

We the Italians

April 2023
N.162

interviews with



Tom Damigella
page 25



**Michael Wright and
Alana Sacriponte**
page 75



N.162, April 2023 • Index



Editorial:

What's up with WTI #162

by Umberto Mucci • page 7

Italian land and nature: **The Lagoon of Orbetello**

by italia.it • page 11



Italian cuisine:

Seasonal Italian Fruit Torte

by Amy Riolo • page 14

Italian sport: **Piero D'Inzeo, the horse wisperer**

by Federico Pasquali • page 18



Italian books:

The Leopard

by Sabrina Penati • page 21



Interview: Tom Damigella

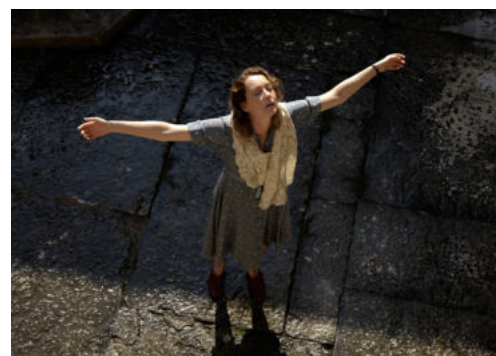
Let's meet Tom Damigella in the North End, the Little Italy of Boston, MA

by Umberto Mucci • page 25

Italian entertainment:

Italy & the “drama” Saints. How the Holy Spirit tells their story in a journey through the Italian TV fiction. Part 2 of 2

by Elena Palazzi • page 37



Italian lifestyle and fashion:

The Italian Gentleman's Wardrobe. A guide by Sartoria Carfora. Part 2, Summer

by Alessandro Di Lullo • page 42

Italian little Italies:

Sambuca di Sicilia. The fortress of Al-Zabut

by I borghi più belli d'Italia • page 48



Italian cinema:

Giancarlo Giannini

by Minerva Pictures • page 54



KEFA:

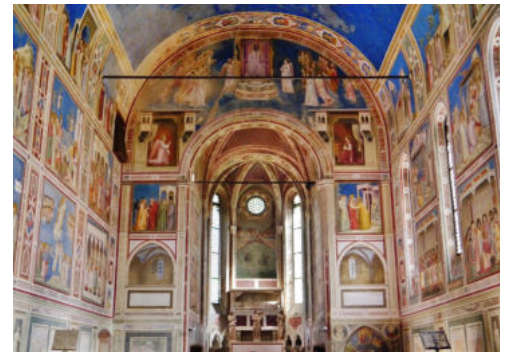
KEFA, an Italian story. A watch is not worn, IT IS OWNED

by Umberto Mucci • pag 59

Italian culture and history:

The Scrovegni Chapel in Padua

by italia.it • page 65



An Italian American in Rome:

Gigi Betti, a girl from California, pursuing her dream in Rome

by Rob Mariottini • page 68

Italian design:

The Situation of Italian Design Today

by Alberto Improda • page 72





Interview: Michael Wright and Alana Sacriponte

Telling Italian and American kids today about the sacrifice of American soldiers of yesteryear to liberate our country: Be the Difference-Never Again

by Umberto Mucci • page 75

Italian flavors:

Mortadella Bologna

by Consorzio Mortadella Bologna with MASAF • page 90



Italian good news:

Airbnb, an important support for the economy of small Italian villages

by Millionaire • page 94

Italian handcrafts:

Footwear of Riviera del Brenta

by Camera di Commercio di Venezia with Unioncamere • page 97



Italian wine

One of Campania's Greatest White Grapes with Aia dei Colombi Falanghina del Sannio

by Jennifer Gentile Martin
for www.vinotravelsitaly.com • page 103



Italian gardens and parks

The Botanical Garden of Collemaggio, L'Aquila

by Italian Botanical Heritage • page 107



We the Italians is a media company to promote Italy in the US and represent the Italian Americans in Italy. We have a website, a video and audio podcast, a newsletter, daily news, an Italian American websites archive and accounts in the main social media. This is our magazine.

Editorial staff: Umberto Mucci, Alessandra Bitetti, Giulia Casati, Jennifer Gentile Martin (for vinotravelsitaly.com), Cecilia Goletti, Alberto Improda, Rob Mariottini, Elena Palazzi, Federico Pasquali, Sabrina Penati, Amy Riolo, Sandra Tornberg, Giovanni Vagnone. Plus, articles written by: www.italia.it, MIPAAF, UNIONCAMERE, I Borghi Più Belli d'Italia, Italian Botanical Heritage, Millionaire, Movieitaly... and many more.



WE THE ITALIANS GALA DINNER

12 GIUGNO 2023 | CIRCOLO DEL MINISTERO DEGLI ESTERI | ROMA



Editorial

What's up with WTI #162

by Umberto Mucci

Dear friends,

Spring has come and We the Italians is off again to New York, where we will attend the NIAF Gala and make some important and interesting meetings.

And speaking of galas, we are

working hard to organize our Gala dinner again this year here in Rome. It will be held again at the prestigious Club of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs on June 12, and we will have the NIAF board as guests of honor. [At this link](#) you can find videos and photos of last year's gala,



same location. Everybody's welcome!

Our Gala will be attended by personalities from the world of institutions, politics, industry, managers and professionals. Also with us will be the system of the American presence in Italy that represents the United States in culture, academia, business, associations and from the institutional point of view. This is the only moment of celebration in Italy of the Italian American community and the most important event here in Rome to witness the friendship between Italy and the United States.

A few days ago I had the pleasure and honor of giving a lecture at the Centro Studi Americani here in Rome as part of the "Alla Scoperta dell'America" project. I was happy to

tell more than 100 Italian high school seniors about the successes and hard work of Italian Americans over the decades from the years of mass emigration to present day. And I explained the fact that Christopher Columbus is under attack, and especially why these attacks are wrong, unjust and unwarranted. It is fundamental and reason for being proud, for me and for all of us at We the Italians, to continue to represent here in Italy how important the Italian American community is.

For the past few months our member Edoardo Colombo has been working to ensure our help in the celebrations of a very important man, but mainly unknown to almost everyone in the United States: Alessandro Geraldini. We are pleased to announce that we

have accepted the invitation to participate as a sponsoring institution in the forming National Committee for the Celebrations of the 500th Anniversary of the Death of Msgr. Alessandro Geraldini, the first Resident Bishop of Santo Domingo, active in the Court of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic and known there for his support of Christopher Columbus. Without him Columbus' first voyage would hardly have been financed by Spain. The celebrations will be held throughout the year 2024, which is when the 500th anniversary of Msgr.

Geraldini's death falls. Of course, we will keep you updated on these events.



Alberto Improda

Last but not least, our family continues to grow. Today we welcome in our team a friend, who will accompany us by taking care of the column in the magazine dedicated to Italian





design: Alberto Improda. Alberto is Managing Partner of Studio Legale Improda, President of Fondazione Città Italia, President of Centro Studi Cross Route Impresa, Vice President of Cultura Italiae, lawyer, professor and writer. He is also Lecturer at ISIA University Institute, Italy's oldest university on Design.

Once again let me remind you that **the new yearbook of We the Italians is available**, with the 23 interviews (in Italian and English) published during 2022. You can find a preview

and **buy a copy here**. Also, please use **our virtual store to buy gifts and gadgets**, where you can find more than 20 products in different colors: t-shirts, tank tops, hoodies, onesies, mugs, notebooks, pillows, totes, tapestries, pins, laptop and smartphone cases, magnets, stickers, masks. Buy We the Italians!

It's all for now. Please stay safe and take care, and enjoy our magazine and our contents on **our website**. The future's so bright, we gotta wear shades. A big Italian hug from Rome!





Italian land and nature

The Lagoon of Orbetello

by italia.it

The Lagoon of Orbetello, in Tuscany, is a natural paradise that draws numerous travelers in the know all year long.

In the lower Maremma, it is protected by the World Environment Fund since 1971, allowing for its ecosystem – comprising many species of migratory birds – to

thrive. This splendid zone, overlooked by the 2,083-ft. Monte Argentario, is covered by fragrant Mediterranean maquis. Three slight and sandy stretches of land wrap around Orbetello's lagoon, connecting the town itself to the Argentario Promontory, making it unrivaled as a refuge of avifauna and charming coastal oasis.



In Town

The community of Orbetello fronts the lagoon, jutting out at its center. Populated by the Etruscans in Antiquity (visible in remnants of defense wall), Orbetello was also a fortified port under the State of Presidi or Garrisons, governed by Spain in the 1500s. Indeed, near the local salt mines (Saline) we can see an age-old Spanish fortress, the Fort of Saline, along with another structure from the same epoch, known as the Casale Spagnolo (or Spanish Country House).

In Orbetello's Historic Center resides the Concattedrale (Co-Cathedral) di Santa Maria Assunta, built c. 1300 on the ruins of a Roman temple from the 5th Century C.E. This Gothic Duomo hosts several important works on the

inside, including an important High Medieval Antependium in marble relief.

Then, the Umberto I Caserma or barracks houses an ancient pediment or from nearby Talamone; a vestige terra-cotta from the Etruscan-Hellenistic era, it dates back to 150 B.C.E., and it narrates the myth of Oedipus.

Meanwhile, the 16th and 17th Centuries prevail in the structures of Orbetello: think towers, citadels and castles, Spanish fortifications like the former Polveriera Guzman or ammunitions silo, now hosting the Municipal Archaeological Museum.

Along the Coast

Orbetello's lagoon is bordered by two strips of land in the sea, known as the Tomboli: two beaches, they are





known as the Tombolo della Feniglia and Tombolo della Giannella.

Laguna di Orbetello Nature Reserve

Almost four miles long, Feniglia lies between the hills of Ansedonia to the east and Monte Argentario to the west. Giannella expands over a similar distance, but lies between Argentario and the Albegna River delta. Characterized by long beaches, sandy dunes, coastal pines and Mediterranean shrub, it is ideal as a sea tourism destination.

Visitors in the area without a doubt should visit the Riserva naturale di Orbetello. The salty coastal lagoon boasts tiny islands of sand and is partly fed fresh water by the surrounding canals. Distinguished by an enormous botanical variety and by its enchanting butterfly garden, this reserve is ideal for watching its 200 bird species.

For those that prefer the intrigue of rocky shores, rather, the coasts along both Talamone and Ansedonia are gorgeous and pose just the right amount of “treachery” for the more adventurous.





Italian cuisine

Seasonal Italian Fruit Torte

by Amy Riolo

Springtime calls for lighter desserts that take advantage of seasonal bounty. This traditional Italian cake is a favorite of my family, and I love to make it with whatever fresh fruit I have on hand. Light and airy, it's a

great way to start the day sweetly as Italians do or to end a meal with authentic Italian flair. All across the northern Mediterranean region, there is a culture of combining sweets with fresh fruit.



This cake is perfect to bring to a potluck or give as a hostess gift. Since it can be frozen for up to a month, I usually make two at a time, one for now, and one to give away whenever the occasion calls. If you're not planning on finishing it the same day, make sure to refrigerate it so that it won't spoil. This recipe is from my [Quick and Easy Mediterranean Recipes](#) cookbook.

Ingredients

- 7 tablespoons (98 g) unsalted butter, at room temperature, divided
- 1/3 cup, plus 1 tablespoon (80 g) sugar
- 2 large eggs, separated
- 1 cup (125 g) unbleached, all-purpose flour or almond flour, plus extra for pan
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) heavy cream
- 2 teaspoons anise or almond extract
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 ripe plums, apricots, or nectarines, peeled, pitted, and sliced OR 1 cup (145 g) blueberries
- Confectioner's sugar for dusting

Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

Butter a 9-inch (23 cm) tart pan with a removable bottom. Add a round of parchment, butter the parchment, then flour it.

Place 6 tablespoons (84 g) of butter and 1/3 cup (67 g) sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat together on low speed until smooth and fluffy. Add the egg yolks and beat well until combined.

In a small bowl, stir together the flour and the baking powder. In another small bowl, stir together the cream, 1/4 cup (60 ml) water, anise or almond extract, and vanilla extract. Stir the mixtures into the butter mixture by alternating the flour mixture with the cream mixture—adding one third of each at a time until they are used up.

In a clean bowl fitted to an electric mixer using a whisk attachment, whip the egg whites until stiff peaks form. If the eggs are not stiff enough, the cake will not rise properly.

Using a rubber spatula, gently fold the beaten egg whites into the batter to eliminate all of the white and break up any lumps. Then stir once in the opposite direction to make sure that all white has been incorporated.



Pour the batter into the prepared tart pan and level the surface. Arrange the plums or other fruit in a circle pattern on top of the batter. Sprinkle the remaining tablespoon (13 g) of sugar on top of the fruit.

Bake until a toothpick inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean and cake begins to pull away from the sides of the pan, 35 to 40 minutes.

Transfer to a cooling rack. Allow cake to cool for at least 30 minutes.

Invert onto a cooling rack and remove sides of pan, then bottom and parchment paper. Turn over to cool completely.

Invert the cake onto another plate and then back over onto a serving platter. Dust with confectioners' sugar. Serve at room temperature.

Yield: 8 servings

Quick and Easy

MEDITERRANEAN Recipes



Amy Riolo

Delicious Recipes from the World's Healthiest Diet



Italian sport

Piero D'Inzeo, the horse wisperer

by Federico Pasquali

One hundred years ago, a sports legend was born in Rome. He still holds a number of records that are impossible to equal, together with his brother.

It was March 4, 1923, and in a hospital in Italy's capital city, Piero D'Inzeo, the greatest horseman in Italian history, was

born along with his younger brother Raimondo, who was born two years after him in Poggio Mirteto, a small town in the province of Rieti.

Piero began riding horses almost before he began to walk, because his father Carlo Costante D'Inzeo, a career military

Piero and Raimondo



man, had been an Italian champion and founder of the Società Ippica Romana, a cavalry school that became famous for the many champions who trained there over the years.

He began at a very early age to learn the art of show jumping, and when he came of age he became an officer in the Italian Army, perfecting his technique more and more until he became one of the best in the world, winning dozens of competitions in the international competitions in which he participated, although his younger brother often managed to beat him: but when they competed together in the Italian team, the two were truly invincible.

Piero, became famous not only for his perfect technique, but also for his extraordinary ability to calculate the

horse's every move and then guide it to perfection on every course where he competed.

In 1948, in London, at the age of twenty-five, he began his interminable adventure at the Olympic Games: he participated in eight editions, a feat achieved only by seventeen other athletes in the 100-year history of the event conceived by French Baron Pierre de Coubertin in 1896. His brother Raimondo also participated in the same number of editions of the Olympic Games, making them the only brothers in history to have competed together in such a large number of editions.

In his long Olympic career, Piero D'Inzeo won six medals, a haul that few riders in history have ever won, although he never managed to win a gold. After the first two editions,

in 1948 and 1952, where he won nothing, in 1956 in Melbourne, Australia, he won the individual bronze medal and the team silver medal in show jumping. And four years later, at the Olympic Games in Rome, he won silver and bronze again, with his brother Raimondo winning gold just ahead of him in the individual event, writing a unique page of history, because never before had two brothers finished first and second in an Olympic competition.

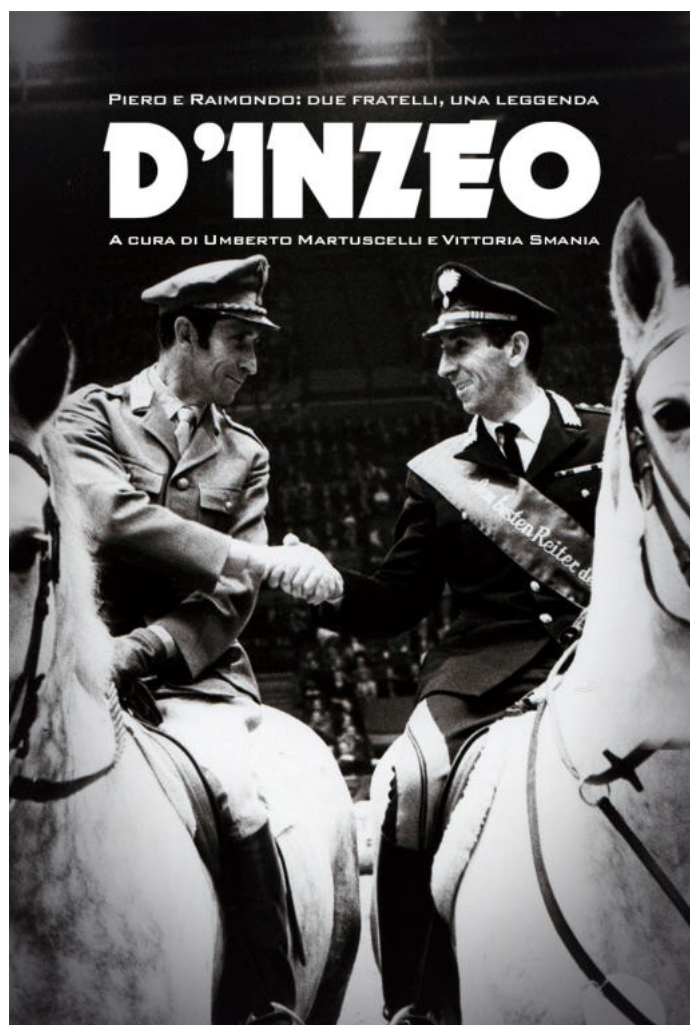


They were so strong that the world press after that race called them “the invincible brothers.” Piero won two more Olympic bronze medals, one in Mexico City in 1968 and the other in Munich in 1972. His last Olympic competition was in Montreal in 1976, when he had turned fifty-three!

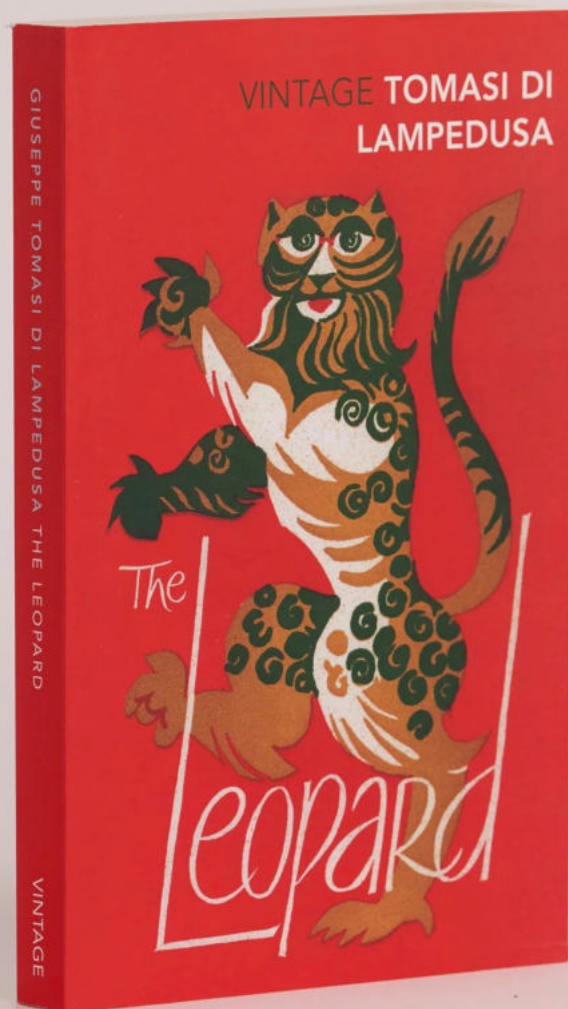
In the history of the sport, very few

athletes have been able to compete at such high levels at the age of Piero, who is a true legend of the sport in Italy, not least because he is the only rider to have won the Concorso Ippico Internazionale di Piazza di Siena, one of the most prestigious show jumping trophies in the world that has been held in Rome since 1922, seven times.

Another record that probably no one will be able to take away from Piero D'Inzeo who, nine years ago, at the age of ninety-one, passed away in Rome, the city where he was born and where he learned to whisper to horses.



Piero and Raimondo



Italian books

The Leopard

by Sabrina Penati

The Leopard – Il Gattopardo, in Italian – is a book published in 1958 and written by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa (1896-1957). The author didn't live to see his work printed and made public as it came out a year after his death and in its full edition in 1969. The book gained immediate success and was awarded the Strega prize in 1959.

Against the backdrop of the political unrests in the 1860s, the author tells a story of a decadent and perishing aristocracy whose existence is compromised by revolution and democracy.

Tomasi was born in Palermo from an aristocratic family, his father was the Prince of Lampedusa and Duke of Palma di Montechiaro, he

Tomasi di Lampedusa



was home-schooled by his mother and grandmother, who read him the novels of Emilio Salgari, and attended Shakespeare's plays in the theater of their house.

Tomasi served as an artillery during World War I, during which he was captured and imprisoned in Hungary, but later escaped and came back to Italy on foot. He first wanted to pursue a diplomatic career but, after a nervous breakdown, decided instead to focus on intellectual activities by writing, reading in different languages and discussing literature.

He started writing his most famous

work in 1955, which was rejected by publishers while the author was still alive.

The story is set in Sicily at the end of the Bourbon domination and centers around a very rich and aristocratic Sicilian family, in particular the main character who is the Prince Fabrizio Salina. The author depicts a lively and colorful picture of the Italian island, permeated by a fast and modern spirit, fully aware of the problems of that time and what was happening on the historical and political scene.

The novel is in fact a psychological study of its protagonist, Don Fabri-

zio – called the Leopard because of his family crest – who lives through significant changes as he observes how power dynamics in Society changed going from the old Bourbon aristocracy to the new Kingdom of Italy and holding on to the unscrupulous and liberal bourgeoisie during the 1860s.

“While adhering to the Don’s conservative viewpoint, the novel unfolds in a series of compelling dramatic scenes, matched by richness of literary style. The character of Don Fabrizio is one of the most striking in 20th-century Italian literature, and the book, despite the ideological controversies it stimulated, is widely recognized as a masterpiece”.

The Leopard is considered as one of the greatest literary piece of the 20th century in Italian literature and a classic of European literature; an immortal masterpiece which sold more than 3.2 million copies and was translated into more than 37 languages.

The story develops in the 19th century during the Risorgimento, beginning when Giuseppe Garibaldi, alongside his thousand volunteers, arrives in Sicily and puts an end to the presence of the Bourbons defining the passage from feudalism to modernity.

The book does not only reflect what was happening in the country and within society, but it also includes daily activities



from recitals of the Rosary, evening reading around the fire to dinners and walk and hunting expeditions in the countryside. As previously mentioned, the protagonist is Don Fabrizio Corbera, Prince of Salina, and a wealthy landowner with a strong passion for astronomy. His favorite nephew, Tancredi Falconeri, is an ambitious and frivolous character who supports Garibaldi's unification goal. Tancredi falls in love with Angelica Sedàra, the daughter of a member of the merchant class who aspires to gain power. The book therefore outlines clear examples of class struggles between the declining elite represented by the Corbera family and the climbing middle class portrayed by the unscrupulous Sedàra.

Eventually, Don Fabrizio understands that he must approve of his nephew's marriage with Angelica to make sure that Tancredi can pursue his ambition to become a diplomat. This would allow Tancredi to have the financial resources to succeed in the new regime and provide a title of nobility to Angelica and her parents.

Finally, the story ends in 1910 with the prince that had died, and his line has consequently ended.

The book was firstly rejected by notorious publishers such as Mondadori and Einaudi who deemed it reactionary and weak, not in line with the mainstream Italian literature of that time. Eventually, it was Feltrinelli that decided to publish it. The work is considered as a historical novel, which became bestseller in Italy and abroad; only in the first four months, 52 editions were printed.

After initial objections in the first years, the novel started to be appreciated for its writing style and modern narrative structure. The narration contains in fact stylistic shifts that echo Prince Salina's different points of view and Tomasi's perceptions of history.

What is more, the story became a movie in 1963 directed by Luchino Visconti.

"The Leopard is a family saga, a psychological novel, a meditation on death and on the loss of collective memory. It has been read as a lyrical and prophetic contemplation on the experience of modernity and on the risks that it involves, such as ambition, and loss of beauty and traditions".



Interview with Tom Damigella

Let's meet Tom Damigella in the North End, the Little Italy of Boston, MA

by Umberto Mucci

Boston and the State of Massachusetts have always been fundamental in American history but also in the narrative of Italian emigration and presence in the United States. Our guest today is one of the most im-

portant figures in the Italian American community in the Bay State, where he has also been our new Ambassador for a few weeks.

Tom Damigella well represents the



pride of Italian Americans who love to remember their Italian roots with passion. He will tell us about Boston's magnificent Little Italy, the North End, and the Italian American Alliance, of which he is Vice President. Thank you Tommy, welcome to We the Italians!

Tom, when I met you I immediately understood how much you are proud of your Italian heritage... please tell me about you and your family's Italian roots

In 1965 When I was a young man of 18 years old, I went to Sicily with my parents to my mother's place of birth. This was the first time she returned to Sicily since she left in 1925 at 7 years old. It was an emotional coming home experience that left indelible impression on me that made me even more aware of my Italian roots. Of course, growing up in a large extended family of relatives who were all Italian made it even more clear that I was Italian American who felt very grateful that our culture of family, food, and faith was part of my identity.

I also had watched my parents and others work very hard to create a successful life for their family which became our American dream that you can become whatever you wanted in America. This always gave me a sense of gratitude for what opportunities I had as well. I always loved talking with my Nana about

her growing up in Mineo, Sicily. I found it fascinating. In addition, my mom kept all the old family photos from 1900, which helped to tell her story as well. None of that story telling was lost on me and I cherished it. I also fell in love with Rita who also came from another wonderful Italian family, which of course reinforced that sense of who we were.

You played as professional soccer player for the Boston Astros... how was soccer in the US back in those days?

Yes, in College I played Varsity soccer as a Goalie, which was quite unusual back in 1966 for an American kid to play soccer. I played all the other sports and just found that I had the talent and physical skills to learn the goalie position well enough that I became good enough to become a back up Goalie for the Boston



Astros in year of 1972. It was mostly Brazilian players who were amazing. I also managed a semi pro team as well and had become even more embedded in my Italian culture because many of the other teams were Italian and they eventually became my friends and they embraced me because I was of Course Italian too.

The North End in Boston is one of the most important Little Italies of the United States. You are President of the North End Historical Society. What's special in this Little Italy?

Also in the 1970s I moved into the North End Italian neighborhood of Boston where my mother first immigrated to in 1925. Once again, I was purposely reaching back to my roots. These were the reasons why I for the rest of my life always embraced our Italian heritage, which eventually brought me back to Sicily in 2002 and since then have become reconnected to all my cousins. It has

added such a greater level of emotional feeling of truly being connected to my heritage, which is why today I am President of the North End Historical Society.

Even though I moved to the suburbs years ago, once you live as a North Ender, it stays with you and therefore, I always stayed connected to the North End and friends. What made the north End even more relevant to me and my family is when my dad at 86 years old decided to sell his house in the suburbs and we got him an apartment in the North End where he socially flourished by speaking his Italian and becoming a part of the neighborhood, which was better then any assisted living place he could be a resident. To this day they all recall him fondly.

Walking in the North End today and being among North Enders that you know just by walking down the street still gives it that feeling of a small





village in Sicily. When I have friends who visit, they enjoy my Boston tours because it is all very personal and genuine.

What really made the North End one of the most resilient Little Italy's was the construction of the Expressway in 1953. It actually cut it off from the



rest of the city and in a strange way it never got gentrified until the 1980's. Yet even today there are still original Italian Families living there as well as owners of businesses that keep the character of the old world alive. At one time in the 1920's there were

North End



40,000 Italians in the North End and today there are only 8.600 people of which % 15 are still Italian. There are 90 Italian restaurants and coffee shops, butcher, bakery, and Catholic churches all maintaining Italian culture that people love. The streets are narrow, alive, and vital especially when five Italian Religious feasts take place in the Summer months.

Yes, I know there are several Italian festivals in Boston's Little Italy every year. Are you particularly fond of one in particular?



St. Agrippina di Mineo feast

One of my favorite feasts is Saint Agrippina of Mineo, the patron saint of my grandparents. I always enjoy sharing it with family and friends. Another of my favorites is the Fisherman's Feast (Madonna del Soccorso) which have been celebrated for over 100 years in the Streets

of the North End. They are four-day long events and they are a time for friends and families to return for a reunion. Marching bands, food, and the Saint procession through the streets is a sight to behold.

Over the years, I have visited my



Fisherman's feast

families in Sicily and experienced their Festa as well, and they are so surprised to see that these customs are still alive in America.

Italian roots run very deep in Massachusetts. There are many communities that have dominant pockets of Italian Americans. In fact, there are 800,000 Italian Americans out of 7 million people in Massachusetts. We have the 3rd largest percentage of Italian population in USA. This is why we grew up very conscious of being Italian due to our visibility and constant influence in all facets of our communities.

I often like to quote my Dad. He could speak fluent Italian and dialect before he spoke English when he was born in 1915 in Chelsea, MA. He of course grew up in the

heart of the Italian enclaves and he often said he “Loved being Italian, but most of all he was a Proud American.” That kind of sums up exactly how I feel as well.

What is your favorite Italian place in the North End, and why?

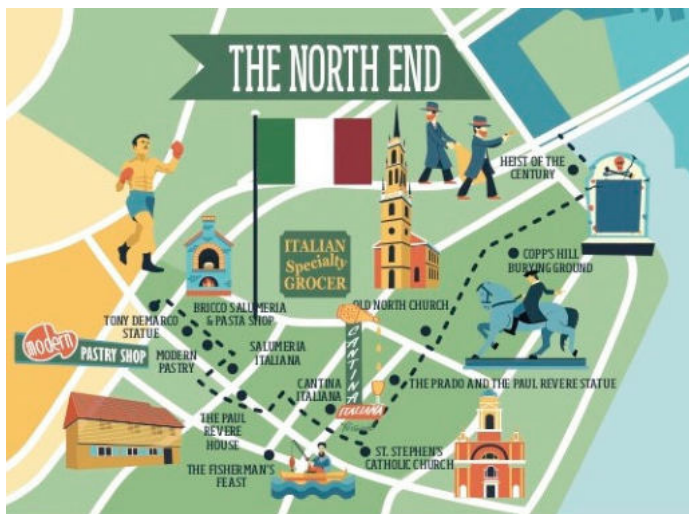
One of the reasons why the North End is such an Iconic Italian enclave is due to businesses like Polcari's Coffee. Bob Eustace has kept the store exactly like it was in 1932 when Mr. Polcari's opened it. He sells every kind of coffee beans and other imported products from Italy. It is like walking into a time machine that takes you also back to when everyone knew your name as you stepped into the many stores to shop.



Polcari's Coffee

One of my favorite North End activities is to just walk around the narrow streets and know that I am walking in the footsteps of my parents and grandparents when they first arrived in the early 1900's. Of course, I have many friends who own one of 90 restaurants in the North End that have become one of my favorite places to visit and hang out with friends and family. And the food? The best. The North End also has the only all Italian publication book store in the United States!

The North End is also part of what we call the Freedom Trail of Boston which takes people back to special landmarks of the pre-revolutionary times of America. The North End was actually the first settlement of Boston that goes back to 1630. What a combination of history that takes us through the immigration era of Iris, Jewish, and eventually Italians that flooded the streets in the 1800 and 1900's.



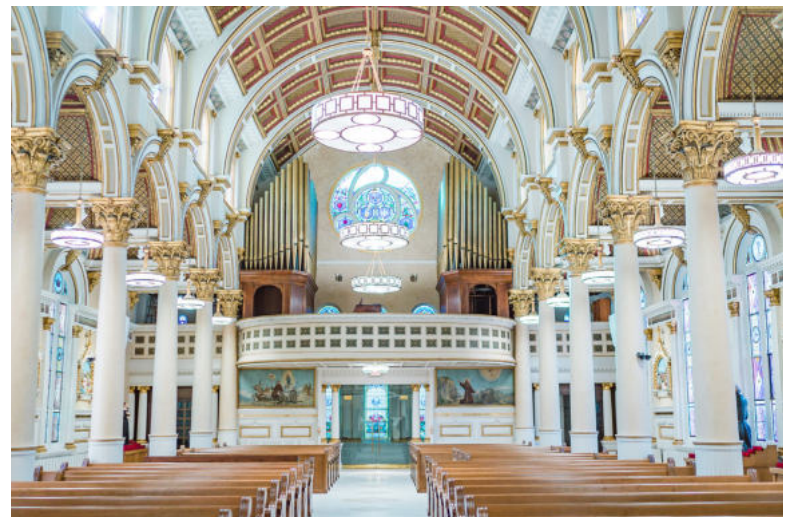
North End Freedom Trail

We have Paul Revere house right in the middle of the North Square, and the old North Church where the lanterns were hung to start the Famous Midnight ride of Paul Revere. The North End and Boston are the United States Cradle of Liberty!



Paul Revere's House

The first Italian church, St. Leonard's, was built in 1873 to meet the needs of the new immigrants. It is a beautiful church as is Sacred Heart where my great uncle was married in 1908.



St. Leonard's

Talking about the North End, I know that the restaurateurs of the Italian neighborhood are suing the city of Boston. This is another conflict, after what happened with Columbus: a fight you fought also as Vice President of the Italian American Alliance, right?



Ironically, this year those same restaurateurs are at odds with the city of Boston over a dispute over the possibility of having outdoor tables, an option that has been canceled only in the North End throughout Boston. The restaurateurs have filed a discrimination

lawsuit. There seems to be a political sense of anti Italianism when you put add this dinning issue to the replacement of Columbus Day in Boston with the Indigenous Day



and the removal of Columbus Statue in 2020.

The Columbus issue has been one of my roles with the Italian American Alliance to Save Columbus Day as a State Holiday. We stopped legislation last year from being passed and we helped many towns counter the action and stop town committees and boards from eliminating Columbus Day. All grassroots efforts won those fights.

The Italian American Alliance has Board members who support our culture with great programs and concerts and festivals. We also have become the most fervent activist group to save Columbus by educating those who have been indoctrinated with untruths and disinformation about Columbus to serve others political agenda regarding social justice policies and actions. They unfortunately have been using him as a scapegoat for historical events that he never participated.



Now I Am Vice President, but I became Chairman of the Strategic planning group after Frank Mazzaglia passed away. He was a heroic champion for the Admiral Columbus and I just picked up that torch. We now have over 7000 people on our member list that we keep informed and involved in our programs and political action efforts. Since I took that role, it lead me to becoming more involved with the



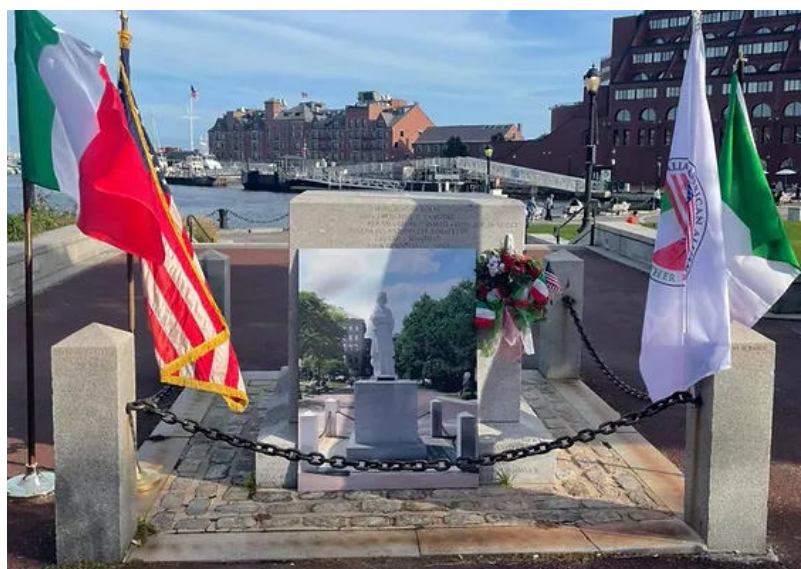
National organization called the Conference of Presidents of the Major Italian American Organizations lead by President Judge Basil Russo who has been leading the Columbus issue on a national level.

It is still our intention to get Columbus Day back on the books by still pressing the unfairness and its importance to our Community and many other Americans. In fact, in October we actually had a sit down with the Mayor Wu who made a positive gesture to us by declaring Columbus Day Italian Heritage Day in Boston. We still see that as a 1/2 of loaf and will do our best to bring Columbus Day back by continuing to hold Columbus Day Celebrations like we did in East Boston last October.

We are blessed with many active Italian Organization which are collaborating more and more together so we can create a greater synergy

of operation that at one time was somewhat lacking. We are creating a more unified One Voice that has been to quiet for to many decades. We to believe in diversity and inclusiveness and it seems that Italian Americans have been excluded as special ethnic group, which was unfortunate.

We have much hope for putting this unfortunate Columbus issue behind us so we can spend more time joyously celebrating our heritage and culture and share it also with others.



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Italian entertainment

Italy & the “drama” Saints. How the Holy Spirit tells their story in a journey through the Italian TV fiction. Part 2 of 2

by Elena Palazzi

Let's keep rolling in our journey through the lives of some “special” Christian people, some Italians who have responded 100% to The Call. As anticipated in the introduction to

Part one, for their work in the world, Christians always identify themselves and act as sons and daughters of God the Father, who generates them in spiritual life (through Baptism).

Consequently, their works (from charity to every kind of work) lead them to see the other person (the neighbor) as a child of God themselves; that's how they get to the Truth and the essence of what is Christianity (and holiness and serving God not as servants but as sons). A drama on Faith accomplishes its goal if it walks the audience to this reflection. Instead, when it leaves us tied to this worldly humanity, it lacks to tell who is the Baptized person, the Christian, and what a man is called to be, that man is made in the image and resemblance of God. So, only God can communicate to them the pure truth and reality of their being and life.

Chiara Lubich

"They may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us"

From the Gospel of John (17,21)

... (pt.2) Jesus prays like this in Gethsemane. Chiara takes it as a mission to build a "united" world, so the "Focolare" movement aims to spread the Gospel over and within all the fields of society (education, politics, science, knowledge, work etc.). This makes the point that holiness is not just for "consecrated" and religious people, but it's a call for anyone in their own specific state of life.

A scene: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yq5ZeztobGI>

Fr. Pietro Pappagallo

"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

From the Gospel of Matthew (10,28)

He houses people wanted during the



Insinna is Pietro Pappagallo

2nd world war; the Fascists shot him in the Ardeatine massacre of Rome. He could rebel against the arrest, but he follows in the footsteps of Christ, who let his killers bring him to the place of his death. Fr. Pappagallo chooses to remain in Him and imitates Him, understanding that as the way to love the Father 'till the end, along with brothers and sisters.

The scene of the capture and deportation tells the heart of all his love for Jesus and his people. Following the ones who go with him is the most important thing to do when approaching death. This gesture witnesses his consideration about the core of his mission: being a shepherd- with Christ, "the good Shepherd".

The trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEmg1zhOgI>

A scene: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSIXpuYKVkM>

Actor, Flavio Insinna (other remarkable interpretations: A. Fabrizi)

Fr. Lorenzo Milani

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created."

From the Letter of St. James apostle (1,17-18)

Although he's a controversial Catholic figure, the TV drama is compelling. We don't intend to sift through the criticalities of his life; you can easily browse and read these pieces of information, forming your idea of the matter. Here we wish to inject what's good from his life, and everything good links to the



Castellitto is Lorenzo Milani

Good and the Love God brings us. In Barbiana, a little mountainous village in Tuscany, fr. Milani established a school and educated young people (poor farmers). His way of educating&teaching opposes the “upper and middle-class” school (just a theoretical viewpoint on reality): you can see it in the book “Letter to a teacher”, written along with all the pupils of the School in Barbiana.

The trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7KyQ7_exOY

A scene: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-oJYzEPozY/>

Actor, Sergio Castellitto

St. Filippo Neri

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!”

Psalm 133,1

The verse above comes from a so-called “Psalm of ascension”; when St. Filippo prayed, he levitated. This phenomenon helps us understand that the vocation’s gist is not “serving the poor, youth and children” per se. In Rome, St. Filippo is the founder of the Oratory, and like Fr. Bosco afterwards, he sees Jesus as the alfa and the omega to everything, so he is not just pushed by a sense of social service: the core stays, and it’s meeting Jesus. This event has to happen every time at the level of one’s person first: St. Filippo lives long moments of prayer, such deep ones that made him ascend and levitate; the profound relationship with Jesus allows him to overcome physical laws. Only from there the service



to the neighbor and “the little ones of the Kingdom” is born, along with the desire to make people know Jesus as the alive person He is.

Sidenote: St. Filippo is also famous for the songs he invents for children to learn by singing and playing.

The trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-x4AIyQA8c>

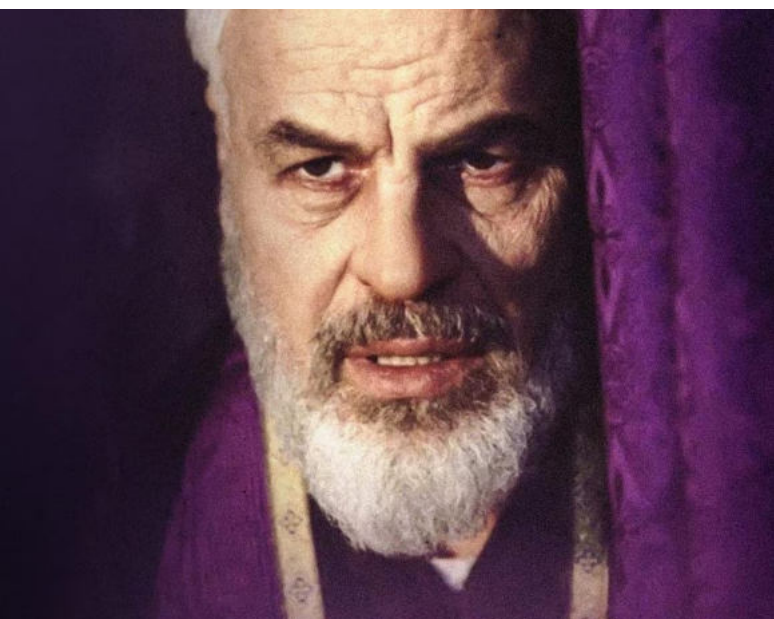
A scene: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq5QL-XrXFc>

Actor, Gigi Proietti (other remarkable interpretations: Johnny Dorelli)

St. Pio from Petrelcina

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

From the Letter of St. Paul to Galatians (2,20)



Placido is Padre Pio

The TV drama highlights a life full of spiritual and human richness and extraordinary episodes of Grace. Still, everything is rooted in a strict relationship with Christ. From the stigmata to the fight with Satan, Fr. Pio testimonies communion with Jesus, the reason for life herself. It's a relation that each of us is called to incarnate, according to each one's peculiar way and personality. St. Pio conveys that this status has to involve the whole existence, and thence, all the rest generates (as we've seen with other saints, too). Founding the Hospital (“The house of the relief of suffering”) derives from his charity work towards souls: St. Pio dedicates many daily hours to confessing people. Everything begins from Christ's charity: Fr. Pio takes his love for the souls from the communion of his loving heart towards Jesus, by the prayer always nourishing him and connecting him with the Father united to the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H19wIItoPtM&t=3s>

A scene: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H19wIItoPtM>

Actor, Michele Placido (other remarkable interpretations: S. Castellitto)

Here's a [link](#) to a list of some TV dramas related to the topic of this article.



Italian lifestyle and fashion

The Italian Gentleman's Wardrobe. A guide by Sartoria Carfora. Part 2, Summer

by Alessandro Di Lullo

After the spring solstice, the sun's rays in our hemisphere increase at an accelerating rate. This acceleration awakens the energy that was dormant during the long winter. In the streets, not only the green of the trees but also the gray of the

buildings no longer look the same. Everyone can, somehow, feel it.

Regarding summer, it is fascinating to notice the great change in attitude towards the heat. The classic style has fought it by lightning fabrics

3ply

and justifying less strict style rules. In today's age of impatience, however, summer represents the most obvious case of suspension or abrogation of formal conventions, as it is considered legitimate to wear any garment or behave in any way that combats the temperature. Nothing wrong with that of course, but a gentleman shall not surrender to the heat at the expense of his style and elegance.

Below is a practical guide that we hope readers will find helpful.

Casual context

Loose trousers (i.e. trousers that do not belong to a suit) to consider include nautical red canvas, chinos, at least one blue in linen, drill, and an ivory white in linen or hemp. For beautiful and relaxed days when you might want some color and a touch of flamboyant, nothing beats an outgoing boat-club blazer, with vertical stripes in fanciful contrasts. Much more wearable are blazers in shantung or Fresco 3ply or 2ply, with white or gold buttons. The tone of traditional blazers depends a lot on the buttons. If they are silver, they go well with both beige and gray, and in this case, tend towards informal. White ones require bright pants, so the jacket is more sporty and morning wear. Gold buttons give an air of escape, leisure time, and tend towards sporty with any combination. Among the sport jackets, keep



in mind the linen one with colonial details, such as bellows pockets, central vent, and martingale, or the simplest in white cotton. These are items that are worn more often than you might think, and with the pleasure of pleasing.

The white linen suit requires a double-breasted chest if pure white and a single if ivory. Hemp, on the other hand, is advisable in three pieces. Its dirty, matte, and irregular white, with the neckline of the vest, gives

an appearance between the dandy and the intellectual. Something fabulous, perhaps admittedly for a few.

At least a couple of shorts are essential for the beach or on a boat. The right length is that of Bermuda shorts, with a high waist and a good width at the bottom. The most versatile colors are crisp white to khaki to military green. The best material is drill, a top interpreter of martial fashions, but canvas also does an

excellent job.

Informal context

Recommended trousers are those in shades of gray, made of fine combed cotton or canvas, to be worn with either a blazer or just a shirt. As for the blazers, tropical plaid or plain hopsack ones are suitable choices. Seersucker suits or blazers are also an option. Single or double-breasted blazers in twisted three-ply ten-ounce fabric, respectively with silver or gold buttons, are stylish choices.

For travel, tropical suits in blue, gray, or dark brown with micro patterns are recommended. For a lighter and brighter look, a mohair suit in brown or bold blue is a good option. Linen suits in sand or tobacco colors, or even sky blue, are also a popular choice. Blue linen can be worn in many formal occasions and is a good investment, as it lasts long and becomes even more beautiful and fresher after a few years. Finally, white linen reminds of an aristocratic magnificence, being also relatively easy to wear.

Formal context

Summer is notoriously a wedding season. Young people, especially at less formal ceremonies in the evening or in pleasant places, look fabulous in blue, and they can show



off single or double-breasted mohair or fine combed suits in this solid color. For older individuals, gray is more suitable.

For work occasions, pinstriped suits in the same materials or fine combed suits with a gray or blue background, even with stripes in a different color than white, are appropriate. For the evening, the classic choice is a dark blue solid suit, perhaps enlivened by subtle motifs or barely visible stripes in the weave. However, a black suit in high-quality fine combed material is also an admired piece. Mohair suits work well, while linen and other cellulose fibers are better reserved for cocktail hour. A 2ply is a smart choice, as it works very well both at the office and at the dining table, if practicality is of essence. For black-tie events, a midnight blue or black mohair tuxedo is suitable.

Those with an international flair will appreciate a warm-weather white dinner jacket, which even if not much common anymore, looks more fantastic than ever. Go for white baratheia or other ivory granular wool jackets with silk lapels or shantung jackets with unlined shawl collars. Fans of evening jackets can also indulge in the burma jacket, which first appeared in the 1930s. It is a beige colonial dinner jacket with lapels in the same fabric, in gabardine or sometimes in silk.

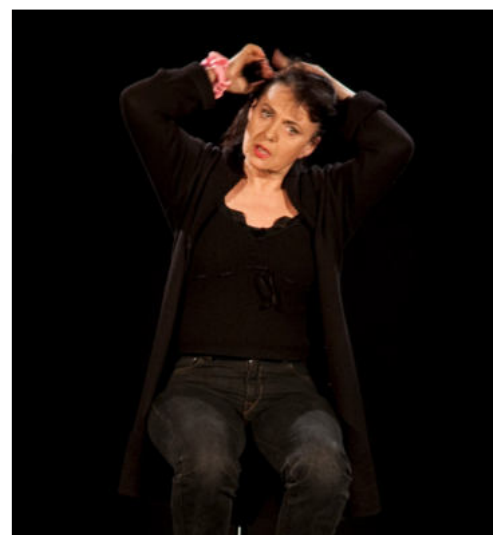


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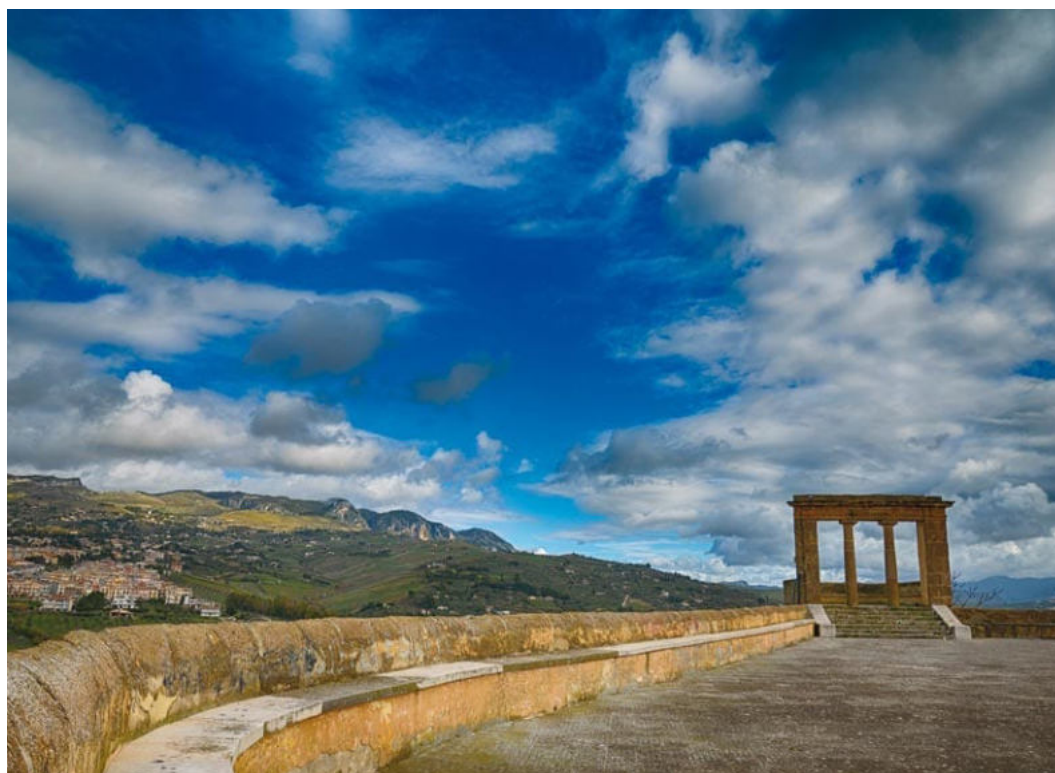
Italian little Italies

Sambuca di Sicilia. The fortress of Al-Zabut

by I borghi più belli d'Italia

The town's urban development follows two lines: the Arab one "inside the walls," which is projected through the sixteenth century with the thickening of residences around the fortress of Zabut, and the seventeenth-eighteenth-century one "outside the walls," with the town hall acting as a hinge.

The tour begins at the 19th-century L'Ida theater at the lower end of Corso Umberto I. Along the corso, stately buildings, marked by the presence of sandstone and the passing arches connecting the main streets to courtyards (about 250), alternate with places of worship, of which there are thirteen. In the middle of



the course, the Di Leo and Oddo palaces and the church of San Giuseppe with its *chiaramont*-inspired white stone portal stand out.

On Marconi Street, the Church of the Conception has a magnificent pointed arch portal of *chiaramontana* matrix also from the church of San Nicolò in the ancient village of Adragna. Inside it has 18th-century sculptures. Also on Via Marconi are the aristocratic palaces Rollo, which faces the church with a courtyard and loggia staircase; Giacone, with a double private courtyard and Catalan staircase inside; and Fiore with its imposing bulk.

Back on Corso Umberto, Palazzo Campisi, a bank building, dates from the second half of the 19th century and shows the warm color

of sandstone. The church of St. Catherine of Alexandria with its opulent decorations is an expression of Baroque architecture, enhanced by stuccoes, allegorical statues, coats of arms, blazons, and twisted columns. The enameled tile floor from the majolica factories of nearby Burgio is notable. On the opposite side of Piazza della Vittoria, the casino of the Marquises Beccadelli is appreciated for its balcony with sinuous Baroque forms and courtyard that recalls Catalan types imported to Sicily during Spanish rule.

The building is part of a larger complex that reaches as far as Via Caruso and includes the 16th-century church of Saints Rocco and Sebastian (now an exhibition space), the tower and the hospital. The scenic



effect of the seventeenth-century Church of the Carmine is accentuated by the front, which is built on two superimposed orders. Here are the burials of aristocratic families, wooden and marble statues: these include the 17th-century St. Anne and the Madonna dell'Udienza on the high altar, from the mid-16th century, attributed to Gagini.

Returning to the corso, there are the 19th-century Ciaccio palace in exposed sandstone with a central colonnaded courtyard; the fine façade of the Church of the Purgatory (1631) used as a Museum of Sacred Art;

and the Oddo (or dell'Arpa) palace, ascribable to the classicist language of the mid-18th century. This palace, seat of the city hall, leads into what was the "walled city." In fact, from here the urban geography of the town changes: the streets thicken, become tangled, and then open up into unexpected irregular widenings: we are in the Arab quarter, in the ancient heart of Sambuca, born from seven Saracen alleys.

In largo San Michele, palazzo Amodei with its unique courtyard is just before the three-aisled church of San Michele, inside which is the eque-

strian statue of St. George, a 1596 work by the Lo Cascio brothers. In that same year, the new direction of urban development towards the valley entailed a 180-degree rotation of the church's original orientation, until then facing the castle; hence, its two elevations. Dating from the late sixteenth century is the castle keep later transformed into the Panitteri palace by adapting the quadrangular structure to the new housing requirements. The main floor of the palace is home to the archaeological museum.

When you reach Piazza Navarro, you turn left back into the dense web of narrow streets of the Arab quarter: a haphazard tangle of alleys, a casbah with one- or two-level houses and

sometimes with external ramped staircases, and with the escapes of Sicilian tile roofs declining on each other. Then there are the *purres*, the stone quarries of the sunken city made up of walkways and caverns emptied over the centuries. In the neighborhood, the signs of the Christian faith are the Church of the Rosary, which boasts a cobblestone churchyard dating from 1752 and a cypress-wood doorway with carved tiles, and, at the top of the hill, the Matrix Church, closed to worship since 1968.

Nearby

Walking and trekking on Mount Genuardo, mountain biking and, for the less sporty, theater, because





Sambuca boasts one of the very few still-functioning Italian-style theaters in western Sicily.

Forty kilometers away, Alberto Burri's Cretto in Gibellina is one of the most important works of land art of the 20th century. To stay in Sambuca, Mount Genuardo and the Oriented Nature Reserve (1180 m. a.s.l.) comprising the area of Santa Maria del Bosco and the Bosco del Pomo with the settlement of Adranon, are destinations for walking and trekking. To the east of Mount Genuardo runs

the valley marked by the Arab castles, which controlled the trade route from the port of Sciacca to Palermo. The fortress of Zabut was the guardian of the valley.

Lake Arancio is a reservoir, behind which some trekking routes start, such as the one along the Tardara Gorge leading to Sciacca. The mid-15th-century Pandolfina tower, which stands in defense of the farm, the 11th-century Cellaro tower on the shores of Lake Arancio and, not far away, the remains of the Arab fort of

Mazzallakkar are worth a visit. From the lake, via state road 188, one reaches the Misilbes quarries, “fantastic and unreal,” Leonardo Sciascia wrote in 1960, “dug into the hillside like Egyptian temples. North of the town is the church of Santa Maria di Adragna, known as “Bammina,” among the oldest places of worship in the area. It seems to have originated from the primitive place of worship attached to the farmhouse of Adragna. Finally, the archaeological site of Monte Adranone can be visited.

The village dish

Inventing the minni di virgini, the “virgin breasts,” was - tradition says - a nun from the College of Mary, commissioned in 1725 by the Marquise of Sambuca to prepare a cake for her son’s wedding. Sister Virginia

took her cue from the hills surrounding Sambuca and obtained a pastry with a filling of milk cream, chocolate and zuccata, covered with sugar icing, praised by the Prince of Salina in Tomasi di Lampedusa’s “Il Gattopardo”: “... sviolinature in major of the candied black cherries, sour timbres of the yellow pineapples and triumphs of the throat, with the opaque green of their ground pistachios, impudent ‘Paste delle Vergini’.

The village product

Wine, extra virgin olive oil, cheeses derived from sheep farms: in Sambuca the products of the land are all zero kilometer. In addition to sheep’s ricotta cheese, also used in pastries, it is worth mentioning *vastedda del Belice DOP*, a pasta filata cheese made entirely from sheep’s milk, with its unique focaccia shape.





MOVIE ITALY

CELEBRATES
GIANCARLO GIANNINI'S
ACHIEVEMENTS

Italian cinema
Giancarlo Giannini

by Minerva Pictures

Just a little over a month ago, a new star has been added to the sidewalk of Hollywood Boulevard: it's the one dedicated to the multi-award winner and Oscar nominated Italian actor and screenwriter Giancarlo Giannini who has also lent his voice to Jack Nicholson and Al Pacino, as an established voice actor.

Winner also of four David di Donatello Awards for Best Actor, he is known internationally for his role in Ridley Scott's *Hannibal* (2001), where he played Inspector Pazzi, as well for his role in two James Bond movies, *Casino Royale* (2006) and *Quantum of Solace* (2008), along with Daniel Craig.

Don't miss the chance to review some

Seduction of Mimi



of Giannini's best performances on the Italian Cinema Icons section on Movieitaly, the first streaming platform all'italiana, using a special discount dedicated to WeTheItalians magazine readers for 10% OFF on the Yearly Subscription: Movieitaly4WTI.

At 80 and visibly excited, the interpreter uncovered the iconic red star tile engraved with his name in brass lettering in the Los Angeles Walk of Fame. He is the 16th Italian star to ever receive the acknowledgement, joining Rodolfo Valentino, Gina Lollobrigida, Sophia Loren, Anna Magnani, Ennio Morricone, Bernar-



Seduction of Mimi

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do Bertolucci and of course the brilliant director Lina Wertmüller, honoured by a star on the Walk of Fame in 2019 and winner of the Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2020.

Giannini, tied to the director by a fruitful, life-long work partnership, has dedicated to the recently passed Wertmüller, recognising the impact of her genius in his career. Some of his most recognizable and appreciated roles that led him to success are indeed from Wertmüller cults *The Seduction of Mimi* (1972) and *Love and Anarchy* (1973), for which he won the Cannes Film Festival Award for Best Actor.

Both films, currently available on Movieitaly in their 4K restorations in original language with English

subtitles, are irreverent comedies featuring lucid and witty political commentary, colourful characters, and paradoxical stories that Giannini himself wrote together with the director, inspired by real people whom they met in Cinecittà and in the streets of Naples and Sicily. They take the viewer across all Italian regions to unveil the reality of all social classes with irony, painting a portrait of the country both realistic and absurd, which makes them so iconic and impactful everywhere in the world to this day.

Versatile performer, with great depth both in his dramatic range and in his comedic tones, he has starred also in many other famous Italian movies, collecting accolades, and entering the national imaginary with his unforgettable presence.

Love and anarchy





Honour Giannini's impressive career by discovering his other thrilling award-winning roles on Movieitaly like the historical comedy 'O Re – The King of Naples (1989), alongside the beautiful Ornella Muti, and the spell-binding political drama Bankers of God – I Banchieri di Dio (2002) on the famous Calvi scandal that shook an entire country, starring also a young Alessandro Gassman.

Movieitaly features many masterpieces that have made history but also offers a vast selection of Italian cinema to cater the needs of those who love genre, comedies and popular cinema: swords&sandals, giallos, 70s and 80s horrors, and of course even Adriano Celentano! All in original language with English subtitles, with a special collection with French subtitles, for real cinema lovers across the world.

You can watch Movieitaly on your computer at the link www.movieitaly.net, or download the app on

your phone through the Apple App Store and Google Play. The app is available also for Chromecast, Airplay and Samsung and LG Smart-TV, and will be soon on Roku.



King of Naples



Bankers of God



KEFA

KEFA, an Italian story. A watch is not worn, IT IS OWNED

by Umberto Mucci

Dear friends and readers of We The Italians we are once again pleased to tell you, on the threshold of the NIAF Gala 2023, about another chapter in the history of Italian KEFA, which we have been following for some time now. This time we will give the floor to Cav. Gianluigi Di Lorenzo co-founder and creative soul of KEFA.

“Dear friends and readers of We the Italians I confess to you my immense joy and honor to be able to reach you all, and I would like to tell you about passions, watches and symbols. Yes, because after all, if we are here together it is precisely because of our PETRUS watch and what it represents.





You may have had a chance to read in the past few appointments about our story and how in small steps we have come so far by realizing a great project that we have the pleasure to share with you. Everything stems from a great pas-

sion for watches and this Petrus watch is the concentrate of all our passions: a treasure chest where we put all the experiences and all the values that Life has given us.



Why a watch? This is the first thing I would like to share with you. The watch is in the modern age the oldest but distinctive object that can be worn and that unquestionably ends up characterizing all of us. De-

pending on one's character or job, one has a greater tendency toward a certain type of model than another. From the watch sometimes you can tell the person who wears it since the watch is an object of daily use is strictly personal together with which, each of us, must build our own story and identity.

Today to tell the exact time there are smartwatches and cell phones ... you can even read the time from the microwave oven! A watch, a real watch, today is no longer just a timepiece accessory but a distinctive and unique symbol that describes us as people. Even not wearing it, therefore, speaks of our personality.

As far as I am concerned, a watch is not "worn," IT IS OWNED. And I own Petrus with every cell of my being!

In a now saturated market, we have decided to stand out, paradoxically, by making a simple, seemingly "normal" object, without the use of precious elements such as gold or silver, but one that has all the credentials to compete in terms of style, quality, mechanics and performance with the most prestigious brands of today.

Its great symbolic value, the meaning carried by the emblems we de-

cided to imprint on it, the strength and power of a faith shared by more than a billion believers in the world. And that is how, in an unexpected way for me, in this project, I gave shape to my passions: Made in Italy, art, watches and heraldry.

I have been passionate about the knowledge and study of effigies, emblems, coats of arms and blazons for many years; in fact, I am an expert in heraldry and have had the honor of designing and drawing countless coats of arms for prelates bishops and cardinals all over the world.

What has always fascinated me is the power of images and symbols that reveal and hold deep meanings along with ancient stories that have spanned the millennia and are the heritage of all.



Vatican coat of arms

This is why we chose for the Petrus watch two emblems of absolute prestige and rich in history, such as the emblem of the Vatican City State and the personal coat of arms of Pope Francis.

The fact that the entire project that led to the creation of the Petrus watch received the authorization of the Vatican authorities gave us immense honor and invested us with a great responsibility.

The coat of arms of the Vatican, described in official documents as “Chiavi decussate sormontate dal triregno in campo rosso” (Crossed keys surmounted by the papal tiara on a red field) shows the triregno, the papal headdress symbolizing the threefold Church militant, suffering and triumphant, and at the same time displays the three powers of the Pope, father of princes and kings, rector of the world and vicar of Christ on Earth.

From the triregno hang the lappets, decorated with patent crosses, and below it we have the keys of the Kingdom, crossed in the shape of the Cross of St. Andrew, symbolically left to St. Peter by Jesus to guide Christendom and becoming, since the 14th century, the official insignia of the Holy See.

The coat of arms of Pope Francis, chosen by the pontiff himself for his





episcopal consecration, re-proposes the gold and silver tiara, the lappets and the crossed keys. They are accompanied by a



Pope Francis coat of arms

blue shield on which three figures stand out, representing the particular devotion our Pope has towards the Holy Family: a radiant sun with the letters HIS in red color, the monogram of Christ, with the letter H surmounted by a cross and with, at the bottom, the three black nails used for the crucifixion. The sun thus described is also the emblem of the Pope's home order, the Society of Jesus. Next on the shield we find the image of the star, symbol of the Virgin Mary, and the flower of nard, indicating St. Joseph, patron of the universal Church. Closing

the papal coat of arms at the bottom is the motto “Miserando Atque Eligendo,” taken from the Homilies of St. Beda the Venerable on the vocation of St. Matthew.



A heart, of Swiss manufacture, that marks time enclosed in a steel case where the dial and case back, the result of a fusion, are the most classic and refined example of Italian design and style. A ‘limited and numbered edition made of 2013 pieces, enriched with the introduction of the electronic register: an identity card of the watch to track its changes of ownership and encourage an increase in value over time that will have the task of uniting the concept of time with that of history... A club formed by the 2013 owners.

These are the distinctive elements of a unique project in which I sincerely hope you will enter personally by choosing your Petrus watch that will accompany you through your time becoming the worthy witness of your history as well.”

Our friends at Kefa wanted to grant a unique and exceptional gift to us at We the Italians and to all our readers. Those who want to invest, after reading all the features that make it a unique item, in the purchase of a “Petrus” watch, will be given a silver “Emblema silver” pen: this gift, exclusively for our readers, is worth \$1,050. At checkout, adding the code WTI will automatically add a free “Emblem Silver” pen for each “Petrus” watch placed in your cart, exclusively for you. Here you will find the exceptional characteristics and prices of these three items: the “Petrus” watch (for men, here; and for women, here); the “Emblema Aurum” gold pen; and the “Emblema Silver” silver pen. We at We the Italians are proud to be able to partner up and offer these unique and inimitable Made in Italy items of the highest quality, and with a huge gift just for our readers. Believe me: you will thank us if you choose them.



Italian culture and history

The Scrovegni Chapel in Padua

by italia.it

Padua's Scrovegni Chapel is, without a doubt, an artistic masterpiece. Built on the dime and ambition of a powerful usurer, Enrico Scrovegni, the Chapel was adorned with the frescoes of Giotto, who dedicated himself to the project for 855 days between the years 1302 and 1305.

Purposed as the Scrovegni Family's personal chapel and to be annexed to its palazzo, the Chapel actually stands atop a 60 B.C.E. Roman amphitheatre (hence its second name, the Arena Chapel). The contents of the walls of the 1,000 sq m chapel are scenes depicting events from both the Old and New Testaments.





The Chapel, dedicated to Santa Maria della Carità is rather simple in architectonic terms (it is uncertain whether it is the work of Giotto or someone else), with high, narrow windows and a façade whose upper ends with with a Gothic trifore flourish. Inside, the sarcophagus of Scrovegni himself lies in the structure's chancel.

To further embellish the interior, Scrovegni entrusted the realization of three altar statues to Giovanni Pisano; the marble works depict the Virgin and Child between two deacons. Then, of course, Giotto, our sommo pittore, was made responsible for the epic colors and forms that make the Chapel shi-

ne. At the time, Giotto was working on the commission given to him by the friars of the Basilica of St. Anthony in Padua; his name was already quite revered for having frescoed St. Francis's Basilica in Assisi, St. John in Lateran in Rome, and Palazzo della Ragione in Padua.

The fresco cycle – fresco, painted on fresh plaster – consists of an incredible color palate. Many know of Giotto for his intense ultramarine, a hue for which painters would pay a pretty penny in Giotto's day; indeed, the artist as brilliant as his colors obtained his pigments from all around the Mediterranean, by way of Venice.



While the frescoes are filled with Old and New Testament narrative, the Last Judgment holds rank, covering an entire wall with Christ the King and Judge accompanied by his Apostles, while the forces of Evil at turns claw at and sink into the ether.

Images of Christ, the Gospels and Prophets appear as innumerable portholes – through which the viewer peers at awe-inspiring glimpses of life from the Bible. Intriguing are the recesses containing the Virtues and Vices, making for a sort of vade mecum of righteous behaviors for the Christians of the era.

Under its starry-sky-painted barrel-vaulted ceiling, the natural forms - innovative in Giotto's day for their fresh realism - recount pieces of Christianity as inspired by St. Augustine.

Giotto completed this masterpiece as a fairly young man: at just under forty years of age, he realized a fresco cycle so groundbreaking that it is the only work in the world that can be considered to rest in the company of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel in Rome.



An Italian American in Rome
**Gigi Betti, a girl from California,
pursuing her dream in Rome**

by Rob Mariottini

Gianna Betti, referred to as Gigi, is a young Italian American soccer player who is making a name for herself in the competitive world of Italian soccer. Gigi was born and raised right outside of San Francisco, California, to an

Italian American father and an American mother. Gigi's passion for soccer has been a constant throughout her life, and the combination of her love for the sport and her family's connection to Italy has led her to her current role as a



Student-Athlete here at Rome City Institute.

The Betti's originated from Bagni di Lucca, Italy, where some of Gigi's older cousins still remain today. Gigi's nonna was the first of the family to make the move to America, as she traveled directly to San Francisco on a boat in the early 1960's. One year later, Gigi's nonno made the journey himself, and the Betti's have remained in California ever since.

About her Italian origins, Gigi says that her whole life she has grown up super close to her nonno and nonna and felt very connected to her Italian heritage. They moved to the United States in the 60s and taught her dad Italian as he grew up. They grew up with a heavy influence of Italian culture and always ate homemade Italian food from her non-

na, and made sure to spend time together as a whole family.

Focusing on her admiration for soccer, Gigi's love affair with soccer began at a young age, and it's a passion that has only grown stronger over time. From the moment she first stepped onto the field, Gigi knew that soccer was her calling. She poured herself into the game, spending countless hours practicing and honing her skills, and soon her talent began to attract attention. During her developmental stage, Gigi competed in high-level play with the 'California Magic Soccer Club' as she worked on her craft, and developed into a talented player. After graduating from High School, Gigi knew that she wanted to venture into the professional world and take on a new challenge. She found this exactly when she decided to join the Rome City Gap-Year program, and



was able to test herself against top Italian competition.

Gigi now finds herself playing in Rome, as a member of 'Roma Calcio Femminile', a Serie C team in Rome. Gigi joined Rome CF shortly after she arrived in Rome, going to a trial with the club, and immediately catching the eyes of the coaching staff.

While most would find the transition from America to Italy difficult, Gigi has thrived in her new surroundings. Quickly she asserted herself into the starting lineup at her club, doing so at the age of just eighteen. Throughout her first season in Italy, Gigi has been put in the work, both physically and mentally to find new success. Gaining the respect of her teammates and coaches for her ability on the field as well as her determination off of it, Gigi is a crucial player for her club as they push to fight their way up the table in the tail end of the season. As she continues to make strides as a player, it's clear that Gigi is a force to be reckoned with.

Growing up, Gigi's Italian heritage played a significant role in her life, and her family's ties to Italy instilled in her a deep love and appreciation for the country. As her grandparents went from Italy to the United States, Gigi's father grew

up hearing stories about his Italian culture. As a result, Gigi was raised with a strong connection to Italy and a desire to learn more about her family's roots.



When she had the opportunity to play soccer in Italy, it was a dream come true. She was thrilled at the prospect of immersing herself in Italian culture and exploring the country that had always held such a special place in her heart. And so, when the chance arrived, Gigi jumped at it, eager to see what adventures lay ahead. Her family and

current sport adventures even came together when her father was able to watch Gigi and Roma CF play in Italy as they took on Academy Sant'Agata in Sicily, a special moment for Gigi and her father.

Looking forward, Gigi wants to continue down the path she has started. With her determination to be the best player she can be, Gigi is keen to carry on her development as a high-level player. As a Gap-Year student, she has merely tested the waters of what it means to play and study abroad in Italy. Looking to return next year as an Undergraduate student with Rome City, Gigi will continue to compete in the top ranks of Italian Women's calcio, and naturally, her next step will be to challenge herself to step up from Serie C to Serie B, with Serie A being the end goal. Whether it will be with her current team or a new club who have been eagerly watching her progress all season long, Gigi is on the

first step of a path that many dream about, but only few can put into action.

From her early days playing in California to her current position as a rising star in Italian soccer, Gigi continues to pursue her dreams. Her story serves as a testament to the power of perseverance, hard work, and a love for the game. Her journey to Rome has been one marked by determination, and her success on the field is a reflection of her unwavering commitment to the game she loves. As she navigates the challenges of playing professional soccer in a new country, Gigi serves as an inspiration to young athletes everywhere, showing them that with dedication, hard work, and a love for what they do, anything is possible. We can't wait to see where Gigi's journey takes her next, and we're sure that wherever she goes, she'll continue to make waves both on and off the field.



Almost a background noise in companies, an under-skin sensation on the streets, a basic color in our lives; almost, even, an idea of society.”

Riccardo Falcinelli, far more authoritatively, states, “In the contemporary world, design is everywhere: it can be used, inhabited, enjoyed, exploited, wasted, destroyed, recycled; but above all, design can be seen.”

We could say, adopting Francesco Trabucco’s learned irony, that Design is good everywhere: “Design is like salt: taken in the right dose, it gives flavor and meaning to things, makes them pleasant and desirable. Just like salt, a pinch of design is good almost everywhere, which explains why design is so widespread, indeed pervasive and transversal: design of objects and the machines to produce those objects, design of relationships and communications, design of environments

and interactions, design of strategies and services.”

Here, therefore, we now speak of Product Design, Systems Design, Process Design, Communication Design, Design Thinking, Social Design, Brand Design, Web Design, etc.etc. Design, moreover, is seeing a strong broadening of its scope, a multiplication of its functions.

Of course, Design continues to concern the Shape of products, but it is also increasingly extending its influence on their Functioning and the Meanings they convey to consumers.

We can say, using the fine words of Walter De Silva, that “Design is a cultural model in constant evolution. It develops analog and digital, aesthetic and poetic systems. It defines business strategies and is at the center of decisions. It makes products less ambiguous by giving added and



repeated value over time, for mutual benefit between citizen/user and business/country.”

The new complexity of today’s functions of Design was brilliantly captured by Alberto Bassi, according to whom, “Today, the role of design is confirmed as the synthesis of an overall, collective global path of care for people and the world. Which also means trying to understand how and why to design, produce, communicate, distribute and manage at the end of the life cycle objects, systems and services.”



ADI - Associazione per il Disegno Industriale (Association for Industrial Design) states that “design is a system that connects production with users by dealing with research, innovation and engineering, in order to give functionality, social value and cultural meaning to goods and services distributed in the market.”

Design in the Contemporary, in short, is certainly about Aesthetics, but it also touches on Technology,

Communication, and Semiotics.

This article inaugurates a new column, entitled “Italian Design.” In “Italian Design” we will report, share, and comment on interesting and significant cases of Design of our time.

On the one hand, we will consider the more traditional applications of Design; on the other hand, we will explore the more advanced and innovative frontiers of Design.

Understanding Design, given its strong pervasiveness in every field of society and the unprecedented breadth of functions performed in today’s reality, is of extraordinary importance.

Today more than ever dealing with Design, as Francesco Trabucco says, is equivalent to “confronting history,” because-to quote Deyan Sudjic-“design is the language a society uses to create objects that reflect its purposes and values.”

Exploring Design, then, means investigating the Time we are living in, interpreting its spirit and expressions.

We hope that this journey around Italian Design, which we gladly and proudly propose to the readers of *We the Italians*, will be a source of useful ideas and stimulating reflections.





Interview with Michael Wright and Alana Sacriponte

**Telling Italian and American kids today
about the sacrifice of American soldiers of
yesteryear to liberate our country: Be the
Difference-Never Again**

by Umberto Mucci

This new interview is particularly dear to me for three reasons. The first is that it tells how even young Italians can be guided to learn about the sacrifice that thousands of American heroes made to liberate Italy. The second is that very often I get suggested interviews

that are not exactly in the flow of this column, which explores new and special things and people and stories: so for today's guests I have to thank our mutual friend Elizabeth Bettina, who introduced us.

The third reason is that almost always my interviews are devoted entirely to something from the past, stories from the past; or entirely to stories from the present and the future. It is difficult for them to have past and future together. But this time that is exactly what happens. So I very gladly welcome on We the Italians Michael Wright and Alana Sacriponte, who run the Duquesne University Study Abroad program here in Rome

I would start by asking you to tell our readers about Duquesne University's study abroad program here in Rome. Who are your students, where are they from, what are they studying in Italy?

DUQUESNE IN ROME

(Michael Wright) Duquesne University is a private, Catholic university in the Spiritan tradition located in Pittsburgh, PA with an international campus in Rome, Italy. 2021 marked the 20th anniversary of Duquesne's campus in Rome, where we host 200 students annually on our beautiful property located with the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in the verdant Acquafredda Nature Reserve



Rome Campus

of Rome, near the busy working-class neighborhood of Boccea.

The Rome campus hosts students for a semester or a summer program from the university's nine schools. The academic semesters are full of undergraduate students who work on their core curriculum classes in areas like art history, classical history, theology, sociology, intercultural studies, Italian language, along with specialty courses in education, business and the sciences. For Duquesne students, many of these subjects literally come alive by studying art and archaeology in the places where it happened.

Our summer programs are full of both undergraduate and graduate students studying music, nursing, and physical therapy providing historical context and health care comparisons that we hope will make Duquesne students competitive in their future academic and professional careers.

Do you have Italian American students? A few months ago I started to develop a theory, that is that Italian American kids are different from American kids of other ethnicity, and obviously different from Italian kids. What do you guys think about that?

(Alana Sacriponte) There are over 1.4 million Italian American people in the State of Pennsylvania and more than 15% of people identify as Italian American in Western Pennsylvania where

our home campus is located. But if you have ever actually visited Pittsburgh, you would think the number was even higher than that! Pittsburgh's Heinz History Center has one of the largest collections and archives of Italian American material culture. We also have a Little Italy neighborhood called Bloomfield, as well as many other "unofficial" Italian areas, like the Strip District, where Italian pride reigns. There are so many Italian Festivals throughout Pittsburgh and the suburbs, like an Italian Kenywood Day (our local theme park), and a local food and coffee scene that highlights Italian food and the Italian experience.

I would say that over half of the Duquesne University students who come to study at our Rome campus are Italian-Americans, and this experience is very different for them compared to their other classmates. The overall experience is the same, in that they engage with Italy's incredible cultural patrimony like the art, food, language and music. But Italian American students who are also coming as heritage seekers are having a reckoning experience with their past, and one that can bring such strong emotions about returning to their family's place of origin. This is probably one of the highlights of my job, helping Italian American students plan their travels to the small, remote villages of their great-grandparents, or ask for my help in translating a first-ever meet-up

with Italian relatives during their semester abroad. Distant relatives who they have never met, most often with a big language barrier, cannot get in the way of this almost-sacred pilgrimage for these students. Students will visit incredible places like Venice, Florence and the Amalfi Coast, but nothing will ever compare to the experience of seeing the church where their great-grandfather was baptized, or meeting a cousin or great-uncle that they have heard about in stories from their families since they were born.

I know that I personally become super invested in helping these students, not only as a part of my job, but because that story is also my story. When I studied abroad in 2003 in this same program as an undergraduate student at Duquesne, I met my grandfather's first cousin. It was the most moving experience for me to feel connected to his past, learn more about my family and feel an authentic connection to this country that has been such a big part of my life and traditions.

About our Italian American students, I think the most memorable story was an ex-student who had family in Abruzzo, in a small town near Pescara. He had never met them before, but they were so excited that he would be in Rome for three months that upon his arrival, his great aunt took a three-hour bus from Pescara to Rome, then our metro (or subway), and local

bus to come meet him at campus. In her long journey, she brought along two teglie di parmigiana, or casserole dishes of eggplant parmesan, euro cash in case he didn't have any, and continued to do this once a month while he was here. His aunt told me she felt it was her duty to make sure he was well-fed and to check in on him – almost like she had taken custody of him while on Italian soil. It was a beautiful thing to witness.

I really like the relationship you have established with a Roman high school near your campus. Based on your experience, what do Italian kids learn from this exchange, and what do American kids learn?

(Michael Wright) Duquesne in Rome's relationship with the I.I.S. Einstein-Bachelet high school began in 2005, when we moved campus locations in 2004 to our current location in the Boccea neighborhood of Rome. The Einstein-Bachelet high school is located a half-mile (less than a kilometer) down the road from our campus. I continued to see other U.S. university programs in Rome and Florence offer reciprocity to their communities through musical performances, art installations at local schools and hospitals, and fashion shows of student creations.

I had been thinking about how to engage our students more fully with our





IIS Einstein-Bachelet

local neighborhood, as well as giving something back to the city that graciously hosts us as U.S. Americans. One day when passing in front of the high school, I thought, “I wonder if we could create an exchange with students learning English at the high school to help them better their linguistic skills and in turn, they could help our students who were learning Italian?” After all, Italian students are 19 or 20 in their last year of high school and our students are mostly 19 and 20 years old as sophomores in college.

An enthusiastic meeting with the En-

glish language department resulted in an official gemellaggio, or sister-school agreement, that has been in effect ever since. Over the last 18 years, Duquesne’s relationship with the Einstein-Bachelet high school has resulted in nearly 1,000 Duquesne students working with nearly 1,000 of their Roman peers on projects, which has created many lasting friendships. Some of these Roman students have even visited their friends in the U.S., including on two official English Summer Camps that Duquesne University created and hosted in Pittsburgh for the Einstein-Bachelet students in 2009

and 2011.

I was recently at a wedding in Rome between one of our American alumnae and her now-Roman husband who she met during her semester abroad when a young man came up to me and said, “Are you Professor Michael?” I responded that I was. He told me that he had participated in our program and it changed his life. He was still friends with his partners from years before and he had understood the value of his city through the eyes of our American students. It helped to inspire him, as he was currently running for public office in Rome to help make his city a better place.

The main feature that differentiates your work from other study abroad programs are the project by which you bring American and Italian students to the Sicily Rome American Cemetery and Memorial in Nettuno, south of Rome...

(Alana Sacriponte) Our academic offerings have always been, and remain to be the keystone of our program, including on-site art history and classical history courses that are taken in the city center, with Rome as their open-air classroom. However, something that we thought was lacking was the academic opportunity to describe, analyze, and evaluate the cultural experiences students were having in Italy and with local, Italian people.

Many tourists and visitors learn the cultural nuances of Italy, like how Italians don't order a cappuccino after meals and not cutting spaghetti with a knife, but we wanted to provide a means to deepen intercultural exploration. By clarifying cultural confusions, learning about oneself and one's own culture, as well as gaining a depth of the new Italian culture, we can help students reflect on their experiences and observations from different intercultural perspectives.

In 2013, we developed a 3-part Intercultural Engagement course series that students would take prior, during, and after the study abroad experience. The course that the Duquesne in Rome students take while abroad is called “Intercultural Awareness and Exploration” and is co-taught by Michael Wright and myself. We use these class hours to reflect on the students' experiences with their Italian partners at the Einstein-Bachelet high school and meet with diverse underrepresented communities in Rome with visits and lectures by historian and guide Micaela Pavoncello from the Roman-Jewish community and Ahmad Ejaz from the Islamic Cultural Centre of Italy. But I think that the most fulfilling experience for all students is their work on the “[Be the Difference - Never Again](#)” project, which we implemented in 2016 as a part of the course.

(Michael Wright) Early in 2016, I received a phone call from a friend and fel-



Elizabeth Bettina

low U.S. study abroad program director in Florence who told me of an American friend of his, Elizabeth Bettina, who had written a book on her family's village near Salerno that had been the site of a Jewish internment camp during World War II. He had been using her book in his curriculum and she was coming to Italy, interested in visiting the two American war cemeteries in Italy, including the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery in Nettuno, just south of Rome near Anzio.

Elizabeth arrived in Rome and I accompanied her down the Tyhrannean coast on a beautiful spring morning. I had read her book and embarrassingly admitted to her that I had been to Nettuno many times to eat seafood and go to the beach with Roman friends, but I had never visited the cemetery where 11,000 U.S. American service members were entombed or memorialized.

Melanie Resto, Superintendent of the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery welcomed and created special tours for us. As we entered this sacred, giant site that was studded with gleaming marble crosses and Stars of David tombs, sheltered by the towering umbrella pines of Rome, we moved with our guide through the 77-acre property hearing the harrowing stories of the young men and women who laid at rest. We saw an elderly man in his 90s laying roses at different tombs. Our guide told us that he was a local man who had been



friends with the soldiers, played baseball with them, and even was able to go on fighting missions with them, until his soldier friends were ambushed and killed. Since then, he has come once a week to lay flowers at his friends' graves.

We learned the personal story of the group of soldiers who had been killed and were missing that Sophia Loren speaks of in her memoir, and how one of them was a soldier who helped care for a scar on her face that she had received during the war. She owed her beauty to him. We then heard the heart-wrenching stories of those who had sacrificed their lives, learning that



many of these soldiers have never received visits from their loved ones after the war.

Elizabeth and I were moved beyond words. As we drove back to the city, Elizabeth spoke of her vision for U.S. American students to visit these cemeteries during their semester abroad and to learn the stories of those who had given their lives for freedom. She called this the “Be the Difference – Never Again Project”. A light bulb went off in my mind, thinking that this might be the perfect project for our Intercultural Awareness course and to create a more meaningful collaboration for our Du-

quesne/Einstein-Bachelet relationship.

Alana and I talked about how it would be perfect for them to work together in small groups, each assigned a soldier at the cemetery to research. The Duquesne students could take the lead with military records and online searches to reconstruct the stories of these young soldiers, including collecting historic pictures and newspaper articles. The Einstein-Bachelet students in each group would work with the research to create a homage to their soldier, through poetry and song. The project would culminate at the end of the semester with a visit to the cemetery. The stu-

dents would help to create a memorial service that we all participate in, take tours of the cemetery, and ultimately go to find the tomb of their U.S. American soldier to present their homage at their grave. Ultimately, students would turn in their group projects of research and homage, which we would donate to the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery.



Seven years have passed since the inception of the “Be the Difference-Never Again” project at Duquesne in Rome. Students learn intercultural values from working together and creating friendships, while coming into contact with important historical material. At the beginning of the semester, we reiterate that this is not a political project to show that America “saved” Italy, but rather an experiential collaboration to highlight the important relationship and friendship that our two countries have had over the past 80 years. It reminds us that because of combined efforts by the Allied forces and the Italian partisans, that Rome is the free and beautiful city where we make our homes, even if only for a semester for our Duquesne



students. Einstein-Bachelet student, Enrico Mottola, reflected, “This experience has touched me deeply and made me think of the value of sacrifice, something these soldiers did for Italy and Europe.”

If it is possible, I would ask you to tell some anecdotes or the details of some stories that particularly struck you and your students, studying someone of the nearly 11,000 American heroes buried or celebrated in Nettuno, who gave their lives to free our country.

(Michael Wright) An experience that connected the Duquesne and Einstein-Bachelet students even beyond the borders of Italy with this project was a group of students that had been assigned First Lieutenant Chester Angell as their soldier. Since students only

Chester Angell

receive the soldier's military record, including their name, place of enlistment, and their serial number, it is up to the students to find out who the "real" Chester was. On a genealogy website, the students found the email address of someone who looked to be a possible living relative. They vulnerably reached out to Chester's living niece, Barbara Chiarella who lives in Colorado.

The group of students received an emotional and joyous response, helping the students know Chester more fully. They learned that he had been adopted by the Angell family as a child and had learned to be a pilot after enlisting with the Army Air Corp in November 1941. Before being sent to war, he had been a flight instructor on Beechcraft AT-11 planes and Martin B-26 bombers in the southern United States. He married his sweetheart Elaine Brown in June 1942 and they had their beloved daughter Janice in July 1943. In early 1944, he was assigned to the 37th Bomb Squad, 17th Bombardment Group, which had been credited through strategic bombings to have saved much of the art and architecture in Florence. Chester was stationed in Sardinia. Just days before dying in battle, he wrote an optimistic letter to his father, "It's a mite rough in spots but I'll get along all right...I've got a darn good crew."



Chester died on March 16, 1944. Chester's niece told the students that he is remembered in their family as "a young, handsome, and intelligent hero in so many ways." Chester's niece Barbara wrote me an emotional email saying, "May I just say that the program you created is not only a testament to humanity, history, and our fallen soldiers, it



Chester Angell Tomb and Homage





has personally given me a whole heart. Chester was a special brother to my father [Donald], which prompted my visit to Nettuno in 2009 to pay homage to both Chester and Donald, as brothers whose relationship was ended too soon.” The “Be the Difference-Never Again” project not only connects the living to the heroic dead, but con-

nects the living with the living, creating hope for a more peaceful future.

(Alana Sacriponte) This April 2023 will be the first time that one of our students has a family member buried at the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and whom we will honor during our ceremony. Physician Assistant stu-





dent from the Rangos School of Health Sciences, Megan Stevens and her group will be paying homage to her great-uncle Alfred W. Graham, who was a pilot in the 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division in the U.S. Army. He was killed on January 31st, 1944 and was awarded a Purple Heart for his bravery.

You educate kids who are developing their personalities and have their whole lives ahead of them, and you rightly confront them with a history that concerns events that happened almost 80 years ago now. I think that what you do is very useful, because this experience teaches

them more than many hours of theory... am I wrong?

(Michael Wright) Theory is obviously an important part of the Intercultural Awareness course that Alana and I teach, but we are blessed to have Rome and Italy be a living laboratory where our students can see theory put into practice. The “Be the Difference-Never Again” project helps us do this. Both Duquesne and the Einstein-Bachelet students have the opportunity to dive deeper into cultural and historical exploration. They understand each other better by developing linguistic and cultural understanding to



create lasting friendships.

They also learn the consequences of war, what freedom means, the plight of the soldier, and how to bring this 80-year history forward to our contemporary, broken world. They learn that even though Italian statehood may be younger than that of the United States, it is a peninsula full of ancient, rich, and complex history. These complexities not only change their lives in the “now” as study abroad students, but changed many of their lives long ago when their great-grandparents or

grandparents decided to emigrate to the United States. Through our semester-long program, Duquesne students are able to shed their initial romantic notion of Italy through authentic experiences. They take away a mature understanding and love for Italy in its successes, its challenges, and its always hopeful future.

Most likely among our readers are descendants of a family of some of the 11,000 American heroes buried or celebrated at the Sicily Rome American Cemetery and Memo-





Alfred Graham



rial, among whom are many names ending in a vowel. What would you feel like telling them?

(Michael Wright) We want those who have family who are buried at the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery to know that we continue to work through the list of 11,000 names. Young Italian and U.S. American students are taking the time to learn the stories of those who sacrificed to help free Italy. Your loved ones are not just a name on a tomb or a serial number on the west

coast of Italy, but we know that they were living young people, who had families, were loved and missed terribly when they did not come home. We honor them with the “Be the Difference-Never Again” project, allowing their stories and sacrifice to bring perspective and change to our students. We hope the bringing-to-life of their stories will create an urgency for peace in these young people at a time when there is war again on the continent of Europe.





Italian flavors

Mortadella Bologna

by Consorzio Mortadella Bologna with MASAF

The origins of Mortadella Bologna are to be found in the area of ancient Etruscan Felsina and the Bonomia of the Gallic Boii, places rich in oak forests that provided tasty acorns for the numerous local swine, both wild and domesticated. There are two theories regarding the origin of the name: one is that it derives from “murtatum”, meaning meat finely ground in a mortar, while the second, less probable, is that it comes from “far-

cimen mirtatum”, a Roman name for a pork sausage flavoured with myrtle and prepared in a mortar.

Returning to the Etruscan origin of mortadella, confirmation of this suggestion can be found in the fact that other types of mortadella have survived in the areas once occupied by the Etruscans, or those near them, although different from that of Bologna. It is certain, however, that the production and appre-

ciation of large, heat-dried, finely ground sausages soon extended far beyond the restricted limits of Bologna and the Po Valley area.

In Tuscany, between 1350 and 1355, Giovanni Boccaccio mentions “mortadello” in the final pages of his Decameron, and the Viscounts of Milan in the 15th century willingly offered the city of Bologna a fat ox each year in exchange for fragrant mortadella.

Bologna, on the other hand, became the guarantor of the quality of this special sausage and in 1661 Cardinal Farnese issued a proclamation regulating the production of mortadella, providing one of the first examples of rules similar to those currently in force for PDO and PGI labelling.

Its preparation and the application of the required seals of guarantee were entrusted to the Guild of the “Salaroli” [salted meat vendors], one of Bologna’s oldest, which was already using a pestle and mortar as its emblem in 1376.

Starting from the nineteenth century, mortadella became increasingly popular on Italian and foreign markets. This was partly due to the introduction of the first industrial pork processing companies that adopted and consolidated the recipe and tradition of this sausage.

These companies received a highly favourable response and were encouraged by excellent future prospects.

The product

Mortadella Bologna is a cold cut with an oval-shaped or cylindrical exterior and a compact, non-elastic consistency. When cut, the surface should be smooth, with a uniform bright pink colour, and the slice must contain small, pearly white squares of fatty tissue, well distributed and united with the paste. It has a typical aromatic fragrance and a delicate flavour, with no hint of smoked meat.





To recognise Mortadella Bologna PGI, the label should always be carefully checked for two distinctive elements: the yellow and blue PGI stamp and the words “Mortadella Bologna”. EC recognition provides consumers with valid assurance that when buying products with the PGI label, they are buying quality foods that meet clear requirements and are produced in compliance with precise specifications. EC recognition is also a safeguard for farmers against imitations or unfair competition (agro-piracy).

The production technique of Mortadella Bologna is special and unique in the world. The starting point is meat which is chopped up

and reduced to a creamy emulsion through three different steps, using a specific machine. The production of Mortadella Bologna is divided into the following phases: preparation of the meat; preparation of the fat fingers; mixing; bagging; baking and cooling.

Only pork from striated muscle must be used, with high-quality fat for the “lardelli”; this is mainly taken from the throat, which is the hardest and most refined type of pig fat. Glucose and certain additives may be used, but only in small quantities, and the addition of polyphosphates, colouring agents or milk proteins is prohibited.



The local area

The Mortadella Bologna production area includes the territory of the following regions and provinces: Emilia Romagna, Piedmont, Lombardy, Veneto, province of Trento, Tuscany, Marche and Lazio. Its connection with the traditions of the production area is indisputable and can be attributed to the specific knowledge and skills of the producers, with experienced workers passing on the tradition established over the centuries from generation to generation.



Italian good news

Airbnb, an important support for the economy of small Italian villages

by Millionaire

According to the findings of a study conducted by the Politecnico University of Turin, Piedmont, the research carried out of 270 villages belonging to the list “I borghi più belli d’Italia,” showed that short term rentals and realities such as Airbnb grow rural tourism and Italy’s arti-

stic heritage.

In particular, they help boost the local economy, especially when ads related to accommodation offers are activated in the villages. The study shows that small businesses experience increased revenues, genera-



ting additional positive effects on workers and a more equal distribution of wealth in areas usually characterized by a declining economy.

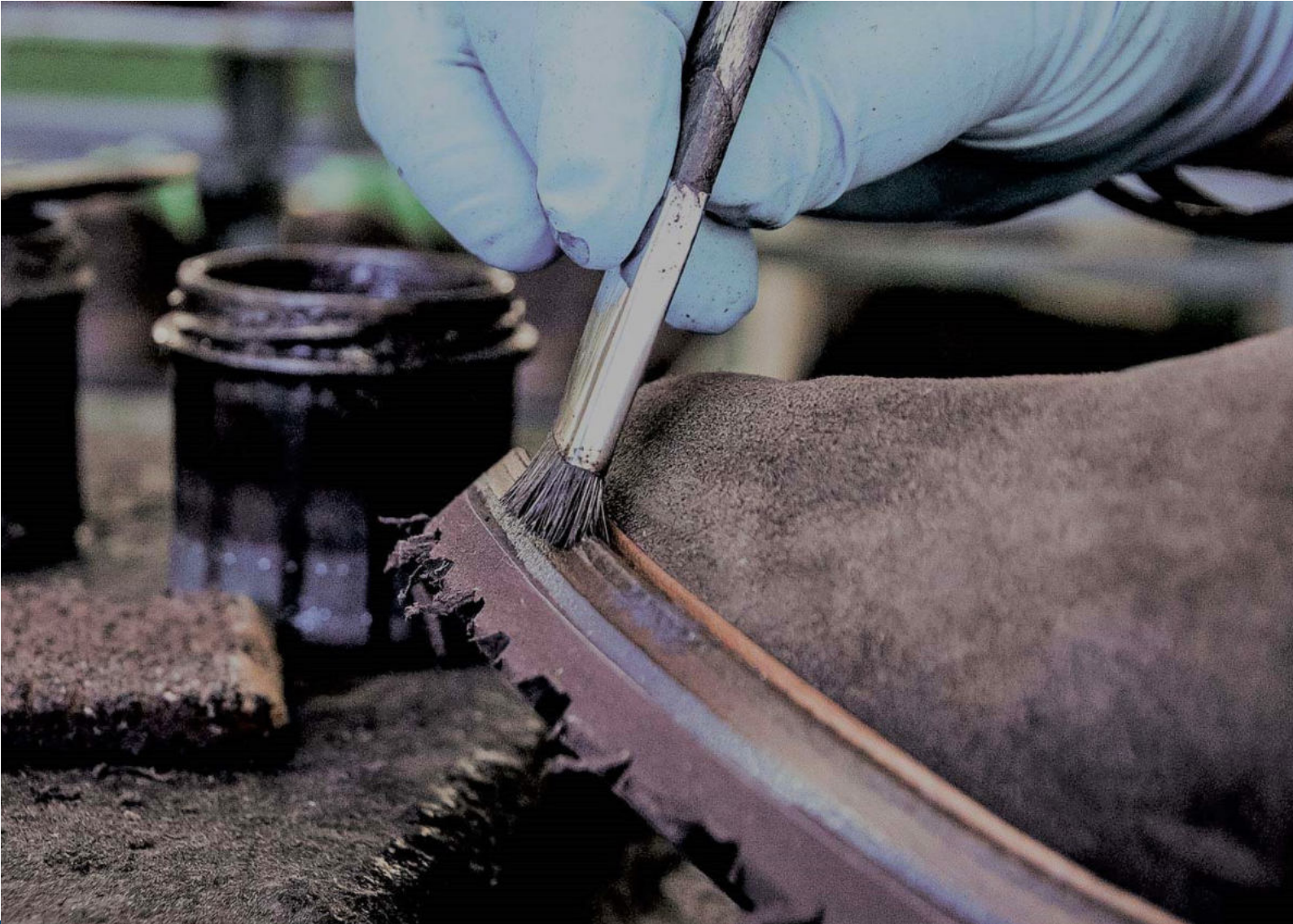
So it is very clear that the presence of businesses like Airbnb in 'marginal economic areas' is also good for economic growth in the long run. Similar activities bring a benefit to micro-businesses that can be quantified as 23 % income growth for up to four years. Among the site users' favorites are centers such as Chiusa, in the province of Bolzano, Trentino Alto Adige, or even small towns such as Bard, in Val D'Aosta , which has about 100 inhabitants.

Immediately tangible effects on local communities include growth in the

hospitality sector (+8.6 %), transportation (+10.8 %), entertainment (+11.5 %) and travel agencies (+7.9 %).

But realities such as the U.S. platform are not only good for the economy: short rentals would also offer concrete help in combating depopulation. Private tours, overnight stays and food and wine experiences in historic homes are real growth opportunities for locals. Indeed, on the Airbnb platform, in addition to rural-type accommodations such as agritourisms, there are also more than 12,000 historic homes, residences often located in sparsely populated areas: in fact, according to data from the Associazione Italiana Dimore Storiche (Italian Association of Historic Houses), 90 % are located in rural areas.





Italian handcrafts

Footwear of Riviera del Brenta

by Camera di Commercio di Venezia with Unioncamere

One of the oldest congregations of shoemakers was founded in Venice in the 13th century. The Statute of the Congregation was reformed in 1268, the year used to calculate the duration of the Art of the Calegheri. The seal of the “Confraternita dei Calegheri” (Cobblers’ Confraternity) has remained a badge for the sector for centuries, which from Venice

moved to the mainland – Riviera del Brenta – where the art lives on and thrives still today.

Riviera del Brenta is the birthplace of footwear that is recognised all over the world for its craftsmanship, elegance and style. In a word: its soul. Here, as of 1898, an ancient craft became a modern industry,

where know-how still holds the value of craftsmanship, of being able to combine passion and expertise, taste and creativity with technology, efficiency and results.

This is Riviera del Brenta. Riviera del Brenta footwear is made up of thousands of names and actions. Created by far-seeing eyes, able to capture inspirations and trends. Sensed through the grain of the leather. Shaped in endless shades of color. Cut along the outline of character and personality. Made to resemble a woman, a man, and their desire for pleasure.

Every day, the designers' creativity and intuition draw upon skilled workers to turn their ideas, visions and projects into reality, in over 500 small and medium-sized enterprises covering the full production chain (from shoemakers, manufacturers of footwear components, materials and accessories, through to professional shoe design studios).

Every day, styles, materials and colors find an unexpected affinity, coming together to give life to new fashions.

Every day, it relives a story of passion and challenge: to fuel creativity and beauty, a task that, first and foremost, is an art.

A style signed by the most famous brands. A quality made of passion and tradition recognizable in the finest details. A brand that thrives on passion and tradition. Riviera del Brenta is a benchmark for many international fashion houses, with the highest quality standards providing the utmost reliability for their business partners. Almost all branded footwear on the world market is produced – largely co-conceived and designed, and partly also sold – by shoe manufacturers in Riviera del Brenta.

A made-to-measure working relationship, which from the 1960s through to today, has enabled Italian style to walk down catwalks around the world.

A unique working tradition that is renewed year in year out, growing in experience and technological capacity. A priceless cultural heritage tied to the evolution of fashion and art.

Every year, students from around the world attend courses at Politecnico Calzaturiero (Footwear Polytechnic), which has succeeded the School for Shoe Designers founded in Stra in 1923.

The Polytechnic is now a training and technological research Centre, which is constantly expanding, designing, developing and patenting exclusive production techniques.





It therefore unites tradition and innovation to train professionals and protect the future of an industry that already has 800 years of history. As of 1961, Riviera del Brenta footwear manufacturers put together their own representation and services association to further develop the sector in industrial, as well as organizational and managerial terms, building a constructive dialogue with unions.

Their collective services include: promotion in foreign markets, organizing fairs and workshops abroad, quarterly updates on styles, materials, fashion trends and colors.

Product

A quality product – contrary to popular belief – is difficult to grasp, as it hides a background of stu-

dy, research, professionalism and tradition that cannot be seen, it can only be discovered. Within a quality shoe, there are many components which are not visible, but which serve to make it “richer”.

Riviera del Brenta footwear has a higher than average cost, yet also a high added value: it offers expertise, art and design, tradition and innovation, research and quality control, expressed as exclusive models and limited series.

The models are designed and manufactured by designers with meticulous training, paying close attention to fashion and design and possessing excellent technical skills.

Over 10,000 highly-skilled staff, both working by hand and using modern machinery, work in com-

panies applying all regulations regarding the workers' health and safety.

The leather, components and accessories are of the utmost quality, and are selected and checked in line with EU criteria for the protection of consumers' health and safety. You know a quality shoe when you feel it: the foot distinguishes it from a low-cost shoe.

Production

In Riviera del Brenta, footwear is produced in industrial facilities, but with artisan results. Every single shoe can be "manipulated" 180-210 times on average during its production process. To turn an idea into a consumer product, it must go through several phases before it reaches the store window.

Many details go unnoticed, such as internal structural elements; yet as a whole, they make up the superior quality for which Riviera del Brenta footwear stands out. A complex art such as this is not easy to explain. Through a visual journey, we will try to make it easier to understand.

The following pages will show a simplified journey through the main steps in the organization of a shoe company: from the designer's table, to shaping and molding, cut-

ting and sewing, assembly and finishing, right through to packaging.

The first phase of manufacturing consists of developing the design of the model, creating the prototype and producing the series using the computer.

The next stage is to cut every single part of the shoe upper and lining (toe, side, heel) for the serial production, and then proceed with the stitching, which is a crucial step. This is performed by experienced hands that use the sewing machine with skill and precision.

The upper is then assembled to the outer sole. This is one of the most testing tasks, giving the shoe its final appearance. The assembly of quality footwear is carried out first by machine and is then completed by hand for the fine adjustments and visual checks. This ensures an appropriate balance and centering of the individual parts in relation to the shape and axis.

The final stage is the finishing and polishing of the shoe: the leather is bought back to a real and natural look by cleaning and treating it with natural waxes and polishing creams. Several polishing stages expose the quality of the leather, giving the shoe its own personality.

Master Shoemakers of Brenta

Shoe manufacturers from Riviera del Brenta use the old seal of the Venetian Confraternita dei Calegheri (Cobblers' Confraternity), dating back to the 13th century as their mark of origin. Venice had dictated the sizes and shapes of the soles, that all "cerdonei" from Venice and Padua had to conform to.

The coat of arms bear the words "S. FRATELITA CASOLARI REGNATI" "S." means Sacred, "Fratelita" means Confraternity, "Casolari" means Shoemakers and Solemakers, "Regnati" means the regulations by means of statute.

The inscription surrounds the symbols of the shoe knife on the left and the "calamerie" (measurement

units to mark and cut soles) and sole on the right. The first center of the confraternity was the current

Academy of Fine Arts

In 1446 it moved once and for all to Campo S. Tomà to the building since called "Scuola dei Calegheri" (Shoemakers' School). The original seal is preserved at the Correr Museum in the St. Mark's Square in Venice.

It may only be used as a logo by the "Master Shoemakers of Brenta", as sole heirs of the art of Calegheri Valdez (13th century). The logo is registered and filed in all countries worldwide. Its protection and dissemination is managed by the "Consorzio Maestri Calzaturieri





del Brenta” (Brenta Master Shoemaker Consortium).

It is a symbol that identifies the geographical area of excellence, called “Riviera del Brenta”, known for its production of high-quality footwear, spanning along the waterway connecting Venice and Padua.

The area

The Brenta Riviera is an urban area between Padua and Venice, stretching along the banks of the Brenta Canal. It is the ancient natural channel of the Brenta river, branching away up to Stra and flowing from west to east into the Venetian Lagoon in Fusina: a charming route marked by history, culture, architectural beauty, and traditional food and wine. The area and its landscape are of great historical value for its numerous Venetian Villas.

The Brenta Riviera includes the towns of Stra, Fiesso d’Artico, Dolo, Mira, Oriago and Malcontenta. Bro-

adly speaking, it covers the whole area including the towns of Campagna Lupia, Camponogara, Campolongo Maggiore, Mira, Pianiga, as well as the footwear business towns of Stra, Fiesso d’Artico, Dolo, Fosso’, Vigonovo in the Venice area and, near the Brenta river in the Padua area, the towns of Vigonza, Noventa Padovana and Saonara.

Thanks to its unique strategic position, and to the Republic of Venice, between the 16th and 18th century, this placid river and surrounding area saw a period of great splendor, as shown by the many fine resort homes of wealthy Venetian aristocrats.

To design the buildings, great architects and painters were called upon, including Palladio, Scamozzi, Longhena, Frigimelica, Zelotti and Tiepolo. These wonderful residences were used by Venetian nobles as a reference point to manage their inland affairs, but also for times of leisure and rest.



Italian wine

One of Campania's Greatest White Grapes with Aia dei Colombi Falanghina del Sannio

by Jennifer Gentile Martin for www.vinotravelsitaly.com

This month we venture to the region of Campania highlighting the native white grape, Falanghina. Campania is a region in southern Italy located on the western coast along the Tyrrhenian Sea.

With Naples as the capital of Campania that most are familiar with, maybe you've also been fortunate to travel there to explore the Amalfi Coast and the ancient ruins of Pompeii. A region with amazing history and amazing wines.



The winery – Aia dei Colombi

The Aia dei Colombi winery I'm featuring today is not one very large in size, occupying about 25 acres in the hills east of Naples in the towns of Castelvenere and Guardia Sanframondi. The winery was established in only 2002 founded by Maria and Marcello Pascale. Originally much of the fruit had been sold off to other producers, but since their sons, Gaetano and Marcello, have become involved in the business they now produce their own wines from 3 primary varietals including Falanghina, Fiano and Aglianico.

The grape – Falanghina

Falanghina is a grape that is believed to have arrived in southern Italy by the Greeks in the 7th century BC. Campania claims 95% of Italy's Falanghina plantings and the Sannio DOC that I'm sharing today is where 80-90% of Falanghina is grown.

A key figure and local producer, Leonardo Mustilli, was instrumental in the Falanghina grape thriving. He had found an ancient vine of Falanghina and began to work with the grape to be the first to release it as a single varietal in 1979 showing the qualities that this grape possesses to stand on its own.



There are two different varieties of this grape, Falanghina Flegrea and Falanghina Beneventana. Falanghina Flegrea is typically lighter and brighter with showing notes of citrus, stone fruits, pears and apples. Falanghina Beneventana, on the other hand, is more concentrated showing more tropical and floral notes with some herbal nuances.

Falanghina is a grape that has a yellowish skin that loves the warm, dry Mediterranean climate, especially the volcanic soils of this region as well. Most of the wines made from Falanghina are made in stainless steel, but you may see the use of oak with some producers. The flavor profile will vary depending on the use of Falanghina Flegrea or Falanghina Beneventana grapes along with the specific terroirs of where the grapes are grown.

The Wine

The 2020 Aia dei Colombi Falanghina del Sannio DOC Guardia Sanframondi I purchased was brightly straw colored with pretty aromas of

citrus mostly and green apple. The wine had a tingly acidity that lasted throughout to waken up that palate showing lemon, tart apple and some minerality. A decent finish with some length. Retailing about \$15-17 a bottle it was worth the purchase. Although it's always important to know the top producers making high quality wines to get a good sense of the typicity of these grapes, I always enjoy those I haven't heard of that may be smaller as those can sometimes be the ones that surprise you. ABV 14%



Jennifer Martin is the author of the popular blog Vino Travels: www.vinotravelsitaly.com.
Learn all about Italian wine, food and culture through all 20 regions of Italy.



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Italian gardens and parks

The Botanical Garden of Collemaggio, L'Aquila

by Italian Botanical Heritage

The Botanical Garden of Collemaggio is located near the church with the same name, on the outskirts of the city of L'Aquila. Originally, the garden was used by the Celestinian monks who lived in the basilica, and then in 1965 it began property of the Faculty of Mathematical, Chemical, Physical and Natural Sciences of the University of L'Aquila.

At the rear of the basilica a garden was created for recreational and ornamental purpose: it was called the Transumanza Garden because that was the original place of departure of the transhumant trip to Puglia.

The garden has an area of about eight hectares and is organized into sectors:





some of them are the main habitat of Abruzzo, while others gather species with similar characteristics, but not necessarily native. 460 different species are grown or cultivated, including many endemic species of Abruzzo, ancient cultivars of pear, apple and cherry, and some trees with mistletoe (*Viscum album*), which is normally not that widespread in the Italian botanical gardens.

Main areas of the Garden

Garden of peonies: where the herbaceous and shrub varieties, grown all around the world, can be seen in all their glory.

Succulent: grown in a cold greenhouse realized under a wall, so as to create a sheltered environment for the

survival to the harsh winter temperatures.

Saffron Garden: for the tradition of the cultivation of saffron (*Crocus sativus*) in L'Aquila basin, which dates back to the second half of the thirteenth century.

Arboretum: developed in collaboration with the 8 mountain communities that have provided plants representative of their territory, such as linden (*Tilia platyphyllos*), white willow (*Salix alba*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), oak (*Quercus cerris*), field and Neapolitan maple (*Acer campestre* and *A. neapolitanum*), downy oak (*Quercus pubescens*), hornbeam (*Ostrya carpinifolia*), and the black pine (*Pinus nigra*).



Butterfly Garden: made with species such as red valerian (*Centranthus ruber* subsp. *Ruber*) and summer lilac (*Buddleja davidii*), named by the British as “butterfly bush”.

Spontaneous Elm Forest: consisting of elms adults (*Ulmun minor* subsp. *Minor*) that have not been attacked by the Dutch elm disease, a disease caused by a fungus responsible for the mortality of this species in Europe and North America.

Flowerbeds teaching: the area where the morphological and physio-

logical characteristics of the plants are highlighted for educational purposes such as dyeing plants (*Isatis tinctoria*, *Anthemis tinctoria*) and toxic plants (the hemlock of Socrates, *Conium maculatum*, and stramonium, *Datura stramonium*).

Path for the blind: walkway with the plants located close to stones, interspersed with grass crops. The change of path has the purpose of indicating to blind visitors the presence of the plant, accompanied by a special tag identification of the species in Braille.



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