



CARCIOFO FRITTO

Wine Pairing: Casale Marchese Frascati Superiore, 2013

Artichokes are an excellent example of how worthwhile a little extra work can be. While they're perfectly enjoyable served steamed or grilled and pulled apart at the table, there's something luxurious about being presented artichokes where the work has been done for you. Paired with the Casale Marchese Frascati this dish has a fine balance, with the herbal and floral notes in the wine complementing the earthy-sweet artichoke and the wine's weighty finish providing enough strength to stand up to the richness of frying.

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- 8 large fresh artichokes
 - 2 1/2 cups Extra Light Olive Oil
 - 3 lemons
 - Salt and pepper

PREP THE ARTICHOKEs: Squeeze the juice of two lemons into 3 quarts of cold water then add the rinds to the water. Keep the prepped artichokes in this water until you're ready to cook to prevent them from turning brown. Cut one additional half of lemon to use while prepping. Using a large knife cut about 1-inch off the bottom of the stem and rub the exposed surface with the lemon half. Cut off the top 1 1/2-inches of the artichoke. Cut the artichoke in half lengthwise and place into the lemon water prevent browning.

Removing one artichoke at a time from the water, pull off and discard the outermost leaves. Continue upwards, snapping off about 25 percent of the outer leaves, or until you reach the leaves that have a lighter brighter green color and appear tender. Trim the dark remains of the leaves from around the stem and peel the outer skin on the stem until the pale green shows. Using a spoon, remove the purple-tipped leaves in the center of the artichoke as well as the silk, leaving as much of the heart behind as possible. Return the artichoke halves to the lemon water and repeat the process with those that remain.

TO FINISH: Pour at least 2-inches of oil into a large frying pan and gently heat to 300° F. Drain the artichokes and dry them well, gently pressing out moisture trapped between the leaves, then season generously with salt and pepper. Place the artichokes in the oil with the flat side down and cook until tender, about 15 minutes, occasionally pressing them down into the oil and rotating the pan for even heat.

Transfer the artichokes to a paper towel lined plate. Turn up the heat until the oil reaches 375° F. Using tongs, return the artichokes to the pan with the flat surface facing up, pressing gently so that the leaves are fully submerged and spread open. Fry for an additional 40 seconds or until the leaves are nicely brown and crisp. Transfer the artichokes to a fresh paper towel lined plate to drain completely. Serve while still hot with lemon wedges to garnish.