

PAPPAGALLO



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When grapes came by the carload to Rockford

True story of how local winemakers helped save California wine industry
By Mike Doyle

A little known chapter in local history from the Prohibition Era paid a small part in helping to save California's wine industry. Beginning in the 1920s, it was common to see Italians from South Rockford load California grapes into their cars and trucks that had been shipped in specially ordered boxcars. The practice of meeting trains with grapes to be pressed into wine continued in Rockford long after the end of Prohibition.

The Volstead Act of 1918 that prohibited the sale of alcohol in the U.S. put a severe strain on vintners in California. The Volstead Act banned the production, importation, transportation, and sale of alcohol until the 18th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was repealed in 1933. Prohibition was a remnant of the Progressive movement in the early 20th century and was supported by the Anti-Saloon League, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and rural Protestants.

While growing grapes under Prohibition was legal, making wine from them for sale was not. California wine-growers didn't want to see their vines ripped out and replaced with something new and possibly less profitable, so a group of them lobbied Congress to allow them to produce grapes and "grape bricks" for sale for individual consumption. This loophole became known as Section 29, which allowed every household to make up to 200 gallons of "non-intoxicating cider and fruit juices." Of course, all of these individuals, including many of Rockford's Italian immigrants, followed this to the letter of the law ... of course.

Boxcars filled with crates of California grapes soon made their way to New York City and points in between, including Chicago and Rockford. In 1923, a *Chicago Tribune* columnist wrote that Chicagoans produced about 12.5 millions of gallons of home-made wine, which equals about "twenty gallons for every family in Chicago, or about four and one-half gallons for every man woman and child."

In Rockford, four groups of families or businesses arranged for California grapes to be shipped by rail to Italians in South Rockford. In most cases, it was the head of the family who placed an order for grapes through these groups – Gasparani-Oliveri Funeral Home, Leggio Fruit Company, Piemonte Bakery or the Capriola family.

Steve McKeever, who runs Piemonte Bakery, recalled that his grandfather Luigi Dodaro ordered grapes for others. Steve even remembers being a part of it. "I unloaded rail cars," he said. "You bet." He said his grandfather would hire kids from St. Anthony



Image from Lodi Grapevine Commission

School to help unload the crates of grapes. "A lot of them worked at the bakery," Steve said. "For them, it was a rite of passage."

Steve said his grandfather ordered grapes during and after Prohibition. "My grandfather was one of the largest (distributors)," he said.

Domenic Messina was one of the kids from South Rockford who helped to unload grapes at the Illinois Central Depot. "They would bring a carload of grapes from California, put them on a spur track behind the depot, and people would come in their cars and trucks and find what they ordered," he said. "Then we would help to unload the grapes – the muscatel, zinfandel."

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*GRIAA to honor
Salvato,
Barbagallo,
M. Spinello & Son*

Steve Salvato (*above*) is named to the GRIAA Hall of Fame. Story on Page 3. Jim Barbagallo and M. Spinello & Son will receive Special Recognition awards. Story on Page 4. Tommaso Celani (*right*) of Ferentino, Italy, holds the Italian flag on stage at the opening ceremony of Festa Italiana. He was one of 14 students to visit Rockford with two teachers as part of the Rockford Italian Sister City Alliance.





Experience Christmas in Rome



In Piazza Navona, Babbo Natale (Santa Claus) points to the North Pole

Piazzas, churches, streets make the holiday colorful

By Joan Schmelzle

I have spent three Christmases as a tourist in my favorite city of Rome, the most recent in 2015.

The season starts officially on December 8 when Pope Francis comes to Piazza di Spagna, and a fireman on a ladder delivers his flowers to the statue of the Immaculate Conception. Via del Corso and the shopping streets leading from it to Piazza di Spagna are crowded with people admiring the beautiful windows decorated for the season — and shopping, of course.

Many of the shops use English in their decorations. Piazzas in this area often feature large trees decorated by company products such as purses by Fendi and BMW insignias. A huge tree usually sits at the top of the Spanish Steps, but in 2015 the steps were being refurbished and were closed. Instead near the top was a huge lighted picture of the Nativity.

Piazzas around town are decorated. Piazza Venezia in front of the Victor Emmanuel monument has decorations decided by the city administration. In 2010, lighted tubing illustrated the Nativity scene and Santa with his reindeer. Trumpet blowing angels of the lit tubing decorated Michelangelo's stairway up to the Capitoline Hill. In 2012, there were just red and white flowers. In 2015, a huge lighted tree brightened the square. A huge lighted tree also stood in front of the Colosseum.

Of course, St. Peter's Square has a huge tree and Nativity scene. But this Nativity and the large scene inside the basilica are not uncovered until Midnight Mass so I visit them later. The Baby does not appear in any church Nativity scene until Midnight Mass or whatever Mass is designated as such. St Peter's scenes change from year to year, and there are always crowds viewing them. The display outside is lit at night for viewing. Inside the scene always shows the angel awakening the shepherds. The Holy Family is there and the Magi join them on Epiphany, January 6. Inside you can see running water, a sky shifting from night to day, and some figures moving — a boy catching fish and a girl scrubbing laundry.

Two special places to visit during the season are the exhibit of

100 Presepi and the International Museum of the Presepio. The first in a hall in back of Santa Maria del Popolo features Nativities made out of all kinds of material. Some are beautiful, some strange looking, and some even political like the 2015 scene of the Holy Family in a roofed shed surrounded by oil barrels and on one side a tank pointing away from the shed and on the other a manned artillery cannon. They seem to be protecting the Holy Family.



Holy Family display at Presepio Museum

The museum has varying hours, but is open on Christmas Day around 10 a.m. It is in the basement of the church of Saints Quirico and Giulietta on Via Tor de' Conti. It, too, is full of beautiful, different, and even plain works, all featuring the Holy Family and other additions to scenes such as shepherds, kings, food, animals and furnishings. I would not miss a visit to either of these places in Rome at Christmas time.

How do I celebrate Christmas in Rome? First I attend the English Mass at San Silvestro, a block from my hotel. The Irish priests serve *prosecco* and *panettone* in their apartments after this. On Christmas Day I head to the museum stopping in open churches on the way there and afterwards to see the Presepi. Since many Roman restaurants are closed for family time for lunch, I revert to my Irish blood and have beef and Guinness and a pint at the Scholars Pub. After a rest at the hotel, I join Romans visiting neighborhood churches to see the Presepi, the Child placed in front of the main altars, and other decorations. And how does the season end? Along with the Magi and Old Befana looking for them and the Child, on January 6 come the huge bright signs proclaiming "*Salde!*" or in English "*Sale!*"



Steve Salvato roots out family stories

By Mike Doyle

Steve Salvato's journey to become the leading genealogist for Italian Americans in Rockford began when he got his first computer. "I'm a full-blooded Sicilian who had an interest in history, and when I got my first computer, I wanted to get some genealogy software," Steve said. "I started working on my own family, and I enjoyed it so much that I expanded it to include all Italian families in Rockford."

Today, Steve has more than 150,000 names in his database and has connections to sources as close as Beloit, Wis., and as far away as New Orleans, Italy and Sicily. His unselfish work with local families to discover their roots led to his selection to the Greater Rockford Italian American Association Hall of Fame. Steve will be honored at GRIAA's annual dinner on Saturday, October 8, at Giovanni's Restaurant, as well as at the Columbus Day Mass on Sunday, October 9, at St. Anthony of Padua Church.

"[Steve] donates and volunteers his personal time and materials to help many Italian American families to research their Italian roots," Shirley Martignoni Fedeli said in her nomination letter. "He especially has surnames from western Sicily ... and focuses on the towns of Sambuca di Sicilia, Aragona, Marsala, Roccamena, Plana degli Albanese, and Comporeale."

Steve has donated his time to work with people seeking their Italian roots at several events, including Festa Italiana in 2007 and 2016, the Rockford Public Library Main Branch and St. Ambrogio Society in 2008, the Ethnic Heritage Museum in 2007, 2009, and 2016. "He has presented sessions for anyone who wishes to learn more about their Italian roots," Shirley said.

Steve, who works at the Winnebago County Adult Probation Department, graduated from Iowa State University with a history major. "I grew up in a very traditional Italian family," he said. "One of my grandfathers, Angelo Cacciatore, was born in Aragona, Sicily, and all of my great-grandparents were born in Sicily." His genealogy research began in 1999 and quickly expanded beyond his family. "I just enjoyed it so much," he said. "It's like detective work. Then once I got started giving information to people, I was pleased at the reaction to their family histories."

Early on, he realized that many people had little knowledge of their past. "That was one thing that amazed me," Steve said. "A lot of older people just didn't want to talk about [their past]. My grandparents did. They shared that with me and my parents continued that." His family consists of his parents Phil and Fran Salvato, and a sister Judi Guenzler, brother-in-law Scott Guenzler and their children Kyle and Kaitlyn.

Two of his favorite stories about searches with individuals came at the Festa Italia, where Steve set up shop once again this year in the Cultural Tent. One was a woman who was unable to find her father's entry at Ellis Island, where many Italians first set foot on American soil. "She had looked for years and was not able to find



Hall of Fame nominee Steve Salvato works to help trace a family history for this couple at the 2016 Festa Italiana

it," he said. Steve looked up his name, the date of his arrival and his place of birth. But his birthplace was different than what she assumed it was. "Based on that information, I said, 'This is where your dad was born.'" When she insisted that wasn't the place, he showed her the manifest of the ship he had sailed on with the correct name of his village. "She started crying," he said. "She had been looking for it for years and she said, 'I finally got it. I had the wrong village.'"

Another man sought information on his father, who he said was called Alex. "That's what everybody called him, the man said. Some people say it's Calogero and it's not," Steve said. "So he gets on his cell phone and calls his mom and asks what his father's name was. She said it was Calogero." The man insisted he was called Alex but people just called him Calogero. Steve was able to verify the man's first name was Calogero. The man shook his head and said, "I never knew my father's real name was Calogero."

Steve also is aware that learning about one's past is more than names and dates. "You learn a lot about the culture," he said. "That's what I find interesting."

The Hall of Fame recognition is humbling for Steve. "I really feel honored and blessed by being named," he said. "I do this [genealogy] out of the love of my heritage. I get joy seeing people getting excited when they find out something about their family. This is something I enjoy and I like to pass it on."

To our readers:

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of the Pappagallo, the first with color pages and advertising. In this issue, Boylan High School teacher Rose Mercuri-Ford, a native of Italy, writes our language feature in place of Theresa Cascio, who is taking some time off. We do the best to present stories and photos that represent our Italian heritage on a local, national, and world-wide scale. Let us know how we are doing. We love to hear from our readers.

We are glad to provide you with the Pappagallo without a subscription fee. In order to increase our readership, we would like to begin to offer issues to you via email at some future date. Until then, we will continue to send it to you by mail. Because we would like to provide you with information between issues, we would like to gather the email addresses of our readers. To do that, please go to griaa.org and open the "About Us" folder. Then click on Officers and Committee Structures. At the top of the page, you will find our email address: info@griaa.org. Please send us your email address via that path. And don't forget that past issues of the Pappagallo can be found on the website griaa.org.



Jim Barbagallo, M. Spinello & Sons earn Special Recognition honors

By Mike Doyle

Jim Barbagallo and M. Spinello and Son Locksmiths/Safe/Security, each of which have made significant impacts in local businesses, have been selected to receive the 2016 Special Recognition Awards by the Greater Rockford Italian American Association at its annual Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Awards Banquet at Giovanni's on Saturday, October 8, 2016.

Jim Barbagallo will receive his award posthumously, having passed away July 11, 2014. Matt Spinello, James R. (Jim) White and his son James J. (Jimi) White will receive the award for M. Spinello and Son.



Jim Barbagallo

A man of many talents, Jim Barbagallo has been recognized for his contributions that went beyond the Rockford area. "Jim had a passion for his heritage, and for making the Rockford area a better place for kids to grow up with art appreciation," said his wife, Karen Barbagallo. Jim worked for 28 years as a Realtor for Gambino Realtors and for 40 years at Joseph Behr and Sons, but he always found time to volunteer for causes he supported. He served on the board of directors of Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful and the Rockford Area Arts Council for four years and was the chairperson of the arts council from 2011-13. His love for pottery led to his involvement with the arts council. From 2004-13, he was on the board of Patriots Gateway Center and also served as its president.

"He got involved with Patriots Gateway through Jim Flodin, and that became one of his passions," Karen said. He also served two terms as the president of the Rockford Area Association of Realtors, and for 20 years was involved with the Illinois Association of Realtors and the National Association of Realtors.

"Jim had two full-time jobs and still had time to volunteer on countless non-profit committees and participate in numerous art shows and donate his pottery with endless generosity. If you asked him if he "spread himself too thin, he would just say no," Karen said.

Jim has two children, Shawn Barbagallo and Amy Barbagallo, and two step-sons, Steve Coates and Jay Patch. He also has two grandchildren, Alexis Patch and Claire Coates.

Asked how he would have responded to being honored by GRIAA, Karen said, "He would have been surprised." But he would have been glad, too. "He was very proud to be Italian," Karen said. "He was actually Sicilian and was always quick to point that out."

M. Spinello and Son/Safe/Security Experts have been in the locksmith and security business in Rockford since 1921. Matt Spinello Sr. started the company in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1905, and, three generations later, the family is still in business. Matt, Sr., was followed by his son Joe Spinello in the 1950s. In 1979, Joe was

replaced by his son-in-law James R. White. Since 2006, the business has been run by Matt Sr.'s great-grandsons Jimi and Matt Spinello,

"That is pretty remarkable," said Jimi. "After four generations, the odds of continuing a business are in a small percentile. It's hard to keep that going but we do it with the help of our customers. Our customers have done that for us." M. Spinello and Son has evolved from sharpening push lawnmowers and repairing guns to high tech security equipment including HD video surveillance, card access systems as well as complete locksmith and safe services.

Matt Spinello Sr. was quite inventive and was issued patents in the 1920s for a set of scales, a cigar lighter, a device for controlling elevators, a non slip clutch for push lawn mowers and a new type of lock. After opening his shop in Rockford, he provided mobile



Joe Spinello (right) is in front of M. Spinello and Son in this photo taken in 1932

service, riding to service calls on a motorcycle with a sidecar. In the early days, he serviced lawnmowers as well.

Both families are descended from Italian immigrants. James R. White's grandfather came to Rockford from Ferentino, Italy as Joseph Bianci. "But he had trouble finding work," James said, "There was a stigmatism because he was Italian. So he changed it to White."

James R. White, Jimi White and Matt Spinello are going to be recognized at the GRIAA event. "This is an honor," Matt said. "A family business like this just doesn't happen."

James R. White pointed out that the Spinellos are a close knit family. "Taking care of business is what we do," he said.

"Being in market with 10 different locksmiths, one with the same last name, and different security systems over 111 years and we're still here ... it is an honor for us," Jimi said. "We are right there on top."

For Matt, following in the family business was a natural thing. "I was around it all of my life," he said. "I knew how to do a lot of stuff before I started working here. It was kind of natural.

"Not only has our business been handed down through four generations, but so has the heart, craftsmanship and philosophies. We think our great-grandfather and grandfather would be proud of us."

M. Spinello and Son is not connected or affiliated with any other Spinello Lock company.



Hall of Fame

And



Special Recognition Award Banquet

Saturday, October 8, 2016

Giovanni's Restaurant

6:00 pm Social Hour

7:00 pm Dinner

Music provided by the Mike Alongi Trio

8:00 pm Awards Program

Menu#1: **Filet of Sirloin:** Burgundy demi glaze

With Roasted Cut Potatoes, Baked Butternut Squash

#2: **Chicken Diane:** Free range semi boneless Chicken Breast

With classic sauce of mushrooms, shallots, brandy and Dijon, Roasted Fingerlings, Baked Butternut Squash

#3: **White Lasagna:** Layers of kale, cauliflower, roasted mushrooms, lemon ricotta, alfredo sauce

(Children's Meals \$15: Chicken Tenders, French Fries & Fruit Cup)

Turtle Cheesecake

\$40.00 per person

R.S.V.P. to Anna Mirabile (815) 871-7789

or email zabut66@gmail.com

*******DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS IS SEPT 30TH!*******

Please make your check payable to GRIAA. Send the following information:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____ Entrée# _____

Name: _____ Phone # _____ Entrée # _____

Name: _____ Phone # _____ Entrée # _____

Name: _____ Phone #: _____ Entrée# _____

Name: _____ Phone # _____ Entrée # _____

Mail to: GRIAA – 1525 West Street, Rockford, IL 61102

Questions? Contact Rosie Scalise Sheridan at (815) 978-4779 or email sheridanrosie@yahoo.com

*******DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS IS SEPT 30TH!*******



Ethnic Heritage Museum honors Angie Germano as Woman of the Year



Angie Germano

Angelene "Angie" Germano, who was honored as the Italian Gallery Woman of the Year by the Ethnic Heritage Museum, has roots that are deep in South Rockford. "I went to St. Anthony School," said Angie, who was honored on Sunday, April 24, 2016. "My Corirossi grandparents lived on Cunningham, just two blocks north of our house," she said. "My grandpa Paul Sacco taught me how to make change at his grocery store that was at the corner of Sanford and Morgan. His house was connected to the store. The store had a big window where the butcher block was. Growing up, I just thought everyone was Italian!"

Angie was a month away from her 20th birthday when she married John Germano in 1958. They had two daughters -- Maria Schlickman and Teresa Myers -- and have ten grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

The current president of the Altar and Rosary Society of St. Anthony Church, Angie is a 15-year member of the National Catholic Society of Foresters for which she has served as Court 674 treasurer. In 2013, she was nominated for the National Fraternalist of the Year. That same year, she was selected to represent St. Anthony Church as its Woman of the Year and was honored at the Rockford Deanery Banquet as a one of the Women of Inspiration. She also is an advocate for the Alzheimer's Association, Rock River Pantry, Rockford Rescue Mission and the LZ Peace Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Most of all she is loved by her family and was humbled to receive this honor. "I am so traditional," she said. "I am a pasta maker. My kids love my sugo. When they called me (to inform her of the honor), it was overwhelming. I am glad I am able to represent my heritage. I am just proud to be a representative to honor the Italians in Rockford."

Anthony DiTullio honored as Ethnic Heritage Museum Man of the Year

When Dominic Anthony DiTullio Jr. looked at a plaque with names of those selected as Man of the Year by the Ethnic Heritage Museum, he was humbled. "Those guys did wonderful things; they were pillars of the community and have done some great things," Anthony said. "I'm humbled to be on that list." Anthony was honored as the museum's 2016 Italian Gallery Man of the Year on July 24. "I've got a tall order to live up to, to rise to the same level that they reached," he said.



Anthony DiTullio

Anthony and his wife Kareen have two children -- Giovanna, a student at Boylan High School, and Dominic, a student at Holy Family School. This summer, they were part of an extended family trip to Italy, where Anthony connected with his roots. "I have come to realize over the last couple of months that we all need to look back where we came from," he said. "What I'm going to pass onto my children [may be] less than what was passed on to me. As you

get older, you realize that. My awareness of that is greater now, and I want to help other people discover their heritage."

The third of four children born to Dominic Anthony DiTullio and Patricia Ann Castrogiovanni-DiTullio, Anthony was born in Davenport, Iowa, in 1966. His siblings are Maria, Paul and Michael. Beginning in the 1940s, his maternal grandfather Anthony Castrogiovanni operated the Sanitary Meat Market at 2215 East State Street. In December 1995, Anthony and Kareen started DiTullio's Italian Market & Café. The market currently occupies part of the commercial building that his grandfather operated. "I feel a sense of pride that I am operating my business today in a building so rich in history," he said.

October 1 is deadline for GRIAA's Immigration Project

October 1, 2016, is the deadline for Rockford Italian families to submit their stories for inclusion in GRIAA's Immigration Project. About 50 families have contributed their stories that will be published in the book *Histories of Rockford Italian Families*. The project began several years ago as part of GRIAA's Culture and Education Committee.

Families are asked to write a story and submit a photograph that will be included in the collection. For "how to" information, go to GRIAA.org and click on committees and find the Culture and Education Committee. There you will find information and formatting guides as well as a user friendly Family History Form, from which you can organize and write your family history. The site also includes the family histories that have been submitted, which also will provide a guide.

If your family history is not included in GRIAA's book, it will be because no one submitted information. For further information, contacted GRIAA co-chairperson Frank Perrecone at 815.962.2700 or frankperrecone@aol.com.

GRIAA participates in Cultural Heritage Celebration

By Valeri DeCastris

Midway Village Museum, the Center for Learning in Retirement and Rock Valley College sponsored a new ethnic event Rockford's Cultural Heritage Celebration on Saturday, April 23, 2016. The Greater Rockford Italian American Association (GRIAA) hosted a table highlighting the Italian culture and Rockford's Italian American community in the event held at the museum. The day-long event featured various ethnic groups from our community which showcased educational displays, artifacts, clothing, lectures, and foods.

Displays of GRIAA's family history project, photos, artifacts, and educational materials adorned the Italian table. Valeri DeCastris, Lisa Speck, Karen Cantele, Anna Drog and Frank Perrecone staffed the display on behalf of GRIAA. Anthony DiTullio of DiTullio's Italian Market and Café supplied cannoli as the sample Italian food for the participants. Also, GRIAA's Amici Italiani dance troupe performed traditional dances and Holly Mathur spoke on Rockford's Italian Sister City (Ferentino) program.

The museum's immigration exhibit, *Many Faces One Community*, featured costumed interpreters who shared our local history. Bob Bertolasi compiled a DVD of photos from Rockford's immigrant past and traditions that ran throughout the event.



Ten types of food you should never serve to an Italian at an Italian restaurant

- Meat lover's pizza. Keep in mind that the less, the better.
- Chicken with pasta
- Alfredo pasta. In Italy, it's simply pasta with butter, the simplest of dishes. Keep it that way.
- Chicken Parmesan
- Spaghetti and meatballs. Meatballs aren't supposed to be big, but very small.
- Pepperoni pizza
- Garlic bread. True Italians don't eat bread with pasta.
- Carbonara with bacon
- Hawaiian pizza. Eat pineapple in Hawaii, not on pizza
- Mac and cheese. Not good. Pasta with four cheeses. Good.

Sources: Iloveitalianfood.org. You can also enjoy this list by searching Vincenzo's Plate on YouTube.

Top Italian t-shirt or sweatshirt messages

- My Italian Family is temperamental – half-temper, half-mental
- When life gives you lemons, make limoncello
- Genco Olive Oil: Product of Sicily (from the "Godfather")
- O'talian (Italian colors inside a shamrock)
- St. Patrick was Italian
- FBI (Full Blooded Italian)
- IBM (Italian by Marriage)
- And on the eighth day, God created The Italian – and the devil stood at attention
- I'm Italian. I can't keep calm, *capesh?*
- The best people have a root in the boot
- Never underestimate the power of an Italian woman with a wooden spoon

Continued from page 1

Various groups had their preferences, Domenic said. "Usually the Venetians took the zinfandel and the Sicilians the muscatel. A lot of times they would blend the grapes – get a couple of cases of zinfandel and blend it with the muscatel to get a different color. When we got done unloading, we used to get a bunch of grapes ... that's how we got paid."

Grapes came from several regions of California, including Lodi, which is located in the Central Valley west of Napa Valley.

"We made a killing off it (the wine trains)," said Molly Djork of the Lodi Winegrape Commission. "There are stories of growers sending the grapes off with notes to tell you how not to make wine. Of course, they were really detailed notes telling you how to make wine."

Thomas Pinney's book "A History of Winemaking in America" notes that in 1919 before Prohibition became the law, 55 million gallons of commercial wine were produced in America. From 1922 to 1929, it was estimated that 111 million gallons of wine were produced in American homes. "The nation had turned to wine making," Pinney wrote. "No one imagined that the demand was remotely like what it proved to be." It was suggested that Andrew Volstead should have been enshrined as the "patron saint" of the San Joaquin Valley in California.

"The stories ... are certainly an established part of California wine lore and saved many a grape grower financially during prohibition," C.M. Lucy Joseph, curator of the Wine Microbe Collection at the Department of Viticulture and Enology at the University of California Davis. "While it saved some growers, it was a double-edged sword as wine quality suffered for many years after



Graphic by Jill Paul

that due to the grape varieties that were planted for shipment, rather than quality."

From 1919 to 1926, California wine growers actually expanded their farms from 97,000 acres to 681,000. But with that came an increase in the price of grapes from \$10 to \$100 a ton. In 1924, the price reached a high of \$375 a ton. "One Italian social club in Minnesota, seeking to acquire grapes

for home winemaking, sent a grocer named Cesar Mondavi to California to acquire a suitable supply," Reid Mitenbuler wrote in drinks.serious-east.com. "Fortune beckoned, and Mondavi quickly abandoned the life of a Minnesota grocer and moved his family, including young son Robert, to the Golden State."

However, as Lucy Joseph pointed out, quality was affected as growers found ways to cut corners. "Growers discovered that one way to produce a lot of grapes quickly was to rip out the current crop and replace them with Alicante Bouschet -- a fast-growing, thick-skinned grape that would travel "particularly well on freight trains going all the way to New York's Grand Central Station," Randy Caparosa wrote in the Wines of Lodi, California, blog.

Another California grower produced grape bricks that when dissolved in water would ferment into wine. The most popular brand was called Vin-Glo, which advertised in newspapers including the *Chicago Tribune*. But, again, the growers had a conscience and didn't want consumers to produce anything illegal, so they warned them that "after dissolving the brick in a gallon of water, do not place the liquid in a jug away in the cupboard for twenty days because then it would turn into wine."

"By the time Prohibition was repealed in 1933, much damage had been done and the California wine industry was largely outfitted to produce lousy wines," Mitenbuler wrote. It took six decades for the industry to recover. In 1961, there were only 800 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon in all of the U.S., 450 for Riesling and 300 for Chardonnay, which are miniscule when compared to the 424,000 acres available at the time. The U.S. wine industry didn't fully recover until 1976, when a California wine finally outperformed its French counterpart in a blind taste test in Paris. Even today, Americans can legally make up to 200 gallons of wine a year for a household of two adults – 100 gallons for a single adult.

Rockford's connection to the wine trains didn't end with the repeal of Prohibition in 1933. "As a kid in the late 1960s and early '70s, my grandfather [Angelo DiTullio] would take us in his car down South Main to the train station," said Anthony DiTullio, who operates DiTullio's Italian Market & Café in Rockford. "We would walk into the train car, pick up the crates of grapes and load them into his car. Then we'd drive back to his house, stack the grapes in his basement and start crushing the grapes."

Anthony's memory of what happened then was played out in hundreds of other Italian-American families at the time. "Every holiday, he would go into the wine room and decant a bottle of wine of red and a bottle of wine and start the meal. The great thing about the homemade wine is that it is unfiltered, so you had that cloudiness and that distinct, wonderful flavor. And it went with the food ... that was the best part."

Additional source: smileandgun.wordpress.com.



Columbus was 1st but not the only Italian explorer

We are grateful for Amerigo and others not so well known

As we celebrate Columbus Day on October 12, Italian Americans also need to be aware of the other Italian explorers who displayed leadership and courage. These men helped make North and South America places for immigrants of all the world's nations come to forge new lives with their families and helped to provide bountiful futures.

Cristoforo Colombo (Christopher Columbus) – October 12, 1492 is the day he landed on an island in the Caribbean, opening the New World. Approximately half of this voyage was financed by Italian merchants in Spain.

Giovanni Caboto (John Cabot) – June 24, 1497 is the day he landed on North America to claim it for England. He also planted the flag of Venice on that day. Caboto was born in Genoa around 1450 but moved to Venice when he was 11. Sailing for King Henry VII, Caboto's voyage was fully financed by him and Italian merchants in Bristol, England. Benjamin Franklin mentioned this fact in 1775 to protest British oppression. On his first voyage, he made landfall in Newfoundland or Labrador but believed he had found a northern route to Asia. He returned to England a success and was able to sail again to the New World in 1498. That venture was not as successful and he faded from history after 1499. However, he set the course for England's rise to power in the 16th and 17th centuries, and we speak English today because of him.

Amerigo Vespucci – February 15, 1502 is the day he took command of the Portuguese fleet exploring the Brazilian coast and realized the islands Columbus had found were off the shore of actual continents. Vespucci called it South America in the New World. Born in Florence in 1451, he met the famed mariner Columbus in Seville, Spain, which sparked Vespucci to seek his own fame. On his first voyage in 1499, he is credited for discovering the Amazon River. On his third voyage in 1502, he discovered Rio de Janeiro and the Rio de la Plata. He died on February 22, 1512, and left the world with a name for the ages – America.

Giovanni da Verrazzano – July 8, 1524 is the day he returned to France and announced French title to a northern and eastern portion of North America to King Francis I. The French were anxious to compete with England and Spain for New World holdings, and Verrazzano had the experience for the task. Born near Florence in 1485, he learned sailing at an early age. In 1524, he landed at Cape Fear, N.C., then sailed south to northern Florida, before turning north, always keeping the shore in his sight. He discovered New York Harbor and stayed a week on the southern tip of Manhattan before a storm forced him further north to Newport, Rhode Island. He returned to France and had two more voyages across the Atlantic. He died after encountering cannibals in 1528 in the Lower Antilles. The Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge in New York bears his name.

Enrico (Henri de) Tonti – April 9, 1682 is the day Tonti and Rene-Robert LaSalle reached the mouth of the Mississippi River and claimed the river and the vast Louisiana Territory, which was named for King Louis XIV of France. Tonti spent 25 years in service to France in America, most of it on the Mississippi. Among his posts were Fort Crevecoeur in Illinois. He also explored Texas and Arkansas, sailed to the Gulf of Mexico and died in Mobile, Alabama, in 1704. In 1668, while fighting the Spanish in the Battle of the Messina Revolt, a grenade explosion cost him his right hand. That earned him the nickname "Iron Hand" for the hook he wore in its place.

Alessandro Malaspina – July 30, 1789 is the day Admiral Malaspina sailed from Cadiz, Spain, on a voyage around the world. He mapped in detail the Pacific coasts of the Americas up to Alaska. Malaspina was born in Malazzo in Tuscany but spent much of his boyhood in Palermo where his great-uncle Giovanni Fogliana Sforza D'Aragona was the viceroy of Sicily. He became a Spanish naval officer and led the Malaspina Expedition from 1789 to 1794 during which he explored and mapped the west coast of the Americas from Cape Horn to the Gulf of Alaska. While on his expedition, he was asked to seek the western end of the Northwest Passage. That brought him to Yakutat Bay, Alaska, where he found only an inlet. He died in 1810.



Giacomo Beltrami, quite dashing in this frontier pose, discovered the source of the Mississippi River

Giacomo Beltrami – August 28, 1823 is the day the private traveler announced that he found the source of the Mississippi River in northern Minnesota. Born in Bergamo in the Lombardy region, he was the 16th of 17 children. He was jurist, writer, and explorer, who arrived in the U.S. in Philadelphia in December, 1822. While traveling, he met up with Lawrence Taliaferro, an Indian agent, who was traveling upriver on the Mississippi. Beltrami became obsessed with finding the mighty river's source. The two and a third traveler, sought the river's source, but squabbles occurred and the party broke up. Beltrami went on with two Native Americans, who eventually split as well, and Beltrami made his discovery alone. His name survives in Beltrami County, Minnesota. Located in the Lake of the Woods in northern Minnesota, the county features the Upper and Lower Red Lakes and the Beltrami Island State Forest. He died in 1855 in Filottrano, Italy.

Source: Italian Institute of America



Fall and Winter Festivals and Holidays of Italy

October (Ottobre)

8 – Alba White Truffle Festival, *Fiera Internazionale Tartufo Bianco d'Alba*, Alba, Piedmont region

November (Novembre)

1 -- All Saints' Day (Ognissanti)

21 – Feast of Our Lady of Good Health, Venice

December (Dicembre)

25 -- Christmas (Natale)

26 – St. Stephen's Day

January (Gennaio)

1 -- New Year's Day (Capodanno)

20 – Feast Day of San Sebastiano

February (Febbraio)

28 – *Carnevale*, many places (one of Italy's biggest winter festivals)

March (Marzo)

15 – Ides of March, commemoration of death of Caesar, Rome

19 -- Festa del Papa' (St. Joseph)



**Santa Claus
in Rome**

Sambuca: City on a hill

Anyone who has visited the beautiful city of Sambuca di Sicilia knows that it is situated on a hill. The book *"Sambuca in bianco e nero"* (Sambuca in black and white) is a 1993 collection of people, public buildings, churches, and holidays with photos dating from 1881. Because of their age, many of the photos lack contrast and clarity. Here are two of the best photos from the book.



The book "Sambuca in bianco e nero" (left).



Corso Umberto, the main street in Sambuca, is depicted in this photo from 1956 (right).

This 1920 photo, taken at the Chiostrò di Convento di Santa Maria di Gesù (the Cloister of the Convent of St. Mary of Jesus) which dates from 1621, shows La Banda Musicale di Sambuca Zabut.



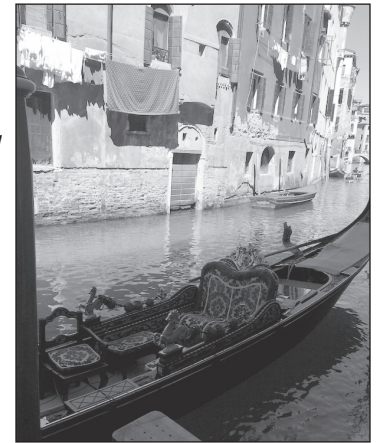
Hanging out in Italy

By Victoria de Maio

When I see laundry hanging on drying racks and makeshift clothes lines on balconies, outside windows, across alleys and just about anywhere, I know I'm in Italy. And I simply can't resist taking photos ...

As I saunter the streets and passageways of every Italian town and village, my eye is always caught by the washing ... hanging here and there, basking in the sunshine, telling their stories.

Everything from undies and overalls to dish towels and diapers, jeans and jerseys, socks and shirts...and of every size, color, and style imaginable. Some faded and well worn, some bright and brand new but all revealing a little about who lives inside; gender, size, age and even their livelihood and pastimes. All in public and subject to speculation -- no secrets here!



Fluttering freely in the fresh air and seemingly without a care, everything from slacks to sheets flap gaily in the gentle breezes. Basking shamelessly in the warm sunlight, stretching out, dangling and dancing before going back in the closet or drawer, ready for the next call of duty.

I always have slightly mixed feelings about taking photos of other people's laundry. It's a little like peeking into someone's closets or drawers. Sometimes I take them surreptitiously or hurriedly so as not to invade

someone's privacy but then again, the laundry is hanging out in public? And, well, I find it just too tempting.

When I travel I'm often asked how I do my laundry while on the road — well, I do it by hand of course! And I have to wonder what story someone else would write about my laundry?

So, in honor of and as a tribute to my own Mother who washed everything by hand and only with respect and praise for those whose laundry appears here... I thank you for being my muse.



Source: Italiannotebook.com



Italian idioms:

Senza peli sulla lingua

What we say in English doesn't

always translate well in Italian

By Rose Mercuri-Ford

When learning a new language, the first thing one notices is that some expressions are hard to translate, especially word for word. Such expressions, usually made of a few words strung together, convey a particular, often colorful meaning, unique to the target language.

Think of the English expressions: never mind! Who cares? At the end of the day. What about...?, You would never translate any of these idioms, word for word, into another language because the result would not make much sense. For example, to give the same idea of the English "at the end of the day," one would say in Italian: "*In fin dei conti*" which means at the end of the calculations. See what I mean?

Some of the short Italian idioms are well known or easy to grasp, especially those with repetitive words such as: *pian piano*, *man mano*, *poco a poco*, all of which mean: little by little, gradually. We would never translate "mano a mano" as "hand to hand" because it would not make any sense in English. Also, "more or less" perfectly translates in Italian as *più o meno*. There are always exceptions to the rule.

Idioms are unique to a certain language and they express concepts otherwise hard to substitute. Linguists advise to learn and use some, because they make you sound more authentic when speaking another language. Here are some of the most recurrent and everyday Italian idioms that you might want to use.

A quanto pare/a quanto sembra = Apparently

A cose fatte = After the fact

A dire il vero = To be truthful

A quattr'occhi/ A tu per tu = Between you and me

A chi lo dici! = You don't say?

Affare fatto! = Done deal

Acqua in bocca! = Keep your mouth shut!

(literally: water in your mouth!)

Capire fischio per fiasco = Totally misunderstand something

Coi piedi di piombo = Very cautiously

(with leaden feet)

Con le mani nel sacco = Red-handed

Come si voleva dimostrare = As to be expected

Lasciamo stare!/Lasciamo perdere! = Never mind. Forget about it.

Per farla breve = In short/ to make a long story short

Senza capo e senza coda = Nonsensical

(without head nor tail)

Su due piedi = On the spot

Prendere lucciole per lanterne = Grossly mistake something for something else

(to mistake fireflies for lanterns, cute isn't it?)

Senza peli sulla lingua = To be straightforward/ say it as it is

(not having any hairs on your tongue)

Siamo alle solite! = Here we go again

Non vale la pena! = It's not worth it

Oggi come oggi/ Oggigiorno/ Al giorno d'oggi = Nowadays

Here are some idiomatic expressions with the verb *avere* (to have) followed by a part of the body. In Italian you might always have your hands, or your face, or your tongue, or your feet, or your eyes doing something.

For example:

Avere le mani in pasta = To be involved in something

Avere la faccia tosta/avere la sfacciataggine = To have the nerve

Avere lo stomaco = To be able to stand something awful

Avere la lingua lunga = To have a loose tongue/to talk too much

Avere la testa sulle spalle = To be sensible/ mature

Avere le mani lunghe = To steal/to get into things that do not

belong to you

Avere il naso all'insù = To be a stuck-up

Here are a couple colorful idioms/proverbs:

Morto un papa, se ne fa un altro, meaning: one door closes, another opens. The idiom actually means "one pope dies, a new one is made"

What about: *Volere la botte piena e la moglie ubriaca*? This means "to want the wine cask full and the wife drunk." In other words, "To want to have your cake and eat it, too."

And *per finire* (in conclusion) here are some snappy idioms:

In fondo in fondo = Deep down/basically

Meno male! = Luckily/thank God!

Che schifo! = How repulsive

Che macello!/Che casino! = What a mess

Roba da matti! = How crazy

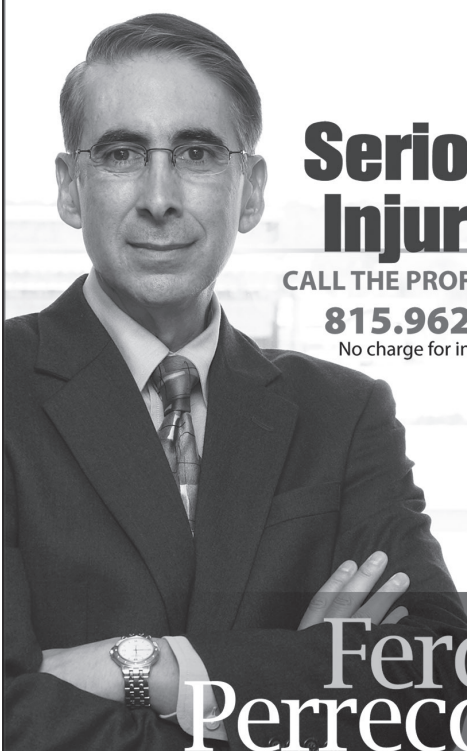
Matto da legare = Mad as a hatter

Bella figura!/Bella roba! = How nice (usually sarcastically).

State bene e... presto!

Eight interesting facts about the Italian language

1. The Italian language has been around since at least the 900s. Like other Romance languages, Italian is derived from Latin.
2. But the language didn't become standardized until the time of Dante Alighieri. Perhaps the most famous Italian writer of all time, Dante Alighieri wrote "*The Divine Comedy (La Divina Commedia)*," which was completed in 1330, a year before his death.
3. Italy didn't actually have a national language until the 20th century. Dante and other prominent Italian writers and linguists like Petrarch paved the path for the Tuscan dialect to become the national language of Italy. However, when Italy was unified in 1861 and officially adopted Tuscan Italian as its national tongue, fewer than 2.5% of Italians could actually speak the standardized language.
4. The dialects of Italy are each their own independent languages. Before Italian unification, what we now know as Italy was made up of several independent states, each with their own regional language.
5. The Italian alphabet has only 21 letters. Italian uses the same Roman characters as the English language, minus 5 of them. The letters j, k, w, x, and y simply do not exist in Italian.
6. Italian is the language of classical music. Anyone who has studied or played music will be familiar with the terms *crescendo*, *forte*, *soprano*, *alto* and *a tempo*. These are all Italian words, because Italian is used universally as the language of classical music. Italian is spoken by more than 85 million people in the world.
7. Italian is the first language of about 65 million people and the second language of another 15 million. In addition to being the national language of Italy, Italian is one of the national languages of Switzerland, as well as the Vatican City and San Marino. It is also the second-most spoken language in Argentina.
8. Italian is the 5th most studied language in the U.S. It follows Spanish, French, American Sign Language and German as the most studied language.





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One family's Feast of the Seven Fishes celebration

By Mike Doyle

The Feast of the Seven Fishes (*Festa della Setta Pesce*) is an Italian tradition on Christmas Eve. OK, let's establish that the most fun way of describing it is not grammatically correct, but one gets a sense of that this is probably the way our ancestors from the old country first described it in their best English.

The tradition of a meatless meal on Christmas Eve dates back to the Roman Catholic tradition of abstaining from meat or dairy products on Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent and on the eve of certain holy days – like Christmas. With meat and butter prohibited on those days, fish cooked in oil was typically eaten. History tells us that *La Vigilia* (the vigil) originated in southern Italy to commemorate the *Vigilia di Natale*, the wait for the midnight birth of the Baby Jesus.

Why seven kinds of fish? According to an article in the December 2014 issue of The Italian-America Cultural Center of Iowa's newsletter, seven is the number most used in the Bible, appearing more than 700 times. Seven also could represent the words from Genesis 2:2, "And in the seventh day God completed the work He had begun, and on the seventh day he rested." Also, there are the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church and the Seven Hills of Rome that surround the Vatican City, home of the church.

And many Italian families don't stop at the number seven. On his website, famed chef Mario Batali said, "No one's quite sure of the significance of the number," Batali said. "Some families do seven for the sacraments. Some to ten for the stations of the cross. And some even do 13 for the 12 apostles plus Jesus."

One family that has carried on the Feast of Seven Fishes tradition is the Pauls of Belvidere. The family tree begins with Henry and Marie Paul, then Bernard and Vivian Paul, then five sons – Bernie Jr., Mike, Joe, Gary, and Tony. "[Then] 16 grandchildren came along and now there are six great-grandchildren, with another two arriving in 2017," said Tony's wife, Jennifer Paul. "The family name was changed from Pologruto to Paul in order to 'blend in.'"

The Paul family came to the Rockford area from suburban Chicago. "The preparation began a few days before Christmas Eve because [family members] would drive into Chicago to get all the fish they needed. For some reason, they liked this one store and made an adventure out of going each year."

On the day before Christmas Eve, the dried cod would be rehydrated. Around 2 p.m. on Christmas Eve, the family would gather, each family contributing a different fish. "We usually made the shrimp gravy [or sauce], so my mother-in-law didn't have to be in the kitchen all day," Jennifer said. "The entire family would make a point of attending, and gifts were opened after dinner. We ate before midnight Mass, which made staying awake pretty tough."

"For many years, my husband's grandparents would also be able to attend, so there were four generations of Pauls eating together. Looking back, that was such a blessing. There were traditional Christmas carols playing on the stereo, lots of wine, and some Frank Sinatra thrown in for good measure. When my in-laws lived in Des Plaines years ago, they had an additional kitchen in the basement for entertaining. So the windows would be all steamed up and whole house smelled like fish that night and a couple of days after. Leftovers were divided up and sent home with all of us for enjoying on Christmas Day and no one had to cook."

Like all families, members of the older generation have passed. "And the crowd has thinned a bit," Jennifer said, "but the numbers are coming back, slow and steady."

What follows is recipes from the Paul Family's Feast of the Seven Fishes.

The Paul Family's Christmas Eve seafood selections

Deep-fried Baccala
Italian Shrimp Gravy (Sauce)
Calamari Gravy
Fried Shrimp
Fried Smelt
Boiled Crab Legs
Steamed Mussels
Deep-Fried Lobster Tails

Deep Fried Baccala (Fried Cod)

Dried cod, 3-5 pounds
 4 eggs, beaten
 3 cups, all-purpose flour (for breading)
 Salt and black pepper to taste
 Garlic powder to taste

Topping for the fish

2 large bunches parsley, chopped
 5 garlic cloves, chopped
 ½ cup olive oil
 Deep frying oil (corn or canola)

Soak dried cod in cold water until rehydrated, 12 to 24 hours, depending on the thickness of the cut. Change the water frequently. Finely chop parsley and garlic and sauté in olive oil until lightly golden. Set aside. This is the garnish for the fish. Cut cod into pieces, about the size of saltine crackers. Mix dry ingredients (flour, salt, pepper, garlic powder) to taste. Beat eggs and set in one bowl. To begin the breading process, place fish pieces in egg, covering completely, then dredge in flour mixture and shake off excess. Place fish pieces hot frying oil and cook until crust is golden brown and fish is flaky inside. Set aside on paper towels and continue breading remaining fish. When all the fish is fried, plate on platter, dress with garlic and parsley topping and toss lightly.

Italian Shrimp Gravy (Sauce)

4 pounds wild caught shrimp, cleaned and deveined
 ¼ cup olive oil
 2 large onions, diced
 3 bunches fresh parsley, chopped
 5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Red pepper to taste (optional)
 Paprika to taste
 2 large cans chicken broth
 2 pounds angel hair pasta, cooked

Heat olive oil, toss in garlic, onions and cook until transparent. Add chicken broth and spices to taste. Add parsley and bring to a simmer. Toss in shrimp, cooking until pink and curled up. DO NOT OVERCOOK! Pour shrimp gravy over pasta and toss, garnish with paprika and parsley. Enjoy!

**Calamari (Squid) Gravy**

4 pounds squid (calamari), cleaned with tentacles on.

(Cut tentacles off before cooking)

2 large cans tomato paste

¼ olive oil

1 large onion, chopped

5 cloves garlic, put through garlic press (discard pulp)

Salt and black pepper to taste

Red pepper to taste (optional)

Oregano to taste

Lots of parsley, diced (2-3 bunches)

2 pounds pasta, your choice

Heat olive oil, add onions and garlic until slightly cooked. Add tomato paste and stir until paste is broken down in mixture. Reduce heat and simmer for a few minutes. Add spices to taste. Add squid bodies to sauce and let simmer for about an hour until tender. The final step is to toss in the tentacles for about 15 minutes. Toss gravy into pasta and enjoy.

Fried Smelt

5 pounds smelt

3 cups all-purpose flour

Salt and pepper to taste

Deep frying oil (vegetable, corn or canola)

Heat oil in pan while you prepare smelt. Cut off all fins with scissors. Remove backbone by filleting fish and gently pulling backbone out, starting at the head (the tail comes out with it). This makes very nice fillets. Mix dry ingredients for dredging. Wet fillets in water, shaking excess, and place in flour mixture. Dredge slightly, then shake off excess. Place each fillet in hot oil and fry until golden and crispy. Drain on paper towels and eat hot.

Fried Shrimp

2 eggs

1 quart milk

5 pounds wild caught shrimp, cleaned and deveined

2 10-ounce boxes of Zatarain's Fish Fry Mix

Zatarain's Creole Mix to taste

Deep frying oil (vegetable, corn or canola)

Heat oil. Beat eggs into milk for the crispy base. Place shrimp individually into milk mixture, then place into breading mixture and coat lightly. Place in hot oil and cook until lightly brown. Drain shrimp on paper towels and lightly salt.

Other seafood options for Christmas Eve:**Boiled Crab Legs**

Boiled and buttered

Steamed Mussels

Steamed in water and red wine mixture. Steam until mussels open up ... yum.

Deep Fried Lobster Tails

No breading, just fry lobster in oil and drizzle with melted butter.

*Sources: Bernard Paul Sr., Vivian Paul,
Bernard Paul Jr., Mike Paul, Tony Paul*

These two recipes are from Albert Skaronea's 'A Gourmet Trip Thru Italy'

Stuffed Baked Italian Trout

6 trout

10 tablespoons soft bread crumbs

Salt and pepper

4-5 sprigs parsley, chopped

Juice of 2 lemons

1 cup olive oil

Clean the trout and wash them well. Combine the bread crumbs, a little salt and a generous quantity of freshly ground pepper, the chopped parsley and lemon juice. Mix well into a paste and stuff each trout with a small amount. Spread what is left over the top of the fish. Heat the oil in a large heavy pan (one that is easily transferred to an oven), arrange the trout in it in one layer and cover the pan. Bake at 375 degrees about 20 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork.

**Baked Sole or Halibut (Italian Style)**

2 pounds frozen sole or halibut, thawed in cold water

Salt and pepper to taste

½ cup butter, softened

2 cloves garlic, crushed

2 teaspoons onion, minced

2 tablespoons garlic, minced

2 cups dry white wine

Dill for garnish

Drain fish fillets and pat dry. Season with salt and pepper and place in shallow oblong baking dish. Combine butter, garlic, onion, and parsley for a garlic butter. Spread half of the garlic butter under the fillets with spread the remaining half on top. Pour in the white wine. Cover fish with foil and bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes or until the fish fillets flake easily when tested with a fork. Spoon the pan juices over the fish and garnish with snipped dill.



Pasta due Mondi

*Honoring Columbus, Two Worlds Pasta
A dish that blends New and Old World*

If you are an Italian American, chances are you have a food tradition to celebrate Christmas, Easter or St. Joseph's Day. Have you ever wondered why we don't celebrate Columbus Day with a special meal or dessert? So did the Italic Institute of America. So it asked Mary Ann Esposito, host of television's long-running cooking show *Ciao Italia*, to create a new dish to honor Columbus and the Italian explorers who unified the globe. She called it Pasta Due Mondi, joining ingredients from the Old World and the New World.

By Mary Ann Esposito

We have Christopher Columbus to thank for not only discovering the New World but also for discovering new foods that he brought back to Europe. He brought back potatoes, legumes, corn, peppers, avocado, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, and cocoa. His search for spices was less successful, only finding allspice and not the cloves and peppercorns that were in such demand in Europe. During his voyages, his crew ate salted fish, hardtack (biscuits), and drank wine. He carried olive oil, cheese, honey, vinegar, sardines, and pickled meats in the ship's hold.

If Columbus were to be invited to dinner with you, he would be familiar with some of the ingredients in this pasta dish. He might not recognize the red tomatoes, though, since, the first ones were yellow, and from where they take their Italian name *pomo d'oro* (*pomodoro*), meaning apple of gold. He might be a little skittish, too, about eating the tomatoes since they were considered an ornamental plant with poisonous properties. But his fears would be quelled once he took the first forkful.

Pasta Due Mondi - (Two Worlds Pasta)

5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 small hot red pepper, crushed (1 teaspoon or more to taste)
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 anchovies in olive oil, mashed
1 large red bell pepper, seeded and diced
1 medium zucchini squash, diced
2 medium red skin potatoes, unpeeled and diced
1 cup corn kernels, fresh or frozen
1 cup halved yellow cherry tomatoes
(Sun Gold variety has nice flavor)
1 pound linguine
½ cup minced basil leaves
(in honor of his hometown of Genoa, land of pesto sauce)

Pour 3 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large bowl; add 1 teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon coarse ground pepper and mix well. Add the bell pepper, zucchini and potatoes to the bowl and mix well to coat the vegetables. Transfer them to a baking dish and roast them at 350F degrees until just al dente, about 12-15 minutes, then set aside. In a large sauté pan, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil and stir in the hot red pepper, garlic and anchovies and cook over medium heat until the mixture is soft and sauce-like. Add the corn and cook 1 minute. Turn heat to simmer. Add the cherry tomato halves and roasted vegetables. Cover and keep warm. Cook the linguine until al dente; drain, reserving ¼ cup of the cooking water. Add the linguine to the saucepan along with the water and stir over low heat to blend all ingredients well. Add the basil and toss again. Serve hot with your favorite grated cheese. Serves four to six.

From the Old World – pasta, basil, olive oil, garlic and cheese

From the New World – potatoes, squash, corn, peppers and tomatoes

From the Ocean -- anchovies

Recipes from Giada's 'Everyday Italian'

The chicken stew recipe is perfect for the coming cool days of fall. The marinara sauce recipe is a classic and can serve as a base for other sauces.

Chicken Spezzatino

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 celery stalks,
cut into bite-size pieces
1 carrot, peeled and
cut into bite-size pieces
1 small onion, chopped
1 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
1 14-½ ounce can reduced sodium chicken broth
½ cup fresh basil leaves, torn into pieces
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 bay leaf
½ teaspoon dried thyme
2 chicken breasts with ribs (about 1-½ pounds total)
1 15-ounce can organic kidney beans, drained (rinsed if not organic)

In a heavy 5-1/2 quart saucepan, heat the oil over medium flame. Add the celery, carrot, and onion and sauté until onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the salt and pepper. Stir in the tomatoes, broth, basil, tomato paste, bay leaf, and thyme. Add the chicken and press to submerge. Bring the liquid to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer gently, uncovered, turning the breasts over and stirring occasionally, until chicken is almost cooked through, about 20 minutes. Add the kidney beans and simmer until chicken is cooked through and the liquid has reduced to a stew consistency, about 10 minutes. Discard the bay leaf. Let the chicken cool for 5 minutes. Discard the skin and bones and cut the meat into bite-size pieces. Return to the stew and bring to a simmer. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Marinara Sauce

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 small onions, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 celery stalks, finely chopped
2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped
½ teaspoon sea salt, plus more to taste
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
2 32-ounce cans crushed tomatoes
2 dried bay leaves

In a large pot, heat the oil over a medium-high flame. Add the onions and garlic and sauté until the onions are translucent, about 10 minutes. Add the celery, carrots, and ½ teaspoon each of salt and pepper. Sauté until all the vegetables are soft, about 10 minutes. Add the tomatoes and bay leaves and simmer uncovered over low heat until the sauce thickens, about one hour. Remove and discard the bay leaves. Season the sauce with more salt and pepper to taste. [The sauce can be made a day ahead. Cool, then cover and refrigerate. Rewarm over medium heat before using.]





Dance troupe celebrates 30 years



The Amici Italiani Dance Troupe celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2015. They continue to enjoy sharing their traditions through dance and music and encourage Italian Americans to join. The troupe members this year are Ellie Addotta, Josey Donofrio, Heather Dunaway, Johnny Fandel, Bobby Fandel, Rose Ann Logan, Mitchell Luebke, Hannah Massari, Luciano Mirabile, Mario Mirabile, Terry Polizzi, Bea Ricotta, Madz Ricotta, Steph Ricotta, Craig Sheridan, Rosie Sheridan and Pauline Urso. If you are interested in joining the dance troupe, contact Rosie at 815.978.4779 or Bea at 815.520.1010.

Sister City Alliance welcomes students from Ferentino

Like teenagers everywhere, the students from Ferentino, Italy, take a group "selfie" at the 2016 Festa Italiana on August 5. The students are from Martino Filetico High School and were in Rockford from August 2016. While here, they visited many places, including Rock Valley College, Rockford University, and St. Anthony of Padua Church. This is the second student exchange with Ferentino and Rockford as part of the Rockford Italian Sister City Alliance (RISCA).



RISCA volunteers gather on Friday night at the Festa Italiana. From left are group secretary Dina Getty, treasurer Karen Cantele, and board member Lisa Seck. In front is president Anna Drog. Anna, Lisa, and Dina hosted Ferentino students in their homes during their visit.

St. Joseph Altar viewed by many

The Rev. James Ciaramitaro, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Church, blesses the St. Joseph Altar after 4:30 p.m. Mass on March 12, 2016, with the help of parishioner Rose Zammuto. The altar was open to all for viewing and *pasta con sardi* on March 13.



(From left) Mickey Goral, Mike Lager, and Richard Meyers serve pasta at the St. Joseph Altar.

Colleen Gullo explains to a young visitor the panuzzi or little breads that were baked for the St. Joseph Altar.



Micah Cork is enjoying his St. Joseph pasta.

Getting ready for 38th annual Festa Italiana

This group of volunteers helped to bake cookies for the Festa Italiana. More than 5,000 cookies were baked for the event, including these delicious chocolate cookies.



Only in South Rockford could you see a similar sign. This one can be found in the garden area outside the Graham-Ginestra House at 1115 South Main Street.

Greater Rockford Italian American Association - GRIAA
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*Feast of the Seven Fishes,
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2016-17 Calendar Items

October

9 – Columbus Day Mass at 11:30 a.m. and Celebration following in the Memory Garden, St. Anthony of Padua Church

December

10-11 – Santa Lucia Celebration, all Masses, St. Anthony of Padua Church

March

18 – Blessing of St. Joseph Altar, St. Anthony Church
19 – St. Joseph Altar, St. Anthony Church

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