

IAHF NEWS

ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION • ESTABLISHED 1975 • FOUNDED AS NONPROFIT 1976

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JAN PRINZIVALLI / IAHF NEWSLETTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ~

Happy New Year!

I can't believe we are now in 2022! I'm sure we can all agree what a whirlwind the past two years have been! Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Dana Zuccarello, and I have been a member of the IAHF since 2015, though volunteering at the Festa for a couple years prior to that. I started

taking Delia's Italian language classes to help me prepare for my trip to Italy in 2016. I gained much more than (slowly) learning the language. I began to meet many wonderful people and started attending the Cena Fuoris held monthly. The more I got involved, the more people I was able to meet. I was approached one evening at a Cena Fuori by Linda Binkley, and she asked if I'd be interested in joining the IAHF Board. I told her I wasn't sure what a Board member did, yet I was interested. That following year, I was voted in. I started to volunteer at events and in time was able to meet more people. I was asked recently what made me decide to join the IAHF. After thinking long and hard, I realized that after the passing of my dad in 2015, there were no other Italian family members close by. Sure, there were second and third cousins with whom I became acquainted on my dad's side of the family, yet I wanted to join the IAHF to be closer to those who resembled and felt like family. There are quite a few members who remind me of my great aunts and uncles, my grandparents and even my own father. In 2019, I was nominated for the Fourth Vice President and have served for 2 years. At our most recent Board meeting, I was nominated and chosen for the coming year to be President. I am looking forward to serving the IAHF and working with everyone to have a successful year! I'd like to acknowledge and thank the outgoing Board members,

Felix Dalldorf, Nanci Willborn, Jan Prinzivalli, Carlo Severo, Richard Stewart and Nancy Moreale, for their many contributions over the past few years. I'd also like to acknowledge and thank Marie Dalldorf for her time and efforts as the Corporate Secretary these past few years as well.

With that said, I'd like to announce the upcoming 2022 IAHF Officers: First Vice President, Ken Borelli; Second Vice President, Azie Habib; Third Vice President, Lucia Clementi; and Fourth Vice President, Louie Lombardo. Joining the current Board, I'd like to welcome our newest members, Joe Rosati, Elise Habra, Joe Lucito and Sharon McCray. Sharon McCray will also be filling in for the role of Corporate Secretary until we can find a permanent person to take over that responsibility. If anyone is interested in learning more about what the role entails, please feel free to reach out to me and we can discuss. Stay tuned for February's issue, as we will have a picture of the IAHF Officers and the Board of Directors so you'll be able to put faces with names. We are currently in discussion for planning events for the upcoming months. Personally, I'd like to see movie nights/afternoons return to the schedule. We're planning on scheduling movies in Italian for the afternoon showing and then movies with subtitles in the evenings. I'm hoping to see at least a few cooking classes per month, and I encourage other members to reach out if they're interested in sharing a favorite recipe. I am currently working on a dinner comedy show. There are a few Italian comedians that I follow on social media who have expressed interest in coming. Now we just need to work out the logistics. We'd also like to bring back our dinner dances, crab feed, cultural lectures and genealogy classes! I am open to all suggestions that you may have regarding new events so please feel free to reach out to me. I want everyone to know that the IAHF is ready to get back to our events!

Thank you, Dana Zuccarello / President ~



AT

A GLANCE

JANUARY

- January 5, Wednesday - An online zoom program, La Befana Celebration with Marie Dalldorf
- January 20, Thursday - Regional Lunch, Tuscany; at the IAHF Hall; \$25 members, \$30 guests; call (408) 293-7122 by January 18 to make a reservation
- January 25, Tuesday - Italian Language Film Night "Ciao Professore," a tribute to Film Director, Lina Wertmuller
- January 27, Thursday - Cena Fiori, Sam's BBQ, 1110 South Bascom Avenue, San Jose

• See page 2 for more information •



JANUARY

January 5, Wednesday - An online zoom program, La Befana Celebration with Marie Dalldorf

January 20, Thursday - 12:00 Regional Lunch, Tuscany; at the IAHF Hall; \$25 members, \$30 guests; call (408) 293-7122 by January 18 to make a reservation

January 25, Tuesday - 7:00pm, Italian Language Film Night "Ciao Professore," a tribute to Film Director, Lina Wertmuller

January 27, Thursday - Cena Fiori, Sam's BBQ, 1110 South Bascom Avenue, San Jose; lecture with proprietor/author pending; \$40 payable at the door; call (408) 293-7122 by January 25 to make a reservation

February 13, Sunday - 3:00-7:00pm, Valentine Pizza Party Time; a casual event; all welcome; dance to the music of "DJ Eric" with karaoke and line dancing (Salad, individual pizzas and dessert) \$20.00 adults/\$10 children under 18

Additional Events in the planning stage: Overnight trip to Graton Casino, Lecture on Mussolini, Musical Valentine Party & Silent Auction to benefit the IAHF.

Call IAHF Office 408-293-7122 to RSVP
or register online <https://www.iahfsj.org/events>

It is important to call for reservations because so many of these activities have limited space and fill quickly.

IAHF Events Health Policy

In an effort to keep our members safe, the IAHF has adopted the following policy:

All who attend an activity or event which takes place at the IAHF Hall will need to be fully vaccinated or present negative COVID-19 test results dated within 72 hours. This policy follows the guidance set by Santa Clara County and the CDC.

This means that when checking in at an event at the IAHF Hall, we will ask you to show your vaccination card or your QR Code on your cell phone from the State Registry (see below).

If you are not fully vaccinated (i.e., it has been a full two weeks since your second shot of the Pfizer/Moderna vaccine or two weeks since your Johnson and Johnson vaccine), you will need to show a negative Covid test from within 72 hours of the event.

Many local counties are implementing measures to require proof of vaccination to attend certain events or enter select venues. To facilitate proof of vaccination status, you can register your vaccination status at <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov>. With a validated registration, you will receive a QR Code on your mobile phone which you can show upon entry. This will serve as proof of your vaccinations at most venues. -- Article by Felix Dalldorf



Do you have any IAHF event photos to share?

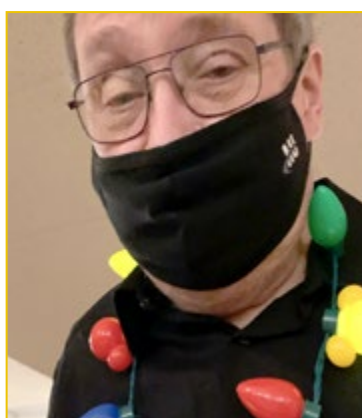
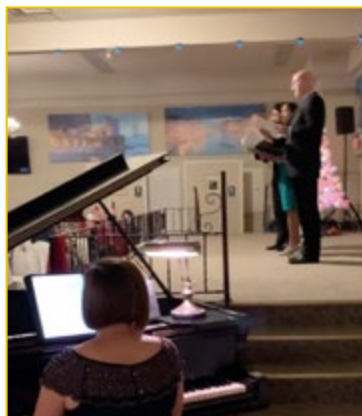
- The IAHF is collecting photos and videos of our past events!
- Please upload them to tinyurl.com/iahfphotos
- You will find several folders by event where you can post your photos.
- If your photos are not digital, drop them by the office for us to scan - just let us know if you want them back.
- Think of the many memories we can share! Thanks so much!

OPERA & PARTY TIME AT THE IAHF!

The operative word is getting back on track with two of our traditional holiday activities, our World of Italian Opera and Holiday Lunch. Along with the jingle bells came masks and special precautions. Nevertheless, the IAHF was determined to celebrate the end of the year along with the new realities. As we often hear and now a daily lesson, the spirit of the matter is what really counts. Getting together, enjoying each other's company, listening to live music and sharing a meal all take on special significance these recent years.

Our two holiday events incorporated this desire. Our 33rd World of Italian Opera also took on a special significance in recognizing the contribution of IAHF member Frank Fiscali. The event was dedicated to him. Frank played a major role in the early days of Opera San Jose as Board President. Frank, a renaissance man, has contributed greatly to the community as Vice Mayor of San Jose, President of the Eastside Union School District and chairing major community initiatives. He was honored at our Opera event with a commendation from the State of California Senate presented by State Senator Dave Cortese. The event was zoomed live to Frank, and the commendation was shared at both events.

The IAHF and Frank played an important part in the early days of Opera San Jose, Irene Boitano Dalis, an IAHF member, was always connected to her Italian roots and its cultural treasure "opera." Her legacy and our support are vital for a rich cultural community. It is an amazing



legacy that we need to nurture and so it was with this determination - even with the epidemic and with precautions in place - that we found a space to celebrate our 33rd World of Italian Opera. Our many volunteers responded to the challenge of both events and truly are the glue of all our activities. Our Hall glowed at each event with special decorations and a festive tribute to the Christmas spirit.

Individual meals were served, catered by Tony & Alba's and I give a special acknowledgment to them for providing our individual catered meal. As we chronicle how we are surviving the epidemic of 2020, it should also be noted that the Restaurant did a special outreach to shut-ins during the worst times of the stay-at-home restrictions.

Likewise, our guest artist from Opera San Jose provided a program that offered a glimpse into the potential vision of Opera San Jose, giving us hope for a new 2022 opera season. I also give special appreciation to our boutique participants, who added to the festivities by making some holiday shopping quite painless. Another holiday experience at both events was the newly restored IAHF Community History Boards, funded by a special history grant from the County of Santa Clara Parks Department. We were able to have them ready for both events along with a library sale and an update on our archives project (more on that project as the new year progresses). When you consider all that transpired in 2021, it is admirable to note the dedication of so many of our members who

found a way to keep traditions and the spirit alive in appreciation of Italian American heritage. Even during the downtime of the epidemic, we were able to accomplish many Italian American heritage archival projects. Four more history boards will be added to the collection soon.

The holiday party was also a warm experience infused with the Christmas spirit. There was a toy drive led by Marie Dalldorf that doubled last year's donation to Toys for Tots and a special concert of holiday songs by Dan Burns accompanied by Marion O'Leary which added to the fun.



Both are accomplished artists in their own right and IAHF members who shared their talents at the lunch. A special treat was "DJ Eric" who wove his musical magic to the diehards until 4pm in the afternoon! We are planning to continue the party for a fun-filled Valentine's event in February. Check the calendar for details.

In appreciation of all the goodwill and support we have experienced - not just at these events - throughout the year, I wish you "Buon Natale e Felice Anno Nuovo."

— Article by Ken Borelli /
Photos by Stanley Oliver



LA BEFANA vien di notte

The word "Befana" comes from the Italian word "Epifania", meaning Epiphany. In Italy they celebrate "Babbo Natale", while the Western world celebrates Santa Claus. The Christmas season in Italy begins with the Novena eight days before Christmas and lasts until the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6th.

La Befana is a folklore tradition and dates back to the 13th century. La Befana is said to be an old woman (a good witch) dressed in long skirts and woolen shawls, with a wart on her nose

On the night of January 5th, before going to bed, Italian children place their shoes or socks on the window sill hoping La Befana will fill them with sweets and other treats. For children who were naughty, La Befana leaves hard black candy called carbone (charcoal), as a reminder to do better. She flies on a broom and goes down chimneys to deliver toys. In exchange, La Befana is offered un goccia di grappa, pane e un



po' di formaggio (a drop of grappa, bread and a little cheese) to warm her chilled bones and to help her on her way.

Growing up there was a rhyme that my mother sang to my sister and me. I spoke to my sister and between the two of us we came up with the first few lines.

*La Befana vien di notte,
con le scarpe tutte rotte,
col vestito alla romana
ai bambini piccolini, lascia tanti cioccolatini,
ai bambini cattivi, lascia cenere e carbone,
viva, viva La Befana!*

*Befana comes at night
In worn-out shoes.
Wearing a Roman dress
For the small, little children she leaves a lot of
little chocolates,
For the bad little children, she leaves ashes and coal.*

IAHF Befana Event

To hear the story of La Befana, on January 5th the IAHF will have a reading of the story by Marie Dalldorf. The Zoom will begin at 3 pm.

Check the website event calendar for the link to join this event. Don't miss out on this Italian tradition. -- Article by Marie Dalldorf



Thanks to your generous donations of a new toy for our second annual Marines Toys for Tots Drive, we have amassed a great assortment. Last year we felt blessed to have received so many toys donated. This year, even though it has been a very trying year, you have exceeded our expectations, and we have received many more toys to help those in need.

Through your support, you will help to bring a smile on the face of the child opening your toy Christmas morning. It not only sends a message of hope to the less fortunate children, it also sends the same to their parents.

When we took last year's donations to a local fire station drop-off location, the fire captain who accepted our donations was very appreciative as they had fallen far short of toys to distribute.

This year, because of your generosity we are able to share toys with even more needy children. Remember children are one of our nation's most valuable resource and grow up to be tomorrow's leaders. According to experts, the Toys for Tots drive has motivated children to grow into responsible and productive community leaders. You have helped with this transition.

Grazie per la tua generosità!

-- Article by Marie Dalldorf and Jan Prinzivalli, Toys for Tots Co-chairs

Curling Up With A Good Book

Now that the holidays are behind us, we may all be ready for a slower pace. One of my favorite ways of relaxing and taking some time for myself is to find an interesting book and make myself comfortable in a quiet corner.

Correction To Last Month's Article

But before I get into this subject, allow me to issue a correction. In last month's article, I inadvertently listed some dates as being in the 1900s. Cesare Cantù lived and published in the 1800s, and all dates should have reflected that. I apologize for any confusion.

Mystery Fiction

We have loads of topics to choose from, whether you prefer fiction or non-fiction. This month let me offer a sampling of our fictional mysteries.

Do you like a good mystery? We have them - in English, and in Italian. The highlighted books all bring the flavor of their settings to the story in English so get ready to travel!

The first is **Black Run**, by Antonio Manzini. Set in Aosta and the Alps, Manzini brings us Deputy Prefect Rocco Schiavone, a sophisticated yet crotchety Roman who is exiled to the small alpine town. With a lot of insight into human nature, Manzini uses sly humor and irony to have Rocco solve the murder, complete with the custom, dialect and history of Aosta.

Donna Leon is an American who lives near Venice. She has captured the mystery and intrigue of this fascinating city in her series highlighting the detective work of Commissario Guido Brunetti. These small paperbacks include the titles **A Sea of Troubles**, **A Noble Rancidance**, and **Acqua Alta**, the latter of which features a same-sex relationship. We have six of the series.



Next up is **Secrets of Sant'Angelo**, bringing us to this small Tuscan town whose people believe firmly in the power of curses. They are in the midst of a series of misfortunes and are hoping for salvation. Enter a gypsy-like mother, Rosa Spina Innocenti, and her grown son, Emanuelle Mosè, who seem to be able to help. Author Jeff Shapiro has lived in Siena since 1991 and weaves together mystery, comedy, passion, religion and local beliefs.

If Naples is more your style, try **Così Fan Tutti**, written by Michael Didbin. Linda Blinkley wrote a wonderful review of this book in the [August 2018 newsletter \(page14\)](#). In short, demoted Inspector Aurelio Zen has been re-assigned to Naples. Despite trying to keep a low profile, he is pulled into local drama with many complications. Loosely based on the opera of a similar name, you don't have to know opera to appreciate this witty and enjoyable book.

Author Andrea Camilleri takes us to Sicily in his novel **A Nest of Vipers**. Inspector Montalbano is called to investigate the death of a wealthy accountant, an investigation that uncovers his unsavory manipulations and extortions and leading to the question, who is/are the real victim(s) here? The backdrop captures the essence of Sicily, along with exquisite descriptions of the inspector's sumptuous Sicilian meals. Written with humor and compassion.

I have highlighted several out of our large collection. I encourage you to search our card

catalog to find books that fit your interest.

Go to the IAHFSJ.org website, select "IAHF Library" from the menu along the top, then click on the green button labeled "[IAHF Library Catalog](#)." Then search our diverse collection at your leisure.

Enjoy!

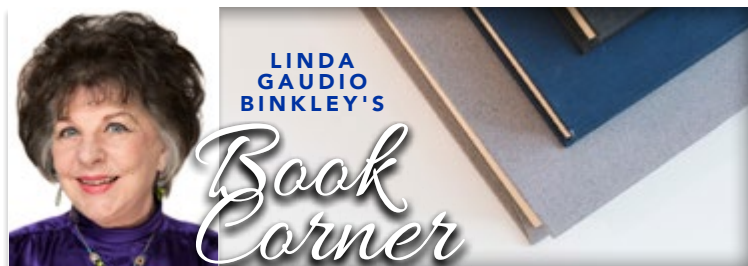
Email comments to librarian@iahfsj.org 🐉



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





The Shadow King by Maaza Mengiste 🍷



In the 1890's my grandfather served as a scribe for the Italian government during its early occupation by treaty of Eritrea. Because of this, I have always had an interest in the Italian involvement in Ethiopia.

The Shadow King is beautifully written. The reader enjoys a seldom used motif of stream of consciousness made famous by the great writer, James Joyce. We see elements of Greek literature evidenced in the songs and choruses interspersed throughout the book. Even the holy bible

is referenced as we see that **The Shadow King**, a slim novel, is divided into Books not Chapters. The lack of any quotation marks immerses the reader completely into the setting; the characters, in effect, are one with their surroundings. This masterful writing is quite a unique accomplishment.

The revelation of the realities of the brutal war waged by Mussolini is difficult for Italian- Americans to read. The soldiers behaved on par with Nazis. Nothing of their disgusting behavior is spared. The fact that Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie fled the country with his family for the safety of a regal residence in

England, leaving his country leaderless, is fully described. The fighting was left to dedicated "folk" warriors who realized the need for a figurehead to rally the troops. The warriors found a Selassie look-alike who travelled the country dressed in regalia on a great white horse duping the peasants. This shadow king convinced the country people to take up arms and they did. Thus the title.

The great theme of the book is the usefulness and resilience and strength of women. Clearly coming from a patriarchal society, these women asserted themselves with incredible strength and bravery and took up arms along with the men. Sexual assaults on their weaker bodies became a symbol of war itself. The ability of a woman or of a people to be degraded and abused and then to stand up with dignity and fight is demonstrated repeatedly in the story.

Throughout the book, we follow the life of a Jewish-Italian boy whose job as a young soldier is to photograph the despicable and horrendous events of the war. Along the way he learns that Italy, the country he is fighting for, is now cooperating with Hitler and expelling and killing its Jewish population. His parents are lost to Auschwitz. His entire experience in Ethiopia is a struggle to find his identity and a yearning to have his enigmatic father's love. He is overwhelmed with grief for "following orders." But the past cannot be undone.

Thanks so to Maaza Mengiste for the great effort she put in to creating **The Shadow King** and allowing us to see this period of history from different points of view: the native African, the disgusting Italian commanding officer, and the Jewish-Italian soldier photographer. I highly recommend this book. 🍷

LINDA GAUDIO BINKLEY'S

Italian Word or Phrase of the Month

Happy New Year!

It is still January so I can wish you all a **Happy New Year**:

- *Felice anno nuovo, buon anno nuovo, buon anno, buon capodanno* all mean Happy New Year
- Your response can be *Altretanto!* (I wish you the same)
- Now you get to make i *propositi del nuovo anno* (New Year's resolutions)
- *Hai già fatto una list di buoni propositi per 2022?* (Have you already made a list of good intentions for 2022?)





IAHF Kitchen volunteers surprised Ken Borelli with a birthday cake!!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, KEN!

(Photo by Stanley Olivar)



Lina Wertmüller 1928 - 2021

As we go to press, I want to acknowledge the passing of one of the greats of Italian Cinema, film director, Lina Wertmüller, who recently died in Rome. Lina was part of a wave of directors that followed the post-war renaissance of Italian cinema and helped to firm up the international reputation of Italy's contribution to the art form. In fact, Lina was the first woman to receive an Academy Award nomination for Best Director in 1975 for the film, "Seven Beauties."

While she was born in Rome, the origin of her name, Ar-

cangela Felice Assunta Wertmüller, stems from an old Swiss Royal family. She was married to a well-known art director, Enrico Job, and their collaborations on various projects firmly established her directorship within her own "Wertmüller style," hard-hitting, satirical, tackling the sexual and cultural mores of 1970-80 Italy.

The Academy gave her a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019. She also has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. As an example of her focused wit, when she received the "Oscar," she observed she

would have liked to have received an "Anna" instead.

Her directorship and film work are part of a standard repertoire in appreciating the Italian cinema. During one of our film series events through our Italian Language Program a couple of years back, we played her movie "Ciao Professore." Hopefully, as 2022 progresses we can continue with our Italian Language Film Series and as homage to her amazing talents, show the film "Ciao Professore" again. Stay tuned as we check out this possibility.

— Article by Ken Borelli ~

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CONSIDERING BUYING A HOME IN ITALY?

Small Towns' Depopulation

There are over 5,000 towns in Italy with a population of 5,000 or less. Many of these towns have been depopulated in the past 75 years as inhabitants have left in search of jobs and better opportunities. As a result, the lure of the big city has been the death knell for many small villages.

Mayors of five small Sicilian towns facing this debilitating decline have come up with innovative strategies to lure folks back. The one initiative that got traction in the world's media was the offer to sell abandoned homes for one euro. Of the five towns that started the movement, one town has had major success, Gangi.

Gangi is a town of about 6,500 people situated in the interior of Sicily along the Madonie Mountains, approximately one hour and one half from the capital city of Palermo and forty-five minutes from the Tyrrhenean Sea. It is a beautiful town with great vistas of the surrounding fields and a known baronial past. Gangi was recently named one of the most beautiful villages in Italy.

Gangi's origins go back to the 1300s when it was rebuilt following the Sicilian Vespers war. For centuries, it was an agricultural hub known for its granary, animal husbandry and source of high quality cheeses and cured meats. There are many archaeological styles to admire in Gangi's medieval castles and churches.

Small town depopulation is not just a Sicilian or Italian problem. Greece, Portugal and Spain are experiencing a similar problem. Young people continue to emigrate to big cities and other countries in search of better jobs and greater opportunities. Besides Gangi there are hundreds of small villages ready to welcome prospective buyers.

Many of these villages have ancient roots, some dating back to Phoenician, Carthaginian, Greek, Roman, Arab and Spanish colonial rules of the island.

The One-Euro Solution

Participating towns offer to sell abandoned houses at a bargain price as low



▫ Article By Antonio Tasca ▫



as one euro in order to entice folks. Buyers have to commit to upgrade their purchase within a specified number of months, usually 24 months and to spend 30,000 euros.

At the bottom of the pile are houses abandoned decades ago that for all practical reasons need to be demolished. These are the typical one-euro deals. One euro is about \$1.15. At the top there are houses that require much less work. These better houses can cost upwards to 50,000 euros. The remodel depends on their condition and the expected result. All said, you can have a very comfortable 2-3 bedroom house with modern conveniences when completed a year or so later.

If you prefer a place along the seashore or closer to the action, you will have to be prepared to spend about 125,000 euros or more for a 3-bedroom flat.

It is important to point out that several villages in other Italian regions have similar initiatives. Attractive small villages in Tuscany, Abruzzo, Lazio, Molise, Umbria, Basilicata and Calabria are welcoming newcomers. Several of these villages are within short distances from well-known cities.

What About ...

Property taxes are low. They can range from \$250-\$1,000 per year based on square footage. In Italy, the buyer pays the title transfer fee to the public notary (an attorney and fiduciary authorized by the government to oversee commercial transactions). There are no title companies in Italy. The notaio fills also that requirement. The charge is 5% of the purchase price. One can expect to be charged a nominal fee for garbage pickup and street maintenance. Utilities are provided by the state and are to be paid quarterly. Home insurance is estimated at around \$400 per year.

A caretaker is recommended during periods of owner absence. The job of the caretaker is to ensure the security and operational maintenance of the home. The cost might range from \$1,000 - \$1,500 dollars per year.

continued on next page >>>



Motivating Factors

There are several reasons why anyone might consider buying a fixer upper in a small town. Here are some of them:

- Stay connected to one's ancestor roots
- A place to go to unwind from modern living
- A low-cost retirement venue
- Explore the nooks and crannies of a world slowly vanishing
- A place where the clan can meet and make memories
- Experience the local culture and learn the language

Regardless of one's motivation, one will find welcoming people and plenty of spectacular sights to enjoy. In these villages, the pace is slower and traditions still hold strong.



A More Practical Alternative

Consider renting a place for a year first. It can be daunting, managing a property from far away. There is much to be learned about living abroad. In these smaller mountain towns you can rent a 2-3 bedroom fully furnished home for \$300-\$350 per month.

Prices surge during the summer months so a year-lease is more economical even if you do not expect to be there the whole year. You can come and go as you please. If after some time you decide that this is for you, you can then jump in and buy a place.

This alternative gives you flexibility and permits you also to move up and down the Italian peninsula. You can mix and match your destination as your needs or interests change. 🌿



BUON ANNO a tutti! We hope your Holidays were happy, healthy and delicious!

Now that we're in the full swing of winter, it's time for a comforting, decadent, hot drink that will warm your bones. When we were in Italy, I ordered hot chocolate in a restaurant thinking that hot chocolate in Italy would be the same as in the States. Not so! In Italy, the hot chocolate is creamy and thick almost like chocolate pudding. I couldn't resist having it every morning while we were there. So here's a recipe for Italian hot chocolate to take the chill off of your winter days or nights.

ITALIAN HOT CHOCOLATE (serves 2) (Recipe by Rosemary Molloy)

Ingredients

- 3.5 ounces dark chocolate, chopped into small pieces
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 ½ tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
- 1 cup + 1 tablespoon milk, 2% or whole milk/divided
- 1 teaspoon corn starch

Instructions

1. In a small bowl whisk until smooth, 1/4 cup milk and cornstarch set aside.
2. Sift the cocoa into a medium bowl then add the sugar and whisk together; set aside.
3. In a small/medium pot, heat 3/4 cups + 1 tablespoon milk until boiling; reduce heat to low, start whisking and add the milk/cornstarch mixture then add the cocoa mixture slowly while continually whisking until smooth add the chopped chocolate and whisk for approximately 3 minutes. Serve immediately. Enjoy!

Our cooking classes will resume in the Spring. We hope to see you in our classes then!



WINE AND ITALY, A BOND STEEPED IN HISTORY

Viticulture and wine making are part of Italy's history since ancient times (Photo: Mirko Vitali/Dreamstime)

A glass of Italian red, who hasn't relaxed after a long day at work with one?

Italian wines are the epitome of quality and versatility, of tradition and elegance. This is not only because of the work and skills of our winemakers; as it happens in much of the Mediterranean basin, it is because wine is something we've been making for millennia.

Blessed with the perfect climate, Italy's connection with the vine and the grape began around the year 1000 BC, courtesy of the Phoenicians and the Greeks, even though traces of rare local production were found by archaeologists.

The Phoenicians were traders coming from modern Lebanon, who maintained their dominion on the Mediterranean for centuries. While traveling and trading, they would also introduce wine to the people they came into contact with, including those living in Sardinia and Sicily, where they imported wine in large quantities.

Winemaking, however, and vine cultivation on a large scale, was introduced in the peninsula by the Ancient Greeks, who brought along new varietals and adapted them to the soil and climate of our South. The glorious people of Hellas, fathers of western civilization along with our ancestors the Romans, were central to the history of winemaking in Italy, especially in our southern regions where, still today, some of the varietals they introduced are still used. Historians acknowledge the first regions cultivating grapes and making wine were Calabria, Campania and Sicily. At the same time, they don't quite agree on the order. For some, the motherland of wine was Calabria; for others, it was Sicily from where winemaking spread throughout the country. In any case, by the 7th century BC, wine was commonly made and consumed by the Etruscans in Tuscany, northern Latium and Emilia-Romagna and by the Celtic populations of the North.

A classical mosaic celebrating grapes and wine. The Greeks and the Phoenicians brought wine to Italy, but it was the Romans who made it a European thing (Photo: Sytilin Pavel/Shutterstock)

Of course, when we talk about the history of wine in the Belpaese, it's difficult not to think immediately of the Romans. Great producers of this golden or ruby-red nectar, they also made it common throughout their large empire, transforming it into a pan-European drink. But the Romans – and the Greeks – didn't drink wine the way we do as they would always mix it with water, probably because of its high alcohol content which was much higher than that of modern wines. It is likely, experts say, that their winemaking techniques were relatively rough and yielded a strong product when compared to the smooth silky taste of modern Italian wines. Water, in other words, was essential to enjoy your daily glass of red.

So essential in fact that during banquets and gatherings, there was a person, the magister bibendi or rex convivii, who would establish the right proportion between water and wine – it was usually 65%/35% ratio – and how many glasses could be consumed during the meal. But what perhaps is more striking about wine in Roman times is how ubiquitous it was. Everyone, from the Emperor all the way to the slave, drank it in a fashion that very much remained common in Italy and across all Mediterranean countries. Indeed, wine in the Belpaese is still today a drink for all, that transcends wealth and social class.

In order to cater to people of all economic and social extractions, there were different types of wines, some of better quality and pricier, others a tad more low key and cheaper, which were often mixed with honey and spices to make them more palatable. Back then, the best wine was Falerno, a red from the South; wine coming from Castelli Romani near Rome was also appreciated.

After the end of the Roman Empire, viticulture stopped being central for some centuries. The Barbarians weren't too interested in wine, preferring mead and bee, and winemaking became an activity limited to monasteries and convents. Even if these were years of little trade and consumption, vinification techniques were greatly improved by the monks.

With the Renaissance, wine came back in vogue and a period of thriving development and trade began. Italy returned to be the largest exporter of wine – a record it lost during the Middle Ages – also thanks to new commercial sea routes. Many winemaking houses were founded around the country. But it was a short-lived victory with the fall of the Medicis in Florence. Italy fell almost entirely under the dominion and the Spaniards and the Habsburg, who cared very little about winemaking.

While Italians kept on consuming wine largely throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, export was incredibly limited. Things didn't get better during the first half of the 20th century when two world wars destroyed many vineyards and tragically reduced the number of men working in them. It was only in the 1960s that things started picking up again, with a return to local cultivars and the introduction of technology to improve the winemaking process. Tuscany was the first region to adopt new methods, followed by Piemonte, Friuli and, then, the rest of the country. Today, Italy is the largest wine producer in the world, with 47.2 mhl, and the second exporter after France.

Wine and Italy, a bond steeped in history by Francesca Bezzone | November 27, 2021 | Source: ItaloAmericano.org | Submitted by Tony Cedolini

Top photo: A classical mosaic celebrating grapes and wine. The Greeks and the Phoenicians brought wine to Italy, but it was the Romans who made it a European thing (Photo: Sytilin Pavel/Shutterstock)



PERSONAL NOTES

*Auguroni Enzo,
papa, nonno, amico, nel
tuo 90mo. compleanno,
cent'anni anco in salute
ed armonia!*

- Rosita

*Pray the
Rosary faithfully.*
IT WORKS.



*Marie,
Hope the new knees
serve you well!
Get better soon.
All our love.*

-- Felix & Family

Thanks for being the
most incredibly
fantastic Secretary
our President could
have asked for.

-- Felix

For doing such a great job
in difficult times, thanks to
Stanley, Frank and Myrna.

-- Felix

Jan / Cathy / John:
Thanks for being the
glue holding the IAHF
newsletter together!

-- Felix



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We welcome everyone that shares the same appreciation of Italy, Italians, Italian-Americans, and their many contributions to our community.

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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. If you have not already done so, please click on this link: <https://form.jotform.com/70946201067150>

-- Article by Dave Perzinski / IAHF Membership Chair



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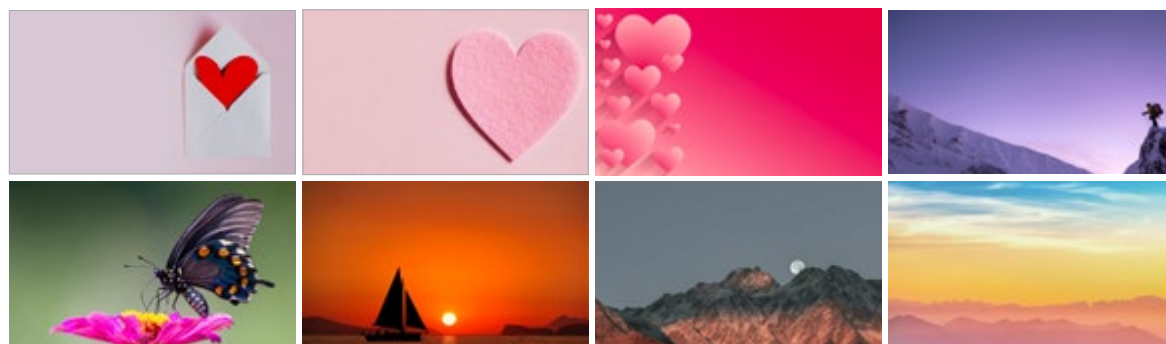
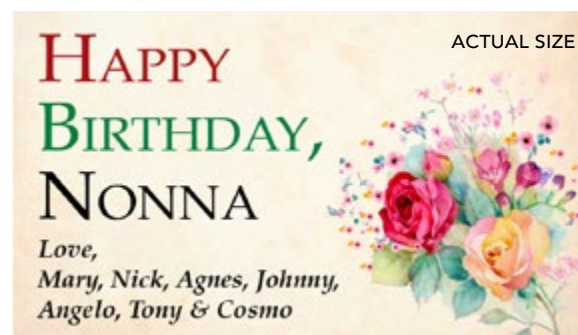
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EDUCATION

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 client's 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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