

## • PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE •



March was a turning point, but what was around the corner depends on where you were. Here at the IAHF, we were greeted with spring flowers, magnolias and fruit trees in full bloom, warmer weather, sunshine and nice sunny, warm days. The promise of vaccines became real as millions rolled up their sleeves. Even I got my first shot!

Our wellness calls have revealed that all seem to have adjusted well and are just waiting to get out once again. People are maintaining precautions while the vaccines ramp up and the pandemic curves down. Thoughts of family get-togethers, birthdays, BBQs, pizza parties are starting to become a real possibility.

The IAHF held our first drive-by event on St. Joseph's Day. Everyone who came was excited to see each other again and look forward to more events to come. The IAHF is leading a new initiative to bring together different Italian organizations. We are cleaning the Hall and fielding new rental requests. The year is recovering and we are on our way back to our grand rebirth 'rinascita.'

What waits around the corner is different elsewhere. Italy is headed back into lockdown with a sharp rise in cases and strong fears of more variants. Vaccines have been put on hold as cases of blood clots are investigated. Thirty-seven people out of 17 million developed blood clots from the AstraZeneca vaccine. The EU was on pause until they determined whether this was within the normal progression of an untreated population and the vaccine was deemed safe again. Once again, the streets are empty and our cousins must pull together as they have in the past to face their fears head-on. While roughly 35% of the USA has received vaccines, in Italy it is only 12%.



Last May, I wrote about the prophecy of St. Malachy that Pope Francis would be our last pope, and we would face the end of times. I watched the Palm Sunday and Easter masses live on the internet and could not help but feel the emptiness Pope Francis must have felt celebrating the most sacred sacrament on the most holy days with only the smallest token of celebrants. No doubt, he is aware of the prophecy, and he may have felt the fallibility of man as he presented the host to an empty piazza.

I will watch again this year, and my prayers will be with our Italian families, and those throughout the world, who have not yet had the benefit of a vaccine.

Of course, these are just generalizations, and what is around your corner may be different. Whether your corner is filled with sunshine and re-emergence, or you are faced with rain and continued challenges, remember Pope Francis' call for a "Contagion of Hope," this is the type of contagion we continue to need.

— Felix Dalldorf / [president@iahfsj.org](mailto:president@iahfsj.org)

# ITALIAN COOKING:

# 5

## Forgotten Regions



### A LITTLE BACKGROUND

Italy is divided into 20 regions. A region is similar to a state but much smaller. The most populous are Lombardy, Lazio, Campania and Sicily. Five out of the 10 smallest regions are: Aosta, Molise, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Basilicata and Sardinia. Except for Sardinia, these smaller regions are surrounded by larger neighboring regions and by mountains. Sardinia is an island that sits in the middle of the Tyrrhenian Sea about 14 hours from the mainland by ferry.

The cuisine of these regions remains pretty much unknown and is dominated by that of the adjoining regions. Overlap has contributed to a blurring of the lines.

### EXPLORING THESE REGIONS

Let's start with the smallest region: **Aosta**, population 125,000. This region is located in northwest Italy. France borders it to the west, Switzerland to the north and Piedmont to the south. Italian and French are the official languages. The Romans used the area as a logistics outpost, launching sorties against the Galls. Aosta is named in honor of Emperor August, who is credited for having found it.

Separated by the Mont Blanc tunnel from Switzerland, the region is a pass-through point to traffic entering Italy from Switzerland. River Dora Baltea splits the Valley of Aosta.

Aosta is well known for *fontina* cheese and is credited for the invention of *fondue*, a dish that France and Switzerland have made famous. The region produces a variety of charcuterie products and an assortment of cheeses. Noteworthy local dishes are: *Vapelenentse Soup*, *Valdostana Ribs*, *Swede Civet* (a game dish), *Polenta Concia* (made with sliced fontina and butter) and *Sweet Tegole* (cookies made with hazelnuts, almonds and vanilla).

The next smallest region is **Molise**, population 306,000. This region was spun off in 1963 from the Abruzzo-Molise region, making it the youngest region in Italy. Abruzzo borders Molise to the north, Puglia

to the east, Lazio to the north and Campania to the south. It has a 22-mile sandy coastline facing the Adriatic Sea.

Although overwhelmed by its bigger neighbors, Molise has managed to retain some peculiar culinary traditions. The best known are: *Composta Molisana* (a fruit and vegetable conserve made with pears, grapes, tomatoes, onions, peppers and carrots in earthenware jars to marinate for at least a month), *Pampanella* (a popular street food consisting of marinated pork with sweet or spicy red peppers, garlic, salt and vinegar cooked in the oven and served in a bun), *Pezzata* (mutton cooked in a copper container along with potatoes, vegetables and spices), *Scarpelle* (typical dessert made from leavened batter, fried and served with lots of sugar), and *Cauciuni* (ravioli prepared for Christmas and for Carnival that are filled with chickpeas, cocoa, cloves, cinnamon, liqueur and candied fruit, drizzled with honey).



*If you are afraid of butter, use cream.*

*Julia Child*

The third smallest region by population is **Basilicata**, population 563,000. It borders Campania to the west, Puglia to the north and east and Calabria to the south. It is the most mountainous region in Southern Italy. Cultivation consists mainly of sow-able crops such as wheat, potatoes and maize. Olives and wine production is rather small. Poor transportation hinders olive harvesting. Difficult accessibility and lack of promotion make Basilicata one of the most remote and least visited regions of Italy. Basilicata has a variety of archeological sites containing prehistoric Greek, Roman and Jewish heritage.

The regional cuisine features: *Spaghetti with Baccalà* (a traditional Christmas Eve dish of cod fish cooked in tomato sauce), *Fusilli* (with oil, stale breadcrumbs and peppers), *Cucciva* (a soup cooked on New Year's Eve made with beans, chickpeas, corn, barley and grain), *Frittelle di Peperoni Cruschi* (peppers dipped in a batter of flour, grated cheese and parsley fried in extra virgin olive oil) and *Castagnaccio* (baked sweet mini donuts of crusty chestnut flour, sugar, grated orange and vermouth).

The sixth smallest region is **Friuli-Venezia Giulia**, population 1,211,000. This is also an autonomous region. It is located on Italy's northeastern border with Austria to the north, Slovenia to the south where it faces the Adriatic Sea and the Veneto region to the west. Friuli-Venezia Giulia spans a variety of climates and landscapes from mid-Oceanic in the south to Alpine-continental to the north. The area is known for its tourist destinations, especially during winter.

The region is known for a number of soup dishes. *Boreto alla graisana* or turbot chowder seasoned with garlic olive oil and vinegar. *Fasuj e uardi* is an herb flavored barley soup with beans, pork, onion and celery. *Jota* is a soup made with sauerkraut, beans, sausages and potatoes.

Other dishes are: *Granzevola alla triestina* (baked spider crab with bread seasoned with lemon, garlic and parsley), *Risotto di Marano* (shrimp, squid and mussels simmered in fish broth), *Gulasch* (a beef and pepper stew flavored with hot peppers, onions, paprika and tomato served over polenta) and *Muset e bruada* (a sausage made from pork rind, first boiled and then fried with salt pork, onions and garlic.) The area features several desserts. The best known is *apple strudel with pine nuts and raisins*.

The tenth smallest region is **Sardinia**, population 1,628,000. This region sits just south of Corsica and is surrounded by the sparkling Tyrrhenian Sea. It is connected with the mainland by ferry and by air.

The most typical dishes of the island are: *Seafood Fregola* with Saffron (semolina pasta rolled into small balls with clams, prawns and served with some saffron broth and a loaf of crunchy bread), *Zuppa Gallurese* (a mixture of slices of bread, cheese and lamb broth baked in the oven), *Porceddu* (suckling pig cooked in myrtle leaves and served on a cork tray), *Spaghetti with sea urchin* (raw sea urchin sauce), *Bottarga* (dried mullets roe thinly sliced to dress pasta), *Lamb with artichokes* (eaten during Easter as a stew) and *Catalan Style Lobster* (boiled lobster served as a salad with fresh tomatoes and onions).

*You don't need a silver spoon to eat good food.*

*Paul Prudhomme*



### Closing Comments

As the descriptions above illustrate, many regional dishes are not known outside their particular region for a variety of reasons, including geography, product availability and promotion. Italian cooking, like that of the French and Spanish, is regional.

As a native Italian who has visited Italy numerous times, I have passed through Trieste in Friuli-Venezia Giulia on my way to Slovenia

and visited my cousins in Aosta. Regretfully, I have not experienced their local cuisine.

I have never been to Basilicata, Molise and Sardinia. I will add them to my bucket list.

by Tony Tasca 🌸

## Note FROM THE EDITOR

Hi all! I want to make you aware of the IAHF's reinvigorated effort to reach out to our younger generation in the area. My name is Andrew Cardellini, and I have just joined as an intern, working with the newsletter team!

A bit about me: I am currently a second-year student at Santa Clara University with a major in Political Science and minors in International Business, Italian and Sociology. I am part of the Cultural Italian-American Organization (CIAO) club on-campus, and one of my main goals with this internship is to further connect CIAO and the IAHF! Unfortunately due to the pandemic, this might be a slow process. I am excited to start my work here and see what I can do to encourage young Italian-Americans to explore further their heritage. As for me, I will be studying abroad in Milan, Italy this coming Fall and am hoping to write a blog in association with the IAHF newsletter! So keep your eyes peeled for that down the road!

That's all I have for this edition. If any of you want to contact me, feel free to reach out by email at [acardellini@scu.edu](mailto:acardellini@scu.edu). Thanks for reading!



## APRIL

**Thursday, Apr 15 / 7:00 PM / Baked Stuffed Melanzane** with Chef Ken Borelli via Zoom.

**Thursday, Apr 22 / 7:00 PM / Italian Explorers** / Richard Di Giacomo via Zoom will present his power point presentation on the Italian Renaissance Explorers of the 15th and 16th centuries. These exciting times of new world exploration and the adaptation of new scientific navigational instruments by the Italians that were able to put aside dogma and use empirical evidence are a study in heritage and intellect.

**Thursday April 29 / 6:00 PM / Cena Fuori** at Vin Santo in Willow Glen. There is limited seating, so please call the IAHF office to make a reservation.

## MAY

**May 4 / Tuesday / Rose Garden Demo and Tour** / There are more details to come regarding this event (such as time, etc.), so mark your calendars and keep an eye out for more!

**May 15 / Saturday / 11 am-12:30 / Natural Wines: A New Page in the Italian Food, Culture, and Lifestyle,**" (Puglia region) with Marie Bertola via Zoom

## JUNE

**June 1 / Tuesday / Festa della Repubblica** with the Honorary Chair Zina Russo, Zoom presentation and panel of people who recall the event.

**June 13 / Sunday / IAHF BBQ** / Outdoor/takeout Chicken BBQ, to benefit the IAHF.

## About Easter Pies/Torta Di Pasqua

The Easter season comes with a whole series of culinary experiences, including those associated with Lent with meatless dishes. Our traditional St. Joseph Day activities are a meatless feast and the envy of every potential vegetarian. Lent begins with Hot Cross Buns, a custard-crossed roll to remind one of the Easter seasonal delights.

As Easter approaches and the Lenten season ends, there is another tradition throughout Italy and that is the sharing of "Easter Pies" or Torta di Pasqua. Because this is such a common family dish, the recipes and fillings vary from region to region if not from family to family. Interestingly too, the torta is not usually found served in Italian restaurants although there are some Italian bakeries that make their version for sale. I am not aware of any local bakeries that do this.

There are some common denominators to the torta that include ricotta and eggs along with a rich, post-Lent filling of diced cold cuts. Likewise, the transition from an Italian dish to an Italian American dish has also added a layer of mystery to this holiday experience. I have seen tortas as a traditional pie, an open-face pie and even a quiche-like presentation.

I was experimenting with a torta recipe recently and bought some pre-made pie shells and used two to make the pie. It was OK, however it did not have the texture the traditional pizza dough or bread dough gives. I had wanted to delete a step in the process because the filling takes time in itself. Even so, the pizza-like dough adds to the overall experience. My recommendation is to use your favorite pizza dough recipe or even buy some frozen dough. When I can, I like to get mine at Trader Joe's. As I said, I am not keen on making the dough since the filling is time-consuming to make.

With that caveat, I am sharing a recipe for the filling for one large 10" round pie. I bake my pie in a 10-inch round Pyrex.

### For the filling:

- 1 15oz container of ricotta
- 2 cups minced boiled ham/or assorted diced cold cuts
- Small bunch of Italian Parsley, minced
- 3 boiled eggs
- 4 beaten eggs
- 2 yolks for brushing on top of the pie (whites can be added to the mixture)
- 2 cups of diced cheese of choice (I use peppered Monterey Jack cubes)
- 1 link of pre-cooked Italian sausage, diced
- 4 tablespoons of Romano/Parmesan blend
- salt, black pepper, red pepper (or paprika) to taste

### Instructions:

Pre-boil egg and pre-cook sausage. When both are cool dice the sausage and chop the eggs then blend into the mixture. Once blended, then mix with 4 beaten eggs.

Roll out the pizza dough into a pie dish (bottom light olive oil greased).

Place ingredients into the pie shell and cover with the dough with 2-3 small air slits; beat 2 yolks to brush on top and seams and then bake at 350 degrees oven for 45-60 minutes. The top should be nicely browned. When done, let sit for about 15-20 minutes on a rack. It can be served warm or at room temperature.

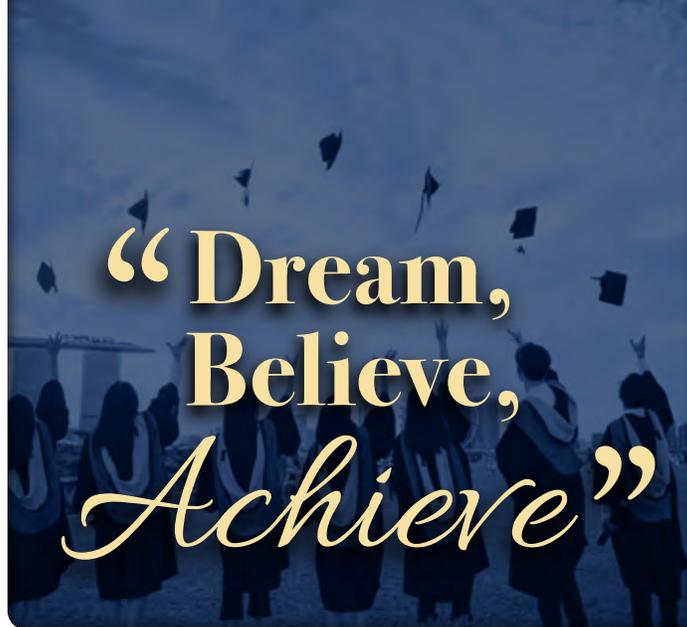
by Ken Borelli 🌿



This year, the IAHF is celebrating our 45th Anniversary. We are extremely proud to be able to continue our tradition of offering scholarships that not only fulfill our mission of promoting and inspiring greater interest in Italian culture among young people of Italian heritage, they also help students meet their financial needs as they pursue their higher education goals.

Over the years, the IAHF has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships to deserving students. Our IAHF merit-based scholarships are open to 1) students matriculating this year from a Santa Clara County high school and pursuing a degree at a two- or four-year institution; 2) community college graduates who are moving on to a four-year institution; 3) university undergrads pursuing graduate-level studies.

Please share this information with family members and others who may be interested in learning more about our scholarships. They should check out the IAHF website at [iahfsj.org/scholarships](http://iahfsj.org/scholarships) for additional information about the criteria and the link to download



the scholarship application form. Applications are due before 4:00 p.m., on Friday, April 30, 2021.

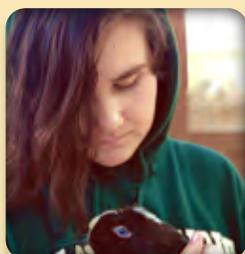
The IAHF scholarship program is able to survive only because of the generous financial support of our donors. In this economic climate where many families are struggling to make ends meet and not able to help their children with the skyrocketing costs of higher education, our need for new sponsors is greater than ever. Please consider sponsoring a scholarship. You would not only be assisting a

deserving student achieve his/her dream of college, you could also create a legacy or tribute to a beloved family member. Consider honoring your grandparents, parents or just your family name with a donation to the scholarship program. Those interested in becoming a sponsor please contact the IAHF at [www.iahfsj.org](http://www.iahfsj.org) or call 408-293-7122. We will be happy to assist you and discuss details. With your help we can continue to make the IAHF Scholarship Program a huge success!

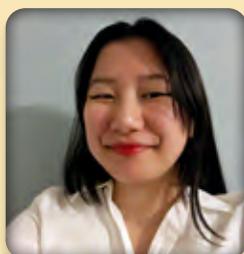
by Marie Dalldorf, Scholarship Chair 🐬

## Welcome Interns!

The IAHF welcomes a new cohort of Interns who are participating in the Spring internship program from San Jose Works, and sponsored by the City of San Jose. These interns meet with our president every day to discuss new ideas and programs for the IAHF, and help with artwork, solicitations, technology, our library, and a host of other activities. The IAHF is proud to host and learn and benefit from these young minds. If you are interested in working with or mentoring the interns, please contact our president Felix Dalldorf at [president@iahfsj.org](mailto:president@iahfsj.org).



Courtney (Angelina)



Emily



Kimberly



Ria



Jittra



# La Festa Di San Giuseppe

(The Feast of St. Joseph)



St. Joseph's Day is a feast day commemorating St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The origin of the tradition of the St. Joseph's altar is Sicilian. There was a famine in Sicily in the Middle Ages during which time the people were reduced to eating fava beans which was the food for cattle. The people thought themselves lucky to at least have favas to eat, and consequently the bean became known as a "lucky bean."

The people prayed to their patron saint St. Joseph for rain and an end to the famine, and St. Joseph eventually answered their prayers. Altars to honor St. Joseph were erected by the people and were filled with their most precious of items, food, including the "lucky beans."

By the 1800s, the tradition of St. Joseph altars had spread from Sicily to the United States. The altars are typically elaborate, decorated with figurines, medals and votive candles. At a typical Saint Joseph's Day altar, people place flowers, oranges, candles, wine, fava beans, specially prepared cakes, breads and cookies (as well as other meatless dishes) and zeppole, a sweet Italian pastry similar to a doughnut.

For many decades, our Italian community has celebrated St. Joseph's Day in individual person's homes and at the Italian American Heritage Foundation. At the latter, there is a beautiful table laden with a bountiful variety of foods and desserts, Mass is celebrated, and a meatless meal is served which is free to all who come through the door. This is in the tradition of sharing with the poor and hungry. Each person is given a "take home bag" containing a prayer card to St. Joseph, an orange, a bread item and fava beans. The fava beans are often kept on a kitchen cabinet shelf to bring good luck and to help keep our pantries full.

Despite the restrictions encountered by everyone due to the COVID 19 Virus, the Italian American Heritage Foundation still found a way to celebrate our traditional St. Joseph's Day. Traditional St. Joseph's Day take home bags were created, blessed by His Excellency Bishop Oscar Cantú, Bishop of the Diocese of San Jose, and dispersed by volunteers during a drive-through on St. Joseph's Feast Day, March 19.

A heartfelt "thank you very much" from each and every one in the Italian American community.

by Larry Lohman 



*La Festa  
Di San Giuseppe*  
(The Feast of St. Joseph)

Kudos to the St. Joseph's Day committee, Kathy and Larry Lohman, Cathy De Maria, Nanci Wilborn, Ken Borelli, Azie Habib, Stanley Olivar, and Dave Perzinski, for their work on the St. Joseph's Day event! Despite "sheltering in" you each made this celebration a reality. The altar looked lovely and the gift bags with all the extra treats were fabulous.



## Missing Issues

Our first newsletter was published in **February of 1976**, when we were known as the Italian American Bicentennial Association. It was a humble beginning, just two short pages. And look at what it has grown into!

### Looking for Vintage IAHF Newsletters

As our collection is cataloged and digitized, we are finding gaps in our collection. If you have older copies at home, please consider donating or lending these issues to the library to help us complete our collection:

- 1976 March through December
- 1977 January, February and April
- 1980 August
- 1981 September
- 1982 January, February, May through October
- 1983 March through June, August through December
- 1984 June through December
- 1986 January, February and April
- 2008 January through April, July, November and December
- 2010 April, May, June, and October
- 2011 February, May, and October

If you find these issues among your collection, let me know and we can arrange a safe pickup.

### Research Librarian

Much of our collection remains to be digitized, while a good amount of our newspapers and photos have already been done. Email if you are looking for specific information about a past event or article. It will give me a chance to practice searches!

And don't forget – you can find an impressive amount of information in our card catalog at [iahf-sj.librarika.com](http://iahf-sj.librarika.com). Check it out!

— Madeline Damiano / [librarian@iahfsj.org](mailto:librarian@iahfsj.org). 



## Special Grazie to an IAHF "Padrino"



Over the last year during the darker days of the COVID crisis, there have been many goodwill gestures on behalf of our Italian American Heritage Foundation. I would like to single out just one of many which comes in the form of \$30,000 in a series of donations from The Anonymous Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation. The monies were for general support of the IAHF. The Anonymous Fund is set up to process special donations in accordance with a donor's wish and focuses on supporting nonprofit organizations. The Foundation is in Oakland, California and has a regional base.

While the anonymous donors do not expect any formal acknowledgment of their donation, we are nevertheless very appreciative of their dedicated and ongoing

support over many years of the mission of the IAHF. To paraphrase our mission, the IAHF is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the rich culture of Italy, increasing awareness of its history and recognizing the achievements and positive contributions made by Americans of Italian descent. We are also welcoming of all who share this vision and our special role in the greater life of the community.

This anonymous donation is invaluable in keeping our Foundation solvent, and it also is significant as a vote of confidence of the cultural goals and mission of the IAHF. In keeping with the nurturing spirit of a godparent, we are truly grateful of their support!

by Ken Borelli, Chair Cultural Committee 



## Celebrating my Mother-in-law's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday at a Sicilian Villa



In 2018, I remember having a conversation with my British mother-in-law regarding how she wanted to celebrate her 80th birthday in 2019. I had suggested she could have her three sons, their spouses and her grandkids celebrate her big event if we all gathered in another country. She and her husband live in Manchester, England, two of her sons live in the greater London area and we live in Northern California.

She immediately loved the idea and left the planning up to me. So I was on a mission to find a villa rental for 15 people. And being the Italophile that I am, I narrowed my search to somewhere warm in Italy. After connecting with several villa owners, I decided to book a villa on the outskirts of Palermo in the town of Santa Flavia. The owner of the villa, Marida Musso, made our family feel extremely welcome.

It had the perfect set up. She and her husband live in the main house. There were four additional separate villas where each of us lodged during our week-long stay. Because Marida is a local, she helped recommend restaurants and local excursions – like the boat trip our family took with a local sailor and his crew.

And for my mother-in-law, it was the only holiday she has ever had where all of her sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren were together for an entire week. During our stay in Sicily, we traveled and dined together, and my kids were able to meet their cousins and aunts and uncles. I would highly recommend multigenerational travel whenever possible. There is no better way to get to know long-distance relatives during our busy lives.

In fact, for my next multigenerational trip, I am planning on going on a river cruise with family and friends. Why a river cruise? Similar to a long villa stay, you don't have to pack and unpack everything and you can meet up with your family in the evening for dinner to discuss your individual explorations.

by Jeanie Colclough 🌿

Jeanie Colclough is the owner of Riveting Trips ([www.rivetingtrips.com](http://www.rivetingtrips.com)). Contact info: [Jeanie@rivetingtrips.com](mailto:Jeanie@rivetingtrips.com) or 408.647.7141.

Note from Jeannie — I am a travel advisor and am trying to determine if there is enough interest in a river cruise to organize a special cruise for the IAHF. If we can get at least five cabins (10 people), we can get a discount. If we can get at least 15 cabins, IAHF friends and family will receive not only a discount, it could be a great fundraiser. Please let me know if you are interested in taking a river cruise with the IAHF by completing this [survey](#) (or contacting me).



## A Website For *Italifornians*®

The IAHF has been partnering with The Online Almanac of the History of the Italians of California. The goal of this long-term project is to enable us to begin to chronicle the history of Italian Americans in California.

This project began with a grant awarded about two years ago from COM.IT.ES. (Committee for Support for Overseas Italians) di San Francisco. The Committee is sponsored by the Italian government and associated agencies. Paolo Pontoniere is a senator of the Committee; and, on behalf of the IAHF, I have served as a support person.

The website created, [thealmanac.online](http://thealmanac.online), has several options available to you, having been designed to be multi-functional as a blog,

chat site, where you can post events, articles and network with others regarding mutual interests in our California Italian community.

We wanted the site to have a regional as well as state focus to highlight our living history as "Italifornians." In this way, it can also be a marketing vehicle for fundraisers to keep your friends, associates and member organizations connected online to promote your specific activities and projects.

We will preview the site in March with content roll-out April 5. With free access, the site welcomes all interested parties. I invite you to check it out: [thealmanac.online](http://thealmanac.online)

by Ken Borelli, Chair Cultural Committee ☞



**ZOOM** into all the great IAHF Classes & Events!

Download the ZOOM app at: <https://zoom.us/download>

# Lucia's Cooking Class News

• The Latest from Lucia Clementi •

Our cooking classes have been continuing on Zoom and have been very well attended. In March, Marie Dalldorf taught us how to make Ricotta Gnocchi. The added surprise for me was that she taught us how to make the ricotta as well. I wasn't aware that you could make your own ricotta at home and it's fairly easy to prepare. Here is the article and recipe that Marie wrote, and I thank her for sharing this delicious recipe with us.

## Ricotta Potato Gnocchi with Creamy Pesto Sauce

Classic gnocchi are made with a starchy Russet potato that give these light, airy and pillowy dumplings their texture. Adding ricotta to the gnocchi gives them an even lighter texture. Gnocchi are referred to by many different names and are made in nearly every corner of Italy. They have their origins from northern Italy where the climate is cooler and better suited to growing potatoes. Other, healthier Italian cuisine also comes from Northern Italy, like risotto and polenta.

My parents were farmers "contadini" before coming here and were passionate about sharing with their daughters their knowledge of homegrown ingredients to make simple Ligurian cuisine like polenta, risotto and gnocchi.

You can enhance the flavor of gnocchi by adding different ingredients such as peas, spinach or mint. Making them with beets and ricotta will produce a stunning shade of purple color that doesn't need any sauce, just olive oil, balsamic vinegar and parmesan cheese or a pumpkin and ricotta gnocchi. For a gluten-free option, use sweet potato and brown rice flour. You can use Gorgonzola cream sauce or just simple brown butter. When gnocchi are tossed with a classic pesto Genovese, they become a popular Ligurian dish.

This ricotta potato gnocchi are made with homemade ricotta which is incredibly easy to make, and your results will be far superior to those made with most store-bought ricotta. Any leftover ricotta is great on crostini, in lasagna, on toast drizzled with honey and so much more.



### RICOTTA INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups of milk (makes about 1 cup of ricotta)
- 1 lemon juiced (can also use same quantity of white vinegar)
- 1 tsp. salt (optional)

### Directions

1. Pour milk into a pot and with medium heat begin to heat until the milk gets foamy and starts to steam and bubble, and begins to boil. Remove the pot from heat once boiled.
2. Add the lemon juice and salt (if using). Stir with a plastic spatula then let the milk sit for 10 minutes to allow the whey (watery, yellow-colored liquid) to separate from the clumps. If you find a lot of un-separated milk add another tablespoon of lemon juice.
3. Strain the curds through a strainer with cheese cloth. Let them drain for about 30-60 minutes, depending on how wet or dry you prefer your ricotta. If the ricotta becomes too dry you can stir in some of the whey. For a softer, creamier and more spreadable consistency, whisk the ricotta with a fork, breaking down the granules. Add and do not drain for as long a period.
4. Fresh homemade ricotta has a much better flavor than grocery store ricotta. If you don't use all of it, the ricotta can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 4-5 days.

### Tips for Making Ricotta

1. Use whole milk which makes for a creamy ricotta or use equal portions of whole milk and 2%. AVOID using skim or nonfat milks as they don't separate easily into curds and whey.
2. The more you drain the ricotta, the less you will end up with and the drier it will be.
3. Don't use Meyer lemons to make homemade ricotta because they do not have the same level of acidity as regular lemons.
4. Fresh ricotta can be used right away or refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 4-5 days

## GNOCCHI INGREDIENTS

- 3 medium (2 large) Russet potatoes because they are starchy
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour (may not need all the flour)
- 1/2 cup whole milk ricotta
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan (sprinkle on top)
- 1 large egg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

## Directions

1. If baking potatoes, preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Pierce potatoes with a fork; place onto baking sheet, bake until tender, about 1 hour.
2. Can also boil potatoes, cook about 45 minutes. Boil whole with skins on to reduce the amount of moisture the potato will absorb. When fork easily pierces potatoes, they are done. Remove from water and let cool until you can handle to remove skin.
3. For baked potatoes, cut in half and scoop flesh into a medium bowl and put through ricer. For boiled potatoes, remove skins and put through ricer. Transfer 1 1/2 cups of mashed potatoes to a large bowl; stir in flour, ricotta, egg and 3/4 teaspoon salt. If your ricotta is a little wetter, you can add a little more flour. Adding too much flour will make dough tough.
4. Working on a lightly floured surface, cut off a small piece of dough and roll each piece into an 18-inch-long rope, about 3/4 inch in diameter; sprinkle with additional flour as needed to prevent sticking. Using a sharp knife, cut each rope into 3/4-inch bite-size pieces.
5. Using a wooden Gnocchi Paddle or board that makes grooves in the surface, giving their classic texture. Roll pieces down the board using your thumb and be sure to start at the top of the board; transfer to a baking sheet.
6. Using a fork method, roll the pieces down the tines of the fork to create ridges in the gnocchi; transfer to a baking sheet.
7. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil; cook gnocchi until tender, stirring occasionally, about 2-3 minutes or until gnocchi rise to top of pot which indicates they are done.
8. Using a slotted spoon, drain the gnocchi well and transfer to a bowl.
9. Toss cooked gnocchi with the pesto sauce and sprinkle with grated parmesan cheese. If you want your pesto a little creamier add some cream cheese to the pesto. Also make sure to add some water used to cook the gnocchi to the pesto.



## Tips for Making Gnocchi

1. For best results, use a starchy potato like a russet (Idaho or baking potato) instead of Yukon Gold.
2. For either baked or boiled potatoes, be sure to let moisture steam out of the mash so your gnocchi dough won't be soggy.
3. Press cooked potatoes through a potato ricer for a smooth consistency. Spread out the mash to let more moisture evaporate.
4. The amount of flour you use depends on how much water your potato absorbs during cooking and the wetness of your ricotta: boiling absorbs the most and baking or microwaving absorbs the least.
5. Avoid overworking the dough.
6. Cut the dough into small pieces and roll each into "snakes" with the palms of your hands rather than your fingertips.
7. Cut the snakes into 3/4-inch pieces. Roll each piece against the tines of a fork (front or back) to impress the signature ridges.

Please join us for our next cooking class on April 15th, at 7:00 p.m. taught by Ken Borelli. Ken will teach us how to make Stuffed Melanzane (Eggplant).

In May, Ken Borelli, Marie Dalldorf and Lucia will teach classes on Italian Pasta Sauces. Dates to be determined.



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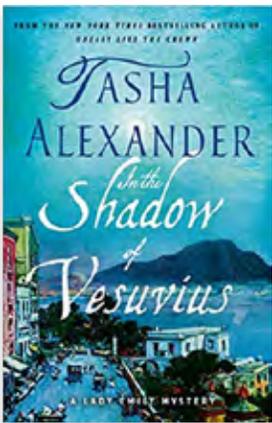
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## In the Shadow of Vesuvius

by Tasha Alexander ~

**In the Shadow of Vesuvius** is Tasha Alexander's fourteenth book. I chose to read it because the recent new discovery of a well-preserved chariot was unearthed from the ashes of Vesuvius. Ms. Alexander is a prolific author of mysteries that take place during the Edwardian Era. The stories feature Lady Emily Hargreaves who is quite well known for her sleuthing abilities

and whose high-born nobility allows her certain privileges not available to most Edwardian women.

Seeking excitement, Lady Emily, her husband and a dear friend find themselves in Pompeii, volunteering to work on an archeological dig. In 1902, work was still quite nascent and new Pompeiiian houses were being unearthed at a rapid pace. Events heat up rather quickly when the team, which includes Italians, Americans and British, notices that one of the plaster casts appears to be actually quite

new. Within it, they find a murder victim... so Lady Emily is well within her element doing what she does best...sleuthing.

The entire quest to find the murderer is convoluted and buried in Edwardian niceties and Edwardian prejudices so that there is little thrill or excitement involved in the reading. When the murderer is finally revealed, it is somewhat anti-climactic. Instead, the focus of the story is on the lives and misadventures of those involved in the dig. The whole team seems to be burdened with secrets. For those who love the whole Downton Abbey lifestyle, this book might be a pleasure.

For me, the success of the book rested wholly on the split-story style of writing. Chapters alternated between 1902 and AD79, the year of the devastating eruption. The chapters dedicated to AD79 were just lovely. We follow the events of a Greek slave girl, Quinta Flavia Cassandra, who was a remarkable epic poetess in the style of Virgil. Her father earns enough money to buy their freedom, freeing Cassandra to write. As her tale unfolds, her poetry is plagiarized by Sylvanus, a man aspiring to be admired as a poet. In her sad attempt to hide her rolled papyri manuscripts in a residence in Herculanium, she is caught in the violent catastrophic eruption. The man stealing her work has chased her there, and they all suffer the same dark fate.

Kassandra manages to protect herself from Sylvanus with a knife. Moments later, they are all struck by the mighty blast of hot air flowing down the mountainside over the town. The final chapters of the book find a new and modern protective use for that knife and thus the two events cleverly merge.

Interestingly in real life, those rolled manuscripts are now being studied and read through an electronic process which does not require unrolling them. ~

LINDA BINKLEY'S

## Italian Word or Phrase of the Month

### IL Vaccino

**IL Vaccino** (vaccine) pronounced vachino/ plural I vaccini (remember ci has the sound of English chi)

Both the English and Italian words derive from the Latin word for cow, vacca. Dr. Edward Jenner, the Father of Immunology, discovered that smallpox could be avoided by inoculation of the variole vaccinae (cowpox). Louis Pasteur later broadened the use of this technique. Some common vaccines are:

IL vaccino antiinfluenziale/contro l'influenza (flu vaccine)

IL vaccino antirosolia (rubella vaccine)

IL vaccino antimorbillo (measles vaccine)

IL vaccino antipolio (polio vaccine)

IL vaccino di richiamo (booster)

La vaccinazione, (vaccination; vaccinare (to vaccinate) vaccinarsi (to get vaccinated).

There is also: IL latte vaccino (cows milk).

Figuratively the word vaccinato can also mean to be an adult. È adulto e vaccinato, lui puo decider da se stesso (He's all grown up, he can decide for himself). 🌱



# ART NEWS

The world lost an extraordinary poet, artist and social activist last month. Lawrence Ferlinghetti PhD passed away at the age of 101 in his home in San Francisco. The IAHF was fortunate to have visited with him in his art studio a couple of years ago.

After his service as an officer in the navy during WWII, Mr. Ferlinghetti set down strong roots in San Francisco's North Beach. He founded City Lights Booksellers and Publishers in 1953. Here he established himself as the godfather of the Beat movement providing a literary meeting place for writers, artists and activists. "As soon as we got the door opened," Mr. Ferlinghetti remembered, "we could not get it closed." His famed book store was designated a historical landmark in 2001.

While remaining an individual with his own personal values, Mr. Ferlinghetti befriended and promoted the works of the major Beat poets such as Corso and Ginsberg. His position in the political landscape was cemented by his publication of Ginsberg's remarkable "**Howl**" which led to Mr. Ferlinghetti's arrest for willfully printing "indecent writings." Significantly, the First Amendment allowed for his acquittal. "**Howl**" became the 20th century's best-known poem.

Mr. Ferlinghetti was a prolific poet. He never considered himself a "beat" poet. He did, however, strongly believe in poetry as an insurgent art, a way to buck the establishment. He is famous for saying "Every great poem fulfills a longing and puts life back together," and, "a poem should arise to ecstasy somewhere between speech and song." He was awarded the Poetry Society of America's Frost Medal in 2003 and was San Francisco's first Poet Laureate. Mr. Ferlinghetti's illustrious education culminated with a doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris, France.



*An excerpt from "The Old Italians are Dying."*

*The old anarchists reading L'Umanita Nova  
the ones who loved Sacco & Vanzetti*

*They are almost gone now*

*They are sitting and waiting their turn*

Mr. Ferlinghetti's book of poetry **A Coney Island of the Mind**, which had been condemned by a New York congressman for being blasphemous, went on to be translated into numerous languages and sold a million copies.

In later years Mr. Ferlinghetti immersed himself in painting, a love he developed in France. It was a pleasure for the IAHF to visit him in his gallery. 🌿

*City Lights bookstore, on Columbus Avenue, has become as much a part of San Francisco as the Golden Gate Bridge or Fisherman's Wharf*





## Notes FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

As you can imagine, our membership roll during this pandemic has taken a toll. Before this pandemic hit, our membership was at an all-time high of 605. That number would be much higher if you counted every “family level” membership as two, yet we count both individual and family memberships the same; a family level membership counts as one membership.

Because of the pandemic, our membership is currently 553, which I think is a pretty awesome reflection of the loyalty and dedication of our members to remain engaged in the struggle to promote Italian heritage and culture. This number does not tell the whole story because we will have to remove from our count (as we do every year), those who have not renewed for 2021. This means we are looking at a membership total of 431 for this year.

Considering what we have all been through, this number, although not being what we’d like, is still pretty darn good. I want to personally thank all of you who have renewed your membership. If you haven’t yet done so or if you know someone who hasn’t, please encourage them to give us a call or click on the button below to renew their membership. We would like to get back to our highs and even surpass our previous membership count.

Sincerely,

David Perzinski, IAHF Membership Chair

PLEASE CLICK HERE TO  
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

To all our members who have stepped up to help us in our time of need to update their membership to super membership: **THANKS!!!**

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- Joyce Allegro & Jerry Sheridan
- Linda & Bob Binkley
- Agostino Burzio
- Sue Cancilla-Conde & Saul Conde
- Gwen Benassi & Rich Daulton
- Joe & Cathy De Maria
- Rod Diridon Sr. & Gloria Duffy, M.D.
- Frank Fiscalini
- Bill McCraw & Janet Muscio
- Carmine & Stacey Napolitano
- Michael & Gail Paccioretti
- Marge Papp
- Dave Perzinski & Lucia Clementi
- Jackie Pighini
- Stephen & Katherine Ricossa
- John & Marjorie Scandizzo
- Bruce & Keeley Unger
- Dana R. Zuccarello

### Medici Level:

- Jo Ann & Roger Bjornstad
- Ken Borelli
- Rose Crimi
- Frank DeTurris Sr.
- Maria Gloria
- Juliana Severo

### Montessori Level:

- Eugene & Christine Bernardini

### La Dolce Vita (Lifetime) Level:

- Mike Console
- Felix & Marie Dalldorf
- Ebe Frasse

**BENVENUTI New Family, Individual & Student Members As of November 2020**

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- Linda Ochsenbein • Theresa & Danny Palmer • Liana Palmer • Enrica Poggio • Arthur & Josephine Testani •

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The following Members chose to honor the contributions of the IAHF to the community with a remembrance in their estates.

LINDA & BOB BINKLEY • ROSE CRIMI • MADELINE DAMIANO & GILDA DE SIMONE-GROCCIA • STANLEY OLIVAR

If you would like to consider becoming a Legacy Circle donor, please contact [legacy@iahfsj.org](mailto:legacy@iahfsj.org) for more information.



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*Note* FROM THE DESIGNER

Ciao tutti!

I'm Susy and I'm helping out with newsletter design for a couple months while John Romano is on leave. I'm a first-and-a-half™ generation Italian-American living in San Francisco. My mother immigrated from Caserta di Napolitano, and my father was born in the US like me. My mother's side of the family is all still in Italy and Switzerland. I visited Italy several times as a child, playing with animals on my Nona's farm, visiting the warm Adriatic from my Zia's home in Nepezzano, and eating all the gelato!

I'm a self-employed graphic designer and found IAHF while browsing volunteer opportunities on Taproot. Usually, my volunteer efforts center around animal welfare, but I saw Italian-American and Bay Area and knew I had to sign up! It's my pleasure to add some color to the great articles being written by and for the IAHF community. I hope to meet some of you once we are all able to socialize in person again!

– Susy DellVeneri Bias / [susybiasdesign.com](http://susybiasdesign.com) / [susy@susybiasdesign.com](mailto:susy@susybiasdesign.com)

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# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Now is time of year that we reach out to our members, past and present, to renew their membership. Your membership is much valued by all our board members and officers. All the work at the Italian American Heritage Foundation done by board members and officers is volunteered; no one on the board, including our president, our treasurer, or our committee chairs gets paid a dime. We rely on your support through

your generous donations and continued membership to keep our organization alive and well. Due to recent restrictions on getting together in large groups we have been not been able to generate the normal income through events and hall rentals. So please renew your membership and help us keep Italian-American heritage a proud statement for generations to come.

[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP](#)

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### EDUCATION

Since obtaining her California Real Estate license, Rosetta has attended mandatory legal classes, completing various state-required programs, such as Real Estate Principals, Real Estate Appraisals, 1031 Exchange Reinvestment Plan, Senior Real Estate Specialist, Certified Probate & Trust Specialist, Pricing Strategy Advisor Certification, Short Sales & Foreclosure Resource Certification, Limit Liability Company for Reinvestments, Protecting the Fee, Due Diligence and Disclosures, Agency Fair Housing, Trust Funds, Ethics and Risk Management, Survey Course and Risk Management. Professional Philosophy Rosetta's passion and philosophy have always been to put her clients best interests first, provide every client with the highest of business ethics, commitment and 100 % excellent quality service. Building a lifetime relationship by earning the respect and trust of her clients, is her ultimate goal.

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- National Association of Realtors
- San Jose Real Estate Board
- Re-Infolink Multiple Listing Service

### PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Spending quality time with family and friends, exercising, running and giving back to the community.

It is my ultimate goal, as your professional real estate agent, to provide you with quality service, exceed your expectations and make your real estate transactions a positive and painless experience. My overall local expertise and extensive real estate experience will benefit you whether you currently are selling or buying a home, or are a returning client checking out the many homeowner resources I offer.

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