

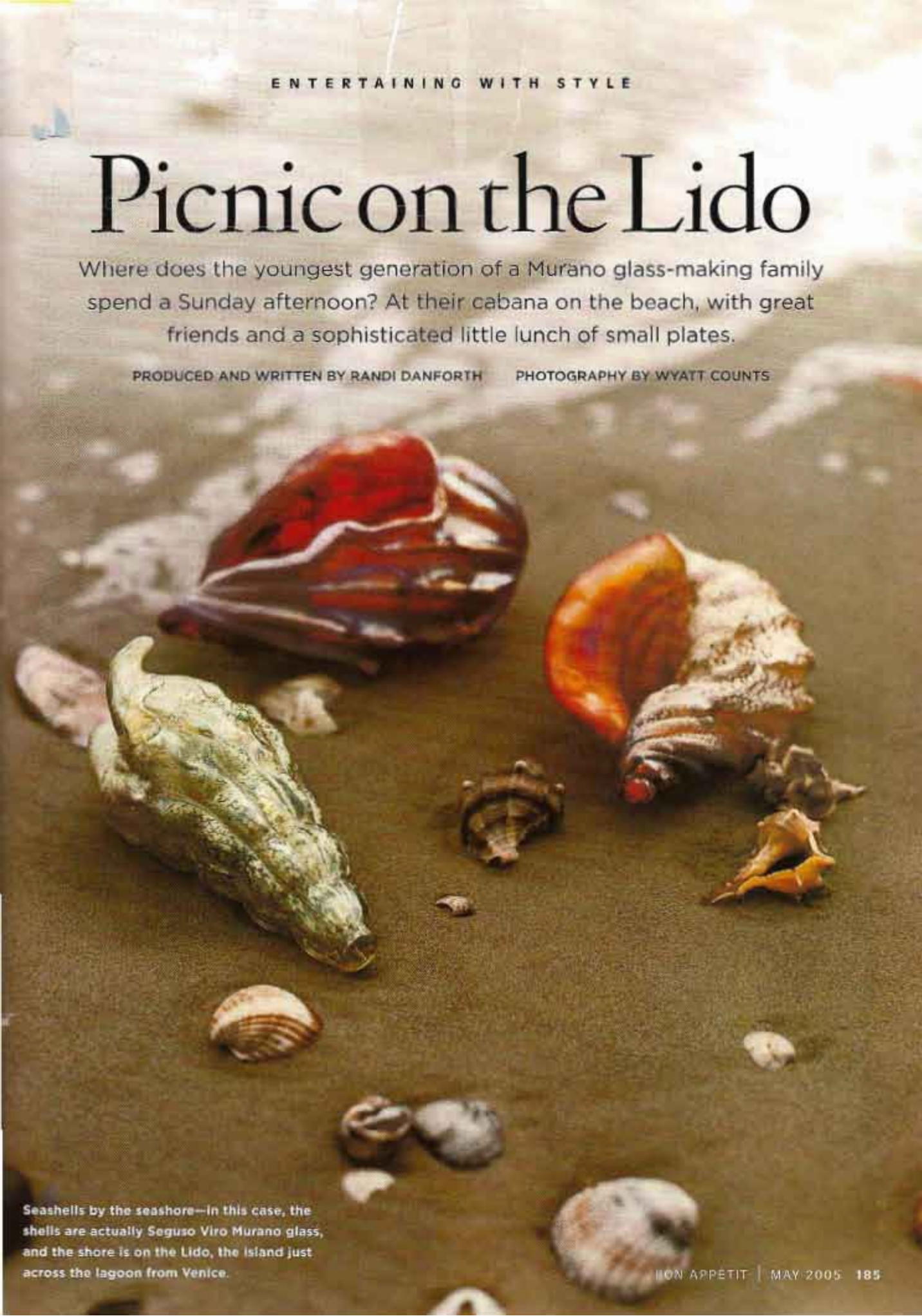
ENTERTAINING WITH STYLE

Picnic on the Lido

Where does the youngest generation of a Murano glass-making family spend a Sunday afternoon? At their cabana on the beach, with great friends and a sophisticated little lunch of small plates.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY WYATT COUNTS



Seashells by the seashore—in this case, the shells are actually Seguso Viro Murano glass, and the shore is on the Lido, the island just across the lagoon from Venice.

MENU FOR 8

> PROSECCO-AND-CAMPARI SPRITZ

Tramezzini (Assorted Mini Sandwiches)

Chilled Zucchini-Mint Soup

Marinated Shrimp on Grilled White Polenta

Octopus and Celery Salad with Lemon Vinaigrette

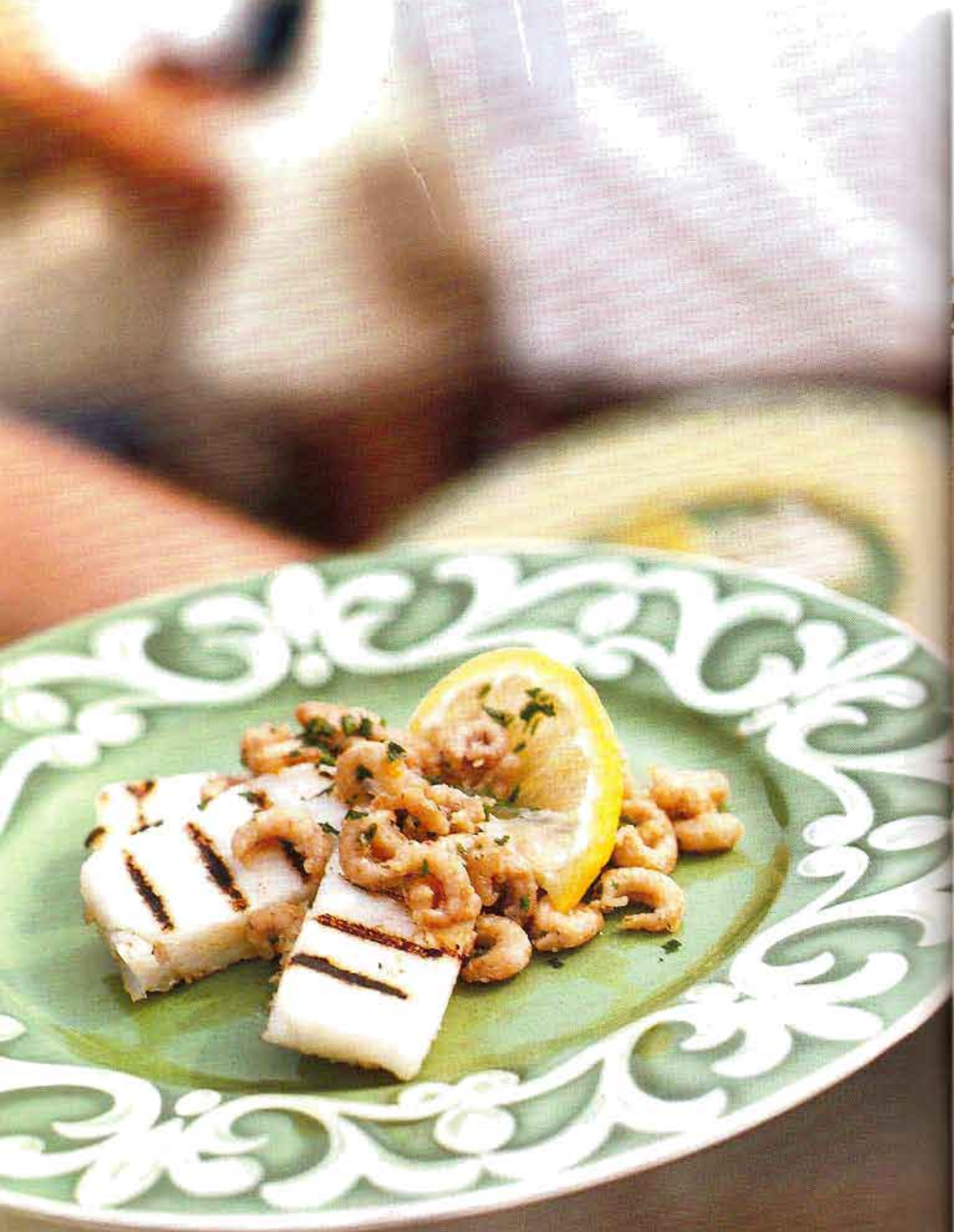
Parmesan-Stuffed Tomatoes

> FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA PINOT BIANCO

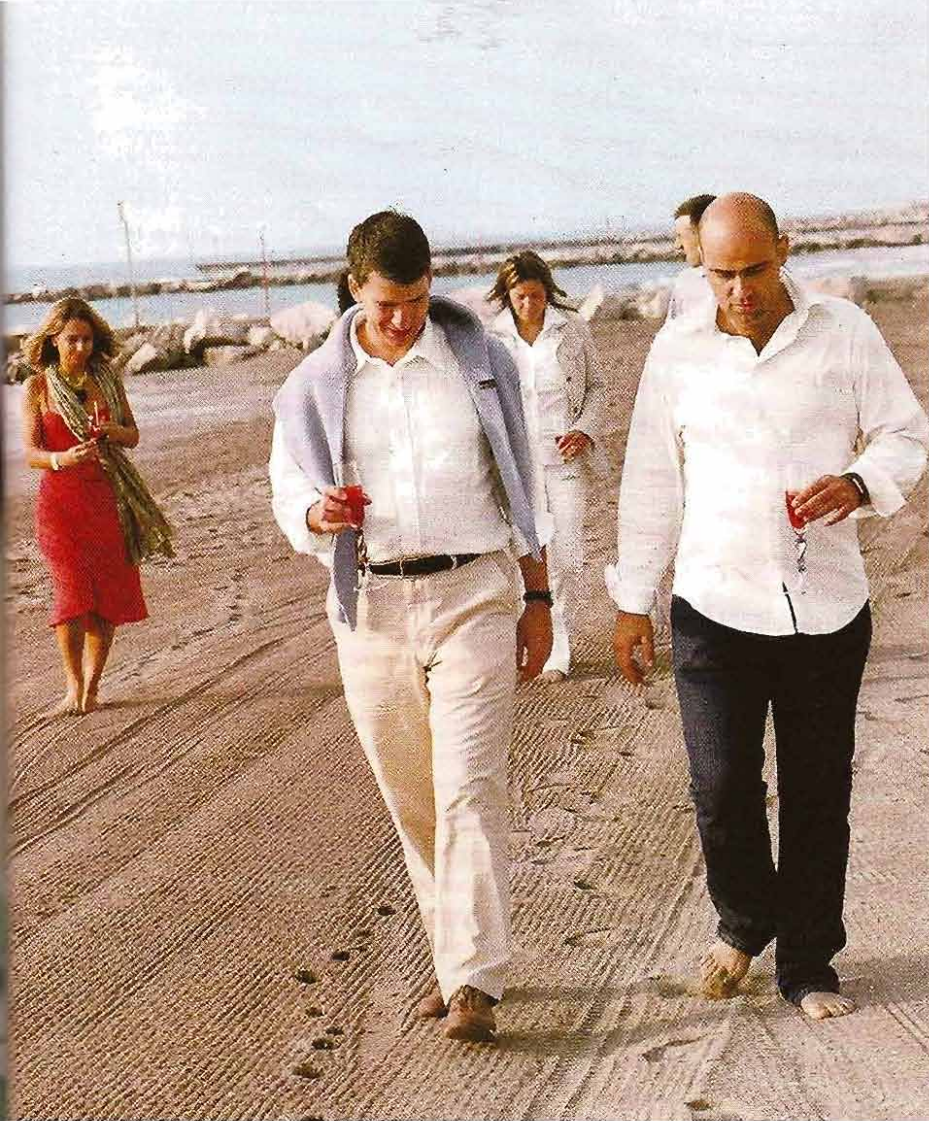
Berries in Sweet Fragolino Wine with Biscotti



In the shadow of the Moorish-style Hotel Excelsior, the group sets up an elegant picnic near a row of stately cabanas. Even the table—one of the Seguso family's latest designs—is made of glass.



For the second course, tiny shrimp seasoned with parsley and garlic are served atop grilled white polenta (recipe on page 190).



LEFT: Andrea Favaretto Rubelli and Pierpaolo Seguso stroll on ahead of the others, refreshing Prosecco spritzes in hand. **BELOW:** Host Marika Seguso, a cooking teacher and caterer, has a nice touch with flowers. Here they're flame-colored roses and green hydrangeas; elsewhere violet-blue hydrangeas are paired with yellow freesias. **BOTTOM:** A pitcher of Prosecco-and-Campari spritzes.



When the late-spring sun sparkles on the Venetian lagoon and the days start to lengthen, the cabanas on Lido beach come out of hibernation for the summer season. For Gianluca and Marika Seguso, it's the beginning of many casual parties alfresco with family and friends. "We have had our beach cabana here for over half a century," says Gianluca, "and I have great memories of cabana picnics from my childhood."

In fact, it was here on the Lido that the cabana was reportedly invented around the turn of the last century. Patrons of swanky hotels like the Excelsior and the Des Bains used them as changing rooms and canteens where cocktails were served and picnics laid out in grand style.

Marika and Gianluca are carrying on this tradition with panache. There won't be a paper plate or cup in sight—not from a family that can trace its glass-making lineage back 22 generations. For more than 600 ►



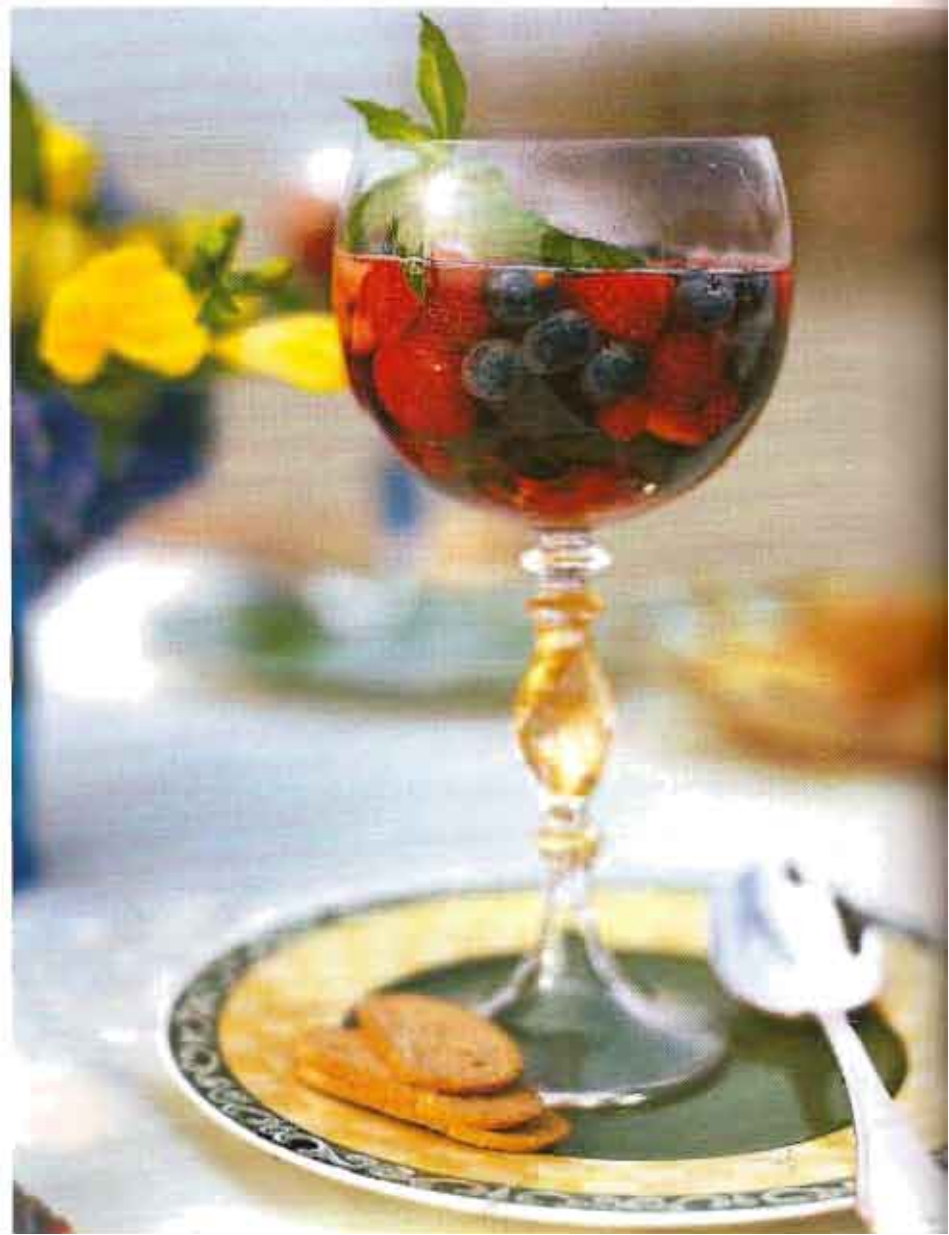


TOP: Elena Busato and Pierpaolo help Marika finish the table. **ABOVE:** Before lunch, the group relaxes in the cabana with cocktails and mini sandwiches (recipes on page 190). **RIGHT:** The Seguso Viro stemware incorporates classic Venetian decorative techniques—a twist of gold or silver on a stem, a threaded stripe or dot of color, flaring bases—in shapes that are unmistakably 21st-century. Here, a “Ca’ d’Oro” goblet holds berries in sweet Fragolino wine (recipe on page 191).

years, the Seguso family has been making glass on nearby Murano Island. Today, Gianluca's father, Giampaolo, gives the company—Seguso Viro—its artistic guidance while his three sons and daughter carry on the legacy.

And Marika, a chef and caterer (she'll open a cooking school in Venice at the end of the year), is in charge of today's lunch—a menu of local ingredients presented in small courses. “For a beach picnic, I like to do things that are simple and fresh; foods that don't have to be served hot.”

Before lunch, everyone lounges around with Prosecco-and-Campari cocktails and little appetizer sandwiches called *tramezzini*. Then it's time to move to the glass table on the sand, where chilled zucchini soup is followed by octopus vinaigrette and marinated shrimp over polenta. A dessert of berries in cold Fragolino wine wraps up the meal. It's peaceful here on the beach, where the laid-back charm of the Lido is a welcome contrast to the crowded canals and piazzas of Venice. ➤





Marika and Gianluca sit down to enjoy the afternoon and a lunch of octopus salad with Parmesan-stuffed tomatoes (recipes on page 191).