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“There was a streak of austerity in Florentine life throughout the Renaissance” wrote Professor Nicholai Rubinstein of the University of London. “The utilitarian outlook of 14th-century merchants, with its caution and frugality, survived in the more pleasure-loving and sumptuous life of the 15th-...”

p.33-34

“When [the Tuscans] emerged from the heaviness and gluttony of the Middle Ages, whose cooking was a prolongation of that of the Roman Empire, [they] did not return to that Empire as an exemplar of the classical world of which [they] were becoming conscious, but to the austere republic, with its simpler healthier food.”

“Florentines [of the Renaissance] ate only two meals a day (like the Etruscans before them), the first at nine or ten in the morning, the second just before dark. The menus were simple. Not much meat was eaten; pasta had already become the *pièce de résistance* for many meals. A middle-class dinner might begin with fruit, a melon, for instance, and perhaps end with it too, unless the opener was salad and the closer cheese. In between, the main dish, if it were not past, might be *fegatelli* (a thin pancake stuffed with chopped liver), or pigeon, or perhaps nothing except bean or squash soup poured over sliced of bread – not a cheap dish, since bread was expensive. On gala days, the main course might be kid and there would be a sweet dessert. The wealthy would eat more expensive main dishes (trout, or thrushes, or pheasant, or a stew), but the meal would be no longer.”

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“...one of the most popular Renaissance dishes was duck with lemon or orange sauce... not only a renaissance dish in Italy, but an ancient Roman one. *Pollastri repleni* was simply stuffed chicken, but *pollastri affinocchiati* was roast chicken flavoured with fennel seeds.”

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[middle of C15th] “Grilled meat, spitted meat and veal steaks were eaten with pasta... roast loin of pork... *Aristos!* (best)... *Roso* in cisame was roast veal, served in slices and covered in sauce based on hard boiled eggs. Liver was sautéed in butter with raisins and cherries, and thickly peppered. Hare was marinated in wine and vinegar and then cooed slowly in the marinating liquid, along with plenty of onions and spices.”

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“...some 800 years before our era had meagre materials on which to found a cuisine... mutton and cheese (pecorino... and ricotta)... wheat and wine... beef, and hogs... *porchetta*, spit-roasted whole suckling pig. Tuscany eats *porchetta* too...”

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“Somewhere between 1260 and 1290 an anonymous cookbook appeared, in manuscript form – a witness to the progress that had been made in the last century. Boiled meat was still there... but there was roast meat too, for instance shoulder of mutton. *Bollito* [Boiled meat] was accompanied either by [green sauce or pepper sauce]. Calf's head was listed as a currently popular dish. Poultry included capons, chickens, ducks, geese – and cranes. Stuffings were recommended for chickens, particularly elaborate ones for goose, and garlic or quince were recommended for smaller birds – a return to ancient Roman practices. There were wine sauces and almond sauces. There were also recipes for *vermicelli*, *tortelli* and *tortelletti*...”

p.85-86

(C16th) “**Gnocchi alla romana**... boiled in milk to which grated Parmesan cheese and beaten eggs has been added... finished in a baking dish in the oven, with plenty of butter and more grated cheese on top... The renaissance *gnocchi* was made of bread from which the crust had been removed, water, and flour...”

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“Roman pizza is soberer than the exuberant Neapolitan version, being made with oil and onions alone...”

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“porchetta tipica dell’ArICCia al legno di faggio... [wood roasted suckling pig] with garlic, parsley, rosemary and lots – lots – of pepper.”

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“The Marches do not have one cuisine, they have at least two. ‘Rough and savoury’ fits the inland cuisine (symbol, *porchetta*) which bows to Roman-Umbrian-Etruscan influence, but the coastal cooking (symbol, *brodetto*) casts a nostalgic glance towards Greece.”

p.129

“...Boccaccio, praised Picenian salame...”

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“...all *brodetto* makers agree: (1) the olive oil used in the soup should be of the best obtainable quality; (2) only very fresh fish should be used; (3) in preparing the fish for the pot, they should be washed in sea water, never in fresh water... other details vary. The fish are usually cut up into chunks... Most recipes call for white wine... Some *brodetti* are made with onions, or garlic...”