

The background of the cover is a photograph of the Colosseum in Rome, Italy, taken during the "golden hour" of sunset. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of orange, pink, and blue. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm glow. The Colosseum's iconic tiered arches are visible, with some arches illuminated from within. In the foreground, a paved walkway leads towards the monument, and a few people can be seen walking. To the left, there are dark silhouettes of trees and a building.

MARCH - APRIL - MAY 2021

PICCOLA ITALIA

THREE-MONTHLY PUBLICATION



ICC EVENTS

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Gems and recipes
from Lake Garda



Italian Cultural Center of San Diego
Promoting Italian language and culture since 1981

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Andrea Zarattini



NEWSLETTER

by Italian Cultural Center
of San Diego

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Cari soci e sostenitori dell'Italian Cultural Center,

Un anno fa, dopo aver trascorso due settimane e mezzo in Italia, sono riuscito a prendere uno degli ultimi voli operati da British Airways da Bologna a Londra e da Londra a San Diego. Ho passato la mia ultima notte all'Hilton Hotel ed ero l'unico ospite in tutta la struttura. Bologna e la maggior parte del Nord Italia sono state "bloccate". L'11 marzo 2020 il primo ministro Giuseppe Conte ha vietato quasi tutte le attività commerciali ad eccezione di supermercati e farmacie.

Da allora non sono più riuscito a tornare in Italia a causa della pandemia. Fortunatamente, la tecnologia ci permette di rimanere in contatto con i nostri amici e familiari e con la stessa tecnologia l'Italian Cultural Center, non ha mai smesso di offrire ai nostri membri e follower le nostre pillole culturali e linguistiche. Abbiamo offerto e stiamo offrendo numerosi corsi ed eventi di lingua, alcuni dall'Italia altri dagli Stati Uniti. In Italia diciamo "Dietro ogni problema si nasconde un'opportunità" e l'opportunità non era solo quella di continuare ad offrire i nostri servizi ai residenti di San Diego, ma a tutti coloro che erano interessati alla lingua e alla cultura italiana, indipendentemente da dove si trovassero. Speriamo di tornare presto nelle nostre classi e poterci guardare negli occhi, ma abbiamo imparato a comunicare con i nostri membri e amici in un modo diverso e continueremo, anche in futuro, ad utilizzare la tecnologia per collegarci con tutti voi. Grazie a tutti per la fedeltà e per consentirci di continuare a fare ciò che veramente amiamo.

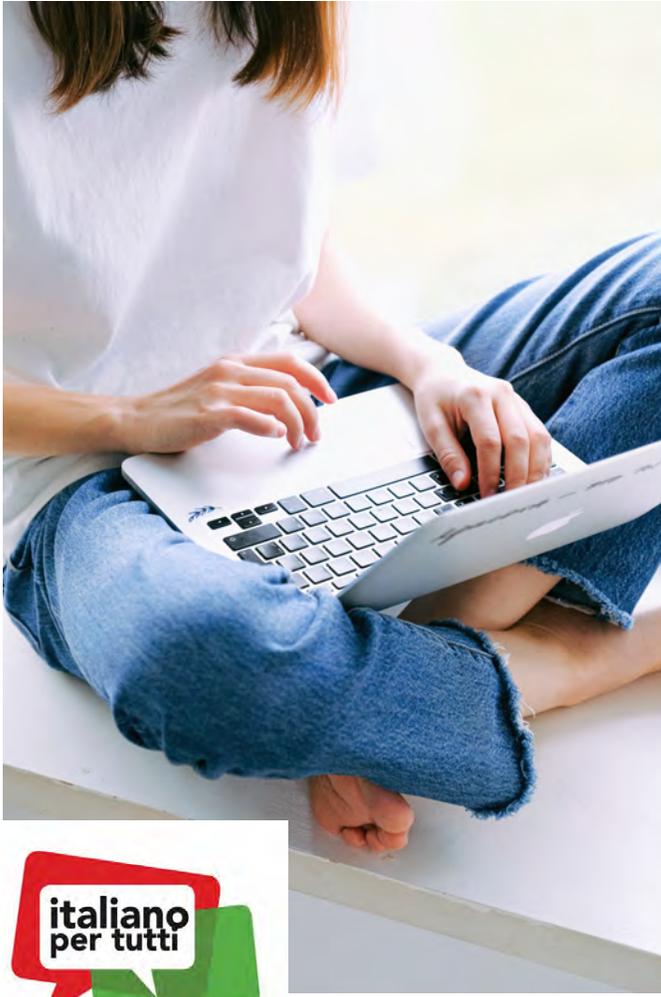
Andrea Zarattini - presidente ICC

Dear members and supporters of ICC

One year ago, after spending two and a half weeks in Italy, I was able to take one of the last flights operated by British Airways from Bologna to London and London to San Diego. I spent my last night at the Hilton Hotel and I was the only guest in the whole structure. Bologna and most of the North of Italy was "locked down". On 11 March 2020, the first minister Giuseppe Conte prohibited nearly all commercial activity except for supermarkets and pharmacies.

Since then, I have been unable to go back to my native country because of the pandemic. Fortunately, technology allows us to stay in touch with our friends and family. With the same technology, the Italian Cultural Center never stopped offering our members and followers their dose of culture and language. We continue to offer a numerous number of language courses and events, some from Italy and some from the US. In Italy we say "Dietro ogni problema si nasconde un'opportunità" and the opportunity was not only to continue offering our services to San Diegans, but to everybody interested in Italian Language and culture no matter where they were located. We will hopefully come back soon with in person classes, but we learned how to communicate with our members and friends and we will continue to use the technology to connect with all of you. Thank you all for your loyalty.

Andrea Zarattini - ICC president



Make your Italian bloom with our Spring Quarter 2021



Classes will start
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The full schedule of classes can be viewed on our [website](#)

Whether you are at a beginning, intermediate or advanced level, we have the right class for you! We offer a wide variety of classes for all proficiency levels. In addition to our regular program, we offer special quarterly classes, designed to learn Italian through books, history, newspapers, art and more!



Lonato on Air - Garda in the USA

Saturday April 17th 2021

10:30 am PST - 1:30 pm EST - 7:30 PM ITALY

scroll down our Newsletter to register

Nuovo percorso culturale online, con uno sguardo locale e internazionale. Ispirato dalla ricerca ed innovazione nel mondo dell'arte e del turismo, e della loro tutela.

L'incontro virtuale è nato dalla collaborazione tra partners italiani, come la Pro Loco di Lonato del Garda e partners americani, tra cui l'ICC di San Diego, ed è dedicato alla presentazione di alcune tipicità artistiche ed enogastronomiche dell'entroterra del Lago di Garda bresciano. L'appuntamento è un invito a godere del nostro patrimonio culturale con uno spirito comunitario per ritrovare, in un anno segnato dalla pandemia, una nuova normalità e prossimità, promuovendo percorsi che educano al valore della tutela del patrimonio visitato, sia che si tratti di un prezioso oggetto d'arte, un personaggio storico o un piatto cucinato seguendo le antiche tradizioni. Oltre ai soggetti promotori, intervengono professionisti e docenti attivi nel campo dell'arte, esperti nella tutela e valorizzazione del patrimonio e della ristorazione.

Parte dell'evento è dedicata alla presentazione e visita in diretta di importanti luoghi artistici e storici del territorio di Lonato del Garda, in particolare del sito archeologico delle Fornaci romane, unico nel suo genere e della Chiesa della Madonna del Corlo, in cui spicca lo splendido soffitto a volta dipinto, dal grande potere attrattivo, realizzato secondo una modalità decorativa illusionistica, nata in Italia nel 1500: la quadratura.

L'incontro con un personaggio del passato ci introdurrà all'interno della storia locale. Verranno presentate alcune fotografie, facenti parte della collezione della città di Lonato, dell'artista di fama internazionale Mario Giacomelli (1925-2000) di Senigallia che generosamente omaggiò Lonato di alcune sue opere. La nostra proposta di inserire alcuni frammenti della collezione si ricollega al valore di scambio culturale insito nel programma.

A conclusione non può mancare un momento di convivialità per dare risalto alle produzioni enogastronomiche locali: due ristoranti, uno italiano, di Lonato del Garda e uno italoamericano di Laguna Niguel in California, si incontrano per la preparazione dello stesso piatto tipico, condividendo gli stessi ingredienti e per la presentazione di prodotti DeCo (Denominazioni Comunale d'origine).



A new online experience with a local and international perspective, inspired by research and innovation in the preservation of art and responsible tourism.

The virtual seminar is a collaboration between Italian partners, like the Lonato del Garda local entity "Pro Loco" and US partners, including ICC San Diego. During the seminar, relevant artistic and culinary aspects of the geographical area near Brescia and Lake Garda will be emphasized. This is an invitation to enjoy a particular cultural patrimony in a comunitary spirit so we can find -- in a year shaped by a pandemic -- a new proximity. There will be attention to the preservation of the cultural landscape, whether it is a precious art object, a historical character, or a dish cooked following ancient traditions. Alongside the hosts, there will be experts in art history, conservation, and culinary arts.

A portion of the event is dedicated to live online visits to relevant artistic and historical spots in the Lonato area, particularly the unique archeological site of the Roman Furnaces and the Madonna del Corlo church, famous for its painted, vaulted ceiling, built with "quadratura," an illusionistic decorative practice born in Italy in the 1500s.

Photographs by internationally renowned artist Mario Giacomelli (1925-2000) from Senigallia will be a path into a piece of local history. Giacomelli generously donated some of his works to a Lonato collection which will be shared online as one manifestation of the cultural value implicit in this Italian-US exchange.

To conclude, there will be a convivial moment, illuminating a selection of local wine and culinary specialties: an Italian restaurant in Lonato and an Italian American one in Laguna Niguel, California, will both prepare the same dish, sharing DeCo (Local Denomination of Origin) ingredients and products.

ICC is looking forward to being transported into this special piece of Italy.

Discovering Lonato



Lonato del Garda is located on the southwest side of the Lake Garda, in a wonderful position that allows to overlook the lake and the plains of Brescia.

Visitors will first notice the impressive dome of the basilica and the Torre Civica tower. On Monte Rovò a widely visible fortress stands strong and mighty. The influence of the "Serenissima", the historic Republic of Venice, can be seen in many buildings and stately palaces.

Between green spaces, old walls, silent gardens protected by iron gates and half-closed doors, Lonato del Garda – amazing for its look of ancient town and its architectural beauties – has a rich variety of well-conserved monuments, first of all the properties of the Foundation Ugo Da Como. Lonato del Garda shows itself as a tourist's destination and as a reference point for the demanding travelers that search discoveries that astound them.

It offers unexpected answers to every hobbies, with its furnished and lovely beach on the lake (Lido di Lonato) and with a lot of opportunities for the leisure time: sport facilities, horse riding, cycling, walking through the hills or the alleys with pebbles of the Venetian "Cittadella" in the old town center. The cooking is excellent in the numerous farms, in the local restaurants, in the pizzerias, besides the wine and food events in the hamlets of Campagna, Esenta, Sedena and Centenaro.

Let's get inspired by the local cuisine

Nettle Risotto - Risotto con le ortiche

In the spring, the stinging nettle sprouts wildly at Lake Garda, most see it as an unpleasant weed that causes itching and burning pustules on the skin when touched. However, it tastes delicious when prepared in different dishes.

Have you ever tasted a nettle risotto? It's good! Here is a simple recipe.

Ingredients:

320 g Vialone Nano Veronese rice
50g onions
300 g of celery
50 g of carrots
300 g fresh nettles
100 g of butter
Grated Parmesan cheese
A stock cube
A pinch of salt



Preparation:

Clean the celery and chop along with the onions and carrots. Wash the stinging nettle under running water and place half of it with the carrots and celery in a pot with 2 liters of water. Bring to a boil and cook until the liquid is reduced by half. Strain the vegetables, keep the broth warm and add the stock cube. In the meantime, roast one-third of the butter with onions and the remaining stinging nettles and deglaze with a little broth. Then fry the rice with another third of the butter and gradually add broth. Once the rice is al-dente, add the butter-onion-nettle mixture and allow to finish cooking.

Wine Pairing:

Lugana DOP (Protected Denomination of Origin) summarizes in its name the prestigious mix of elements that characterize it: a unique soil of its kind, rich in clay; the mild microclimate of Lake Garda; noble autochthonous vine of Trebbiano di Lugana that gives white grapes of rare typicality. Delicate and long-lasting tasty wine with very salty acidity, obtained by soft pressing and fermentation in stainless steel tanks; ready for drinking after an ageing in the bottle in the spring of the subsequent year.



Polenta with local cheese - Polenta con formaggi Lombardi

For a long time, in all of Italy, polenta was a staple food. Its use, though, is deeply rooted, especially in northern Italy, including Veneto, Friuli, Lombardy and Piedmont. Polenta was traditionally cooked by pouring stone ground flour from a height into a large pot of salted boiling water and stirring constantly for at least one hour. Once ready, it was served on a round plate, covered with a large dishcloth to keep it warm. Farmers ate it at every meal, from breakfast to dinner. On good days, it was accompanied by cheese.

Ingredients:

2 liters of water
500 gr. of corn flour (stone grounded)
400 gr. diced Valtellina's Casera DOP (aged 12 months)
400 gr. Stracchino
200 gr. Soft Robiola cheese
200 gr. Gongorzola DOP
200 gr. Grana Padano DOP
200 gr. Butter
Black pepper to taste
Salt to taste

Preparation:

Boil 2 liters of water (0.53 gallons) in a copper pan, add salt and sprinkle 500 gr. of polenta flour in the boiling water. Cook for approximately 40 minutes on a medium heat, constantly stirring. When the polenta is ready add 400 gr. diced Valtellina's Casera DOP, 400 gr. Stracchino cheese, 200 gr. Soft Robiola cheese, 200 gr. Gongorzola DOP and 200 gr. Grana Padano DOP. Add a good dose of black pepper, serve in a terrine and sprinkle with 200 gr. of well browned butter.

Wine Pairing:

A rustic version of Garda Marzemino Marzemino DOC is a red wine produced in the region of Lombardia and Trentino. It is made with grapes of Marzemino, a vine that in recent years has found in an ideal habitat in these regions along with Lugana, Gropello and the award-winning dessert wine San Martino Della Battaglia Gefide.

Its vineyards extend over a wide area between 70 and 700 m above sea level. Here the climate is alpine, with hot summers, often muggy in the valley floor, and snowy winters. The land in the bottom of the valley is alluvial, fertile, mainly sandy; while on the slopes it is rich in skeleton, of dolomitic and permeable limestone origin.



Saffron from Lake Garda

Italy has cultivated Saffron since the 14th century. The precious and unique spice is also called "yellow gold" because of its color and it's known to have extraordinary effects.

The use of saffron as a remedy and as a luxurious spice goes back to ancient times as the Bible and the Iliad both mention saffron highlighting its importance and popularity in history. Due to the special microclimate at Lake Garda, saffron is grown here and used to refine regional specialties.

A precious and extraordinary spice

You obtain the saffron from the flower pistil of the eponymous crocus species, scientifically referred to as *Crocus sativus*. If the crocuses produce their purple flowers in the autumn for a few weeks, the intense red and sweet-aromatic scented threads can be picked by hand and then dried. This process makes saffron one of the most expensive spices in the world. In Italy, it is used to refine starters, main courses, bread and desserts.

The extraordinary spice not only tastes particularly good but is also healthy. Saffron contains the natural dye crocin, which makes it rich in antioxidants. Also, saffron has a detoxifying and digestive effect, and vitamin B2 stimulates the metabolism.

Cultivation areas and methods at Lake Garda

Saffron cultivation is entirely free of fertilizers, pesticides and chemicals. The bulb of the perennial plant gets planted in August. In the autumn it sprouts and finally blooms between October and November. Then the crocuses can be picked by hand in the early morning hours. Then the pistils are separated by hand from the rest of the flower, dried over burning charcoal and then packed. Lake Garda saffron is grown mainly in the hilly area at the foot of Monte Baldo, in Pozzolengo, Pravelle, Gargnano, Desenzano and Lonato. On January 2021 the Lonato's saffron obtained the DeCo (Denominazione Comunale d'Origine). Over 150 flowers are needed to make just 1 gram of saffron.

Garda DOP Extra Virgin Olive Oil

At Lake Garda, the production of high-quality olive oil is a craft that has been lovingly cared for, for centuries. The olive trees that thrive on the fertile slopes and fields around the lake are the fundamental basis for its preparation.

The scenic road Gardesana Orientale leads along the east coast past dreamy villages and the Riviera degli Olivi which holds plenty of culture, nature and tradition for its visitors. In addition to olive groves, there are also the processing centers or oil mills.

After harvest, the olives are packaged and stored for no longer than 12 hours. Washed, sorted and selected, the olives get pressed. State-of-the-art and hydraulically driven, the purest olive oil is squeezed out and bottled.

Olio Extravergine d'Oliva del Garda is awarded the quality D.O.P. (Denominazione di Origine Protetta or Protected Designation of Origin) since 1997. It's characterized by an extraordinary lightness, excellent digestibility and a delicate, fruity and pleasantly piquant flavor.

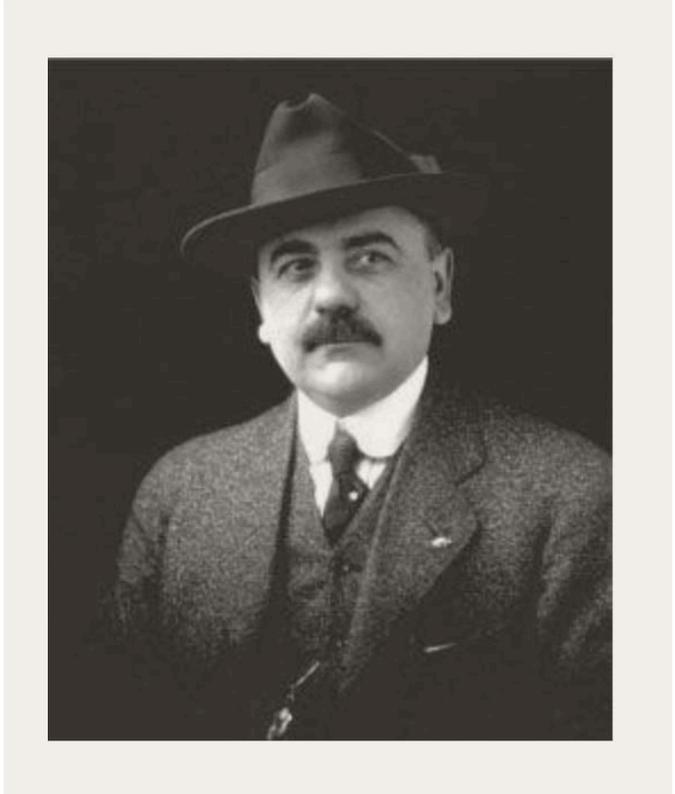
The Varieties

The DOP West of Lake Garda (Garda Bresciano) requires the following cultivar: Casaliva, Frantoio and Leccino 55%, Other Cultivar 45%



Did you know?

Amedeo Obici, founder of Planters Peanuts. Obici was born in 1877 in Veneto, Italy. When he was just 7 years old, his father died, leaving his mother to care for him and his three other siblings. A few years later, Obici emigrated to America to live with his uncle in Scranton, Pa. Once there, Obici commuted to a nearby town almost every night to take English classes to improve his language skills. As a young man, he worked at a fruit shop, which inspired him to get his own peanut cart and experiment with roasting peanuts made a rudimentary roaster from parts obtained at a local scrap yard and selling them to customers. With the money he made from the peanuts sales, Obici saved enough money to bring the rest of his immediate family over from Italy to join him in the United States.



Later, he teamed up with Mario Peruzzi, another Italian American immigrant, and they founded Planters Peanuts Company in 1906. Obici had invented a new method of skinning and blanching the peanuts so that they came out clean, making them a very popular snacking food. In 1913, the pair built a new plant in the heart of peanut farming territory in Suffolk, Virginia, making it the capital of peanuts in the United States. By 1930, the company owned four factories and was rapidly expanding. Obici and his wife made serious efforts to give back to the surrounding area of Suffolk and were well-known for their generosity; they eventually built a hospital to benefit the community. Through his estate, Obici also planned and paid for another hospital in his original hometown of Oderzo, Italy. Obici passed away in 1947, but left behind a multi-million-dollar legacy and a true immigrant success story.



L'angolo dello studente

The student's corner



Questo trimestre ho frequentato "l'Italian Speaking Workshop" con Rossella Chiolini Bagley. È durato 8 settimane e si è focalizzato sulla pronuncia, sul vocabolario, sul parlato, e sullo scritto. Per ogni lezione la professoressa ci forniva il materiale sui vari soggetti come l'arte, la musica, la cucina, e la pubblicità.

Ogni studente aveva il tempo di parlare e discutere sui vari temi. Il corso mi ha aiutato ad acquisire sicurezza perché Rossella creava un'atmosfera di collaborazione ed incoraggiamento. È importante ricordare che non è necessario parlare perfettamente, l'importante è parlare!!!

Qualche volta, come altri, ho paura di fare uno sbaglio e, di conseguenza, non dico niente. Solo io perdo quando non parlo e quando permetto alla mia paura di fermarmi.

Robin Witkin

Sign up today!

Upcoming ICC events:

A Medici Immersion

A Weekend with the Medici Family

Streaming Lectures from Florence with Art-Historian and Tour Guide Laura Cirri
Learn about one of the most famous Italian families

March 26, 27, 28, 2021
9:30 am PST

3/26 - From the Origin to the 15th Century
3/27 - The 16th Century
3/28 - The 17th & 18th Century

Tickets on donation

Each live event will last about 1 hour and you will have a chance to ask questions.
You will receive a link after your ticket purchase. No recordings will be available for this event.

This is a collaboration between ICC and CulturallItaly.



Lake Garda Cultural and Culinary Event: LONATO ON AIR (Garda in USA)

Saturday April 17th 2021

10:30 am PST - 1:30 pm EST - 7:30 PM ITALY

This 80 minute online zoom event is a discovery of artistic beauties and culinary specialities from the Lombardy town of Lonato del Garda and its territory inland of Lake Garda. After the greetings from the Italian organizers, there will be a presentation of relevant historical figures from Lonato, including photographer Mario Giacomelli. A live exploration of an ancient Roman site and a restoration project at a local church will be followed by culinary suggestions, with the specialities from "La Campagnola," a Lonato restaurant, and a Californian counterpart, "Bistrok," in Laguna Beach. This presentation will be in Italian, with brief summaries in English.

The event will be live streamed on Youtube:

<https://youtube.com/channel/UCOivfdN3FHESon3MmbNPHHw>

Free access to ICC members and any who is curious. Just access the Youtube page on that day and time



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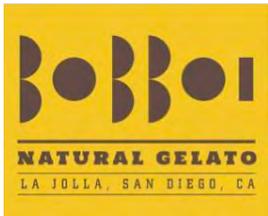
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