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# Australian Gourmet Pages Newsletter

**Book Review**  
**November 2008**

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Lucio's Ligurian Kitchen

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Lucio Galletto and David Dale

Book Review by Franz Scheurer

Lucio Galletto and David Dale's second book is much more of a recipe book and this one might be more approachable for anyone who is not so much into the stories but more interested in food.

It's a beautiful looking book. I like the matte dust jacket with the spot UV vanish, giving it a half gloss, half matte look. Paul Green's photography makes you want to jump on a plane and visit the wonderful towns pictured (I adore the shot on page 65), and the food looks life-like and appetizing.

The book is divided into **Finger Food, Appetizers, Soups, Pies, Pasta and Risotto, Seafood, Meat, Vegetables and Salads** and **Desserts**. Each section has a short introduction, which is illustrated by the recipes that follow. Some of these recipes go back to the traditional fishermen or shepherds' fare and some are modern takes on classic ideas. I love the simplicity of flavours, although you will learn quickly that it is not easy making the produce shine and the flavours stand out. Sometimes simple is hard! All the recipes are achievable although some may not be suitable for your dinner guests the first time you cook them.

I love the 'Crostini with broad bean puree' (Page 16) and the clean flavours of 'Anchovies with bread and butter' (Page 43). The 'Scallop

tartlets' (Page 55) look so good I had to raid the fridge and eat something before I could continue and I love the step-by-step, picture-by-picture instructions for making 'Cheese focaccia' (Pages 58/59). The 'Fried ravioli' (Page 87) is a wonderful way to use wild herbs and the 'Chickpea and faro soup' (Page 111) isn't just good for you, it tastes great.

I love Lucio's introduction to the Pie section, and I quote: "It's an ancient argument: which came first, the pie or the raviolo? Is a raviolo a small pie, or is a pie a big raviolo that is baked instead of boiled? Either one is a testament to the Ligurian habit of stuffing stuff inside other stuff, to be sure nothing is wasted." The pies look and sound sensational and I reckon every Kiwi should try the 'Whitebait frittata' (Page 126). My favourite pie has to be the 'Octopus and olive pie' (Pages 136/137). It's a textural sensation. Imagine Italy without pasta or risotto, unthinkable, and the book deals brilliantly with both and you must try the 'Silk handkerchief pasta with pesto sauce' (Page 172). Fish is abundant along the Ligurian coast and the simple, hearty flavours of 'Almond-crusted fish fillets' (Page 203) shine. "Meat on the other hand is rare in Liguria, so it's highly valued and carefully cooked" and Lucio's recipes illustrate the care and attention he talks about. The Easter treat 'Stuffed shoulder of veal' (Page 253) was originally made using mainly leftovers but try Lucio's version: It's a terrific dish, although time consuming. In the vegetables and salads section the 'Pan-fried radicchio' (Page 285) caught my eye and as I love 'poor man's asparagus', the 'Salsify with spicy sauce' (Page 292) is my kind of dish. If you have room, finish your journey through Lucio's book with 'Stuffed peaches with amaretti biscuits' (Page 302).

Summary: it's a great picture book and a fabulous recipe book.

RRP: \$65

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