

AMERICA'S MOST WANTED

Mario Batali, Octopus Whisperer

BY F&W EDITORS | POSTED JANUARY 21, 2014 AT 1:00PM EST



Dena Marino's Signature Octopus
© Andrew Meade

Chef Dena Marino of Miami's MC Kitchen credits [F&W Chef-in-Residence](#) Mario Batali for helping perfect her signature octopus dish. He tried an octopus preparation while she was working at Aspen's Ajax Tavern and said "This is amazing but I can show you a way to take it over the top," she remembers. "I was boiling the octopus, adding too much water and cooking it for longer than it needed. He showed me how to sear and bake it dry. Since that day, I have never cooked octopus any other way." At MC Kitchen, Marino sears, braises then chars her octopus with lots of chile, garlic and sherry vinegar, then serves it with a black risotto cake, pancetta and a frisée salad.