



TASTING ROME

DAY 1: INTRODUCTION TO ITALIAN CUISINE



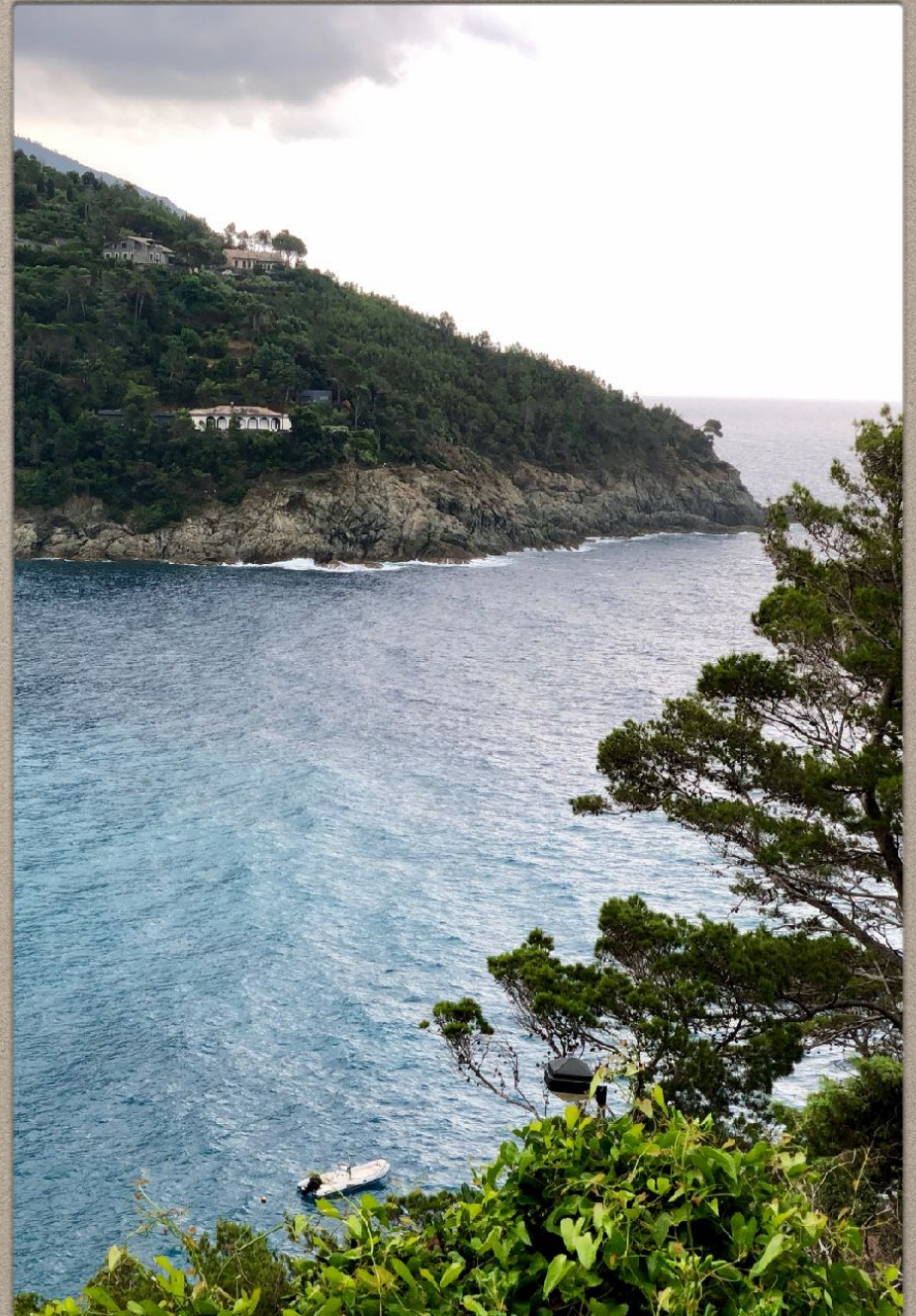
ITALIAN FOOD

- Every single Italian dish that you have ever heard of, and every single ingredient, is associated with a particular region (and usually a particular town), not “Italy”
- Ingredients and techniques are very different: the north uses butter, the south, olive oil; gelato is custard-based in the north, eggless in Sicily
- Pizza and gelato are available everywhere, although they have local connotations, too



LIGURIA

- A poor cuisine (Liguria is basically steep hills leading down to the water, and it's hard to grow much): fish, plain cheese, pasta, olives
- Wheat won't grow, so chestnuts are used for flour
- Pesto and focaccia are the most famous exports





LOMBARDY

- Northern Italy—olive oil is almost unknown, butter is used instead
- Relatively rich: beef, butter, lard, milk, cheese, pork, rice and corn
- Risotto (alla milanese, of course), cotoletta (alla milanese), polenta (land of 'polentoni')
- Gorgonzola







TUSCANY

- Enormously popularized in the US in recent decades (*Under the Tuscan Sun*)
- Chianti and "super-Tuscan" wines
- Crostate and crostini
- Wild boar (cinghiale) both as a secondo and in ragù, and in general, wild game
- Bistecca alla fiorentina
- Papardelle







BOLOGNA

- Nickname: La Grassa
- The opposite of Rome: wealthy, rich food, with meat, cream, cheese
- Balsamic vinegar, parmigiano-reggiano cheese, mortadella (baloney-bologna), prosciutto di Parma
- tortellini, tortelloni, lasagne al ragù (i.e., stuffed pastas), gramigna alla salsiccia





LAZIO (ROME)

- Poor for centuries, Roman food relies on vegetables and 'offal' (tripe, oxtail, trotters, brains, etc.)
- Bruschetta, pizza bianca, cacio e pepe, gricia, amatriciana, carbonara, carciofi alla giudea
- Percorino romano, ricotta, mozzarella
- Gnocchi on Thursdays!







CAMPANIA

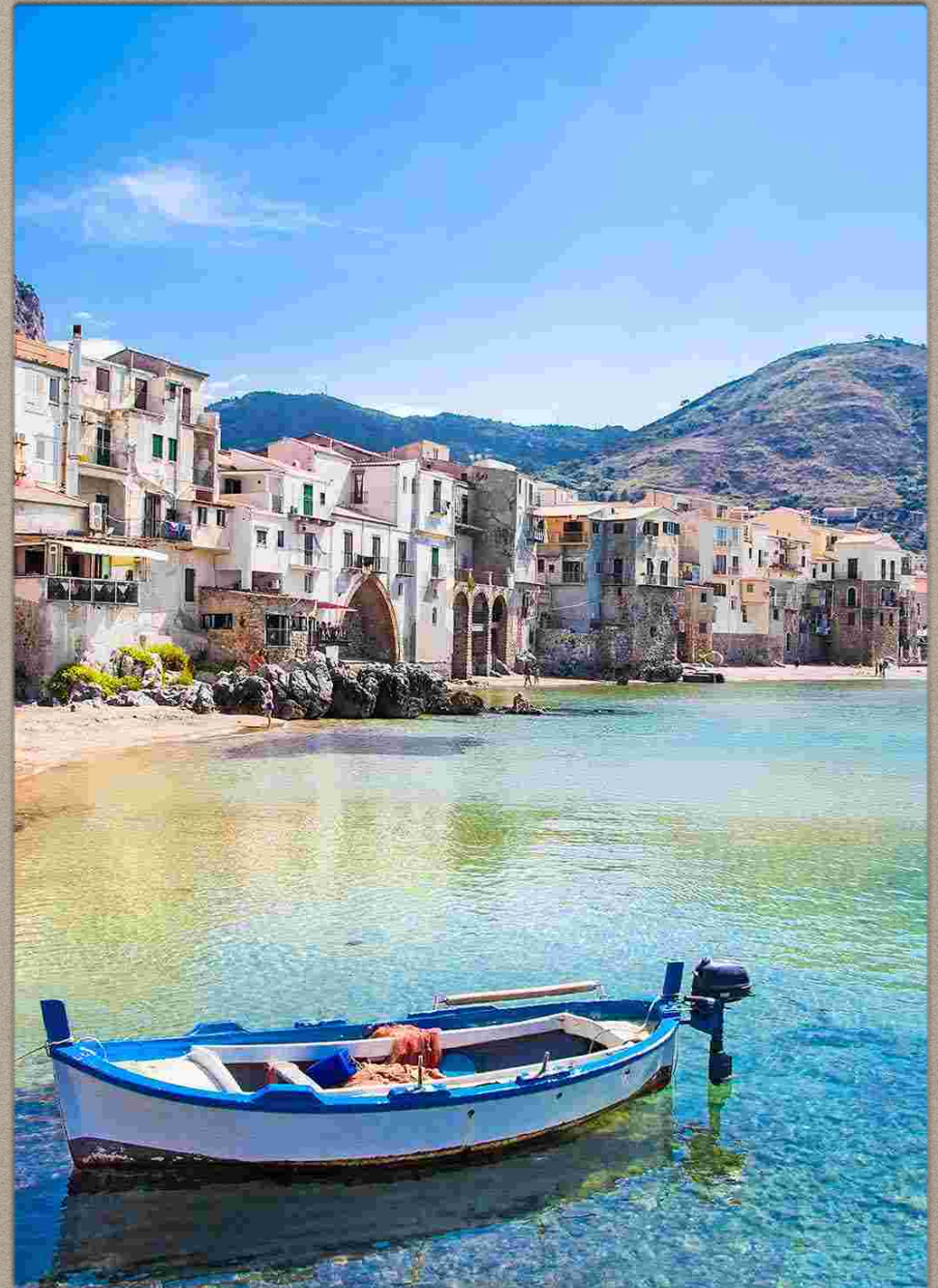
- Naples: tomatoes, peppers, fennel, lemons, fish and seafood (octopus), mozzarella, ricotta
- Pizza, spaghetti alla puttanesca
- Along with Sicily, the origin of most Italian-American immigrants (Liguria for those who went to Argentina): spaghetti with tomato sauce, baked ziti, pizza, pasta e fagioli (*pasta fazool*)





SICILY

- Tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and seafood, mozzarella, ricotta
- Pasta alla norma, cannelloni
- Famous for desserts (cannoli, gelato, candied fruit, granita, often stuffing brioche or cake, as in cassata siciliana)
- Why is the hottest place in Italy the most famous for ice based desserts?





FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA

- A very poor region, but next to pastry-rich Austria; also next to Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia
- Stews (meat, beans, potatoes, sauerkraut), Vienna sausages, goulash, strudel – but also polenta and prosciutto di San Daniele
- Frico is *the* regional dish (montasio cheese with potato, onion, prosciutto...)





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SOME NOTES





"Katie, a New Jersey native, came in 2003 as a recent college graduate with an art history degree. She planned to continue studying art but was immediately distracted by the local cuisine; she turned her attention to food instead and earned a master's degree in Italian gastronomic culture at the Università degli Studi di Roma "Tor Vergata." Kristina was transferred to Rome in 1999 for work, after having studied for a year in Florence as an undergraduate and a year in Bologna as a graduate student. "

-Tasting Rome

"We both loved documenting Rome's lost recipes and contemporary innovations and were eager to share dishes and stories that only a fully immersed Rome dweller could know. We enjoyed celebrating new flavors and breaking down the stereotype that Roman food must be hypertraditional in order to be authentic. [We looked for foods in] peripheral, graffiti-clad neighborhoods, patrician districts, archeological parks, neighborhood bakeries, artisanal gelato shops, dimly lit cocktail bars, chaotic markets, and innovative restaurants."

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“By the time the first emperor, Augustus, took the throne in 27 BC, Rome was a burgeoning capital with nearly 1 million residents living in an area that corresponds to today’s historical center (currently inhabited by fewer than 123,000). Romans imported spices, wine, condiments, and olive oil, and the patrician class entertained itself with elaborate banquets showcasing exotic produce and game meat. Meanwhile, the urban poor lived mainly on cereals, legumes, porridge, and bread, and many relied on state rations or upper-class generosity for food.”

-Tasting Rome

"For the most part, the city's medieval diet remained simple and relied on locally cultivated produce, legumes, and lamb, all of which still play an important part in today's cuisine. When the Roman Renaissance began in the mid-fifteenth century, wealth returned to noble tables, while peasants ate simple, rural cuisine and small taverns catered to pilgrims. Meanwhile, from 1555 until 1870, the popes confined Rome's Jews to a squalid, flood-prone Ghetto, where isolation, poverty, sumptuary laws, and the rules of Kashrut gave rise to a unique cuisine called the *cucina ebraica romana*."

-*Tasting Rome*

"In 1870, after twelve centuries of papal rule, Rome fell to a secular unification movement led by King Vittorio Emanuele II and General Giuseppe Garibaldi. The Ghetto was liberated and Rome began its tremendous transformation from a dilapidated, insalubrious swamp into a flourishing European capital."

-Tasting Rome

"Although the Jewish community has just around 13,000 members, about .3 percent of the city's total population, the flavors and history of its dishes are so profoundly rich, they warrant special attention."

-Tasting Rome

“The ‘Sweets’ chapter explores the underappreciated variety of Roman desserts, both baked and frozen.”

-Tasting Rome

INGREDIENTS

- Black pepper
- Eggs
- Fennel pollen
- Guanciale
- Oil
- Pasta
- Pecorino Romano
- Peperoncino
- Salt

