

## SICILIAN ANTIPASTO

Serves 8 as a main dish, 20 as a vegetable side dish or to a crowd as an hors d'oeuvre.

Olive oil

4 stalks celery, sliced

4 - 6 carrots, sliced

2 - 4 onions, coarsely chopped

6 - 8 cloves garlic, minced

1 head cauliflower, florets sliced

1 - 2 heads fennel, sliced (optional)

2 - 4 zucchini, sliced

2 (6 oz.) cans tomato sauce

6 oz. can tomato paste

1 c. chopped parsley

1 - 2 tbsp. each oregano and basil

1/4 - 1/2 c. capers (optional)

1 - 2 (8 oz.) jars pearl or cocktail onions, drained (more is better)

1 - 2 (16 oz.) jars mixed sweet pickles, drained and sliced

6 oz. can (drained weight) pitted black olives, drained

5 3/4 oz. jar (drained weight) stuffed green olives, drained

16 oz. jar cherry peppers, mild or hot, drained

13 1/2 oz. jar peperoncini, drained (banana pepper)

3 (6 oz.) jars marinated artichoke heart and juice (quarter artichoke hearts)

1/4 - 1/2 c. red wine vinegar

1/4 c. sugar

Salt and lots freshly ground black pepper

1 (or none) of the following: 6 oz. anchovies, finely chopped; 2 - 3 (7 oz.) cans tuna, packed in oil and undrained; 1/2 lb. salami, cut in julienne strips (best with mozzarella)

In very large heavy pot with lid, pour enough olive oil to cover bottom. Add celery, carrots, onion, garlic, cauliflower and fennel (if used). Cover and cook vegetables in oil for 5 minutes. Add sliced zucchini and steam 5 minutes more. Remove from heat and add remaining ingredients, including your choice of anchovies, tuna or salami. Stir gently to mix, return to heat and simmer for about 3 to 4 minutes, just to blend. Refrigerate antipasto for 3 days, stirring daily. Can be served over the next 10 days, storing remainder in refrigerator.

Testing Results: Use a very large pot to hold all these ingredients, though don't feel constrained to follow the recipe exactly. If you don't like olives, omit them and compensate with more artichoke hearts or onions. Add julienne strips of mozzarella if you like. Play with peppers according to your palate. Some ingredients, like peperoncini (small hot peppers) may have to be purchased in an Italian food store where you might also buy Italian salami if that's your choice among the last 3 ingredients.