

## **“Anginares a la polita” - Artichokes braised in the style of Constantinopolis**

*My grandmother, Evdoxia, used to prepare artichokes in this way. She did not use recipes nor did she leave any recipe cards or instructions. Her cooking was embodied. She measured using the pinch of her fingers, the palm of her hand, the size of her cooking pots. She sequenced and timed her cooking according to smell, look, taste - her personal response to the senses of the food. She cooked everything until it was done. Figure that out. I've been re-creating those dishes from my memory of their taste, and from my father's memories of the same dishes. At 91, he has a subtle palate and a keen memory for the foods of his childhood and for the food that his mother prepared. As I practice, my dad has been my taster and critic. For this dish he says: You need a lot of oil. For the food to be tasty it must not be boiled seasoned with oil, but must be COOKED IN the oil... Olive Oil. The last time I made these artichokes, I did it this way. And he approved.*

- 1/2 cup to 1 cup Greek Olive Oil
- 12 - 16 artichoke bottoms, trimmed and cored so they make little bowls (these come frozen from Egypt, available at Lebanese or Armenian, or Mediterranean grocery)
- 2 Yukon gold potatoes
- 4-6 lovely fresh carrots
- 2 leeks (including the tender green parts)
- 1 medium yellow onion
- 1 bunch green onions
- 3 cloves garlic
- Small bunch fresh dill, chopped
- 2 juicy lemons

Start a large lidded pot on the heat and add the oil. The quantity of oil is the key here. One recipe said a full cup of oil. Really? It'll depend on how big your pot is. Be sure that there is nice 1/4+ inch of oil in the bottom, enough so that the onions and leeks swim around in there as they soften. You can go slow and then be prepared to add a little more, maybe, later.

Add diced onion to the oil so it simmers gently. Dice the leeks and add, then the spring onions, then the garlic. Let it simmer and bubble gently to soften and mellow. You want it soft and fragrant not brown.

Peel and dice the potatoes. Add. Peel and dice the carrots and add. As the veggies cook they will absorb oil. Add a splash of water to keep it all from sticking and give it a gentle stir or a shake. Season generously with salt and pepper. Add a little more water and simmer. Oil and water will make the sauce.

Add the peas. Stir and simmer until they are beginning to get tender. The peas and carrots will be bright. The onions and leeks will be getting melty. It should be a little saucy. Add another splash of water if you think it needs it. Maybe 1/4 cup.

Carefully add in the artichokes, nestling them into the veggies, in a single layer, cup side up, lifting and spooning the sautéed veggies up onto the chokes so that some of it fills each little bowl.

Cover and simmer gently until the artichokes are tender. After 30 minutes, test for doneness. All the veggies should be well cooked and a tiny bit soft.

Turn off heat and pour lemon juice over all. Sprinkle chopped dill over all.

Cover and let it rest off the heat until you are ready to eat.

This can be eaten at room temperature, or warmed, or even cold. That's up to you.