



THE TASTES OF A JOURNEY



IN THE PROVINCE OF CATANIA



REGIONAL PROVINCE OF CATANIA



IP.S.S.AR "K.WOJTYLA" DI CATANIA

A trip to our land always becomes an immersion with all five senses in a unique atmosphere, full of colours, scents, sounds, flavours. And to speak of cuisine is to begin a journey within a journey.

The heat of the sun enhances the smell of the earth, which mingles with the scent of the Mediterranean Sea carried on the breeze. On Mount Etna, as in the Piana countryside or in the Calatino area, it is a succession of strong colours and intense fragrances. The flavours in this generous land are decisive and unique and are a delicious balance between land and sea. Coastal cuisine, then, and inland cuisine.

This guide aims to accompany the visitor in the discovery of the typical products and dishes of the province of Catania: cheese, fruit, vegetables, fish, cereals are the basis of traditional dishes to be proud of.

Some municipalities in the province of Catania have not been mentioned because they do not have specific gastronomic traditions, especially if they are close to the city. But the variety of dishes, the richness of aromas, spices and products make up such a varied gastronomic panorama that the discerning traveller will find himself engaged in a true journey of taste.

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CATANIA

In Catania, talking about cuisine is a must, eating becomes a moment to celebrate the senses. An exuberant, baroque, controversial cuisine.



The recommended approach, for those who want to get to know the city, would be to take a peek at the historic markets of the Pescheria and Piazza Carlo Alberto, a *fera 'o luni*: you will be seduced by the extraordinary abundance of food, the excellent quality and also the particularly affordable prices.

Everything is unique, from the garlic to the oregano, from the mountains of country vegetables displayed on the stalls to the great variety of fruit, first and foremost the citrus fruits.

Next to the cathedral, walking along the Amenano fountain, called *'o linzolu* water by the Catanese, the traveller can visit the Pescheria. A sacred temple of fish.

Stalls overflowing with ice display tuna and swordfish, silvery sardines, not to be confused with the delicious anchovies (*i Masculini* or *anciova*, salted anchovies), sparkling spatulas. They can be cooked in a thousand ways, roasted and seasoned with *salmoriglio*; fried or faded in sweet and sour, with vinegar and sugar, to achieve a delicate balance between sweet and salty. The more curious, in search of the most typical flavours, can taste *u mauru*, a seaweed that is eaten raw with a squeeze of lemon.

LOCAL SPECIALITIES

Cuisine is the key to understanding a people. In Catania it takes on a character as strong and joyful as that of its citizens. What will remain indelibly in your memory will certainly be the unique taste of the dishes that you will have the chance to taste in the numerous restaurants and trattorias that you will find along the narrow streets of the historic centre: sardines a beccafico or with onions, pasta with curly fennel, fried baby meatballs (u muccu), spaghetti with squid ink, aubergine caponata, aubergine parmigiana, broad bean macco seasoned with extra virgin olive oil or fried with wild fennel, bastardo affogato (pan-fried cauliflower). The most famous dish in the Catania tradition is pasta alla Norma. Maccheroni topped with fresh tomato sauce, crispy fried aubergines, fragrant green basil and lots of grated salted ricotta cheese. The name comes from an opera by the famous Catania-born musician Vincenzo Bellini and is a tribute to his greatness.

BREAKFAST IN CATANIA



The typical Catanese breakfast was and is the granita: lemon, almond, chocolate, etc., especially in summer and in coastal areas. Traditionally it had to be accompanied by fresh, crusty bread, but over time it has been replaced by the typical Sicilian brioscia made with leavened egg dough and the shape of a hemispherical base topped with a small ball (called tuppù).

Every bar presents its own specialities when it comes to slush. Some offer an excellent roasted almond granita, others a pistachio granita, and still others specialise in fruit granitas, such as mulberry granita.

No less delicious are the other breakfast specialities - cornetti, treccine, iris, panzerotti, fried and sugar-coated graffe, ricotta raviole - which are, however, preferred during the winter period.

CATANESE PASTRIES

Among the most typical and traditional desserts, first place goes to the cannolo di ricotta, composed of a crispy wafer filled with ricotta cream and decorated with chocolate shavings and pistachio grains, stuffed strictly at the moment of tasting. Equally famous are cassata and the smaller cassatelle, minuzzi 'i Sant' Aita (*1), also made with ricotta, and Frutta Martorana. The latter is a speciality made of almond flour and sugar, characteristic because it perfectly reproduces fruit,



vegetables and fish. On the traditional feast of Sant'Agata, the patron saint of Catania, olivette di Sant'Agata are prepared, exquisite green almond paste sweets in the shape of olives, from which they take their name.

And there are also almond, hazelnut and pistachio pastries. Ice-cream parlours in Catania are particularly renowned for their exquisite artisanal ice creams, produced in a wide variety of flavours, and the so-called pezzi duri, often praised by Sicilian writers as a triumph of gluttony. Another typical Catania speciality are the biscotti della monaca, dry 'S'-shaped biscuits flavoured with fennel seeds, so called because towards the end of the 19th century a nun started making and selling them.

() Cassatella is in fact a small Sicilian cassata in the shape of a woman's breast, to symbolise the martyrdom suffered by the Catanese saint whose breasts were torn off.*

LA TAVOLA CALDA (FAST FOOD)

The 'tavola calda' is a must-have item in Catania's bars and delicatessens. A cross between snack and street food, a snack in the middle day or a light meal such as lunch or dinner.



Pizzetta, Arancino, Cartocciata, Bolognese, Bomba, Sfoglia, Cipollina and Siciliana.

The pizzetta is generally rather high round, prepared with tomato, mozzarella, black olives and oregano.

The 'arancino' can be considered the king of the Sicilian hotpot,

a divinity of fried rice that conceals wonders. The arancino's first secret lies in its shape:

Classic inverted cone-shaped: with meat sauce and chunks of meat;

Round: plain (with mozzarella, cooked ham and butter);

Oval with vegetable filling;

Cased inside a brisèe or puff pastry, baked in the oven.

The cipollina is a half puff pastry filled with tomato sauce, mozzarella cheese and plenty of wilted onion; in some cases cooked ham is also added.

The Siciliana is a fried or baked calzone with 'tuma', a typical local cheese without salt, and salted anchovies.

The bolognese is a pizzetta covered with a half sheet of dough stuffed with mozzarella, cooked ham and hard-boiled egg.

The cartocciata, shaped like a bundle, is baked in the oven, its dough is soft and high, somewhat similar to brioche; it is stuffed with ham, mozzarella and tomato.

BREAD AND BAKERIES

Catania has an incredible variety of bread, you only have to enter any bread shop to realise this: semolina bread, with sesame seeds, wholemeal bread, soya bread; in various shapes, u cucciddato, easily recognisable by its round shape and hole in the middle, the mafalda, the gemellini,



just to name the most traditional ones. Bakeries also prepare pizzas and scacciate. Scacciate with tuma and anchovies or those with cauliflower, sausage and tuma are among the most popular and are prepared especially around Christmas time. .

The bakers also prepare onions, aubergines and peppers cooked whole in the oven and displayed on black baking trays. Other specialities you can find in bakeries and bars are 'nzuddi (*2), totò, bersaglieri and rami 'i Napuli (Copper of Naples) (*3), which are prepared in November on the occasion of the Feast of the Dead. At Carnival there are the chiacchere, typical fried sweets.

(*2) Literal translation of Vincenzi, nzuddi are dry biscuits perfumed with orange peel and decorated with an almond on top. They are so called because they were made by Vincentian nuns.

(*3) The origin of the name seems to refer to the unification of the Kingdom of the two Sicilies (Naples and Sicily) in 1816. On that occasion, King Charles of Bourbon had a coin minted from copper alloy, a poor material that replaced gold and silver. Thus the Sicilians reproduced in cooked the copper coins and created a biscuit with a soft heart

covered with a chocolate icing, flavoured with cinnamon, cloves and orange essence.

FRIGGITORIE

Originally only present in the old town, frying shops are now spread everywhere, both in the town and in the neighbouring villages. Sweet and savoury crispelle are prepared there. The sweet ones are dipped in honey, the savoury ones have two shapes - one round, filled with ricotta and the other elongated, with anchovy inside. The crispellaro prepares them 'on sight' (often right in the street) by manipulating the almost liquid dough with an extraordinary skill and technique of hand movements and then fries them floating in a huge frying pan over a metre in diameter and about 30 cm deep.

ARRUSTI E MANGIA

There is a strong tradition of street food in Catania. One need only walk to Piazza Castello Ursino or Via Plebiscito to find a myriad of butcher shops that turn into characteristic meeting points at dusk. The sandwich



with horse meat is their speciality. On giant grills you will see slices of horsemeat, horse meatballs, bacon-wrapped onions cooking. You will be served these delicacies inside a grilled sandwich!

Here and there, you will come across Putie, selling wine and traditional food, where you can taste

pork jelly, u zuzzu, seasoned with lemon juice, you can enjoy excellent cheeses and cold cuts, accompanied by local wine, which the putiaro will extract directly from the barrels.

Also in the old town area, you will come across small street food stalls where a large pot, a quarara, stands over the fire. Here u sangeli, a typical Sicilian dish, is prepared using the pig's gut, filled with the animal's blood, and tripe.

I CHIOSCHI



The chiosco (kiosk) for the sale of thirst-quenching drinks has always been a meeting point, day and night, and over time has become a real 'cult' in the life of the Catanese. The evolution in the way drinks are prepared and sold originates from the vendors of acqua e zammù, water and aniseed, who in the 19th century quenched the thirst of the Catanese during the period of great heat.

Over time, this hawker activity is transformed and fixed stations with a characteristic hexagonal shape appear, located in many squares of both ancient and modern Catania.

Sugar, fruit, seltzer water, measuring cups and presses are the inevitable elements of a kiosk. The peculiarity is that it is the chioscari themselves who produce the syrups for tangerine-flavoured drinks, for tamarind, for orzata, for sciampagnino (citron liqueur with water and soda), for completo (orzata, fresh lemon juice, aniseed and soda).

But the traditional drink par excellence is definitely seltzer, lemon and salt, which has a highly thirst-quenching and digestive effect; also very popular is lemon and tangerine, which combines the tartness of the lemon and the sweetness of the tangerine, or tamarind with lemon and bicarbonate of soda, also an excellent digestive remedy.

Pasta alla Norma



INGREDIENTS FOR 4 SERVINGS

FOR THE SAUCE:

40 ml extra virgin olive oil, 1 clove of chopped garlic, 600 ml tomato sauce, salt and pepper to taste, plenty of basil.

FRYING: extra virgin olive oil for frying ml 300, 2 sliced aubergines, previously salted and squeezed. Cheese to sprinkle: salted ricotta. Fry the chopped garlic in a little oil, add the tomato puree, season with salt and pepper and cook. Season with fresh basil. Fry the aubergines. Cook the pasta, add the sauce and aubergine slices, sprinkle with plenty of salted ricotta cheese and serve.

Bastardo affogato (drowned cauliflower)

INGREDIENTS FOR 4 SERVINGS:

800 g cauliflower, 150 ml extra virgin olive oil, 250 g onion, 20 g anchovies, 100 g black olives, 150 g fresh pepper, 20 g Sicilian pecorino cheese, 250 ml red wine, salt and pepper

Put some oil in a frying pan. Arrange a layer of cauliflower cut into strips, the onion julienned, the black olives pitted, anchovy bits, and slivers of fresh pepper, sprinkle with Sicilian pecorino cheese and olive oil. Continue making more layers of cauliflower and dressing until all the ingredients are used up. Place on the heat and drizzle with red wine. Allow to cook with the lid on

low heat for at least 50 minutes or until the cauliflower is well cooked and dry.

Catanese-style aubergine caponata



INGREDIENTS FOR 4 PEOPLE:

800 g aubergines, 400 g green peppers, 250 g onions, 150 g celery, 75 g tomato paste, 100 g pitted green olives, 25 g capers, 40 g pine nuts, 50 g sultanas, 100 ml white wine vinegar, 100 g caster sugar, extra virgin olive oil, salt, ground black pepper.

Preparation of the sweet and sour sauce: in a little extra virgin olive oil, let the onion julienne wilt, add sugar and a handful of salt. Wet with vinegar and let it evaporate. Add tomato paste, dilute with good vegetable stock and cook.

Cut the celery into chunks and blanch in boiling water, repeat the process with the pitted olives and then the capers. Cut the aubergines into chunks and the peppers into small pieces and fry them separately in plenty of extra virgin olive oil. Separately, soak the raisins and briefly toast the pine nuts. Assemble the fried peppers and aubergines, pine nuts, raisins, celery, olives, capers and sweet and sour sauce. Season with salt and pepper. Mix all the ingredients together over low heat for a few minutes. Perfume with plenty of fresh basil.

Pasta with cuttlefish ink "pasta cu niuru re sicci"

INGREDIENTS FOR 4 SERVINGS:

extra virgin olive oil ml 40, gr 15 chopped onion, 1 clove of garlic chopped, gr 600 cuttlefish (leaving the bags with the black ink intact), ml 50 of white wine, 150 g tomato paste, chopped parsley, salt and pepper to taste, 400 g spaghetti.

Stew the chopped onion in extra virgin olive oil, add the garlic and chopped parsley. Pour in the chopped cuttlefish and douse with white wine. Let it evaporate and add the tomato paste. Season with salt and pepper. Continue cooking. Towards the end add the squid ink, wait a few more minutes, then switch off.

Cook the spaghetti and toss them with the resulting sauce.

P.S. - A new version of pasta with black cuttlefish is u ripiddu nivicatu created by a chef from Catania. The 'ripiddu' is, in Sicilian dialect, the black lava gravel found at the foot of Mount Etna. This is a risotto whose shape and colours are meant to represent the giant 'Etna'. , the black of the cuttlefish will represent the lava stone, the tomato sauce the lava flow and the fresh ricotta the icy snow of the heights.



COAST AREA

ACICASTELLO

Built on a lava cliff in the middle of the sea, the castle rises imposingly over the square, like the prow of a ship. Behind it stretches the Riviera of Lemons. Walking through the alleys, the scents of a cuisine traditionally linked to fish assail us. The fishermen's crates are full of sea urchins, mussels, octopus, limpets and occhi 'i voi, maschulini (anchovies typical of the Ionian Sea). The maschulini da magghia (from the meshes of the nets used for fishing) have many uses: marinated in oil and lemon, sautéed with wild fennel and peas to season spaghetti.



Pasta che maschulini e' u finocchiu rizzu (pasta with anchovies and wild fennel)

INGREDIENTS:

maccheroncini, maschulini, extra virgin olive oil, garlic, parsley, curly fennel

Boil the fennels. After draining them, chop them roughly. Keep the cooking water aside. Chop the garlic, fry it in a little oil and add the fennel. Allow it all to take on flavour, add the maschulini and cook for a few minutes. Cook the macaroni in the fennel cooking water, when it is just al dente, drain it and toss it with the fennel and maschulini sauce. Serve with a sprinkling of toasted breadcrumbs.

ACITREZZA (district of Acicastello)

The seaside village of Acitrezza teems with colourful boats and fishermen reminiscent of Verga and his Malavoglia. The small pier retains its ancient charm unchanged. The cuisine tastes of the sea. Here one tastes mauro, a fleshy seaweed that is eaten raw with lemon juice. The abundance of fish, crustaceans and molluscs means that they are omnipresent on the tables of the many restaurants, cooked stewed, fried or grilled.

In June, for the feast of St John, the pantomime U pisci a mari takes place, a representation of swordfish fishing featuring the fishermen and the rais (the one who directs the fishing). The latter spies the fish in the water from the top of a cliff and gives instructions to his companions to catch it amidst the cheers and shouts of the public on the pier and boats. The fish is played by an expert swimmer who hides among the boats and is eventually caught. But just as he is about to be killed, he manages to free himself and escapes. A depiction of the constant struggle for survival in a land that makes fish its main source of income.

Spaghetti with sea urchins

INGREDIENTS:

Spaghetti, extra virgin olive oil, garlic, parsley, chilli pepper, fresh sea urchins, salt

In a little extra virgin olive oil, brown the minced garlic, add the chilli pepper. Cook the spaghetti, toss them in the pan with the aromatic oil. Turn off the heat and add the urchin pulp, stir and serve with chopped parsley.



ACIREALE



Baroque Acireale is located in the centre of the Riviera of lemons, on a fertile terrace named Timpa. The city of the mythological Cyclopes is a land rich in water springs and citrus fruits; lemons, oranges, olives, figs and lush vines are produced here. During the summer months, the granita becomes a real ritual: lemon, mulberry, coffee, almond or chocolate, as long as it is served with large brioche while still warm. The cuisine of Acireale, maritime and at the same time peasant, follows the times of the seasons; its recipes have a secret, the use of the freshest and highest quality ingredients.

Typical dishes of the city are the 'Polpettine ne pammini da lumia', minced meatballs or oily fish meatballs seasoned with salt, eggs, grated Sicilian pecorino cheese and chopped parsley, which are grilled enclosed between two large lemon leaves, and the 'hunnatu' fritters.

'Nunnatu' (newborn) refers to the newborn fish and can be of various species: sardines (muccu), anchovies, sea bream. The term 'muccu' comes from the Arabic 'sumuk' (fish) and is used in the Ionian coast of Sicily.

The 'nunnatu' is seasoned with eggs, chopped parsley, salt and pecorino cheese. Meatballs are made, fried in plenty of olive oil and eaten while still steaming.

ACI BONACCORSI

Here the countryside abounds in citrus fruits and grapes; the production of local cheeses is remarkable.

The ricottas that characterise many dishes in the cuisine of Catania and its province are excellent. Great care is taken in the maturing, salting and baking of the ricottas, which come in many forms: a torretta, canestrata, matured in cavagne.

ACI SANT'ANTONIO

The village has a medieval history marked by the countless eruptions of Etna. Citrus growing and viticulture are the real driving forces of the pæse economy. It is the land of the famous green lemon. The pastry shop is a stage for sweets made with almonds, honey, pistachio and ricotta.

Green lemon rosolio

INGREDIENTS: 3 large 'verdello' lemons, 200 ml pure alcohol, 300 g sugar, 300 ml water



Prepare an infusion with alcohol and the zest of the lemons and let it steep for at least five days. Bring the water and sugar to the boil. Once cooled, add the Verdello infusion. Allow to stand, strain and pour the liqueur into a nice rosolio.

GIARRE

The dense woodland of Aci, which in ancient times occupied all the territories to the north-west of Acireale, in the ancient county of Mascali, was cleared and cultivated with vines at the behest of Bishop Caracciolo. The city of Giarre was born on its margins, whose name træ originated from the jars, terracotta containers that contained wine, oil and cereals. Giarre's agricultural economy produces excellent quality potatoes, citrus fruits, cereals, cherries and wine.

As early as the 16th century, during Spanish rule, the preparation of homemade bread once a week was a dutiful ritual. The coarser, less refined flours were used by the poor, while the wealthier social classes made use of Majorca flour, corresponding to today's 00 wheat flour. Majorca flour was also used to make scacciate. The bread, baked in an olive wood oven, as soon as it came out of the oven was cunzatu (seasoned) with extra virgin olive oil, oregano, chilli pepper and salt.

Potato and sausage scacciata

INGREDIENTS: 800 g semolina flour, 16 g beer yeast, 15 g salt, one teaspoon sugar, 2 tbsp oil

Make a well in the flour and put the extra virgin olive oil in the centre, the brewer's yeast previously dissolved in a little lukewarm water mixed with a pinch of sugar. Add salt and start to knead, gradually adding water until the dough is smooth and homogeneous. Bring to rise. Roll out the dough into two thin circles. Cover a round baking dish greased with oil with the first circle, and on the bottom of the "scacciata" place the potatoes cut into rounds and boiled in salted water, topped with sliced caciocavallo or tuma or primosale cheese, anchovy fillets, pitted black olives and sausage. Season with plenty of salt and pepper. Close with the second disc and bake for about 40 minutes at 180°.

CALATABIANO

The mighty walls of the castle of Calatabiano act as a sentinel at the eastern entrance to the Alcàntara valley, whose name comes from Al qantar, the bridge, indicating the border point between the provinces of Catania and Messina.

Calatabiano has always been a predominantly agricultural centre. Here medlars are produced in abundance. The qualities known as vanilla and nespalone predominate. The medlars of Calatabiano seem to contain all the colour and sweetness of the sun. They are harvested in late autumn, placed in straw to ripen properly so that they are sweet and juicy. Extraordinarily good are the marmella-teas, the excellent medlar ice cream and the home-made liqueurs, among which the 'nespolino' is worth tasting.

In August, the Jousts of the Saracen, the Boar and the Ring are held, representing a true dive into the medieval history of Calatabiano. An opportunity to taste and rediscover its ancient flavours: wine, extra virgin olive oil, fruit liqueurs, fresh ricotta and local cheeses.

Nespolino liqueur

Steep 160 g medlar stones in one litre of 95° alcohol. Leave to infuse for at least 30 days. Prepare a sugar syrup by boiling 1 litre of water with 800 g of caster sugar. Leave to cool and add the medlar infusion. Serve chilled.

RIPOSTO

A warehouse ('u ripostu') to store goods and barrels to be shipped by sea, this is the origin of the name Riposto.

The locals have developed an intimate relationship with the sea, the main means of subsistence and focal point for merchants, fishermen, ship-owners, 'sensali' (brokers), 'bordonari' (owners of a mule or donkey, dedicated to the transport of grain and beans) and sailors.

The traditional Ripostese cuisine is renowned for its fried fish and albacore - the prized white tuna caught off the coast by fishing boats. 'Masculini' (anchovies), sea bass, squid and prawns are cooked in a variety of ways to satisfy even the most demanding palates: grilled, with onion, fried, baked in foil or marinated raw. The typical ripostese summer drink is u cor 'i cani, a mixture of water, lemon granita and mint syrup.

MASCALI

The lands of Mascali, at the foot of Mount Etna, are enormous lava expanses overlooking the sea, dotted with old 'palmenti' where wine was pressed and stored in huge chestnut barrels.

Vines have been cultivated here for at least four centuries, from the bunches of grapes the prized and celebrated 'Nerello Mascalese' is obtained, cereals, citrus fruits and almonds are also grown.

A typical product is the rare 'fagiolino mascalese', cultivated only in this area. It comes out towards the middle of July and lasts until the end of August.

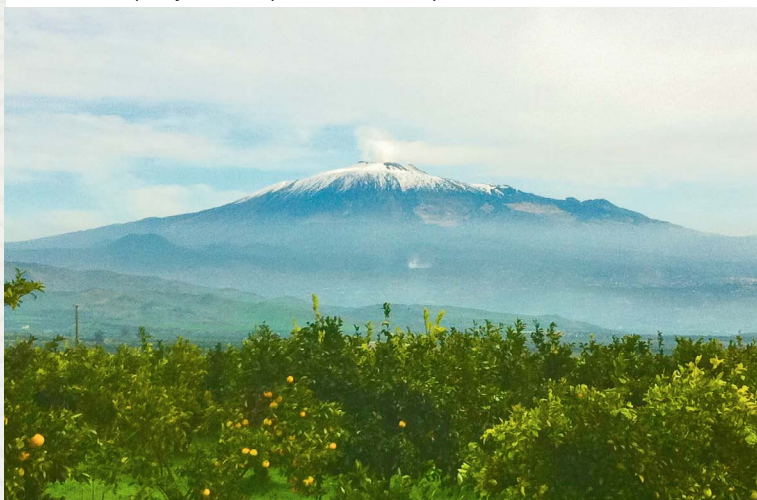
Green beans with garlic and tomato

Blanch the green beans in boiling water. As soon as they are 'al dente', drain and sauté in a frying pan with extra virgin olive oil, two crushed garlic cloves, leave to gain flavour and sprinkle with tomato puree. Season with salt and black pepper and complete by sprinkling with grated Sicilian pecorino cheese.

PEDEMONTANA AREA

A heritage at the foot of Etna

Circumnavigating the volcano you will pass through all the municipalities that are part of the Etna Park. A delicious mix of flavours: from the apples of Pedara to the mushrooms of Nicolosi, from the sausages of Linguaglossa to the honey of Zafferana Etnea, from the torroncini of Belpasso to the strawberries of Maletto, from the pistachios of Bronte to the salads of Adrano and the oil of Ragalna, to the black pork salami of Maniace. And then plenty of quality wine from the splendid vineyards of Sant' Alfio, Castiglione di Sicilia, Milo, Viagrande, Randazzo, Linguaglossa. Each municipality has its specialities, it is impossible to mention them all.



CASTIGLIONE DI SICILIA

A village between the Etna Park and the Alcantara Park, on a rocky hill between chestnut, oak and broom forests. An enchanting scenery of orange groves, vineyards and hazelnut groves. In spring, the landscape becomes a riot of colours, from almond blossom to orange blossoms. Castiglione's economy is based on agriculture, mainly grapes and hazelnuts. There are many vineyards and wine cellars that produce and export fine DOC wines, so much so that Castiglione has earned the name 'Wine City'. Among the most prestigious grape varieties are Nerello Mascalese, Carricante, Merlot, Frappato, Nero d' Avola and Catarratto.

Among the gastronomic specialities to try are 'u maccu' (the macco) of broad beans, macaroni with pork sauce and covered with baked ricotta cheese, 'tagghiarini' with nettles, 'cuddureddi' with honey and hazelnuts, and ricotta fritters, called sciauni.

Sciauni or Ricotta Raviole

INGREDIENTS FOR THE DOUGH:

500 g wheat flour, half a glass of olive oil, half a glass of red wine, 50 g honey, water (as much as needed), a pinch of salt.

INGREDIENTS FOR THE FILLING:

400 g fresh ricotta cheese, cinnamon powder, 50 g honey, plenty of olive oil for frying, grated orange peel, 100 g candied fruit cubes, mandarin liqueur.

Prepare the dough and leave it to rest for at least half an hour. Separately prepare a filling with the ricotta. Roll out a sheet with a rolling pin, cut out disks and place a spoonful of the ricotta filling on half of each disk, moisten the edges with water, close in a half-moon shape and fry. Sprinkle with caster or icing sugar.

LINGUAGLOSSA

In Linguaglossa, Baroque buildings mock passers-by with their black lava stone masks and old Art Nouveau buildings line the pretty streets of the centre dominated by the volcano in the background. In the past, the snow from Etna was accumulated and stored in winter and was a source of income for the locals who, in summer, sold it to the Catanese in the form of ice la-strons for the preparation of granitas. The economy of Linguaglossa has always been linked to wine production. Hazelnuts, the pride of the area, are also excellent.



The sausage is prepared in the old-fashioned way using pork with added lard. The meat is processed on an oak log and then seasoned with black pepper, salt, and 'terri forti' wild fennel seed. There is also an excellent pastry tradition in Lingua-glossa. Particularly captivating are the hazelnut pastries, from pistachio and the unique mustazzoli.

Falsomagro

INGREDIENTS: Slice of beef, boiled eggs, fresh pecorino cheese, ca-ciocavallo cheese, ham or mortadella, fresh parsley, salt, pepper.

Spread the well-beaten slice of meat, lay layers of ham or mortadella on top, add the whole eggs, sprinkle with chopped parsley and the shredded cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Roll the slice of meat on itself and tie it with butcher's twine. Take a pan and in a little olive oil brown the falsomagro on all sides. Remove the meat from the pan, add the onion and brown it together with a bay leaf. Put the falsomagro back into the pan. Deglaze with red wine and let it evaporate. Now add some tomato puree and cook over a moderate heat for at least an hour, covered. Leave to cool, then remove the string and cut into slices. Serve with the sauce.



PIEDIMONTE

A land of beeches, holm oaks, birches, pines, oaks and chestnuts. Scattered here and there are the dagales, green islands in the midst of a sea of lava flows, cultivated with orchards, vineyards and olive groves, while pistachio trees and prickly pear blades climb among the rocks. On the border with Fiumefreddo, there are rich citrus fruit crops on skilfully terraced land: oranges, mandarins, clementines and lemons. Piedimonte produces excellent D.O.C. wines. The vines cultivated are Carricante and Nerello Cappuccio, while the orchards offer excellent qualities of apples, pears (the thigh pear is worth mentioning), peaches and cherries.

SANT'ALFIO

A stage of rare beauty from which to admire the Mediterranean scrub on one side and the lava desert on the other. S. Alfio is among the most renowned towns for the production of apples, hazelnuts, wine grapes and chestnuts. The pasticceria is known for its excellent almond, pistachio and hazelnut pastries. An excellent quality of honey is also produced. Particularly pleasant are eucalyptus and orange blossom.

The forests are rich in mushrooms that are present in many local dishes. Horse and goat breeding is increasingly developed. Excellent cheeses are produced from the local milk.

Zeppole with rise

INGREDIENTS: type 0/0 flour 250 g - rice 250 g - 500 ml water - 500 ml milk - a pinch of salt and sugar - brewer's yeast 20 g - grated orange peel

INGREDIENTS FOR THE SYRUP: Etna honey gr 250- water ml. 250- cinnamon- powdered sugar for sprinkling.



Bring the water and milk to the boil and cook the rice in it for at least 17 minutes. Add a pinch of salt and caster sugar. Add the sifted flour, orange peel and yeast dissolved in a little lukewarm water. Leave to rise, then form into sticks and fry them. Separately, prepare a syrup with water, honey and cinnamon to drizzle over the zeppole. Sprinkle with icing sugar.

MILO

Milo caressed by snow in winter turns into a cool home in summer. Eruptions over time have covered the forests, vineyards and old farmhouses with lava. The volcanic nature of the soil favours an excellent production of wine, chestnuts, hazelnuts, mushrooms, wine grapes, fruit, especially apples and vegetables.

The cuisine consists of parmigiane, battered vegetables, caponate, roasted or stuffed peppers. Particular is the 'pane cotto' made with hard bread, onion, cherry tomatoes and chopped parsley. The fresh sourdough bread prepared in a wood-fired oven is very popular. Fruit tarts, semifreddi, ricotta cheese cassatas and rosoli will delight your palate at the end of the meal.

Baked bread (example of traditional poor cuisine)

250 g stale semolina bread soaked in lukewarm water and squeezed out, seasoned with 100 g red cherry tomatoes, 100 g red onion rings, sprinkled with chopped parsley, drizzled with 100 ml extra virgin olive oil, fine salt and a handful of freshly ground pepper.

ZAFFERANA ETNEA



On the eastern slopes of the volcano is Zafferana, 'the pearl of Etna'. It owes its name to the Arabic word 'Zafaran' (yellow) and reminds us of the colour of the local broom and saffron. Strong points in the local economy are sheep farming, wine and beekeeping. Etna's gold, honey, is the main source of income.

"The Saffron 'I Lapani' (beekeepers) produce multi-flower, orange blossom, eucalyptus and chestnut honey. The honey is also used in the preparation of sweets and typical dishes. Zafferana is also a land of oil, apples, mushrooms and chestnuts. Typical dishes are Foglie da tè, thin leaves with pistachio, almond and hazelnuts, Sciatori, chocolate-covered biscuits, 'a siciliana (Sicilian pizza) a fried calzone stuffed with tuma or fresh pepper, anchovies and black pepper.

Sciatori, biscuits "ca liffia"

INGREDIENTS: 1 kg 0/0 flour, 300 g sugar, 150 g butter, 400 ml milk, 4 whole eggs, orange essence, 1 pinch of salt, vanillin, 25 g brewer's yeast,



Dark chocolate for covering. Knead all ingredients except chocolate. With the dough create many small S's,

place them on a baking tray and leave to rise. Bake in the oven at 200° for 15 minutes. When the biscuits are cooked, dip them in melted chocolate and leave to cool.

S. VENERINA

Santa Venerina has experienced remarkable economic and demographic development since the mid-19th century with the birth of numerous distilleries and the establishment of a rich wine production. Local specialities include pork knuckle, tuma and fried ricotta cheese, fresh homemade pasta such as casarecce with pistachio, battered vegetables, meat-based main courses, game and porcini mushrooms. The herbal or fruit liqueurs produced by the local distilleries, such as limoncello, fragolino and arancello, are excellent.

Fried tuma (cheese)

INGREDIENTS: 400 g tuma cheese, salted anchovies gr 40, durum wheat flour (for flouring) gr 200, olive oil for frying.

Cut the slices of tuma in the centre to form pockets, insert the anchovy in each one and close the open parts. Dredge in flour and fry in a pan with hot oil.

VIAGRANDE

It took its name from the ancient via 'regia' 'Và ranni', via grande, which connected Catania to Messina. From it, barrels of chestnut wood full of wine were transported on carramatti (carts pulled by mules). A past strongly linked to the land and its products such as prickly pears, cherries, and the production of extra virgin olive oil in the old palmenti. In one of the most important historical cafés in the province, which has been present for a long time in Viagrande, the famous Siciliana is made, a kind of fried calzone with sheep tuma, anchovies and black olives. Another feather in the cap is the Spumone, a semifreddo with a variety of flavours. The cafeteria is also full of real delicacies such as crispelle with ricotta or anchovies.

Siciliana

INGREDIENTS: semolina flour mixed with type 0/0 flour gr 500, brewer's yeast gr 15, fine salt, lukewarm water.

Filling: fresh tuma cheese gr 300, pitted black olives gr 150, anchovies in oil gr 30, ground black pepper, olive oil for frying.

Knead the ingredients until a soft and homogeneous dough is obtained.

Leave to rise and roll out with a rolling pin to obtain thin disks of dough. In half of the disc place the tuma, a few olives and the anchovy fillet. Fold the disc over to form a half moon. Fry in plenty of oil.



NICOLOSI

A land of strong flavours and aromas. Specialities include 'provole', cured meats, fresh sheep's milk ricotta, sun-dried tomatoes, salads of Etna oranges dressed with extra virgin olive oil, toasted pine nuts, fresh onions and cinnamon, fresh broad beans seasoned with salted ricotta and spearmint, 'maccu 'cca pasta frittu', risottos with ferula mushrooms, grilled meat on lava stone, veal meatballs in lemon leaf, the 'schiacciata' with broccoli. To finish, desserts: lemon or almond frost, pistachio or lemon cake.

Funci 'ncartati (mushrooms baked in foil)

INGREDIENTS: 500 g mushrooms, 50 g breadcrumbs, 50 g grated pecorino cheese, 1 anchovy, parsley, chopped garlic, lemon, olive oil, salt and pepper.

Clean the mushrooms, mince a clove of garlic, the parsley and the anchovy, add the breadcrumbs, the pecorino cheese, some lemon juice, salt and pepper. Season with extra virgin olive oil. Coat the mushrooms in the breadcrumbs, place in a baking paper bag, close tightly and bake in a hot oven for at least 25 minutes.

RAGALNA

The cherry tree softens the rough, lava stone terraces. The 'funciaro' with his wicker 'panaro' picks ferula mushrooms in the dense woods. Today, as then, it is easy to come across people stooped over the countryside to fari a viddura (pick vegetables). An excellent D.O.P. oil is produced. An ancient rural culture survives that makes use of the products of the land such as wild asparagus and an endless variety of vegetables like cosci 'i vecchia (Costolina vegetables) and caliceddi (cabbage), which usually, sautéed with garlic and chilli pepper, accompany grilled sausage.

"Sciara" rabbit with olives and gooseberry

INGREDIENTS: Wild rabbit, white olives, prickly pears, white wine, extra virgin olive oil, onion, garlic, celery, carrots, bay leaf, salt and pepper

Brown the floured rabbit in a pan with oil, douse with wine and let it evaporate, season with salt and pepper. Separately, brown the onion, garlic, celery and carrot in a little oil. add the rabbit. Cover with stock. When almost cooked, add the pitted and blanched white olives and the pear pieces. Finish cooking.

S. MARIA DI LICODIA

Here, olive, almond, fruit and citrus fruits are grown in abundance. While present is mainly sheep farming.

The gastronomy is made up of genuine food and generous aromas. Specialities are the so-called 'fake ragout' prepared with tomato paste and potatoes, omelettes with wild vegetables, bread and chickling soup, and fried pumpkin.

Cotognata (quince jelly)

INGREDIENTS: Quinces kg 1.3, caster sugar kg 1, 2 lemons

Peel the apples, cut them into four and remove the seeds, then soak them in water acidulated with lemon. Place them in a saucepan, cover with cold water and lemon peel and cook over low heat until cooked. Drain and mash them, collecting the puree, which should weigh about a kilo, and pour it into a saucepan with the same amount of sugar and the juice of half a lemon. Place back on the heat, cooking until the mixture is very dry. Remove the lemon peel and pour the quince paste into the terracotta moulds.

BIANCAVILLA

Here, the soil is extraordinarily rich in potassium, a very important element for vegetable production; moreover, the Biancavilla area teems with water springs and often enjoys a particularly mild climate, which is why Biancavilla has always had a strong vocation for organic farming systems. The countryside is rich in vast pastures, and forage and hay abound here, which is why sheep, cattle, and goat breeding have developed with excellent yields. Excellent qualities of sweet almonds, DOP nocellara dell'Etna olives, ficurinia - prickly pears - and fiononi obtained from the second flowering of the prickly pears, prized blood oranges, tarots and many other fruit and vegetable products are produced. In the area's ancient Palmenti and oil mills, superb qualities of extra virgin olive oil are obtained.



The vines produce excellent table wine such as the fine Etna Rosso. Among the local specialties are scacciate con tuma, an infinity of wild herbs made in all sorts of ways, cunzati olives (seasoned with garlic and oregano), and excellent aubergine parmigiane. In the pastry shop, you will be spoilt for choice: soft hazelnut torroncini, Scumuni (an iced spumone), ice creams, biscuits, iris, almond pastries, a remarkable variety of riposto (dry tea) and mignon pastries. The traditional pastries are extraordinary, such as cannoli with ricotta and candied fruit, mastazzoli, mostarde, cotognate and prickly pear rosoli.

BRONTE



In the hard lava rock the contadini have planted pistachio trees that manage to grow strong and lush. And it is precisely the pistachio that is the territory's main economic resource. Also excellent are the peaches and apricots produced along the fertile Simeto valley.

Dairy products stand out such as the excellent pecorino cheese and ricotta, which stands out for its ancient and genuine flavour.

The people of Brontè love sparacogni, a vegetable that resembles asparagus and grows wild in the woods and slopes between the pistachio groves (known as Lochi). The peasant culture has transformed its characteristic slightly bitter flavour into tasty dishes. With pasta or fried, with egg or also as a side dish or in traditional omelettes.

Traditional confectionery is rich in recipes with pistachios as the main ingredient, such as 'mammurati' (the 'cosaruci', sweet things), composed of a mixture of almonds and/or pistachios, egg whites and sugar, in the shape of a heart, covered with a white icing dotted with 'javuricchi' (coloured diavoline) and baked in the oven.

MALETTO



Its countryside abounds with old vines and the evergreen strawberry groves, which offer the area's best known and most typical product: the 'strawberry of Maletto'. Cattle, sheep and pigs are reared and excellent cheeses and an incredible ricotta cheese are produced.

Rural tourism benefits from an extraordinary gastronomic offer: local lamb and mutton cooked in the oven or on the grill, tagliatelle with ferla mushrooms, local pork sausage plain or topped with cherry tomatoes and cheese, wild asparagus omelette, strawberry risotto, fresh pappardelle with porcini mushrooms and macaroni with wild rabbit sauce, home-made bread and good local wine, pulses, cereals, fruit, vegetables.

Strawberry salad

Cut the strawberries into pieces, after washing and drying them. Wash the arugula and dandelion, as soon as dry add chunks of

goat cheese. Mix all the ingredients and season with extra virgin olive oil. Season with salt. Complete with a grinding of pink pepper.

RANDAZZO

It is the kingdom of birch trees, chestnut trees, foxes, hedgehogs and wild rabbits that make this place fascinating and unique. Its cuisine is based on mushrooms, cold cuts and meat from Etna and the nearby Nebrodi mountains. The recipes are a synthesis of Etna's gastronomic traditions: grilled ferula mushrooms, carpaccio of porcini and ovuli, Nebrodi provola cheese, roast with truffled mushrooms, fresh or



baked ricotta and local vegetables. The pastry shop offers 'occhi di bozze' (hazelnut biscuits), pignolata, marmorata, tirimulluri, and mostarda.

Tirimulluri

INGREDIENTS: boiled wine - flour type 0/0 - hazelnuts and walnuts baked and roughly crushed; a pinch of cinnamon.

Bring the cooked wine to the boil, add the flour by sprinkling. Mix well and pour in the walnuts and hazelnuts, simmering until a stiff dough forms. Remove from the heat and flavour with cinnamon. Allow to cool. Grease your hands with oil, take the dough a little at a time and make sticks, which you press onto the rim of a basket to give them their special shape, then place in the oven and cook over a low heat.



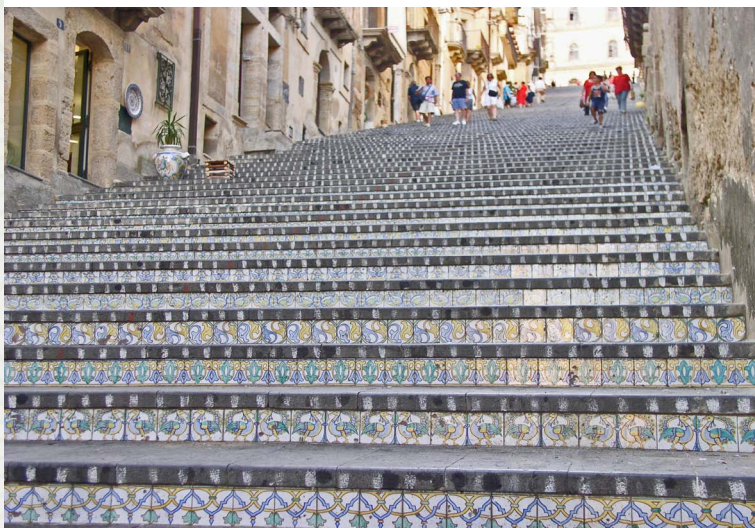
CALATINO AREA

Nestled between the foothills of the Erei and Monti Iblei, lapped to the north by the Simeto river, lies the Calatino, an area of great historical and culinary value.

Here reigns a deep-rooted tradition of typical dishes that show a thousand faces of a complex weave of peoples that have succeeded one another on the island, each of which has left a piece to compose an incredible gastronomic puzzle. A symbiosis of nature, high quality products and tradition.

A dance of poor and genuine dishes intertwined with the sumptuous dishes of Sicilian baronial cuisine, all under the banner of the extraordinary generosity of the land.

CALTAGIRONE



The typical cuisine of Caltagirone is the consequence of a society that for centuries was divided into two social classes: one rich, cultured and aristocratic, the other poor and peasant.

The dishes of the 'poor' cuisine show a strong bond with the products of the land. A very popular dish is broad bean macco, u maccu. Already Aristophanes attributed to this bean puree the power to make Heracles perform incredible amorous feats. Prepared on the occasion of the feast day dedicated to St. Joseph, it included other pulses such as peas, chickpeas, fa-gioli, lentils, as well as various vegetables such as borage, wild fennel, dried tomatoes and onions.

Macco constituted the sole dish of many labourers, who were only given a bowl by their bosses as the main meal of the day. Only during threshing time was they allowed a plate of pasta. The 'rich' cuisine was significantly influenced by the various dominations. This is particularly noticeable in the pastry from Arab and French influences. Sweets such as cassatelle, cannoli and collorele are a source of pride here. The breeding and availability of sheep's milk favour the production of excellent ricotta and cheeses such as tuma, primo sale, pecorino and ricotta salata. Equally high quality is the production of fruit and vegetables, such as the Piano S. Paolo peach, grapes and red-fleshed oranges. Another prized product is extra virgin olive oil. Typical dishes are vaccareddi (snails), favi nuveddi (fresh broad beans), i piruni (calzoni with spinach or broccoli), a cocuzza ru nvernu (yellow pumpkin), a frittata ri sparaci (asparagus omelette).

Collorele

INGREDIENTS: honey, toasted almonds, 00 flour, cloves, eggs, lard, lemon peel.

For the filling: Bring the honey to the boil and add the toasted almonds and a third of the flour. Place them in a container and let them rest.

For the dough: Mix the remaining flour with the egg yolks and lard. Roll out the dough with a rolling pin to make a thin sheet, cut it into fettuccine, place the filling on each one, wrap and bake in the oven for 20 minutes at moderate heat (180°).

CASTEL DI JUDICA

One of the most traditional dishes is the cuccia. It is a dish of boiled wheat that has Arab origins. This tradition is linked to a long famine and the miraculous appearance of a load of wheat that was immediately cooked and eaten by the starving people.

The cooked wheat is sweetened with honey or cooked must, or in some cases with fresh sheep's ricotta cheese.

The kennel is often prepared and it is a good omen to share it with neighbours and family members. It was customary to offer it to the poor on the day of the death of a close relative. Typical dishes of Castel di Judica are mostarda (hot and cold), home-made macche-roni with prickly pear sauce, and cannoli filled with cream from the same fruit. Typical products: citrus fruits, Arancia Rossa di Sicilia IGP (Red Orange of Sicily), cereals, olives.

Cuccia

INGREDIENTS: 500 g wheat - 120 g starch - 1 1/2 litres milk - 200 g sugar - cinnamon powder - bay leaves

Soak the wheat in a bowl of cold water for about three days. Drain it and place it in a pot with cold water and bay leaves. Cook on a low flame for at least a couple of hours. Season the cuccia with caster sugar and cinnamon powder.



LICODIA EUBEA

In the Middle Ages, Licodia was considered Little Palermo because of the abundance of nobles in its territory and the very richness of its land. Ancient are the local recipes based on legumes, such as Fagioli di Santa Pau, Buriana chickpeas and Cappuccini lentils, medieval dishes that can be tasted during the Sagra della patacò. Patacò is the flour obtained from the milling of a leguminous plant: the chickling vetch. The use of this polenta in the Licodiese area dates back to the ancient Roman Puls (legume polenta). Sicily under the Empire absorbed the manners and customs of the great Rome and with it the eating habits. Cattle, sheep, goat and horse breeding and the production of delicious Sicilian cheeses flourished.

Patacò

INGREDIENTS: chickling flour, broccoletti, sausage, chilli pepper, oil, salt.

Fry some finely chopped garlic, add some sausage with its casing removed and some red chilli pepper and fry everything; add the broccoli previously cooked in salted water, stir for a few minutes adding the water used to cook the broccoli. Just before the water comes to the boil, start pouring in the chickling vetch flour a little at a time and stir repeatedly. As soon as the mixture reaches the desired consistency, add oil and serve.

It is a local tradition to prepare pagnuccata during the cold months and especially at Christmas, Easter and during carnival. This characteristic Licodiese cake was considered the 'nougat' of the poor because almonds, which were certainly more expensive, were not used, but the same appearance of nougat was maintained.

Pagnuccata

INGREDIENTS: Flour 400 g, 4 Eggs, Lard 80 g, Honey 300 g, Sugar 2 tbsp, Cinnamon, Oil

Mix together the lard with the flour, sugar and eggs. Form many sticks with a diameter of 1 cm and cut them into small pieces. Fry them a little at a time in plenty of oil, drain and mix with the melted honey.

GRAMMICHELE



Around 827, the Arabs conquered Sicily. They brought a refined gastronomic culture, which soon became the island's heritage and pride. And so sugar, almonds, citrus fruits and cinnamon constituted a real

revolution in the Sicilians' eating habits. Cuddreddi 'i meli, an ancient sweet whose traces date back to the 15th century, are typical of the village of Grammichele. They are prepared during the Christmas festivities and have a ring or S shape. The sweets often have symbolic geometric shapes.

The circle, for example, is a male symbol of completeness and eternity, while the S-shape symbolises the snake.

The main religious festivals are linked to particular foods and sweets: cuccia for St Lucia, sphinxes for St Joseph, aceddu 'cu lova (bird with egg) (*1) and cassateddi di ricotta for Easter, blessed bread for St Anthony of Padua and on pilgrimages to the hermitage of Sant'Arcangelo, watermelons for St Rocco, sausage for the Madonna del Piano.

Other typical foods and sweets, some of which have imaginative names that are used in the various festivities, are testi di turcu, tumai di ricotta, piruni made with spinach, cudduri and cucciddati stuffed with typical products of the land: almonds, dried figs, sultanas, walnuts, pine nuts, candied fruit, orange peel, and cucuzza-ta.

Last but not least, the sausage, whose minced meat from organically reared pigs makes it a product of excellence. Barbecued, in the squares packed with people, it is roasted and eaten hot. Another typical Grammichele recipe is fried tripe.

Cuddureddi

INGREDIENTS: 500 g 00 flour, 500 g semolina flour, 350 g sugar, 2 eggs, 200 g lard, 1 sachet baking powder, 1 sachet vanillin, 1 pinch of cinnamon, 1 lemon, grated and squeezed, a pinch of ammonia, milk to taste.

FILLING: ½ l cooked wine, spices (cloves, powdered cannella and vanillin), 400 g roasted and peeled almonds, 200 g candied orange peel.

Place the two flours in a heap, pour the sugar, eggs, lard, baking powder, cinnamon, a pinch of ammonia and grated lemon into the bowl. Knead everything together, gradually adding the milk until the desired consistency is reached. Leave to rest in the fridge for 10 minutes. Cut into chunks and roll out with a rolling pin, cut into fairly wide strips, place the filling on each strip and roll up. Grease a baking tray, place the cuddurreddi on it and bake for about 20 minutes at 150°.

**1) L'aceddu cu lova is an Easter cake traditionally shaped like a dove with a variable number of hard-boiled eggs in the shell.*

MILITELLO IN VAL DI CATANIA

Militello gastronomy favours sweets with almonds or vino cotto. Typical are the cassatiddine or sweets of the aunt nun, short pastry sweets covered with icing, once prepared in the convent of Sant'Agata. At Christmas, delicious sweet delicacies such as mastrazzola and 'nfasciateddi are prepared, while for the feasts of Santa Lucia and San Giuseppe, cooked wheat cuccia and rice pipirata are a must.

Pipirata

INGREDIENTS: cooked prickly pear wine, pine nuts, rice cloves

Prepare the 'vino cotto di fichi d'India' by bringing the prickly pear juice to the boil, the cooking should be slow and prolonged, thus obtaining a very concentrated syrup. Add the cloves. Separately, cook the rice by boiling it. After draining it, mix it with the cooked wine and return it to the heat. Add the pine nuts. When cooked, serve with a sprinkling of bitter cocoa and cinnamon.

MINEO

Mineo is distinguished by its rich production of citrus fruits, must grapes, almonds, wheat, prickly pears, and its excellent extra virgin olive oil, which can be tasted in December at the annual Olive Oil Festival. Produced in mills according to the ancient traditional system, it is used to flavour a myriad of dishes, including legumes with pork rinds and vegetables.

Cattle, sheep and pigs are reared in its countryside. The lambs, kid goats, wild rabbits and chickens reared 'at home' are delicious. In some masserie, which retain the charm of the Caltagirone countryside, you can still taste freshly made hot ricotta cheese.

The area's renowned dishes are undoubtedly the cavatieddi, seasoned with tomato sauce, aubergines and salted ricotta, and home-made pasta with wild fennel. Among the desserts, the most characteristic are sfinci.

Sfinci

INGREDIENTS: 1 kg. Durum wheat flour, 20 g beer yeast, caster sugar, lukewarm water to taste, cinnamon powder, frying oil, vanillin, salt

Make a well in the flour, place the yeast dissolved in a little lukewarm water mixed with a pinch of sugar in the centre.

Gradually add more tap water with a pinch of salt and mix, beating the batter vigorously with the palm of your hand until the dough is soft. Cover with a cloth and leave to rise for a few hours. Fry the batter by spoonfuls in plenty of hot oil. Season with sugar or honey and cinnamon.

MAZZARRONE



The name Mazzarrone has an interesting etymology, of Greek origin, deeply linked to the cult of food: Maz, ear, and aron or arun, wheat, i.e., a land rich in wheat.

An ancient custom, handed down from father to son, is St Joseph's Supper, prepared as a sign of vow for grace received. On this occasion, three people representing the Holy Family are invited to feast and the most typical dishes are prepared. The cult of tradition, the protection of authenticity

and ambition to improve the quality of grapes have made Mazzarrone a focal point of table grape production. So grapes, local wines, mostarda and all the typical sweets made with cooked wine reign supreme here.

Vino cotto (cooked wine)

Put some red wine must in a saucepan, place the pan on the heat and, as soon as the must starts to boil, lower the heat. Let it simmer, stirring continuously, until about one third of the initial liquid is left in the pot. Let it cool, then pour the syrup into bottles, cork them tightly and conserve. The addition of carob and ash obtained from vine wood will make it unique in flavour.

MIRABELLA IMBACCARI

A village that has always been dedicated to agriculture, so all the people who have lived there have been fascinated by the myths and cults linked to the cycles of agricultural production.

On St. Joseph's Day, altars are set up in the form of banquets, large tables covered with food characterised by the richness of the dishes and the quantity to impress the Papuan guests. Ritual banquets as votive offerings. Bread becomes an instrument of devotion and is offered to all those who pay homage to the altar. Special forms of bread are distributed on this occasion: pagnoccu, cuddura and gaddu.

PALAGONIA

This village is famous for the production of blood oranges, the red gold of Palagonia. Wherever you look, the Piana appears covered with gardens of juicy, fragrant blood oranges.

Also in Palagonia, as in Castel di Iudica, the cuccia is prepared. It is the traditional dish that is prepared on 13 December for Santa Lucia.

Oranges marmalade



INGREDIENTS: 500 g untreated oranges, 500 g sugar

Soak the oranges in water for three days, changing it every night. Cut the oranges into chunks, using the same peel. Add the caster sugar and cook until the mixture thickens. Turn off the heat and place in jars.

RADDUSA

Raddusa, land of abundant vegetation, from the Arabic Raddusa. In the past, this village earned the title of granary of eastern Sicily for its abundant wheat production.

Selection and hard work have made it a product of excellence in Sicily. In fact, Raddusa wheat is one of the niche products of the Vie del gusto. An excellent bread is made from it. A typical preparation is u brusciareddu, durum wheat cooked on a grill with charcoal. The cuccia, often seasoned with wild fennel, is worth tasting. In March, votive altars are set up for St Joseph's Day and on that occasion St Joseph's soup is offered, made with legumes and homemade pasta. According to ancient traditions, it is prepared in a large quadara (pot) and distributed on plates or in pots that guests have brought from home.

But Raddusa is also the cradle of delicious cheeses such as the pecorino raddu-sano, perhaps the oldest cheese produced in Sicily: its origins date back to the 9th century BC. A typical cheese preparation is carrubella.

SAN CONO



South of the Erei Mountains, nestling at the foot of Monte San Marco, lies the small village of San Cono, City of the Prickly Pear. Hernàn Cortès brought it to Europe in the 15th century, and in Sicily it initially served to give an exotic note to noble residences.

An old proverb reads: " Jinchì la panza e jinchìlia ri spin "i (fill your belly and fill it with thorns) perhaps justifying the fact that the husks were also eaten, breaded and fried. As well as being eaten fresh, the prickly pear is processed in a variety of ways, yielding juices, liqueurs, jellies, jams and ice cream. The blades can also be eaten fresh, in brine, or candied, while the skins, skilfully peeled, are often cooked as cutlets. Farmers also use them as fodder.

In folk medicine, direct application of the pulp on wounds is an excellent antiphlogistic remedy. The decoction of the flowers has diuretic properties. The fruits are considered astringent due to their richness in vitamin C.

Masticutti

INGREDIENTS: prickly pears from which one litre of liquid can be obtained, 100 grams of wheat starch, 100 grams of almonds and walnuts, cinnamon powder, grated orange peel and mandarins

Cut the prickly pears into pieces and put them in a pot to cook, with all the peels, for about 15 to 20 minutes. Sieve everything and, having obtained the necessary liquid, pour it into a saucepan. Add the wheat starch a little at a time, stirring continuously until it thickens. Flavour with cinnamon, grated citrus peel and coarsely chopped dried fruit. Take earthenware moulds, moisten them with water and pour the resulting mixture into them. Leave to rest for a couple of hours, then place them to dry in the sun.

P.S. - Terracotta moulds are the traditional containers that were used in Sicily to make jam, mostarda and cotognata.

RAMACCA

The Ramacca landscape is embellished by the splendid masserie scattered across the countryside: true masterpieces of rural architecture.



A land of artichokes, where the violet artichoke of excellent quality is grown. Artichoke cultivation in Ramacca has more than a thousand years of history: it seems to date back to the Arabs, who gave it the name Kharshuf between the 9th and 10th centuries.

The artichoke is a truly generous plant, practically everything is used: from the flowers to the thistles, the fresh leaves and the dried ones for livestock. At the end of summer, when the earth ripens its fruits, dishes are prepared to artichoke base to be offered to visitors in the squares

dressed up for the festival.

In Ramacca, as in many other parts of Sicily, the main product is wheat. Here in the past, the local farmers created and selected a special quality of wheat, called Margherito, which takes its name from the district of the same name. The bread made from it is famous throughout the eastern part of the island.

Sheep breeding is very important in the local economy; the cheese production excels in terms of variety: to mention u picurinu, the pecorino cheese.

Artichoke Omelette

INGREDIENTS: 4 artichokes, 4 eggs, 40 gr. of Sicilian pecorino cheese, salt, pepper and oil.

Clean and strip the artichokes of their hard parts and inner beard, cut into chunks and fry in good olive oil. Beat some egg yolks separately, add the already cooked artichokes and some Sicilian pecorino cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Return to the pan and finish cooking.

Artichoke caponata

INGREDIENTS: artichokes - carrots, medium onions, celery stalks, pitted white olives, ½ glass wine vinegar which you can replace with dry white wine, 1 ½ tablespoons caster sugar, extra virgin olive oil

Fry the chopped onions, carrots and celery in extra virgin olive oil. Add the artichoke hearts cut into wedges and the olives and cook. Wet with vinegar, sprinkle with sugar and finish cooking. Season with salt and pepper.

SAN MICHELE DI GANZARIA

The ancient village of San Michele dates back to Arab times. It reached its maximum development in the Angevin period. The name derives from its patron saint with

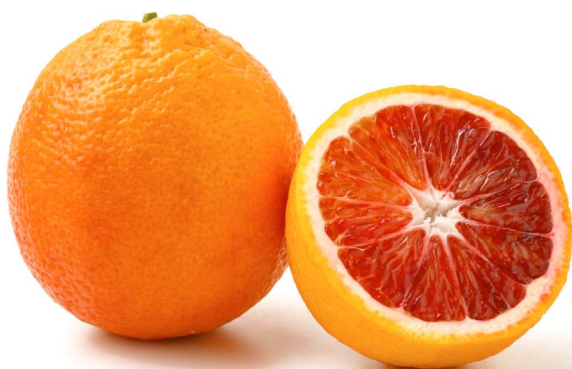
the addition of the Arabic word Kanzir, which meant pig breeding. The paese boasts a rich production of cereals, grapes, olives, fruit and citrus fruits, as well as large herds of sheep, goats, pigs and cattle. The production of fresh eggs is excellent.

Typical dishes include pasta with wild fennel and muddicata (breadcrumbs fried in oil and anchovies), chiullo, a polenta made from chickling vetch flour, crastagneddu (mutton), u pani che ficu, bread with dried figs, homemade lasagne with rabbit sauce, cutinedda, pork rind.

I curriulli (wild cardoons in batter)

Boil the cardoons in boiling water and lemon for a few minutes. As soon as they are cooked, drain them well and dry them. Prepare a batter with the semolina flour, water, a pinch of salt, pepper, three tablespoons grated pecorino cheese and chopped anchovy fillets. Dip them in the batter. Fry them in plenty of olive oil.

SCORDIA



The name Scordion, of Greek-Byzantine origin, means garlic. The town is one of the main citrus-growing centres in Sicily for the excellent quality of its product. Numerous local companies, in fact, are engaged in the cultivation of oranges now destined for the international market. There are various temptations for the palate: dried fruit, jams, dried prickly pears, various types of cold meats and sausages, cheeses, pastries.

Traditional Scordi dishes include scacciate, gelatine, toasted chickpeas, cuccidati, pagnuccata, biscuits called ossa dei morti (bones of the dead), mastazzola, and orange salad. The schiacciata is a traditional preparation of popular Catania cuisine. There are countless variations: the classic one is prepared with black olives, anchovies and tuma, a local cheese. Other ingredients used for the filling are cauliflower, sausage and fresh pepper.

Oranges salad

Ingredients: blood or blond oranges, leek, pitted black olives, extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper.

Cut the oranges into slices and arrange them on a plate, add the rings

leeks and olives. Season with extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper.

VIZZINI



The typical product par excellence of Vizzini is fresh sheep's milk ricotta. The breeders over time have selected excellent dairy breeds that have enabled the production of fine cheeses, and the desserts made with the local ricotta are renowned. This is the right place to indulge in cassata, cassa-telle, pastries, ricotta ice cream, mostarda di

must, nucatola (*1), prickly pear mustard, cutumé, St. Joseph's fritters, giulebbati biscuits, giammelle (*2).

Giuseppe, giulebbati biscuits, giammelle (*2).

*(*1) - biscuits with an almond filling as the main ingredient*

*(*2) - a biscuit somewhere between a Savoyard and a sponge cake, made essentially of eggs and flour.*

Cutumé with cottage cheese

You take a cavagna of ricotta (about 200 g), add an egg, two tablespoons of sugar, two of flour and a pinch of cinnamon. It is taken a little at a time with a spoon and fried in a frying pan. When the cutumés are ready, they are sprinkled with sugar.

Sugar Syrup Cookies (biscotti giulebbati)

A kilo of flour is mixed with nine eggs and six tablespoons of olive oil to make a firm dough. It is cut into pieces and placed in floured baking tins. In each biscuit, two notches are made with a knife and then placed in the oven. In a separate saucepan, prepare the giulebbe with water and sugar. When the biscuits are ready, dip them two or three at a time in the giulebbe and turn them over until they are covered with it.

IDEATION

Cultural Tourism and Sport Policies Service, Regional
Province of Catania

GRAPHIC PROJECT

Agata Vitale

TEXT

Calogero Matina

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The heat of the sun enhances the smell of the earth, which mingles with the scent of the Mediterranean Sea carried on the breeze. On Mount Etna, as in the Piana countryside or in the Calatino area, it is a succession of strong colours and intense fragrances. The flavours in this generous land are decisive and unique and strike a delicious balance between land and sea.

Coastal cuisine, then, and inland cuisine.



PROVINCIA REGIONALE DI CATANIA



IP.S.S.A.R. "K.WOJTYLA" DI CATANIA