



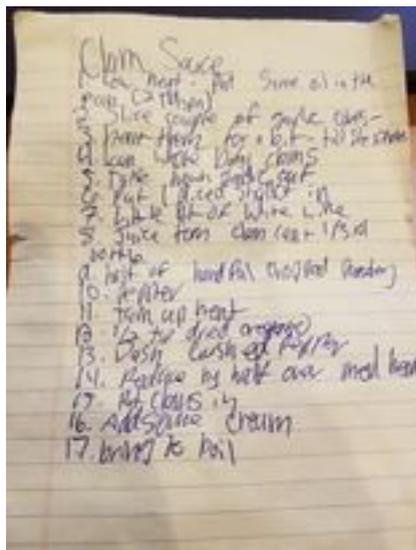
A Family Recipe

by Samantha Anthony

“You just make it, Sam.” That’s what my dad said to me when I asked him to show me how to make me his famous “clam chops,” actually termed linguine con vongole. This wasn’t the first time he’d said this to me regarding family recipes, but it wasn’t any less vexing.

My dad’s family is in no way Italian, but after living for five years in Milan, his mother’s (my Gammy’s) cooking had an Italian influence. This recipe came to her in Milan, came to my dad in New Hampshire, and came to my sister and I in Delaware. It’s always been one of my absolute favorite things to eat, and reminds me of my dad’s cooking in a way few other things do.

Dad loved to cook. It was his creativity, his passion, his way of expressing love and gratitude. We sat down to a home cooked meal every single night. He, along with my sister and uncle (a chef in his own right), have an ease in the kitchen and a mastery of technique that is my constant goal, and which only comes with years of practice. Almost every recipe for my dad was second nature, memorized from many repetitions. This linguine con vongole is no different, hence his response when I asked for a recipe that one, “just do it.” I resorted to learning how I’d learned so many other recipes and techniques: by sitting in the kitchen and watching him make it. This time, I frantically wrote down what he was doing, trying (and failing) to get accurate measurements and steps. The picture there was my first attempt, and is what I used until I memorized the recipe myself.



I lost my dad in June. It wasn’t covid-related, just an accident which came unexpectedly. One day he was there, the next he wasn’t, which meant my main advisor on all things food was gone. Left with half a recipe written on a piece of paper, I’ve been working on getting my clam chops as close to his as possible (with help from my sister). I think I’ve come pretty close. I think he’d be proud.

Dad taught me the importance of food in life. It connects us to place, to family, to each other. He loved cooking passed-down recipes just as much as he loved experimenting with other cuisines (some of his other hits were Panang curry and Cuban sandwiches). I plan to carry that part of him forward as I continue to cook and share meals with those around me. I’ll start by sharing the recipe, finally written down correctly, for linguine con vongole. Enjoy.

Linguine con Vongole (Wilson's Clam Chops)

Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 2 Cloves garlic, sliced in half
- 1 Shallot, diced
- 1 Cup chopped parsley, divided
- 1 Can whole beefy clams
- ½ Cup clam juice from bottle
- ½ Tablespoon ground black pepper
- ½ Teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ¼ Teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ Cup white wine (optional)
- ¼ cup heavy cream (more to taste)
- 1 LB Linguine, cooked to al dente and drained

Steps:

Add olive oil and garlic cloves to the pan over medium-low heat while the pan is still cold. Discard garlic once it starts to sizzle but before it browns (around 3 minutes).

Add diced shallot to the pan with oil. Cook until soft.

Add half of the parsley, oregano, crushed red pepper, wine (if using), clam juice, and the juice from the can of clams. Season with black pepper.

Turn heat to medium-high and reduce mixture by half.

Add clams and cream. Bring sauce to boil and let simmer for 10 minutes, adding more cream to taste.

Serve over pasta with the rest of chopped parsley and grated parmesan. Enjoy!