

# CAPONE FOODS

## FRESH PASTA AND SPECIALTY FOODS

W I N T E R 2003

Capone Foods 14 Bow Street,  
Somerville, MA 02143

Phone: (617) 629-2296  
Fax: (617) 776-0318

e-mail: [albert@caponefoods.com](mailto:albert@caponefoods.com)  
[www.caponefoods.com](http://www.caponefoods.com)



*Pasta Makes the Heart Grow Fonder...*

## NOT NORMAL

**E**ver since I was little, my mother has been telling me, “You never do anything normal!” This covered a lot of territory when I was young, but I notice it is true even as I grow older. Take *cheese cake*, for example. For many years I dreamed of cheese cake, but never got around to making one due to my busy schedule and the more pressing need to fill the freezer with sausages, lasagna, etc.

Then I got a shipment of ricotta cheese from a supplier in New York that was too soft and creamy for our cannoli filling. Instead of getting upset and sending it back to them, I got the feeling that this might be just right for making *cheese cake*. And it was. We came up with a cheese cake that is lighter and brighter (with just a whisper of lemon flavor) than conventional cheese cake and it quickly became a good seller. I did not get here by the conventional route, but inspiration certainly favors the abnormal.

## WHAT'S NEW

**E**very time I announce new, improved or changed products in this column I feel like I am beating my own drum. The truth is that we make things in small batches and we taste the ingredients each time. It is easy to make small changes and improvements. Take our *cheese tortellini*. They were OK and we certainly sell a ton. However, we were using a premixed cheese filling that was a little bland. One day we decided to add a little more *romano* cheese and spices. It came out great; more interesting and assertive. I did not tell anyone because every time I announce “new and improved” someone complains they liked it better the old way. Sales went up, so I guess someone likes them better. I did not change the price: \$3.75 for either the egg, spinach or tomato pasta versions.

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*Change  
Is No  
Accident*

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We make the *lobster sausage* in very small batches, almost every week, so I have plenty of opportunities to try variations. This latest recipe has a more intense lobster flavor and a better color. They are definitely not cheap — \$7.50 for two, but you will wish you could test new versions every week.

Several weeks ago we got the new season *Capone's olive oil from California*. Like fine wine, every year produces a different vintage and the year 2002 was very fine. Highly recommended at \$15.95 for 25 oz.

## SPECIAL OFFER

**O**ur *cheese cake*, usually \$7.75, will be only \$7.00 until the end of March. For six servings, it is a real deal.

## FEATURED CUSTOMER

**F**or years my Cambridge retail customers raved to me about Fresh Pond Market. I knew the shop — it has been there forever, in the heart of Huron Village. The store is run by brothers Marc and Crosby, the third generation of the Najarian family whose grandfather opened shop in the 1920's. Last year someone told them about our pasta and soon they were carrying a line of Capone's pasta and sauces.

Fresh Pond Market reminds me of an old-fashioned grocery store with the addition of a really good meat counter. They specialize in fine meats, poultry and fish and one of the brothers is always in the store to cut a special steak or roast. In addition, they have a good selection of wines and gourmet cheeses. Stop by and treat yourself to a really good steak, a bottle of wine and several pounds of fresh pasta.

**Fresh Pond Market.** 358 Huron Avenue, Cambridge.  
Tel.: 617-876-3916



## HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS?

**F**or Valentine's Day this year give your loved one (or any likely prospect) a box of *Rabitos* (\$7.95). The attractive package holds nine figs stuffed with really good brandy truffles and then hand dipped in bitter sweet chocolate. They are more interesting (and sexy) than conventional chocolates, and the figs are good for you.

In the late fall we brought in a *raw milk farmer's gouda* that is not as aged or as salty as our other goudas. Nonetheless, it has a deep flavor and a smooth, creamy texture that goes well with winter pears and apples (\$7.95). On the other side of the cheese case are two versions of *Umbriaco* from *Luigi Guffanti*. *Prosecco* resembles fontina and the *red wine* aged version is tangy from long aging in red wine must (each \$12.95/lb.). Both go very well with *Mas Portell's Membrillo*, *Clear Flour bread* and a glass of red wine.

*Cheese,  
Apples, Pears,  
Red Wine*

## FAST FOOD

**T**he cold weather this year has led to a lot of requests for soup. It is difficult to make a good soup quickly, but here are two suggestions that are both fast and delicious.

### Quick Cream of Tomato Soup

- 1 Pt. Capone's Plum Tomato/Basil Sauce
- 1 Pt. Chicken Stock
- 1/2 Cup Heavy Cream
- 2 Tbs. Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 Cup Cubes of day-old Clear Flour bread

1. Simmer the tomato sauce and chicken stock in a sauce pan for five minutes.
2. Puree the chicken stock and sauce in a blender. Return to the sauce pan, add cream and bring back to a near simmer. Do not boil.
2. Sauté the bread cubes in olive oil until lightly browned.
3. Pour the soup into bowls and garnish with the sautéed croutons.

Tomato soup is difficult to match with wine, but a glass of a simple Chianti or Dolcetto will go well.

### Valentine's Day Bisque

- 2 Capone's Lobster sausages
- 2 Containers Capone's Newburg Sauce
- 1 Cup Whole milk

1. Bring the lobster sausage to a very low simmer in salted water and poach for ten minutes. Allow to cool and slice into 1/4 inch slices.
2. Warm the Newburg sauce, whisk in the milk and heat until quite hot but not boiling.
3. Divide the lobster sausage between two elegant, warmed soup bowls and add the hot bisque.

This is a soup for a special occasion. Garnish with chopped chives or pull out all the stops and add a few drops of white truffle oil right before serving.

A glass of champagne goes very well indeed...