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- GIOIELLI NASCOSTI: BASILICATA

- SKYSCAPES: A NATURE'S INSPIRATION
FOR ARTISTS

- CURIOSITY CORNER

- HEALTHY COMFORT SOUP

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Gioielli Nascosti

RUBRICA PER ACCOMPAGNARVI ALLA SCOPERTA
DELLE BELLEZZE DEL NOSTRO PAESE

L'Italia è il Paese della grande bellezza. Custodisce tesori paesaggistici e capolavori artistici di valore inestimabile, apprezzati in tutto il mondo.

La FAO Staff Coop Gazette attraverso questa rubrica vuole condurre i lettori nel cuore dell'Italia in una passeggiata nella storia alla scoperta di caratteristici borghi dal fascino antico. Storia, arte, natura, terra e mare saranno i protagonisti della nostra rubrica in cui vogliamo raccogliere curiosità, immagini, colori e bellezze da celebrare e condividere con i nostri lettori.

L'Italia è un paese di poeti, navigatori e paesini addormentati.

Probabilmente in qualsiasi punto dello stivale ci si trovi, nel raggio di un centinaio di chilometri c'è un borgo-gioiello ai più sconosciuti.

Nella nostra penisola la storia si è sbizzarrita con un tale entusiasmo da lasciarsi alle spalle villaggi ed uomini in un alternarsi inarrestabile di invasioni, saccheggi, guerre, terremoti, frane, siccità, povertà, cambiamenti nelle rotte commerciali.

Questi eventi hanno concorso a creare un'altra Italia, quella fuori dal tempo e dolcemente imprigionata in esso.

Un'Italia che si concentra soprattutto nel cuore del Belpaese.

E noi vogliamo partire da qui, dai borghi abbandonati, impregnati di un fascino antico che ancora resiste e che abbiamo il dovere di difendere e valorizzare.

Come sottolineato dall'architetto Paolo Portoghesi

“Questi borghi rappresentano la nostra verginità e conservarla corrisponde ad uno dei pochi ideali del nostro tempo”



di Enrica Romanazzo

Sostiene e promuove da anni le attività della FAO STAFF COOP. Nel contempo segue ed organizza eventi in difesa dell'ambiente e per la valorizzazione del territorio salentino

BASILICATA

La Basilicata, fino a poco tempo fa ignorata dai turisti, negli ultimi anni è stata riscoperta ed apprezzata per la ricchezza di paesaggi incontaminati ed incantati, per la cultura, l'archeologia e l'enogastronomia.

Tappa immancabile per chi si reca in Basilicata è la famosa Matera, con i suoi Sassi, patrimonio dell'Unesco dal 1993. Ma oltre a questa suggestiva meta c'è tanto altro da scoprire. Perché come diceva Rocco Papaleo nel famoso film "Basilicata Coast to Coast", la Basilicata esiste... ed è bellissima! E noi vogliamo portarvi a visitare alcuni dei suoi gioielli nascosti: i suoi incantevoli borghi adagiati sulle cime delle Dolomiti Lucane, in cui assistere ai "Riti Arborei", cerimonie ancestrali che affondano le loro radici nei riti pagani di questa terra. La Basilicata è una terra ricca di tradizioni e vanta singolari rituali che fin dai tempi più remoti celebrano il legame tra l'uomo e la natura. In particolare durante il periodo primaverile ed estivo la regione diventa

teatro di cerimonie davvero uniche: “le nozze tra gli alberi”. L’inconsueto matrimonio avviene fra un tronco ed una cima di due alberi diversi. Un’unione simbolica fra “due Sposi” che richiama l’arcaico inno alla fecondità ed al rinnovarsi della vita.



PIETRAPERTOSA - IL BORGO PIÙ ALTO DI TUTTA LA BASILICATA CON I SUOI 1088M SUL LIVELLO DEL MARE

Questo borgo gioiello della Basilicata è adagiato sulle cime delle Dolomiti Lucane, che, come una fortezza naturale, lo proteggono dai freddi venti provenienti da Nord. In un paese dominato dalla roccia la pietra la fa da padrona. La roccia è così importante da dare il nome a Pietrapertosa che deriva da Pietra Perciata, cioè roccia forata. Partendo dal grande massiccio che accoglie il visitatore all’ingresso del paese, si passa attraverso gradinate scavate nella roccia (le scalelle), per visitare il quartiere arabo (aravata) caratterizzato da strade

strette, vicoli ciechi e tipiche case unifamiliari in pietra locale, e si giunge infine alla pietra forata (perciata) sita nel punto più alto del paese. Da fare assolutamente è il suggestivo percorso geologico che dalla fortezza normanna conduce alla chiesa madre di S. Giacomo Maggiore, attraverso cui ammirare le bizzarre forme assunte



dalle rocce, modellate nel corso dei secoli dagli agenti atmosferici, raffiguranti un soldato, due gemelle, un elefante o un delfino. Per le strade del borgo oltre all'aria pura e frizzante, si respira un'atmosfera di storia e di cultura. Numerose sono le chiese con cicli di affreschi, i palazzi medievali ed i tesori del castello da scoprire in compagnia di una guida locale. Dai resti del castello si gode di un panorama mozzafiato.

CASTELMEZZANO - IL BORGO PAESAGGIO E BALCONE DELLE DOLOMITI

Qui aria purissima, e panorami incantevoli. In questo borgo incantato di soli 800 abitanti tra le suggestive vie del centro storico è possibile ammirare le abitazioni incastonate tra le rocce.

Per gli amanti della natura c'è la possibilità di scegliere percorsi ed escursioni storico-naturalistiche, a partire dal Percorso delle Sette Pietre, un antico tratturo che collegava Castelmezzano con la dirimpettaia Pietrapertosa.



Nei borghi di Pietrapertosa e Castelmezzano è inoltre possibile assistere ai “riti arborei”, cioè alla celebrazione di singolari “matrimoni” che avvengono tra un tronco, lo “sposo”, ed una cima, la “sposa”. Un sodalizio mistico tra cielo e terra in cui sacro e profano, uomo e natura si fondono per diventare una sola cosa. I riti arborei celebrano dunque l'unione di due piante che vengono letteralmente innestate fra loro a formare un unico nuovo albero ed innalzate in cielo in un clima di festa e solennità.



In questi luoghi è possibile gustare specialità a base di semplici ingredienti sapientemente utilizzati da gente dedita alla caccia ed alle pratiche agricole, come le beccacce ripiene, la frittata di lampascioni, la Rafanata: una specie di frittata a base di uova, rafano e formaggi, i ravioli di ricotta con sugo di funghi cardoncelli, i maccheroni con mollica frita e noci. Qui tutto rimanda ad un mondo arcaico che ha saputo mantenere intatta la sua magia.



VIAGGIO SULLE TRACCE DELL'IMPERATORE FEDERICO II DI SVEVIA IN TERRA LUCANA

Questa terra seppur poco conosciuta è sempre stata al centro dei principali eventi della storia d'Italia. Federico II di Svevia, nipote del famoso Federico Barbarossa, Re di Sicilia e successivamente incoronato Imperatore del Sacro Romano Impero, ha amato la Basilicata percorrendone i boschi con il suo Falcone, fedele compagno di caccia. Federico II è stato un uomo per alcuni versi leggendario: conosciuto con l'appellativo di "stupor mundi" era dotato di una personalità poliedrica ed affascinante che fin dalla sua epoca ha polarizzato l'attenzione degli storici e dei suoi sudditi producendo una lunga serie di miti e di fantasie popolari. Questo personaggio carismatico che riuscì a creare un ponte tra oriente e Occidente, alla Basilicata ha lasciato in eredità castelli e leggende ma soprattutto storia e cultura. Perché lui con questa terra ha avuto uno strettissimo rapporto.

Proprio qui, nel Castello di Melfi, sono accaduti alcuni avvenimenti molto importanti della vita dell'Imperatore del Sacro Romano Impero.

La storia di Federico II e del Castello di Melfi comincia in realtà con un tragico avvenimento: è qui che il re di Tessalonica durante la visita all'Imperatore muore di infarto. Ma al Castello di Melfi è legato uno degli avvenimenti più importanti della vita di Federico II: l'emanazione delle Constitutiones, le leggi emanate con l'obiettivo di creare uno Stato centrale e unitario. Nel Castello di Melfi Federico II soggiognerà diverse estati, per sfuggire al caldo torrido, per battute di caccia a Lagopesole o per discutere le fondamentali questioni di Stato con i suoi più stretti consiglieri. Proprio l'idea di ricostruire lo Stato, limitando lo strapotere dei Baroni, era l'obiettivo primario che Federico II cercò di perseguire durante il suo regno. Per fare questo, l'imperatore attuò una grande opera di ricostruzione del demanio. E per farlo si attivò per ricostruire e rinforzare le città, i castelli ed i casali.



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Proprio i Castelli sono uno dei più importanti lasciti che Federico II ha donato alla Basilicata. Qui grazie alla sua opera ne sono sorti innumerevoli: oltre a quello di Melfi e San Fele se ne contano altri 18 (Abriola, Acerenza, Anzi, Brienza, Brindisi di Montagna, Calvello, Gorgoglione, Lagonegro, Maratea, Matera, Montescaglioso, Monte Serico – Genzano, Muro Lucano, Pescopagano, Petrullo – Stigliano, Pietra di Acino – Armento-Aliano, Policoro, Torremare - Metaponto).

Una menzione particolare merita il Castello di Lagopesole. Era qui che l'Imperatore amava svagarsi cacciando, anche se prediligeva tornare al Castello di Melfi per il pernottare. Lagopesole del resto non era strategico per il controllo di fondamentali vie di comunicazione o per motivi economici ed era posto a presidio di una vecchia strada che congiungeva Benevento e la valle del fiume Bradano. Il fortilizio di pianta rettangolare, con annesso torrione presente in loco, era stato costruito in epoca normanna: era piccolo e non incontrava i gusti di Federico II. Fu così che nel 1242 l'Imperatore ne decise l'ampliamento, trasformando il castro in Domus, casa dell'ozio, facendo costruire un secondo cortile da collegare al primo e facendo erigere una torre ad ogni lato delle fortificazioni. Da allora ad oggi Castel Lagopesole non ha subito rimaneggiamenti rispetto al progetto originario di Federico II, divenendo per questo il secondo castello federiciano più importante dell'Italia meridionale peninsulare, dopo Castel del Monte.



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COMMENT LE RETOUR D'EXPATRIATION A INFLUENCÉ L'EXERCICE D'UNE PROFESSION : LE TEMOIGNAGE D'UNE PSYCHOLOGUE BILINGUE

a. L'expérience Au Féminin D'une Reconstruction Professionnelle

Aujourd'hui, je suis *psychologue et psychothérapeute de double nationalité italo-française, référente externe des institutions O.N.U.*, spécialisée dans la prise en charge des fonctionnaires internationaux, des travailleurs dans l'humanitaire et de leurs familles.

Pour en arriver là, je suis passée par 10 années d'expatriation.

Ces années ont été marquées d'abord par les études, à Paris Cité la Sorbonne, où j'ai pu être confrontée aux *différences culturelles et sociétales* que j'ai tâché de *saisir pour « bien » m'intégrer*.

Avec l'entrée dans le monde professionnel, ce travail s'est révélé à peaufiner, imposant par ailleurs la question fondamentale de ce qu'est une bonne intégration.

La réponse n'était pas si vite trouvée que la décision de rentrer en Italie est tombée pour réaliser un projet de famille.

Je me suis alors faite à l'idée de *redémarrer une nouvelle phase d'intégration*. Car, même s'il s'agissait de mon pays natal, j'avais bien à l'esprit le risque lié aux débuts, c'est-à-dire de ne pas *déceler tous les rouages du système*.

Mais grâce à la précédente expatriation et à ce retour un peu impromptu, je tirais déjà une première leçon qui pouvait en partie répondre à ma question concernant *l'intégration*. Ce concept prenait désormais un sens plus complet et *défini par le fait de savoir s'adapter à un terrain inconnu, accepter de faire moins bien que prévu* et parfois même moins vite. Leçon qui a constitué un bagage de réflexion précieux quant à la manière de réapprendre à vivre selon le nouvel environnement économique et socio-culturel italien.

En ligne avec mes réflexions, *j'ai alors muri un projet qui devait prendre en compte la réalité de ce que la ville de Rome avait à m'offrir*.

b. La Mise En Place D'une Proposition D'offre En Ligne Avec Les Besoins Des Expatriés

Rome est une capitale qui accueille beaucoup de communautés étrangères travaillant pour des institutions internationales comme la vôtre. Comme je l'ai aussi vécu personnellement, *le défis de l'intégration touche de nombreux enfants et des nombreuses familles* qui doivent s'y confronter au quotidien.

Désormais, j'envisage l'expatriation comme un objet d'étude qui constitue la clef de voute pour une offre d'accompagnement nouvelle, très spécifique et surtout utile à beaucoup.

Le principe fondateur de cette approche est que l'expatriation, vue comme un choix de vie, peut prendre ses racines dans notre histoire. Histoire qui joue un rôle déterminant dans la manière d'envisager notre vie et de tisser nos liens.

FRANCOPHONES DES N.U.

L'EXPATRIATION IMPLIQUE
DES ENJEUX SPECIFIQUESFEDERICA PAGNONI
UNE SPECIALISTE BILINGUE FR- IT
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En parallèle, le constat du terrain est que *chaque changement* (déménagement, départ d'un enfant, promotion...) *représente un déclencheur potentiel d'un questionnement personnel, familial ou professionnel.* La récurrence de ce questionnement finit par invoquer un caractère d'urgence à une vie ponctuée par la perte de repères. J'ai alors décidé d'accompagner ce questionnement, souvent porté autour des motivations à la base de ce choix de vie.

L'objectif étant celui de retrouver une harmonie et un sens, en aidant l'individu à concevoir d'autres perspectives dans son parcours d'expatriation.

Avec le temps, *l'expérience a aussi mis en lumière qu'une attention particulière n'était toujours pas posée sur les*

hommes et femmes accompagnateurs dont leur rôle, central dans les équilibres familiaux, passe souvent au second plan. Aujourd'hui, ma pratique s'y dédie tout particulièrement.

c. La Spécificité De La Proposition De Soins Au Sein Du Cabinet

Pour répondre aux exigences de cette communauté, il m'a semblé donc naturel de créer une activité presque entièrement basée sur *des suivis en ligne que le patient « emporte » avec soi* lors de ses déménagements.

Pratique adogmatique dans le milieu professionnel, certainement sujette à critique mais finalement bien utile et adaptée à cette époque de pandémie et surtout d'abattement des frontières.

Autre point central, c'est *la promotion d'une thérapie dans sa langue maternelle.* Les années de pratique ont confirmé que le facteur langue *aiderait la reconnexion à son identité primaire* et à déployer de manière plus fluide des liens entre ses choix du passé et ceux du présent. De surcroît, la langue maternelle évoquerait *cette idée « d'être chez soi » quand on est « ailleurs »*, apportant un vécu de réassurance.

En conclusion, mes parcours personnel et professionnel m'ont donc ouvert la possibilité de *fournir un réel service à cette communauté d'expatriés qui vit partout dans le monde et dont il est important prendre soins, comme j'aurais voulu qu'on le fasse pour moi.*



By Dr. Hicham Mouallem FRCS

Laureato in Medicina e Chirurgia, Specialista in Chirurgia Generale

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La nuova frontiera del body contouring per un fisico al top? è la vaser lipo. E'una procedura avanzata che impiega energia ultrasonica per rimuovere in maniera selettiva l'adiposità indesiderata – fa sapere il DR. Mouallem -. Il tutto senza danneggiare gli altri tessuti. Stiamo parlando, appunto, di liposcultura e cioè di un trattamento di chirurgia estetica, mini-invasiva e con poco dolore e con tempi di recupero rapidi.

Spiega ancora Mouallem: Questa tecnologia permette una vasta gamma di applicazioni di rimodellamento corporeo: dal trattamento di piccole a grandi aree.

I tempi di recupero sono minimi, come il dolore e le ecchimosi mentre si assiste ad un progressivo miglioramento del processo di retrazione del tessuto cutaneo . Le zone che possono essere sottoposte a questa tecnologia sono il collo, il doppio mento, il seno, le braccia, la parte alta e bassa del dorso. Ma anche l'area della circonferenza vita, i fianchi, la pancia, i glutei, le cosce, le ginocchia, le gambe, i polpacci e perfino le caviglie. Questo tipo di trattamento può essere praticato da tutti, tuttavia, gli obesi patologici non sono i candidati ideali: infatti, una pelle compatta ed elastica produce risultati migliori. I primi risultati si vedono dopo 3 settimane.

In alcuni casi il grasso aspirato potrebbe essere utilizzato e diventa in quel caso materiale prezioso per la paziente stessa per aumentare il seno oppure rimodellare i glutei riempiendoli con il grasso aspirato e trattato.

Vale la pena sottolineare che la Vaser lipo non aiuta a perdere peso nel senso che, come evidenzia Mouallem, l'adipe è leggero e per questo la rimozione delle sacche di grasso può essere considerata un'alternativa alla perdita di peso. L'obiettivo è quello di avere una silhouette sottile. Quanto al grasso rimosso, presupponendo che si porti avanti uno stile di vita sano, non si riformerà ma emigrerà in un'altra parte del corpo. Infine uno step importante: una volta fatto il trattamento, occorre mantenere uno stile di vita sano e attività fisica adeguati: la forma postoperatoria è relativamente permanente ed eventuali, successivi, aumenti o perdite di peso tenderanno a distribuirsi in modo proporzionale su tutto il corpo.



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About Us:

Hicham Mouallem has graduated in Italy in 1990 and has been practicing cosmetic surgery since 1998. He has first specialized in General Surgery in Italy and later in Cosmetic Surgery in Rio de Janeiro- Brazil, becoming increasingly specialized and trained under the supervision of Prof. Pitanguy and Dr.Farid Hakme, the most important surgeon soft he Brazilian cosmetic surgery school and president of the Brazilian Society of Plastic and Aesthetic Surgery.



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SKYSCAPES: A NATURE'S INSPIRATION FOR ARTISTS



By Fahmi Bishay

Dr. Bishay is an FAO retiree. He is a senior consultant in agricultural policy analysis and sustainable economic development. He is an economist, artist and writer. This is his self-portrait.

INTRODUCTION

How many times did you, my dear reader, look at the sky in the morning and admire the remarkable cloud formation against a beautiful blue sky? And how often did you look at sunrise or sunset when the sun reflected beautiful colors on the clouds (Figure 1)? And if you like painting, didn't you wish to paint those lovely scenes? What you observed are *skyscapes*.



Figure 1. A photograph by Fahmi Bishay of a
skyscape including clouds
Over the Mediterranean Sea at sunset in Castiglione
della Pescaia, Tuscany. See the beauty of the light

What is a **skyscape**? According to the Collins English Dictionary: a skyscape is “a painting, drawing, photograph, etc. representing or depicting the sky”. In art, a skyscape is defined as “a part of the sky with outlined terrestrial objects that can be comprehended in a single view”. A skyscape can include clouds or not. It could be either a picture of part of the sky or a picture that includes a significant component of a view of the sky.

This article focuses on the beauty of skylscapes and argues that it is a gift of nature’s inspiration for artists.

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION FOR ARTISTS

It is essential to be inspired to achieve creative, powerful, and beautiful artwork. There are many sources of inspiration for artists. The following are selected pragmatic approaches for finding inspiration for artworks: **nature**; visiting an art museum or gallery; sketching people from life; looking at work from different cultures or time periods; getting out and observing reality; looking back at old work; looking through art books; connecting with other artists; trying something new; and more.

On top of the above list is **nature**. Nature is the best source of inspiration. **Claude Monet** once said: “The richness I achieve comes from nature, the source of my inspiration”. How true. Artists interact with nature using multiple senses - including sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste - and create works of art that incorporate what they observe. These artworks can be in any medium and can be abstract or realistic. Each artist experiences nature differently, and these unique experiences are reflected in their artwork.

Notwithstanding the above, many artists when inspired by nature seldom pay enough attention to skylscapes in their paintings. They usually focus on landscapes, seascapes, human nature (e.g., portraits), still life, etc. Thus, it is recommended that artists look at the sky to observe skylscapes as nature’s inspiration to get creative ideas for artworks.

NATURE OF SKYSCAPES

Climate is an essential element in the composition of skylscapes. The intervening atmosphere between a viewer and a faraway object causes that object to have less distinct edges and outlines than had it been near the viewer. In addition, details of the interior of those objects would be softened or blurred. Distant objects appear lighter than objects of similar tone being closer to the viewer. And in general contrasts between light and shade appear less extreme at large distances.

The Sky in skylscapes can be presented by many colors under different weather conditions at different seasons and times of the day.

Clouds could be colored pale blue at certain times of the day. The sky could be depicted as black at night with perhaps a bright moon and some shining stars. During the day with limited clouds, the color of the sky is usually deep blue. At sunrise and sunset, when there are clouds, the view of the sky and clouds in skyscapes can be very colorful with many shades of yellow, red, brown, and blue, (Figures 1, 2, and 3).



Figure 2. A photograph by Fahmi Bishay of a classic skyscape without clouds at sunrise in Amman, Jordan.



Figure 3. A photograph by Fahmi Bishay of a skyscape At sunrise in Warsaw, Poland. Observe the remarkable light movement over the city in the early morning.

CHALLENGES AND PLEASURES IN PAINTING SKYSCAPES

To produce a powerful, beautiful, and highly satisfactory skyscape painting is a challenging task. It requires hard work, dedication, and concentration. Yet, producing quality artwork of skylscapes gives the painter great pleasure. The main sources of that pleasure include, inter alia: generating creativity in art, solving art problems, and introducing harmony into the final product.

As regards creativity, the artist has to “concur” the white canvas to create the perceived image of the skyscape. With respect to problem-solving, the artist has to address such issues as focal point, composition, values and colors, approaches for applying paints, and more. Concerning harmony, the intuition of the painter should be added to the above elements to ensure harmony in the final product.

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EXAMPLES OF SKYSCAPES' PAINTINGS BY SELECTED MASTERS

Of paintings by masters of the art whose works included skyscapes, we present two examples: a painting by Vermeer (Figure 4), and another by Raphael (Figure 5). Vermeer's masterpiece is among the early works depicting the details of part of Delft city in Holland including an outstanding skyscape. In this skyscape there are clouds with soft colors against a pale blue sky (Figure 4). It is believed that the painting was done in 1661 – 1663.

With respect to Raphael's painting, although skyscape is not a significant component of the painting, it adds character and a charming background to the picture (Figure 5). It must have been painted with great care by Raphael. See how beautiful both paintings including skyscapes are.



Figure 4. Johannes Vermeer, A view of Delft, Holland, (1661 – 1663). (Oil on canvas 96.5 X 117.5 cm.)



Figure 5. Raphael. Moses shows the Tablets of the Law to the people of Israel. (1518 – 1519).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In a skyscape beautiful colors of different shades of yellow, red, brown, and blue are usually reflected by the sun on the sky, clouds, water, birds, and other terrestrial objects in the painting. Thus, views of skylscapes provide beautiful and attractive subjects for painters to paint as such or to be incorporated in other scenes of nature. To conclude, skylscapes are, indeed, a gift of nature's inspiration for artists.

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HEALTHY COMFORT SOUP



by Pasqualina Raspaolo

Founder and owner of Culinary Genes, LLC. Pasqualina pursued her passion in nutrition, the culinary arts and genetics. She holds annual Tuscan Culinary Adventures, where she shares her enthusiasm and love of food. She currently blogs about gluten-free baking and cooking, taking traditional family recipes and converting them into gluten-free alternatives. Pasqualina released her first cookbook in November 2020 entitled, 'Pasqualina's Table, Our Italian Family Traditions... The Gluten-Free Way' and is currently working on a second book, which will feature her family's traditional dessert recipes converted into gluten-free deliciousness. Pasqualina is passionate about people, and the triple L's - love, laughter, and living ... it's in her DNA! - www.culinarygenes.com



Serves: 4

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

A delicious and nourishing soup that I learned how to make from a dear friend in Portugal with some modifications. The sweet potatoes and carrots give it a creamy texture so no milk is needed!

A comfort soup with many powerful health benefits:

- **Sweet Potatoes** are rich in vitamin A and are a great source of fiber, vitamin C and various B vitamins. They also contain minerals, potassium, manganese, magnesium, and copper and have a good amount of protein. The orange color is from beta-carotene, which is a pigment and antioxidant. Studies have shown that sweet potatoes are not only great for eye health and vision, but they have also been linked to improved digestive health, heart health, and boosting the immune system. Although they are considered a starchy vegetable, they are low on the glycemic index and promote regulation of blood sugar.



- **Onions** are nutrient-dense and part of the Allium family of plants, which also includes chives, garlic, and leeks. They are a good source of vitamin C,



B6 and manganese. They also contain small amounts of calcium, iron, folate, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and antioxidants, quercetin and sulfur.

Research has shown that onions provide potential health benefits that may reduce the risk of several cancers. As a good source of vitamin C, it has also been linked to supporting skin and hair. Quercetin, found on onion skin, is linked to lowering blood pressure.

- **Garlic** has antibacterial, antiviral, and anti-fungal properties, all of which help boost the immune system. It has been used as a remedy to fight the common cold and flu. Garlic has been used for thousands of years, not just as an ingredient to add flavor to a dish, but also for medicinal purposes. While growing up in Italy, I remember my grandparents and parents using raw garlic as a medicinal agent for numerous therapeutic uses, which we still use today. The list is extensive but typically they used it for digestive issues; the common flu and cold, whatever their origin (viral or bacterial); for skin problems such as small wounds and cuts and gingivitis (infection of gums caused by a bacterium); for protecting the liver against various toxic substances; and, it was used to help the body strengthen the immune system. They also used garlic for constipation as it has laxative properties. Thanks to its wealth of antioxidants (allicin, flavonoids, vitamins E and C, minerals, and others), garlic helps fight the harmful effects of free radicals.



- **Tomatoes** have many beneficial properties and are a good source of several vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C, A, K, folate, potassium, and antioxidant lycopene, which is responsible for the red color. Lycopene, which is mainly contained in the peel, has been linked to many health benefits including reducing the risk of heart disease and some cancers. Tomatoes are mostly made up of water and are low in fat and calories.



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- **Carrots** are a gift of nature rich in many nutritional properties useful for your body. They are the most widely available sources of beta-carotene, which is converted into vitamin A in the body, a powerful antioxidant. There is an impressive amount of research and cancer-prevention studies of beta carotene. Carrots are also a good source of fiber, vitamin K1, potassium, are a modest source of vitamin C when raw, and are virtually fat-free. Your body needs fat to absorb beta carotene, so the addition of a healthy fat when preparing carrots not only enhances their taste, but their nutritional function as well.

- **Broccoli** is rich in fiber and help support healthy intestinal function and digestive health. Thanks to the presence of dietary fiber, they also help to maintain a sense of satiety. It is part of the cruciferous family and is considered a superfood. Broccoli is full of vitamins C, A, K, and folate, and minerals, potassium, phosphorus and selenium. It has high levels of a compound called glucoraphanin that is converted into a potent antioxidant called sulforaphane. Studies have shown that sulforaphane may have multiple health benefits such as reducing blood sugar, cholesterol levels, oxidative stress, and the development of chronic disease. Broccoli also contains antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin, which have been shown to be eye-protective.

- **Extra Virgin Olive Oil** is known as “liquid gold” but my family and I call it “magical.” Olive trees go far back before biblical times, with their legendary reputation. Italians consider the olive tree as almost holy, evoking feelings of vitality and health. The first evidence of the use of oil dates back to 4000 BC when it was used as an ointment for the skin, for lamp lights, and taken as a medicine. Olive oil is rich in healthy monounsaturated fats and has large amounts of antioxidants. Research has shown olive oil to have strong anti-inflammatory properties. Studies show that monounsaturated fats also help improve cardiovascular health, cut cholesterol, and reduce blood pressure.



Ingredients:

- 2 large sweet potatoes (can sub with butternut squash)
- 1 small onion
- 2 large ripe red tomatoes
- 16 oz organic baby carrots
- 2 broccoli heads
- 6 to 8 garlic cloves, whole
- Extra virgin olive oil to taste
- Sea salt to taste
- Ground black pepper to taste

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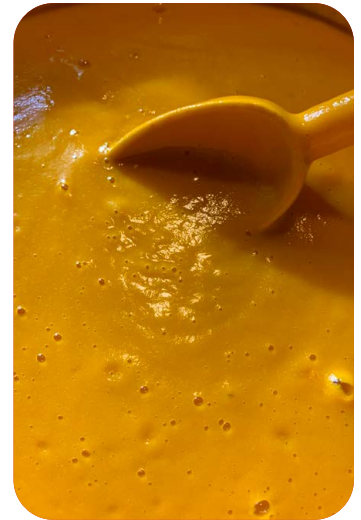
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Directions:

For Tomato Sauce:

1. Cut sweet potatoes, onion, tomatoes, carrots, and broccoli into small uniform sizes (about a 1/2 inch dice). Peel garlic and leave whole.
2. In a large heavy-bottom pot, add potatoes, onions, tomatoes, carrots and garlic and fill with cold water, covering contents 1 to 2 inches. Cover the pot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for another 8 to 10 minutes or until sweet potatoes are fork-tender. Add broccoli and cook for another 5 minutes or until broccoli is tender. Add 1/4 cup of extra virgin olive oil, salt, and pepper to the pot and stir.
3. Turn off the heat and let the soup sit for 10 minutes.
4. Transfer everything to a high-speed blender and blend until smooth. You may need to do this in batches. Add water if too thick.
5. Return the soup to the pot and cook on medium heat for 3 to 5 minutes. Season with salt to taste.
6. Garnished with small pieces of broccoli, roasted pine nuts, and a cream made with roasted beets and garlic.



Notes:

- *Feel free to add ginger - I added a 1-inch piece of fresh ginger, chopped.*
- *You can also add 1 cup of fresh spinach, chopped, after the last step. Remove from heat, add spinach and serve hot. You can substitute with broccoli rabe or any other green of your choice.*
- *You can add cauliflower or use it as a substitute for broccoli.*
- *I have also caramelized the onions and added them as a garnish instead of cooking them with the other vegetables.*
- *Garnish as you desire!*

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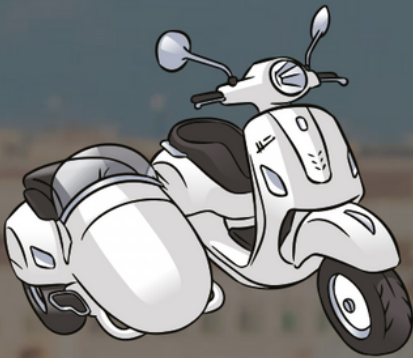
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