

# Ambassador

National Italian American Foundation

Vol. 25, No.1 • Fall 2013 • [www.niaf.org](http://www.niaf.org)

## ANNIVERSARY GALA PREVIEW

**Agriturismo!**  
**Springsteen in Italy**  
**Bottega NIAF**

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# Ambassador

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Vol. 25, No.1 ■ www.niaf.org

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*The cover image is a sneak preview of NIAF's 2014 Region of Honor that we'll formally announce at the 38th Anniversary Gala on October 26 in Washington, D.C. Recognize it? Write in and tell us where it is. Photography by © leoks*

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# From The NIAF Chairman

As many of you know, one of the important duties that the NIAF's Board of Directors fulfilled at its meeting last March was to elect new leadership tasked with carrying out the Foundation's new vision for better serving the Italian American community nationwide.

As NIAF's new chairman, I would like to thank our former chairman (now Chairman Emeritus) Jerry Colangelo for four years of confident leadership and commitment. I'd also like to invite all current and prospective NIAF members to become actively involved in building a more dynamic and responsive NIAF as our Foundation evolves over the next several years.

Crucial to that new vision is attracting a new generation of Italian Americans with new ideas and energy that wants more fully to embrace its heritage and legacy. We took a significant step toward that future almost two years ago when John M. Viola became NIAF's Chief Operating Officer. As one of the youngest leaders of a major nonprofit organization in America, John is unequalled in his passion for his family heritage and his innovation in reconnecting Italian Americans to Italy. In March, the Board endorsed changes John and his vibrant staff have been making by electing him as NIAF's new president.

While the Foundation's core mission of education and preserving and protecting the Italian American culture and legacy remains unchanged, a lot is changing. This year we have hosted some incredibly suc-

cessful events, including our Chairman's Golf Invitational in Arizona and our sold-out annual New York Gala. We've redesigned our membership program to offer more member benefits and make NIAF a greater part of our members' lives. More than ever, NIAF is reaching out to smaller Italian American organizations through its restructured affiliate program. Our presence on Capitol Hill, where we represent Italian American interests, has never been stronger. And, through our Region of Honor program and other initiatives, we're increasing our relationships and involvement with the people and institutions of Italy.

In addition, the Foundation's centerpiece event takes place October 25-26 in the nation's capital. I urge you to join us at NIAF's 38th Anniversary Gala for a weekend of embracing our heritage and celebrating our distinguished honorees who have made their mark both in the United States and Italy. For details about the Anniversary Gala weekend, please turn to the Gala Preview in this issue's NIAF Insider. By attending and sponsoring the Gala, you're helping NIAF fulfill its mission. And you're helping NIAF grow. We can't do it without you.

Joseph V. Del Raso,  
NIAF Chairman

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# Reader Feedback

## *Il Bel Ballgame*

This article has brought back many pleasant memories of the baseball team in Bologna, Italy, that I played on in the years 1962-63. I was a student at the University of Bologna studying Medicine and, in the spring and summer months, I participated as one of two Americans on the Bologna Serie B team. It was a great experience to be able to teach the fundamentals of the game to young Italian players who had a great desire to play baseball (*pallabase*).

Soccer has always been the kingpin of sport in Italy enhanced by the participation of many foreign players. Can you visualize an Italian baseball team with American professional baseball players! With the possibility that an Italian citizen may play U.S.A. professional baseball, the heyday of baseball in Italy has yet to arrive.

—Gennaro Pasquariello M.D.  
Johnston, R.I.



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## *Il Bel Ballgame— 2nd Inning*

Bravo! I loved your piece on *il bel ballgame* and am alerting my family tree branches to it. My grandfather played in the minor leagues and dreamed of trying out for Major League teams before he injured his thumb. He was a baseball *appassionato* all his life...

Your writing really gave me an overview of the vocabulary, vision, history and beauty of baseball as it developed in Italy and America. The quotation about Nettuno at the end really speaks about the diamond of baseball as a jewel rightfully at the center of our two countries. I think baseball and culture go together and it's great to see this story on Italy and America.

—Kirsten Keppel  
Washington, DC

### Contact Us

**Tell us what you think!** Letters to the Editor may be e-mailed to [ambassador@niaf.org](mailto:ambassador@niaf.org) or mailed to Letters to the Editor, Ambassador Magazine, 1860 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009. Include your full name and address. Letters may be published and edited for length and clarity.

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# Creating NIAF's New Logos

## Q & A with Graphic Designer Todd Radom

By Don Oldenburg

A year ago, NIAF contracted graphic designer Todd Radom, an artist specializing in identity and logo design, to rethink the Foundation's iconic imagery. Over his 20-year career, the graduate of the School of Visual Arts in New York City has updated the symbolic "face" of corporations, sports franchises and organizations. A Yonkers native, Radom lives and bases his firm, Todd Radom Design, in Brewster, N.Y. We recently talked with him about the new NIAF designs that became official earlier this year.

**Q: How do you go about creating symbols that to go to the essence of an organization?**

**TR:** In some cases, an organization wants to wholly change the visual face of who they are. In the case of NIAF, you needed an evolution rather than a revolution. [NIAF President] John Viola came to me and explained we wanted to respect the past and build upon the visual identity.

**Q: Why did NIAF's old logo require a facelift?**

**TR:** The previous logo had some great qualities and some clever elements, and we decided to retain the column and the star. But it did have its limitations structurally. Part of my job is to not only present something that's aesthetically good and represents your organization in a positive way, but I also try to leave you with a visual tool kit that will fit your needs in any conceivable situation. And the needs are so much more expansive than ever before. You need something in which your identity looks good, small and big, good for signage, good for correspondence, good for stationery, and other traditional things, but it also has to look good on the Web....



Todd Radom redesigned NIAF's logo and emblems to visually connect its past and future, including (above left) NIAF's new crest and (above right top to bottom) NIAF's new primary logo and secondary mark.



**NIAF**



**Q: How'd the new logos take shape?**

**TR:** As we evolved through sketches, we got into some stuff that maybe pushed it a little too far, but at the end of the day there was visual equity in the old logo that we carried forward. It's always tricky because at an advocacy organization such as NIAF, where people are really invested in it, where people give their time and their money....you don't want to alienate your constituency.

**Q: So what values did you keep in mind?**

**TR:** Our conversation revolved around the fact that you wanted to embrace the Italian American experience in an accessible way. When you think about that in terms of color, you think red, white and blue for the U.S.A., and green, white and red for Italy. We went through a few variations that were more forward thinking. We had some steeped in heraldry that looked historic. I think we came out somewhere in the middle.

**Q: The primary logo is designed to express what?**

**TR:** We wanted something that's classy and embodied an established organization. So we needed something that has some gravitas, and I think we pulled that off. It displays tradition, but it's not cold or corporate.

**Q: You've recently started working on a special NIAF 40th Anniversary logo that will be used heading toward the 40th Anniversary Gala in October, 2015. What's the approach?**

**TR:** Anniversary logos are about where your organization has been. So what I'd like to do is highlight the 40, make it look like the NIAF identity we put forth last year, and tie it all together.

**Q: Your last word on NIAF's new identity symbols?**

**TR:** I think we did a good job in propelling the previous logo into the second decade of the 21st century. And I believe it is built to last.

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# The 19th Annual “Let The Music Play” Memorial Concert



Photos by Alexandra Dall



**Above:**  
Seventeen-year-old Connecticut native Viktoria Chiappa enchants the audience.



**Left:**  
Nicholas King sings “Mack the Knife.”



Chanteuse Giada Valenti

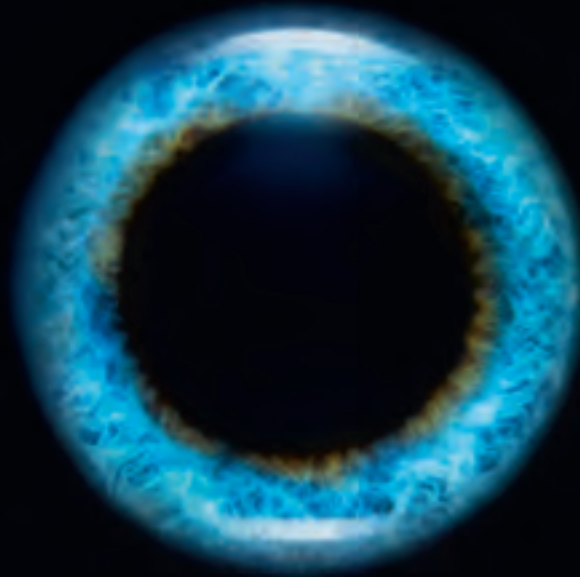
**Below:**  
The Redneck Tenors (Blake L. Davidson, Jonathan Huber and Matthew Lord)



Eva Franchi on stage.

Honoring the memory of her late husband, the legendary Italian tenor Sergio Franchi, Eva Franchi once again hosted a wonderfully festive and elegant afternoon concert on August 24 at the Franchi estate in Stonington, Conn.

With the weather providing a splendid sunny day, the 19th Annual Let The Music Play Memorial Concert, which benefits the Sergio Franchi Music Foundation’s educational scholarships, featured the 2013 Sergio Franchi Young Tenors and Sopranos, accompanied by Conductor Jeff Domonto and a 32-piece symphonic orchestra. More than 16 vocalists performed, including four tenors from the Metropolitan Opera. Adding some zest to the spirit of the outdoor concert this year was the “Great Gatsby” theme for those who chose to dress in 1920s attire—including Eva Franchi!



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# Finding Italy in San Francisco

In NIAF on Location, NIAF members, whether from Italy or Little Italy, lead you through some of the restaurants, festivals, markets, monuments, museums and shopping that make them feel Italian day-in and day-out in their hometowns.

This issue, Board Member Jeff Capaccio, an attorney at the law firm of Carr & Ferrell, reveals his favorite haunts in San Francisco.



Ristorante Umbria owner Giulio Tempesta and Jeff Capaccio

## What is the most Italian part of your city?

**Capaccio:** North Beach is San Francisco's Italian neighborhood. It's streets are vibrant, energetic and feature Saints Peter and Paul Church, and great coffee houses including Caffè Trieste and Caffè Greco. Poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti's iconic City Lights bookstore is a landmark on Columbus Avenue, and much of the beatnik generation hung out in North Beach. To this day, it retains an artistic, bohemian feel.

## What is your favorite Italian restaurant?

**Capaccio:** San Francisco has many wonderful Italian restaurants so it's difficult to pinpoint a single favorite, but my go-to Italian restaurant is Ristorante Umbria, where I love to relax, unwind and feast on the agnello scottadito, artisan ravioli or antipasto misto, with a glass of Lorenzo Scarpone Montepulciano d'Abruzzo.

## What is the most "back-in-time" authentic Italian-neighborhood restaurant?

**Capaccio:** The Crotti family's Tommaso's Restaurant, reputedly one of the original wood-burning pizza ovens out west; and Caffè Trieste, the first espresso coffee house in the west dating back to the mid-50s with the same Giotto family at its helm.

## And for a dose of Italian culture?

**Capaccio:** I head to one of our many specialty food stores, or go to the Ferrari, Maserati or Lamborghini dealerships, or take a stroll through North Beach.

## Where for hard-to-find ingredients for cooking an authentic Italian meal?

**Capaccio:** San Francisco's one-of-a-kind specialty food stores include Molinari in North Beach, Lucca in the Marina District, and multiple AG Ferrari locations. They display some of the finest olive oils, vinegars, dry and fresh pasta, salumi, cheeses, polenta, San Marzano tomatoes, olives and other specialty items. The Ferry Building Farmers Market carries some unusual ingredients and we also have wonderful artisan food producers such as Paul Bertolli and his Fra' Mani hand-crafted salumi products, and chocolatier Michael Recchiuti.

## How about Italian fashion?

**Capaccio:** San Francisco not only gave birth to blue jeans, the iconic denim originated by our ancestors from Genova, Italy, it has some of the finest examples of Italian fashion with boutiques rivaling the best in the world, including Armani, Gucci, Loro Piana, and Salvatore Ferragamo.

## What's the most Italian day of the year there?

**Capaccio:** San Francisco has one of the oldest continuous Columbus Day festivities in the nation. The Italian Heritage Day parade dates back to 1869 ([www.sfcolumbusday.org](http://www.sfcolumbusday.org)).

## Who has the best morning espresso?

**Capaccio:** Espressamente Illy in San Francisco's financial district. Emporio Rulli on Union Square not only serves wonderful espresso, but its master pastry chef-owner Gary Rulli makes the most authentic Italian pastries in northern California.

## Special Italian American monuments, museums or cultural centers?

**Capaccio:** The wonderful Italian American Museum—The Museo ItaloAmericano—in the Fort Mason center has featured innovative exhibits such as Italians in the Silicon Valley and Italian Americans in Baseball. There's also the vibrant Istituto Italiano di Cultura (IIC) that showcases Italian movies, authors, design exhibits, music and other exhibits.

By *Elissa Abatemarco Ruffino*

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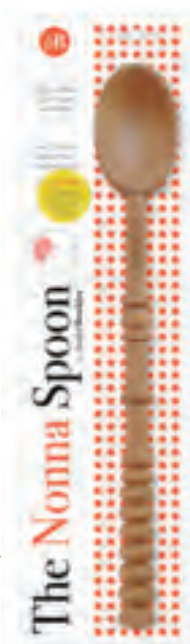


### Well Grounded in Brooklyn

When Rameses Crisi cofounded bottled Brooklyn (bB) in 2011, he started dirt cheap—literally. Named for its first product, this tiny Brooklyn-based souvenir company sold samples of street grit, soil and grass stains swabbed from locations around Brooklyn and corked in a test tube. Like the \$69 turf clumps from old Yankees Stadium only more pedestrian.

Since then, bB has evolved beyond souvenir dirt stains into a design company selling t-shirts, posters, tote bags and other merchandise online—and still celebrating the borough. Crisi, 30, and his sister, Angelica Crisi, 34, think of themselves as the “mini Martha Stewart,” Brooklyn version. So their premiere item now is the “Nonna Spoon,” designed in their nonna’s memory. “It’s a celebration of all nonnas and grandmothers—the matriarchs in our lives who fed us, loved us and taught us right from wrong,” says Rameses.

Featured in *The New York Times* and named one of Brooklyn’s “Top 20” by *Brooklyn Magazine*, bB remains an entrepreneurial venture. “This is my dream. This is why my grandparents and great grandparents came to America,” says Rameses, proud that a portion of each purchase is donated to the World Food Program USA. It makes bB’s vision bigger than simple Brooklyn earthiness—not that there’s anything wrong with that. Visit [bottledBrooklyn.com](http://bottledBrooklyn.com).



### He Saved the Leaning Tower

Had it not been for an extraordinary judgment call by a 23-year-old G.I. named Leon Weckstein, the Leaning Tower of Pisa might’ve been rubble.

“For a few scary minutes the fate of the Leaning Tower of Pisa hung by a thread,” reports the WWII staff sergeant and subsequently a medaled veteran of the Italian Campaign who in the chaos of battle was ordered to demolish the tower of Pisa if it would stop the Nazis. “All that was left for me to do was in the word ‘fire,’ and every canon within three miles would have pulverized it.”

Instead he spared what he knew was one of the Seven Wonders of the Medieval World.

Raised in a Bronx orphanage, Weckstein says he can’t be sure of his heritage. But since landing in Naples during WWII, he has “cherished a love affair with Italy...becoming Italian in every way.”

Now 93, and living in the tree-filled township of Thousand Oaks, Calif., Weckstein has written two books—“Through My Eyes” and “200,000 Heroes,” the first a memoir of the Pisa incident, and the second his wartime experiences with the Italian partisans. Visit [leonweckstein.com](http://leonweckstein.com).



**Each issue, Paesani chronicles in short form the lives of Italian Americans and lives of interest to Italian Americans.**





## Cloudy with the Chance of Frankenstorms

When Hurricane Sandy wiped out Staten Island last year, John Licata knew he had to address how Americans prepared financially for weather catastrophes. After all, his parents live on Staten Island in one of the worst hit post-Sandy areas.

“Sandy changed my life because I didn’t like seeing so many people struggle to adapt without power or without gasoline. It broke my heart,” says Licata, who grew up with a Wall Street affinity from overhearing his father, an Italian lira currency broker, and his uncles who worked in banking and crude-oil trading.

After stints at Dow Jones, Salomon Smith Barney and BrokerageAmerica, in 2005, Licata launched Blue Phoenix Inc., a macro-research company focused on the future of energy. Sound familiar? Licata’s a regular talking head on Bloomberg TV/Radio, CNBC/CNBC Asia, BNN, Yahoo! Finance and FOX Business, providing nontraditional viewpoints on subjects such as crude oil, natural gas and uranium prices.

But his latest claim to fame is “Lessons from Frankenstorm: Investing for Future Power Disruptions,” a book focusing on the future of energy, climate change, public policy, energy sustainability, and the need for advanced preparations for global power problems. Financial lightning rods available at [www.bluephoenixinc.com/author](http://www.bluephoenixinc.com/author).



## Nice Day For a Cherubini Wedding

When Boston’s contemporary Samsøn gallery exhibited the custom bridal dresses and ball gowns by legendary fashion designer Rose Cherubini in August, it was doing more than displaying the work of a true Italian American material girl! It was paying tribute to Cherubini who celebrated her 100th birthday!

Now living in Wareham, Mass., Cherubini opened her first shop, Rose Cherubini Bridals, in Quincy in 1946, and through a variety of locations and professional detours designed gowns through the mid-1980s.

Cherubini’s designs gained popularity even among celebrities (the “Orbit Dress” for astronaut John Glenn’s wife) because her style incorporated hand embroidery, jewels and beads, with painting, color and texture, making her designs as much art as fashion. But for most clients, her gowns became prized family possessions.

She credits going “purely custom design” to her uncle John Mayer, who created an “Eve Cava” dress that fashion houses adapted repeatedly with changes of pockets or buttons. She also credits her heritage: “I think Italian designers are the tops in this area. They just know what they are doing!”

The most important thing she has learned? “I’ve learned how important it is to be patient, and to listen to what your customers say,” she says. “That’s what it’s all about.



Courtesy of the artist and Samsøn. Photography by Stewart Clements.



Photo by Joseph Leute

## Making Limoncello Out of Lemon Laws

Most consumers have never heard of Vince Megna unless maybe they've had unsolvable car problems or happened upon one of his brash YouTube videos. Some automobile manufacturers know him too well. Megna is arguably America's foremost lemon-law lawyer.

Since beginning his lemon-law practice in 1990, the 69-year-old, Milwaukee-based attorney has handled more than 3,000 lemon-law cases—some simple as telling consumers how to file claims, others complex as taking law suits to the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Either way, Megna likes to put the squeeze on lemon laws.

"Every state has a lemon law, but there are a lot of bad lemon laws," says Megna, adding that manufacturers should always stand behind their cars or provide a fair remedy if a car can't be fixed.

Last year, Megna won the biggest lemon-law judgment in history—\$880,000. The customer's \$56,000 Mercedes had a recurring battery problem. Mercedes wouldn't budge—for eight years of litigation. The Wisconsin Supreme Court finally awarded the plaintiff \$256,000; Megna's attorney's fees totaled more than a half million.

Wisconsin's legislature has now passed a new lemon law severely limiting attorney's fees. "Wisconsin went from having one of the better lemons laws in the country to one of the worst," says Megna, who grew up in a typical Italian American family in Iron Mountain, Mich. "Now the little guy is stuck."



Franc Palata

## To the Beat of a Different Drum

Composer and musician Joe Bertolozzi likes to bang on things. In a good way. Four years ago, he composed "Bridge Music," a piece created from sounds he recorded by hammering, striking, scraping and drumming different structural parts of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Mid-Hudson Bridge, near Poughkeepsie, N.Y. The album climbed to #18 on the Billboard Classical Crossover charts.

As a concert organist, Bertolozzi has played St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City and several other cathedrals and basilicas in Rome, Assisi and elsewhere in Europe. But it's his percussion work using major public structures that attracts most attention. So, this summer, when he travelled from his home in Beacon, N.Y., to Paris to "play" the Eiffel Tower, stories appeared in the New York Times, The Guardian, Le Figaro and on NPR radio.

"Everything vibrates," Bertolozzi recounts his aha-moment thinking that lead to this unusual instrumentation. Using sticks, hammers and mallets made of various materials, he collected more than 2,000 sounds from the Eiffel Tower. Over the next several months, he'll compose those sounds into an hour-long recording, "Tower Music," due out in 2014.



"I compose for traditional instruments as well and have some powerful orchestral, ballet, choral and wind ensemble music which I think the public would enjoy hearing," says Bertolozzi, hoping that the high visibility of "Tower Music" will resonate with conductors willing to explore his other works. Listen: <http://josephbertolozzi.com/eiffel-tower-music/>.

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# Putting Pampepato in its Place

By Mary Ann Esposito



If palaces, powerful people with royal titles, exquisite art, delicious food and bicycles interest you, then you would love Ferrara, the northernmost city of Emilia Romagna, nestled in the flatlands of the Po Valley some 28 miles north of Bologna.

Unlike Bologna, it was not founded by the Romans but was a Byzantine outpost for the Roman emperor. The city reached the pinnacle of its power under the rule of the powerful d'Este family during the Renaissance, from the 13th to the 16th century. The d'Es-



Congratulations to Ambassador's culinary columnist Mary Ann Esposito, who was recently awarded the prestigious Artusi Award 2013 in the city of Forlimpopoli, Italy, hometown of Pellegrino Artusi, author of Italy's most famous cookbook, "*La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiare bene.*"

tes came from old German stock and were largely responsible for turning Ferrara from a frumpy collection of communes into a mecca for the arts, attracting musicians, writers and painters to the royal court—with most of the credit going to Isabella d' Este.

The Dukedom of the d'Este family gained its prestige beginning with Ercole I. It remained so until 1598 when Ferrara became a papal state after Alfonso d'Este, Ercole's son, husband of Lucrezia Borgia, died without an heir, resulting in the pope claiming the city. This signaled the demise of d'Este's power and the family eventually moved to Modena.

But the d'Este dynasty gave a new physical appearance to the city, changing its medieval look into a more elegant one with such impressive structures as the d'Este castle (built in 1385), which was surrounded by a moat fed by the Po River.

Palazzo dei Diamanti, Palace of the Diamonds, on Corso Ercole d'Este, was originally built in 1492. It has a most interesting facade of over 12,000 large marble blocks cut to resemble diamonds. Today it's an art gallery.



The Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrara

There is also the Palazzo Schifanoia on Via Scandiana. The word *schifanoia* means to "avoid boredom," and was the playhouse for pleasurable pastimes of the d'Estes. Today, it contains an exquisite art collection including the fabulous frescoes in the Sala dei Mesi, Hall of the Months, an allegorical depiction of the months of the year, court life, signs of the zodiac, and a host of mythological creatures. Just to sit and study these frescoes, one can while away hours—and lend ▶



In 1456, Duke Borso d'Este served *pampepato* at a banquet with a gold coin in each loaf.

credence to the meaning of *schifanoia*.

One of the d'Estes crowning humanitarian achievements was the acceptance into the city of the Jewish community, which had been expelled from Spain in 1492 by Queen Isabella. They relocated to central Europe and Italy, taking up residence in Venice. But the Venetians considered them a threat to their commerce and soon expelled them, too.

Ercole d'Este welcomed the Sephardic Jewish community. He gave its people protection, allowed them to live in a designated ghetto area of the city and work in money lending, textile trades, agriculture and medicine. Only one synagogue remains in Ferrara today (La Sinagoga di Rito Tedesco), but at one time there were a dozen or more.

The Jewish community left its mark on the foods of Ferrara. There is a lively tradition of *cucina ebraica Ferrarese* (Jewish cooking), including classics like the hearty stew *hamim* (also known as *frisinal*), and *zucca disfatta*, a squash dish for which Ferrara is famous.

One of my favorite places to grab a snack and people watch is at Bar Centro Storico on Martiri della Libertà, a pleasant pasticceria and bar not far from the d'Este palace. There, you will find typical Ferrarese foods, including the famous bread *pampepato*.

This dome-shaped bread is covered in melted chocolate and looks like a papal skullcap. Its ingredients include lots of spices—nutmeg, cinnamon, coriander and ginger—and is rich with chocolate, nuts and fruit. It's the Christmas bread made in Ferrara.

Created at the monastery of Cor-

pus Domini during the 15th century, *pampepato*, or *pampapato*, depending on who you ask and how it is spelled, can mean peppered bread (*pan pepato*) or bread of the pope (*pan del pappà*).

In Ferrara, Duke Borso d'Este served *pampepato* at a banquet in 1456 and inserted a gold coin in each one. In the Middle Ages they were sent as gifts to the pope. Ferrara even gave an 11-pound *pampepato* to General Eisenhower during World War II.

While *pampepato* isn't difficult to make, its heavy dough does require a stand mixer. And, perhaps, a gold coin....

### Pampepato Pope's Bread

Makes 2 round breads

#### Ingredients

4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
 ¾ cup slivered almonds  
 4 cups unbleached, all-purpose flour  
 1 tablespoon baking powder  
 ½ teaspoon baking soda  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 ¼ teaspoon ground cloves  
 ¼ teaspoon ground ginger  
 ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg  
 Grinding of black pepper  
 ½ cup diced candied orange rind  
 ½ cup diced candied lemon rind  
 ½ cup diced candied citron  
 1½ cups sugar  
 1 cup water  
 ¾ cup baking cocoa  
 ½ cup sweet cocoa  
 1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate melted  
 with 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil



Mary Ann's latest cookbook, "Ciao Italia Family Classics" is available at bookstores and online at Amazon.com. For more recipes, visit [www.ciaoitalia.com](http://www.ciaoitalia.com).

#### Directions

- Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- Spread the almonds on a baking sheet and toast them for 5 minutes. Watch carefully to prevent burning. Transfer the almonds to a bowl and set aside. Place a piece of parchment paper to fit over the baking sheet and set aside.
- Blend the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg and pepper together in a large stand mixer. Stir in the orange, lemon and citron rind. Set aside.
- Combine the sugar, cocoas and water in a saucepan and stir the ingredients over medium heat for about 10 minutes. Cool for 5 minutes, then stir in the vanilla and pour the cocoa mixture into the flour mixture and combine well. Stir in the almonds.
- Remove the dough from the mixer, divide it in half and form 2 domed rounds about 6-inches in diameter.
- Bake for 30-35 minutes or until a cake skewer inserted in the middle comes out clean.
- Cool the breads on a rack.
- Melt chocolate in a bowl set over warm water. Stir in the olive oil. Brush the bottom of the breads and allow them to dry before turning over and brushing the top and sides. Allow to dry.
- Cut into slices to serve with a dessert wine such as Vin Santo. ▲

Recipe courtesy of [www.ciaoitalia.com](http://www.ciaoitalia.com)

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## Bruce Springsteen Serenades his Ancestral Madre Patria

In May, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band played the first of four concerts this year in Italy at Naples' Piazza del Plebiscito, the city's incredibly beautiful main square. The 2013 European leg of the "Wrecking Ball Tour" also took the band to Milan, Padua and Rome, as well as to more than two dozen other European cities.

Geographically the band's largest tour ever, this road trip equaled the four continents they toured during the 1984-85 "Born in the U.S.A. Tour," and surpassed it in the number of countries, including places where they'd never performed such as Brazil, Chile, the Czech Republic and Mexico.

But Italy...that was special for Springsteen.

A couple hours before stepping onto the stage in the early evening with his formidable multi-ethnic and multi-racial band of 17 men and women, The Boss warmed up to the excitedly waiting Neapolitan audience. Walking on stage alone with his acoustic guitar, he addressed the fans with the words that one of his musical heroes, Frank Sinatra, used to refer to his Italian heritage and Italian Americans in general, repeating twice: "My people, my people!" Then, he performed two songs, both from his old repertoire: "This Hard Land" (1984) and "Growing Up" (1973).

*By Samuele F. S. Pardini*

*Photography by Francesco Castaldo*

Neither the words nor the choice of the two songs were coincidental, let alone the place where the newly inducted member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences uttered them. That became even clearer after his band played an instrumental version of "O' Sole Mio," and Springsteen said in a mix of excellent Neapolitan dialect and good Italian:

*"O' paese do sole e della mia famiglia. É bello essere nel Sud d'Italia. Io sono del Sud d'Italia. É bello essere a casa."*

"The land of the sun and where my family comes from. It's beautiful being in the South of Italy. I am ►





Born in the **USA** But at home in  
**ITALY**

“Born in the U.S.A.,”  
but a proud  
grandson of Italy.



from the South of Italy. It's beautiful being home."

After this salute, he launched into the first tune of the concert, a song titled "Long Walk Home."

And a long walk home to his Italian roots and his Italian American self it has been. Springsteen is the grandchild of Antonio Zerilli and Adelina Sorrentino, two turn-of-the-past-century Italian immigrants to the United States from a small town located a few miles north of Naples, Vico Equense. Officially an honorary citizen of the town since April 2011, he later in the show dedicated, appropriately, the song "My Hometown," from his 1984 "Born in the U.S.A." blockbuster album, to Vico Equense.

I don't know Bruce Springsteen personally, but I know one thing about him: He is an obsessively self-conscious artist. That's often the case with American male artists who hail from a recent immigrant family and become recognized American names, if not, as in Springsteen's case, iconic and public American figures. That is to say, when

he talks in public, no matter the occasion, he's meaningfully serious, even when he pretends not to be.

Since the late 1980s, when he became a parent and started writing songs from a parent's perspective, Springsteen began to reflect upon himself, upon who he is rather thinking more generally about who we are as Americans, what America is and should be, as he did earlier in his career. The man screaming to the world

that he was born in the U.S.A. was no longer only that imaginary American from the songs, but now he was also the singer, songwriter and parent Bruce Springsteen.

Therefore, it is no surprise that references to his Italian heritage and his Italian American self, have become more and more frequent as time went by, both on stage and in public appearances such as the rare interviews that he gives.



More than 50,000 Italian fans crowd Milan's Stadio San Siro for the Springsteen concert.

## “You can’t really know who you are and where we’re going, unless you know who you were and where we came from....”

—Bruce Springsteen accepting the Ellis Island Family Heritage Award in 2010

Make no mistake, the righteous pride of his maternal Italian heritage has always been a strong presence in his artistic life. As he ascended to fame in the mid-1970s, a time when the country continued to identify Italian American men with the gangster figure, then in the guise of Don Corleone, “Rock’s New Sensation,” as the *Time* magazine cover hailed him, even then known as “The Boss” (talk about paradoxes!), did not shy from telling his newly found arena audiences that his mother was “very Italian.”

And very Italian, Mrs. Adele surely is. Once, she reproached her beloved son for using the f-word one too many times during a show. And if that is not an old-fashioned Italian American moment, I don’t know what is. It could have been a scene from Jerre Mangione’s classic 1942 memoir of Italian American life “Mount Allegro.” Seriously, can you picture Mick Jagger’s mom doing the same?

Likewise, Springsteen’s acknowledged musical influences include the cream of Italian America’s popular singers, from Frank Sinatra to the recently reunited (thanks to E Street Band’s Italian American guitarist, actor and cultural entrepreneur Steven Van Zandt) The Rascals. And to one of the most underrated and yet most seminal rockers ever, Dion Di Mucci, whose name appears along with Elvis’ in the 30th anniversary documentary of the making of “Born to Run,” the album that consecrated Springsteen as an artist.

In part, this is the result of Italian Americans’ strong impact on American culture after the Second World War, an influence especially strong on artists who grew up in the New York City and New Jersey area, as Springsteen did. At the same time, for Springsteen, this self-discovery as an

American has been an increasingly conscious choice that eventually led him to acknowledge more consistently his Italian immigrant heritage.

When, in 1995, Springsteen opened the Frank Sinatra 80th birthday tribute, he paid homage to the Hoboken native by linking their shared Italian identity to their musical artistry. “And so, from one Italian singer to another . . .,” he told his fellow Italian American musician from New Jersey before singing for him an acoustic cover of “Angel Eyes.”

In 2010, Springsteen accepted the Ellis Island Family Heritage Award. In his brief acceptance speech, he first paid tribute to his Italian grandparents by saying, “You can’t really know who you are and where we’re going, unless you know who you were and where we came from. You really can’t understand what it might mean being an American unless you know what it meant to be an American.”

Then, he credited his grandparents’ three daughters, his mother and his aunts, calling them his living connection to his Italian heritage and the embodiment of what it meant to him to go to Ellis Island “as an immigrant.”

Think about it: The man who gained his world passport by singing that he was “Born in the U.S.A.” an immigrant? One who calls himself a Southern man and Southern Italy home? Is this a contradiction?

Perhaps, but it occurs to me that in typical American fashion, being born in the U.S.A. was for Bruce Springsteen his second birth, so to speak. Prior to that, the Jersey Devil had already sung that he was born to run to “that place where we really wanna go,” as his epic 1975 anthem’s lyrics read toward the end. These are words that might very well have been in the mind of his



“The Boss” plays Milan, one of four Italian cities on his 2013 Wrecking Ball Tour.

grandfather and grandmother before leaving Italy, or, for that matter, of any grandfather and grandmother, of anybody before leaving the country of origins to emigrate to America or elsewhere in the world.

Look at the two songs that he sang this past May in Naples to warm up the audience. They are about hardship, becoming one’s self, work, family, dreaming, friendship, beauty and, above all, they are about finding a home in the world, “the place where we really wanna go,” perhaps the “Land of Hope and Dreams” of the song he opened with at the Milan show.

These are, in essence, immigrant songs, as are many of Bruce Springsteen’s songs in the end. They are versions of his Italian American story, itself a version of the American story—a story that began somewhere else, a story that “this son of Italy,” as Bruce Springsteen called himself at Ellis Island, has been singing for 40 years. ▲

*A native of Tuscany, Samuele F.S. Pardini became a fan of R&R music at a very early age. He is an Assistant Professor in the Department of World Languages and Cultures at Elon University, where he is the Coordinator of the American Studies Program and Faculty-in-Residence of the Honors Program. The editor of “The Devil Gets His Due: The Uncollected Essays of Leslie Fiedler” (Counterpoint Press; 2008), he is completing a book called “In the Name of the Mother: African Americans, Italian Americans and Modernity.”*

Francesco Castaldo/www.francesco-castaldo.it/

# Italian American Agriturismo!

A New Ex-patriot  
Trend  
Translates the Italian  
Experience

*By Gabi Logan*





Ashley Bartner

It's not often that you find yourself dining in a crowded Mediterranean marina filled with luxury yachts on an agritourism, or agricultural tourism, vacation. Yet there I was swirling my *pasta con suria* in the shadow of the steep cliffs leading up to 2000-year-old Tropea, Calabria, once the southern frontier of the Papal States and more recently the playground of '70s starlets.

Our main course, a local specialty called *pesce al pettine*, and the flaked fish mixed with breadcrumbs to coat our spaghetti, were caught fresh that morning. Not by a local fisherman, per se, but by former-P.E.-teacher-cum-private-skipper Captain Francesco, our chef and escort for a lazy afternoon boat trip down to Capo Vaticano, the jutting edge of the last bay before Sicily. As we sailed past the active volcano Stromboli and spotted Mt. Etna peaking up from the distant Sicilian shores, Captain Francesco told us the name and history of each interesting rock outcropping in the sea or on the shore, from the ancient Niace Grotto to the “funghi” micro islands.

I had come to Calabria to research a new breed of agritourism tours run by expats looking to share Italian culture with their compatriots. These adventurers have not only left their homes behind for *la dolce vita* but

also forged thriving businesses in an extremely competitive market. As we returned to Tropea's shore, taking in the city from its best angle in a perfect introduction to the territory, I knew something was different about this tour, a verve and prickly static sense of something new and exciting coming into being.

When a British friend recently told me that, on a whim, in the midst of looking at flats to buy in London, they bought a house in Umbria near a sustainable agritourism community they're helping to launch, and that a model from New York was moving there to become the excursion coordinator, it was clear there was a change in the air.

Always alluring, Italy has a new draw for expats and would-be business owners in particular. What started as a trickle with the Baur B&B near Acqui Terme in 2002, and Bella Baita

in the Alps north of Torino in 2005, now nearly 10 years later has become a deluge.

But why is a generation of Italian Americans returning to their ancestral land not just to discover it, but to promote it and share it with the world?

In part, because Italy is just addictive. After a few prolonged visits, these expats just couldn't bear the thought of returning home. But even more than Italy's usual charms, the stress and tempo of modern life has pushed many to yearn for the simple pleasures and rhythms of country life, where you can curate every part of your food from start to finish in connection with nature and the seasons.

In the far north, where the first Italian American agritourisms began, this seasonal connection complicates the business of operating an agritourism, or in Italian *agriturismo*. As Marla Gulley Roncaglia, co-owner of Bella ▶



Family-style dinner at Tania Pascuzzi and Chef Peppe's cooking school

Baita in Piedmont's Val Chisone, explained in March, "The spring business is quite fickle. Naturally, the spring arrives later here in the mountains. Even though our elevation is not all that high, it's high enough that we are fully blanketed in snow at the moment even though the valley is showing signs of thinking about spring." And this is perhaps one of the most intriguing parts of these new businesses.

While you naturally expect to find agritourisms in rural parts of the country, expat-run agritourisms chose unusual areas of the country as their bases, such as Umbria, Le Marche and Calabria. They're all regions practically unknown to foreigners, hard to reach, and not home to large expat communities. But these entrepreneurs dive deep into the Italian countryside to immerse both themselves and their guests in the type of pure Italian life and culture that's harder and harder to stumble upon in Florence, Rome and Venice these days.

Take Ashley and Jason Bartner, owners of La Tavola Marche. To reach

this rustic cooking school and inn via public transportation from Rome, you take the national train service to Perugia, then switch to the Umbrian train service to Città di Castello, and still need a pick up for the remaining 20 minute drive. From Milan, you'd have to head to Pesaro by train, take a bus to regional capital Urbino, and then switch buses to finally make it to Piobiccio, the town closest to their agritourism. (They can also arrange a car pick-up for guests from any of these points.) But if you ask Ashley how they settled on such an off-the-grid location, she'll tell you that when they saw the place, they knew they had to leave their lives in America behind and buy it right away.

She's not the first person I've heard that from.

Tania Pascuzzi, proprietor of In Italy Tours and the Delicious Italy cooking school, with Calabrian Chef Peppe in Tropea, had the same experience. For a decade, Tania worked as a professional stylist in cut-throat New York City, where Balenciaga dresses have busier schedules than the

celebrities who sport them. After an assistant's mix-up with some jewelry on loan cost her her relationship with a major woman's magazine, she needed a break. On a vacation to Calabria in search of her roots, she became intrigued by a culture she realized she had barely been taught about.

"I thought I knew about Calabrian food from what I ate at home, but when I arrived, I didn't recognize a single thing on the menu," she reminisced over a dinner of 30-second broiled shrimp as sweet as candy. "Life was just better here. Everyone kept telling me that I had to see Tropea, that I would love it. And when I first came to the piazza and saw the view, I knew I had to stay here and start my business here."

Insinuating herself into the Tropean community was no simple feat for Pascuzzi, however, and that may be one of the big reasons these enterprising entrepreneurs choose locations off the main tourist path. While it can be said that getting anything done in Italy is about who you know, as a foreigner looking to start

a business that locals fear will compete with their own, the task becomes Herculean.

Even though Pascuzzi spent four years researching locations and providers before she began to offer any tours, she had to change her local cooking class and agritourism partner a couple years and thousands in infrastructure and equipment investments in. But while many still consider her a newcomer or foreigner, her deep connections to the community are clear on any walk through town. When I first met her at my hotel to walk to the main square, we stopped at least once per block as shop owners, elegantly dressed older gentleman having their morning caffè, and other tour guides came over to catch up with us. From Captain Francesco's personalized boat tours to the affectionately attentive service on Tropea's most scenic café patio, that warm welcome extends to her guests.

On the other side of Calabria, in Catanzaro Lido, where Cherry Moore operates tours and the Il Cedro inn with her Italian husband Peppe Mannella, the familial local connection has become a key part of recreating an authentic Italy for guests. "The Calabrian experience for me is people welcoming you into their homes for multi-course meals. It's hard to get that sense in a restaurant," she confessed. "When I looked back at my past tours, the ones that people enjoyed the most, they were the ones where we had a meal with Peppe's relatives. They'd say, 'Oh my god, you've never tried a Galioppo? Get me a cup.'"

My last meal in Tropea was exactly one of these occasions. At the site of Pascuzzi and Chef Peppe's agritourism, a cooking lesson turned into something of a family reunion. As food cooked or we waited for the pasta dough to be ready to roll, a ➤



Gabi Logan

Chef Peppe cooking

An Umbrian winemaker prunes his vines in early spring.



Ashley Bartner  
Gabi Logan



Alici (white anchovies) with herbed breadcrumb sauce



Fresh fusilli pasta

Gabi Logan

### Sailboats in Tropea Harbor

Gabi Logan



## Agriturismo Options

**Alla Madonna del Piatto**  
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15011 Acqui Terme, Piedmont  
baurbb.com

**Bella Baita**  
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10060 Pinasca, Piedmont  
(39) 347-984-2945  
bellabaita.com

**In Italy Tours | Delicious Italy**  
Piazza Raponzoli, 12  
89861 Tropea, Calabria  
(39) 338-760-9785  
italytours.com | deliciousitaly.com

**La Tavola Marche**  
Via Candigliano  
61046 Piobbico, Le Marche  
(39) 331-525-2753  
latavolamarche.com

**My Bella Vita Travel | Il Cedro B&B**  
Viale Isonzo, #310  
88100 Catanzaro, Calabria  
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constant stream of visitors came in to say hello and pay their respects, not just the farm workers, but also their cousins, wives, children and even grandmothers. We asked all to stay and eat with us, and soon our small luncheon of five stretched and expanded to fill all the available seats.

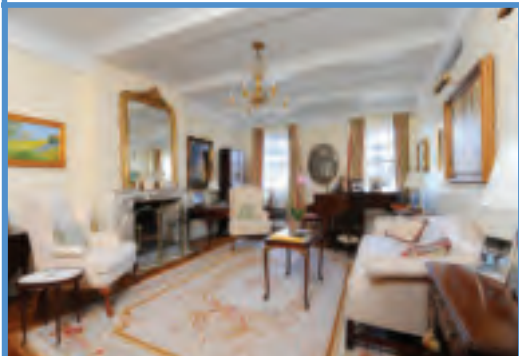
Blending the old, traditional agritourism activities from farm tours to cooking classes with new takes on the traditional, this new age of agritourism operators is bridging an important gap.

When I first arrived, Pascuzzi explained that her biggest differentiator was that, "I know what its like to

be in a foreign country and not speak the language. I make sure to hold their hands." And as we took a short walk through Chef Peppe's farm, even though I did speak the language, it was clear that though I arrived with no background in Calabrian food, history or culture, in just two days, it had all been expertly, seamlessly translated. ▲

*Gabi Logan is a freelance travel writer who specializes in Italy. She explores both the popular and lesser-known parts of the country to share them with Italophiles around the world as a freelance writer and cultural news correspondent for Italy Magazine.*

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# Parlo Italiano!

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*I calabresi  
che hanno cercato fortuna  
altrove nel mondo  
hanno sempre portato  
nel cuore la loro terra  
trasmettendo alle giovani  
generazioni la passione  
per le proprie radici.*

*I calabresi nel mondo sono una  
comunità importante  
che ci permette di crescere  
fuori dai confini  
della nostra regione,  
una comunità  
che ci rappresenta  
e ci rende orgogliosi,  
un legame intenso e diretto che  
non si spezzerà mai.  
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in gioco di squadra  
per costruire il futuro  
di una regione meravigliosa,  
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# the ancient pottery of squillace

By Michelle Fabio

the terra cotta tradition  
on terra firma  
in this Calabrian village



Most mornings, you'll find Claudio Panaia spinning his potter's wheel in the ancient seaside village of Squillace, Calabria, located near the eastern coastline of the boot's arch. Attached to his *laboratorio* is an impressive display of hundreds of completed ceramics for sale, many destined for everyday use—all handmade by him and his wife, Beatrice Russomano. All stunningly beautiful.

"These kinds of objects come from the type of production known as '*della nonna*' (grandma's) or '*dei contadini*' (peasants)," explained Panaia, in Italian.

In fact, the potters of Squillace are called "pignatari," referencing their centuries-old tradition of this style of potter. The word comes from "*pignata*," a terra cotta pot still used today in Calabria for cooking beans over an open fire.

Also on display are shiny, glazed ceramics painted in what Panaia calls the "classic colors" of Squillace's pottery: green, green copper, blue, orange and yellow. In the past, potters prepared the hues by hand using natural elements such as milk and egg yolks. Today, the colors are commercially produced. The painted designs are elegant but tend to be simpler than those of the elaborately decorated majolica of nearby Sicily.

One such simple but beautiful design is of the "*uccellino della fortuna*," a bird that brings good luck, recalling a pattern from early 18th-century Squillace. Indeed, when Poste Italiane, the Italian postal service, honored Italy's ceramics with a series of five stamps in 2012, one of the designs featured Squillace's famous bird of fortune.

But the highlight of Panaia and Russomano's Bottega d'Arte Il Tornio ("*il tornio*" is the potter's wheel), and in many of Squillace's eight pottery workshops dotting its quaint, medieval streets, are the reproductions made in the 15th-17th century style Squillace is famous for: "*ceramica ingobbiata e graffita*," engobed and etched terra cotta,



Claudio Panaia of  
La Bottega D'Arte Il Tornio



also called sgraffito in English.

### History of Squillace Pottery

Squillace's rich tradition of sgraffito pottery dates back to when noble families commissioned artisans to produce special pieces for display. During that time, the pottery of Squillace also featured religious figures important to the region, such as Calabria's patron saint, St. Francis of Paola. And it became known for plates, vases and other objects in the sgraffito style, notably a peculiar type of bottle with six handles still reproduced today.

The sgraffito technique, which is Byzantine in origin, was all but abandoned in Squillace after a devastating earthquake in 1783 that destroyed much of town, causing major damage to its Norman castle dating to the 11th century and destroying most of its pottery shops.

In more recent years, Squillace pottery has experienced a kind of rebirth, however, thanks in large part to the efforts of families who have been engaged in the art for centuries. Photographs of Panaia's potting predecessors line the walls of Il Tornio. Just down the street, visitors can see the Commodaro family's 17th century fornace, the oldest oven in the village. The Commodaros operate the Ideart boutique and offer lessons to those who would like to take their turns at the wheel.

The opening of Squillace's Istituto Statale d'Arte, a high school devoted to the arts, in the early 1980s has also

helped regenerate interest in this ancient art form, including among those like Panaia himself, who although coming from a family of potters, admits didn't find his passion for the craft until he was a student at the institute.

"When we would take our objects to fairs, I saw that the tourists were interested in my handmade souvenirs, even those that weren't fired in the oven," said Panaia.

Then, in 1990, came Legge 188/90, an Italian law whose goal is to protect the fundamental characteristics of ceramics produced in particular locations throughout Italy by assigning a D.O.C. label (controlled designation of origin) to such products based on their form, style, design, production technique and territories of origin. Squillace is one of only 33 municipalities in Italy and the only one in Calabria that has been awarded the D.O.C. label for its pottery and ceramic products.

### Engobing and Etching Technique

Panaia explained that in the "*tecnica ingobbata e graffita*," the piece is first shaped from clay on the wheel entirely by hand. The object is then dried for a few days outside of the oven, after which on the surface of the plate or vase is applied the engobe, a thin, white clay. This is then allowed to dry for a few hours before the artist takes a small knife and, with surgical-like precision, etches out the chosen design.

This product then is left for a week to 10 days to dry until it is placed in a 960°-980° Celsius (1760°-1790° Fahrenheit) oven. The more "*ferrosa*," or rich in iron, the clay, the richer the terra cotta color that will emerge around the white engobe that has been applied on top of it, noted Panaia, adding that the clay used in Squillace's pottery is, in fact, very rich in iron, but it is no longer sourced locally as it was several hundred years ago.

"In those times, the artisans used to go directly to collect clay and then transform it on the potter's wheel," said Panaia. Even though the territory of Squillace is still 75 percent iron-rich clay, no industrial operations current- ➤



A wall of photos  
detailing the family  
history of La Bottega  
D'Arte Il Tornio

Photo by Michelle Fabio



Photo by Michelle Fabio

Graziella Cristofaro of Ideart applying engobe to plate that will be etched and fired, sgraffito style

ly excavate it here. And so, these days, the potters of Squillace have their clay shipped in from another town famous for its pottery, Montelupo Fiorentino. The clay of that area has the same characteristics of Squillace's.

### Squillace's Ancient Pottery Around the World

Ironically, treasured examples of Squillace's sgraffito pottery dating back centuries are more likely to be found in museums and other collections well outside of Calabria. The closest example, geographically, is in the Ciccio Collection of Naples' Capodimonte Museum. The nearly 20-inch in diameter engobed and etched plate features a figure in typical Calabrian dress of the period surrounded by various animals and vegetable motifs.

Other works from Squillace are found in Italy at the International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza and the Civic Museum of Rovereto, and

abroad in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the British Museum in London.

### The Future of Squillace Pottery

As Panaia himself notes, the potters of today necessarily must also keep an eye toward the market as well as on the constant growth of their craft, which is why he's a member of several organizations and associations, including the Consiglio Nazionale della Ceramica Italiana (National Council of Italian Ceramics) based in Rome to promote Italian pottery in Italy and worldwide.

But on an everyday basis, in Squillace, this small, picturesque town perched above the Ionian Sea is now once again claiming its rightful place in the rich pottery tradition of Italy—with Panaia, Russomano, the Commodaro family, and their fellow pignatari proudly leading the way from behind their wheels. ▲

## Squillace's Norman Castle



Photo by Franco Muià

Like many towns in Calabria, Squillace's history dates back to the area's time as Magna Graecia, when Greek settlements lined what is now the Calabrian coast. Squillace takes its name from the ancient Greek city of Scylletium, the ruins of which are located in nearby Borgia and on top of which was built Roman Scolacium. One of the highlights of Squillace is its castle, built on the grounds of a former Byzantine fort by Norman Robert Guiscard in 1044. Although the castle was largely destroyed in an earthquake in

1783, the walls and towers still stand, and the area, including a museum located inside its perimeter, is open to visitors. A placard outside the castle commemorates that in 1599, Calabrian philosopher Tommaso Campanella was imprisoned there for his part in the anti-Spanish Calabrian Revolt, a plan to break Calabria away from Spanish rule under the Kingdom of Naples. By that time, the Spanish had already expelled the Jewish population from Calabria as well as massacred the Waldensians in

Guardia Piemontese in the province of Cosenza. Some of the most noted archaeological finds on the site include artifacts with references to the Knights of the Templar; the skeletal remains of a couple seemingly in a tender embrace; a centuries-old plate decorated with Squillace's notable "uc-cellino di fortuna" design; and a Christian necropolis from the 5th-7th centuries. The castle's remains are well worth a visit if you're in the area.

—Michelle Fabio

*Michelle Fabio has lived in her ancestral village in Calabria, Italy, since 2003. She writes about savoring simplicity one sip at a time at Bleeding Espresso (bleedingespresso.com) and about raising goats at Goat Berries (goatberries.com). She is also the managing editor of Gemelli Press, a boutique publisher that combines twin passions for books and Italy.*



Ceramics painted in the classic Squillace pottery colors at Ideart

Photo by Franco Muià

## The Pools of Cassiodorus

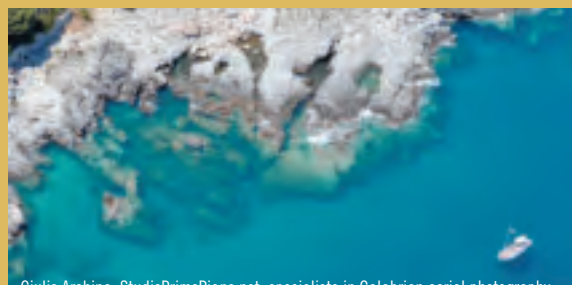
Squillace's most famous citizen is undoubtedly Cassiodorus, who was born in ancient Squillace (Scylletium) in about 490 into a prominent family that had lived in the area for generations. He was a statesman, writer, monk—and fish farmer.

After serving in various levels of government and gaining a solid reputation for keeping meticulous and precise records, Cassiodorus finished his illustrious career as praetorian prefect for Italy, which essentially made him the prime minister

of the Ostrogoth Kingdom. Upon his retirement, he returned to his native area to build a monastery, where he began writing on religious matters, attempting to bridge the gap between ancient culture and Christianity. The monastery did not operate on traditional monastic principles, however, as it combined both religious and secular texts as well as study of the liberal arts. Perhaps the most impressive aspect of Vivarium, though, and from which the monastery took its name, were the naturally formed pools of water along the Ionian coast, which Cassiodorus used

to farm fish. The basins were enclosed by grates, and the fish were fed food prepared by the monks. The farms are no longer in operation today, but visitors can still wade in the clear blue pools located in Copanello in the Gulf of Squillace.

—Michelle Fabio



Giulio Archina, StudioPrimoPiano.net, specialists in Calabrian aerial photography

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# NEBBIOLO ON THE MAP

By Dick Rosano

Not Just the  
Grape of Barolo  
and Barbaresco



Castiglione Falletto within Barolo in Piedmont, Italy, one of the top wine-producing areas in the world.

Dick Rosano



WWW.NIAF.ORG

Courtesy of Palm Bay Imports

If this was Jeopardy, the answer would be:  
“What are the best Italian wines?”

The usual answer is as straightforward as it is incomplete.

“The three B’s” refers to a small group of internationally recognized super stars in the Italian wine firmament – well, actually, any wine firmament since these wines have won accolades for many decades and survive as classics of Italian viticulture.

Brunello di Montalcino is the lone Tuscan wine to make it into this holy trinity, which is too bad in a way because this central Italian region produces many fabulous wines, not the least of which is Chianti, a wine that introduced many American Baby Boomers to the wines of the Old World.

Barolo and Barbaresco are the remaining members of this elite club. Both hail from the region of Piedmont, both are named after the towns they border, both are made from the nebbiolo grape, and both have a unique folklore about their pedigree. Barolo is known to many as the King of Wines, and Barbaresco as the Queen of Wines (some say Prince, but the royal lineage remains intact).

Barolo is truly a kingly wine – and one that often costs a king’s ransom. It is also slow to mature, a fact that forces eager buyers to face the glum



Courtesy of Palm Bay Imports



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**Above:** The barrel room at the Travaglini Winery in Italy's Piedmont region

**Left:** Winemaker Gianmarco Ghisolfi at his vineyard in Monforte d'Alba in Piedmont, Italy

**Near Left:** The family-owned wine estate Travaglini Vineyards, founded in the 1920s

reality of aging. Sometimes the aging process is so long that many wine lovers who, as they themselves aged, refused to buy more bottles of Barolo once they hit their 60s, knowing that their children would be the ones wielding the corkscrew by the time these timeless gems reached maturity. New winemaking techniques bring the wine around sooner, but Barolo is still a big wine, with a big price tag.

Barbaresco is a bit more forward, a bit more graceful and, although the terminology sometimes draws glaring stares, more feminine. It matures earlier than Barolo but still combines elegance and power in a stylish waltz. That said, most Barbarescos would still benefit from six to 10 years of cellaring.

But the greatest grapes are seldom confined to only a few creations,

and wise winemakers know that not all wines from Piedmont must be either Barolo or Barbaresco. Why not source nebbiolo grapes from outside the delimited districts of Barolo and Barbaresco? Why not tinker with the fermentation and aging, use more aeration and less oak treatment, and bottle this magic grape in other forms? Such decisions could produce wines from nebbiolo that come around earlier, are more affordable, and remind us of the greatness that the big wines promise when we decide to go upscale and invest in them.

Winemakers have been doing just this for many years, labeling the wines that result as Sizzano, Ghemme, Gattinara and Spanna. But the fruit in the bottle remains the same, all from the little brother that stares upward at

kin like Barolo and Barbaresco.

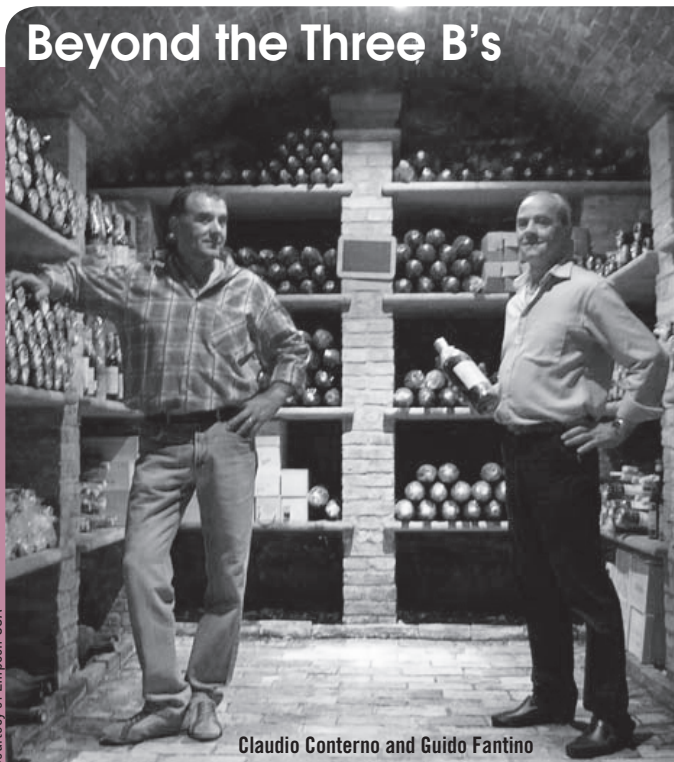
Standard European labeling practices emphasize the place of origin – think Bordeaux, Burgundy, Chianti and Montepulciano – so the printed name often omits reference to the grape inside the bottle. Such is the plight of the nebbiolo grape that is too often hidden behind the place names noted above. There will be an occasional bottle with “Nebbiolo” prominently displayed on the label, which is all good, but don’t wait to settle on just these.

So for someone new to Piedmontese wines and eager to discover the greatness without missing a mortgage payment to do it, or someone familiar with the greatness that is Barolo and Barbaresco who wants to have a hint of it more often, the advice is to seek these other labels. ➤



Gianpaolo Manzone is the sixth generation of his family in the wine industry in the legendary Piedmont region.

## Beyond the Three B's



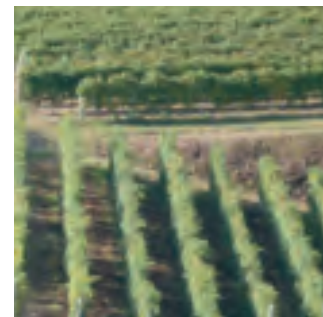
Claudio Conterno and Guido Fantino

This handy mnemonic, “the three B’s” (Brunello di Montalcino, Barolo and Barbaresco) is useful to the wine novice, but it does a lasting injustice to the vast array of Italian wines that have graced our cellars and dinner tables over the years. Chianti, particularly in its upper versions like Chianti Classico and Chianti Classico Riserva, is the easiest example for wine-drinking Americans to identify with. There’s Amarone, Morellino, Barbera, Dolcetto, Grignolino, and the great whites like Pinot Grigio, Malvasia, Verdicchio and Vermentino. According to the labeling standard discussed in the article, many of these grapes are hidden from view by not being listed in print, but we’ve been drinking them for years.

—Dick Rosano

## Some Nebbiolo tasting notes:

- **Attilio Ghisolfi 2007 Nebbiolo (\$30)**  
Whiff of black cherry and raspberry, deep forest pine, fresh floral and upfront, black cherry; soft tannins and rich textures. **Score: 89**
- **Conterno Fantino 2011 Nebbiolo Ginestrino (\$37)**  
Lively and fruity, but with finesse. Flavors of black cherry, plum and raspberry; soft but evident tannins. **Score: 92**
- **Luca Bosio 2009 Nebbiolo d’Alba (\$11)**  
Tightly wound but evocative of earth, toast, oak and dark red berries, flavors tend toward dark fruit; dense textures, long finish. **Score: 90**
- **Marcarini 2011 Nebbiolo Lasarin (\$20)**  
Soft, elegant, equal parts fruit and earth. Light overall, but nice approach. **Score: 85**
- **Orsolani 2008 Carema “Le Tabbie” (\$40)**  
Raspberry and cherry aromas, forward and fruity, but with depth on the palate, delicate violet hints and a subtle suggestion of chocolate on the finish. **Score: 91**
- **Paolo Manzone 2009 Nebbiolo d’Alba Mirine (\$38)**  
Soft, supple, broad palette of earthy aromas and flavors, nicely textured, red fruit, slight hint of earth and tobacco smoke. **Score: 88**
- **Travaglini 2007 Gattinara (\$31)**  
Scent of blackberries and plums, touch of oak and licorice for accent, leather notes, dark red fruit, touch of licorice; intense and filling. **Score: 88**
- **Travaglini 2006 Gattinara Riserva (\$60)**  
Opens with aromas of smoke, earth and dried berries, soft textures, evocative of dried fruit and forest aromas. **Score: 90**
- **Travaglini 2006 Gattinara Tre Vigne (\$50)**  
Bright fruit nose featuring cherries and strawberries, more fruity than earthy, terrific balance, touch of smoke on back palate. **Score: 90**
- **Travaglini 2010 Nebbiolo (\$20)**  
Fresh red fruit nose, light hints of plum, cherry, raspberry, soft angle on finish, touch of spice, smooth finish. **Score: 86**
- **Vietti 2010 Perbacco (\$29)**  
Upfront fruit and nicely balanced, gains intensity on mid-palate, finishes smooth. **Score: 90 ▲**



*Dick Rosano is a wine, food and travel writer whose columns have appeared in The Washington Post, Wine Enthusiast, and other national magazines. His recent book, “Tuscan Blood,” is a mystery set in Italian wine country. His next novel, scheduled for publication, takes place in Piedmont.*





Courtesy of Barboursville Vineyards

The Barboursville Vineyard

## Italian Winemaking in Rural Virginia

Perhaps it's an irony that Virginia has a region called Piedmont, but great wines are produced there as well. One of perennial leaders in all Virginia wine is Barboursville Vineyards in Orange County. It was founded in 1976 by Gianni Zonin, sixth-generation heir to the legendary northern Italian wine family. Under the tutelage of the original winemaker, Gabriele Rausse, it was quickly turned into a winery to be reckoned with.

Luca Paschina took over the reins as winemaker at Barboursville in 1990. He raised Rausse's standards even further and began collecting what is now a somewhat endless stream of accolades for the estate. Just this year, the Barboursville Octagon (a proprietary blend of Merlot, with elements of Reserve Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot that creates a big, voluptuous wine with deep coloration and dense fruit flavors, focusing on ripe berry fruit and roasted coffee bean) won the Virginia Governor's Cup.

Paschina's 2009 Nebbiolo Reserve fits this article and is another case in point. With a nose that evokes the impression of earth and soil, dried cranberry and cherry aromas and flavors, and subtle soft tannins, this is not a Nebbiolo in the Piedmontese style, but a wonderful wine nevertheless.

Barboursville Vineyards is a short two-hour drive from Washington, D.C., nestled in bucolic Virginia countryside. Near the quaint town of Orange, there's more to see than just the winery, but a tourist should dedicate ample time for that estate to visit the tasting room and dine at the luxuriously appointed Palladio restaurant. And if you have the time, a night in the elegant 1804 Inn would be perfectly in season.

—Dick Rosano

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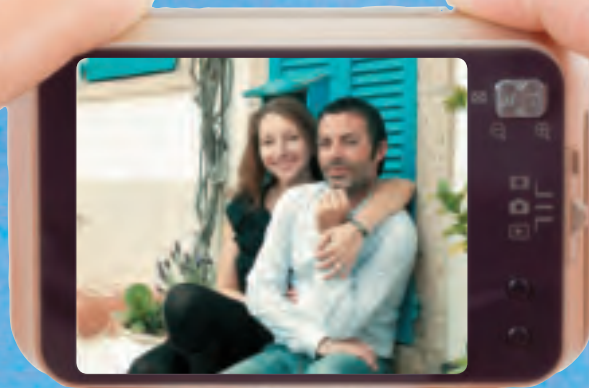




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# BEST Cannoli EVER?

Story and Photos  
by Traci Badalucco

## ONE Cannoli Hope

Perfection...something we're taught is unattainable. But perfection is attainable in Dattilo, Sicily, in the province of Trapani. You won't find this quiet town with a population of 300 in any guidebook or online itinerary of "Things You Need to See and Do in Sicily." But if there were a Cannoli Guidebook, it would be a highlight because, here in Dattilo, you find the perfected cannolo.

It's made fresh daily at a mom-and-pop *pasticcERIA* (pastry shop) called Euro Bar, where with just one bite all your perfectionist dreams come true.

Most of us know cannoli. In Italian, the singular word is actually *cannolo*, and the plural is what the English-speaking world knows as cannoli. The *cannolo* originates from Sicily, the Sicilian word being *cannolu*, meaning tubular. The pastry dates back to the Arab domination of Sicily during the Middle Ages. As the meaning suggests, the pastry's shell is round and filled with ricotta cheese. Cannoli were originally eaten during *Carnivale*, but now are a year-round taste sensation.

So, in my never-ending search for the perfect cannolo, I recently talked with Signore Michele Mazzara and Signora Maria Mazzara, both siblings and owners of Euro Bar along with their sister, Signora Vincenza Mazzara. It was a Sunday, the busiest day of the week. The shop hadn't opened yet, but there was already a line out the door. I asked the locals if they were waiting for the cannoli. One replied "*Certo, aspetta e Lei vedra.*" Translated: "Of course, just wait, and you will see."

As I entered Euro Bar, I was drawn to the beautiful display case of pastries so colorful and full of life. But no cannoli in sight! My turn to order, I asked frantically if they had

already run out. Not such an odd question since the Sicilians before me were carrying them out by the dozen to accompany their Sunday dinners.

Signora Maria Mazzara replied, "Oh, no, we make them fresh as customers order. We've got the ricotta in the back and we fill the cannoli on the spot."

I waited with a coffee. In less than five minutes, there it was. The cannoli at Euro Bar measure about seven inches long and about four inches around, much bigger than the average. Seeing my reaction, Signore Michele smiled. After 35 years in the business, he's seen every expression when customers first glimpse his famous cannoli. ➤





Left: Maria Mazzara stuffs a cannolo  
Right: Michele Mazzara finishing other Sicilian pastries

Call it love at first bite: Lifting the *cannolo*, the weight shocked me—heavier than any other *cannolo* I'd tried. My teeth sank into the splendid crunchiness of the shell, followed immediately by the soft, fluffy freshness of the ricotta. The deliciousness overcame me. The perfection....

After I'd savored every bite, I visited the kitchen, amazed how they manage such an organized system in such a small space. Michele explained that the shop gets by with only five workers, including himself and his two sisters. The fourth is another relative, and the fifth, a pastry worker.

In the center of the room is the work table with two big containers of the chocolate-chip ricotta, waiting to be squeezed into the cannoli shells. Signora Maria said they always have two containers ready, no more, no less.

"We make the ricotta right then and there, until we run out. Then we make more," she said. "Even if there is a line out the door, we keep making new batches as the orders come in."

I asked if this makes things more complicated, even though it guarantees freshness. "This is how we operate," she replied. "It's our system."

And they've been operating that same system since their parents, Giovanni and Francesca Mazzara, took over the *pasticceria* in December 1976. "In the beginning, when my mother and father took over the business, they only made cannoli," Signore Michele said in Italian. "Then, with time, they added other Sicilian desserts."

The cannoli is an old family recipe, passed down generation after

generation from his mother Francesca's side of the family. "The other recipes were passed down from an old Trapanese pastry chef," Michele said.

The first-come-first-serve system explains the freshness, but it's not the only secret. The proof is in the ricotta.

"After 30 years, they're always the same," Signore Michele said. "Here, there is nothing to hide. The ricotta is fresh, so there's no need to add tons of sugar like other places."

Milk from cows costs less than milk from sheep, so most places buy ricotta from cow milk, then add lots of sugar to cover the taste, he explained. The Mazzara family uses only ricotta made from sheep's milk.

"We use 228 grams of sugar for every kilo of ricotta," he said, adding that this equates to about one cup of sugar for every seven cups of ricotta. "The ricotta arrives fresh every morning. We have no secrets, we spend more on our products and that's what makes all the difference in the taste."

The ricotta filling is fairly easy to make, consisting of just a few ingredients: ricotta, sugar and chocolate chips. The cannoli shells are made fresh every morning using flour, water, cocoa powder and marsala wine vinegar. They take about three hours to make from start to finish. Once the dough is cut into circles, they're

rolled and deep-fried. The secret to the crispiness lies in the *strutto* or "lard" made from pork fat.

If you're not a cannoli fan, no worry. There are plenty of other Sicilian sweets to choose from, all made daily—including the famous Sicilian *cassata* (white cake dessert filled with ricotta), *graffe* (fried doughnut-like pastry dipped in sugar), *pasta di madorla* (almond paste), *savoia* (a thin, chocolate layered cake), and *genovesi* (doughy pastries filled with ricotta or custard).

All of them are a memorable taste experience (I know), but the lines form for the canoli.

Before saying my goodbyes, I couldn't help but ask Michele how he manages to resist all the sweets. He said with a laugh, "I eat a piece here and there, but I can't let myself gain any more weight."

Walking out the door, I had no doubt this was one piece of perfection well worth loosening the belt a notch. ▲

*Traci Badalucco is an English teacher and freelance writer. She lives in her hometown, Kansas City, Mo., and spends her summers in Sicily.*

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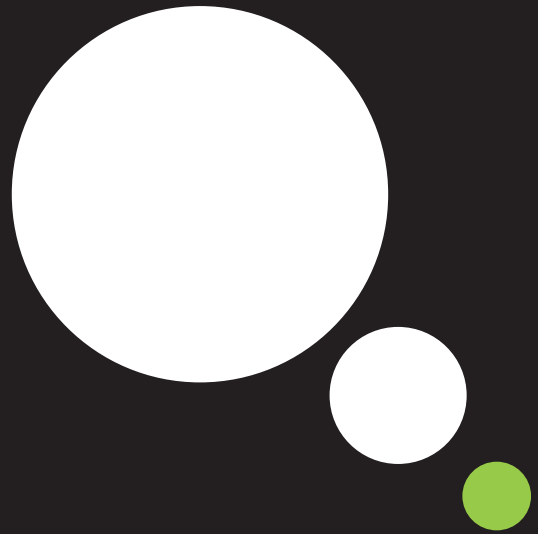
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# The Autumnal

## Italian American Reading List

One of the remarkable memory triggers about Autumns past is the air, and not just of presence of falling leaves, chimney smoke, and that prescient chill. The season smells of going back to school—of freshly sharpened pencils, chalkboards, gym class and cafeterias. Every year, no matter your age, that scent reminds us that summer's done, school's back, time to hit the books.

Well, if school's only a memory for you these days, the good news is you now get to hit whichever books you want. And for our Autumn harvest of new publications, there's a diversity of worthy possibilities.

As always, we provide a sentence or two from the beginning pages of each book because we're convinced beginnings are important glimpses into a book's soul—or should be. We've also added a brief review or thumbnail summary of each book. So turn up Vivaldi's "L'Autunno concerto," sit back in your favorite reading chair, and take a look.

Buona lettura!

—Don Oldenburg



Trucks returning Florentine treasures, including this painting from the Uffizi—Luca Signorelli's *Crucifixion*—in the northern Italian town of San Leonardo, August 1944. German soldiers had transported the paintings hundreds of miles away.





Deane Keller Papers, Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University



Returning Giambologna's statue of Cosmo di Medici and his horse to the Piazza della Signoria of Florence, February 1945.

Monuments Man Capt. Deane Keller, August 1944, at the Florentine repository at Montegufoni where he found 246 paintings, including Botticelli's masterpiece Primavera.

**Saving Italy: The Race to Rescue the Nation's Treasures from The Nazis**

By Robert M. Edsel  
W.W. Norton & Company  
480 pages; \$28.95

Several nights earlier, bombs hit the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie and its Refectory. Surprisingly, none had damaged the jewel of Milan, the dining companion of the Dominican friars: Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*. It had been a centuries-old tradition that the friars would share their meals in front of the north wall on which Leonardo had painted the twelve apostles ...

Robert Edsel brilliantly chronicles this unheralded brushstroke of World War II history in Italy, the story of the little-known unit of Allied art historians, artists and curators called the "Monuments Men," who volunteered for the armed services to rescue historic treasures from the ravages of war and art-looting Nazis.

With centuries of cultural heritage threatened, this different kind of war-time hero travelled with the Allied invasion forces liberating Italy to recapture works of art and preserve masterpieces from the rubble. Told as

an anecdotal narrative highlighting the personalities and tales of a handful of the Monuments Men, as well as the stories of secondary characters such as members of the Italian resistance, Italy's own heroic art officials, museum-pilfering Nazis, even the SS general who secretly helped save Italy's art, the book reads more like a harrowing adventure novel than a history.

How did Da Vinci's "Last Supper" barely escape destruction? Who wrenched the treasures of the Uffizi Gallery from Hitler's grip? How were the remnants of the frescoes of Pisa's Camposanto pieced back together? It's all here, as well as many other tales.

The author of the 2009 book "The Monuments Men" (a major motion picture starring and directed by George Clooney to be released on December 18), Edsel lived for five years in Florence where he researched the story and gained expertise in the recovery of war-stolen art. He founded The Monuments Men Foundation to raise public awareness of the importance of safeguarding civilization's most important artistic treasures from armed conflict. "Saving Italy" raises that awareness, too. And Edsel's knowledge and passion for art recovery makes for compelling storytelling that will fascinate anyone who interested in art, World War II or Italy. ➤



Triumphant return of the Florentine art treasures to Florence and the Palazzo Vecchio, July 1945.



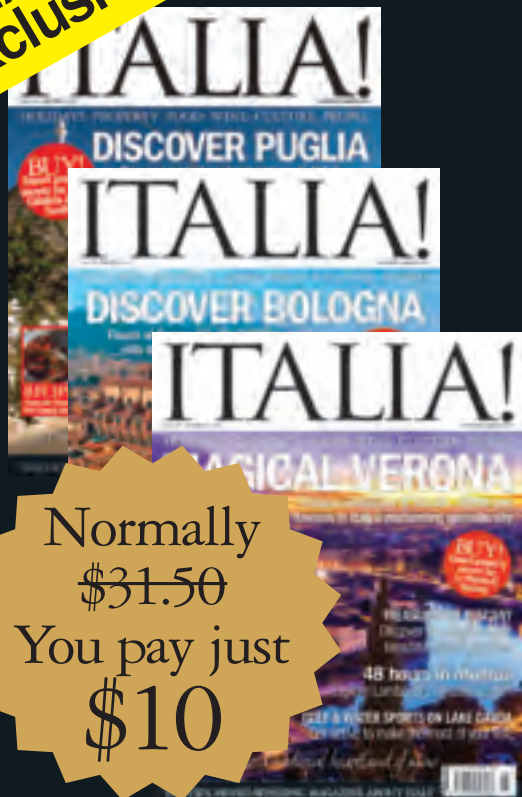
Filippo Rossi, Director of the Galleries of Florence, with recovered stolen painting by Lucas Cranach the Elder, Adam and Eve.

National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD

Deane Keller Papers, Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University

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**The Italian Mission**

By Alan Champorcher  
 Ciamporcero Publishing  
 218 pages  
 \$2.99 (Kindle Edition)



American Embassy to the Holy See, Rome . . . “Planning to join the party? The Ambassador is asking for you, and she looks angry.”

John Adams Conti gazed over the black wrought-iron fence down at the Circus Maximus, the ancient Roman arena where chariot races were once held . . .

In his second international thriller, novelist Alan Champorcher shows a fine hand at shuffling disparate thematic elements (politics and religions, among them) together with some desperate and dangerous characters to create a fast-paced tale with twists and turns that practically require a GPS. And so does the plot’s globetrotting which stretches from the Vatican and Florence, to Beijing and Lhasa, to South Africa and Washington...

with some overtime at Langley.

Like his first novel, “Made in Italy,” the storyline takes place mostly in Italy and, adding to its feel of authenticity, integrates the author’s personally researched Italian settings, including the story’s dramatic chase along the an-

cient pilgrimage route Via Francigena through Tuscan territory. John Adams Conti returns as the charming, daring, understated, ex-CIA agent now trying to go diplomatic with the State Department via the American Embassy to the Vatican. But, of course, you never really kiss The Company goodbye, and so the agency connection continues as Conti finds himself thrust into the middle of a dangerous international incident and intervenes to protect an important fugitive.

The novel’s cast includes Conti’s on-again-off-again romance interest at the CIA, an on-the-run Panchen Lama, a scholarly Rabbi operative, Chinese intelligence agents, South African mercenaries, foreign diplomats, and the new CIA chief. Altogether, it’s

a classic page-turner whose edge-of-your-seat intrigue fits Italy well.

**Galateo or, The Rules of Polite Behavior**

By Giovanni Della Casa  
 Edited and Translated by M.F. Rusnak  
 The University of Chicago Press;  
 103 pages; \$15



In Della nobiltà di dame (Venice, 1600), dancing master Fabritio Caroso tells us that women, when walking, should take great care never to give the impression that their feet are more than three fingers off the ground.”

You might say Giovanni Della Casa was 16th-century Italy’s Miss Manners and his influential book is Italy’s, in fact all of Europe’s, equivalent of “Amy Vanderbilt Complete Book of Etiquette.” But, in this new translation of the famous “Galateo,” ▶



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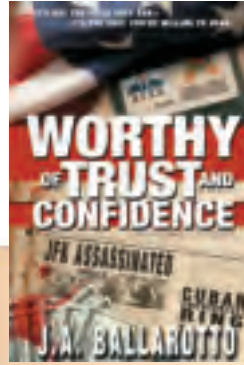
M. F. Rusnak politely disagrees.

Della Casa writes not about etiquette protocols and finishing-school formalities, Rusnak points out in the introduction, but about behaving properly in public and showing common courtesy. He adds that “Galateo” is to etiquette what Machiavelli’s “The Prince” is to politics, “a discourse on action in real life based on ... close observation of a complex world.”

And 1588 Italy was a complex world. Italians were already eating with forks and knives instead of their fingers like other Europeans, but also publicly touching themselves in wrong places—a common “nasty habit” Della Casa frowned upon. He also warned against such crude and rude behaviors as braying “like a donkey” while yawning, sniffing someone else’s wine, and clipping fingernails during conversations. Neither did he suffer liars, braggarts and off-key singers.

Named for the author’s hero, Bishop Galeazzo Florimonte, who once ran down a house guest to admonish him (nicely) for vulgar eating habits, “Galateo” covers the gamut of offensive behavior and instructive

alternatives in 30 brief and entertaining chapters. And Rusnak’s translation delightfully captures Della Casa’s irony and humor throughout.



### Worthy of Trust and Confidence

By  
J.A. Ballarotto  
Pirate143Press;  
375 pages;  
\$14.99

It was late September and I really should have been back East—anywhere back East—most preferably Newark. ....I found myself, for the moment, anyway, about 70 years old, completely gray, wearing a hearing aid and confined to a wheel chair. Some spot for a young man in the prime of his life...

With the 50th anniversary of the JFK assassination this November, the past year or so has seen an uptick in

fictional accounts involving the events surrounding that day in Dallas, from Stephen King’s remarkable time-warp novel “11/22/63” to Stephen Hunter’s gripping thriller “The Third Bullet.” In spring, J.A. Ballarotto added his debut novel to the mix.

A criminal defense attorney and former Secret Service agent, Ballarotto titles his debut novel with the Secret Service’s slogan and focuses his compelling plot around an Italian American Secret Service agent whose counterfeit investigation becomes entwined in a web of conspiracy and intrigue surrounding the JFK assassination, Cuba, a New Jersey crime syndicate, and those extraordinary events of 1963.

True to crime-thriller form, there’s an anti-heroic twenty-something hero you can root for, an alluring dame, foreign secret agents, FBI suits, counterfeiters, assorted bad guys, lots of action, and pithy lines like: “Some say it was a sign of the times—maybe it was just no sign at all.”

Ballarotto tells a good story (that includes not the usual warmed-over JFK conspiracies but his own theories) that borrows from his real-life expe-

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rience with the Secret Service. And from the novel's first page forward, he tells it with a hardboiled, tough, street-smart narrative that recalls Raymond Chandler and Ross MacDonald. Not bad for a first novel, not bad at all.



**Waiting For Yesterday: Pages From a Street Kid's Life**

By Michael Parenti  
Bordighera Press  
170 pages; \$15

No names have been changed to protect the innocent. There are no innocents in this book. Some names have been changed to protect the author ...

In this engaging memoir of growing up in New York's East Harlem, award-winning author and lecturer Michael Parenti revisits his early

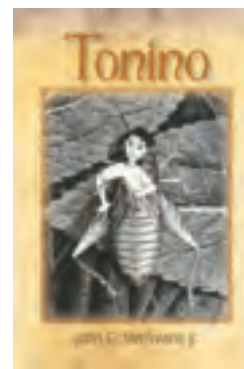
childhood in the Italian neighborhood around 116th Street east of Fifth Avenue, from womb to the life of a street kid and the influences that started him on the path of becoming a political analyst, social activist and cultural critic.

Interspersed throughout are entertaining memories and vignettes, often humorous, all resonating with life in the Italian immigrant neighborhood—from neighbors' customs to counter *u malocchio* to his father's dire threats when he announced he was leaving home. The author includes some political observations as well, rounding out a literary memoir that's insightful, witty and a joy to read.

**Tonino**

By John G. Stoffolano Jr.  
iUniverse Inc.; 460 pages; \$24.95

Every summer evening Maria and her husband, Giovanni, would sit outside their cozy home. This was one of their favorite pastimes. The Italian music coming from the restaurant around the corner was enchanting....



Suspending disbelief is the prerequisite for enjoying John Stoffolano's fantasy, "Tonino," the adventures of a cricket boy from Boston's North End

who sets out to learn about the world and about his family roots. Turns out Tonino's family roots lead him to Italy where he discovers he's the descendant of Grillo Parlante, the talking cricket guide to the puppet boy Pinocchio.

In fact, Stoffolano, a professor of entomology, owes much to Florentine author Carlo Collodi's classic children's tale "The Adventures of Pinocchio," published in 1881, later altered and adapted to the big screen by Walt Disney, who renamed Pinocchio's cricket Jiminy Cricket. But while Jiminy was Pinocchio's conscience, Tonino's far-flung travels transform him into the conscience of the world. ▲

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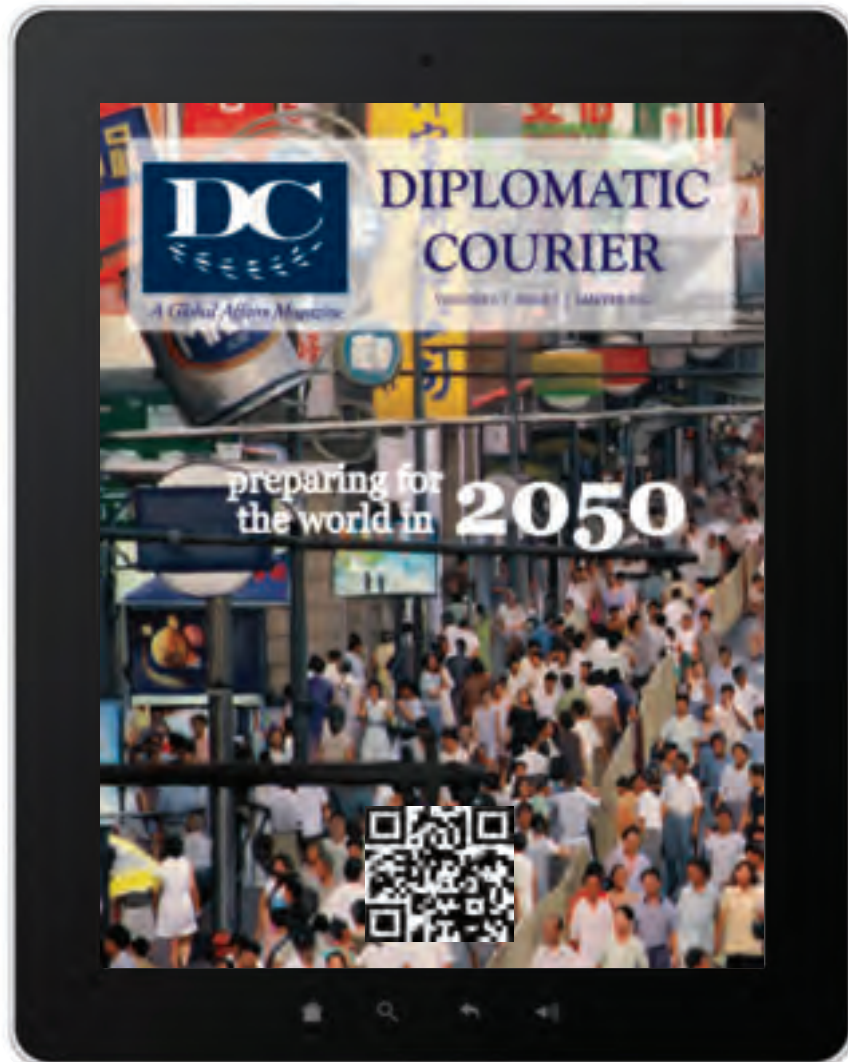
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Newly  
Restored  
"L'Avventura"

By Maria Garcia

## Bourgeois Angst Revisted

A beautifully restored print of Michelangelo Antonioni's "L'Avventura" ("The Adventure," 1960) screened at selected theaters across the country this summer. Watching the black-and-white movie at New York City's Film Forum sparked memories of the halcyon days of the '60s and '70s when many Italian directors, Vittorio De Sica, Federico Fellini and Alberto Lattuada among them, were regular art house fare.

Antonioni, who died in 2007, is distinguished from his contemporaries by his consistent portrayal of characters struggling to redefine themselves in an increasingly technological world. The iconoclastic, Ferrara-born writer-director is also celebrated for his broadening of cinematic "language," for the unusual ways he edited or mixed image, sound, dialogue and music. While these characteristics of Antonioni's work endear him to film scholars, he is best remembered by audiences for his Monica Vitti films, of which "L'Avventura" is one. ▶

Above: Monica Vitti and Gabriele Ferzetti in Michelangelo Antonioni's "L'Avventura"

Right: Monica Vitti in "L'Avventura"





Monica Vitti and Gabriele Ferzetti in Michelangelo Antonioni's "L'Avventura"

The story of a love affair between a friend and the fiancé of a woman who vanishes, "L'Avventura" is the first in a trilogy that included "L'Eclisse" ("The Eclipse," 1962) and "il Deserto Rosso" ("Red Desert," 1964), the latter Antonioni's first color film. Along with "La Notte" ("The Night," 1961), the trilogy represents Antonioni's best work, although all were made early in the writer-director's 60-year career.

"L'Avventura" established Antonioni as a new talent, and Vitti as an international star. It is difficult to appreciate what a unique aesthetic the movie represented at that point in film history, as so many of Antonioni's techniques are now commonplace. A consideration of several stylistic elements in "L'Avventura" remedies that, and attests to the filmmaker's singularity.

"L'Avventura" begins with Anna (Lea Massari) walking along a path leading out of the Roman villa she shares with her father (Renzo Ricci). Antonioni then cuts to the father, a retired diplomat; he is speaking to a workman about the encroachment of apartment buildings under construction across from the villa. Visible behind the two men, in the distance, is the dome of St. Peter's Basilica. With

great economy, Antonioni contrasts the villa's rarified gardens to the drab, working class housing, which the father disparages. Architecture as a means of conveying theme is an Antonioni signature, and here the structures also symbolize various immutable facts of Italian society. The generations-old mansion represents the hegemony of the rich, the Basilica, the continuing influence of the Church, and the new construction, Italy's urbanization and economic progress.

Antonioni unsettles his audience through this restless landscape; it's the discord of old and new, by buildings once venerated, such as the Basilica, which are now nearly invisible and, in cinematic terms, inaccessible. After the workman departs, Anna and her father argue about her fiancé, Sandro (Gabriele Ferzetti), of whom he disapproves. Antonioni cuts from a medium shot of the father to one of Anna, the standard method for editing a conversation. During the next minute or so of screen time, Anna walks out of the frame, and the father walks in front of Anna. This choreography is unconventional, as is the entrance of Claudia (Vitti), Anna's friend. She walks into the

frame behind Anna and her father as they remain engaged in their divisive conversation. After the father walks away from Anna, the camera pans as he crosses in front of Claudia.

This first segment gently inures viewers to a different way of seeing—and of understanding the characters and the movie. While Antonioni cues his audience in the usual way about the father's class distinctions, through his discussion with the workman, and in his attitude toward the unprincipled Sandro, the discord of father and daughter is reflected in unaccustomed ways. Anna's fleeing the argument by exiting the movie frame opens the possibility of reality beyond the frame where, it turns out, Antonioni's edit suggests there is no escape. The father crossing in front of his daughter underscores their disagreement, as his crossing in front of Claudia confirms what we sense from her entrance—she's an outsider, that is, not "old rich."

A growing sense of disharmony is also reflected in the soundtrack: the cacophony of the building site quickly replaces the opening birdsong of the villa's tree-lined path.

Antonioni never reconciles the audience to these discomfiting conflicts. Instead, "L'Avventura" focuses on the "adventure," the protagonists' attempted resolutions. As members of an affluent class, as Italians and Roman Catholics, rooted in particular traditions and social interactions, all of Antonioni's characters grapple by either clinging to the mores of a past era, like Anna's father, or by rejecting them, as Anna does in contemplating marriage to Sandro.

Sandro, on the other hand, is like Isola Tiberina, the boat-shaped island that is his home; he is disconnected and adrift, unable to complete any project he undertakes. He is further hampered, as the other characters are, by the fact that his income and social position shelter him from the sort of failure which often compels people to live more authentically.

"L'Avventura" swiftly progresses to the other rather aimless adventure for which it is named, that of the characters' voyage to the Aeolian Islands. Aboard the yacht, Antonioni explores



class differences among the passengers, friends of the engaged couple, and later, their attitudes toward the defining incident of the movie, set on the austere cliffs of Lisca Bianca. Anna vanishes there shortly after a quarrel with Sandro. Antonioni underlines the insignificance of their woes in comparison to the majesty of the island by intensifying the sound of the waves against the rocky shore. The eternal motion of the sea also mirrors the recurring and destructive patterns of human behavior, which encompasses for Antonioni the characters' precarious disconnection to the natural world.

After Anna disappears, the boating party searches in vain for her. Claudia and Sandro follow reports of her appearance in other parts of Sicily, and in the course of their travels become lovers. Claudia, who evinces the sole spark of humanity in "L'Avventura" (as she does throughout the trilogy), suffers pangs of guilt over the affair.

Anna is never found, and the movie ends in Taormina, in that city's San Domenico Palace, once a mon-

astery and now a hotel that caters to the rich. Antonioni takes full advantage of that irony by making it the setting for Sandro's debauchery. Claudia discovers it, and in their final scene together, she comforts her tearful lover as they gaze at a serene Mt. Etna, a symbol of their spent passion. Giovanni Fusco's excellent score (he was a frequent Antonioni collaborator) turns to a mournful flute and then discordant horns.

Are these "adventurers" transformed by their terrible loss at Lisca Bianca? To answer that question, we must turn to the setting, which always informs any understanding of Antonioni's characters. Does the San Domenico represent a triumph over the outmoded morals of the monastery that would render the lovers tragic figures and sinners, or does the hotel and its famous gardens represent a facile answer to the conundrum of living authentically? Antonioni's prescient articulations of the implied philosophical question, of how to reconcile our values with the demands



Monica Vitti in "L'Avventura"

of modern life, are still profound, and quintessentially cinematic. In "L'Avventura" and in the other films of Antonioni's trilogy, the answer lies with the adventurers who are fully conscious of the conundrum. ▲

*Maria Garcia is a New York City-based freelance writer and a frequent contributor to Ambassador. Her reviews and feature articles also appear regularly in Film Journal International and Cineaste. Her website is <http://mariagarciawrites.com>.*

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# Her Second Racket

## *Former Tennis Pro Mary Carillo Aces Sports Broadcasting*

By Wayne Randazzo

Just after the turn of the New Year, the international sports world will fix its eyes on Sochi, Russia, and the XXII Winter Olympic Games. Once again, the top winter sports stars in the entire world will compete for the biggest prizes in athletics—gold medals.

Here in the United States, NBC will unleash its top broadcasting talent on Sochi, including Bob Costas, Dan Patrick and, of course, Mary Carillo. A tennis star in her youth, Carillo has gone on to become one of the brightest stars in broadcasting with several awards to her credit, including an Emmy and a Peabody.

Carillo played on the women's professional circuit from 1977 through 1980 and was ranked as high as 33rd by the Women's Tennis Association. In her rookie year, she teamed with childhood friend John McEnroe to win her only grand slam title in mixed doubles at the French Open.

After knee injuries chased her from her tennis dreams, Carillo applied her craft and love for the game of tennis in a different way, behind the microphone. Carillo wasted no time becoming one of tennis's best analysts and she is still today. In 1981, she was named Broadcaster of the Year by the Women's Tennis Association, an award she'd handle again in 1985.

Talking tennis came naturally to Carillo. As Wimbledon coverage began to expand, so did Carillo's repertoire. She was suddenly appearing on ESPN, CBS and even HBO. Wherever there was a moment to analyze tennis performances, there

was Mary Carillo.

Things began to change after Carillo was hired by HBO in 1996. There was a new untapped potential that HBO enabled. Under all of those tennis props, there was an aggressive, bulldog-type reporter. "At this point in her career, she's probably the preeminent women's broadcaster in sports," Ross Greenburg, president of HBO Sports, told the St. Petersburg Times. "Obviously I saw real potential as a tennis analyst but more than that, I saw her blossoming into a high-powered sports broadcaster. I look at her as a hardcore journalist. It's almost as if she was never a tennis player or pro athlete."

Carrying those journalistic qualities into HBO's Real Sports franchise, which began in 1997 and now, hosted by Bryant Gumbel, remains one of the top sports news magazine shows in the country, Carillo made her mark on that program time and time again.

In 1999, she teamed with Frank Deford to co-write the Peabody Award-winning HBO documentary "Dare to Compete: The Struggle of Women in Sports." In 2006, she served as story adviser and interviewer on HBO's "Billie Jean King: Portrait of a Pioneer."

It was this special type of reporting that attracted Carillo to Olympic coverage. With a showcase of every four years, it's difficult for the mainstream fans to really get to know the athletes in Olympic events like fans can with stars of the NFL, NBA and MLB thanks to daily reports by local and national media.

It is in these human interest

pieces that Carillo really has the forum to share her genuineness and warmth with her audience. It's also the reason why Carillo has been chosen to lead the discussion in a documentary that NBC will air during its upcoming Olympic broadcasts, chronicling the 20th anniversary of the 1994 Winter Olympics when the fierce rivalry between Nancy Kerrigan and Tonya Harding blew up in the tabloids.

"This will be a fascinating look back on the 20th anniversary of one of the most dramatic episodes in Winter Olympic history and how it has affected the lives of these two women. Mary Carillo is the perfect reporter to tell their stories," said Jim Bell, Executive Producer of NBC Olympics.

Carillo grew up in Queens, N.Y., and still lives in New York City while sharing time in Naples, Fla. She has two grown children, Anthony, 26, and Rachel, 21. Her father, Tony, was an art director for the Young & Rubicam advertising agency to provide for a family of five which included Mary and her two siblings.

In 2008, Carillo's "commitment and passion for the sport of tennis" earned her induction into the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame.

*Wayne Randazzo is the editor of Red, White & Green, the official publication of the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame. He's also the play-by-play voice of the Midwest League's Kane County Cougars Baseball Club and an update anchor/talk show host for Chicago's Sports Radio 670 the Score.*



Mary Carillo accepting her 2008 induction into the NIAA in Chicago

National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame



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# The Changing Face of Italy

By Alexandra Dall

Italy is a beautiful country, filled with stunning *passaggiate* and a cultural patrimony that spans millennia. As Italian Americans, we often fondly recall the stories of our *nonni* and friends who speak of a home that is rich in heritage and tradition. It is easy to get swept up in nostalgia for our ancestral homeland and forget that it, like all nations, has a dark side.

In recent months, some of the news and images coming from the *bel paese* have been unsettling. Reports of extreme racism and discrimination toward Italy's Minister of Integration – Cecile Kyenge, the first black minister in Italy's history – have made worldwide headlines.

At a recent rally in Cervia, a seaside resort town on the Adriatic Riviera near Ravenna, a man in the audience threw banana peels at her while she spoke. Two weeks prior to this incident, a member of the Italian senate, Roberto Calderoli, compared her facial features to an orangutan. (Sen. Calderoli later apologized for his remarks). She has received death threats. And one local Italian official suggested Kyenge should be raped so she would understand how it feels to be the victim of a crime committed by an immigrant.

All of this is just another entry in the long list of recent troubles regarding race and immigration in Italy. One of the most notable is soccer superstar Mario Balotelli's battle to obtain his Italian citizenship. Despite the fact that Balotelli was born in Italy (Palermo, Sicily) and raised by an Italian family in Brescia, he was ineligible for citizenship under current Italian law until age 18, as his birth parents were not Italian citizens. He became an Italian citizen in 2008 (his first year

of eligibility) and went on to play on the Italian national team in the UEFA Euro Tournament in 2012.

Immigrants currently make up about seven-and-a-half percent of Italy's population, the majority arriving from Eastern Europe, Asia and Northern Africa. This number does not include immigrants who went on to become Italian nationals, nor does it take into account the Italian-born children of these immigrants. Many of them work in fields as day laborers or in cities as busboys and janitors. Some of them can barely speak Italian, but fled to the peninsula to seek out a better life for themselves and their children.

And those are only the legal numbers. Currently in Italy, an estimated 670,000 immigrants (though no one can know the actual numbers) are living illegally and more arrive every day, seeking asylum.

In the face of this changing demographic, the Italian government has reacted in two seemingly opposite ways. In 2009, the Parliament passed one of the strictest anti-illegal immigration laws in the European Union – any illegal immigrant found would be subject to a fine of 10,000 euros and could be detained up to six months. Any Italian national found harboring illegal immigrants could be imprisoned for up to three years. The law also allowed for the foundation of citizen patrol groups to help police in local towns.

Fast forward to 2013 and Italy has its first black Minister, and its first non-native Italian Minister. Scores of Parliamentarians

have come to Kyenge's defense in the weeks following the remarks made by others; the President of the Consiglio, Enrico Letta, has denounced comments and called for solidarity and support for Kyenge.

As Italian Americans, we can certainly relate to the experience of an immigrant in an unsympathetic country. Many of our parents and grandparents faced severe discrimination and racism as they sought to integrate themselves into American society. Ethnic slurs echoed in the streets of American cities and unsafe working conditions were rampant. Men were wrongfully imprisoned, and women and children treated as indentured servants. In the face of this great challenge and in a country that didn't want them, our families continued to work hard and pursue their dream of a better life.

Part of our responsibility as a group that has suffered from discrimination and succeeded in spite of it is to recognize a similar struggle in others and ensure that, as we move forward in a world our parents and grandparents could only imagine for us, we are awake to Italy's challenges, as well as her beauty.

*Alexandra Dall is the Director of Programs at the National Italian American Foundation.*



The opinions and viewpoints expressed in the *Pensieri* column are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foundation. We welcome comments from our readers for possible publication in an upcoming issue. Send comments to [ambassador@niaf.org](mailto:ambassador@niaf.org).



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## The NIAF's 38th Anniversary Gala Preview



### Join The Celebration!

Thirty-eight years ago, a dedicated group of leaders of the Italian American community joined together to found the National Italian American Foundation. Their first NIAF Gala Dinner attracted more than 2,000 guests, including such notables as President Gerald Ford, presidential candidate Jimmy Carter, vice-presidential candidate Walter Mondale and 150 Members of Congress. Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington Post columnist Mary McGrory wrote that never before in history had there been a meeting with such political power present in one room.

But that was then and this is now. *Ieri, Oggi, Domani!* Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow! This year, NIAF invites you to join us not only to celebrate 38 years of fulfilling our mission, but to help with our continuing evolution as the premier national organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the Italian American heritage, speaking for Italian Americans in the nation's capital, and facilitating positive connections in government and business between the United States and Italy. As the world changes, so does NIAF. Be part of the excitement!

Reserve your tickets today for NIAF's 38th Anniversary Gala weekend in Washington, D.C., October 25-26. This promises to be a weekend rich with notables, surprise guests stars, and distinguished honorees, and packed with receptions, entertainment, wine tastings, a feature movie screening, and seminars, all culminating with NIAF's black-tie Gala Dinner.

Proceeds benefit NIAF's educational programs. For tickets or sponsor information, contact Jerry Jones at 202-387-0600 or [jerry@niaf.org](mailto:jerry@niaf.org); or register online at [www.niaf.org/gala](http://www.niaf.org/gala).



**Shining Stars!**

Just for starters, cohosting the Gala Awards Dinner will be Emmy Award-winning journalist and CNBC Anchor Maria Bartiromo and comedian and actor Joe Piscopo! Stay tuned for more!



**Vegas-Style Friday Night!**

Traditionally NIAF Anniversary Gala weekends kick off on Friday night with a big party! And this year is no exception—but this big party is going to be something special!

On Friday, October 25, NIAF will present our first-ever Las Vegas-style evening! Besides Vegas fun and games, the event will take place in the lush atrium of the Ronald Reagan Building and include the always popular live and silent auction, along with an open bar, hors d'oeuvre stations, and dancing to Big Band music of the renowned Radio King Orchestra!

This Friday Night party is open to the public. Dress is cocktail attire. The doors open at 8 p.m. and the party rocks on 'til midnight—when someone's going home with a \$10,000 Vespa 946! Deal you in? We're expecting a full house so buy your tickets (separately or as part of a discount Gala weekend package) now at [www.niaf.org/gala](http://www.niaf.org/gala)!

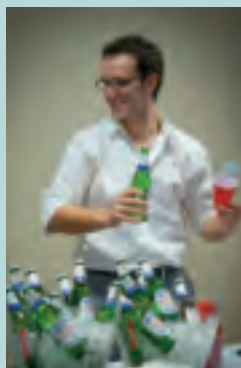


**Ieri, Oggi, Domani**

Bring your thoughts and opinions to this lively annual "State of the Community" discussion with NIAF leaders with special guests from the Italian American Studies Association on Saturday afternoon. Be part of the conversation about NIAF's new vision and direction.

**NIAF Central**

Showcasing the best of Italian and Italian American culture, products and services, NIAF Central is back as the Gala's "neighborhood street corner" featuring Mike's Deli—The Original Arthur Avenue Italian Deli; Perillo Tours' custom travel services; Peroni, Italy's finest beer; Colavita, producers of fine extra virgin olive oil and pasta; Roots in the Boot's expert genealogists; Ville in Italia, luxury villa rental specialists; Silpada, handcrafted jewelry designs; Rosetta Stone, the language-learning specialists; NIAF's 2014 Region of Honor—Campania; and so much more!





## Going! Going! Live and Silent Auction Luncheon

Don't miss out on this season's once-in-a-lifetime experiences, resort vacations and must-have items! A long-time favorite tradition of NIAF's Gala weekend, this year the much-anticipated Live and Silent Auction will be part of NIAF's Special Las Vegas-style evening on Friday, October 25.

So get your bids ready for such fantastic auction items as a six-day Safari adventure at the Zulu Nyala Heritage Safari Lodge in Hluhluwe, South Africa; a brand new Moto Guzzi California 1400 Touring Bike; a three-day stay at Terme Rosapepe Thermal Health Spa, in Contursi Terme, Italy; three nights in the Pavarotti Suite at the Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria in Sorrento, Italy; three-night ocean-view accommodations at the Grand Wailea – a Waldorf Astoria Resort in Maui, Hawaii; custom family-history research by NIAF's exclusive genealogy partner Roots in the Boot; and so much more!



### Questions?

For more information about the NIAF 38th Anniversary Gala, please contact us at 202-387-0600 or visit [www.niaf.org/gala](http://www.niaf.org/gala) today!



## Reserve Your Room Now at The Washington Hilton

As you know, NIAF will be hosting its 38th Anniversary Gala at the Washington Hilton, one of the premier hotels in the nation's capital, located at 1919 Connecticut Ave. NW, in Washington, D.C.

Join the rest of your friends and support our efforts by booking your room(s) within our room block at the Washington Hilton for some of the best rates in town. Book your reservation directly on the Hilton Website or call the Hilton directly at 202-483-3000 and refer to the "NIAF" room block. This year you will receive lower room rates and other benefits for booking your room at the Washington Hilton.



**NIAF to Honor Leaders in International Business, Philanthropy, Science & Healthcare, & Entertainment**

This year's list of distinguished honorees exemplifies Italian and Italian American achievement at its best! Among NIAF's 2013 Gala honorees: Diana Bracco, CEO and President of Bracco S.p.A.; Roberto Colaninno, Chairman and CEO of Piaggio & C. S.p.A.; Louis Donatelli, Founder and Chairman of Donatelli & Klein Inc.; George Randazzo, Founder and Chairman of the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame in Chicago; and award-winning actor Paul Sorvino.



NIAF Vice Chairman Louis J. Freeh, former director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and chairman of Pepper Hamilton LLP and Freeh Group Int'l Solutions, will serve as Gala Chairman. Visit [www.NIAF.org/gala](http://www.NIAF.org/gala) for updates on honorees, special guests and celebrities attending the Gala, and for more information on purchasing tickets, sponsoring the gala and becoming part of NIAF's 37th Anniversary Gala and Convention.



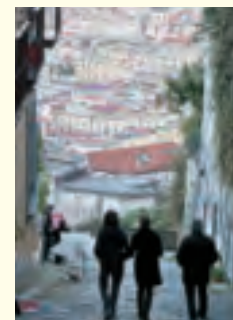
**Other Gala Weekend Activities**

NIAF's non-stop Gala weekend will also host such activities and events as: the annual NIAF Networking breakfast discuss the 21st-Century Italian American experience; a book presentation by Mario B. Mignone, Linda Barrett Osborne and Paolo Battaglia, authors of "Explorers Emigrants Citizens: A Visual History of the Italian American"; and an exclusive showing of the Italian film "Carnera: The Walking Mountain," the true story of Primo Carnera, Italy's only heavyweight champion of the world, followed by a Q&A session with the film's lead actor Andrea Iala.

**Region of Honor—Campania**

One of the big official announcements of the Gala weekend will be the 2014 NIAF Region of Honor! This coming year, NIAF is rolling out the red carpet for Campania at the 38th Anniversary Gala Awards Dinner and then throughout next year.

Located in southwest of the Italian peninsula, Campania is the nation's second-most populated region, with major cities of Naples and Salerno. The culture-rich region also boasts the beautiful Amalfi coast, the picturesque towns of Positano and Ravello, the towering Vesuvius and mountain ranges, the popular islands of Capri and Ischia, as well as ancient classical ruins from Pompeii and Herculaneum to the Greek temples in Paestum. The Gala Dinner's ambiance and menu will reflect Campania.



**Wine Tasting!**

Join us for a special sit-down wine tasting, accompanied by a full luncheon, as a knowledgeable sommelier leads you through a spectrum of traditional and modern wines from across Italy!

**After the Gala's Over**

As the great Yogi Berra put it, "It ain't over 'til it's over!" Late nighters and partiers, don't miss the hidden gem of the Gala Weekend! The Chairman's After Hours Celebration featuring live entertainment and dancing immediately following the Gala Dinner and going until it ends!



## New York Extravaganza Honors Business and Entertainment Leaders

With \*Good Day New York\* co-host Rosanna Scotto emceeing, the sold-out springtime New York Extravaganza at Cipriani 42nd Street on April 4 was a huge success! More than 600 guests honored business executives Mark J. Casella, partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP; Gerald A. Donini, chief operating officer of Corporate and Investment Banking at Barclays; Dino Fusco, managing director and global head of real estate at Goldman Sachs & Co.; and Tony May, owner of contemporary Italian restaurant SD26; as well as actress Annabella Sciorra.

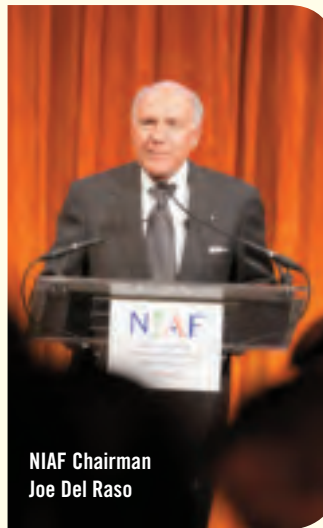
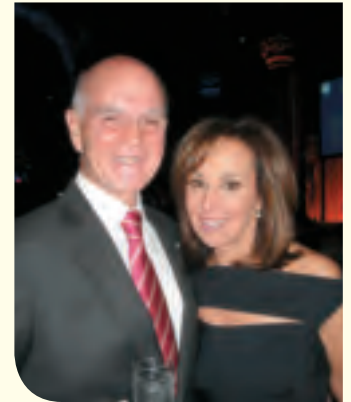
Adding to the evening's excitement, Italian American tenor Roberto Iarussi performed "I Believe" from his debut album to a standing ovation.

Earlier in the week NIAF kicked off its 2013 series of the Frank J. Guarini/NIAF Media Forums in the media capital of the world, New York City. NIAF Chairman Emeritus Hon. Frank J. Guarini welcomed the guests to the Pepper Hamilton offices in the New York Times Building. NIAF's John Viola introduced the distinguished panelists: Carol A. Giacomo, editorial board member of The New York Times; Maurizio Molinari, bureau chief of La Stampa; and Fernando Napolitano, president and CEO of the Italian Business & Investment Initiative: Why Italy Matters to the World."



Honoree Dino Fusco and emcee Rosanna Scotto

NIAF Executive Vice President Sal Salibello and Rosanna Scotto



NIAF Chairman Joe Del Raso



NIAF President John Viola, Rosanna Scotto and actor Danny Aiello



Victoria DiNardo, NIAF Board Member Jeff Capaccio and NIAF Secretary John Calvelli



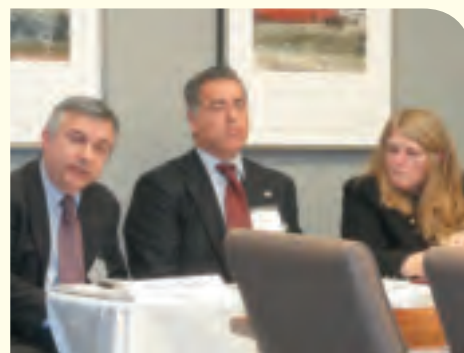
Guests enjoying the Extravaganza reception.



Italian Australian superstar Alfio



Acclaimed tenor Roberto Iarussi



Media Forum panelists Maurizio Molinari of La Stampa, Fernando Napolitano of the Italian Business & Investment Initiative and Carol A. Giacomo of The New York Times



Former Italian Congressman Amato Berardi and NIAF Board Member Robert Allegrini

## Welcome Reception for IACD

On February 27, NIAF Frank J. Guarini Public Policy Forum hosted a welcome reception honoring new and returning U.S. representatives and senators of the Italian American Congressional Delegation (IACD) of the 113th U.S. Congress, a bipartisan group of congressional members of Italian heritage. Italy's Ambassador to the United States Claudio Bisogniero attended with embassy dignitaries, administration and government officials, business and community leaders, media, and other notables.

Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur and  
Congressmen Mike Doyle and Dennis Hastert



Democratic House  
Leader Congresswoman  
Nancy Pelosi and  
NIAF Chairman  
Joseph Del Raso



Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici and NIAF  
Vice Chairwoman Patricia de Stacy Harrison



Congressman Pat Tiberi, Congressman  
Bill Pascrell, NIAF Board Member Mark  
Valente III, NIAF Chairman Joseph Del  
Raso and NIAF President John Viola



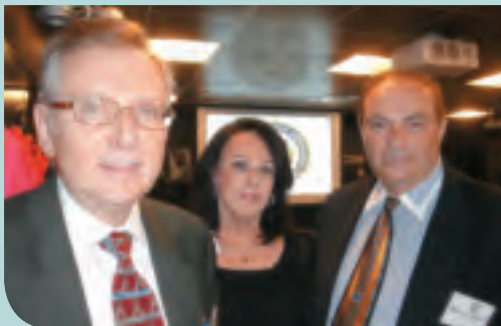
NIAF Board Members Joseph Lonardo and  
Mark Valente III with NIAF Vice Chairman  
Gabe Battista

Italy's Ambassador  
Claudio Bisogniero  
and NIAF Chairman  
Joseph Del Raso



## Media Forum Focuses on Italy's Economics

On July 25, the Frank J. Guarini NIAF Media Forum met in New York City where panelists Maurizio Molinari of La Stampa, Fernando Napolitano of the Italian Business & Investment Initiative and Carol A. Giacomo of The New York Times considered the topic "Austerity vs. Growth: Is it Time for Growth Policies in Italy?" Hosted by Pirelli Tire LLC at its Manhattan office, the Forum began with Pirelli NAFTA Region CEO Paolo Ferrari noting this was Pirelli's first partnership with NIAF.



Photos by Elissa Ruffino

## Women's Working Group Firenze



Debra Cheverino, a former NIAF scholarship winner and now Deputy Conductor to Zubin Mehta at the Florentine Orchestra, and NIAF Board Member Anita Bevacqua McBride



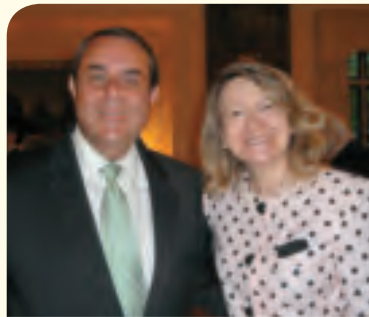
Paola Sartorio, Executive Director of US-Italy Fulbright Commission, NIAF Board Member Anita Bevacqua McBride and Consul General Sarah Morrison at the Consulate in Florence on March 25,



NIAF Board Member Joseph Lonardo and NIAF President John Viola

## Italy Honors Congressmen

At a reception on May 22 at Villa Firenze, the house of the Ambassador of Italy to the United States, Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero, conferred the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy upon Congressmen William Pascrell Jr. and Patrick Tiberi.



Mark Valente III and Laura Denise Bisogniero, wife of the Italian Ambassador



Congressmen William Pascrell Jr., Italy's Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero and Congressman Patrick Tiberi



Left: Major League Baseball Hall of Famer Joe Morgan and then NIAF Chairman Jerry Colangelo



Above: New NIAF Chairman Joe Del Raso teaming up with NIAF Board Member Mike Ferguson



Left: Ready to tee off are Bob Aspromonte, NIAF Board Member Ken Aspromonte and NIAF Vice Chairman Joseph Della Ratta



Left: Media guests KFNX President Francis Battaglia and FOX 10 TV newscaster Rick D'Amico

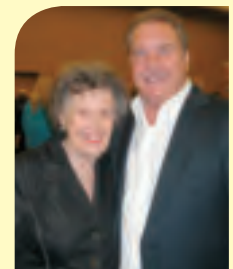
## Duffers Converge on Chairman's Invitational Tournament

Photos by Elissa Ruffino

On March 16, scratch golfers and duffers from around the nation came to the Wigwam Golf Resort in Litchfield Park, Ariz., for the Third Annual Chairman's Golf Invitational. Jerry Colangelo, then NIAF chairman, headed the list of NIAF leaders, industry executives and sports celebrities who played 18 holes to support NIAF's mission.

The evening before, Sinatra Stylist Sebastian Ansaldo and his six-piece band entertained guests at the annual event.

NIAF Chairman Joe Del Raso, entertainer Sebastian Ansaldo and NIAF Board Member Gerard LaRocca



NIAF Executive Vice Presidents Marie Garibaldi and Dr. John Rosa



**NIAF Board Members Meet in Calabria and Rome**

NIAF leadership, including Chairman Joseph Del Raso, President John Viola, and the executive committee, travelled to Italy in June to bring together board members, business leaders and local government officials and discuss key issues influencing cultural, economic and diplomatic relations between our two nations. Following a full schedule of meetings with officials, the final day of the NIAF Mission to Italy concluded with a papal audience with Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square.



**Pope Francis with NIAF Board Joseph Lonardo and NIAF President John Viola**



**Lonardo Corrazieri, a member of the Corazzieri, NIAF Chairman Joseph Del Raso, and Francesco Nicotra**



**NIF Chairman Joseph Del Raso and now former U.S. Ambassador to Italy David Thorne**

**NIAF Board Member Paolo Catalfamo (third from left) and officials of Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Rome, with (right to left) NIAF President John Viola, NIAF Vice President Gabe Battista, NIAF Board Member Mark Valente III, NIAF Chairman Joseph Del Raso and Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs Emma Bonino**



**NIAF Board Member Ken Aspromonte and Claudia Valente.**



**NIAF President John Viola and NIAF Chairman Joe Del Raso join in with a traditional dance troupe.**



## Public Policy Forum Surveilling Cyber Security

On April 24, the NIAF Frank J. Guarini Public Policy Forum convened for a luncheon at the Willard-Intercontinental Hotel to hear keynote speaker Congressman Mike Rogers, chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, speak about cyber security and cyber predators currently attacking the U.S. government, industries and citizens. In attendance were U.S. Members of Congress, administration and government officials, business and community leaders, the media and NIAF leadership.



Keynote speaker  
Congressman Mike Rogers



Leo Eshia and NIAF Board  
Member Dr. John Rosa



NIAF President John Viola, NIAF Chairman Joe Del  
Raso and NIAF Board Member Mark Valente III



Kimberly Badenhop, Mike Bell and Congressman  
Mike Pompeo



Mike Zarrelli, Amway Managing Counsel-Federal Government  
Affairs; Congressman Mike Rogers, Mark Valente III, Richard  
Zwirner of Holister Inc



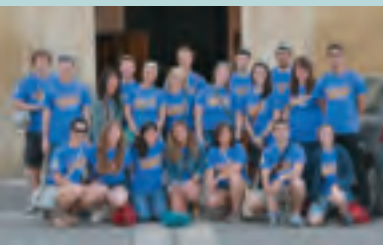
NIAF Chairman Joe Del Raso, keynote  
speaker Congressman Mike Rogers and  
NIAF Board Member and former congressman  
Michael Ferguson



## Voyage of Discovery 2013

In its 13th year, the 2013 NIAF Ambassador Peter F. Secchia Voyage of Discovery program introduced 20 Italian American college students to their ancestral homeland—experiencing the country, culture and heritage of Italy.

The group travelled for 12 days through Calabria, NIAF's 2013 Region of Honor, from visiting Greek ruins in Crotone and the Aragonese castle in Le Castella to touring the Amaretto licorice factory at Rossano Calabro (top left) and doing community service in Isola di Capo Rizzuto (second from top). The students dined with NIAF's Board Members in Villa San Giovanni. At (third from top) VOD students Mike Allevato and Katie Golden with Board Member Gabe Battista; and (bottom left) students talk with Board Member Ken Aspromonte and NIAF Program Manager Ally Dall.



## Public Policy Forum Tackles Tax Reform

On June 27, Congressman Dave Camp, chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, gave the keynote speech at the a NIAF Frank J. Guarini Public Policy Luncheon on tax reform on Capitol Hill.



NIAF Executive Vice President  
John Calvelli



John Lutz, Congressman Bill Pascrell and  
NIAF Board Member and former congressman  
Michael Ferguson



NIAF Board Member Mark  
Valente III introduces keynote  
speaker Congressman Dave Camp.



NIAF Board Members Gabe Battista, Mark Valente III, and John Calvelli  
with Congressmen Bill Pascrell and Eliot Engel, former Congresswoman  
Connie Morella, Congressman Dave Camp, and NIAF Chairman Joe Del Raso.

## 2013 HERITAGE TOURS BY PERILLO TOURS

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### Culture and Heritage of Southern Italy

Lemon trees and vineyards cascade down the terraced cliffs to the sea. Soft sea breezes mix with the scent of fresh basil, tomatoes and olive oil. Capri sparkles in the distance. Welcome to Southern Italy! Dates: September 21-28. Price: \$2,689 per person (land only); discount air available from NYC area (call for more details).



### Art & Architecture of the Veneto & Lake Garda

From art to wine, we will travel through the most famous wine producing vineyards in the villa land during our NIAF exclusive full day food and wines of the Veneto region.

Dates: October 11-18. Price: \$1,650 per person (land only); discount air available from NYC area (call for more details).

## CALENDAR

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

NIAF is offering the following special events in the coming months. For more information, visit [www.niad.org](http://www.niad.org).

#### OCTOBER

##### NIAF's Las Vegas-Style Night

An evening of Vegas-Style games, hors d'oeuvre stations, open bar, and live music and dancing to the big band sounds of the Radio King Orchestra that's open to the public!

*Date:* October 25

*Location:* The Ronald Reagan Building; Washington, D.C..

*Time:* 8 p.m. to midnight

Tickets sold at the door or online at [www.niaf.org/gala](http://www.niaf.org/gala).

##### NIAF 38th Anniversary Gala Weekend

The centerpiece of NIAF's annual events calendar, next to Italy itself, this is THE destination for Italian Americans who want to reconnect and recommit to their ancestral roots...and make sure the next generation of Italian Americans does, too.

*Date:* October 26

*Location:* Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.

*Contact:* To register or sponsor, visit [www.niaf.org](http://www.niaf.org) or contact Jerry Jones at 202-939-3102 or [jerry@niaf.org](mailto:jerry@niaf.org)



### The Adriatic Pearls

Set between Lombardy and Tuscany, and stretching from the Adriatic to the Mediterranean, Emilia-Romagna is the heartland of northern Italy. Emilia is a wealthy area whose tone is well-mannered, well-dressed and comfortable. The region excels in many ways, not least in the regional cuisine. Featuring Puglia, Salerno, Sorrento, Capri, Pompeii, Ravello and Rome.

Dates: October 11-18. Price: \$2,170 per person (land only); discount air available from NYC area (call for more details).

For additional information or to make a reservation, please call 855-PT-GROUP (855-784-7687) or email [groups@perillotours.com](mailto:groups@perillotours.com).

Look for Perillo's 2014 tour schedule in the Winter issue of Ambassador!





# Italy

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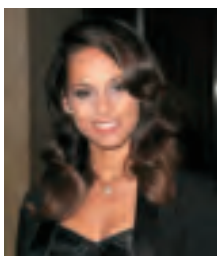
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**Tel:** 800-777-7432 • 914-253-9446

**Email:** mpisano@Unitours.com

**Website:** www.Unitours.com



# italian american

by Leon J. Radomile

www.myheritageculture.com



Name-Change

**ACROSS**

- 3 This 14-time Grammy winner has sold over 35 million albums and singles worldwide. Her mother's maiden name was Augello. R&B singer-songwriter. 2012 – Girl on Fire.
- 5 Carole Marscharelli, talented comic actress was the first female to direct a film to gross over \$100 million.
- 6 Sofia Scicolone is widely recognized as Italy's most renowned and honored actress. First woman to win an Oscar for a non-English-speaking performance.
- 9 Professional PGA golf pro's paternal grandparents emigrated from Italy and changed their name from Coppola to make it sound less ethnic. Professional wins – 55 (Masters 1992) First name is Fred.
- 10 Gaetano Teleza was instrumental in defining literary journalism. Honor Thy Father.
- 12 Son of Alba Zambon, he was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1974. At 34, he was the youngest senator from this state in its history.
- 13 Walden Cassotto was famous for Mack the "Costello."
- 16 Armando Catalano was Disney's Zorro and Lost in Space.
- 17 Alfred Pesano played for the New York Yankees and also managed them five different times.

- 18 Director of the FBI from 1993 to 2001. Mother's maiden name was Chinchiola.
- 19 Vincent Zoino was quite a popular TV doctor.
- 20 Anthony Benedetto left his heart in San Francisco.
- 21 Ana Maria Italiano – Toni, Emmy and Oscar winner, best remembered as Annie Sullivan and Mrs. Robinson on the screen.

**DOWN**

- 1 Terrence Bollea was a "Hulk" of a man in the ring.
- 2 Concetta Franconero hit it big with, Who's Sorry Now.
- 4 Adele Ann Zerilli's son became famous for his brand of heartland rock, beginning in New Jersey in the 1970's.
- 7 Ashley Ciminella is known for her acting and not her "family" singing.

- 8 Mary Retoni was America's Olympic Gymnast.
- 11 His mother's maiden name was Boscia. This popular TV personality tried to give away a million dollars every week to contestants who could successfully answer a series of difficult questions.
- 12 Carolina Laraia was a versatile stage actress most famous as Maria in West Side Story.
- 13 Vito Farinola was often mentioned as being in the same league as Frank Sinatra.
- 14 Bernadette Lazara, beautiful and vivacious, is a multiple Tony Award winner.
- 15 Talia Rose Coppola worked for her brother and starred with an Italian Stallion.
- 17 Salvatore Lombino sold over 100 million books world-wide and also wrote The Birds screenplay for Hitchcock.

**Solutions**

4 Bruce Springsteen  
7 Ashley Judd  
8 Mary Lou Retton  
11 Regis Philbin  
12 Carol Lawrence  
13 Vic Damone  
14 Bernadette Peters  
15 Talia Shire  
17 Ed McBain

DOWN  
1 Hulk Hogan  
2 Connie Francis  
18 Louis Freeh  
19 Vince Edwards  
20 Tony Bennett  
21 Anne Bancroft

3 Alicia Keys  
5 Penny Marshall  
6 Sophia Loren  
9 Freddy Couples  
10 Gay Talese  
12 Patrick J. Leahy  
13 Bobby Darin  
16 Guy Williams

Ambassador



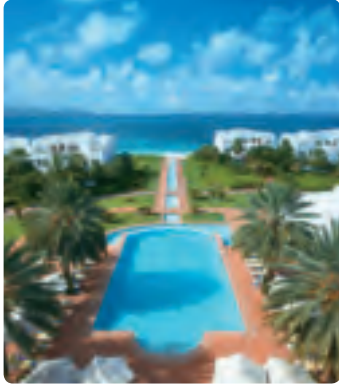
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