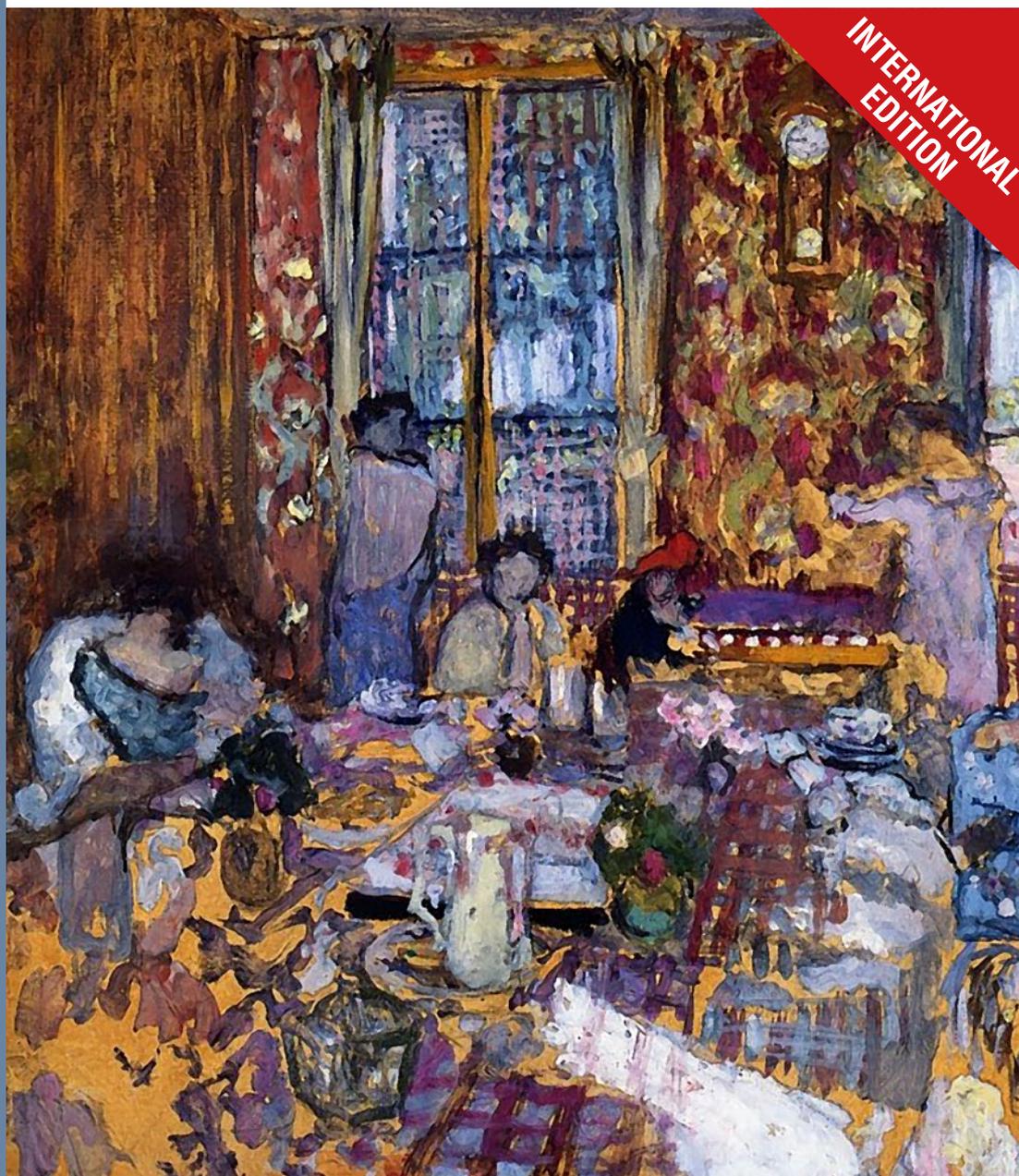


CIVILTÀ DELLA TAVOLA

ACCADEMIA ITALIANA DELLA CUCINA



INTERNATIONAL
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CON MASSIMO ALBERINI E VINCENZO BUONASSISI.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



FOCUS

- 2 On the eve of the
Delegates' Assembly
(Paolo Petroni)

CULTURE & RESEARCH

- 3 Have you ever eaten hemp?
(Giuseppe Trompetto)

- 4 "Cooking is a science:
it's up to the cook
to make it an art"
(Angelo Tamburini)

- 6 Water footprint
(Gianni Porzi)

- 8 Investigating the origin
of trifle
(Rosella Middleton)



*On the cover: Detail of Breakfast at Villerville
(1910) by Edouard Vuillard. Private collection.*

On the eve of the Delegates' Assembly

A strong, revitalised Academy fit for the challenges of the 'new gastronomy'.

BY PAOLO PETRONI

President of the Academy

For an association like our Academy, a new session of the Regular Delegates' Assembly, which convenes every three years, always has great relevance, and not only to our statute. It is a chance for Delegates from all over the world to meet and exchange experiences, opinions and cultural interests.

All the new Legates, Counsellors and Regional Coordinators have also been invited to the social and convivial portions of the event. This occasion is equal to the Forum insofar as it offers everyone a clear overview of the Academy's state of the art. In a time of hardship for many service and cultural associations, our Academy has enjoyed extraordinary and remarkable development in the past three years: 1,687 new Academicians (including 421 abroad) joined our ranks in this period, thereby lowering our average age (now around 65 years) and increasing our female membership. These three years have seen the birth of nine new Delegations: those abroad are Paris Montparnasse, Brisbane and Jordan, and the Sofia Delegation is about to be inaugurated. In Italy the new arrivals are Agrigento, Vasto, Sassari Silki, Matera, Brescia-Terre dei Fontanili, Rovereto, Caserta, Locride-Terra dei Gelsomini and Assisi. The amendment to the Academy's bylaws approved by the Council in Florence in 2015 introduced the new institution of the foreign Legation, of which 13 followed: Cambrid-

ge, Perth, Glasgow, Tokyo, Jakarta, Moscow, Stuttgart, Pittsburgh, Tunis, Helsinki, Zurich, Copenhagen and most recently Mumbai in India. All these new Delegations and Legations arose thanks to the dedication of our Delegates and Academicians, who channelled their expertise into disseminating of the Academy's values and ideals. Another sign of vitality is the frequency of leadership turnover both among Delegates (51 in Italy and 18 abroad) and their Councils. All this not only confirms the validity of the Academy's guiding principles but also stimulates everyone to work harder and better. The central and regional governing bodies must always be sustained by individual Academicians who must not feel that they are of secondary importance, being instead a fundamental part of our social life with their suggestions and even their critiques. To dine only among friends may be pleasant, but it doesn't mean being an Academician. We do not aim to proselytise, to draw multitudes to our Delegations; we prioritise the quality of our membership, and based on the profiles we receive, we are certain that we have chosen the right path. In Verona, seat of the Assembly, over 200 participants will attend: to all of them, and to those Delegates who, for professional or family reasons, will have to be absent, we send our most heartfelt thanks for their fruitful work for the Academy during these fleeting, intense years.





Have you ever eaten hemp?

Beginning in 2009, the Ministry of Health has acknowledged the edible use of hemp seeds and derivatives containing antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids.

BY GIUSEPPE TROMPETTO

Ivrea Academician

Hemp has traditionally been widely cultivated as a fibre for cloth, and its seeds used as bird feed. This refers, of course, to *Cannabis sativa*, not to be confused with *Cannabis indica* (Indian hemp), known for its pharmaceutical properties, which is just as easily cultivated such that current law demands that hemp subtype must be disclosed for every field of hemp cultivated. It was traditionally grown in a variety of environments, both on flat and mountainous lands, being able to survive until an altitude of 1400 metres. Popular belief holds that the Canavese area is named after hemp - *canapa* - as borne out by the fact that a wrought-iron weathervane shaped like a hemp seedling has adorned the municipal tower of that area's most important city, Ivrea, since 1758. Philologists, however, maintain that the region's traditional designation of *Canapicium* bears no relation to hemp. So common was its cultivation that most families kept fields of it, and until not long ago, in that area's villages one could still find the vats used for fermenting hemp to extract its precious fibre.

Notably, hemp can be grown without chemical fertilisers and there are no genetically modified versions thereof. Hemp fibre is exceptionally resilient, durable, and insulating, and was used for making clothes, sheets, military tents, shoes, sails, ropes and plumbing insulation. Even the first blue jeans (blue cloth trousers from Genoa), which American cowboys inherited from Genoese



camalli (dockers), were hempen. Hemp's primacy lasted until the 1950s or so, when it was replaced by other fibres. The Arabs and the Chinese traditionally cured skin inflammations with hemp oil, considering its seeds to be tonic, restorative, diuretic and effective in ridding humans and animals of worms. In a novelty-seeking time like our own, hemp has entered the food world, especially its seeds, which taste pleasantly similar to hazelnut and can be ground into flour or pressed for oil extraction. Hemp oil is nutritionally ideal: the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends an optimal 3:1 ratio of omega-3 to omega-6 consumption - precisely that of hemp oil. It is also rich in phytosterols, which hinder cholesterol absorption and

reduce total non-HDL cholesterol levels in blood. It is unsuitable for frying, but can be used raw for dressing salads, fish, pasta or meat carpaccio. It can also be mixed (at 20%) with extra-virgin olive oil to add a touch of flavour when used raw. Whole hemp seeds, like other seeds, can be used in bread, breadsticks, pizza and various biscuits. Hemp milk is obtained by filtering a mixture of 100 grammes of ground hemp per litre of water. Seeds roasted whole and then ground can be used in *amaretti* almond biscuits, crackers and more. The peeled seeds add flavour to pasta, soups, salads, cheeses, yoghurt, stewed fruit or ice cream; they can be ground into a spread, which can be made into an excellent pesto by adding garlic and a few hemp leaves. Mixed with cocoa, they can also be made into chocolate bars. Hemp flour also has a pleasing nutty flavour and gives dough a golden brown hue. It can replace other flours to constitute 7 to 20 %, according to preference, of doughs for any baked goods (bread, breadsticks, pizza, rusks, doughnuts, biscuits and so on), and acquits itself well in crêpe batter, béchamel sauce, home-made pasta, gnocchi, short-crust pastry and many other preparations. When using hemp in biscuits and cakes, one must halve the amount of butter because of the oil contained in hemp flour. Up to a third of the flour in *amaretti* and other biscuits can be hemp, which can also lend additional flavour to sauces, gravies and other condiments.



“Cooking is a science: it’s up to the cook to make it an art”

This maxim concisely embodies Gualtiero Marchesi’s philosophy, expressed in his most famous dishes.

BY ANGELO TAMBURINI
Syracuse Delegate

2018, declared the “Year of Italian food”, has been dedicated to Gualtiero Marchesi: the very same who gave lessons on sublimating flavours obtained by removing the unessential, and facilitated the dissemination of knowledge between professionals in his superb academy named Alma, opened in 2004. In that school, Gualtiero would repeat: “Cooking is not an end but a means; it is one of the languages for talking to oneself and to the world, and to fulfil that function we must ascend from the indispensable condition of executors to the more profound, less definable condition of composers”.

Gold and saffron rice

One of his best-known statements is: “Cooking is, in itself, a science. It is up to the cook to make it into an art”. This maxim simply and concisely embodies Marchesi’s thought, philosophy and love of his work. Let us examine some of his best-loved and best-known recipes, contained in his last published work.

The open raviolo. A raviolo, by its very nature, conceals its contents and only reveals its harmonious blend of flavours within the mouth. In 1982 Marchesi disassembled and revisited this mainstay of Italian cuisine, simply layering veils of pasta, without sealing them, over the filling: a sort of culinary tran-





Open raviolo

slucency daring to re-examine a classic.

Gold leaf on risotto. Risotto is a favourite of Italian cuisine, while being perhaps the most difficult to execute flawlessly. Yellow saffron risotto, for instance, is emblematic of simplicity bordering on perfection. Well aware of this, Gualtiero Marchesi chose to draw even closer to the ideal concept by adding his famous gold leaf. However, it is not merely the detail of the precious gold which emphasises class and attention to the ‘healthy and delicious’ ideal which Marchesi pursued with increasing frequency. He declared a particular affinity to this dish because it is quintessentially Milanese and so was he; but more importantly, he adored its light creaminess, produced by the interaction of the stock with the starch naturally released by the rice, alongside the dusting of cheese. The pure gold leaf, applied as a seal over the dish, represents only the final endorsement of a delicious, elegant and healthy, hence perfect, recipe.

Cold spaghetti. Marchesi habitually and vociferously professed his love of



cold pasta, discovered almost by chance in the United States (this also showcases how open-minded he was about cooking, eschewing cultural or geographical barriers). He maintained, in fact, that we inhabit the land of the excessively cooked, always claiming the alibi that food must be ‘well done’, which however does not necessarily mean ‘done well’, properly prepared with respect for its ingredients. Marchesi liked extolling products understood as primary ingredients. Not by chance was

‘spaghetti with caviare and chives’ the Master’s favourite among his most famous dishes. In its simplicity, cold pasta indeed possesses class, flavour harmony and nutritional balance.

Cooking with clarified butter. A traditional Italian recipe over which much scholarly ink has been spilled is Milanese cutlet (*costoletta alla milanese*). Connoisseurs debate its thickness (high as the bone or flat “as an elephant’s ear”), but especially whether it should be fried in oil or butter.

A Milanese proverb clearly declares that Lombardy is rich in cattle and milk but has not a single olive tree. The cutlet, therefore, must surely be fried in abundant butter. However, the butter chosen by Marchesi is clarified butter, from which the water and milk proteins have been removed, leaving almost pure fat. From the nutritional and culinary standpoint, its advantage is its increased smoke point of 250 °C, making it perfect for frying, while unclarified butter burns around 130 °C: too low to fry safely and well.

ANGELO TAMBURINI

ECUMENICAL DINNER 2018

Our group dinner, uniting all Academicians worldwide around one virtual table, will take place on 18 October at 8:30 PM; its theme is “Sweet and savoury cakes in traditional regional cuisine”.



The topic, chosen by the “Franco Marengi” Study Centre and approved by the President’s Council, honours regional baked specialities, whether stuffed or dry, abundant in Italian home cooking and also amenable to interesting innovations. The Delegates will arrange a suitable cultural presentation to illustrate this important theme, and a menu befitting the same.



Water footprint

This indicator allows evaluation of water needs for producing various consumable goods including food and drinks.

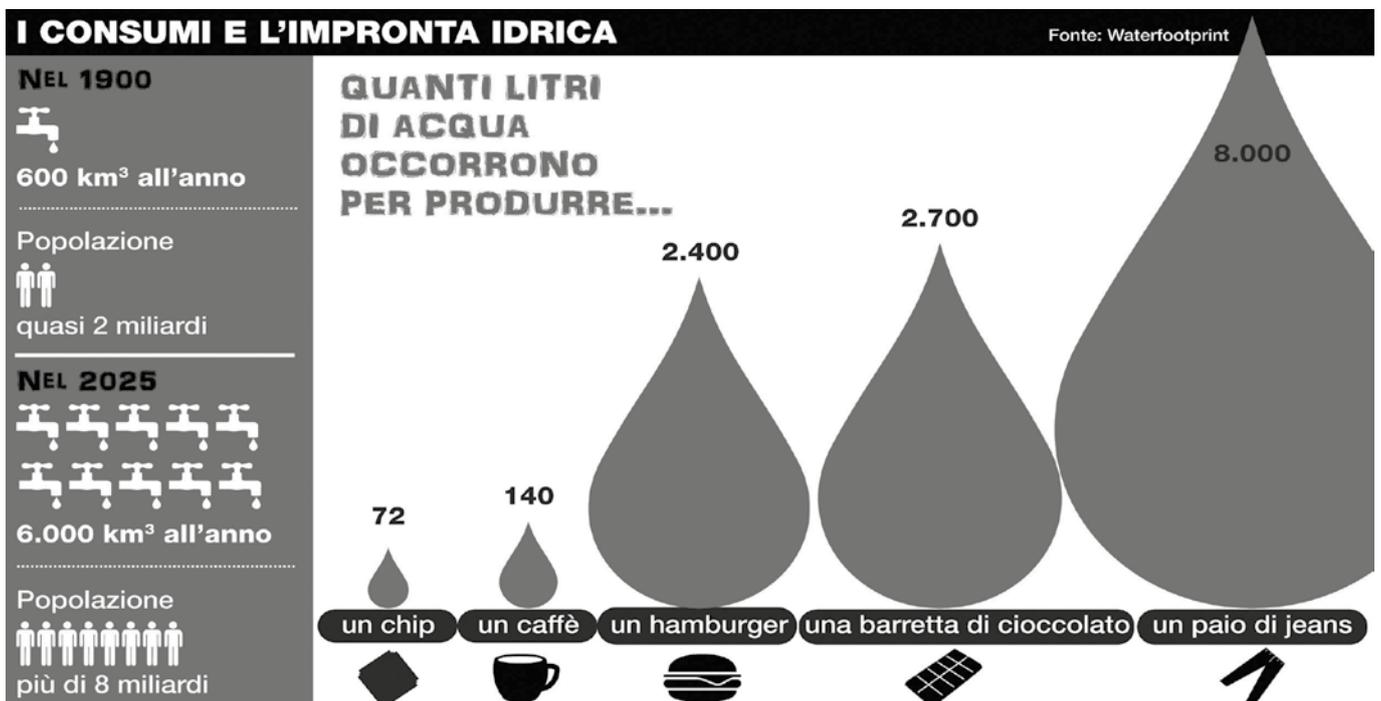
BY GIANNI PORZI

Bologna-San Luca Academician

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, there has been a constant increase in population and industrial and agricultural production, as well as demand for goods and services; the need for fresh water has consequently grown, as demonstrated by the fact that in the last hundred years, water consumption has increased more than twice as fast as population. Sadly, the supply of this basic resource can scarcely meet this ever-growing demand, because of shrinking snowfields and glaciers and increasingly polluted aquifers. Food choices can significantly affect the balance between water demand and availability. Beyond that, however, 'water footprint', which reveals 'hidden' water use, can indicate water amounts em-

ployed in obtaining any given product, whether food-related or industrial. Water footprint, elaborated a decade ago by Professor Arjen Hoekstra, is both interesting and useful because it quantifies the total water used in obtaining any product or service consumed by humans. This 'virtual water' which we unknowingly use, invisible to the end consumer, is required for producing the goods we purchase. This useful measurement allows assessment of total water use during production and facilitates identification of particularly 'water-hungry' goods, including food and drink. We must differentiate production footprint (water used within a country for producing goods and services, including those exported) and consumption fo-

otprint (water used in producing goods and services consumed nationally, whether produced nationally or imported from abroad). Importantly, some countries have effectively externalised part of their water demand by importing goods with a high water footprint. Another useful parameter is internal national water footprint, meaning the total amount of water necessary to produce the goods and services used by a nation's inhabitants. There is also an external water footprint indicating the water volume inherent in imported goods. A country's total water footprint is the sum of these two. According to the WWF, Italy's per capita water consumption is approximately 380 litres for domestic use and





3,350 litres for food and garment production, rising to 6,300 litres if we include water consumption inherent in imports.

With a water footprint 25% above average, Italy is the worst performer in Europe, though still 'bested' by the United States. Italy imports 62 billion cubic metres of 'virtual water' per year, second only to Japan and Mexico.

Water footprint consists of three components:

- **green water:** rainwater absorbed by the soil, which evaporates and is incorporated into plants and thence into agricultural products and forests;
- **blue water:** surface or subterranean water used for agricultural, industrial or domestic purposes which can evaporate or be incorporated into a product and does not return whence it came;
- **grey water:** water necessary for di-

luting industrial pollution to meet quality standards.

WWF data show that Italy's water use is 75% green, 8% blue and 17% grey. Agriculture uses the most water, due to irrigation of crops (ultimately used by humans or animals) - but, importantly, this is mostly rainwater, 'green' water. Next is industry with 8%; domestic use accounts for only 7%.

Water footprint varies widely between products: for example, 1 kilogramme of chocolate requires 24 litres of water, while 1 kg of refined sugar needs 1,500; a hamburger, 2,400; a pair of jeans, 8,000; and a smart phone, 13,000.

In conclusion, though water footprint data are in essence approximations obtained by calculations based on statistics, they provide quantification which allows comparison between agricultural or industrial products. These

estimates can be useful to consumers to evaluate the water use inherent in everyday products and consequently modify their behaviour to limit water consumption beyond merely using less running water at home. Importantly, the three types of 'virtual water' have differing effects on the water cycle: use of green water is less ecologically disruptive than use of blue water.

Water is an essential primary resource, a basic necessity which alas is slowly dwindling and could eventually fail to meet rising human demand. We should therefore use it thoughtfully, considering inter alia expected population growth and increasing demand for goods and services in developing countries, lest we find ourselves, in the coming decades, bereft of the water necessary for our survival.

GIANNI PORZI

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MAGAZINE

Academics' contributions to the magazine are not only welcome, but essential. However Academics should keep in mind some important guidelines so that their contributions, which are the fruit of their passion and dedication, are expeditiously published.

● **Articles:** it is essential that the **text of articles be sent via email**, in MS Word format (not pdf) to the following address: redazione@accademia1953.it

● **Article length:** it is important that articles are between 3,500 and 7,000 characters (including spaces); this is the best way to avoid cuts that are bothersome for both the editors and those submitting the texts. All computers should be able to provide character counts.

● Each issue of the magazine is printed one month ahead of the cover date so that it can be delivered to the Academics by that date. Those submissions that are time sensitive should be sent in ample time.

● **"From the Delegations" Section:** In order to facilitate reading, please **limit articles to a maximum of 2,500 characters including spaces.**

● Please remember that in the "From the Delegations" section as well as elsewhere, **descriptions of meetings held outside the territory of the Delegation or in the homes of Academics, unless they are associated with an important event, will not be published.** Also, **please do not include a list of dishes and wines.** Such listing should appear on the appropriate rating form regarding convivial meetings.

● **Rating forms for convivial meetings:** should be sent to the Secretariat (segreteria@accademia1953.it). It is also important to limit remarks in the "notes and comments" section of the form to **800 characters** (maximum 1,000) spaces included in order to avoid cuts. Rating forms that reach the Secretariat more than 30 days after the event will be discarded.

● We also request that you not submit reports on convivial meetings held **outside the territory of the Delegation**, or that take place in the **homes of Academics**, or are otherwise not held in restaurants or public venues, as they will not be published.



Investigating the origin of trifle

A similar dessert may have arisen in Britain, but Italian cuisine appropriated it with a result more suitable for the Italian palate.

BY ROSELLA MIDDLETON

London Academician

London is often termed a ‘world city’ for the multiplicity of ethnicities and cultures that converge and coexist there, as a consequence of Britain’s imperial past but also, more recently, of the cultural and financial pre-eminence it acquired since the Sixties with high immigration from the rest of Europe and beyond. Inspecting the British culinary universe we note that its ability to attract and welcome difference enabled Britain to evolve gradually into an importer of food culture, though it rarely exports gastronomic ideas and specialities abroad. Regarding Italo-British gastronomic exchange, while Italy has in effect carried out ‘culinary colonialism’, invading restaurants and family tables with Italian recipes and products, Italian assimilation of British specialities is negligible. No invasion of fish and chips or bangers and

mash, therefore, in Italian households. Italy has, however, enthusiastically adopted the delectable roast beef, frequently simplified into *rosbif*, and that simple and mouth-watering dessert whose name in Italian acknowledges its origin: trifle, known as *zuppa inglese* meaning ‘English soup’. Does it really come from England? The first Italian trifle recipes are relatively recent, having appeared in central Italy around the mid-19th century, but several sources mention a similar dessert at the court of the Dukes of Este as early as the 16th century. Hypotheses abound as to how trifle reached Ferrara, but the English origin hypothesis appears most reliable. The Dukes of Este had intense diplomatic and commercial ties with England and it is therefore perfectly plausible that an emissary of the Este court, invited to dine with Elizabeth I, wanted the sweet enjoyed on that occasion to be copied at home, as has been speculated. It was probably a pudding made of heavy cream and sugar, flavoured with ginger and rose water: the type of sweet known interchangeably at the time as ‘fool’ or ‘trifle’. Over the centuries, the term ‘fool’ (beyond its ordinary meanings denoting trickery or foolishness) came to define a simple blend of whipped cream and fruit, leaving the name ‘trifle’ for the dish in question. The English term ‘trifle’ in the sense of ‘inconsequential matter’ or ‘to toy with’ derives from the French *truffle*, meaning more or less the same thing. Though this is no place for a linguistic analysis, it’s only natural to speculate that the des-





Trifle by chef Andrea Aprea

sert's name has a jocular slant, playfully describing a recipe which, though simple, was elevated to the splendour of the royal table because it was delicious and well presented. Regarding trifle's Italian voyage, we know little or nothing about its verifiable spread in the time between its introduction at the Este court and the second half of the 19th century, when its first printed recipes appeared, as noted earlier. Among these we must obviously cite recipe n. 675 in Pellegrino Artusi's *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene (Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well)*. Inhabitants of the United Kingdom with any interest, however cursory, in the history of Italian emigration to Britain may find it eminently plausible that this recipe's widespread presence in central and northern Italy in the 19th century could have been due to the mostly seasonal migration from those regions to Britain, especially London: returning to Italy, these migrants may have brought word of this dessert, adapting it to available ingredients. The history of trifle is well-documented, and we can trace its dissemination to various continents alongside British colonial expansion. Its oldest known recipe dates from 1585 and appears in Thomas Dawson's cookbook *The Good Housewives Jewell*. In the 18th century it appeared in Hannah Glasse's *The Art of Cookery*, including fruit jelly for the first time in the recipe. Alcohol was incorporated around the mid-18th century to soak biscuits which were then covered in custard, fruit compotes or jams, followed by a top layer of syllabub, meaning a



mixture of whipped cream, sweet wine and brandy, today replaced by lightly sugared whipped cream. The biscuits used were originally ratafia or macarons, which are similar to Italian *amaretti*, or what were oddly named 'Naples biscuits', whose description instead calls to mind *savoirdi* (ladyfingers). Today's trifle contains slices of sponge cake, or if time is limited, any dry sweet biscuit such as the aforementioned ladyfingers. Trifle reached America with the British colonists, becoming especially widespread in the southern states. Its abundant alcohol gave rise to its American moniker 'tipsy cake'. A good 'sherry trifle', enriched with exotic fruit, is a traditional Christmas dessert in the former British colonies of Australia and New Zealand; this is a fresh dessert preferably refrigerated just before serving, particularly suitable for concluding a meal in a warm climate such as that of Christmas in the southern hemisphere. This adaptation involves lemon or lime jelly and such fruits as kiwi, passion fruit and mango which are not found in the classic English trifle recipes. As for India, the former colony beloved

by the British monarchs who were once its emperors and empresses, its culinary influence on Britain has been immense. In turn, Indians continue to prepare trifle, though adapted to local tastes and ingredients.

Which is the true classic trifle recipe? Its basic ingredients are always the same: slices of sponge cake soaked in sherry, sometimes fortified with brandy, raspberry or strawberry jam, custard and whipped cream. It is decorated with candied cherries or fresh fruit such as raspberries or strawberries. However, each family has its own recipe, never divulged to outsiders. Historic restaurants also have their own timeless versions.

Returning to Italy and our own trifle or 'English soup', here too ingredient availability has driven adaptation: Alchermes liqueur has replaced sherry; sponge cake is replaced by its Italian incarnation, known as *pan di Spagna* or 'Spanish bread', or *savoirdi*, which have the advantage of being butterless, rendering Italian trifle lighter than the original. We use no jam or fruit, entrusting the task of providing colour entirely to the Alchermes; and we sometimes add chocolate pieces, rarely found in British trifle.

Summing up: is 'English soup' truly English? This brief overview leads us to acknowledge that the English origin theory of trifle may be the most plausible, but we must also recognise that Italian cuisine has appropriated it and perhaps even improved it, or at least made it more appealing to the Italian palate.

ROSELA MIDDLETON

THE ACADEMY SILVER PLATE



An elegant silver plated dish engraved with the Academy logo.

This symbolic object may be presented to restaurants that display exceptional service, cuisine and hospitality.

Delegates may contact the Milan Headquarters

(segreteria@accademia1953.it) for more information and orders.