

# GJELINA

CALIFORNIA COOKING  
FROM VENICE BEACH



TRAVIS LETT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY

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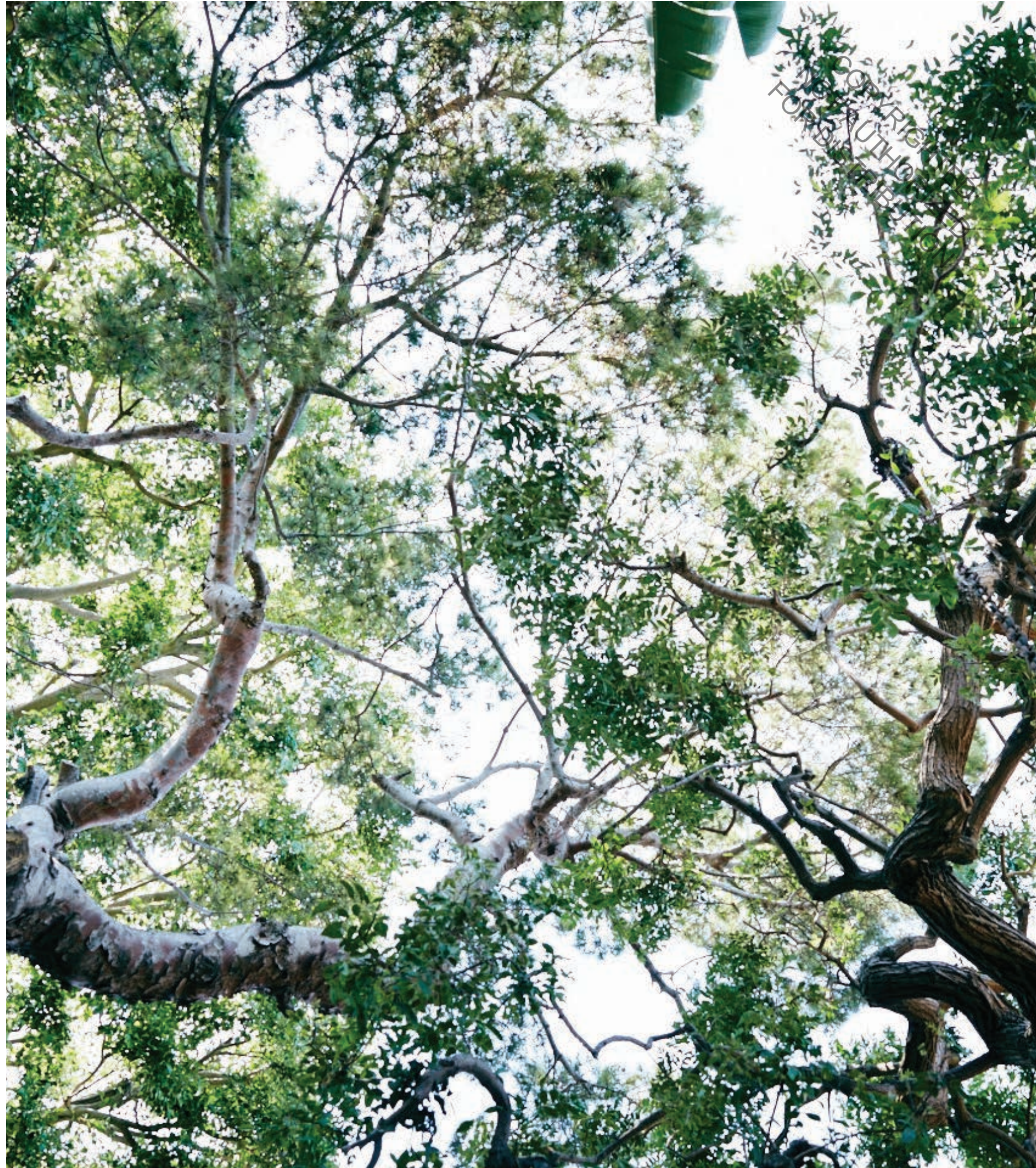
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# INTRODUCTION

The way we are eating is broadly changing. We now understand that our food system is a reflection of our culture, one that in some cases is in desperate need of continued progress. There is a large-scale rollback of some of the practices we have become comfortable with in the last couple decades. Cooks, teachers, healthcare workers, political representatives, and even large organizations are accepting that their ideas of how people should be fed and how we should care for our lands, are increasingly out of sync with the changing conversation.







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## TUSCAN KALE SALAD WITH FENNEL, RADISH, BREAD CRUMBS & RICOTTA SALATA

**SERVES 4 TO 6** / Kale salads have become ubiquitous, especially in the green-minded state of California. But I believe Italians have been dressing cavolo nero with lemon juice and olive oil and serving it raw long before this recent infatuation. Also known as Tuscan and dinosaur kale, this particular variety has a strong fiber and dark-green-bordering-on-purple hue to its leaves. It's not hard to see why people equate it with healthful eating, as it evokes minerality and soil-rich nutrients, and it is remarkably resilient after harvest.

Oily, rich, and garlicky homemade bread crumbs elevate this salad far past a simple statement of mindful eating. I don't recommend leaving them out or substituting store-bought junk. And do seek out ricotta salata, a salted and pressed version of fresh ricotta with a creamy, salty flavor and a dry, almost crumbly texture.

**1 Tbsp + 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed**  
**2 large bunches Tuscan kale, stemmed and cut into ¼-in- [6-mm-] wide strips**  
**Kosher salt**  
**2 Tbsp red wine vinegar, plus more as needed**  
**1½ Tbsp fresh lemon juice, plus more as needed**

**6 radishes, thinly sliced**  
**1 fennel bulb, trimmed and shaved with a vegetable peeler**  
**1 large handful Garlic Croutons (page 000), fully cooled**  
**2 oz [55 g] ricotta salata**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**

In a large bowl, drizzle the olive oil over the kale and sprinkle with salt. Massage the leaves until softened and tender, squeezing them firmly with your hands. This breaks down the cell walls, making the greens softer and more receptive to the dressing. Add the vinegar and lemon juice and continue to massage the kale. Add more vinegar, lemon juice, or salt if necessary and make sure there is enough rich, velvety olive oil coating the leaves. Add the sliced radishes and shaved fennel.

Place the croutons on a work surface and, using a rolling pin or a chef's knife, crush into coarse crumbs.

With a vegetable peeler, shave the ricotta salata into the bowl. Toss gently to combine. Add the bread crumbs and mix thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving platter or individual plates and serve. This salad holds up well for several hours, but should be eaten the day it is made.



# SMASHED ENGLISH PEAS WITH RICOTTA & MINT PESTO ON SOURDOUGH

**SERVES 4** / When fresh English peas are abundant, it’s nice to show off their brilliant color and green sweetness. This preparation works equally well with young fava beans. In either case, if you’re buying them at a farmers’ market, ask for some of the young tendrils to use as a garnish, as they are so nice dressed with lemon and olive oil. Use only very fresh ricotta for this recipe. Burrata or stracciatella are good alternatives if you can’t find it.

- 2 lb [910 g] fresh peas in their pods, shucked,  
plus 1 generous handful fresh pea tendrils (optional)  
½ cup [15 g] chopped fresh mint  
1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus ¼ cup [60 ml]  
1 tsp finely grated lemon zest, plus 1 tsp fresh lemon juice  
Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper  
Four ¾-in- [2-cm-] thick slabs crusty sourdough bread  
8½ oz [240 g] ricotta cheese  
Gray sea salt  
Best-quality olive oil for drizzling

Bring a stockpot of lightly salted water to a boil over medium-high heat. Prepare a large bowl of ice water and set near the stockpot. When the water reaches a boil, drop in the peas and blanch for 1 minute or until they turn their brightest green. Pour the water and peas into a strainer. Transfer the peas to the bowl of cold water to stop them from cooking further.

With a mortar and pestle or in a food processor, combine the blanched peas with the mint, 1 Tbsp olive oil, and lemon zest. Season with kosher salt and pepper, and smash or process into a very rough paste. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

Grill or toast the bread according to the method on page 000.

Place the toasted bread on a serving plate.

Smear each slice of toast with a generous amount of ricotta, followed by a spoonful of the pea mixture. In a medium bowl, toss the tendrils with the remaining ¼ cup [60 ml] olive oil and the lemon juice. Season with gray salt and pepper, and top each toast with a tendril or two, if desired. Drizzle with best-quality olive oil and serve immediately.





# PIZZA WITH ASPARAGUS, SOTTOCENERE & SUNNY EGG

**MAKES ONE 10- TO 12-IN [25- TO 30.5-CM] PIZZA /** After you’ve tried making a couple of pizzas in your home oven and mastered the timing, try this one. Of course, a runny egg on top of just about anything has a way of making people happy. We put one egg in the center of the pizza, which breaks when you slice the pie and oozes all over the top. It also gives you something to swipe your crust through. Sottocenere is an ash-rubbed, truffle-studded cow’s milk cheese with a subtle creamy texture and a flavor of sweet spices like cinnamon and nutmeg, which permeates the cheese as it ages.

In an 800°F [425°C] oven, the egg and pizza cook at a very similar rate. This may not be the case in your home oven, so you might want to start the pizza without the egg, and crack one over the pizza about halfway through the baking process. You want the egg whites to be set, but the yolk still very runny. It may take a couple of shots to get it right, but your flawed experiments will still be tasty.

- Semolina flour for dusting**  
**One 6½-oz [185-g] ball Gjolina Pizza Dough (page 000), proofed and stretched until 10 to 12 in [25 to 30.5 cm] in diameter**  
**2 cloves Garlic Confit (page 000), chopped**  
**⅓ cup [75 g] sliced Shallot Confit (page 000)**
- 4 large asparagus, shaved with a vegetable peeler into thin slices**  
**3 oz [85 g] sottocenere cheese, or another nutty, creamy cheese, such as fontina**  
**1 egg**  
**Flaky sea salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**

Place a pizza stone on the middle rack of your oven and preheat the oven to the highest possible setting, at least 500°F [260°C]. Lightly dust a pizza peel or a rimless baking sheet with semolina flour.

Using your forearms or the backs of your hands, transfer the stretched round of dough to the prepared peel.

Distribute the garlic confit and shallot confit over the dough, flicking the garlic oil that clings to your fingers onto the dough. Top with the shaved asparagus and the sottocenere, leaving a small space in the center of the pie for the egg.

Slide the pizza dough onto the hot stone in the oven and bake for 2 to 3 minutes. Using the pizza peel, turn the pizza 180 degrees to ensure that it browns evenly all over. Crack the egg into a small ramekin or bowl and carefully transfer the egg to the center of the pizza. Continue cooking until the rim is a deep golden brown and beginning to char, another 3 to 5 minutes longer. The egg white should look opaque, but the yolk should be very runny.

Using the peel or rimless baking sheet, transfer the pizza to a cutting board or a baking sheet with a rim. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Slice and serve hot.



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## PAN-ROASTED BABY CARROTS, ORANGE, CILANTRO, SESAME & SPICED YOGURT

**SERVE 4 TO 6 AS A SIDE DISH** / The cool, stubby Thumbelinas are our favorite carrots for this dish, but any small carrot works well. Just don't confuse those mechanically formed carrot pieces sold in plastic bags for baby carrots. Look for small varieties at your farmers' market in the fall and winter. Generally, you can just scrub these before using and forget about peeling them. I like to serve these alongside a couple of other vegetable dishes, and with roasted or braised meats.

**2 lb [910 g] Thumbelina or other small carrots, cut into 1½-in [4-cm] lengths**  
**6 Tbsp [90 ml] extra-virgin olive oil**  
**Kosher salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**  
**2 tsp fresh thyme leaves**  
**½ cup [120 ml] fresh orange juice**

**1 Tbsp sesame seeds**  
**¼ cup [60 ml] dry white wine**  
**¼ cup [60 ml] Chicken Stock (page 000) or Vegetable Stock (page 000)**  
**¼ cup [60 ml] Spiced Yogurt (page 000)**  
**½ cup [15 g] fresh cilantro leaves**

In a medium bowl, combine the carrots with 3 Tbsp of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Add the thyme leaves and 2 Tbsp of the orange juice. Let stand at room temperature.

In a small, dry frying pan over medium heat, toast the sesame seeds until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Set aside and let cool.

Preheat the oven to 450°F [230°C].

Heat the remaining 3 Tbsp olive oil in a roasting pan or a sauté pan large enough to hold the carrots in a single layer over high heat. Add the carrots and cook until they begin to brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer the pan to the oven and cook until the carrots caramelize around the edges but are still a bit firm, 5 to 7 minutes.

Return to the pan to the stove stop and over medium heat, and add the wine, the remaining 6 Tbsp [90 ml] orange juice, and the stock. Cook, stirring with a wooden spoon to scrape up the browned bits stuck to the bottom of the pan, until the liquids thicken and begin to coat the carrots, 2 to 3 minutes more. Season with salt and pepper.

Transfer the carrots to a serving platter. Drizzle the spiced yogurt on top, sprinkle with the toasted sesame seeds, and garnish with the cilantro. Serve warm.







## GRILLED SUMMER SQUASH, ZA'ATAR & CHERRY TOMATO CONFIT

**SERVES 4 TO 6 AS A SIDE DISH** / Drenching grilled squash in oily California za'atar and tomato confit makes plenty of delicious dipping sauce for bread. There are many varieties of summer squash, all of them tasty and suitable for this dish. They are among the most plentiful vegetables when the growing season peaks, and with the exception of the precious baby varieties, they tend to be quite inexpensive. Cut the squash on the thicker side so that the slices can cook long enough to establish deep grill marks before they turn mushy.

We make this dish with quickly blanched Romano beans, which are equally delicious.

**1 lb [455 g] mixed summer squash,**  
cut into  $\frac{3}{4}$ -in- [2-cm-] thick slices  
 **$\frac{1}{4}$  cup [60 ml] extra-virgin olive oil**  
**Kosher salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**

**2 Tbsp California Za'atar (page 000)**  
 **$\frac{1}{2}$  cup [100 g] Cherry Tomato Confit (page 000)**  
**2 Tbsp red wine vinegar**  
 **$\frac{1}{4}$  cup [7 g] fresh mint leaves, cut into thin ribbons**

Prepare a hot fire in a charcoal grill (or preheat a gas grill to high).

On a baking sheet, spread out the squash slices in one layer and drizzle with half the olive oil, turning to coat both sides. Season with salt and pepper and let stand at room temperature until the grill is ready.

Put the squash slices on the hottest part of the grill and cook until well seared on the bottom, about 4 minutes. Turn and cook until well seared on the other side, 2 to 3 minutes more. The squash should be cooked through, but not mushy.

In a large bowl, gently toss the grilled squash slices with the za'atar, tomato confit, vinegar, and mint. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving platter and serve warm.



# ORECCHIETTE WITH CHICKEN HEARTS, TURNIP GREENS, PECORINO & BLACK PEPPER

**SERVES 4** / I love how the bouncy texture of chicken hearts plays off the knobby little orecchiette (the name means “little ears,” which they faintly resemble). Chicken hearts are not always available at a standard supermarket meat counter, but if you ask your butcher, you might discover that he or she may have some stashed aside, or can easily get them if given a day or two’s notice. Orecchiette are a relatively simple form to make, but require a bit of patience. So this is a good opportunity to put any extra hands around your home to work. We press the little dough nuggets over the slats of a bamboo sushi mat to give a ribbed texture on one side and a finger indentation on the other.

A bit of finesse is required to brown the hearts, while making sure the centers remain pink. Removing them from the pan before reducing the pan juices helps to keep them from overcooking. Time the cooking of the pasta with the preparation of the sauce, so that the dish can come together quickly.

- ORECCHIETTE**  
1 cup [165 g] semolina flour, plus more for dusting  
5 Tbsp [80 ml] water, at room temperature, plus more as needed  
Fine sea salt

3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil  
3 garlic cloves, sliced  
1 shallot, sliced
- 4 oz [115 g] turnip or radish greens, cut into ½-in [12-mm] ribbons  
Kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
8 oz [225 g] chicken hearts, halved  
1 cup [240 ml] white wine  
1 cup [240 ml] Chicken Stock (page 000)  
1 tsp aged balsamic vinegar  
Chunk of Pecorino Romano cheese for grating  
Best-quality olive oil for drizzling

*To make the orecchiette:* Put the semolina flour in a medium bowl, and drizzle in 3 Tbsp of the water. With your hands, start to incorporate the water. The idea is to form small clumps of dough, making sure the flour doesn’t stick to the bowl. Sprinkle in a large pinch of sea salt and continue mixing the ingredients together. Drizzle in 1 to 2 Tbsp of the remaining water and continue mixing. The dough should start to come together in a very dry mass. Do not add more water than you need to get a cohesive dough, and be patient, adding it 1 Tbsp at a time, as the flour will absorb the water slowly, so you will generally need less than you think. The amount of water needed will vary, depending on the freshness of your semolina and the humidity of your environment.

Once you have a cohesive dough, turn it out onto a work surface lightly dusted with semolina flour. Knead the dough by folding and pressing it with the palm of your hand, smashing the dough flat and then folding the outer edge toward the center and again pressing down. Continue to knead assertively until the dough is smooth and silky, 3 to 5 minutes. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap let rest at room temperature at least 20 minutes, or for up to 2 hours.

*Continued*





# CHICKPEA STEW WITH TOMATO, TURMERIC, MINT, YOGURT & HARISSA



**SERVES 4 TO 6** / This satisfying fall and winter stew has a Tunisian-Moroccan flavor. It's the kind of thing that would traditionally be served with couscous, but I find it substantial enough to stand on its own or with a slice of grilled bread. It tastes better if it has time to sit while the flavors meld, so make it in advance if possible.

**CHICKPEAS**

- 1 lb [455 g] dried chickpeas
- 1 yellow onion, quartered
- 1 carrot, peeled and quartered
- 2 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 fresh thyme sprigs
- Kosher salt
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- ¼ cup [60 ml] extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 carrots, peeled and cut into half-moons
- 1 yellow onion, coarsely chopped

- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp ground turmeric
- 3 fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 1 cup [240 ml] dry white wine
- 4 cups [960 ml] Vegetable Stock (page 000)
- 1 bunch Tuscan kale, stemmed and cut into 2-in- [5-cm-] wide strips
- 1 tsp red wine vinegar
- ⅓ cup [75 ml] Spiced Yogurt (page 000)
- ¼ cup [55 g] Harissa (page 000)

*To make the chickpeas:* In a large bowl, cover the chickpeas with 2 in [5 cm] of water and soak overnight. Drain the chickpeas and rinse with cool water.

In a large soup pot over medium-high heat, combine the chickpeas, onion, carrot, garlic, bay leaf, and thyme. Add fresh water to cover by about 2 in [5 cm]. Season with a little salt. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, and simmer until the chickpeas are tender but still hold their shape, about 45 minutes. Discard the bay leaf. Cool the chickpeas in the cooking liquid and then drain, discarding the liquid. Set the chickpeas aside.

In a small, dry frying pan over medium heat, toast the cumin seeds, coriander seeds, and fennel seeds just until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Let cool. With a mortar and pestle or a spice grinder, grind to a powder.

In a clean, large soup pot over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil until hot, but not smoking. Add the carrots, onion, and garlic; season with salt and pepper; and cook until the vegetables begin to soften and brown slightly, about 5 minutes. Add the freshly ground cumin, coriander, and fennel and the paprika, turmeric, thyme, and bay leaf and cook until the spices become quite fragrant, about 3 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste, scraping the bottom of the pot frequently so that it does not burn, and cook until fragrant and beginning to brown, about 5 minutes. Add the wine, bring to a boil, and cook, scraping up the browned bits on the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon, until reduced by more than half, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the stock and return to a simmer.

In a blender, combine 1 cup [240 ml] of the soup base with 2 cups [350 g] of the cooked chickpeas and purée until smooth. Return the puréed beans to soup pot. Throw the kale into the stew and cook until softened. Add the remaining cooked chickpeas and gently stir the pot. Remove from the heat and let stand at room temperature for at least 20 minutes and up to 8 hours.

Just before serving, adjust the salt and spike with the vinegar. Serve warm with a dollop of spiced yogurt and a drizzle of harissa.





## RAZOR CLAMS SEARED IN CAST IRON WITH PARSLEY BUTTER

**SERVES 4 AS AN APPETIZER** / This was inspired by a dish found all over northern Spain—razor clams cooked on a plancha, a type of griddle used over very high heat. The sweet meat of these amazing bivalves is unparalleled and is enhanced when cooked over very high heat for just a minute or two. A large cast-iron frying pan holds heat well enough to create a result very similar to the Spanish planchas.

You want to end up with a plate full of beautiful razors on the half shell so fresh that they were still living when they hit the pan. The trick is not to open these too far in advance. We pop them open when the order hits the kitchen, so the customer gets to experience their incredible sweetness. Parsley is good with just about any seafood, especially when you want a little added flavor and richness, as long as you don't use so much that it competes with the main ingredient.

<b>12 large razor clams</b>	<b>1 garlic clove</b>
<b>4 Tbsp [55 g] unsalted butter, at room temperature</b>	<b>Flaky sea salt</b>
<b>Zest of 1 lemon, plus 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice, plus lemon wedges for serving</b>	<b>Freshly ground black pepper</b>
<b>2 Tbsp roughly chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, plus parsley leaves for garnish</b>	<b>3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil</b>
	<b>Kosher salt</b>

In a large bowl of cold water, soak the razor clams for 10 minutes.

Heat a large cast-iron frying pan over very high heat until quite hot, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the butter, lemon zest, lemon juice, and chopped parsley. Using a Microplane, grate the garlic over the bowl, stir, and season with sea salt and pepper. Let stand at room temperature until ready to use.

Remove the clams from the water and shuck them with a clam knife by inserting the knife up under the shell but above the meat to dislodge the flesh from the upper shell. Work your way around all sides of the clam, gathering all the meat on the bottom shell and separating it from the shell. Place the meat on a work surface and clean, using kitchen scissors, by removing the tip of the siphon, the gills, and digestive tract (all the dark parts of the meat). Drizzle the shucked clams with the olive oil and season with kosher salt and pepper.

Cook the clams in the hot pan, gently pressing on them with a spatula to make sure they lie flat. Sear them aggressively until browned, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl. Add a large spoonful of the herbed butter and toss gently to distribute the butter.

Transfer the clams to a serving platter, along with any remaining liquor from the pan. Scatter the parsley leaves over the clams. Serve with lemon wedges and small forks.



# SQUID WITH ARUGULA & MELON

**SERVES 4** / When fresh squid shows up at the fish market, I never pass it up, and I can never seem to buy enough. I adore these strange little characters and cannot imagine our menu without them. We have experimented with preparing them a number of different ways, from adding them to pasta dishes to gently braising them in a light sauce or quickly frying, but I always come back to simply marinating and grilling. This version is for the height of summer when ripe, juicy melons are abundant. The actual cooking time is probably less than a minute (depending on size of the squid), so have your other ingredients lined up and ready, and at the last possible minute throw the squid on a very hot grill.

- 1½ lb [680 g] cleaned squid, tentacles, and tubes

Zest and juice of 1 lemon

Zest of 1 orange

Zest of 1 lime

¼ cup [60 ml] extra-virgin olive oil

2 Tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

¼ tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 6 oz [170 g] arugula

1 cup [160 g] cubed ripe honeydew or cantaloupe

1 celery rib, thinly sliced on the bias

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup [50 g] Parsley Salsa Verde (page 000)

With a sharp knife, make an incision at the tip of each squid tube straight down the side so that the tubes can be laid flat. Scrape out any cartilage or inner membrane with the edge of the knife. Use the knife to score the tubes in a crosshatch pattern so that the marinade will adhere, taking care not to penetrate all the way through the flesh.

In a large bowl, combine the lemon zest, orange zest, and lime zest, 1 Tbsp of the olive oil, and the parsley and crushed red pepper flakes. Add the squid, cover, and refrigerate at least 1 hour, or up to 4 hours.

Prepare a hot fire in a charcoal grill (preheat a gas grill to high), or heat a cast-iron grill pan over high heat.

In a mixing bowl, combine the arugula, melon, celery, lemon juice, and the remaining 3 Tbsp of olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Arrange the salad on a serving platter.

Remove the squid pieces from the marinade, season with salt, and cook on the hot grill just until done, about 1 minute. Scatter the squid pieces over and around the arugula salad.

Spoon salsa verde over the squid and into the salad. Serve immediately.





# ROASTED HALF CHICKEN WITH SMOKY BRAISED KALE

**SERVES 4 TO 6** / I have been serving this chicken, prepared in exactly this way, for quite some time now and it’s remarkably well received year after year. Some Gjelina customers order this and only this, despite having more than sixty items at any time to choose from; it’s one of those classic dishes that neighborhood regulars seek. We bone the leg, brine the chicken for a few hours, and then cook the legs to order in a cast-iron skillet instead of roasting them with the breasts. This cuts down on the cooking time and allows the leg and breast to finish at the same time. It may seem like a lot of work to bone the leg, but is actually not difficult and a cool technique to nail down. Buy a whole chicken, find a good tutorial online, and try your hand. Or you can ask your butcher to cut up your chicken into airline breasts and two deboned halves with legs attached. The best way to ensure a good result with this recipe is to get your hands on a pasture-raised chicken that was walking around its yard, pecking at bugs and worms and snacking on leftover farm bits. Make sure you pat the skin dry after removing the chicken from the brine. That will help ensure a crisp-skinned bird.

- BRINE**  
2 cups [240 ml] room-temperature water,  
plus 2 cups [240 ml] ice water  
¼ cup [55 g] kosher salt  
¼ cup [55 g] sugar  
1 lemon, cut into thin rounds  
4 fresh thyme sprigs  
1 bay leaf  
1 dried guajillo chile  
Two 2½-lb [1.2-kg] whole chickens, halved and deboned,  
with airline breasts detached

- BRAISED KALE**  
3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil  
1 yellow onion, cut into small dice  
4 garlic cloves, sliced  
1 Tbsp tomato paste  
2 Tbsp Tomato Confit (page 000)  
¼ tsp smoked paprika  
Kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
2 cups [480 ml] Chicken Stock (page 000)  
3 bunches Tuscan kale, thick stems thinly sliced,  
leaves cut into 1-in [2.5-cm] strips  
2 Tbsp red wine vinegar  
  
3 to 4 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

*To make the brine:* In a medium saucepan over high heat, combine the room-temperature water, salt, sugar, lemon rounds, thyme, bay leaf, and chile. Bring to a boil, remove from the heat, and let steep for 30 minutes. Add the ice water and let cool completely.

Put the chicken parts in a plastic or glass container, cover them with the brine, and refrigerate for 4 to 6 hours.

*To make the kale:* In a large, deep-sided sauté pan over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil until hot, but not smoking. Add the onion and garlic and cook until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste, tomato confit, and smoked paprika and cook until very fragrant and beginning to brown, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Add the stock and vinegar, and bring to a boil. Add the kale, lower the heat, and simmer until the kale is tender, about 20 minutes. Season again with salt and pepper, but not too aggressively because the sauce will reduce some more later. Set aside.

*Continued*



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# GUAJILLO-GLAZED LAMB RIBS

**SERVES 4 TO 6** / Although lamb ribs are small, they’re fatty, so they have an intense lamb flavor that’s hard to get from a rack or loin. Here we cook them slowly in the oven until very tender, and then move them to the grill for a char while brushing them with a tasty, sweet-hot glaze made from guajillo and chipotle peppers. These are best eaten by hand, so pair them with unfussy sides such as sautéed green beans (page 000) and grilled summer squash (page 000). If you prefer pork spare ribs or baby back ribs, this glaze is very tasty on them, too.

- 8 lb [3.6 kg] lamb ribs
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup [60 ml] Chicken Stock (page 000)

## GUAJILLO SAUCE

- 3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ yellow onion, sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, sliced

- Kosher salt
- 3 Tbsp dark brown sugar
- ¼ cup [65 g] Tomato Confit (page 000)
- 4 dried guajillo chiles, seeded
- ½ dried chipotle chile
- 1 cup [240 ml] Chicken stock (page 000)
- 3 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

Season the ribs with plenty of salt and pepper and allow to sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes, or up to 2 hours.

Preheat the oven to 350°F [180°C]. Pour the stock into a small roasting pan. Put the seasoned ribs in the pan, cover tightly with aluminum foil, and roast until the meat pulls easily away from the bones, about 3 hours. Transfer the ribs to a rack to cool slightly before grilling. (You can do this 1 or 2 days ahead of time and store, well wrapped, in the refrigerator.)

*To make the sauce:* In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil until just about to smoke. Add the onion and garlic and cook until softened but not browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Season with salt. Add the brown sugar and tomato confit and cook until the sugar dissolves and begins to caramelize, about 3 minutes more. Add the guajillo and chipotle and toast in the other warm aromatics for 2 minutes. Add the stock, bring to a boil, and lower the heat to maintain a steady simmer. Cover and continue simmering for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the chiles soften. Transfer the sauce to a blender and purée until smooth. Add the vinegar and season with salt and pepper. (Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 days.)

Prepare a hot fire in a charcoal grill (or preheat a gas grill to high).

Brush the ribs with the olive oil. Grill the ribs until starting to brown on the bottom, about 3 minutes. Brush with a thin layer of the guajillo sauce and flip the ribs. Repeat this step several times until the ribs are well shellacked with the sauce, forming a beautifully caramelized crust, 8 to 10 minutes total.

Transfer the ribs to a serving plate. Serve hot with any remaining sauce alongside.





# YOGURT PANNA COTTA WITH WINTER CITRUS

**SERVES 6 TO 8** / Slightly sour Greek yogurt makes the perfect medium for eggless custards, such as panna cotta. Its tang and richness complement just about any seasonal fruit: macerated cherries, roasted apricots and peaches, pears poached in port wine, or even wild huckleberries (which we drizzle with very good balsamic vinegar). Here, we capture winter in California with various bright citrus fruits and their candied peels. If you can't find an oro blanco or a pomelo, use a pink grapefruit instead.

- 2 tsp unflavored gelatin

2 Tbsp cold water, plus 1 cup [240 ml]

½ vanilla bean, halved

2 cups [480 ml] heavy cream

Pinch of kosher salt

1½ cups [300 g] sugar

1½ cups [360 ml] Greek-style yogurt
- 6 mandarin oranges

1 grapefruit

1 oro blanco or pink grapefruit

1 pomelo

2 lemons, cut into ¼-in [6-mm] rounds and seeded

1 cup [200 g] sliced and seeded kumquats (¼-in [6-mm rounds])

Set a fine-mesh sieve over a 10-by-12-in [25-by-30.5-cm] glass or metal baking dish or pan.

In a small bowl, bloom the gelatin in the 2 Tbsp water, about 3 minutes.

Meanwhile, scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean into a small saucepan. Add the cream, salt, and ½ cup/ 100 g of the sugar, stir, and place over medium-low heat until steaming and bubbles begin to form around the edge.

Put the yogurt in a medium bowl and slowly whisk the hot cream into the yogurt. Strain the mixture through the sieve into the baking dish. Refrigerate the panna cotta until set, about 2 hours.

Section one of the oranges by cutting both ends off. Set it on one end, and use a paring knife to cut away the peel and pith in strips, starting at the top and following the curves to the bottom. Then, holding the fruit in one hand, carefully insert the blade of the knife between the flesh and the membrane to cut out the sections without any membrane attached. The sections should come out easily. Repeat with the remaining oranges, and the grapefruit, oro blanco, and pomelo.

Set aside.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, bring the lemons, kumquats, remaining 1 cup [200 g] sugar, and remaining 1 cup [240 ml] water to a simmer. Continue simmering for about 10 minutes, until the sugar has dissolved. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool to room temperature, about 20 minutes.

Use a large spoon to scoop out portions of the panna cotta onto dessert plates. Top with the assorted citrus sections and the candied kumquats and lemons. Drizzle a bit of the juices from the citruses and the syrup from the candied citrus rounds onto each serving.



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# WARM DATE CAKE & GINGER GELATO

**SERVES 12** / This ranks among Gjelina’s star desserts. The sticky, date-sweetened cake is ridiculously moist. Adding a bourbon-spiked toffee sauce and a nose-stinging scoop of ginger gelato pushes it right over the top. It’s impossible not to like this combination.

**DATE CAKE**  
1 lb [455 g] Khadrawy dates, or  
another type of fresh soft date, pitted  
2 tsp baking soda  
2½ cups [550 ml] very hot water  
1 vanilla bean, halved  
1½ cups [300 g] granulated sugar  
1 egg, plus 1 egg yolk

2¼ cups [280 g] all-purpose flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
  
**WHISKEY SAUCE**  
5 Tbsp [70 g] unsalted butter  
2 cups [440 g] packed dark brown sugar  
1 cup [240 ml] heavy cream  
2½ Tbsp bourbon whiskey  
Ginger Gelato (page 000), for serving

*To make the cake:* Preheat the oven to 350°F [180°C]. Butter a 10-by-14-in [25-by-35.5-cm] glass or metal baking dish or pan.

In a small bowl, combine the dates and baking soda. Pour the hot water over the dates and mix with a fork until they have mostly dissolved and are pulpy, about 5 minutes.

Scrape the seeds of the vanilla bean halves into a large bowl and whisk in the granulated sugar, egg, and egg yolk. Continue whisking until the mixture is pale yellow and falls in smooth ribbons when lifted with a spoon. Stir in the date mixture, incorporating it completely.

Sift together the flour and baking powder into a small bowl. Gently fold the flour into the date mixture until just incorporated.

Pour the batter into the prepared baking pan and bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean. Leave the cake in the pan for at least 40 minutes before serving.

*Meanwhile, make the whiskey sauce:* In a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan, melt the butter with the brown sugar. As soon as the sugar has dissolved, gradually add the cream, pouring in a steady stream while whisking constantly. Remove from the heat and whisk in the whiskey.

Pierce the cake all over twelve to twenty times with a butter knife or a skewer. Pour half of the sauce over the top of the cake, guiding it into these perforations, and set aside the rest. (The cake can be stored at room temperature in the baking dish, covered with plastic wrap, for 1 day and in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Bring back to room temperature before serving.)

Serve the cake while still slightly warm. Cut the cake into squares and drizzle with the remaining sauce. Serve on dessert plates, accompanied by a scoop of gelato.



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