



TASTING ROME

DAY 3: STREET FOOD & QUINTO QUARTO

HIGHBROW

LOWBROW

SUPPLÌ

- Roman snacks are meant to be “light and digestible, even when deep-fried (which is often)”
- Rice is a major food in the North, but an import down South—yet *suppli* are absolutely Roman
- Essentially, a cone, or ovoid shape of meat and tomato risotto wrapped around a chunk of mozzarella, breaded, deep fried
- Traditionally made with chicken innards, most often with beef today; sometimes just rice and mozzarella
- Keep your liquids *hot* when adding to the rice





SUPLÌ VS. ARANCINI

- Arancini are larger, stuffed with ragù and peas (or other ingredients, including spinach), and come from Sicily
- They are invariably spherical, because they should look like oranges
- It is occasionally possible to get the mythical... *arancione*.



SUPPLÌ VARIATIONS

- *Supplì cacio e pepe* is definitely Roman in style and execution
- *Supplì radicchio e gorgonzola* – I need convincing; Gorgonzola screams of the far north of Lombardy
- What other flavors might one add to supplì that would preserve their Roman character?



CROCHETTE

- They look just the same, but are filled with just mashed potatoes
- although they are also sometimes tricked out with other ingredients, from cheese to eggplant to tuna fish
- Primarily associated with France (les croquettes)



CAZZIMPERIO OR PINZIMONIO

- Italians and vegetables
- Fennel is fundamental and great to cook with; it's also basically a weed
- Salt and pepper and olive oil
- Note the inevitable presence of radish, the bitter note



TORTA RUSTICA

- A quick pie made with “rough puff” or frozen puff pastry; fillings vary seasonally
- Parla and Gill give a spinach, chard, dandelion, ricotta and egg version
- “In Rome, you’re most likely to find this savory delight served as a snack alongside Prosecco or a cold beer when you’re dining al fresco”



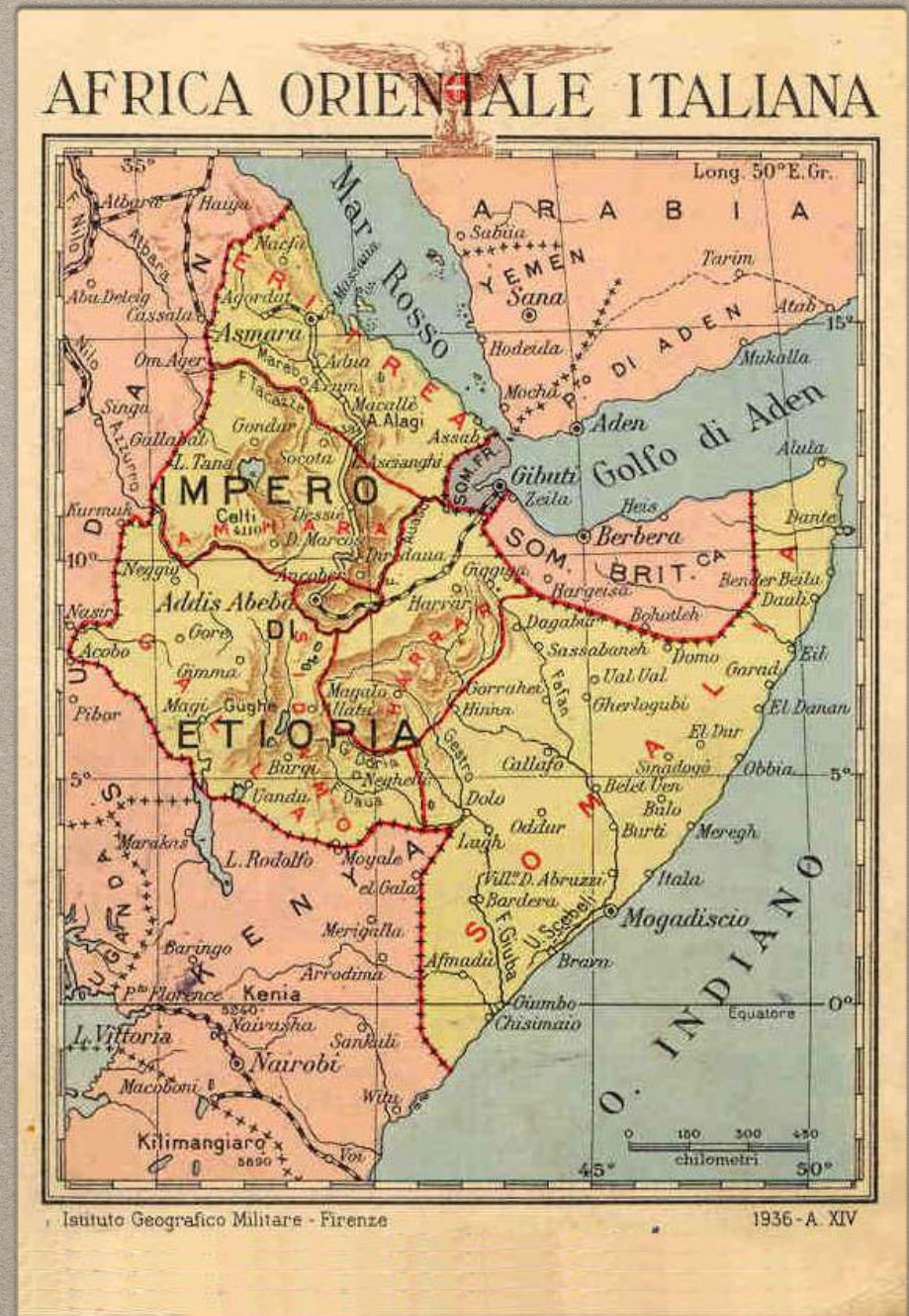
TRAPIZZINO

- “a clever mash-up of two popular snack names: tramezzino and pizza”
- This is not really a Roman dish, but one particular place riffing on Roman food—and hence, Callegari uses extra-Roman fillings (beef tongue in salsa verde, oxtail) as well as East African fillings from Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea. Wait. Why?



ITALIAN EAST AFRICA

- Mussolini wasn't just fascist – he was also colonialist and imperialist
- From about 1935-41, these territories were ruled by Italian viceroys; over 150,000 Italians moved there to colonize the territories
- Atrocities and repressions, but hey, trains and planes!
- Italian is still a recognized language in Libya, Eritrea and Somalia



ZIGHINÌ



Profumo
di
CANNELLA

POLPETTE

- Meatballs—again, cook once, eat twice. Traditionally made from leftovers, with stale bread soaked in milk or broth, vegetables chopped fine, and some eggs
- *Polpette (polpettoni)* are a *secondo*—they are not normally served with pasta; that is an Italian-American dish



'NDUJA IN CAROZZA

- 'nd– a typically Calabrian sound; 'Nduja is a spicy Calabrian sausage.
- There are a lot of Calabrians in Rome
- *Mozzarella in carrozza* is a Central-South grilled cheese sandwich, something you would not normally see in a restaurant; this dish is “comfort food”



FAVE, PECORINO E CORALLINA

- Meals should start with antipasti, but they don't need to be complicated
- Here you just pile fava beans, chunks of pecorino and salami
- Normally would be served with wine; for May 1, a chilled white or a slightly chilled red (these exist in Italy, although they are rare)



FILETTI DI BACCALÀ

- “The battered and deep-fried version, called *filetti di baccalà*, originated in the Jewish Ghetto. Today, this dish appears on pizzeria and restaurant menus and is sparsely seasoned with just salt and lemon—it’s like Rome’s version of fish and chips, just minus the chips.”
- Really is like fish and chips – which were introduced to England also by Jewish immigrants
- Fine with wine, but better with beer; keep it light with a basic Peroni or Moretti lager.



FIORI DI ZUCCA

- This is seriously one of the best things ever. Take the flower, and stuff it with one anchovy and a big chunk of mozzarella
- Make your pastella: flour, salt, and add sparkling water; it should be thick but runny
- Dredge the flower thoroughly in pastella, and drop into hot oil, turn once for an even golden brown color; sprinkle with salt immediately





DRINKING APERITIVI

- Like the evening stroll (passeggiata), almost everyone goes out to have a drink at about 6:30 PM.
- A beer is fine, and so is a glass of wine. Very Italian to get Prosecco. Also possible, a Spritz (specify Aperol or Campari), or a Campari Orange, or a Negroni if you want something heavier



DRINKING APERITIVI

- Regardless, you will have your drink leisurely, and you will have it with food. A second aperitivo would be unusual, since it's assumed you'll have wine with dinner
- Being drunk in public is bad manners in Italy and makes you look bad. Drinking a lot is not considered manly; indeed, it's not considered anything. Alcohol is a beverage, not a dare. Anglo-Saxon drinking habits are just considered weird.



BRUSCHETTE WITH CARCIOFI

- A very simple dish to make, with Roman flavors
- Of the various ways to prepare *carciofi*, I actually really dislike *carciofi all romana*. I think I have an issue with mint, and I often dislike it
- This version, however, with lemon and lots of pecorino, sounds like it would be really excellent.





"There may be only thirteen thousand Jews in Rome—a city of over 4 million—but the community's food culture looms large. Due in part to three centuries of isolation in a walled Ghetto, Roman Jews crafted a distinct cuisine called the *cucina ebraica romanesca*, which coaxes intense flavor from paltry resources. In the 1960s, Rome's small community was also enriched by thousands of Jews arriving from Libya who brought new customs and flavors to a historic tradition."

"The first Italian Ghetto was built in Venice in 1516. The unfortunate European custom of confining Jews to segregated quarters spread through Italy, and in 1555, the Roman Ghetto was established by papal decree. Pope Paul IV relegated the city's Jewish population to a squalid, fire-prone neighborhood on the banks of the Tiber River. Buildings were crowded and claustrophobic as it was, but as the population grew, precarious upper stories teetered above the already decrepit ones. The Ghetto was liberated in 1870, only after the pope lost his political authority in Rome. During those three centuries of crowded isolation and unrelenting persecution, a distinct Jewish culture and cuisine emerged."

"The main ingredients during the Ghetto period were cheap and abundant items like globe artichokes and lettuces, as well as salt cod, Tiber fish, poor cuts of meat, and offal. *Pesce azzurro*, an oily category of fish including mackerel, sardines, and anchovies, were sold at the fish market inside the crumbling ruins of the Portico d'Ottavia on the edge of the Ghetto, and used for flavorful soups. What meat was available was simmered for hours to mellow its toughness. Such slow-cooked meat dishes called *stracotti* are still common on Roman Jewish tables. Frying was also a popular cooking method and even today, Roman Jewish homes and restaurants serve *Pezzetti Fritti*, fried brains, *Filetti di Baccalà*, and twice-fried *carciofi alla giudia*."

SPAGHETTI CICORIA BOTTARGA

- *Cicoria* is a bitter leafy green, and an absolute staple of Roman cuisine; here you substitute dandelion greens
- *Bottarga* is basically a solid block of salted, cured fish eggs that you grate over your food – it's actually a pleasant savory-salty flavor
- Libyan Jews evidently combined these two flavors in the 1960s



HRAIMI CON COUSCOUS

- Couscous is very popular throughout Europe; the Hraimi (or fish in spicy sauce) is typical of Libyan cuisine, however
- Observant Jews would prepare this a day in advance of the Sabbath, giving the spice time to fully penetrate the fish and making sure no cooking happens on the Sabbath
- Cooking is work!



TRIGLIE CON CIPOLLE

- Pine nuts and raisins make for a fantastic flavor combination; the combination of meat and fruit is also a Jewish standard
- The addition of onions and vinegar intensifies the sweet and sour effect
- Occhi di triglia



ALICIOTTI CON INDIVIA

- One of the most classic Roman Jewish dishes
- I find the idea of this completely repellent: just layer after layer of endive and anchovies, baked. Maybe topped with bread crumbs
- Someone should make this, because I want to know if it's actually edible



"ON THE MORNING of Monday, June 6, 1967, the Libyan cities of Tripoli and Benghazi erupted in anti-Semitic violence. In the days and weeks that followed, Jewish businesses were destroyed, property was confiscated, and Jews were beaten and even killed. In the midst of the pogroms, the Libyan government scrambled to evacuate its Jewish citizens, issuing exit visas aimed at prohibiting their return. Libyan Jews boarded boats and planes bound for Italy, and by the end of that year, some five thousand had landed on Italian soil. Some were housed in the Roman Jewish neighborhood of Piazza Bologna, while others were sent to refugee camps south of Rome. Although there are no official statistics, an estimated 1,500 to 1,800 stayed, while others immigrated to Israel. Today some 4,500 Libyan Jews live in Rome, this religious and ethnic minority accounting for about a third of the city's Jewish community."