

<< The Biscuit House >>



Ingredients for the sponge
(for an approx. 40 x 40 cm
baking tin):

500 g of sugar
500 g of plain flour
20 eggs
1 sachet of baking powder for cakes

For the house:

2 jars (290 g each) of "Sa 'briachella" (1)
2 jars (200 g each) of Viallella
"fondente" or another good quality
bittersweet chocolate spread
2 bags (500 g each) of Cantucci
1 bag (350 g) of Stracci
150 g of bittersweet chocolate
150 g of icing sugar

Prepare the Sponge Cake base: in a large bowl, beat the eggs and sugar with an electric whisk until you obtain a smooth, light mixture. Gradually add the flour, sieved together with the baking powder, stirring the mixture slowly from bottom to top. Pour it into the baking tin lined with greaseproof paper, level the surface and bake in a preheated oven, at 180 °C, for 30 minutes. After this time the Sponge Cake will be a nice "biscuit" colour; remove it from the oven and leave it to cool down completely.

In the meanwhile, in a bowl, mix the Viallella with "Sa 'briachella" until you get a smooth cream. When the Sponge is cold, use a sharp knife to cut it in half horizontally. Delicately put the "top" to one side, use a spatula to spread the mixture of Viallella and "Sa 'briachella" evenly on the bottom half, and then put the sponge back together by placing the upper part back on top.

Move on to building the house: break up the bittersweet chocolate and melt it in a bain-marie. Use a knife to cut the ends off the Cantucci, so their shape resembles that of small bricks. Dip the bottom of each biscuit in the melted chocolate and start to build the house, placing one "Cantuccio" on top of another (the chocolate works like "cement" for the bricks). You can choose the shape you prefer for your "construction", Francesco - it goes without saying - has recreated the Fattoria's "Bottega" and ancient oven!

When the walls have been completed, as for any house worthy of respect, you have to build the roof: take the Stracci (the "tiles"), lay them on your work surface and join them together at the edges with melted chocolate. Create the roof according to the dimensions of the house that you've built. When you've finished, leave it to cool down on the work surface without moving it. Then, very delicately, place it on top of the house. If you have some Cantucci left over, you can use them for a chimney or put them all around the sponge cake base. Now it's time to have fun with the decorations - Francesco has chosen a tree and some lights, to create a warm Christmassy atmosphere. And to round off, dredge the house with icing sugar... a sprinkling of snow at Christmas time is absolutely perfect!

(1) "Sa 'briachella" contains Vin Santo. If there are children among your guests, substitute the 2 jars of "Sa 'briachella" with 600 g of Ricotta and add a little sugar or honey according to taste.