



Italian gastronomy heritage

Italy is among the European countries richest in biodiversity, due mainly to a favourable geographical position and a wide variety of geological, climatic and vegetation conditions.

With 838 products, Italy is the European country with the largest number of agri-food products with designation of origin and geographical indication recognised by the European Union. It ranks first for grape (264,451) and oil (646,326) farms. In second place, after France, for restaurant businesses (157,996) and starred restaurants (372).

The Ministry of Agriculture, food sovereignty and forests manages a list of traditional agro-food products that contains both raw ingredients and processed food (cured meat, sauces, liquors...) and dishes. The list is yearly updated.

Italian cuisine is not only the result of the biodiversity of its autochthonous food products.

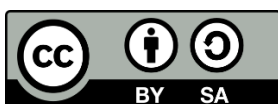
Italian cuisine, in all its local variants, owes much to the culture of the peoples who inhabited the country in ancient times (from the Phoenicians to the Greeks, from the Celts to the many Italic peoples later subjected to Roman power). It owes much to the Germanic peoples who settled there in the Middle Ages, to the Arabs, who within a few centuries spread spinach and eggplants, new varieties of citrus fruits, sugar cane with the techniques for extracting it, and rice unknown to the ancients, and the new custom of making long-shaped dried pasta. Later, it would be the American continent that would provide the corn, the tomato, the potato, the pepper and chilli, the orange squash, the zucchini.

Italian cuisine is well known all around the world and recognised as tasty and rich for the variety of ingredients and cooking techniques. Italian cuisine is not just food or recipes but a set of social practices, habits and gestures, a kind of collective ritual of a people that conceives food as a cultural element of identity. In Italy, cooking is a way of taking care of family and friends (when you do it at home) or customers (when you do it at a restaurant). Preparation and consumption of a meal are moments of gathering and sharing. It is a mosaic of many local skills, an expression of creativity and knowledge that becomes tradition and is passed on between generations. It is also a form of biodiversity protection, based on not wasting anything, on the reuse of leftover food and on the seasonal products of the various territories.

Several taste and Food Museums have been established both by local/regional public bodies but also by private organisations (association, federations, enterprises...) and offer a true journey through the culture and knowledge of food.

Food and wine products and specialities are powerful territorial marketing tools that can promote a destination, as well as being a key element around which to build a tourist offer.

Festivals or events related to Food are spread all over the Country in different periods of the year. Those events valorise local products, recipes and traditions related to the growing/breeding/processing of food as well as community rituals. They attract local / interregional and, the most popular ones, also international public.



DISCLAIMER - This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has launched in 2015 the "**Week of Italian Cuisine in the World**" to promote fine Italian cuisine and agri-food products.

Since then, a rich program of seminars and conferences, meetings with chefs and cookery courses, tastings and dinners accompany the sales promotion activities each year, in the last days of November. Several events all around the globe promote Italian cuisine as cultural heritage and animate a debate about the relationship between food and environmental sustainability, the culture of healthy food, food safety, the right to food, food education, territorial identity and biodiversity.

The Italian Cuisine has been officially applied for as an intangible cultural heritage at UNESCO in 2023.

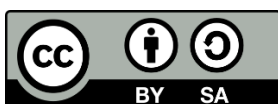
Some Italian food or activities related to food has already been recognised as intangible cultural heritage, such as:

- Art of Neapolitan 'Pizzaiuolo'
- Traditional agricultural practice of cultivating the 'vite ad alberello' (head-trained bush vines) of the community of Pantelleria
- Truffle hunting and extraction in Italy, traditional knowledge and practice
- Transhumance, the seasonal droving of livestock along migratory routes in the Mediterranean and in the Alps
- Mediterranean diet.

Two cultural landscapes related to food & wine have also been recognised by UNESCO (Prosecco Hills of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene; Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe- Roero and Monferrato). Italy has three Unesco creative cities for food and wine (Parma, Alba and Bergamo) and 2 sites designated by the FAO as agricultural heritage systems of world importance (Soave Traditional Vineyards and Olive groves of the slopes between Assisi and Spoleto).

A recent study about food&wine tourism in Italy surveyed that the awareness about sustainability issues has been higher among the "food&wine tourists" compared to other kind of tourists. After pandemic, the awareness gap between those two groups has decreased, but "food&wine tourists" remain more sensitive to opt for initiatives that have a social character. Such behaviour could denote a willingness and/or desire to support the local community by making the trip not only a way to discover, have fun, relax, but also to 'take care' of others.

Italian taste experiences (wine or oil tastings but also coffee tasting of different coffee blends from the moka coffee-maker or another espresso machines, but also latte-art (milk-art) to decorate cappuccinos) and tourism experiences "as a local" of the Italian rituals linked to eating and drinking, can be the aperitif ritual (that in the historical centre of Venice can become an aperitif tour of traditional taverns called Bacaro), or hand-made pasta preparation but also different kinds of bread.



DISCLAIMER - This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.





Case Studies

CASA ARTUSI

Casa Artusi is the very first centre of gastronomic culture to be established, devoted entirely to Italian home cookery.

Casa Artusi was founded in the name of cultured gastronome from Forlì, Pellegrino Artusi (Forlì 1820-Florence 1911), author of the very bestseller “Science in the kitchen and the art of eating well). This book, meant as a teaching manual where recipes are enriched with considerations and short stories, has gone through 14 editions since its first publication in 1891 and has been translated into English, French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese, Russian, Polish and Japanese.

Casa Artusi is a “living museum” split into different areas with a range of functions, all dealing with different aspects of gastronomic culture. Casa Artusi – library, restaurant, cookery school, wine cellar, bookshop, museum and location for events.

Around Artusi’s cultural gastronomy heritage a “slow”/sustainable tourism offer has been developed, matching cultural events and cuisine.

Casa Artusi is one of the promoters of the candidature of Italian Cuisine as UNESCO intangible cultural heritage submitted in March 2023.

SUSTAINABILITY

Casa Artusi is part of the network of regional Taste Museums, conceived as dynamic places to animate the territory, the perfect combination of tradition and innovation, for a tourism that wants to discover the local culture through its food and wine products.

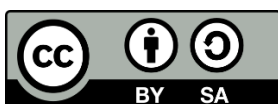
It offers authentic Italian experiences through the discovery of Italian values, such as hospitality and home cooking. At its cookery school, furnished with 20 individual fully equipped cooking stations, visitors can learn how to make pasta and cook delicious local recipes. Many of Artusi’s dishes can be enjoyed at Casa Artusi restaurant, prepared with local products, paying great attention to both the season and the quality of the ingredients.

Casa Artusi works in partnership with the Region Emilia Romagna to promote the quality products of the territory: food & wine (this region is famous as the “food valley”), but also other thematic tourism attractions such as 15 natural parks, cycling paths, 9 UNESCO sites, 110 museums, crafts (ceramics, fashion) and arts (mosaics), automotive excellences (Emilia Romagna is also recognised as “Motor Valley”, since it’s home to Ferrari, Lamborghini and Ducati), historical assets and villages.

Casa Artusi is the beating heart of the Artusian Festival: an annual Festival that interweaves a tasty gastronomic offer with a rich programme of shows, concerts, entertainment, exhibitions and cultural events that stimulate the palate and delight the intellect. All the gastronomy offered in the Festival must be traditional and respect a list of requirements about their quality, sustainability, seasonality and are encouraged to privilege local/autonomous breeds /varieties, neglected bluefish, products from small local producers.... Strict rules are also given for selective waste collection, reduction of packaging, use of biodegradable/compostable materials.

www.casartusi.it

www.festartusiana.it



DISCLAIMER - This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



SLOW FISH

As Liguria stretches along the Coast, fishery has become an important part of the income of the region and seafood is commonly used in everyday's cuisine, both at home and in restaurants.

The conformation and the morphology of the region, combined with specific climatic conditions, make it possible for big varieties of flora and fauna to flourish in this area of the Mediterranean sea.

There are 6 protected marine areas in Liguria:



Many protected species live in this territory, such as dolphins, whales, royal shrimps, corals, sponges, and many more. Among these, there are also various species of fish that are part of our daily eating habits and in order to allow them to continue to be a constant source of income, there are rules, regulations and limits to follow for the fishing.

The Slow Food Foundation for biodiversity coordinates and promotes Slow Food's projects to protect food biodiversity across the world and in Liguria, among 16 others, there are 2 strictly connected to sustainable fishing:

<https://www.fondazioneSlowfood.com/en/slow-food-presidia/camogli-tonnarella/>

<https://www.fondazioneSlowfood.com/en/slow-food-presidia/noli-gulf-artisanal-fishers/>

It is thanks to the Slow Food Foundation and to Regione Liguria that Slow Fish was born.

Slow Fish is a 4 day food market and the producers at the Market of Slow Fish are ambassadors of the Slow Food philosophy and sell products that are good, clean and fair.

Exhibitors follow guidelines that Slow Food has elaborated in order to select exhibitors that adhere to the organization's philosophy. The guidelines document is in continuous evolution, in order to make it more useful to producers and more coherent with the principles of Slow Food.

During this 4-day festival it is possible to participate in conferences and debates, workshops, to taste delicious products, to speak with chefs who daily operate according to the philosophy of Slow Food, and to dine on spot or in restaurants in Genova that respect the criteria and offer top quality seafood according to total respect of the environment.

The event does not only regard fish and sea products but also all those ingredients that are necessary for its preparation, cooking and preservation such as salt, aromatic herbs and extra virgin olive oil.

<https://slowfish.slowfood.it/en/>