

Cleo Coyle shares an old school recipe
from an old friend...

Kerry's "Spiedina" an Italian Stew

After coming home from a trip to Italy last fall, a longtime friend of mine posted about a traditional Italian dish called spiedina. I asked Kerry if he would share this recipe with my *Coffeehouse Mystery* readers. He was happy to provide the details, and I was happy to make the stew, take digital photos, and go into a food trance of enjoyment as I ate it. This old school Italian sauce is a very simple one to make. It also brings me right back to my childhood when my Italian-born mother and aunt would make a long-simmering meat sauce for Sunday's pasta. If you make it, may you and your loved ones eat with joy!

—Cleo Coyle

KERRY'S BLOG POST FROM LAST FALL...

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"The nip of autumn is in the air, and with it, as ever, our normally cozy apartment has been seized by a persistent chill, never quite addressable with our inadequate heating system. Luckily, autumn is apple season, and early this morning, I baked a batch of Honey Crisp apple-cinnamon muffins. The baking didn't raise the temperature in the house much, but their aroma made it easier to get out of bed and start our day. Encouraged by this comforting confusion of the senses, I spent the afternoon experimenting with spiedina, a simple stew I first tasted in Ortona, on the Adriatic coast of Italy.

"The root of spiedina, in Italian, literally means skewered, and the nearby mountain town of Guardiagrele is famous for their skewered grilled meats. The Ortonians—whose more temperate climate allows them nearly year-round access to fresh fruit, vegetables, fish, etc.—probably found the spitted meats of Guardiagrele tasty but dry, and used them to add gusto to some of their local recipes. Their version of spiedina combines chunks of meat with a thick tomato base, for a rich ragout that's as quick and simple as bakery pizza. Here's one way to make it, though I am sure there are as many different versions as there are individual tastes. No matter what you put in it, though, the smell of spiedina simmering in the kitchen makes a home feel warmer..."

Kerry Milliron lives with his wife, Julie, in New York's East Village. They visit Italia each fall, and would go more often, if their imaginary beagle, Edgrr, didn't insist upon flying first class.

You can visit Kerry's blog at www.dacn.biz/kmilliron/

If you have questions or comments, Kerry's public e-mail is kmilliron@peoplepc.com



Kerry's "Spiedina" an Italian Stew

Recipe courtesy of &
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Ingredients:

Salt & pepper

1 Pound of cubed beef tenderloin*

2 Tablespoons olive oil

2 Tablespoons chopped onion

1 clove chopped garlic

6 inches of dry (hard) Italian sausage (If you can't find dry sausage, try pepperoni instead.)*

1 28-ounce can of crushed Italian tomatoes



Step 1: Grill (or sauté) your beef cubes until nicely browned, and set aside

Step 2: In a large saucepan over med-low flame, heat olive oil, and sauté chopped onion, garlic, and your chunks of dry, hard Italian sausage for about 5 minutes. (If sausage begins to smoke or burn, temporarily remove it.)

Step 3: Stir in can of crushed Italian tomatoes, add browned beef cubes, and simmer, partially covered, over low flame for 1-1/2 to 2 hours, stirring occasionally (about every 15 minutes). NOTE: If the stew boils over your pot, lower the flame and take off the lid completely. If the stew appears to be cooking down too quickly (if it becomes too thick or dry too soon) just add a bit of water and continue cooking. Don't try to rush the process, the stew should slow-cook 90 minutes to 2 hours for the most flavorful results.



Serve with crusty bread and a robust beverage. Store leftover stew in refrigerator.

* When I made Kerry's recipe, I upped the beef cube amount to 1-1/2 pounds. If you can't find dry (hard) Italian sausage, ask the folks in your grocery store's deli section to help you locate it or try substituting pepperoni. As with all stews, this one's even better the second day. Spices continue to blend, offering an even more flavorful experience. On Day 1, I ate the dish as a stew with crusty bread and red wine. On Day 2, I ladled the reheated stew over a big bowl of spaghetti—because it makes a delicious meat sauce for pasta! Thanks again to Kerry for sharing his recipe.

—Cleo Coyle,
author of *The Coffeehouse Mysteries*

Eat with Joy!

For more recipe ideas, or to find out more about my
Coffeehouse Mystery novels, visit my website: www.CoffeehouseMystery.com.

