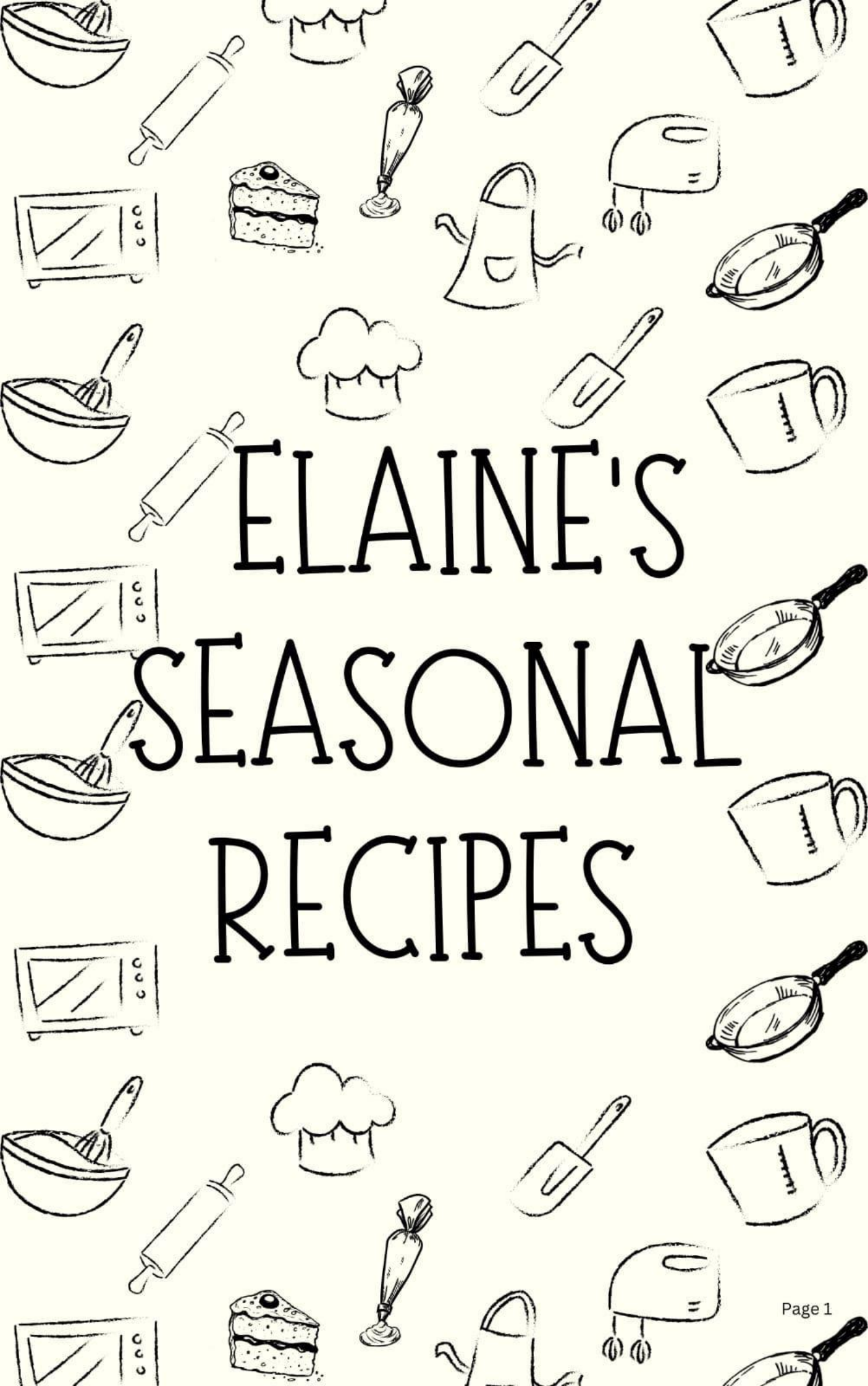
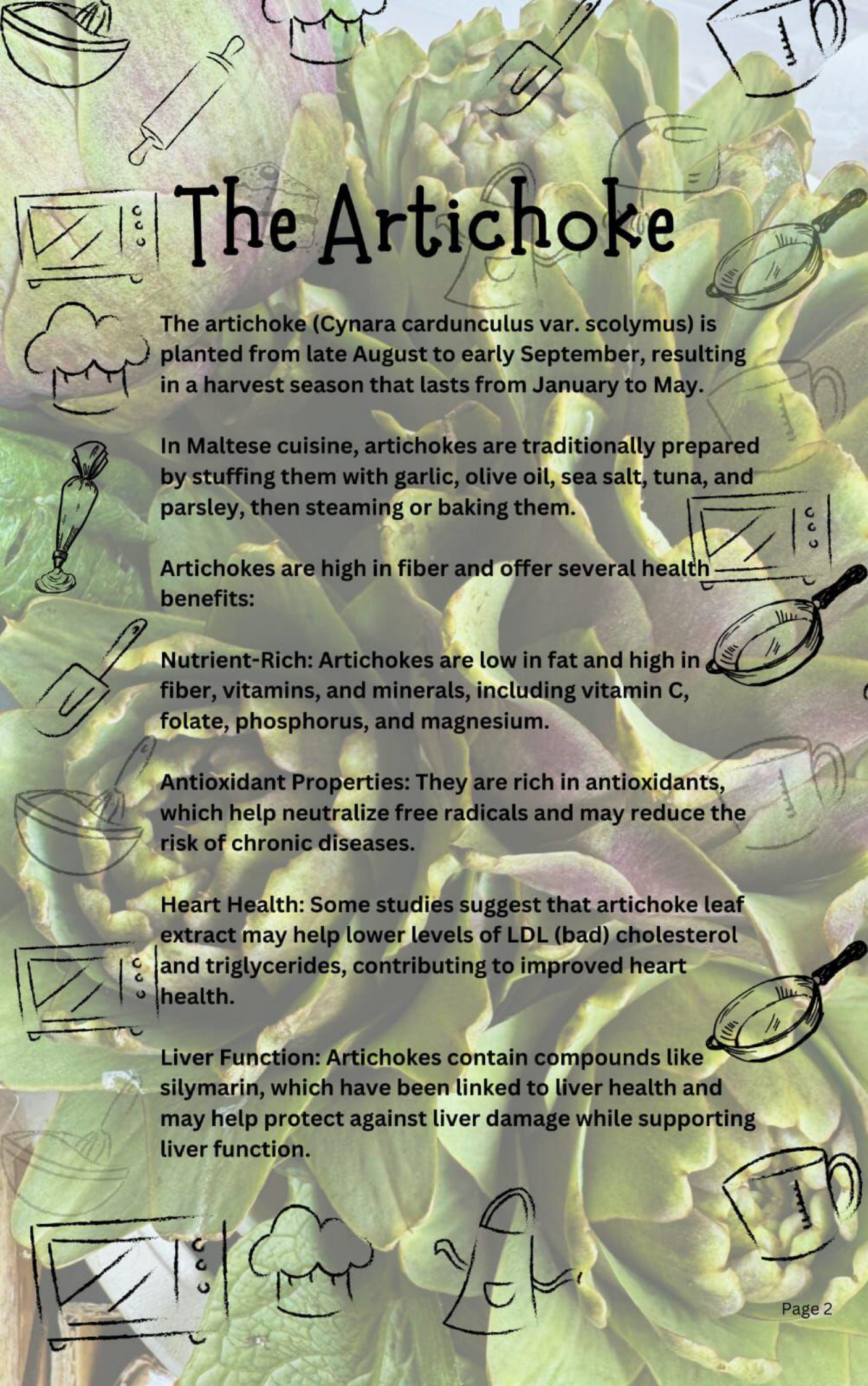




ELAINE'S SEASONAL RECIPES



The Artichoke

The artichoke (*Cynara cardunculus* var. *scolymus*) is planted from late August to early September, resulting in a harvest season that lasts from January to May.

In Maltese cuisine, artichokes are traditionally prepared by stuffing them with garlic, olive oil, sea salt, tuna, and parsley, then steaming or baking them.

Artichokes are high in fiber and offer several health benefits:

Nutrient-Rich: Artichokes are low in fat and high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, including vitamin C, folate, phosphorus, and magnesium.

Antioxidant Properties: They are rich in antioxidants, which help neutralize free radicals and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

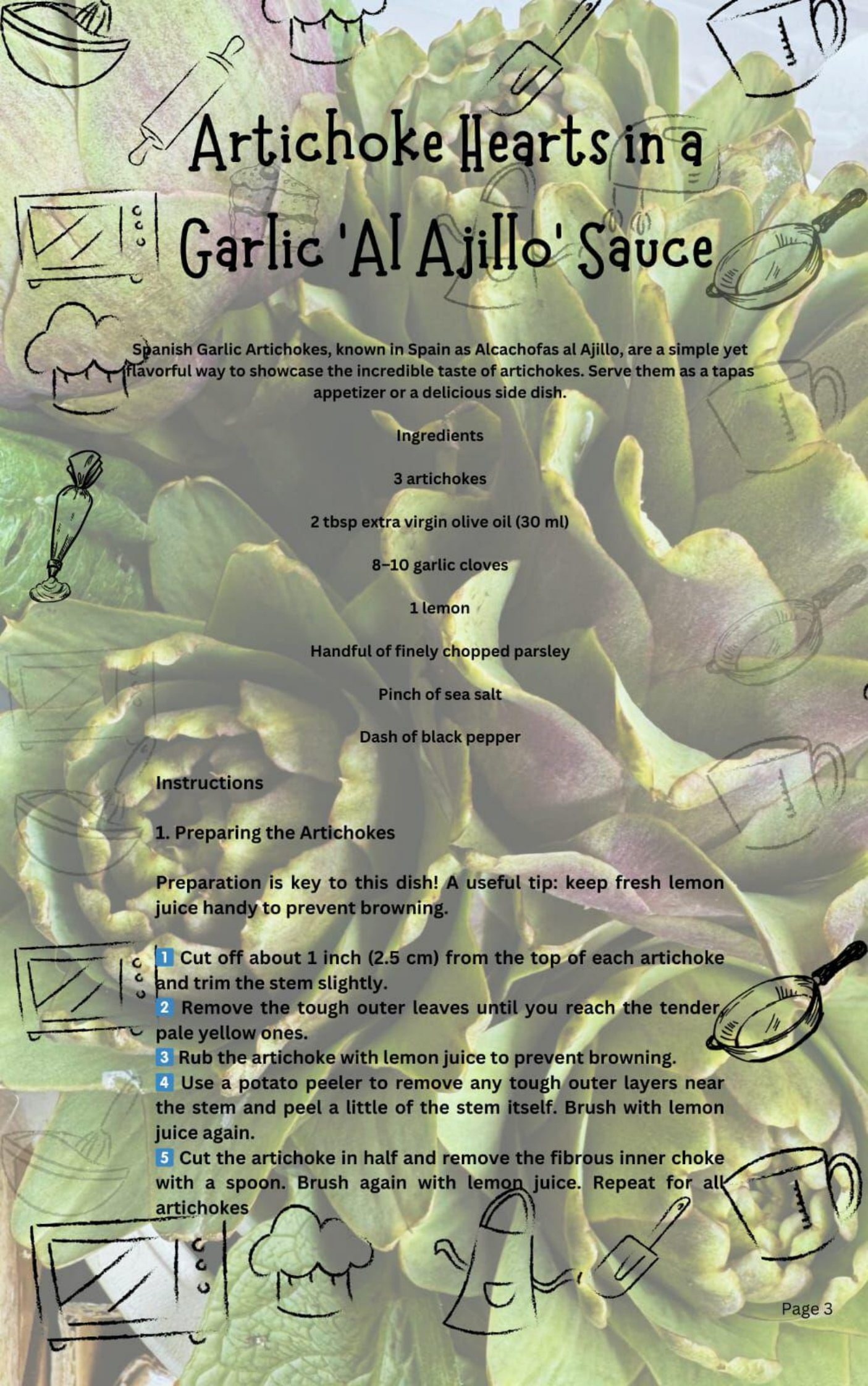
Heart Health: Some studies suggest that artichoke leaf extract may help lower levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol and triglycerides, contributing to improved heart health.

Liver Function: Artichokes contain compounds like silymarin, which have been linked to liver health and may help protect against liver damage while supporting liver function.

Artichoke Hearts in a 'Garlic al Ajillo' sauce.



Elaine Mulcahy



Artichoke Hearts in a Garlic 'Al Ajillo' Sauce

Spanish Garlic Artichokes, known in Spain as Alcachofas al Ajillo, are a simple yet flavorful way to showcase the incredible taste of artichokes. Serve them as a tapas appetizer or a delicious side dish.

Ingredients

3 artichokes

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil (30 ml)

8-10 garlic cloves

1 lemon

Handful of finely chopped parsley

Pinch of sea salt

Dash of black pepper

Instructions

1. Preparing the Artichokes

Preparation is key to this dish! A useful tip: keep fresh lemon juice handy to prevent browning.

1 Cut off about 1 inch (2.5 cm) from the top of each artichoke and trim the stem slightly.

2 Remove the tough outer leaves until you reach the tender pale yellow ones.

3 Rub the artichoke with lemon juice to prevent browning.

4 Use a potato peeler to remove any tough outer layers near the stem and peel a little of the stem itself. Brush with lemon juice again.

5 Cut the artichoke in half and remove the fibrous inner choke with a spoon. Brush again with lemon juice. Repeat for all artichokes

Spanish Garlic Artichokes

(Alcachofas al Ajillo)

2. Cooking the Artichokes

- 1 Place the prepared artichokes in a large deep frying pan filled with cold water. Let them float and season with sea salt.
- 2 Bring to a boil over high heat. After 20 minutes, check if they are cooked by piercing the top of the stem with a toothpick—it should go in with slight resistance. If so, they are ready.

3. Sautéing with Garlic

- 1 In a separate large frying pan, heat extra virgin olive oil over low-medium heat.
- 2 Roughly chop the garlic cloves.
- 3 After 3 minutes, add the chopped garlic to the pan and stir continuously to prevent browning.
- 4 Add the boiled artichoke halves, sautéing for 3 minutes on one side. Then flip and sauté the other side for another 3 minutes, shaking the pan frequently.
- 5 Turn off the heat, season with sea salt and black pepper, and sprinkle with chopped parsley.

Serve & Enjoy!

These Spanish Garlic Artichokes are best enjoyed warm as a tapas dish or a flavorful side. Pair them with crusty bread and a glass of white wine for an authentic Spanish experience!