

## Insalata Tonno di Pollo – Marinated Chicken Salad

Ingredients	Preparation
<p>1 Whole Chicken (or rabbit)            1 Onion 1 Celery 1 Carrot            4-5 Sage Leaves            1-2 Bay Leaves            1 Sprig Rosemary            5-6 Garlic Cloves            3-4 Juniper Berries            q.b Coarse Salt            q.b Peppercorns            q.b Extra Virgin Olive Oil</p> <p><b>For the Salad:</b>            Hazelnuts or Walnuts            Fresh, non-aged cheese in cubes            Celery, sliced thinly</p> <p><b>Suggested Wine Pairings:</b>  <u>Ivaldi   Andrea Extra Brut Alta Langa   Champagne Method Sparkling Wine</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start by bringing a pot of water with an onion, a stalk of celery, and a carrot to a boil. Add your whole chicken and let cook until the chicken is falling off the bone. Remove the chicken and set aside to cool. Strain the broth to use in other dishes.</li> <li>2. When cool, pull the meat off the bones, shredding with your fingers as you pull it apart, and place the shredded meat in a large bowl. Add the seasonings (sage and bay leaves, rosemary, garlic, juniper berries, peppercorns, and salt), and mix all together.</li> <li>3. In a jar or air tight container, place the mixture, packing it in with your fingers, and once full, gently pour in extra virgin olive oil until the mixture is completely covered. This will help with conservation. Leave the mixture to marinate in the jar at least overnight, and up to 7 days if kept completely covered in oil in the fridge.</li> <li>4. To construct the salad, mix together some un-aged, fresh cheese (like a piemontese <i>toma</i>) cubes, hazelnuts or walnuts, thinly sliced celery, and pieces of the meat from the jar. Dress the salad with oil from the jar and a little salt and lemon juice if necessary.</li> <li>5. When the meat in the jar is finished, discard the spices, garlic, and herbs, and keep the oil to used for cooking, dressing or other uses.</li> </ol>

A classic and traditional method of conserving meat in Piedmont, Italy is to put it 'al tonno', or like tuna. Meaning the meat is jarred and conserved with oil. Most famous from the Monferrato is *Tonno al Coniglio*, or rabbit. However, chicken is also very popular, and beef is sometimes used as well. As often discussed here, country foods in Italy are based upon a 'waste not want not' mentality. A dish like Tonno al Coniglio or Tonno al Pollo started off by using the discarded small bits of left-over meat and preserving them for a future meal by placing them under olive oil (which would, through the lack of oxygen, keep the meat from going rancid).

This meat can have many uses, from enjoying it by itself as a meal with side vegetables, on crostini or crackers like an appetizer, or mixed into a salad. The recipe here is inspired by a traditional and common salad, sometimes called an *insalata bergera*, or farmers salad. The mixture of cheese, celery, and nuts works well with the preserved chicken or rabbit.