

# We the Italians



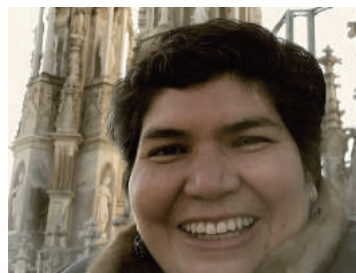
**INTERVIEW WITH  
BRENDA GIANNOTTI  
STANKUS**

The story of the Italians  
who arrived to Richmond, Virginia



**INTERVIEW WITH  
ANDREA GASTALDO**

Memorial Day,  
an Italian American memory



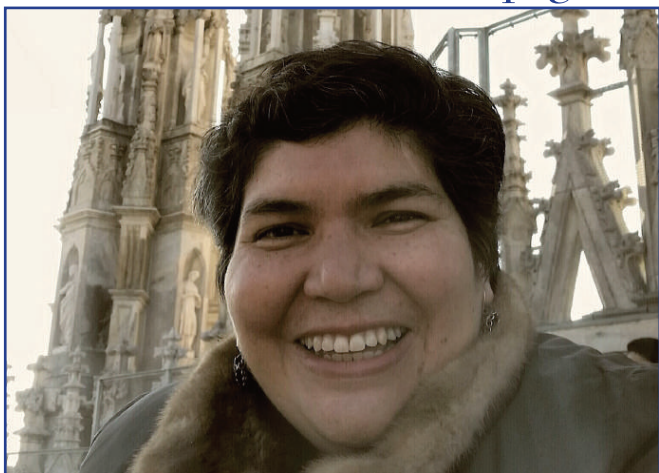
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**Andrea Gastaldo**  
*Memorial Day, an Italian American  
memory*

# #103 May 2018



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**We the Italians** is a web portal where everybody can promote, be informed and keep in touch with anything regarding Italy happening in the US.

It is also the one and only complete archive of every noncommercial website regarding Italy in the USA, geographically and thematically tagged.

We also have our online magazine, which every month describes some aspects of Italy the beautiful and some of our excellences.

We have several columns: all for free, in English, on your computer or tablet or smartphone, or printed to be read and shared whenever and wherever you want.

Ready? Go!

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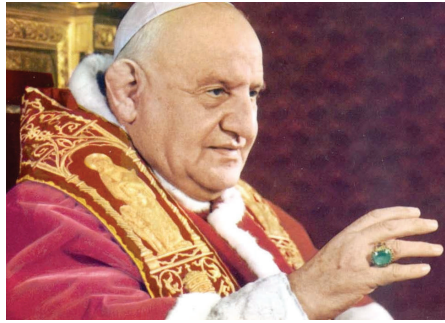
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*/by Umberto Mucci*

# What's up with WTI Editorial # 103

Ciao from Rome, welcome to the #103 magazine of We the Italians!



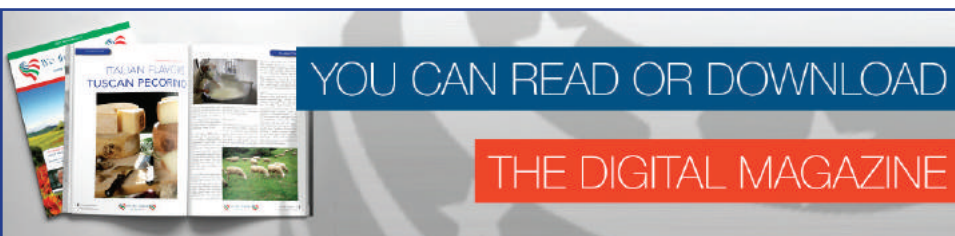
I'd like to start this editorial by **celebrating all the Italian American soldiers who lost their lives, in all the American wars: Monday May 28 is Memorial Day.** To pay my respect, this year I've interviewed somebody who not only beautifully represents the Italians who have fought or still serve for the U.S. Military. This interview has a touch of personal to me, as **Andrea Gastaldo** not only is **Foreign Policy Advisor to U.S. Army North** (the U.S. Army North is what was called until 2004 the Fifth Army, which liberated Italy during World War 2). Andrea is the daughter of Edward "Eddie" Gastaldo, one of the three heroes my father Teodoro "Rino" Mucci was saved by,

together with the other soldiers in the Fifth Army. **Salvatore "Sal" Di Marco, Anthony "Tony" Tiso and Edward "Eddie" Gastaldo have been, are and forever will be those I owe my life to.** I will always be thankful to them.

I recently came back to **Community**, the Italian RAI television show for the Italians abroad. I will be in **two episodes.** In the first, on **Thursday June 7th**, I will be talking about the numerous **museums regarding the Italian emigration in the US:** New York (Manhattan) NY, Albany NY, Los Angeles CA, New Orleans LA, Independence LA, Philadelphia PA, San Francisco CA, Pittsburgh PA and the one that will open in October 2018 in Baltimore, MD. I will also describe two different kinds of museums, both in Chicago, IL: the Italian American War Veterans Museum and the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame.



In the second episode, which will be aired the next day, **Friday June 8th**, I will be describing the **Christopher Columbus issue**, and what the Italian American community is doing to defend him and the Federal holiday named after him.





Last but not least, we're working very hard on the Roman premiere of **Lucia Mauro's** movie "**Frances Xavier Cabrini: The People's Saint**". On **Friday June 8th** at the **Cinema delle Province in Rome**, the documentary will be aired and followed by **questions and answers** moderated by me with **Lucia Mauro**, author and director of the documentary, and **Mons. Guerino Di Tora**, President of **Fondazione Migrantes** and **Auxiliary Bishop of Rome**. All of you who will be in Rome on June 8th and are interested in attending can email us at [info@wetheitalians.com](mailto:info@wetheitalians.com).

Once again, we encourage you to take a look at the **2017 Yearbook of We the Italians**. It's selling very well, plenty of people interested in knowing the stories we told last year. you so thanks, and please keep buying that, **here!**

Please, **join us in our social media presence:** *Facebook, Linkedin, Twitter, Instagram* and *YouTube!*

*That's all for now. So stay tuned, fasten your seat belt and enjoy the ride. The future's so bright, we gotta wear shades!*



**VENERDÌ 8 GIUGNO - ORE 18.30**

**Location: Cinema "Delle Province"**  
Sala della comunità della Parrocchia di Sant'Ippolito  
Viale delle Province, 41 - 00162 Roma  
(accesso anche per disabili)

Seguirà un incontro con

S.E.R. Monsignor Guerino Di Tora  
(Presidente della Fondazione Migrantes)

Lucia Mauro  
(regista e autrice di "Frances Xavier Cabrini: The People's Saint").

Moderatore: Umberto Mucci (Fondatore di "We the Italians")

**Per informazioni: [info@wetheitalians.com](mailto:info@wetheitalians.com)**

310 - 542 fermata in Viale delle Province, davanti al Cinema /  
490 - 495 - 649 fermata in Via della Lega Lombarda / 62 - 168 - 309 fermata in  
Via Lorenzo il Magnifico / Metro B - fermata Piazza Bologna

*/by Umberto Mucci*

# Brenda Giannotti Stankus

## The story of the Italians who arrived to Richmond, Virginia

One of the things we appreciate most, here at We the Italians, is the commitment many Italian Americans show all over the US to celebrate and remember the history and the presence of their fellow Italians who emigrated to the US. Oftentimes this passion is shown by organizing events and writing books, but many of them wanted and still want to establish something that will forever last: a monument, a plaque, a marker.



The story we tell today is about this commitment, to remember the Italians who emigrated in Richmond, Virginia. And we're happy to welcome one of the two people who made this happen: Brenda Giannotti Stankus.

*Last year for the first time, Virginia's State Department of Historical Resources recognized with a marker the Italian Immigrant community in Virginia, paying tribute to Richmond's "Little Italy". Brenda, you are one of the persons we should thank for that...*

Ray Gargiulo and I worked alone and together on this project. Not only we successfully obtained a state marker that pays tribute to Richmond's "Little Italy", it was also the first state marker in Virginia to recognize any immigrant community. It was a three year project with interviews, research and writing, and submitting paperwork and substantiation to the VA State Department of Historical Resources to get this project brought to a vote and then to become reality. It was unveiled on May 7, 2017.

*When did the Italians arrive in Virginia? Where did those Italians come from and who were they?*

We have records of a number of Italians being in Richmond as early as 1856, who started an Italian Club during those years in what is now considered downtown Richmond. There is a beautiful building on Broad Street, credited to that group. It was where they met and held events such as dances and political discussions about the US





and Italy.

The group in "Little Italy" we researched came around the turn of the 20th century and for about 20 years after. This is the group that earned the marker from the State of Virginia. This group of nearly 125 families came primarily from Tuscany and came between 1900 and 1923. Many were sponsored by two men, Umberto Balducci, restaurateur; and Ferruccio Legnaioli, sculptor and plasterwork moldmaker.



### *New historical marker on Pollock Park*

*Is there one or more particular stories you want to mention about these Italians?*

These immigrants came from the towns of Barga, Lucca, San Giovanni Valdarno, and Vicopisano. They were not the only Italian immigrants in Richmond, but this is the group that lived together first in Navy Hill and Shockoe Bottom. Then, when enough money was put aside, they all moved to the northern part of the city and lived in a new community named North Highland Park with new jobs, mostly downtown construction. We have records of approximately 100 addresses in this little neighborhood where these Italian families lived.

The two architects Giannini and Taliaferro were called to Virginia from London. Anthony Giannini was called by Thomas Jefferson, for collaborating his work on Monticello; Benjamin Taliaferro was called by Carter, Virginia's first Governor, for work on the Carter Plantation.



*Rino Balducci, Catherine Flumiani from the Italian Embassy, Brenda Stankuss and Ray Gargiulo*

Taliaferro became part of the first faculty at the college of William and Mary, in Williamsburg, VA, the first and oldest college in America. Anyone can view his name on a plaque marking the founding fathers of the school in the Wren Building on the campus.

There is another quite interesting story we ran into during our research about Taliaferro and the famous Booker T. Washington, an American educator, author, orator and adviser to Presidents of the United States. It appears that he is a direct descendant of Taliaferro, the architect. It is said that Mr. Washington's father was a grandson of that Taliaferro. When the marriage ended early, the mother gave her son her last name and made his father's last name his middle name: Booker Taliaferro Washington.

*As you anticipated, when we think about Italy and Virginia, it is impossible not to mention Thomas Jefferson...*



Richmond times-dispatch. (Richmond, Va.) 1914-current, December 11, 1914, Page NINE, Image 9

Image provided by Library of Virginia; Richmond, VA

Persistent link: <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045389/1914-12-11/ed-1/seq-9/>

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Jefferson brought over another Italian gentleman, Philip Mazzei, who then did return to Italy. He came to help Jefferson raise grapes. Jefferson gave him land next to Monticello but the grape crop failed. The idea has proved to have merit as today, with better knowledge of the soil, wineries are becoming very successful.

Before returning to Italy, Mazzei, who had also brought Roman Literature about governing with him, translated these works for Jefferson and left the translations with him. The phrasing and wording from these were helpful to Jefferson in writing the Constitution of the United States. Several passages were paraphrased by Jefferson. This story is told during tours of Monticello.





*Please tell us something more about the Little Italy in Richmond, and if there are other places – maybe a Christopher Columbus Statue? – that are particularly important to represent Italy in Virginia.*

As I told you, the unique thing about Richmond's Little Italy is that they, for the most part, came from the same 4 towns in Tuscany, Barga, Lucca, San Giovanni Valdarno and Vicopisano. These were not the only Italian immigrants in Richmond, but this is the group that created their own community, complete with a Villa modeled after the "Old Country".

They used to have Sunday dinners in the yard of the Villa for the whole community and remained there together from the early 20th century until the 1960 and further, and most importantly changed the face of our city with their skills and talents. They brought their knowledge of Romanesque architectural trimmings to the interiors



and the exteriors of city and state buildings and churches, theaters and mosques. Richmond was finally being rebuilt after the losses incurred during the US Civil War and its aftermath, and the appearance of the city was given a specific, unique personality by these Italian artists.

Others in this group introduced Italian cuisine to Richmond, something that had not happened be-



*Columbus Statue in Byrd Park*

fore. Most of the restaurateurs owned two, three or even four Italian restaurants each. They were family affairs.

These people offered meals to the political leaders of this community and befriended the police, and became a valued part of the community themselves. They all sent their children to college, highly valuing education, intelligence, church, good manners, a sense of humor and family above all else. They still are members of their Italian Club, the Giuseppe Verdi Lodge of the Order of Sons of Italy.

The Christopher Columbus Statue in Byrd Park was unveiled in 1925. The \$30,000 to realize it were all contributed by the Italian community as a gift to Richmond. But it was not accepted wholeheartedly. The Italian Community was grateful and pleasantly surprised when the Governor and the city Mayor attended the unveiling. From then until today the Italian community has held an annual ceremony at the statue on every Columbus Day.

*What if I ask you about one or more personalities that had a significant role in representing Italy in Virginia?*

In our research we found that some of the Tuscany skilled tradesmen who had immigrated to Richmond to be employed working on Richmond's interiors and exteriors, were called up to Washington, DC to work on the same parts of the construction of the US Capitol and other government buildings. They were in demand for their cement and plaster mold-making skills.

In Richmond, two very important Italians were Umberto Balducci and Ferruccio Legnaioli.

Umberto Balducci sponsored many of the Italian





immigrants with the necessary promise of work and the \$200 needed to meet the requirements to immigrate. Many of the elders remember him as the community problem solver and his home was where most community activities happened, social and political. Balducci had four restaurants. Three of the younger of his twelve children still survive. Reno Balducci, here in Richmond, is a very healthy and active 93 year old, going to his office daily, a residential construction company that he shares with his 2 sons. Umberto Balducci also built his villa on a whole city block in North Highland Park and as each of his children married he built them a home on this same land. It was Balducci that the other Italians followed into this community of North Highland Park, where they achieved a population of over 100 homes and families living near one another at the same time. This is the neighborhood where our marker is now placed.



*Brenda Stankus's mother in North Highland Park*

Ferruccio Legnaioli brought over and employed 35 skilled artisans and sculptors from the Florence area. He was the instrumental person in acquiring the attention of the city leaders here in Richmond, letting them know that he could provide this specific talented labor force to

build the look of the city of their dreams. He granted for these men and their families, gave the necessary immigration credentials and helped them settled in North Highland Park community at that same time that Balducci was doing the same, helping his friends from Italy settle

here. Later it was Legnaioli who sculpted the Christopher Columbus Statue we spoke of earlier, as well as other figurative sculptures in Virginia.

*/by italia.it*

# Italian culture and history

# Cilento

Cilento, terrain in the Region of **Campania** marked by gently-rolling hills covered in olive trees that see their reflection in the blue of the Tyrrhenian, is pure magic and a crossroads between multiple populations and traditions. Traversed by savage torrents and thick woods of chestnuts and evergreens, this splendid landscape is also interspersed with villages clinging to its high, rough rocks, or towns that seem to cruise leisurely along its coasts.

It is here that the magnificent Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park stands out with its archaeological sites of Paestum and Velia, and the Certosa of Padula; together, they have made up a UNESCO World Heritage List since 1998.

## Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park

The majestic Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park (the second-largest in Italy) extends from the Tyrrhenian coast to the feet of the **Campania-Lucania Apennines**, and preserves numerous traces of the presence of man since ancient times. The Park comprises the peaks of the Alburni, Cervati and Gelbison Mounts, in addition to the coastal buttresses of Monte Bulgheria and Monte Stella.

The Park's floral population is constituted by approximately 1,800 different plant species, while the fauna is just as diverse, given, of course, the variety of environments spanning the territory.

Coastal and mountain areas, rivers and creeks also have a say in the contents of the animal community, graced by the frequent presence of highly-valuable species – for example, the peregrine falcon. On mountaintops and bluffs, and in the fields at high altitude, it is not uncommon to spot wolves, **golden eagles** (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and their prey of choice, the rock partridge (*Alectoris graeca*) and the Corsican hare (*Lepus corsicanus*).

Pairing with Cilento's naturalistic characteristics and remarkable heterogeneity are the legendary and mysterious ambience, and a rich cultural history: it is here that the story of the nymph Leucosia is set, it is on the area's beaches where Aeneas sees Palinurus for the final time in Virgil's *The Aeneid*, it is where lie the remains of the ancient **Greek colonies** of Elea and Paestum, and it is here that we find the stupendous Certosa of Padula.

Of the many places of art contained within the Park, the foremost cultural attractives especially worthy of mention are Paestum, Velia and the Certosa of Padula. Important nationally and internationally, these sites are what garnered the prestigious UNESCO stamp for the Park.

## Paestum

One of the most important monumental complexes left by Magna Graecia, its founders originally called it Poseidonia (in honor of Poseidon), but it is also a place for devotion to Hera and





*Certosa di Padula*



*Paestum*

Athena. Paestum is a trove of innumerable archaeological finds and decorative artifacts – many of which can be viewed inside the **National Archaeological Museum**. Of immense beauty are the three Doric temples, still in excellent condition - so much so that they are considered unique exemplars of the architecture of Magna Graecia. The Temple of Neptune (530 B.C.), in actuality dedicated to Hera, is in sandstone and is the largest of Paestum's temples. The Temple to Athena (500 B.C.) is additionally known for being dedicated to Ceres, while the Basilica (540 B.C.) is dedicated to Hera.

## **Elea/Velia**

Velia, from the Greek name Elea, was founded in the 6th Century B.C.

What remains of the ancient city includes the port area, **Porta Marina**, **Porta Rosa**, the Hellenistic and Roman Thermal Baths, the Agora, the Acropolis, the South Quarter and the Archaic Quarter. Of indisputable value is **Porta Rosa**, prestigious monument with the double function of connecting the City's two neighborhoods to the



*Velia*





viaduct running to the top of the Acropolis.

The elements that make Velia UNESCO-worthy are its Eleatics School (Eleatics being a philosophy the proponents of which were Parmenides and Zeno, actually born in Velia).

### The Certosa di San Lorenzo of Padula

The Certosa of Padula (in the Province of Salerno) – besides being the most famous of the Certosas - is the biggest in Italy. Founded as far back as 1306, this monastery boasts the largest cloister in the world (circa



129,167 ft<sup>2</sup>) and is circumscribed by 84 columns. Its main section, in the Baroque, occupies a surface area of 554,341 ft<sup>2</sup> and consists of more than 320 rooms. Today the Certosa hosts the **Provincial Archae-**

**ological Museum of Western Lucania**, exhibiting items found in the excavation sites of the Sala Consilina and Padula necropolises.



*Certosa di Padula*

*/by Consorzio di Tutela della Ricotta Romana*

# Italian flavors Ricotta Romana



The first historical references to the Roman ricotta cheese date from the description of cheese-making techniques provided in “De re rustica” by the Roman agronomist Columella in the 1st century BC. In those times, sheep’s milk had three uses: the first religious, the second alimentary, as a food or drink, and the third to make both fresh and aged sheep cheese.

From the whey, ricotta was obtained first and the rest fed to pigs. Mario Vizzardì, in his book “Formaggi Italiani”, says that ricotta originated in the Roman countryside and was popularized by Saint Francis of Assisi, who, finding himself in Lazio town in 1223 for the construction of a crib, taught the shepherds the art of making ricotta.

## **The Product**

Ricotta Romana DOP is a fresh dairy product made exclusively from the whey of whole milk from the most common sheep breeds in Lazio: Sarda, Comisana, Sopravissana, Massese and related cross-breeds. The whey, which has a characteristic pale yellow colour, must have well-defined chemical parameters, in order to ensure the spe-



cific qualities of Ricotta Romana DOP.

The resulting Ricotta Romana DOP has a very fine texture, a more marked colour than cow ricotta, a fat content of at least 40% of the dry substance and, especially, a delicate, sweet flavour of fresh milk. Ricotta Romana DOP is packed in truncated conical wicker, plastic or metal baskets with a maximum capacity of 2 kg.

## Production

The whey, which is the liquid left after the coagulation of milk, is obtained by straining the liquid from the curds during the making of cheese from sheep's milk.

Sheep farming is the most common in the Lazio region. The farming system and the type of feed affect the quality of the whey. The whey obtained from sheep raised in Lazio is distinguished by its sweet taste: the resulting product, i.e., Ricotta Romana DOP acquires a sweetish flavour that makes it distinct from any other type of cheese.

The whey is heated to 85-90 °C and gently agitated; the slower this process, the softer and more compact the product. During the heating process, whole sheep's milk is added up to a percentage of 15% of the total



volume of the whey in order to improve the quality and yield of the ricotta.

The heating, which usually occurs in the same boilers in which Pecorino cheese is produced, favours the precipitation and coagulation of the whey proteins and thus their rise to the surface in the form of small flakes. Their surface consolidation in a layer of white flakes occurs when heating is suspended. Then the

ricotta is skimmed with a perforated ladle.

The ricotta cheese is placed in perforated wicker, plastic or metal baskets with a truncated conical shape for 8-24 hours, until the whey is completely drained. The drained product is then left to dry for several hours in cool rooms and then packaged. The resulting ricotta has a very fine texture, a more marked colour than cow ricotta and a de-





licate, sweetish flavour - which is why it's known as "sweet ricotta".

## The Area

The area of origin of the whey (obtained from whole sheep's milk) and the processing and transformation of Ricotta Romana DOP is the entire territory of the Region Lazio. The conditions for breeding the sheep and making the cheese must be traditional to the area and suitable to give the milk and resulting product its specific characteristics.

The elements that prove the link with the environment are either by natural factors, such as the typical pedological and climatic characteristics of the region, and human factors, such as the wisdom and experience of the master cheese makers working in the area. The natural factors allow the use of natural meadows and pasture-fields, a source of

food for the sheep, which gives a special quality to milk destined for cheese making.

This type of nutrition, combined with favourable environmental conditions for breeding characterizes the product and distinguishes Ricotta Romana DOP from all other ricottas.

A crucial element for obtaining a product of exceptional quality is the traditional practice of moving to a "mountain pasture", which allows the animal to escape the summer heat and possible environmental and nutritional stresses that it could suffer in the plains.



*"...a less restrictive approach to dieting."* —Michele Sculati, MD, PhD

# The Mamma Mia! Diet

**Eat Pasta,  
Enjoy Wine,  
& Lose  
Weight**

**THE SECRET ITALIAN WAY TO GOOD HEALTH**



**Dr. Paola Lovisetti Scamihorn & Paola Palestini, PhD**

*/by Camera di Commercio di Cosenza with Unioncamere*

# Italian handcrafts The Textiles of Longobucco



The origins of weaving in Longobucco are ancient and common to other areas of Calabria. It is said that inhabitants of the coasts of Calabria were taken as prisoners in raids by Turkish pirates. After a long period spent in the countries of the east, some women managed to return to their places of origin and brought with them the art of weaving, and cloth decoration in particular.

This is according to legend, but Longobucco has a well-documented history. Various poets, including Padula, De Giacomo and Corso, who ventured into the small town in La Sila, left precious accounts of the splendour of the weaving in Longobucco in ancient times, praising the characteristic designs and colours of a textile craft that was quite unique.

Longobucco is one of the few areas in Calabria where people still work using the old hand looms.

## **Blankets**

The outstanding products of Longobucco's textile art are its blankets. Blanket weaving is very ancient here, and no precise period can be established for the start of this type of work,



due to a lack of written and oral accounts. What is certain is that this type of manufacture was not imported from elsewhere, but developed from local wool and silk weaving.

Without doubt, the first blankets would have been made in a rudimentary manner, with little perfection, due to the lack of designs, which became highly developed over time through the industriousness and talent of the housewives of Longobucco.

A full-size Longobucco blanket consists of five concentric patterns: in the centre is “u siattu”, a background design that covers about two-thirds of the textile and is framed by the other four types of design, known as “u parafilu”, “a guardiédda”, “a greca” and “u pizziatu”. A fringe, always made by hand and on the loom, is also sewn along the

edge of the blanket.

Three different techniques can be used to weave blankets on the looms of Longobucco: relief or “pizzulùni,” flat or “trappìgnu” and “a ri piari”. A fourth weaving method, known as “cucchidda”, has now disappeared. Examples of blankets wo-



ven with this technique, which was only used for making geometric figures, are very rare.

A popular song praises the blankets of Longobucco as the most beautiful of all, exceeding even the beauty of the sun: “Cuverte chi nun hannu li mercanti, bellizze chi nun ha mancu lu sulu / haju giratu da Napuli avanti, cuverte cume cchiste un cinna sunu!” (Blankets that merchants do not have, beauty that not even the sun possesses, I have wandered to Naples and beyond, but blankets such as these cannot be found!)

### Production Stages

The particular feature of the fabric made on the Longobucco looms is the way in which it is decorated. The motif produced on the fabric is not embroidered but is part of the fabric itself: in ad-



dition to the common weave of the threads (warp and weft), a third thread is inserted horizontally across the warp threads.

To achieve this, the weaver uses “nziambri”, or “guide-patterns”, composed of small extruded squares, which guide the weaver while weaving the threads. The designs are the product of the imagination of the weavers, who were inspired by the variety and colours of nature and by popular folklore. Some “nziambri”, fundamental tools for reproducing a design, are jealously guarded by certain weavers so that they will never be copied.

One of the most popular designs is “U puntu eru Juriciu” (the “Judge’s Stitch”). It is said that a mother created this design for the Longobucco loom to repay a debt to a judge who had ensured justice was done to her wrongly accused son. It features a pair of scales formed by a saw, a tree and two vine branches and two doves.

The saw symbolises the clean cut of justice, the tree is the symbol of life, longevity and strength, the two vine branches with bunches of grapes symbolise joy, the scales that they form are the symbol of justice and the doves are the classic sign of peace.

### Longobucco

Longobucco has always been known for the industriousness and ingenuity of its inhabitants. The women in particular have contributed to the region’s domestic economy, taking care of the children, preparing food, gathering firewood, picking olives, cultivating vegetable gardens and transforming weaving into a genuine art.

Longobucco is one of the main municipalities of the Sila National Park and in terms of its territory is one of the largest in Calabria. It is a small town



in the heart of Sila Greca, part of the Greater Sila Plateau, in the midst of mountains, rivers and lakes that are home to numerous species of animals and plants.

According to legend, the name “Longobucco” originates from metallurgic Themesen mentioned by Homer in Book I of the Odyssey. This suggestion is due to the presence of silver mines along the Manna stream, which were worked by Sybarites, Crotonians and then Romans since the 8th century BC to produce coins.

*/by I borghi più belli d'Italia*  
**Italian little Italies**  
**Venzone, A living room**  
**within the walls**



Venzone, in the province of Udine, in Friuli Venezia Giulia, owes its fortune to the fact that it has been an obligatory passage to the north since the time of the Celts in 500 BC. Then the Romans made the town one of their stands along the route of the Via Julia Augusta from the site of Aquileia to Norico (now Central Austria). Such information is certified by the various archaeological finds unearthed during excavations for the restoration of the Duomo, which proved the presence of the Roman building in the area of the church, which

was probably flanked by the castrum.

Later, over the centuries, there have been various invasions by Guadi, Marcomanni, Visigoths, Huns, Ostrogoths, Byzantines, Lombards and Carolingians. During the Carolingian dominion (776-952) the first certain urban centre of Venzone dates back.

In 1200 the Patriarch of Aquileia gave the Land of Venzone as a feud to the Mels family, which in-



creased the prestige of the citadel until the recognition of its legal status as a municipality (1247) and the birth of a weekly market (1252). In 1258 Glizio di Mels fortified the town with a double wall, surrounded by a deep moat.

The defensive system of Venzone, in ancient times, included at least 5 castles, located in strategic points to better dominate the valley. Between these two stands in the right Tagliamento, at the foot of Mount S. Simeone. The one called Monfort, was located north of the town of Pioverno while the other, Plovergno, was located south, not far from the Riùl dai Fraris.

Venzone was almost constantly in conflict either with the patriarchs or with its neighbour and rival Gemona or with the Counts of Gorizia or with the Dukes of Carinthia, passing from one to the other Lord.

Venzone since 1965 is declared a National Monument as the only fortified fourteenth-century village of the region and later became one of the most extraordinary examples of restoration in the architectural and artistic field.

In 1976 a series of seismic events managed to bring the wonderful medieval village to its knees, seriously damaging it. After not even 20 years, thanks to the strength and the will of its inhabitants, Venzone was reborn with the Town Hall (1984), with the Old Town (1988) but especially with the Cathedral (1995), symbol of the earthquake and rebirth. The church was restored after a long period of recognition and numbering of stones: about 9500 stones that have returned exactly where they were before the earthquake, possibly supplemented and restored individually with the same care with which you intervene on a



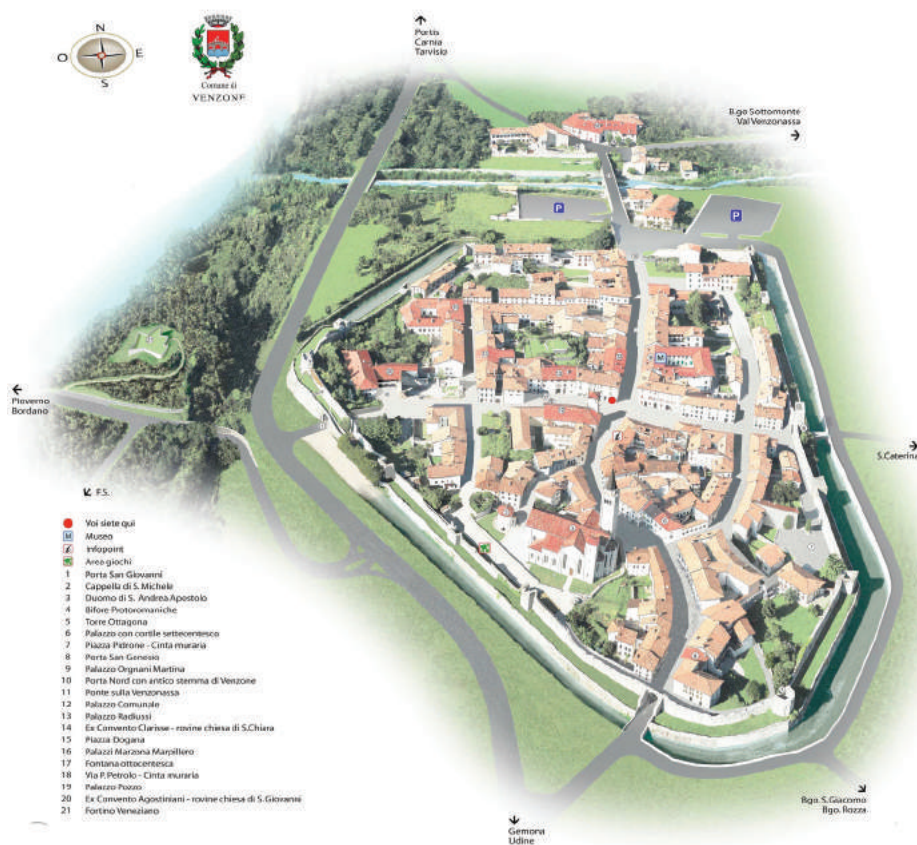
work of art.

The whole town was actually rebuilt stone after stone. The stones in fact, with incredible patience, came back to the place they occupied before the earthquake. All this was possible thanks to the huge photographic and documentary archive created before the earthquakes.

## Worth seeing

Entering from the door below, a round arch dating back to 1835, we immediately find on our right Marcurele House, the oldest building being built in the eleventh century, in Romanesque style with mullioned windows in bas-relief. Further on, proceeding northwards, we find the fourteenth-century Palazzo degli Scaligeri and Palazzo Zinutti, a thirteenth-century building with an elegant gallery with wrought iron parapet and baroque door.

The Romanesque-Gothic Cathedral of the 14th century is considered the monument of the post-earthquake restoration. Consecrated in 1338 by the Patriarch of Aquileia Bertrando, it has a T-shaped cross plan, composed of a longitudinal nave and a large transept, with the three apsed presbyters and the two towers. The organ of the Venzone Cathedral dates back to 1792 by the organ master G. Callido.



In the front square of the Duomo we find the Chapel of St. Michael, built in 1200, now the seat of the Mummies of Venzone: their history dates back to 1647, when the mummy of the "hunchback" came to light, the first of forty extracted from the tombs of the Cathedral.

Walking quietly through the historic center, we come across

Casa Calderari, built in the fourteenth century. From the cozy inner courtyard, also home to the Tourist Office, we can reach Piazza Municipio, where the Town Hall stands. It is a Gothic palace built in the early 1400s, restored in the early 1500s and equipped with the clock tower, whose external facades are decorated with a series of coats of arms of the oldest noble families of Venzone refined by mullioned windows in the Gothic style.

In the northern part of the square we find Palazzo Orgnani Martina, noble palace of the eighteenth century, now home to the main museums and temporary exhibitions; opposite is the former Palazzo Radiussi, palace of the fifteenth century with Re-



naissance balcony and Gothic mullioned window.

Once we arrive at the north door, descending from a side street, we find Palazzo Pozzo, noble palace of the seventeenth century and then after the former convent of the Augustinians. It is a building of the fifteenth century, with a porch of the seventeenth century. Here we find the remains of the Church of St. John the Baptist, built in the fourteenth century. Its ruins bear witness to the violence of the 1976 earthquake, which spared only the main facade of the building with the portal bearing the architectural characters of Gothic style with the capitals decorated with figures and floral motifs. Crossing transversally the historical center we find the fourteenth-century tower of defense, door S. Genesio.

The village of Venzone is surrounded by an interesting double circle of walls of the thirteenth century, a large moat surrounds the first wall that forms an embankment on which is built the second, interspersed with rectangular towers, and on the south-western corner stands a polygonal

tower. Interesting is the north-western corner of the walls, which climbs up a hill and where there are two towers that dominate the communication road. The north-eastern tower is grafted on the edge of the internal walls and the only door still existing, although rebuilt after the earthquake, is on the eastern curtain.

Just outside the fortified town we can enjoy the view exploring the paths of the Julian Pre-Alps Natural Park or walking through the ancient Celtic path that connects the fifteenth-century churches that surround the town in a unique and pleasant way.

### The name

The name Venzone, of pre-Latin origin, was first mentioned in 923 A.D. as Clausas de Abiciones, and later Albiciones became Aventinone, Avenzon, Avenzone and then Venzone. The toponym derives from "av-au" - "fluslauf" (watercourse) therefore from the name of the torrent Venzonassa.



*/by Enrico de Iulis*  
Italian art  
**The frescoes of  
Giandomenico Tiepolo**



In 1727 Giandomenico Tiepolo was born, third son of Giambattista Tiepolo, the unrivaled painter of the Venetian Rococo who enchanted all the courts of Europe with his aerial style and very modern design. His mother was Cecilia Guardi, the sister of the Vedutist painters Francesco and Antonio. In short, Giandomenico was a double son of art, a concentration of Venetian style.

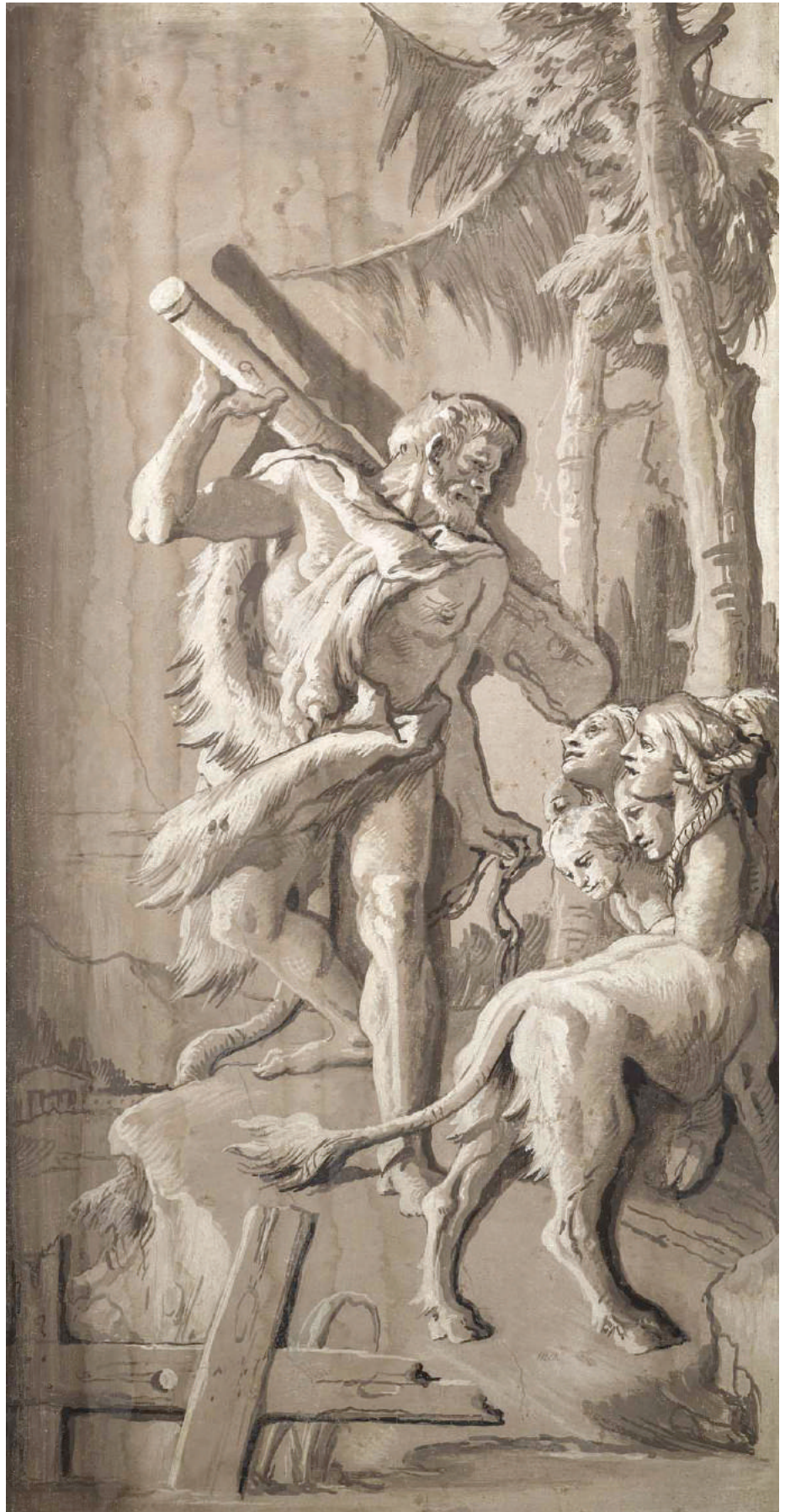
Very young he entered his father's workshop and soon began to collaborate in his great decorative endeavours, from Palazzo Labia to the last masterpieces he produced during his stay in Madrid, where Giambattista died in 1770.

The tragic event did not only mean the return to Venice, but probably a turning point in the existence of Giandomenico, who resumed in a lesser

tone the production of frescoes in churches and palaces. In 1776 he married and, although he accepted in 1785 to decorate the Palazzo Ducale in Genoa, he decided to spend most of his time in the residence of Zianigo, where he cultivated his interest in design and where he died in 1804 leaving a very important pictorial testament. Like his father, Giandomenico is also tied with the other immense figure of Venetian art of that time: the architect Andrea Palladio.

As we know, almost all the noble families of Venice asked the Tiepolo family for the decorations of the ceilings and walls of their homes designed by Palladio, above all the Valmarana family. Several branches of this noble family commissioned the father and son to paint several frescoes to decorate the villas on the mainland and the palaces in the city. Now, thanks to the descendants of the branch of the Valmarana Franco family, it will be possible to admire in Vicenza seven frescoes detached from the family palace during the Second World War, to protect them from air raids that bombed the area.

The seven extraordinary frescoes by Giandomenico Tiepolo, which for over fifty years had been preserved in the owners' residences, are destined for the Palladio Museum. Today the



heirs of those who with enormous foresight saved the works from certain destruction, are convinced of the opportunity for public enjoyment of these masterpieces.

This story intertwines several other stories: that of the extraordinary art of Tiepolo, able to transform from the root the Venetian tradition of frescoing; the defense of the artistic heritage in the dark years of World War II; and the more personal story of Giandomenico, who from the shadow of his father was able to re-emerge as a leading figure in the Venetian art scene and turned out to be a versatile and varied painter as the monochrome frescoes on display testify.

Some depictions of Hercules in his efforts, other representations of satyrs and satires, a subject very dear to the painter, give us a perfect degree of harmony between Palladian architecture and monochrome interior decoration, which simulates niches in which these painted statues seem to belong to the real masonry of the villa. This exhibition in Vicenza is flanked by that of Ca' Rezzonico in Venice where all the frescoes by Giandomenico, torn in the early twentieth century from the residence of the Tiepolo family of Zianigo, are now on display completely restored.



A son of art celebrated not only and completely emancipated for his famous surname but for from that of his unattainable father. his great ability to immerse himself in a personal stylistic world



*/by Paola Lovisetti Scamihorn*

# Italian cuisine

## Spaghetti Cacio and Pepper



Spaghetti cacio and pepper (pecorino romano cheese and pepper), like carbonara and amatriciana, has now become one of the symbols of Italian cuisine. It is prepared using D.O.P (protected designation of origin) ingredients. Pecorino romano is called cacio to distinguish it from pecorino produced in other parts of Italy. Most pecorino is produced on the island of Sardinia, though its production is also allowed in Lazio and Sicily, as well as in the Tuscan provinces of Grosseto and Siena.

Pecorino is a family of hard Italian cheeses made from ewe's milk. The word derives from Italian word pecora meaning sheep. Cacio is one of more widely used, bold-flavored alternatives to Parmesan cheeses. Because of the hard texture and sharp and salty flavor, cacio is an excellent grating cheese over pasta dishes, breads and baking casseroles. However, the use of this cheese is limited because of its extreme saltiness. It is also rich in conjugated linoleic acid, or CLA. CLA is a polyunsaturated fatty acid that has been studied



for its ability to prevent obesity. Full-fat cheese is fine, but you should buy a higher-quality cheese with superior flavor and just use smaller portions according to the Mamma Mia Diet!

Spaghetti cacio and pepper is a tribute to the traditional Roman peasant way of eating. It is a tasty, fast, inexpensive and easy recipe to prepare for a family meal. The secret, in addition to the chemical combination of cacio and creamy water from the pasta, it is the mixture of all flavors: full-pepper grains crushed at the moment and toasted to release its full flavor. The pasta is stirred into the sauce (“mantecata” in Italian) to absorb all of the cacio’s taste. You should prepare this dish to enjoy right away, don’t let it sit around or reheat it - this is an important tip!

## **SPAGHETTI CACIO E PEPE (SPAGHETTI CACIO AND PEPPER)**

Total preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 12 minutes

Serving: 4

### **INGREDIENTS**

320 g (11.5 oz) spaghetti

3 teaspoons black peppercorns, roughly crushed

200 g (7 oz) pecorino romano (cacio), finely grated

### **DIRECTIONS**

- 1.** In a large nonstick pan toast the pepper until fragrant. Set aside half of the pepper
- 2.** Bring a pan of lightly salted water (remember, the pecorino in the recipe is already salty. I don’t add any salt) to boil, then add the pasta; it should be covered but not by much. Stir it occasionally during cooking to prevent sticking
- 3.** Add 240 ml (1 cup) water of cooking water into the pepper and cook over medium heat for 1 minute
- 4.** Drain the pasta 5-6 minutes before it should be done, reserving all the cooking water, and add to the pepper. Cook the pasta and pepper over medium heat
- 5.** Meanwhile, put half of the cheese in a bowl and mix in some of the pasta water very gradually (-spoon by spoon) to make first a paste, and then a thick sauce, similar to the consistency of dense bechamel
- 6.** Remove the pasta from the heat. Add the sauce and toss while adding enough of the water (you shouldn’t need it all) to make a sauce that coats each strand. Don’t worry if it takes a while to come together – keep mixing and it should happen
- 7.** Sprinkle with the remaining pepper and pecorino. Serve immediately.



# Gustoso tastes like a business challenge issued to the US market involving the best actors of the agrifood sector in Sicily

It is an ambitious project, as for the first time 12 Sicilian leading businesses in the agri-food sector have come together under the same brand to conquer the shelves of large-scale retail shops in the USA. The project **Gustoso Sicilian Food Excellence** is the medium to bring 30 lines of Gustoso-branded products to the shelves of Albertons, Walmart and Sam's Club. The initial goal will be to reach more than 500 shops across the USA thanks to cooperation with the most important US distributors, namely Reese Group and Kreative. What is innovative is that a group of business have decided enter the American market by pooling together to create a common brand, the Gustoso Sicilian Food Excellence.

A common brand allows combining the required standards to the capacity to meet the consumer demand for these products. Investing on a brand means to provide certainties and protection to consumers but also to be well equipped to meet the challenges of international markets by launching a well-customised marketing campaign involving promotion, advertisement and development of the common brand activities. The network is the most accomplished tool to share both risks and costs and also opportunities and advantages since the businesses that have joined the network share strategic assets by exchanging goods and services and good practices. The network also helps to make the most of the contribution each partner can provide.

The idea of creating a business network to 'attack' the US market has been cleverly outlined by Daniele Cipollina, the founder of the business network, and Paolo Internicola, the Managing Director of Gustoso Import USA. The twelve companies of the network have been selected and involved due to the following characteristics: traditional and unspoilt products, links to the production area, family history and tradition in the field.

The business network Gustoso Sicilian Food Excellence represents a big share of Sicilian product export and it is expected to produce a turnover of about 25million dollars during the first 24 months of activity in relation to the opportunities of the US market. The businesses are going to benefit from economies of scale, solutions, tools and facilitations to stay positioned within the US market. The business network will rely on a logistic partner based in Florida which will be in charge of receiving, stocking, delivering, tracking orders and billing all goods on behalf of clients.



**100% MADE IN SICILY**  
**100% FOR THE WORLD**



The **Gustoso Import Promotion USA** company is going to deal with all import paper-work and will help the businesses to comply with FDA standards for more complex products such as preserves, cheeses and all food preparations which need to obtain the import licence to enter the USA market. The Gustoso Import Promotion USA company will initially organise product tests. After having passed the initial test, the product can go to the marketing and selling test in order to control risks and limit investments. The goal is to reach regional and national networks under the strict control of the Reese Group, a leading company in the agrifood distribution sector with more than ten branches across North America.

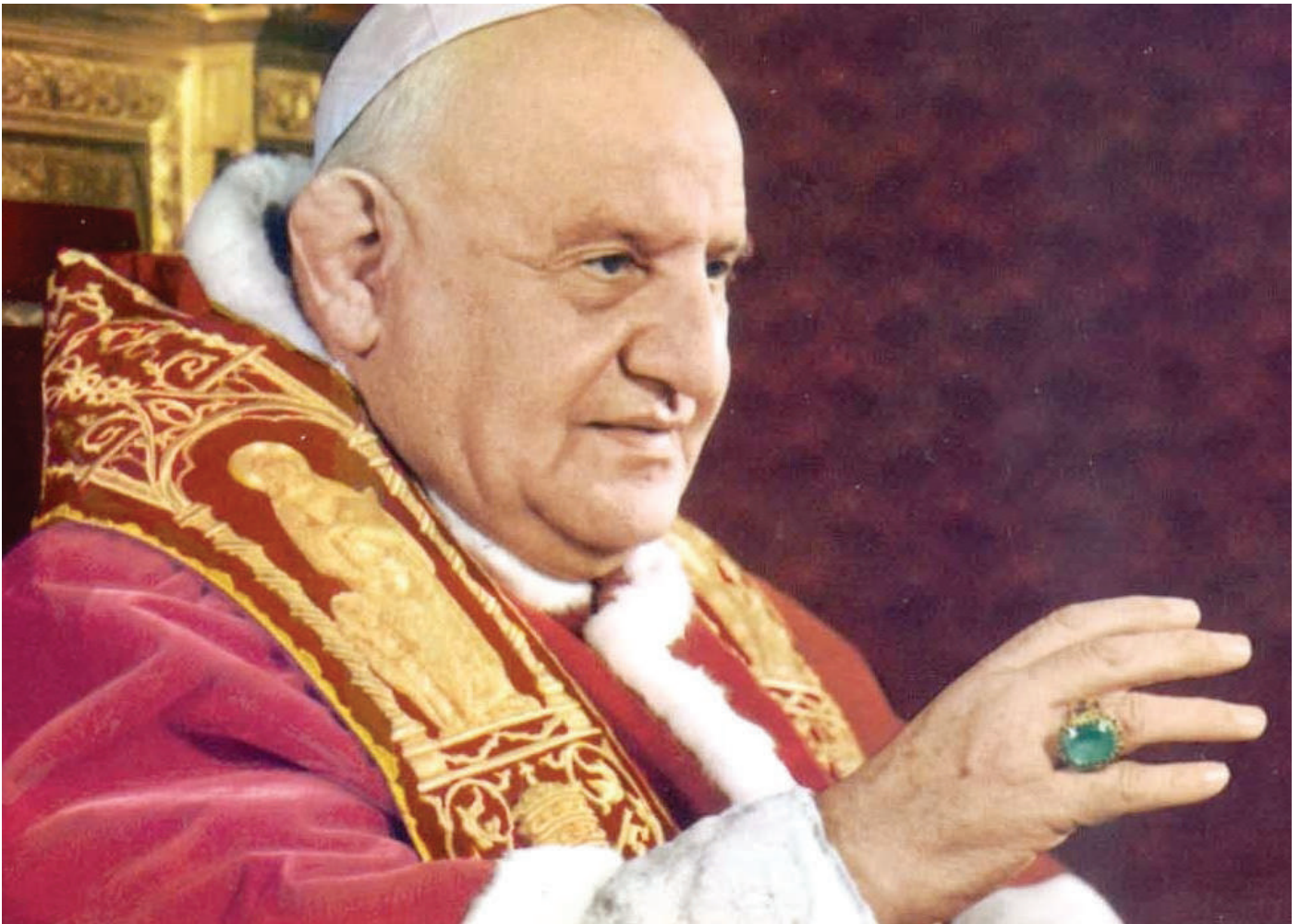
On November 1st and 2nd the business network Gustoso Sicilian Food Excellence will be officially presented in New York during the event 'This is Italy' organised by the Italian weekly magazine *Panorama*.



Daniele Cipollina  
*President & Founder Partner*

*/by Giovanni Verde*

# Great Italians of the Past Saint Angelo Roncalli, Pope John XXIII



Nicknamed "The Good Pope", John XXIII, born Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, in a pontificate of just 5 years managed to undermine the former patterns of the Catholic Church and its power in Rome, giving the figure of the Pope a feature of familiarity. The Pope had become, as he liked to say, "a brother who speaks to the other brothers, become a father for the will of the Lord".

Born on November 25, 1881 in Sotto il Monte, a village in the province of Bergamo, Angelo Roncalli has the opportunity to study to become a priest with the economic help of an uncle, because he was originally coming from a family of humble origins.



From the beginning, his ecclesiastical life is characterized by diplomatic missions, to which the personality of Angelo Roncalli, ductile and affable, is particularly suitable. Already in 1925, Pope Pius XI sends Roncalli in Bulgaria. His mission was supposed to last a few months, but Roncalli ended staying there for about 10 years, moving into deeper contact with the Bulgarian people and with the Orthodox Church and achieving important results in the ecclesiastical field. The future Pope will be able to solve

some serious conflicts between the local dioceses and will start diplomatic relations with the Bulgarian government for a full recognition of the Holy See in Sofia.

In 1934 he is in Turkey, where he tightens a special relationship with the German Ambassador von Papen: this friendly relationship will allow him to save many Jewish German children, arrived in Turkey on a ship and ready to be sent back to Germany, where they going to face a certain death.

In 1944, at the behest of Pope Pius XII, Roncalli becomes Apostolic Nuncio in Paris. The many diplomatic successes that will follow on French soil will allow him to achieve the Great Cross of the Legion d'Honneur from the hands of the French President Vincent Auriol in 1958.

In 1953 he begins the ecclesiastical career that Angelo Roncalli had always dreamed of. Roncalli is appointed Patriarch of Venice, and begins to live in close contact with the faithful



observants, avoiding all barriers, living a simple life and being available to anyone with no problems, convinced as he was that "anyone could need to go to confession" and that he could not "reject the secrets of a lost soul".

Among the general surprise, on October 28, 1958, Angelo Roncalli is elected Pope. At first the common thought about this was him being a transition Pope, harmless and accommodating. But that thought soon proved to be wrong. Pope John immediately becomes a surprising and unpredictable figure for the rigid catholic patterns. His "unscheduled" events become famous all around the world. His affability, the contact with the faithful, his engaging anecdotes mean that Pope John XXIII enters the collective memory as a man of love even before as the Vicar of Christ.

Famous is the meeting with the Gesù Bambino hospital's children in Rome, during his first Christmas as a Pope. Many of the children will exchange the Pope for Santa Claus. Extraordinarily exciting is also his visit to the Regina Coeli prison, during which Pope John XXIII turns to the inmates saying "You couldn't come to me ... so I came to you. I put my eyes into yours. I have put my heart close to your hearts".

During the meeting with Jacqueline Kennedy,

Pope John XXIII abandons the formal expressions of greeting to the First Lady that had been suggested to him, turning to her with a familiar "Madame Jacqueline!".

One of the great merits of Pope John XXIII is the call of the Second Vatican Council, organized in a few months for the general amazement and the opposition of the conservative part of the curia.

And yet, during the Cuban Missile Crisis in the October of 1962, the relations between Kennedy and Khrushchev begin to relax following the intervention of Pope John XXIII, who warmly invites the two leaders "to continue to negotiate" and "not to remain indifferent to the cry of humanity", "to avoid to the world the horrors of war".

His encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, remains a fundamental text on both the theological and the historical level. The work of Pope John XXIII reconfigures peace as a result of the individual human consciousness, the realization of his freedom, and the rights and obligations arising from them, as extraordinary individual being, who can not be annihilated in front of the systems, whether capitalist or socialist.

On June 3, 1963, Pope John XXIII dies, after a long fought against a stomach cancer. "Why are you crying? This is a time of joy. A moment of glory" were his last words.

On April 27, 2014, Pope Francis has celebrated the canonization of Pope John XXIII, simultaneously with that of Pope John Paul II. A final act that recognizes the sanctity of an extraordinary man, whose humanity transcends the boundaries of the Catholic Church, to be recognized by all as an example of unconditional love towards others.





*/by Umberto Mucci*

# Andrea Gastaldo Memorial Day, an Italian American memory

Memorial Day is approaching once again, and this year it brings a special interview, for me. As some of you know, one of the reasons I'm so in love with and grateful to the United States is that during WW2 my father, Teodoro "Rino" Mucci, was saved by the American soldiers of the Fifth Army, in the Northern part of Italy. He certainly would have been killed by the Fascists without them.

Among those soldiers, in the Fifth Army, many were Italian Americans. And among those who saved my father, I've grown up knowing these three names, who have always been for me the representatives of those who saved my father, and allowed me to even exist. Those three names are Salvatore "Sal" Di Marco, Anthony "Tony" Tiso and Edward "Eddie" Gastaldo. My Italian American heroes, who remained friends with my father even after the war.

This year marks the 75th an-



niversary of the Fifth Army, which began U.S. Army North in 2004. A ceremony was held last January: Andrea Gastaldo, the Foreign Policy Advisor to U.S. Army North, daughter of

Eddie Gastaldo, attended the ceremony. She's with us, today: I personally thank her for telling us something about the Fifth Army and some of those brave Italian American heroes who saved my father and freed Italy. I also thank her for her service and, through her, every American soldier, specifically those who came across the ocean to liberate Italy, and more specifically the Italian American ones. I will never forget. We the Italians will never forget.

*Andrea, you are the foreign Policy Advisor to U.S. Army North. Please tell us something about you*

I am a Foreign Service Officer, I work for the Department State, and when I am overseas, I work as a Diplomat, which means I represent the President, the Government, and the People of the United States as a part of the Executive Branch. I recently just finished my 20th anniversary from when I started and now I am the Foreign Policy Advisor to Army North, which means that I advise the Lieutenant General on policies that will impact our Nation.



*You are the daughter of Maj. Edward "Eddie" Galstaldo, an Italian American who fought behind enemy lines as an intelligence officer for Fifth Army headquarters. Please tell us about your father and his service*

My father was actually chosen to go into the military before Pearl Harbor, and then he was chosen, due to his language skill, to go to a special language school, in Georgia I believe, where a group of Italian American men were trained to speak Roman Italian, not dialect. So this group of Italian American soldiers was specifically trained to be used for interrogations and intelligence purposes when the American forces made it to Italy.

So they trained up, and then they were moved to North Africa where the Fifth Army actually began on January Fifth of 1943. Then they were moved from North Africa to Sicily. My father did not move with the American troops, but he was actually detailed to the British in a special operation. So he was with the British, then moved forward, and then he met up, I believe, with Tony Tiso and Sal Di Marco, his two compatriots, near Salerno: and then they were in Salerno and moved behind the enemy line when the rest of the troops moved to Rome. My father, Tony, and Sal then worked with the Partigiani behind enemy lines but still reporting back to the main Army elements. He made his way all through Italy and his military intelli-





gence group was near Milano when the end came for Mussolini.

My father's family was from a small town about 20 miles from Ivrea, in Piemonte: his father was from Tina, while his mother was from outside Asti, so both of the sides of the family were from Piemonte. He lost his father very early, when my father was 15, but my grandmother, nonna Adelina, brought my father and his brother Frank to Italy, to meet the family after her husband, my grandfather, died. So he had a connection there, he knew where his family was and during the War he went to see how they were doing. My father is actually still very well-known in the town, because he showed up one day, I believe in 1944, with a jeep filled with chocolates for the children, blankets, and pantyhose for the women.

And then my father after Italy was in Austria, at the end of the War, working as a Department of the Defense Civilian for a short time before he returned to the US.

*Is there an anecdote or a particular memory about your father during the years of the war you would like to share with us?*

One day my father and Tony Tiso were out driving



around: they had a jeep called "The Mary Jane" named after an ex-girlfriend of my father! So they had spotted a German motorcycle near a farmhouse, somewhere in north of Italy, and they realized there was a German soldier inside the farmhouse. My father decided they should steal the motorcycle, because it wasn't supposed to be there, so he and Tony Tiso went, and they took the motorcycle and rolled it away from the farmhouse. And then my father asked to Tony Tiso "Can you ride it?" and Tony Tiso said "No, I don't know how to ride a motorcycle, I thought you know how to ride a motorcycle!"

So neither one of them knew, but my father let Tony Tiso try, and he obviously couldn't drive it; so my father had to ride it, but Tony Tiso had left the clutch in. When my father started it, the motorcycle shot out, and he started riding uncontrollably on one of these hills, and he crashed it. So Tony Tiso ran up to him and said "Oh my God, Eddie what have you done!"

My father was bleeding from his head, and his el-

bow was broken, so he asked Tony "Please, take the letter out of my pocket!" Now, you have to know that it was very common for soldiers in war to have a letter for their mother, their loved one, ready in case they died. He said: "Please, give it to my mother, but tell her I died in combat!" Then my father went to the hospital. Tony went to see him two days later and my father asked him "Oh, Tony, tell me you haven't sent that letter!", and Tony said "No!" and gave it back to him. At the end they had to remove my father's funny bone, and he had a big scar on his head. I don't know what story they gave to their officers, but the German had to explain the loss of his motorcycle after that!

*This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Fifth Army, which in 2004 has become U.S. Army North: please tell our readers about the story of this courageous group of American soldiers, and about its role nowadays*

The Fifth Army, as I said before, began in North Africa with the specific intent to go first in Sicily and then move in Italy to secure Italy from Mussolini. During the movement between Africa and Sicily and then the whole Italy, the Fifth Army had 65 Medals of Honor Winners, which is a tremendous number, a tremendous amount of bravery and courage. They landed near Salerno and it was a very difficult landing, because of the location. The purpose was to go across Italy, to go up and try to secure the country. They had people from all over the country and from all the background. They had Native Americans, African Americans, Irish Americans, Italian Americans, Jewish Americans, they had all different types of soldiers, and all of them worked together with this common goal.

After the War, obviously all the Armies were reassessed: the Fifth Army and the Fourth Army were



consolidated together. Then the Fifth Army was reactivated as Army North, specifically after September 2001. Army North's missions right now are Homeland Defense, Defense Support to Civil Authorities (in case of a natural disaster or an attack on U.S. soil), and then it also coordinates Security Cooperation with Mexico, Canada, and the Bahamas.



*The Italian Americans in the army have always been a valiant, numerous group, which you represent now here with us. During WW2 many of them, like your father, decided to help save Italy, their motherland, while fighting for the Americans...*

I don't know all the stories: not many Italians who had emigrated to the United States were able to go back and forth once they came, because it was very expensive and difficult. They stayed in the United States for long time before they were able to come back to their Motherland.

For my father, it was different, and unusual: he knew where his family was, he knew where they





were from, and he knew the difficulties of the family. He was a proud American, but he always believed that should know where you are from and stay in touch with family. He thought it very important to continue learning and being educated about Italy: he never stopped learning about Italy, whether it was about the Italy of his war years or going back in time to the Renaissance or even to the beginning of the Christianity. So, even as a new soldier, he probably had more background and understanding about Italy and the differences between its Regions and between the dialects, than the other soldiers and friends. That's why he used a different approach: to him, to help Italy was to help America, because when you worry about your family back home, you can't really take care of your family in front of you. He stayed in touch, for the rest of his life, with his uncles, aunts, and cousins, as well as the Italian friends he made during the war, to include your father Rino Mucci.



*In a few days America will celebrate Memorial Day. What does this historical day mean for you?*

For me the Memorial Day is the day that we think of all the sacrifices that all the Americans have made for us in every War, every conflict.

I think "What have we done to honor the dead, by making sure we make the right decision if we have to go to war again?" Because when you go to war, it's the ultimate decision of risk, you put yourself at risk and you put your family at risk and your

countrymen and countrywomen at risk. I served in war, in Iraq in 2006/2007. I left my children in Kuwait with their father; I was at war, under attack, as a diplomat. So, when you do that, you really consider "Why are we here? Is this going to help?" because you don't want to return to the same place and do it again and again and again. You'd like to have a solution that helps to shape a peaceful future and avoid the country going to war again.

So that's really what I think about Memorial Day: I think about all the lives we lost, everywhere, especially stories of ones less known or battles less famous. Most of the times we lose our soldiers with little glory, with few newspaper articles, or very little news, or we don't even know their names when they fall (die). And those are the ones we have to remember, that we do the right thing by honoring what they did and taking time to recognize their sacrifice.

*As an Italian American, what are your feelings about Italy?*

I love Italy, of course! I will tell you an interesting story: there are six Andrea Gastaldo on Facebook, but all of them are Italian men except me! I'm the only female and I'm the only American, but I have strong affinity for Italy. My father chose my name as he wanted me to have a name that was a strong name, but also a name from Italy. I've done the same with my daughters, and they have very Italian names, Francesca and Gabriella!

We visit our family in Italy, in Piemonte, and we have also cousins in Rome. We try to remember where we are from: I think that when you remember where you are from, you remember where you can go. So we love Italy, we love travelling in Italy, we love the people, and we love the traditions. We'll always love Italy!

# Italian land and nature

## The Park of Castelli Romani

*Ariccia*



Villages, ancient towns, villas, Medieval castles, and archaeological ruins animate the Regional Park of the Castelli Romani, in the Province of **Rome**. Located in the Alban Hills, in the past the Castelli Romani were a favorite resort for the Capital's noble families as well as for Popes.

9,500 hectares of protected land, many animal species, such as badgers, martens, peregrine falcons, porcupines, and especially the wolf (a key component in the local ecosystem) also call this their habitat.

Sixteen municipalities make up part of the **Park of the Castelli Romani**; however, for an already-exhaustive window onto the area, organize a

tour of just six of them, beginning with Lanuvio, a Medieval village near **Velletri**.

The village center is surrounded by walls of peperino (a magmatic rock); passing through them, one enters an ancient atmosphere of homes, palaces and churches that have been perfectly-preserved. Walking the streets and alleyways, one reaches the 14th-century fortress, with its two striking, cylindrical and overlapping towers; at one time a jail, it is now the municipal wine consortium. Visitors can taste the fine D.O.C. wines of the Lanugini Hills as they admire the intriguing exhibition of agricultural instruments used for winemaking.



## Genzano

Do not miss the 15th-Century Baronial Mansion, built by the Colonna Family, and the nearby Fountain of the Scogli, designed by Carlo Fontana in 1675; also worthy of visits are the Medieval Collegiate Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, restored in the 17th Century, the Loreto Bridge (also in peperino) that dates back c. 2nd Century BC, and the Church of the Madonna delle Grazie, dating back to the 16th Century and retaining the painting that each year is carried in procession as a sign of devotion.

Green thumbs should take the occasion to attend the market fair, "Lanuvio in Pink," featuring 100 varieties of ages-old, newer, and English roses every May 1st.

From Lanuvio, along a scenic road lies Genzano di Roma, picturesque town along the Via Appia that extends over the outer slope of the crater Lake of Nemi.



The historic center is rich in history and art, including the 18th-Century Palazzo Sforza Cesarini, surrounded by an enormous park, the 17th-Century Capuchin Church, and the Church of the Holy Trinity. The three main streets, called "the Trident of Bacchus," begin in Piazza Fiasconi: the first is Via Garibaldi, that leads to the route of Lake Nemi, while the others are Via Buoizzi and Via Berardi that leads to the Church of Santa Maria della Cima. Via Berardi,

during the occasion of the Feast of Corpus Domini, is completely covered by an artistic flowered carpet of about 2000 m<sup>2</sup>, the protagonist of the historic event of the Infiorata.

Also on the Via Appia is Ariccia, artistic treasure of the Castelli Romani.

On view here is one of the finest architectural examples of the European Baroque, a work of Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Carlo Fon-

## Nemi Lake



tana: The monumental complex of Piazza di Corte. The complex includes Chigi Palace, with its rich halls, stucco decorations and precious antiques, along with the ornaments of the walls in original leather from Cordoba, the large park surrounding it, and the Collegiate Church of Santa Maria Assunta, inspired by the Pantheon in Rome.

Two other religious complexes to see are the Sanctuary of Santa Maria di Galloro and the deconsecrated Church of San Nicola di Bari. Foodies will appreciate this area's *frascette*, a type of restaurant selling the delicious Ariccia pork (*porchetta*).

After traversing the famous bridge of Ariccia, a monumental viaduct 197 feet high; built by Pope Pius IX, after two kilometers it leads to Albano Laziale. Picturesque village nestled in the volcanic Alban Hills and on the shores of Lake Albano, Albano Laziale is famous for its majestic Cathedral of St. Pan-

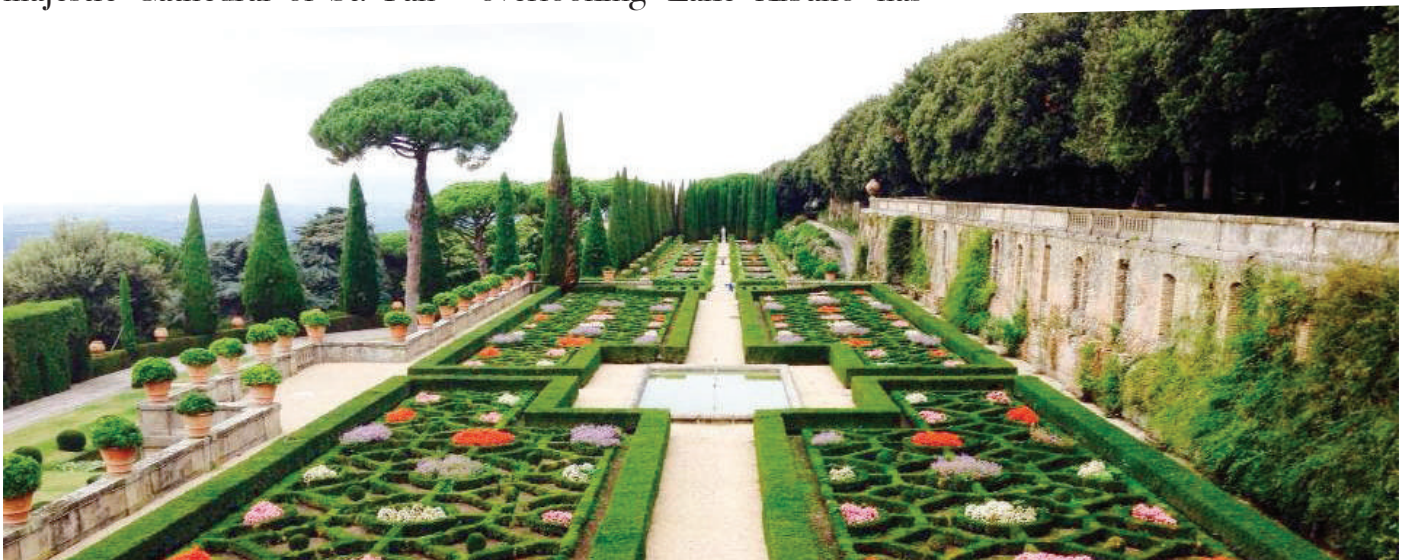
cras in the Baroque style, and for its many ancient Roman finds: the rotund, Romanesque Church of Santa Maria; the Pretoria door, with three openings in lava stone; the Cisternone, underground storage built by Septimius Severus and still used to this day for the city water supply; the Roman amphitheatre; the tomb of the Horatii and Curiatii, a majestic parallelepiped construction in tuff, known as the tomb of the legendary heroes.

The catacombs of San Senatore and the Civic Museum are worth a visit. The Catacombs date back to the 3rd Century and represent the largest suburban cemeteries. In the Civic Museum, housed in the luxurious Villa Ferrajoli, is a valuable collection from prehistory and protohistory.

Another stop on a tour of Park of the Castelli Romani is Castel Gandolfo. This village overlooking Lake Albano has

been the holiday destination of popes, cardinals and Roman Curia for centuries. Originally the residence of the Savelli Family, Urban VII transformed it into a Papal Palace in 1623. It also houses the most important astronomical observatory, known as "the Vatican Observatory."

The surrounding countryside also boasts numerous valuable monuments: the Church of St. Thomas of Villanova, by Gian Lorenzo Bernini; the 16th-Century Roman gate; the majestic Villa Clodius, built in the Republican era; the Baths of Diana, created under Domitian's rule. Equally-beautiful and intriguing are the remains of the ancient villas of Castel Gandolfo, the Albanum Domitiani (the country house of the emperor Domitian), and Villa Barberini and Villa Cybo, connected by a bridge and a loggia leading to the papal palace.





*/by Sofia Medina*

# IT and US Tradition meets Originality. Wear the Flavors of Italy!



The days are becoming long and hot, and it's finally time for a vacation. Where do you choose to go? Is it to swap city life for the countryside views, wine glass in one hand and gelato in the other? Is it to meander through cobblestone streets soaking up the surrounding history while the man down the street plays a familiar Dean Martin tune on his accordion? Or is it to bathe seaside under the Mediterranean sun? Whatever your desire may be, there's a chance Italy has it.

At every corner, in any Italian city, one gets brought back in time. The richness of the history, the art, and most importantly- the food! The boot-shaped country has 20 different regions; each with its own story, and its own particular flavors.

The flavors are so special and original, that one day a group of young Italian entrepreneurs decided to capture them and turn them into something tangible for individuals to bring back with them

to always remember and savor their Italian holiday. That's how Gioielli DOP, the first Italian food jewelry brand, was created. Inspired by these individual and different flavors, Gioielli DOP translates to "PDO Jewelry," standing for the Italian "Protected Designation of Origin." These are classic Italian food products that cannot be replicated or made anywhere else except their designated region. Many "DOP" or "PDO" products are world renown, and not to mention some of the most delicious, such as Parmigiano Reggiano cheese or the spiny artichoke from Sardinia.

The food jewelry was developed by young entrepreneurs in the association "Giovani Gioiellieri d'Italia," the first Italian independent association bringing together second-generation jewelers to enhance Italian culture heritage, food bio-diversi-



ty and artisanal craftsmanship. They call them the "3 B'S": Bello (Beautiful), Buono (Delicious) and Ben Fatto (well-made).

100% designed, shaped and made by hand in Italy. Their design and production teams are based in the heart of Italy—Tuscany—where the craft of goldsmiths has been handed down for generations since the 14th

century.

Where tradition meets originality, Gioielli DOP's mission is to promote Italian culture and preserving Italian heritage, all in a fun and colorful way. With over 100+ combinations in their recipe book, each charm taking at least 4 days to make, you can wear and show off your favorite flavors of Italy at all times!

Gioielli DOP's signature style is original, fun, wearable and full of traditional flavors. Thoughtfully & carefully handcrafted for anyone with Italian ancestry, the Italian food fiend, or anyone who wants to add a splash of color to their style, Gioielli DOP is infused with sterling silver, enamel and love- bringing the flavors of Italy to life once you put it on!

So go ahead- take that Italian





vacation- the sun is shining and the vineyards are calling your name. But don't forget to bring back a taste of Italy home with you with Gioielli DOP!

Receive 15% off your purchase with code **WE15** on [www.gioiellidop.com/store](http://www.gioiellidop.com/store)



*/by Federazione Italiana Tradizioni Popolari*

# Italian traditions Fires, Angels and Archangels at the bottom of Vesuvio



*Saint Michael statue in procession waiting for the flight of the angels*

In spring, between May 7th and May 10th, artistic illuminations, angels, archangels, games and spectacular fireworks are at the center of an intense ritual that the community of Ottaviano (Naples) dedicates to the patron saint, Michael, the archangel who led the angelic hosts in the fight against the rebel angels commanded by Lucifer, annihilating them: *quis ut deus!* (who is like God!) Micha-

el intimidated before punishing Lucifer, who had dared to challenge God with pride.

This is why in the West Saint Michael is traditionally depicted winged, young and beautiful, according to a shared collective imagination; but also armed with shield, helmet and sword, in the act of crushing Satan, now dominated by the fla-



mes of hell. Therefore, the Archangel Michael is commonly referred to as the defender of the soul from evil forces, and as mediator between the world of the living and that of the dead, with his recurring presence in caves and because of the cults often dedicated to him.

In Ottaviano the church dedicated to St. Michael stands on top of a hill, a sacred area already in Roman times, as archaeological finds seem to attest, saved and preserved still today in the Church, destroyed several times by the most recent eruptions of Vesuvius (that of 1906, in particular). In Byzantine times the local cult of the Archangel Michael seems to be a reality, as a plaque with a Greek inscription suggests, a sort of votive offering of thanks to the Saint kept in the church.

May 8th is the day of the great community celebration with the procession of the Michele 'o piccirillo (the little one), that is the wooden statue of Austrian manufacture bought from an antiquarian by the Prince of Ottajano Luigi de' Medici when he was sent to the Congress of Vienna, representing the King of Naples, in 1815. The statue is smaller than its larger double eighteenth-century, Michele 'o ruosso (the big one) placed on the main altar of the parish church. With showy and colorful feathers on the helmet. Michele 'o piccirillo goes in procession through the streets of the city center, according to recurring procedures in a patronal feast. There are numerous brothers (representatives of four ancient brotherhoods), several banners with plumes, ecclesiastical and civil authorities. People is mostly coming from nearby towns, but sometimes also from locations



*Angels flying and singing the hymn to Saint Michael*



in Puglia, and a crowd of devout reunited in the four squares of the historic center from which the respective districts take their name, where most of the offers given to finance the event are also collected. These districts are: Annunziata, Piedi-terra, Mercato and San Giovanni.

But for the people from Ottaviano, the feast of St. Michael is also and above all the flight of the angels, an ancient consolidated form of popular theater that in Ottaviano is repeated four times, that is in the four squares of the corresponding neighborhoods. Two children aged between seven and ten years, for several generations strictly members of the same family, the Duraccios, have the privilege of meeting the Archangel Michael suspended from a metal cable with a pulley (the carrule) that allows them to cross the center of each square, on the crowd that waits silently. They wear a long tunic in different colors, pink and light blue, a heart shaped shield, a helmet with a plume and a blonde and curly wig. Holding their arms underneath,

the children cross the square with a bird's eye, until they stop, perpendicularly, in front of the archangel.

Now is the time to sing the hymn dedicated to Saint Michael, to evoke his venture, express the community pride of having him as protector, implore his special protection or thank him for the wonders done during the year. Flying is also a powerful opportunity to acquire or strengthen social prestige: it is up to the two angels to advertise in the square the offers left as gifts by fellow citizens and emigrants.

The flight of angels here has an ancient ritual tradition. It was already practiced in the sixties of the nineteenth century, when, with a regular act registered on May 4, 1864, the city prohibited its conduct for reasons of public safety, but allowed the race of horses as afternoon entertainment and the recitation of a sacred drama in three acts (The King of Flames, or St. Michael Archangel), to be represented on the occasion of May 8th. The sa-



cred performance on stage was held together with the flight until the fifties of the twentieth century, on separate days, and was entrusted to a theater company specializing in sacred performances from the municipality of Torre Annunziata. The flight, with the strokes sung by the angels, then full of dialect expressions and anacolutes, has survived over time to various attempts by ecclesiastical and civil authorities to eliminate or reduce the size of the execution from four to one: for emigrants and residents, the flight has to stay exactly as it is. Flying is a votive action that strengthens the relationship with the sacred through children who, in the staging, cover a contemporary double dimension, human and divine.

The child takes on the symbolic role of power mediator, as he is still tied to a threshold dimension, alien to the needs and stimuli of adults: the risk he and his family run during the staging and the spectators participating in the event are part of a devotional behavior necessary for the sacrifice to be significant and for the sacredness of the gesture and the offer to be highlighted. But flight simulation is not just a sacred moment. It is also a celebration of childhood, of the community that is reflected in children and with them is regenerated, hoping for its positive future; the ritual machine of flight is still a powerful showcase to preserve prestige, to carve out or to reaffirm a role in the Christian community and society. It is no coincidence that sacred representations such as the flight of the angel alone, or in association with a staging of the struggle between the angel and the devil, are also widespread in other places of Campania between Monday in Albis and the first Sunday of October: when the production cycle of the earth, like that of human life, was born, and then prepare to die but is cyclically proposed again and again.

The legend of diffusion of the local cult for St Michael the Archangel and a living rituality until the first decades of the twentieth century reveal aspects linked to the theme of cyclical fertility of the soil. But they also reveal needs, historical dangers of survival for the community and relations with the area of micelaic cult of wide historical influence, such as the Gargano. It is said that a terrible drought seriously threatened the economy of the local community, based on the production of grapes and wheat, when, unexpectedly, wagons full of wheat came from the tables of Apulias in the village. It was purchased by a young blond man who had sold his ring to get the wheat to send to Ottaviano. When they arrived in the village, those who had transported the wheat recognized in the local statue of St. Michael the young man who had ordered it. The same statue, that of Michele 'o ruosso, used to cross the countryside on September 29th to bless the land. On that occasion, the farmers offered the Saint bunches of Concord and Catalan grapes to transform it into wine: the proceeds of the sale of wine would support part of the expenses for the feast of May 8th.

The feast of St. Michael is also the feast of an intense sound landscape, characterized especially by the "remnant of the sacred bronzes", the repeated applause, the band concerts and light music but, even more, by the deafening and prolonged burst of fireworks that precede the start of the procession, follow each flight in the squares and, again, entertain the spectators during the night show at the end of the festival. It is kind of a counter-positiveness to be exhibited against a real danger to be exorcised, because several times suffered by a community at the bottom of Mount Vesuvius, always ready to awaken.

by Domenica Borriello for "Il Folklore d'Italia"

*/by Italian Botanical Heritage*

# Italian gardens Villa Taranto Botanical Gardens



The Gardens of Villa Taranto are located on the promontory of Castagnola, along the road that connects Pallanza to Intra, on the western shore of Lake Maggiore.

They were created by Neil Mc Eacharn (1184-1964), a captain of Scottish origin, a great lover of botany and Italy, which he had visited in his youth. In 1928 McEacharn returned to Italy with the intention of finding a suitable plot of land for the creation of a vast garden, but without finding

it. In 1930, after having published an advertisement for this purpose in the British newspaper *The Times*, he identified and purchased the property La Crocetta and its villa, built in 1880 by Count d'Orsetti for the Ticino architect Augusto Guidini (former author of Villa Scagliola), in a style inspired by Normandy architecture, and in need of restoration.

The park that surrounded it was smaller than the current one, mainly made up of chestnuts, robi-





nia and bamboo. Captain McEacharn had already a considerable experience in the botanical field working in the vast park of his Castle of Galloway in Scotland. He immediately renamed the vast property Villa Taranto, in honor of his ancestor McDonald, appointed Duke of Taranto by Napoleon, and devoted himself to its accommodation with all his enthusiasm, his expertise and a large part of his personal heritage.

The work took thirty years and over 100 workers. The area dedicated to the gardens was almost doubled, with the purchase of neighboring properties. The vegetation was largely uprooted. A water system was created with water pumped from the lake, distributed to the gardens through a network of 8 km of pipes. An artificial valley was dug for crops that needed a protected and shady climate, terraced gardens were created for crops to be placed in full sun and arranged over 7 km of avenues. Finally, countless botanical species were planted, which led Captain McEacharn to travel several times around the world to find seeds and plants and stimulated gardeners and floriculturists in the area to grow species hitherto unknown.

The importance of the garden is not only given by its botanical heritage, even if very rich, but also by the harmony of the whole, in which the English imprint is enriched by the insertion of typical elements of the Italian garden.



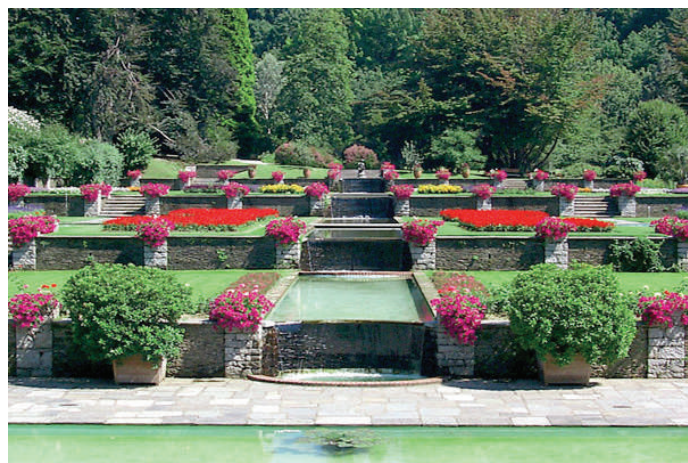
The gardens, donated by Captain McEacharn to the Italian State, were opened to the public for the first time in 1952. When he died in 1964, he was buried in a chapel, specially built in the middle of the garden. The Botanical Gardens of Villa Taranto was established for the management of the park. Today the gardens are part of the Great Italian Gardens circuit; the villa cannot be visited by the public and since 1996 it has been the seat of the Prefecture of Verbano Cusio Ossola.

### The gardens today

The Gardens of Villa Taranto extends over 16 hectares, with 7 km of avenues. It has 20,000 plants, including 80,000 blooming bulbs in spring, more than 150,000 ground cover plants, tree and shrub collections from all over the world, some of which are unique in Europe and acclimatized after a long period of work.

There are many significant places in the gardens. The "Valletta" was built in 1935 and surmounted by a bridge with a single arch. The large "terraced gardens" have waterfalls and water games alternating with flowerbeds of annual plants: here is the bronze statue of the Fisherman, by Neapolitan Vincenzo Gemito. The "Winter Garden" hosts the greenhouse for the shelter of Mediterranean plants, an impressive arboretum dedicated to tro-

pical and subtropical plants, including the *Victoria cruziana*, the huge equatorial water lily, whose seeds arrived at Villa Taranto in 1956 from the Stockholm botanical garden. One of the most impressive places is the basin of lotus flowers (*Nelumbo nucifera*). The "Labyrinth of the dahlias" has more than 1500 plants of dahlias belonging to about 350 varieties. Recently 30,000 mosses were planted. The "Captain's Herbarium" is the final masterpiece, located in a building next to the entrance.



In August 2013, the Gardens were severely damaged by a tornado, which uprooted almost 800 plants and damaged the greenhouses, then rebuilt, but the resulting new space has allowed to plant new collections.



Among the innumerable significant species present in the Gardens we remember:

- Two specimens of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, deciduous conifers described only on the basis of fossil findings until 1941, donated by Prince Borromeo to Captain McEacharn in 1949 and 1950;
- Tree ferns (*Dicksonia antarctica*), planted in 30 specimens;
- The tree of the handkerchiefs (*Davidia involucreta*), Chinese species planted in 1938 by the Spanish infant Don Jaime in the "Meadow of Personalities", which has now assumed dimensions and a posture that make it spectacular throughout the year.
- *Emmenopterys henryi*, tree belonging to the same family of the Rubiaceae, native to the temperate forests of China, from which it was successfully introduced in Europe in 1907; planted in the Gardens in 1947, it bloomed for the first time in Europe in July 1971.





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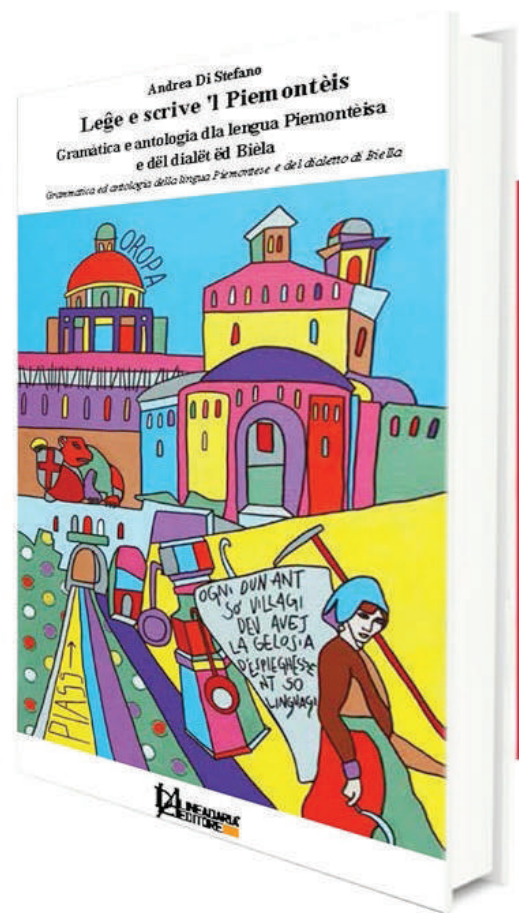
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/by Giulia Casati for the Italian School NJ

# Italian language Unexpectedly International, Piemontèis

## LEÛE E SCRIVE 'L PIEMONTÈIS

*Gramàtica e antologia dla lengua  
Piemontèisa e dël dialèt ëd Bièla*



Let's continue our tour of Italy through its dialects! Next stop Piedmont! We are in the north-west of Italy, not too far from France and Switzerland in the north and next to Valle d'Aosta to the west, Lombardy to the east, and Liguria to the south. And today we are going to talk about Piemontèis, or Piedmontese! The dialect people speak

here. First of all – like for all the dialects - we must say there are many variations of the Piemontèis, but there is one common to all the koine Piemontèis. “Koine” comes from Ancient Greek and indeed means “common language.”

Due to its geographical position, this dialect is similar to

French, Occitan, and Lombard, since it has Latin and Gaelic-Italian origins like them, but it has traits of its own that differentiate it from those other languages as well as Celtic and Celtic-Ligurian influences. From 1981, it is officially a regional or minoritarian language according to the European Charter of the Regional or Minority Language





ges, and it is CENSIRE by the UNESCO in the Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger. As we were saying before, there are different variations of the Piemontéis that we can divide into three major categories: the Western Piemontéis, also called High-Piedmontese, that includes the variations spoken in Turin and Cuneo; the Eastern Piedmontese, or Low-Piedmontese, that includes the variations spoken in Asti, ROERINO, in the Langhe region, in the ALTO MONFERRATO AND BASSO MONFERRATO; and the Canavesano. High and Low Piedmontese do not have anything to do with its prestige, but they refer to their position in referment to the Po river.

Historically, there were 8 Piedmontese languages. During the Middle Age, the codification of the language was a little incomplete, but from the XII century on, it already has a coherent written form. This is very particular, because many other dialects in Italy will never take a written form, but will remain oral. We can see the first evi-

dence of a koine only around the 1700s, and the standardization of its writing in 1900s. The Piedmontese used to create this common language was the elevated Piemontéis spoken by the Savoy aristocracy in Turin, not the one spoken by the large population. This made this language fit for literature and in the 1800s soon became the “golden age” of this language. The Piemontéis literature of that period was flourishing with plays, novels, and even newspapers. During the 1900s, the Italian Dialectology imposed to the dialects a more “Italian” way of writing them out, but Piedmontese kept on using its traditional writing, remaining in this way closer to the Genoese and Milanese, even if this prevented it to have an actual universal way of writing. A very important person we need to remember when talking about the Piedmontese's history is Giuseppe Pacotto. Throughout his life he deeply researched the language, digging out centuries of writings and documents and created the modern spelling. His major improvement is pro-

bably the elimination of the [ö] and the replacement of it with [ò] for an open /o/. His spelling is used still today, and it was adopted by the Ca dë Studi Piemontèis – the Center of the Piedmontese studies – in Turin. But among all the neo-Latin languages Piedmontese is probably the language that got simplified the most: some past tenses vanished completely, leaving room for more simple tenses, and the articles fell in front of possessive pronouns. However, you cannot speak Piemontèis without the subjunctive! Then the diffusion of Italian did not help the preservation of this language at all, because Italian vocabulary deeply penetrated Piemontèis so that words like ancreus, fres, seure, barba, and magna – deep, brother, sister, uncle, aunt – were substituted with a Piedmontized version of the Italian words as profond, fratel, sorela, zio, zia (in Italian: profondo, fratello, sorella, zio, zia.)

Now that we know a little history on this regional language let's take a look at some of its major features. First of all there are barely any doubles. Yes, you heard me right, no doubles to confuse your comprehension. You can use the prosthetic ë as you wish as in words like ëscritor, writer, and ëstèile, stars. Like the French es-que, you can find an enclitical interrogative particle



REGIONE  
PIEMONTE



veus-to deje, and, again like in French, to indicate the continuity of the action they use an expression: ‘n camin che. While unlike Italian, there is a negative imperative, and the personal pronoun is often doubled. Then there are untranslatable vocabs, those that make each dialect unique and extremely useful, like baleng or balengu, that is probably one of the most known and used expression of this regional language and a very simplified translation of it will be something like “silly.”



But for historical regions, as we said, there are a lot of similarities with French and Lombard. The similarities with French are recognizable in words like alman (Piemontèis) and allemad (French) which is tedesco in Italian and means German; or regret (Piemontèis) and regret (French) which is dispiacere in Italian and, well, can you guess in English? Yes, it means regret in English. But also the famous cadrega in Lombard which means sedia in Italian – chair in English – is also cadrega in Piemontèis and arm, braccio in Italian, is brass in Piemontèis and brasch in Lombard. It seems like it is a language that sort of mediates between Italian, French, and Lombard. Well, nothing weird if we look at the history. But did you know that Piemontèis is spoken in Argentina as well? Argentina? Yes! Due to a massive immigration from the Piedmont region to Argentina in the late 1800s and early 1900s – and Pope Francis is the result of it tracing back his origins to this Italian region – people kept speaking that language more than Italian as a way to communicate within their community and thus preserved it. It is a sort of historical memory from Piedmont. It is still spoken today, and still has a certain importance, in Buenos Aires, La Pampa, Entre Rios, soprattutto Santa Fe, and Cordoma!

But if you want to know more, the first grammar book entirely in Piemontèis was printed as early as the XVII and today you can even find a Piemontèis-Italian-English grammar book! And other online resources like the [gioventurapiemonteisa](#) and the [piemunteis website](#) where you can go and learn more about this language and vocabulary.

Well, it looks like this simple dialect is actually an international language!



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*/by Jennifer Gentile Martin for [www.vinotravelsitaly.com](http://www.vinotravelsitaly.com)*

# Italian wine Verdicchio of the Marche with Tenuta di Tavignano



This month our Italian Food, Wine & Travel group is exploring verdicchio from all over Italy. One of the areas I am most familiar with when it comes to verdicchio is the region of Le Marche, which is located in central Italy. Le Marche has a long coastline along the Adriatic and touches 5 other regions to its west including Emilia Romagna to the north, Tuscany, Umbria and Lazio to the west and Abruzzo to the south.

When considering verdicchio from Le Marche wine region there are 2 main wines to consider. Those from Castelli di Jesi and Verdicchio di Matelica. I have previously wrote [a comparison of the two verdicchio](#) some time back that you can read more about. You'll also find this grape in the wines of the Veneto, specifically those of Soave where its known as trebbiano di soave. There it is used as a blending grape with garganega lending it's high acidity characteristic.





**Tenuta di Tavignano** is located in the town of Cingoli in the Ancona province. Set up on a south-eastern sloping hill overlooking the Jesi valley the winery is surrounded by mountains including the Appenines and Mount San Vicino. You'll find the vineyards of Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi located on the northern side of the Misa river. The Jesi were an ancient tribe that resided on the castelli, or castles, situated on top of the hillsides as Tenuta di Tavignano is.



The history of the winery goes back to the 70's when it was purchased by Stefano Aymerich and his wife Beatrice Lucangeli, a descendant of nobility in the Marche region. They didn't begin to start thoughts of making wine until the 90's when they revamped the estate and planted grape varieties. Their goal was to become a producer of top quality verdicchio. Today the winery is managed by Stefano's niece, Ondine de la Feld on 30 hectares of vineyards. The winery since 2015 has also been working towards being organic.

All their grapes are hand harvested and whites are softly pressed at low fermentation temperatures. I had a bottle of their 2014 Tenuta di Tavignano Villa Torre Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi DOC Classico Superiore that I opened this week. I wish I had time to prepare something with it, but it was a very enjoyable wine all on its own. I know everyone is all about wine pairings, but I thoroughly enjoy having wine solo before any pairings are involved anyways.

### **2014 Tenuta di Tavignano Villa Torre Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi DOC Classico Superiore**

**Color:** brilliantly crystal, straw color with a tinge of green, almost clear.

**Nose:** Grassy, citrus, grapefruit.

**Palette:** A crisp, dry white wine with a nice balance of fruit, lemon citrus backed with solid acidity, good sapidity and minerals.

ABV 13% SRP \$11

**Pairing:** Due to its proximity to the sea I can definitely see this wine pairing well with seafood dishes.

*/by Nicole Paronzini*

# Italian Lifestyle and Fashion Brunetta Mateldi Moretti, a forgotten story



With Summer vacation upon us and more time to relax, hopefully on a warm beach or on green grass or simply a comfortable couch, people often look for stress-free, interesting readings to keep them entertained during their downtime.

This year, one of the readings for the audience interested in Italian fashion and history, should be the new book about Brunetta Mateldi by Paola Biribanti, published by Carocci titled *L'ironia é di moda*. Brunetta Mateldi Moretti, artista eclettica dell'eleganza.

The famous remark by Coco Chanel that "Fashion changes, style endures" can be fittingly applied to the vibrant art of Brunetta Mateldi Moretti and its timeless, classy style.

Defining her as an "illustrator for fashion magazines" would be extremely reductive because she is so much more than that. Brunetta was a fashion reporter, a designer and painter, but more than anything a curious observer of 'the others'. She was an artist with a piece of paper and a pencil used to express her fine but sharp sense of humor.



For example, one of her first drawings represented a group of chickens wearing purses and hats: the mirroring image of the Piedmontese ladies on an afternoon stroll. She used to say, about her own work, that it was a way “to take possession of other people’s life, to drink the eyes, the noses, the mouth, the arms, the feet and everything else of beautiful, ugly, good or bad people” («per sviscerare, impadronirsi di altre vite, per bersi gli occhi, i nasi, le bocche, le braccia, i piedi e tutto il resto delle persone belle, brutte, buone o cattive»). (Paolino, 1989).

This book by Paola Biribanti, is the result of devoted and accurate research, pays therefore the proper tribute to whom Gianfranco Franchi calls “the quintessence of Italian fashion”, an important figure of Italian past society, that nowadays is – sadly- almost completely forgotten. Brunetta can be considered one of the key reads to comprehend Italian society for over fifty years (from the 1920s until the social changes of the 1970s), with her ability to picture and analyze trends and obsessions of the time.

Born in 1904 and died 1989 (though her closest friends were not sure about her exact date of birth), Bruna - known as Brunetta - Mateldi Moretti worked mostly for fashion magazines and advertising agencies.

After studying ballet and art between Bologna and Turin, she met the artist, actor and demimondaine personality of the time, Filiberto Mateldi, whom she goes on to marry in 1930. From the end of the roaring ‘20s, Brunetta works for different Italian magazines, starting with Gazzetta del Popolo e La Stampa in Turin.

After the couple moved to Milan, she became familiar with the fashion world and starts to illustrate Paul Poiret’s delicate and innovative models. In 1929 the young illustrator makes her debut for



Lidel, a fashion magazine for the Italian feminine élite of the time. From that moment on, Brunetta starts to collaborate with many other important magazines, such as La Lettura (monthly insert of Il Corriere della Sera) in 1931 and Il Corriere dei Piccoli in 1939. In 1936 she illustrates advertisements for famous brands like Olivetti and Campari. Valentino Bompiani wants her to draw the figures for the book collection I libri d’acciaio. After her husband’s death in 1942 and the end of WWII, she continues to work for Il Corriere della Sera, also creating iconic advertisement posters and manifestos for important brands and for the Milanese departmental store La Rinascente.

Her drawings, colorful, dynamic and ironic, with attention to detail, revealed an eclectic style and a recognizable artistic trait. She used to say about herself, that reading many books, visiting museums and observing the surroundings, helped her to better understand fashion. She had what today

we can call a “critical eye” for the reality she was immersed in.

Along with her professional collaborations, Brunetta was a very passionate painter, and she exhibited her works in a few personal art shows: in Milan in 1956, and again in 1969, later in Rome in 1975, again in Milan in 1977, 1980 for Einaudi, and 1981. In 1957, the only Italian illustrator of that time, she was asked to draw for New York magazine Harper’s Bazaar, personally invited by director Diana Vreeland who earlier in 1932 asked her to work for Vogue (but she refused due to her husband’s illness).

For the popular Italian newspaper Espresso, Brunetta works with Camilla Caderna on the weekly column *Il lato debole*, where, according to Nodolini, her drawings mirrored “moods and trends, ties, witty remarks, costumes and neurosis of the time” (“*mode e modi, tic, frizzi, usi e costumi, nevrosi del momento*”) (Nodolini et al., 1981, p.29).

Her sharp, ironic and sometimes grotesque line, mixed with black and white or harmonious colors is the way she chooses to portray Italian women for over five decades: from the femme fatale of the 20s, to the laud parvenu of the 70s, throughout the young girls of the 60s with their short skirts and high hopes. Brunetta needed only one small detail to tell their story, along with the story of a country fixated one moment at a time, detailing a grimace, a raising eyebrow, a sad eye, a bent head and so on and so forth. She always presented to the most popular fashion shows: for her, fashion, which she defines “usefulness of useless things” (“*l’utilità delle cose inutili*”), is only another way to illustrate Italian society, as a whole.

Her friend and coworker Caderna told *La Repubblica* that if Brunetta was American, she would



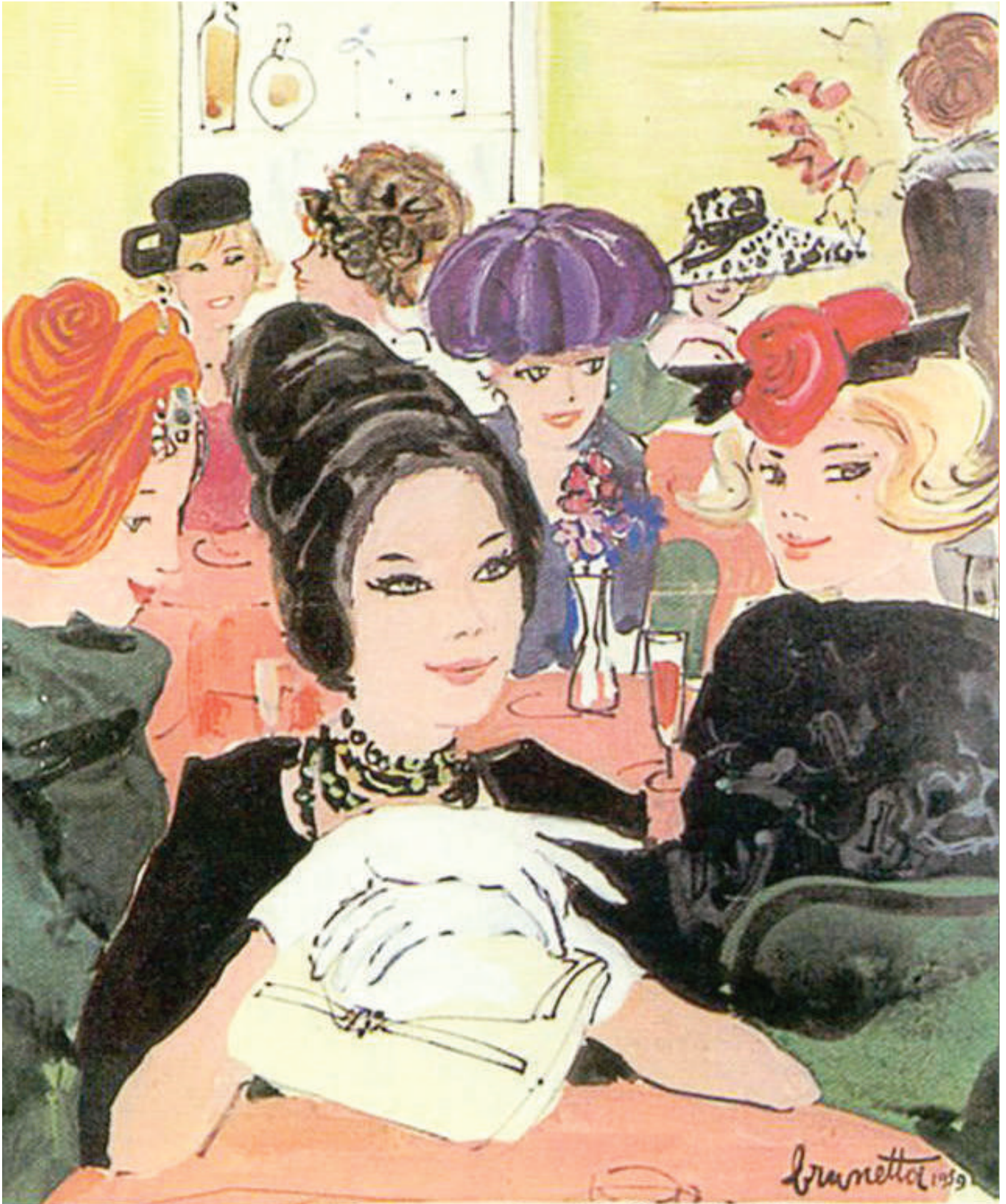
have been very famous and rich, because she was a genius, even though her line was probably too ironic for her times. Her strength was the ability to portrait female figures, ironizing them with elegance and glamour, while they were presenting themselves in front of her attentive eye. Petite in size and not very gracious, alone with her cats that she portrayed in many paintings, Brunetta was admired for the ease of her talent during the fashion shows, where she drew the mannequins, the models and the audience with the attention to detail and the irony which enabled her to frame significant moments of Italian social traditions.

This monography by Paola Birbanti is enjoyable and brilliant, and has the credit of rediscovering such a fascinating and powerful Italian female figure. The Umbrian writer was able to tell a new-old story about an eclectic and energetic artist



and woman, mixing together Brunetta's familiar and personal history, her artistic and professional, long and multifaceted career until the last part of her life and her unfortunate fall in social

and historical oblivion. There is no better way to pay Brunetta Mateldi Moretti a tribute than to read her story along with the story of Italian social and historical costumes.



# We the Italians



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