

The « sfincione palermitano »



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History of the speciality...

The word " sfincione " comes from the Latin " spongia " meaning "sponge". It is in reference to the porous consistency of the dough. This one is halfway between the bread dough and that in pizza. It must be well raised. It is seasoned with anchovies, onion, "caciocavallo" cheese and oil. It is a traditional dish existing in two variants: that of Palermo with tomato sauce and that of Bagheria, softer, enriched with ricotta and bread-crumbs.

The legend tells that its invention was lucky. Indeed, by leaving the dough excessively raised, the nuns of Porta Sant' Agata's convent in Palermo obtained a spongy dough that they named "sfincione".

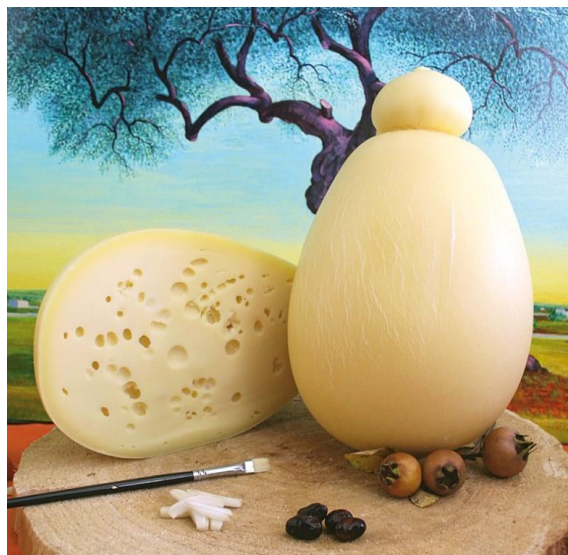
This speciality is prepared on the occasion of the feast of the Virgin Mary of the Immaculate Conception. This party takes place on December 8 and starts the Christmas holidays.

Here is how to prepare both variants:

The « CACIOCAVALLO »

"Caciocavallo" is a very precious cheese, produced from Sicilian cows' milk which some consider among the best milks from Italy. The aromas and the flavours vary depending on the region. The various types of "caciocavallo" reflect the specific traditions of every region. Those of Ragusa and of Godrano in Sicily are very appreciated.

This cheese is completely part of a healthy Mediterranean diet protecting health and the well-being of the consumer



Recipe of “Sfincione de Bagheria” (with ricotta)

INGREDIENTS:

For the dough:

- 250 g durum wheat flour
- 250 g flour
- 1 dice brewer’s yeast
- 12 g salt
- wather

For the seasoning:

- white round onions
- anchovy
- oregano
- salt
- «caciocavallo» cheese
- fresh bread-crumb
- ricotta cheese

Preparation:

- 1) Sieve and mix both flours
- 2) Add the yeast dissolved in some tepid to warm water and mix.
- 3) Pour the mixture in the mixer.
- 4) Thoroughly mix by gradually adding hot water until getting a soft dough.
- 5) Cover the dough with sprinkled flour and a tissue (the volume increases during the rising). Ideally, keep the dough in a warm area.
- 6) Let rest the dough one hour, the time to double its volume.
- 7) Meanwhile, clean onions and slice them thinly.
- 8) In a pan with lid, cook and brown onions in some olive oil.
- 9) Add the anchovy fillets and stir.
- 10) Drain the oil and put it aside separately.
- 11) In the cooking oil, add fresh bread-crumb, oregano, pepper and a little mature "caciocavallo" cheese.
- 12) When the dough’s volume has been doubled, put it on a baking tray and level it to about two little fingers thick.
- 13) Season the “sfincione” with anchovies, onions, ricotta and bread-crumb.
- 14) Put the “sfincione” in the oven at 220°C during approximately 30 minutes.



Recipe of « Sfincione de Palerme » (with tomato sauce)

Ingredients (for 4 people):

- 800 gf durum wheat flour
- 25 gr leaven
- 2 onions
- 500 gr peeled tomatoes
- 100 gr fresh "caciocavallo" cheese (sliced)
- 100 g anchovy fillet
- oregano
- bread crumbs
- extra virgin olive oil
- salt, pepper



Preparation:

- 1) Mix the flour with the dissolved yeast in a little tepid to warm water.
- 2) Mold the dough energetically, pour salt water until getting of a soft dough.
- 3) Pour the mixture in a floured bowl, cover with a tissue and let rise during 2 hours.
- 4) Meanwhile, brown finely cut onions in a frying pan with a little olive oil and some soup spoons of water.
- 5) Crush tomatoes with a fork.
- 6) Pour the tomato purée in the frying pan with a pinch of salt and a pinch of pepper. Cook at medium heat during approximately twenty minutes.
- 7) Give the dough a thickness of some centimeters and arrange it on an oven-proof dish.
- 8) Oil and sprinkle the surface with chopped anchovies.
- 9) Cover with the slices "Caciocavallo" cheese and pour the tomato sauce.
- 10) Sprinkle bread-crumbs and oregano;
- 11) Cook the "sfincione" at 220°C during approximately twenty minutes.

Enjoy your meal !

