoes with fennel and porcini

ot-roasted pheasant stuffed with ricotta
rosiutto and fig salad
rosiutto and radicchio with balsamic vinegar
rosiutto, parmesan and savoy cabbage salad

aspberries and prosecco
avioli with beet leaves
avioli with potato and rocket
avioli with pumpkin and mascarpone
ed mullet with white wine, parsley and garlic
cotta and marjoram frittata
si e bisi
sotto with fennel and vodka
sotto with ricotta and basil
oast grouse marinated in milk
oast grouse stuffed with bruschetta
oast loin of pork wrapped in crackling
oast partridge with thyme and mascarpone
oasted dover sole with oregano and bay
oasted squashes stuffed with sun-dried tomatoes
ocket and potato soup
osemary risotto

alt cod
alt cod salad
alt cod soup
alt cod with chickpeas
alt-roasted chicken wrapped in pancetta
ardinian wild fennel soup
ea bass slashed and stuffed with herbs
eared marinated tuna

pared wild salmon
low-roasted shoulder of pork
soup of farro, borlotti, cannellini and chickpeas
sourdough bread
spaghetti with clams
spaghetti with mussels
spaghetti with rocket and ricotta
medini of monkfish and scallops
minach pasta
minach pasta with ricotta and summer herbs
spring acquacotta
sumante secco with borage
liquid spaghettini
steamed and roasted duck
strawberries and prosecco
summer pudding with valpolicella
summer ribollita
summer thyme
wiss chard gratin

gliatelle con mascarpone e pangrattato
gliatelle with deep-fried zucchini
gliatelle with girolles
gliatelle with walnut sauce
gliatelle with white truffles
irragon
mato and chilli paste
mato and cinnamon
mato bruschetta with fresh cannellini
evise and pancetta risotto
ompettes de mort and girolles frittata

vegetable stock
venison carpaccio
vin santo ice cream

warm anchovy
wet polenta with chicken stock and cavolo nero
wet polenta with fresh porcini
wet polenta with fresh white truffles
white truffle risotto
whole turbot with rosemary baked in sea salt
whole wood-roasted beetroots
wild mushroom risotto
wild salmon baked whole in sea salt
wood pigeons braised in red wine
wood-roasted asparagus
wood-roasted aubergine
wood-roasted celeriac
wood-roasted cherry vine tomatoes
wood-roasted jerusalem artichokes
wood-roasted lobster
wood-roasted pumpkin
wood-roasted squid stuffed with chilli
wood-roasted suckling pig
wood-roasted turbot tranche with capers
wood-roasted whole organic carrots
wood-roasted whole porcini
wood-roasted zucchini

zucchini carpaccio
zucchini frittata
zucchini, Prosciutto e Menta

The River of



Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers

Ebury Press London



Introduction

In the summer of 1994 the River Cafe was redesigned to create a larger, more exciting space, with an Italian wood-burning oven as its focus. Just as we were inspired by the char-grill ten years ago, we are now passionate about the oven's immediacy and responsiveness. It has opened up all kinds of opportunities for doing what we enjoy most – mixing the traditional with the modern.

We discovered how roasting at a high temperature intensifies the flavour of dishes such as porcini stuffed with pancetta and thyme. Roasting slowly, as the oven cools down, also has very special results – a shoulder of pork, for example, rubbed with fennel seeds, garlic and chilli achieves a succulent flavour reminiscent of 'porchetta', traditionally sold from vans and market stalls all over Tuscany. We wrap artichokes with thyme in foil, squash ripe plums and apricots on vanilla-scented bruschetta, stuff pheasants with ricotta and sage and cook them all in the wood oven.

Experimenting at home with our domestic ovens, we achieved the same delicious effects by roasting at a high temperature on the low rack of the oven. Equally, by slow roasting, and ideally using an oven brick to increase the moisture, you can roast overnight very successfully. All the recipes titled 'wood-roasted' use these techniques.

River Cafe Cook Book Two begins with seasonal fruit drinks as they begin the meals we serve in the restaurant. They range from freshly squeezed white peaches and sparkling dry Prosecco, an exuberant summer special, to freshly squeezed pomegranate mixed with campari and Prosecco, a delicious winter aperitivo with a beautiful colour.

Our second chapter, 'antipasti' in a traditional Italian meal, includes many of our favourite, simple starters – hardly recipes, just the pulling together of the finest ingredients to achieve classic dishes such as prosciutto with crisp Savoy cabbage, sweet aged balsamic vinegar and Parmesan, or a simple summer vegetarian carpaccio – slices of young zucchini marinated in lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil with shavings of Parmesan and herb rocket. These recipes and others reflect our open

approach to planning a meal, with many dishes that can be eaten as part of a meal or work equally well on their own.

Fish has increasingly become a focus of our main courses, reflecting a change in our customers' preference. We have discovered and adapted many regional Italian recipes such as a variation on inzimino from Umbria, using salt cod, and baked whole loin of tuna with coriander from Sicily.

We have found new ways to cook duck, venison and game, changing traditional recipes to include other meats, for instance bollito misto with duck. Butchers have responded to our need to know about the breeds and feeds of animals and we love to cook the wonderful organic pork which is becoming increasingly available.

On recent trips to Italy we visited the wine and olive estates at Felsina and Selvapiana to select olive oil. We also went to the regions of Puglia and Sicily, where talking to cooks and producers we learned about their vegetables – cima di rape, ceci and cicoria – spices and the semolina bread called pagnotta.

The recipes in this, our second cookbook, have been stimulated by all these experiences and reflect the food we love to cook and eat at The River Cafe.

Rose Gray & Ruth Rogers London 1997



Drinks



Moscato d'asti with fresh lime
Spumante secco with borragia
Bellini I
Bellini II
Food oranges and prosecco
Melon and prosecco
Strawberries and prosecco
Raspberries and prosecco
Blackcurrants and prosecco
Blackberries and prosecco
Pink grapefruit and prosecco
Pomegranate and prosecco

Moscato d'asti con cedro fresco

Moscato d'asti with fresh lime

For 6–8 This is a winter drink. You need to use a cocktail shaker with a perforated top.

8 limes, fridge cold
bottle Moscato d'Asti, cold

Squeeze the juice from 5 of the limes. Slice the sixth.

Pour the lime juice into the shaker. Add the Moscato very slowly, stirring gently, as it will immediately fizz up. Cover with the perforated top – this will stop the fizzing – and pour gently into champagne glasses. Serve with a slice of lime.

Spumante con borragine

Spumante secco with borage

For 6–8

50 g (5 oz) caster sugar
50 ml (8 fl oz) water
3–15 fresh borage leaves, washed
juice of 2 lemons
bottle Spumante Secco or Prosecco, fridge cold
at least 12–16 borage flowers

Using a small thick-bottomed saucepan, dissolve the sugar in the water, heating gently to make a syrup. When the syrup is hot, add the borage leaves. Stir and allow the borage to just wilt in the syrup. Remove from the heat, and cool. Strain the syrup, then add the lemon juice.

Put the syrup in a jug or cocktail shaker, add the wine (two-thirds wine to one-third syrup) and stir. Pour into champagne glasses, adding a few borage flowers to each glass.

Bellini I

For 6-8

ripe yellow peaches
50 g (4 oz) caster sugar
good shot of Vecchio Romagna (Italian brandy)
bottle Prosecco, fridge cold

Preheat oven to 200°C/400° F/Gas 6.

Halve the peaches and remove the stones. Place the half peaches in a china baking dish and sprinkle with the caster sugar and Vecchio Romagna. Cover with foil and seal. Bake the peaches for 15-20 minutes. They should become slightly softer and the juices will begin to run. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

Put the peaches and their juices in a food processor and pulse-chop. Push the pulp through a nylon fruit sieve.

Using a large cocktail shaker or jug with a lid, pour in 4 champagne glassfuls of peach purée, and add the same volume of Prosecco. Stir with a long spoon or stick to combine and also to prevent over-fizz. Pour into champagne glasses through the lid of the cocktail shaker.

Bellini II

For 6-8

3-12 ripe white peaches
bottle Prosecco, fridge cold

Choose very ripe white peaches. Cut them in half and remove the stones. Using an orange juicer, the rotary kind, press the juice from the peaches as you would from oranges.

Pour the peach juice into a jug or cocktail shaker with a lid. Add the same volume of Prosecco and stir to control the fizz and consequent overflow. Cover with the lid, and pour gently into champagne glasses.

Arance sanguigne e prosecco

Blood oranges and prosecco

For 6-8

-9 blood oranges, according to juice obtained
bottle non-vintage Prosecco

Squeeze the oranges into a cocktail shaker or jug. Add a little Prosecco and stir with a spoon to still the fizz, then add about two-thirds of the remaining wine (you want to have slightly less orange juice than Prosecco). Pour into champagne glasses through the perforated top of the cocktail shaker.

Melone e prosecco

Melon and prosecco

For 6-8

very ripe cavaillon or canteloupe melon
ice of 1 lemon, or 1.1/2 limes
tablespoon caster sugar, or more
bottle Prosecco, fridge cold

Cut the melon in half. Scoop out the seeds and put them in a fruit sieve over a bowl to collect the juices. Scoop the rest of the ripe pulp from the skin and put in a food processor. Pulse-chop to liquefy. Sieve the pulp, adding it to the melon juices collected.

Add the lemon juice and 1 tablespoon sugar to the pulp. Add more or less sugar according to the sweetness of the melon.

Use a cocktail shaker or jug to mix the drink. Fill to slightly over half full with the melon juice. Add enough Prosecco to come to the top. Mix to combine and pour into champagne glasses through the perforated top of the shaker to contain excess fizz.

Fragole e prosecco

Strawberries and prosecco

For 6-8

500 g (18 oz) very ripe strawberries
juice of 1.1/2 lemons
1/2 tablespoons caster sugar
bottle Prosecco, fridge cold

Remove the hulls from the strawberries. If muddy, wash carefully, and lay out on a cloth to dry. Make sure the fruits are very dry.

Cut the strawberries in half and put in a food processor with the lemon juice and sugar. Pulse-chop to a liquid pulp. Strain the pulp through a fruit sieve.

Mix in a cocktail shaker equal parts of strawberry and Prosecco. Pour into champagne glasses using the perforated top of the shaker, as the drink will otherwise fizz up and over.

Lamponi e prosecco

Raspberries and prosecco

For 6–8

300 g (18 oz) ripe and sweet raspberries

30–150 g (4–5 oz) caster sugar

bottle Prosecco, fridge cold

Wash the raspberries and shake dry. Put in a food processor with the sugar, and pulse to a liquid. Push the pulp through a nylon fruit sieve.

Mix the pulp with the Prosecco in a large jug or cocktail shaker. Stir to calm the fizz and pour slowly into champagne glasses, using the lid to prevent overflow.

Ribes nero e prosecco

Blackcurrants and prosecco

For 6–8

50 g (9 oz) fresh blackcurrants, stalks removed

50 g (5 oz) caster sugar

bottle Prosecco, fridge cold

Wash the blackcurrants, and put in a saucepan with the sugar. Gently heat to allow the fruit to burst and release their juices. Do not boil. Remove from the heat and cool quickly. Push the pulp through a nylon fruit sieve.

Make sure the purée is completely cold, then mix with the Prosecco in a large jug or cocktail shaker. Stir to combine, then pour into champagne glasses. Use the lid to contain the fizz and prevent overflow as you pour.

More e prosecco

Blackberries and prosecco

For 6–8

punnets, about 400–500 g (14–18 oz), ripe blackberries

50 g (4 oz) caster sugar

bottle Prosecco, fridge cold

Put the blackberries and sugar in a food processor and pulse-chop to a purée. Push the purée through a nylon fruit sieve. Test for sweetness, as blackberries can be sour. Add more sugar if necessary.

Mix the purée in a jug or cocktail shaker with the cold Prosecco and pour into champagne glasses through the lid or top of the shaker to contain the fizz.

Pompelmo rosa e prosecco

Pink grapefruit and prosecco

For 6-8

pink grapefruit
50 ml (7 fl oz) Campari
bottle Prosecco, fridge cold

Squeeze the grapefruit and mix the juice with the Campari in a large jug or cocktail shaker. Stir to combine then slowly add the Prosecco. Pour into champagne glasses. Use the lid to prevent the fizz overflowing as you pour.

Melagrana e prosecco

Pomegranate and prosecco

For 6-8

3 pomegranates, very ripe
bottle Prosecco, fridge cold (or champagne)

Squeeze the juice from the halved pomegranates as you would oranges or lemons. Fill half a champagne glass with the juice, and top it up with Prosecco or champagne.

Salads Mozzarella Frittata



- roasted squashes stuffed with sun-dried tomatoes
- roasted peppers with tomatoes and anchovies
- zucchini carpaccio
- road bean and pecorino salad
- roasted lemon and artichoke heart salad
- stuffed aubergines with tomato-chilli paste
- peppa with winter leaves and mustard
- rosicutto and fig salad
- rosicutto and radicchio with balsamic vinegar
- rosicutto, parmesan and savoy cabbage salad
- onion carpaccio
- resola, beetroot and horseradish salad
- marinated mozzarella and crème fraîche

aked mozzarella with trevise
betroot, ricotta and beet leaf salad
cotta and marjoram frittata
sparagus and mint frittata
ucchini frittata
ompettes de mort and girolles frittata