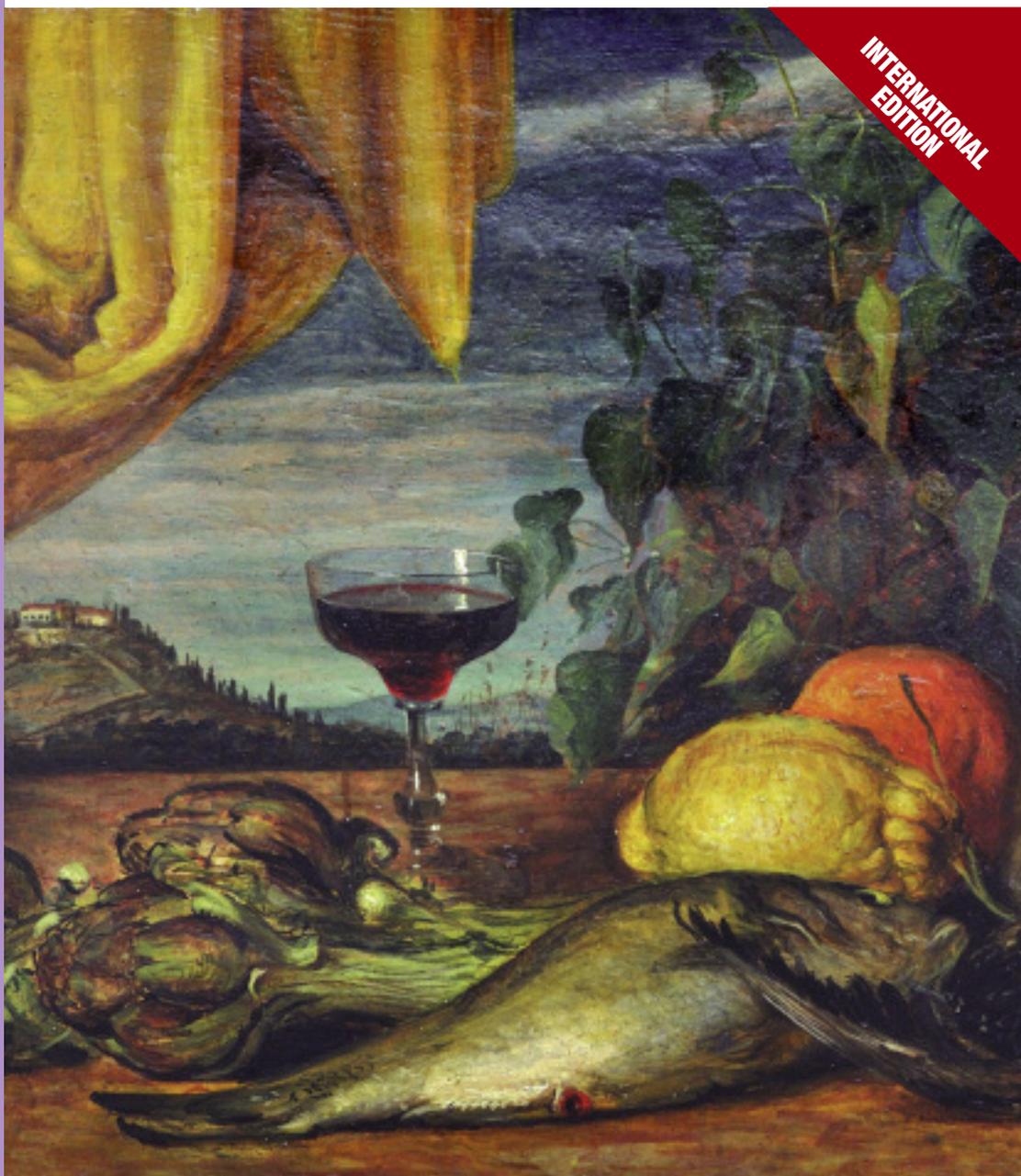


CIVILTÀ DELLA TAVOLA

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On the cover: detail from *The Glass of Wine* (1923) by Giorgio de Chirico, on display at the Matteucci Center for Modern Art in Viareggio from July 20 through November 3, 2013. The exhibition including this work is entitled *Before and After Roman Secession. Italian Painting from 1900-1935*. It represents a further stage in the Matteucci Center's investigation of the best Italian collections of the last century. The exhibition is built around a supporting nucleus of works from a refined collection of Italian art between the two world wars and includes works by, among others, Felice Casorati, Armando Spadini, Plinio Nomellini, Filippo de Pisis, Ardengo Soffici, Massimo Campigli, Ottone Rosai, Fausto Pirandello, and of course, Giorgio de Chirico.

The Academy that I Believe In

BY GIOVANNI BALLARINI
President of the Academy

*Academicians united
together to breathe new life
into our cuisine.*

Dear Academicians, I wish to thank the Delegates and all Academicians for their almost unanimous support for my continued leadership (along with the President's Council elected by the Consulta) of our Academy for the next two years.

The renewal of these responsibilities through free elections this year coincided with the 60th Anniversary of the Academy. Two generations have passed and a third one is beginning. We are living through an important transitional period, which should be seen and embraced by looking ahead with enthusiasm and joy rather than nostalgia for the past. And above all we should be united rather than divided. Leading our Academy in the construction of a new path towards the future will not be an easy task, and I will need everyone's collaboration in this renewal process, starting with the President's Council.

This is a mission that I took on as an Academician, and one that I have thought long and hard about and which requires a brief clarification.

Being an Academician is a fascinating and at the same time difficult job, because it means above all being true to the values of the Academy. Never before has it been so important to be true to the still current fundamental values set forth by our founding fathers. In the cuisine and gastronomy of Italian society's present period of rapid postmodern and post-Western transition, along with several pinpoints of light and some ephemeral sparks, there are also many shadows.

And it is in the dark times that Academies shine - they are cultural institutions based on knowledge and, in the case of our Academy on convivial friendship and are totally voluntary. Academies are not service

clubs or even cultural cooperatives, but instead are autonomous and independent institutions developed around knowledge and culture. In our Academy culture and the Civilization of the Table are joined through conviviality.

Culture and knowledge: Therefore free discussion and the sharing of ideas, and conviviality, as in coming together, are not mutually exclusive but instead can co-exist through tolerance of the ideas of others and within a framework of friendship - not always an easy balance - that must welcome the necessity of diverse opinions that underscores the academic cultural dialogue.

Becoming an academician is a job that never ends. It has been said that gaining access to gastronomy is like joining a religion, as opposed to a faith, which is circumscribed by its own sacredness and exists outside the profane. For this reason as well, becoming an Academician is like responding to a call or a vocation.

Being an Academician does not simply mean having responsibilities or attributes, or simply being mature, nor does it mean having rights, except that of contributing to the increase of knowledge and wisdom of that still mysterious and little known art that is gastronomy, and defending it from widespread ignorance that leads to its desecration and profanation. Academician is not a label that one can attain or a goal that one can strive for, and once assumed it cannot be set aside. Being an Academician means being on an endless journey, a constant quest for gastronomic knowledge that will never be finished. Being an Academician means participating in a journey of infinite research along a path that is not al-

ways easy. A journey along which is it useful, if not essential, to take on different jobs as do participants in a relay. Only in this way can we rediscover our ancient roots, chart new courses and journey down untraveled paths.

The passing of the baton does not mean denying the past, and it serves to counter the danger of habit, or saying "it has always been done this way". It helps to guard against all forms of behavior that are contrary to research, awareness, and Academic life. The traditions that our Academy espouses can remain alive only if we know how to improve them. It is an

endless journey, and those traditions that have not managed to adapt have disappeared or died out, and there is no way to resuscitate them.

Being an Academician calls for service. And it requires constantly fighting against ingrained customs or habits and at the same time making decisions that maintain Academic integrity, without special interests and divisions, and keeping in mind the social function of Academic research.

They say that today we are eating worse than ever before. That is not exactly true in that we are not at risk from eating dangerous foods, however our cuisine is not in good health

because it has lost its meaning; in other words, its soul. Neither physiological scientific, nutritional, or chemical solutions can cure the illness of our cuisine today, and help us recover the soul of our cuisine. This soul has not died, but has fled and hidden in society's subconscious and is just waiting to be brought back to life. The soul is freedom and love, and only a passionate, free, voluntary, ancient and yet always new academic study can bring the soul back to our cuisine. This is the Academy that I believe in and I invite all Academicians to do the same.

GIOVANNI BALLARINI

FOCUS DI PAOLO PETRONI

THE INCREDIBLE BUSINESS OF OUR SUPERSTAR CHEFS

In Italy today there are no fewer than 100,000 restaurants, *trattorias* and fast food establishments. In total, the various gastronomic guides (*Michelin*, *Gambero Rosso*, *Espresso* and the Academy's *Guide*) review approximately 5,000 eateries, excluding possible duplications. There are fewer than 2,000 restaurants that charge prices over 100 euros, while the top restaurants, blessed by publicity, number about fifty. Our 2008 research of 20 top restaurants revealed that they employ on average ten people in the kitchen and eight in the dining area, a total of 18 members of the total personnel. There are considerable costs involved in the restaurant business and that of personnel is the highest. This is the reason why many well known establishments operate by employing family members and the owners themselves. However, our chef-stars make a living with other means than their restaurants. An icon of our national gastronomy, Gualtiero Marchesi - whose restaurant *L'Albereta* in Erbusco is not even mentioned in the *Michelin* and *Gambero Rosso* guides - has just three temples in our guide and a less than admirable 15.5/20 rating in *l'Espresso*. However, its gross is 2.7 million euros with non-existent profit (source: *Il Mondo*). Carlo Cracco and Massimo Bottura operate at the same level. Great cuisine is very expensive and in the midst of the present economic crisis our super-chefs look for support from far sighted sponsors (Enrico Crippa of *Piazza Duomo* in Alba with the Cereto vineyards; Heinz Beck with Rome's *Cavaliere*; Sergio Mei with *Four Seasons*; the Alajmo Brothers of Padua with the *Palladio Finanziaria*;

Filippo La Mantia has recently left the Hotel Majestic of Rome and it does not look like he is opening another restaurant). What makes a difference is diversification. The take of a restaurant, that can be modest in many cases, must be supplemented by consulting work, television appearances, magazine covers, books, and exclusive dinners for very rich people - so why not advertising? (the instant soup Star comes to mind).

There are people, however, who own two, three, four and even ten restaurants. This is a different realm. What does not change is the fact that great chef is never present in the celebrated restaurant. The client who goes to that restaurant to meet the wizard chef is oftentimes disappointed. He just meets the sous chef, who may be a good chef in his own right. The reality is that some personages are better businessmen than chefs, although there are exceptions to be praised (Heinz Beck is always near what's cooking and personally tastes any dish that comes out of the kitchen). By contract, Giorgio Pinchiorri and Annie Felolde must be in attendance on a rotating basis with Giorgio's son in the restaurants that they operate in Florence and Japan. Aimo and Nadia are always present in Milan. At any rate, our chefs, no matter whether their budgets are in the black or in the red, are excellent ambassadors of our cuisine. Without exception, all of them work hard because they must reinvent themselves, find new ways to be talked about, and consequently create new dishes, new offers. Sometime they reap success, other times a little bitterness.

Casatella Cheese from Treviso

BY NAZZARENO ACQUISTUCCI
Treviso- Alta Marca Delegate

A typical rural homemade soft cheese.

Among the various products from Treviso that enrich our cuisine, casatella, a soft cheese made with whole cow's milk, deserves special merit. It represents the simplest and most genuine aspects of peasant culture.

Once upon a time it was produced in the home by farm women, and its origins go back to the 19th century. In order to satisfy the daily nutritional needs of their families peasant wives decided to use the milk of their cows to produce not only butter for cooking but also another product. Thus they figured out a way to make a fresh cheese that could be consumed immediately.

It had a rich flavor and was rich in protein, which helped fortify them for their hard work in the fields.

The agricultural crisis that took place toward the end of the 19th century resulted in lifestyle hardships.

It is said that when a family's milk production was insufficient to make cheese, the housewife would borrow milk from a neighboring family.

The loan was repaid in turn. It constituted a practical means of allowing everyone to produce the delicious cheese in sufficient quantities for every family.

Thus began the production of casatella, a soft fresh cheese that ripens rapidly and is immediately ready to be eaten, constituting a delicious and nutritious dish. It was prepared in a copper pot over the family hearth: the typical home made cheese of rural Treviso.

The name does not derive, as one might think, from the Latin root caseus, but actually from the word casa (house) - casara or casada in the local dialect. The term is used in the modern lexicon to refer only to those products made locally and that are by definition home made and genuine, such as "pan de casada", a bread made in those rare wood burning ovens, the "sopressa de casada", a delicious cheese in a casing, or even the "vin de casada". From the word "casada", it was a short jump to "casata", then "casatea" and finally "casatella".

The milk used for the production of Trevisan casatella must be produced on farms located within the territory of the province of Treviso, and must undergo caseation (the coagulation process) within the same

area. The breeds most often used are Friesian and red and brown cows, that must eat only feed produced in the region. Casatella ripens in 4 to 8 days and must be eaten within 15 days, refrigerated between 0 and 4° C (32-39° F). It has a high water content, a delicate milky scent and a sweet flavor with a slightly acidic note.

In 2008 casatella achieved DOP status. This means that this soft fresh cheese can only be obtained within the province of Treviso, where it is subject to rigorous oversight that in addition to the modern rapid pasteurization of whole cow's milk must respect the ancient production system that peasant women developed so many years ago.

Today casatella is produced only in those dairies where, even though those traditions are observed, a qualitative standard is maintained that once was not possible.

One may say that this cheese has always represented an irreplaceable food for the families of Treviso; one that enriched and continues to grace their tables with its flavor of milk fresh from the cow.

It is a very versatile product in the kitchen and has many applications: it can be used in the filling for fresh pasta, in seasoning risottos, in the preparation of antipasti, fresh herb tarts, various vegetables and even in desserts. It can be eaten as a meal in itself, accompanied by hot slices of grilled polenta.

It can be served as a second course together with other cheeses, served with acacia honey, spicy marmalades, or even sprinkled with crushed red pepper.

That Root with the Pungent Aroma

BY GIULIANO REIJA
Trieste Delegate

*Horseradish and
its local uses.*

Horseradish is a member of the Cruciferae family, and over time it has enjoyed many different names: cochearia armoracia, armoracia rusticana, rafano, barbaforte, radice forte, cren, pizzicalingua, and many others. These expressions meaning “strong root” or “tongue-biter” result from the root’s high concentration of sulphur-rich allylic essential oils, sharp aroma and decisively pungent and spicy flavor.

Trieste gastronomic writer Cesare Fonda explains that handling horseradish is not entirely painless: “If onions make you weep, horseradish will make you cry buckets.”

Setting aside the root’s health and medicinal properties that have been amply discussed in various treatises on ancient medicine and popular tradition - for example, Pliny the Elder’s *Naturalis Historia* from the Roman era, and the medieval writings of Hildegarde of Bingen - let us focus on some aspects of its use in the regional cuisine of Trieste.

In the anonymously written XIV century manuscript *Liber de Coquina* in the chapter entitled *De la composta* we find several recipes based on vegetables (carrots, turnips, leeks, fennel) and/or fruit (pears, apples, quince) “boiled with the addition of preserves made with plenty of vinegar”, various herbs, and “finely chopped horseradish”.

In the introductory chapter entitled “Memorandum on General Table Settings” of his gastronomic manuscript written in the mid-16th century entitled *Banquets and the Composition of Foods*, Cristoforo da Messisbugo mentions horseradish in a paragraph dedicated to “roots, radishes, ramps,

garlic, leeks and scallions”. However, apart from some typographical errors, it does not appear in the subsequent section devoted to recipes. The culinary use of horseradish has always been associated with German-speaking countries and central and eastern Europe as a condiment, either raw or cooked, for boiled or smoked meats, salami and sausage, and even in some fish dishes.

In Italy horseradish appears primarily in the cuisine of northern regions, especially Trentino-Alto Adige, the Veneto, and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

Toward the end of the 19th century, the Austrian traveler and student of the gastronomic customs of the Austro-Hungarian Empire Katharina Prato published *Die Suddeutsche Küche* (*The Southern German Kitchen*) which was translated into Italian by Ottilia Visconti Apartnik from Trieste in 1891.

The book became known as the “bible” of middle European cooking at the time, and contained many recipes based on horseradish, which, as we have noted, in those countries had old and well established roots.

Among the “cold sauces” we find the classic “horseradish with vinegar” and “horseradish with apples” in which “some peeled apples are grated and immediately mixed with vinegar, preferably made from raspberries so that it does not discolor, and then some sugar”; “horseradish with orange”, “with the juice of one lemon, two oranges, sugar, and wine”; “horseradish with eggs” in which “two hard boiled egg yolks are mashed and blended with vinegar, oil, salt and grated horseradish”.

Among the “warm sauces” there is

“strong horseradish sauce” in which “only some boiling broth is poured over grated horseradish in a serving bowl”; the variation “with a roll” in which some breadcrumbs are added along with a pinch of saffron; “horseradish with anchovies” and “horseradish with almonds” prepared with “goose fat, flour, milk mashed peeled almonds, sugar, and lemon peel.” For fish, the author recommends a sauce in which “a bread roll is cooked in fish stock, then in addition to the horseradish and saffron, some acidulous cow’s milk mozzarella is added.” As one can see, there are many variations, some long forgotten, some still used, and some still to be rediscovered.

Some of these recipes, which were immediately popular in Trieste, were recaptured, with some small variations and simplifications, by Maria Stelvio in her *Cuisine of Trieste*, published in 1927 as practical manual for “daughters about to be married”.

In his 1931 work *In Search of Good Taste in the Tradition of Venezia Giulia*, Francesco Babudri describes how he discovered a manuscript in the home of a family in Montona d’Istria dating back to 1806 containing a “list of provisions” drawn up for a pork curing festival. Regarding horseradish, it states: “as a second course slices of young pork with horseradish in our own vinegar.”

Vesna Gustin, a scholar of the habits and customs of Carso in Trieste, points out that horseradish,

along with other traditional Easter foods, symbolized the death and the passion of Christ and therefore was blessed in the church before being eaten.

She also offers a recipe for a simple and tasty local sauce made from grated horseradish, olive oil, salt, and tart Terrano wine, an autochthonous varietal of Refosco.

Today horseradish is primarily eaten in Trieste in its natural state, grated raw, highlighting its strong and pungent aroma, over warm prosciutto or pork boiled in the cauldrons of the city’s many typical “buffets”. A very successful marriage, with spicy accents - solid and destined to stand the test of time.

GIULIANO REIJA

INTERNET, BLOGS, FACEBOOK AND THE ACCADEMIA WEBSITE

Recently some Delegations have expressed an interest in opening their own websites. In order to avoid content conflicts with the Accademia's official website, the Office of the President has expressly stated that this is not possible. The Office of the President would like to stipulate that online conversations among Academicians and/or Delegations in blogs and on platforms such as Facebook are permitted. However, in these cases the use of Accademia logo is not allowed, and content should not discuss or involve the Academy's organizational activities.



The Enchantment of Woodsmoke

BY ROBERTO DOTTARELLI
Academician, Rome-Castelli Delegation

*The aroma of roasting meat
has always tempted both
men and gods.*

There are several pages in Marcel Detienne's book *Apollo Knife in Hand* (Adelphi, 2002) devoted to the personality of the gods and their love for roasted meat and the aromas that emanate from a sacrifice.

According to epigrapher Louis Robert, Apollo Lakeut is a god that presides over the celebration of meats roasting and sizzling over the fire. A gluttonous god, he is associated with Cyprus, where we also stumble across him in the story of Pygmalion's priest, which brings to light the mythic origins surrounding the consumption of roasted meat.

Asclepiad's version of the myth recounts how "One day, while the sacrificial lamb burned in the midst of the flames, a piece of meat fell from the altar. The priest picked it up while it was still aflame, and without thinking, he put his finger to his mouth to soothe the burn. The flavor of the roasted fat (knís) stimulated his desire."

It is interesting to note that in this Greek myth man's passion for roasted meat initially derived from a tactile sensation, immediately followed by a gustatory emotion.

In truth, anyone who loves roasted meat will agree that the desire for it arises from a total stimulation of all five senses: our sight takes in the metamorphosis of the meat as it exudes grease and juices; our ears perceive the crackling of the wood and the sizzling of the meat; our noses pick up the smoky cooking aromas; our fingers are oiled by the grease and scorched by the cooked meat;

and finally our palates bring all the preceding sensations together and add that of the tenderness of a shred of roasted meat.

According to Asclepiad then, human beings became carnivores because of the fragrant fat on the fingers of a priest that led him, then his companion, to clean them in his mouth. Immediately afterward another priest imitated the first and thus, writes Detienne, a new nutritional regime born of sensuality was aroused from the smoke and flavor of the roasted meat. And that aroma that rose to the sky was borne by the wind to the abode of the gods on Mt. Olympus. While always faithful to their ambrosia and nectar, they "sniffed with pleasure the aroma that emanated from the altars below and voluptuously breathed in the scents that rose in the air". The comic poets poked fun at them, joking that Zeus invented the chimney to encourage the vertical ascension of the smell of roasting meat.

It is interesting that in mythology, a carnivorous diet and all that is associated with it is not seen as repugnant. The tradition that led to the Buphonia festivals of ancient Athens explains the passage from vegetable to animal offerings to the gods. This tradition tells that an ox, having returned from a day of work, ate one part of the vegetable offerings left for the gods and trampled on the rest. The angry farmer killed the ox, but fled after realizing the impiety of his act. In response, nature reduced the amount of food available to the Athenians.

The Athenian populace turned to Apollo through the priestess Pythia, who prophesized that the farmer must return, bring the beast back to life and sacrifice it without hesitation. As none of the participants wanted to bear responsibility for killing the ox, the process ended with placing all the blame upon the knife which, having remained silent, was condemned to exile. This facilitated the elimination of the connection between those who slit the ox's throat and those who feasted upon the meat. Throwing the knife into the sea "saved" the souls of the meat eaters.

But if mythological thought approved of eating meat, the philosophical world openly condemned succumbing to the carnal pleasure of grilled meat. For example, Aristotle's 4th century B.C. *Etica Nichomachea* distinguished between those who enjoyed the delicate scent of fruit,

roses and incense and those who preferred salves for their bodies and the odors that emanated from the kitchen. Aristotle characterized the former as balanced and sober because their pleasure had an intangible, incorporeal nature. The latter found pleasure in tactile things, which led the philosophers to consider them intemperate, more animal than human. Later, in the 3rd century B.C. Porphyrius described the apparent affinity among impure things such as knis and malevolent spirits. Lords of mendacity, demons loved the odor of roasting meat, and fed - or "inflated themselves" - on it. Thus anyone who enjoyed the aroma of sacrificial meat was the equivalent of a demon.

The opposition of that era's "opinion leaders" apparently did not discourage man's "passion" for meat, but it probably led to the replacement of priests for the cruelest as-

pect of the sacrifice by butchers (*macellaio* in Italian; *màgeiros* in Greek) who in addition to being more adept at throat cutting and butchery also knew how to cook the meat.

In time it would be the *màgeiros* who were called upon to divide the meat during the sacrifice and once the hunger of the gods and the participants was slaked, saw to the sale of the leftover meat.

Initially that sale took place in the sanctuary of Apollo, as we know from several inscriptions prohibiting the sale of raw meat or the heads and haunches of the sacrificed animals. Later the sale of raw meat moved to the shops and markets, leading to the creation of a new profession that even today suffers from some prejudice, but that allows candid or pure souls to keep their hands clean.

ROBERTO DOTTARELLI

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MAGAZINE

Contributions to the magazine by Academicians are not only welcome, they are indispensable. However Academicians need to keep in mind some essential guidelines, so that their effort and passion are rewarded by rapid and thorough publication.

■ **Articles:** *It is essential that articles be sent electronically, in Word format (not pdf) to the following email address: redazione@accademia1953.it*

■ **Article Length:** *To avoid cuts that are irritating for both the writer and editor, articles should be between 4,000 and 6,000 characters (including spaces). Your computer provides character counts.*

■ **"From the Delegations" Column:** *For ease of reading, maximum length is limited to 2,500 characters including spaces.*

■ **Convivial Dinner forms:** *it is equally important*

that the "notes and comments" section of the rating sheets respect the 800 character limit (Maximum 1,000 characters) include spaces, in order to avoid cuts and errors. Rating sheets that arrive at Headquarters more than 30 days after the event will be discarded.

■ **Please do not send reports on convivial dinners held outside the territory of your Delegation, or on those held in the homes of Academicians or places other than restaurants and public settings, as they will not be published.**

■ **By observing these simple guidelines Academicians can be reasonably assured of rapid and accurate publication, thereby avoiding painful cuts.**

■ **Obviously, the Editors reserve the right to edit all articles and publish them according to available space.**

The Cuisine of the Popes

BY BARBARA D'EGIDIO
Academician, Rome-Appia Delegation

*Gluttonous or temperate,
their tables have always
reflected the traditions
of the era.*

We have often heard the words announcing the name of a new pope, and there is so much history behind the 265 successors to Peter. We know about many of them, about the power - not always spiritual - they wielded over the course of the centuries. But what did (and do) popes eat? There are many curiosities and legends that link the gastronomic and religious worlds. So let us investigate the dining preferences of some the great popes of the past, as well as some recent ones, to see if the expression "to eat like a pope" is still valid.

We must begin with the frugality of Peter's, the first Pope, meals, even though he apparently had a passion for lamb and rabbit. We then move on to Gregory I, known as "The Great" owing to his considerable charisma. Pope from 590 to 604, he contributed to the codification of the seven deadly sins, and was the creator of the Gregorian Chant. A testament to his moderation and simplicity appears on an inscription on the door of the church of Saint Saba: "From this house his pious mother (Santa Silvia) would daily bring a bowl of legumes to Clivo de Scauro, the monastery where her son Gregory lived." In fact, among Gregory the Great's favorite dishes we find a legume soup based on an ancient recipe, that included chick peas, green peas, beans, spelt and barley, made with diced lard, as well as a chick pea soup with saffron and rosemary. Then we have cherries with pecorino cheese and a cherry cake made with cinnamon and breadcrumbs. This pope had a special relationship with cherries: he is also associated with the April 25 feast

of Saint Mark, upon which it is good luck for popes to eat cherries. Innocent III, who was pope from 1198 to 1216, was also a great lover of soup, especially when made with black leaf kale. He also ate farricello, a soup made with spelt and pork rinds. His table was often graced with roast pheasant stuffed with pancetta bacon.

Glutton par excellence was Pope Martin IV, who reigned from just 1281 to 1285. He was mentioned by Dante in the 29th canto of his Purgatory for his inordinate passion for the eels of Lake Bolsena, doused with Vernaccia wine and then roasted. According to some historians he died of indigestion after eating this fish, and the legend states that the pontifical pharmacist who prepared Pope Martin's body washed it in Vernaccia infused with secret herbs.

From 1294 to 1303 it was Benedict Caetani, or Pope Boniface VIII who wielded almost monarchic pontifical power. The spoons and forks that graced his table were made of gold, he lived in terror of being poisoned, and his register of pontifical expenses demonstrated that he ate meat four times a week and fish on fast days, always seasoned with large quantities of spices. Timballo alla Bonifacio VIII, prepared with maccheroni, tiny meatballs, chicken giblets, fried sweetbreads and covered with shaved truffles became a famous dish. A great lover of young lamb, he preferred to eat it roasted with potatoes or cut up and cooked with white wine, rosemary, bay leaves, oregano and thyme.

Clement VI, pope from 1342 to 1352, was a great lover of opulence in all things, including food and wine - especially the famous Châteauneuf

du Pape. His banquets included at least 30 dishes, and were enriched by soups and cheeses. They were also memorable for spit-roasted hare with chunks of lard and the 50,000 cakes prepared for his coronation were likewise unforgettable.

Oddone Colonna took the name Martin V and was pope from 1417-1431. A German cleric by the name of Giovanni Bockenheym who was part of the pontifical curia described the tables of the time. An interesting detail of his account enumerates the recipes for the various categories of dignitaries that made up the curia. Princes of the Church and dignitaries ate almond and spice soup made with chicken broth and boiled beans covered with a dense broth of almond milk, sugar, ginger and almond blossoms. For “the noble villains” there was boiled pork served with raw eggs, saffron, onion and vinegar and a tart of noble cuts of meat made with veal, eggs, almonds and pine nuts. Courtiers were served a tart made with aromatic herbs such as rue, marjoram and sage blended with fresh soft cheese, sugar, raisins, saffron and ginger and covered with more sugar and pine nuts.

Pietro Barbo - Paul II - was pope from 1464-1471 and was also a great lover of luxury, art, and relaxation; he presided over the construction of St. Mark's in Venice. An outstanding gourmand, his banquets were gargantuan and included a rice soup made with capon and tortellini made with chicken livers, mushrooms and shredded boiled chicken.

Pope Leo X, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, served as pope from 1513 to 1521 and had a lifestyle that was more laical than apostolic. He was a great hunter and loved to stay at his villa at Magliana sul Tevere because of the abundance of wild game there. He was a gastronome who was remembered for his banquets rich in tantalizing delicacies prepared by the famous chef Domenico Romoli, known as “il Panunto”. Among the more memorable dishes were a meat

pastry, haunch of roebuck made with lard, cinnamon, nutmeg, rose water, sugar and vinegar, quails with broccoli and bacon and an apple tart made with stale bread. Il Panunto also describes the aphrodisiacal qualities of the foods, including herbs and essences that the Pontiff was said to take advantage of in his private life.

From 1534 to 1549 Alessandro Farnese was Pope Paul III. Another gourmet, his table was famous for his risotto with wild duck made with red wine, dried mushrooms, cloves and a bit of truffle. Moreover he was connoisseur of good drink. He was the first pope to have a personal wine steward, Sante Lancerio, who made notes of the Pope's favorite wines in his diary. He preferred the reds of Montepulciano and the Greco from San Gimignano; he also drank the wines of the Roman hills, and declared those of Albano and Castigandolfo to be “small but perfect”. His passion for wine was offset by his mistrust of water, and when he traveled he often brought along water from the Tiber – the only water he would drink.

The conclave following the death of Paul III went on for 71 days and according to some spiteful gossips, its duration was attributable to all the delicacies prepared by Bartolomeo Scappi, known as the “Michelangelo of Cooks”. At the time the nutritional regime of the cardinals in conclave was very rigorous: if a successor was not chosen within 3 days, meals diminished to one a day, and from there to just bread and water. This rule was promulgated by Gregory X (1271-1276) to prevent what took place during his election from happening again: a 33 month long (1,006-day) conclave. But in 1549 there was a shameless violation of the rules. A typical meal required four serving tables, two for cold and two for hot, each bearing 8-10 dishes. The cold service was comprised of sweet Roman biscuits, salted beef tongue cooked in wine and served with capers, raisins, and sprinkled

with sugar, and a pastry of roebuck covered with sugar, pepper, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and fennel blossoms. The hot dishes were almost always meat based: duck with prunes and dried cherries, thrush roasted with sausage and oranges, starlings stewed with brains, kale served with grated cheese, and pullet hen stuffed with lemon, sugar, and rose water. There were also many sauces including a pickle made of grape must, candied orange peel, quince and wild apples cooked in wine and sugar.

Pius V was pope from 1566 to 1572. A Dominican, he was sober and temperate and slept and ate little, consuming primarily fish and dairy products according to the rules of his order. After Mass it was his habit to dine on pancotto, a simple bread soup made with chicken broth, sugar and cinnamon accompanied by eggs and half a glass of wine. He often ate chicory cooked in broth with some prosciutto cooked in suet and sprinkled with grated cacio cheese. It was most likely for this pope that Bartolomeo Scappi created his brodo apostolorum or “pope's soup” made with aromatic herbs and parsley. Pius V's only sin of gluttony was his passion for she-ass milk, considered to be a cure for “mal di pietra”, or kidney stones, which ultimately caused his demise.

Sixtus V, pope from 1585-1590 was famous for his habit of going out among the common people dressed as a beggar. One day as he was walking around Rome, he entered the convent of the Holy Apostles where he ate a bowl of lard soup. It must have been excellent, because the following day he had a fountain built at the convent to show his gratitude. This pope was fascinated by dietetics and he followed the advice of his chief physician Castor Durante da Gualdo who counseled him to eat tellin mollusks and calamari with herbs.

The banquets of Urban VIII (1623-1644) were unforgettable. Here are

just some of the dishes normally served: antipasto with salami, figs, melon, strained ricotta cheese, rice and spelt soup followed by hot meat pies, capon or milk fed veal coated with candied lemon or pears in syrup; dessert, fruit and cheese. Dinner, which was lighter, was comprised of cooked or fresh salads followed by veal chops, veal cooked with cheese and butter, roast or stewed chicken, and pigeon.

We attribute the dish fettuccine alla papalina (Papal fettuccine) to Pius XII, pontiff from 1939-1958. It is a lighter version of carbonara, with a milder flavor, prepared with prosciutto and Parmesan cheese. Of peasant origins, Pope John XXIII had simpler tastes. He adored his mother's cassoeula made with cabbage and cornmeal - almost a sort of polenta.

John Paul II also had simple tastes. He ate Polish foods, usually small pasta in broth, veal scallops, vegetables and fruit compote. He liked white wine and tea. He was particularly fond of Kremowka, a cake made with puff pastry and cream fortified with a drop of brandy.

The Pope Emeritus, Ratzinger, was the son of a cook and lover of simple dishes. Abstemious, he drank only water and orange juice, with the only exception being the alcohol used for seasoning desserts poured on a muffin. The Pope nicknamed this dessert "drunken virgins".

At lunch, he enjoyed first courses based on fish, meat, and chicken, and with the exception of Fridays, veal scaloppine with mushrooms

and fresh buffalo mozzarella; in the evening, he usually had soup. One of his favorite dishes was spaghetti alla carbonara, which he often ate at Passetto in the Borgo, a restaurant close to his former Roman residence. In addition to Roman cuisine it is said that he also enjoyed Neapolitan food: at Easter there were always pastries on the table.

Sergio Dussin from Bassano del Grappa was one of Benedict XVI's favorite chefs, and was entrusted with creating the menu for the Pontiff's 85th birthday. It included zucchini flan with saffron cream, risotto with white asparagus, medallions of boned guinea fowl stuffed with butter and spinach, and Sacher Torte.

Keeping with the tradition of his native Germany, there were also canederli dumplings, lebkuchen (traditional spiced Bavarian cookies), and kaiserschmaren, a type of thinly sliced crepe.

The current pope, Bergoglio, has the simplest tastes of all. He enjoys chicken, fruit, vegetables and espresso. He also likes bagna càuda, drinks typical Argentinian mate, and from time to time enjoys a glass of Grignolino - which he used to have sent to him in Argentina to maintain his ties with his Piedmontese origin.

Whether gluttonous or temperate, it is clear that the saying "to eat like a pope" was valid for all eras.

BARBARA D'EGIDIO

2013 ECUMENICAL DINNER



The 2012 ecumenical dinner based on the cuisine of herbs and spices once again brought Academicians in Italy and around the world together at the virtual table. Next year the convivial ecumenical dinner will take place October 17 at 8:30 pm, and its theme will be The Cuisine of Unforgettable Meat. The theme, chosen by the Franco Marenghi Research Center and approved by the President's Council, includes the cuisine of the "fifth quarter", but also other meats and animal products that have always had a place in popular cuisine but that are seldom used today because we are no longer subject to a "cuisine of poverty". The objective for 2013 therefore will be to rediscover traditional dishes that use offal - giblets, organ meats and tripe - that can still have a place in frugal modern Italian cuisine. Delegates will be charged with ensuring that the ecumenical dinner is accompanied by an appropriate cultural presentation that discusses the proposed theme and that the dishes chosen reflect the foods that have been selected by the Council.