

THE CULINARY MUSICIAN

My Bolognese mother taught me how to cook. I became so in love with cooking northern Italian cuisine that I paid off my student loans in Boston by cooking for people. I hope you enjoy the legacy of my mother in these original recipes inspired by mom's love for home-made Italian food.

BROCCOLI WITH OIL AND GARLIC - serves 4 people

This is a very simple way of transforming steamed or blanched broccoli into a succulent Mediterranean dish. Peeling the broccoli stalks is easy, and allows for even cooking.

Ingredients:

2 lb fresh broccoli
6 tbsp olive oil
2-3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Wash the broccoli. Cut off any woody parts at the base of the stems. Use a small sharp knife to peel the broccoli stems. Cut any very long or wide stalks in half.
2. Boil water in the bottom a saucepan equipped with a steamer, or bring a large pan of water to a boil. If steaming the broccoli, put it in the steamer and cover tightly. Cook for 8-12 minutes or until the stems are just tender when pierced with the point of a knife. Remove from the heat. If blanching, drop the broccoli into the pan of boiling water and blanch until just tender, 5-6 minutes. Drain.
3. in a frying pan large enough to hold all the broccoli pieces, gently heat the oil with the garlic (do not let the garlic brown, or it will taste bitter) add the broccoli, and cook over moderate heat for 3-4 minutes, turning carefully to coat it with the hot oil. Season with salt and pepper, Serve hot or cold.

This is an excellent side dish and easy to make. Wonderful accompaniment for all meat, fish and vegetarian dishes.

Buon appetito!

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