

## Italia Festa - September 2015 – Appetizer Demonstration

### **Freshly Pulled Mozzarella, Isernio Spicy Chicken Sausage with Arugula and Smoked Garlic Caprese Tomato Relish** - about 6 appetizer servings

Perry Mascitti, Executive Chef, Tulalip Resort Casino

#### ***A note from the Chef:***

*This appetizer recipe is great for the upcoming football season or a great interactive starter before your favorite dinner. All components of this dish can be made ahead of time except for the fun interactive mozzarella “pulled” before serving. The flavors of the freshly pulled warm mozzarella, the spicy chicken sausage and the smoked garlic tomato relish spread on a crostini....can you say Mama Mia?*

### **Isernio Spicy Chicken Sausage Saute**

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons butter

1 onion, red or yellow, approx. ½ dice

1# of Isernio sausage, cut into ½ coins (I liked using the spicy chicken but any quality sausage would do)

½# arugula, into thin strips

Sauté onions until brown in olive oil and butter, add sausage and cook all until sausage is fully cooked, keep warm in pan. Add arugula to warm sausage mix at service time, just to wilt it.

### **Heirloom tomato, basil and roasted smoked garlic relish**

10 cloves of garlic, cut in quarters, roasted and smoked (optional)

Smoking gun (optional) – can be purchased online. Search keywords “culinary smoking gun”

4 tomatoes, cut into ½” cubes

1 cup fresh basil, leaves cut in half. Set a few leaves aside for final plate garnish

¼ cup olive oil (extra virgin)

1 tablespoon coarse salt and pepper

#### **Method:**

Mix all ingredients in a bowl and chill or keep at room temperature.

## **Freshly Pulled Mozzarella**

### **Ingredients:**

One stone heated to about 200 degrees (optional)

Temperature gage that will read up to 185 degrees

1# of mozzarella curd, cut into marble size pieces (can be ordered from your stores dairy manager). The cheese needs to be room temperature before the kneading process.

1 gallon of water

1/3 cup of salt, prefer kosher, but any will do.

### **Method:**

Heat water to 185 degrees. Add salt to the water and dissolve by stirring. The temp is very important. If it is hotter, your hands will not be able to take the high heat. If it is colder, you will not melt the cheese properly.

Pour half of the water over the pieces mozzarella curd. Let it sit for about 1 minute in bowl stirring with a wood spoon. Using rubber gloves place hands in the water and knead it by pressing the curds together to form a smooth "dough" like ball. Hold in warm water until ready to serve.

### **To serve:**

Warm stone in a 250 degree oven for about 10 minutes. Warm the sausage mix on the stove top. Stop cooking and toss in arugula strips. "Pull" the mozzarella until smooth (have your friends join in!) Place warm stone on a plate. Place mozzarella ball on warm stone. Spoon sausage mix on top of the warm mozzarella. Spoon garlic tomato relish on either side of cheese/stone. Serve with crostinis or sliced crusty bread.

Garnish: with a drizzle of balsamic glaze (syrup) and fresh basil leaves.

Enjoy!