



Schweizer Radio  
und Fernsehen

**Vicious Dishes!**  
Delectable Rumours  
And  
The Naked Truth  
About Your Favourite Food



**Seven episodes about culinary classics.  
No window-dressing. No quarter. Sustainable. Contains no palm oil.**

**Episode 1: Lucrezia Borgia's Belly Button – Tortellini (5'11')**  
**Episode 5: Now we have the salad! – The Legend of the Caesar Salad (4'19'')**

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«Vicious Dishes!

- Delectable Rumours And The Naked Truth About Your Favourite Food»

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*There is nothing more beautiful than to have given your name to a good dish.*

Jean Cocteau

Some dishes refuse to disappear from the menus for centuries. These dishes resist every neurotic chef's whim. As «classics», they undergo a culinary apotheosis and become immortal.

Take the great singer Nellie Melba, for example – she still lives on in her peaches. And who knows anything about Count Stroganoff beyond the fact that a delicious beef dish is named after him?

There are stories behind all those culinary classics: What is the connection between Lucrezia Borgia's navel and «tortellini»? Or how did the «Caesar Salad» manage to become the only Italian immigrant from Mexico ever to make it onto the menu of the White House? Questions upon questions, waiting to be answered!

«Vicious Dishes!» is the first culinary docu-fictional podcast by Swiss Radio SRF, and it will bring tears to your eyes without even cutting onions. Seven episodes tell the stories of classics on the menu. No window-dressing. No quarter. Sustainable. Contains no palm oil. Prepared for you, with lots of passion and lots of love. Enjoy! Or as Julia Child would put it: «Bon Appétit!».

**Lucrezia Borgia's Belly Button\_Tortellini (5'11")**

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*Music: Hells Bells (AC/DC)*

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**The 15<sup>th</sup> century. The late middle ages. A world in turmoil.  
The Hundred Years' War is raging between France and England.  
The bubonic plague reaches the ports of the Mediterranean and spreads like wildfire.**

**A time of uncertainty. All of Europe is in the tight grip of Christian guardians of public morals. All of Europe? No! On one of Rome's hills, a population of indomitable libertines refuses to heed the iron bells of strict morality.**

**A powerful noble family that spawned two popes is celebrating in the Vatican. With 50 courtesans. Inside the papal palace.  
The Borgia.**

**Pope Alexander VI, head of the Catholic church and keeper of the double moral standards, his son Cesare, and his favourite daughter:**

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Soundbite: In dim light I close my eyes and remove my clothes.

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**The scandalous Lucrezia Borgia.**

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*Music: The Sensual Woman (The Herbaliser)*

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**After dinner, there was dancing. First dressed, then naked.**

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Soundbite: Tu sei Lucrezia Borgia – Tu sei lo scandalo dell'Italia.

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**Chestnuts were spread out on the floor. The naked courtesans got down on all fours and picked them up with their mouths. The pope, his son, and Lucrezia, his daughter, watched the goings-on.**

**This statement is based on a reliable source (the third cousin once removed of the sister of the father of a sister-in-law of my grandmother's distant acquaintance).**

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Soundbite: E, se non è vero, è ben trovato!

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**So, just the fevered imaginations of malicious liars in an apocalyptic age?**

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Soundbite: Well, you see...all those beards on contemporary portraits from the Vatican...they are not there for fashion reasons. It is an open secret that those beards were intended to cover up facial growths caused by syphilis and its treatment with mercury.

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**At the same time in the streets of Rome:**

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*Music: Tarantella Napolitana (The Godfather)*

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**The religiously devout housewives, whose husbands do not have beards, are curious about the latest recipe for pasta, spiced with the hottest gossip from the Vatican.**

**Here, too, the beautiful Lucrezia Borgia fires the Italians' imaginations like no other.**

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Soundbite: She shares her bed with her father and her brother ...

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## **Seductive, licentious, and dangerous ...**

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Soundbite: Twice engaged, thrice married.  
Her husbands are dropping like flies...

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**Lucrezia speaks many languages and successfully manages the papal court. She invests profits and reclaims the land. However, this is not the stuff that legends or tortellini are made of! For those you need:**

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Soundbite: Farina, sale, uova, un piccolo villaggio: Castelfranco  
Emilia e...

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## **Una donna bellissima!**

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*Music: The Sensual Woman (The Herbaliser)*

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**Lucrezia Borgia is on her return journey to Rome. It is late. The coachman stops in front of a simple albergo where they stay for the night. Dusk spreads across the land, as red as Lucrezia's hair.**

**She enters the inn and retires to her room straight away. The innkeeper is overwhelmed by her beauty and follows her.**

**He peeps through the keyhole and watches Lucrezia taking a bath.**

**The candlelight in the room is dim. As she steps into the steaming bath, the voyeur sneaks a peek of her milky white belly and manages to spot her belly button in the candlelight.**

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*Music: Once upon a time in the west/ Man with a harmonica (Ennio Morricone)*

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**Aroused, he rushes to the kitchen and begins to prepare pasta. Pasta as delicately shaped as Lucrezia Borgia's belly button.**

**The housewives in the streets of Rome fall silent.  
They are running their tongues over their lips.  
They grasp the crucifixes around their necks and rush home.**

**For dinner this evening, all the husbands of Rome eat the novel pasta:  
Lucrezia Borgia's belly button.  
Tortellini.**

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**The End.**

**Now we have the salad! - Caesar Salad (4'19")**

*Music: Le Tango du Moulin Rouge (Marianito Mores)*

*Music: Insane in the Brain (Cypress Hill)*

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Soundbite: No great story ever started with someone eating a salad!

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**You simply have to admit it: Most of us consider salad a culinary option associated with dieting and abstention.**

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Soundbite: You don't win friends with salad.

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*Music: Le Tango du Moulin Rouge (Marianito Mores)*

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**Pimp my salad! That's what Cesare «Caesar» Cardini said when he gave the salad a touch of glamour:**

**Now we have the salad! The legend of the Caesar Salad.**

**The United States, 1920. Prohibition is in full swing.**

**Together with his brother Alex, Caesar Cardini runs an Italian restaurant in San Diego. The two immigrants stick to the rules. They don't serve alcohol and their business is going down the drain! No more customers. Finito pizza e pasta!**

**Meanwhile, illegal bars are springing up like mushrooms. Cardini's former customers are hanging out at a speakeasy that serves hard liquor. It's not just the liquor that's hard, though. The unemployment numbers and the bullets that rivalling gangs use to blow each other's heads off also make for hard times.**

**Longingly, Caesar gazes down the road that leads to Mexico, where booze is legal. He prays seven Hail Marys, asks permission from his mama in heaven ...**

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*Music: Mambo No. 5 (Perez Prado and his Orchestra)*

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**...and opens another restaurant, just across the border in Tijuana.**

**Caesar is a quick learner. Some godfather from Sicily, a certain Corleone, has pulled some strings, and all of Hollywood rolls up in Cadillac convertibles for the opening of the new restaurant, keen to eat and drink at the Cardini brothers' place.**

**There are so many guests that stocks are running low. Besides salad, some cheese, bread, and a few other ingredients, the fridge is empty. Alcohol is flowing like water, and Caesar needs something to fill the hungry stomachs. Something salty that will keep them nice and thirsty.**

**Being a dramatic Italian, Caesar Cardini has a bit of a flair for acting himself. Following a sudden inspiration, he decides to prepare a salad right in front of his guests at the table.**

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Soundbite: Un spettacolo! They will feel they are getting our specialità!  
The Caesar Salad!

Crisp green lettuce.  
Parmigiano.  
Bruschetta.  
E...

The secret of the Caesar Salad:  
The salsa!

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*Music: Twisted Nerve (Bernard Herrmann)*

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**The Caesar Salad turns out to be the dining sensation of the 1920s and 1930s. Everyone makes the journey to Tijuana to get a taste of it. «Going for a Caesar» is the new trendy leisure activity in Hollywood:**

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Soundbite: Bette Davis, James Stewart, Greta Garbo, Humphrey Bogart:

Soundbite: Here's looking at you, kid.

Soundbite: Kathrin Hepburn, Cary Grant, Errol Flynn, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Clark Gable:

Soundbite: Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn!

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**The salad develops a momentum of its own:**

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Soundbite: Chicken, meat, shellfish.  
Capers, ham, bacon.

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**A classic is born. In all its varieties.**

**Long live the Caesar Salad!**

**The only Italian immigrant from Mexico ever to make it into the White House. Onto the president's menu.**

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*Music: Insane in the brain (Cypress Hill)*

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Soundbite: Caesar First!

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Soundbite: I love the Mexican people!

Soundbite: Grab 'em by the pussy!

Soundbite: I love the spirit of the Mexican people!  
I love 'em!

Soundbite: Don't you know I'm loco?

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**Now we have the salad.**

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**The End**