



Triangle
Lodge 2817



IL GIORNALE DI TSDIA

Aprile, 2026

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Follow us on Facebook at
"Triangle Sons & Daughters of Italy"



And on our YouTube Channel
[youtube.com/@tsdoiyoutube7441](https://www.youtube.com/@tsdoiyoutube7441)

Please note that we take photos and videos at our events. If you do not want your image to appear on either Facebook or YouTube, you must tell the photographer at the time.

Il Giornale di TSDIA

Editor Nick Verna

Send comments or suggested materials to
nickverna14@gmail.com

TSDIA Calendar of Events

- Apr 11** – The Italian Secret Documentary
- May 02** – Bocce Tournament
- May 9** – Day of Change – Painting Day Family Promise
- Jun 7** – Annual Picnic
- Jul 18** – Durham Bulls
- Aug 8** - Palio
- Sep 19** – Festa Italiana
- Oct 10** – Italian Heritage Celebration
- Dec 5** – Christmas Dinner Maggiano's

April Birthdays

Katrina DiTomasso (1), Eugene De Rose (2), Robert Pulverenti (2), Kathy Restivo (2), Donald Cimorelli (3), Matthew Kunath (4), Paul Baccellieri (6), Jimmy Farina (6), Barry Gilbert (6), Maria Hittle (7), Antonio Russo (7), Shelly Tripp Dates (7), Donna Kuni (8), Richard Rubisch (9), Christine Cataldo (10), Michael Lein (12), Matthew Pepe (13), Ron Sorrentino (14), Pat DiLeonardo (14), Danielle Pavoni (14), Kelly Brocato-Sawyer (15), Trish Legarth (16), Paul Marinaccio (16), Nicole Thompson (17), Joan Kessler (18), Dawn Ricciardi (18), Michelle Russo (20), Laura Skapik (21), Robert Goldman (22), Ryan Pirozzi (22), Matt Church (23), Martha Sorrentino (24), Robert Gleason (25), Sherry Carty Vetere (27), Stacey Stelluto (28), Carmella Alvaro (29), Sarah Battista (29), Dina Bon (30).



Good & Welfare

We are saddened to share the passing of Deacon Michael A. Ascolese who is the father of our Triangle Lodge Member Mark Ascolese. Mark's wife, Barbara, is also a member of our Lodge. We are thinking of the Ascolese family during this period of loss and transition.

Milestone Reached!



We have reached a new milestone in the growth of our lodge. **Ciro Formisano**, the owner of **Mama Mia's Restaurant** in Holly Springs, has joined as our 450th member.



Letter from the President

Dear Triangle Lodge Brothers & Sisters:

First, I wish to begin this monthly letter with a huge thank you for your generosity to supporting charitable causes. Over the next 1-2 months, we'll wrap up our Lodge's donations to support Cyclone Harry, the Garibaldi-Meucci Museum, and Pancreatic Cancer Research. Based on the preliminary returns, we will stand out for what we are doing as a single local lodge.

Now let's switch gears to upcoming events. Our activities are in high demand. Please carefully review my weekly event email with registration links, or go to the events tab on our website (<https://www.tsdia.org/events-2-2/>)

A few of the top events on the horizon are:

MOVIE: MY ITALIAN SECRET - THE FORGOTTEN HEROES

- Saturday, April 11, 2026, 10:00 am
- Triangle Cinemas, 9500 Forum Dr, Raleigh, NC

MOVIE: SOLO MIO & OPTIONAL RESTAURANT DINNER

- Monday, May 11th, 5:00 pm
- Triangle Cinemas, 9500 Forum Dr, Raleigh, NC
- Optional Dinner at Farina's Neighborhood Italian



ANNUAL TRIANGLE LODGE FAMILY PICNIC & SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

- Sunday, June 7, 2026; 3:00 pm
- Rotary Shelter at Harold Ritter Park

Additionally, we always offer **Conversational Italian and SCOPA** once per month. You can find the registration links for these activities on the Events tab on our website.

I hope to see you soon!

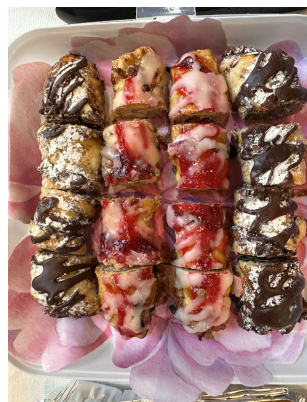
Fraternally yours,
Don Cimorelli, TSDIA President

Sardinian Pasta Class at Melinas Il Laboratorio



Italian Coffeehouse & St. Joseph's Dessert Extravaganza

200 attendees, over 100 desserts, and the greatest Italian singer in the South. What more can you ask for the perfect day.







Family Promise/TSDIA Day of Care Painting Day

One of the tenants of Triangle Sons and Daughters is to give back to those in need in our community. One of the organizations TSDIA supports is Family Promise of the Triangle.

Family Promise of the Triangle provides safe, temporary housing and support services for families experiencing homelessness as they work toward long-term stability. The apartments these families stay in are more than shelter—they are places of dignity, safety, and hope during a very difficult time.

To help maintain these spaces, we are asking you to participate in a new service initiative called **Day of Care**, where we will help revive one of our emergency shelter apartments with a fresh coat of paint. The project will last 2 days:

1. May 8, Friday, 12:00 to 5:00 – This will be a **day of prep** where we will fill cracks in the walls, tape the edges, cover the floors and begin our trim painting.
2. May 9, Saturday, 9:00 to 4:00 – This will be the **day to paint** the walls and finish the trim.

Location: 903 Method Rd., Raleigh, NC

No professional painting experience is required—just a willingness to help and work as a team. All guidance will be provided, and the impact is immediate and visible. By sponsoring and staffing a **Day of Care**, Triangle Sons and Daughter of Italy helps ensure that families transitioning through homelessness are welcomed into a clean, bright, and well-cared-for living space. It's a powerful way to show compassion, give back locally, and make a tangible difference in just one day. If you would like to sign up for this event, please click on the Sign-Up-Genius link below and choose either Friday or Saturday or even both. If you can bring a ladder, please let me know in the Sign-Up-Genius comments. Thank you for your help!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4BADA829AAFBCE9-62831067-painting>

Warm regards,
Nick Verna, TSDIA VP, Family Promise Board Member

Member Business Spotlight



FARINAS RESTAURANT

Our member business spotlight this month focuses on our new member Ian Moore, the Owner of Farina's Neighborhood Italian Restaurant in Lafayette Village on Honeycutt Rd in Raleigh.



When the owner of a business joins the Triangle Lodge, this is a reflection of their commitment to the Italian American community. It means that in addition to supporting our community with great products and services, these businesses also contribute to our commitment to charities and service organizations.

Farina's Neighborhood Italian offers a warm and inviting environment along with a comprehensive menu of traditional dishes and some with fusion flair.

I encourage you to have a fantastic meal and experience at Farina's. Ian and his team supports the Triangle Lodge, and we wish to support them. <https://www.farinaraleigh.com>.



FOOD & CULTURE

Interessante | Web Sites | Food | Culture | Places | Stories

Food & Culture highlights our Italian culture. If you have suggestions we can put it in a future newsletter, please email Nick Verna at nickverna14@gmail.com.

New Members

Please welcome **Anthony Misso**, who has a long-term relationship with the Triangle Lodge. Anthony is the owner of **Capri Flavors Italian Market** in Cary. For many years, Anthony has been both a business sponsor and the host of many Lodge events at his store. There is no other business in the Triangle that has referred more customers to join the Triangle Lodge as Capri Flavors. The staff is always passing out Lodge pamphlets and business cards and inviting us to set up a table to talk to customers about joining. While born in the USA, Anthony lived in Italy till he was about six years old. His family is from the Campania region of Italy. Growing up in the USA, Anthony's dad was very involved with the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America. Without a doubt running a thriving Italian market consumes much of Anthony's time, yet his passion is cooking. Anthony is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of New York, and you can find many of his homemade specialties for sale at CapriFlavors. Anthony and his wife and their daughter live in Holly Springs. welcome Anthony Amissa76@yahoo.com.

Please welcome **Ian Moore** who heard about the Triangle Lodge from Joe and Vicki Pirozzi. Thank you both. Ian is originally from Clearwater, Florida and is joining as a Social Member. He has lived in Raleigh since 2012. He is the owner of Farina Italian Restaurant in Raleigh and enjoys cooking, everything Italian and being with friends and family. welcome Ian Ian7143619@gmail.com.

Please welcome **Vincent and Tanya Occhipinti and their daughters, Bella and Carmela** who heard about the Triangle Lodge from members Joyce and Brad Moses. Thank you both. They are originally from New Jersey; Vincent is from Summit and Tanya is from Jersey City. They live in Apex. Vincent's heritage is from Sicily (Ragusa), Calabria and Naples. He is a Sales Representative at Dell Computer. He enjoys hockey and football. Tanya's heritage is from Sicily (Palermo) and Abruzzo (Roccamontepiano). She is a Customer Service Representative at Nothing Bundt Cake. She enjoys cooking, baking, being with family, Catholic faith, Italian traditions and learning Italian. Bella is a Junior at Cardinal Gibbons High School and enjoys ice hockey, cooking and working out. Carmela is a Sophomore at Cardinal Gibbons High School and

enjoys baking, soccer and running. Welcome Vincent: vincentocch@gmail.com and Tanya taynaocch@gmail.com.

Please welcome **Frank Passarelli** who heard about us through the Triangle Lodge Facebook page. Frank is originally from Mount Vernon, NY and lives in Mebane, NC. His heritage is from Cosenza and Florence. He is a retired electrician and enjoys cooking, walking and exercising. Welcome Frank frankpassarelli523@gmail.com.

Please welcome **Dave and Ann Marie DiSerafino** who heard about the Triangle Lodge from member Caroline Connor and husband Sam. Thank you. Dave is originally from Wayne, Pennsylvania and Ann Marie is from Jacksonville, Florida. They live in Raleigh. Dave's heritage is from Rome and Teramo. He retired after 22 years as Lieutenant Colonel in the USAF and as a Project Manager in Healthcare IT. He enjoys pickleball, hiking, cycling, Philadelphia Eagles football, NC State sports and learning to speak Italian. Ann Marie is a retired Exercise Instructor, and she enjoys running, hiking and learning to speak Italian. Welcome Dave ddiserafino@gmail.com and Ann Marie amdiserafino@gmail.com.

Please welcome **Gina Rynties** who heard about us from members Suzy Schmidt and Teresa Johnson. Thank you both. Gina is originally from Livonia, Michigan and lives in Pittsboro, NC. Her heritage is from Cassino and Cairra. She is a retired French Teacher and enjoys travel, scrapbooking, language learning, reading and grandchildren. Welcome Gina ginarynties@gmail.com.

Please welcome **Rosemary Young**, who heard about the Triangle Lodge from her sister Theresa Gibson, who recently joined. Thank you, Theresa. Rosemary is originally from Buffalo, NY and lives in Apex. Her heritage is from Calabria and Abruzzo. She is a Pre-school Teacher and enjoys cooking, gardening, pickleball and playing cards. Rosemary, along with her sister Theresa, is filing for dual citizenship. She welcomes any member who wishes to share their experience when filing for dual citizenship. Welcome Rosemary crmmyoung@gmail.com.

Please welcome **Ronald (Ron) and Anna Gardiner** who heard about the Triangle Lodge from member Celeste Ryan. Thank you, Celeste. Ron is originally from Portage, Wisconsin and Anna is from Middlesex, New Jersey and they live in Benson, NC. Anna's heritage is from Torella del Sannio, Campobasso (Molise) and she is retired after 40 years as an Elementary and Middle

School Teacher. Ron is a US Army veteran (22 years) and retired Elementary School Teacher. They both enjoy reading, music, cooking, games, cards, theater, Scopa, Bocce, and anything Italian. Welcome Anna annamariiegardiner@gmail.com and Ron gardiron@gmail.com.

Please welcome **Laura Bardascino** who heard about the Triangle Lodge while shopping at Capri Flavors Italian Market. Laura is originally from the San Francisco Bay Area and lives in Fuquay Varina. Her heritage is from Burano (Venezia) and Asti (Piemonte) She is Director of Quality Management in Medicaid Health Plan. Laura enjoys pickle ball, golf, hiking, travel, road trips, cooking, wine tasting and being in the sun near water. She has registered for our Bocce tournament, and we look forward to meeting her. Welcome Laura laura95008@yahoo.com.

Please welcome **Dominic (Dom) and Karen Caristo** who are former members and friends of members Mike and Jodi Petilli. Dom is originally from Southampton, Long Island, NY and Karen is from Ligonier, Pennsylvania and they live in Apex. Dom's heritage is from Calabria. He is an Insurance Adjuster for AAA Insurance and enjoys cooking, tennis and golf. Karen is a Realtor and Executive Assistant and enjoys home decorating, exercising and golf. Welcome Dom dcaristo@aol.com and Karen karencaristo@gmail.com

Welcome **Ciro Formisano!** He is another long-time friend, Lodge Business Sponsor, and Italian Themed Business Owner who has become a formal member of the Triangle Lodge. *Ciro is also our 450th Lodge Member. WOW!*

Ciro is originally from Naples, Italy and he is the proud owner of "Mamma Mia! Italian Bistro" in Holly Springs. His menu is terrific, and his dinner specials are truly special. Tonight I had his bracirole special and it was a real treat! Mamma Mia also sponsors wine dinners throughout the year where every course is perfectly matched with an appropriate wine.

Italian-Themed Businesses want to become formal members of our lodge because, together, our members and these businesses, support our Italian American Community to thrive and be increasingly vibrant.

*The Triangle Lodge hopes that you will visit **Ciro** and his team in Holly Springs for a wonderful meal. P.S. Mamma Mia! in Apex is owned by **Ciro's** daughter, **Lea**, and you should check out her great food too!*

Welcome **Ciro** cformisano1@gmail.com.

Support Our Member Owned Italian Themed Businesses

The Triangle Sons and Daughters of Italy in America proudly recognizing Italian themed businesses whose owners are formal members of Triangle Lodge 2817. These businesses support our organization and strive to continue to enhance their products and services for our community. Additionally, they go the extra mile to support our Lodge with discounts, gift cards, gift baskets, charity donations, and hosted events.

Let's support the Italian themed businesses that support us!

[Cape Fear Seafood Company](#) (Home of Our Lodge's Seven Fishes Dinner)

[Capri Flavors Italian Market](#) (Italian Grocery, Deli, & Bakery)

[Compass Global Travel](#) (Provider of Triangle Lodge Trips to Italy)

[Farina Neighborhood Italian Restaurant](#) (Comprehensive Restaurant & Catering Raleigh)

[Georgina's Restaurant and Pizzeria](#) (Comprehensive Restaurant & Catering Morrisville)

[Flights and Fables Travel Agency](#) (Home of Our Lodge's Trips to Italy)

[Melina's Fresh Pasta and Culinary School](#) (Full line of Pastas, Sauces, & Culinary Classes Durham)

[Mr. Cannoli NC & Sweets](#) (Food Truck and Event Dessert Catering)

[Of Love Realty Estate Consulting International](#) (Buy Your Dream Place in Italy)

[Sandra Pesoli Italian Language Classes](#) (Express Your Italian Heritage through Language)

[Mina's Italian Market & Deli](#) (Italian Market & Deli)

[NY Butcher Shoppe](#) (Full line of meats, eat-in restaurant, and wine bar)

See the Triangle Lodge website (www.tsdia.org) for more details on several of the above-named member owned Italian Themed businesses.

Constitutional Court Rejects the Legal Challenge Against Citizenship-By-Descent Reforms

The long-awaited March 11 ruling is here - faster than expected. Italy's Constitutional Court has **REJECTED** a constitutional challenge to the 2025 law that restricts *jure sanguinis* citizenship claims. The case was referred by the Tribunal of Turin, which questioned whether the law violated constitutional principles, including equality and retroactive removal of citizenship rights.



The Constitutional Court dismissed those arguments, meaning the law remains in force for now. However, this is not the final chapter. The Constitutional Court has only released a short press statement. The full written ruling, explaining the judges' legal reasoning, is expected in 30 to 45 days. Additional constitutional challenges from other Italian courts are also still pending. If you are pursuing or considering Italian citizenship by descent, this ruling may affect your path. We'll continue monitoring the situation and sharing updates as new developments emerge. Follow [@dreamofitaly](#) for reliable updates on Italian citizenship law.

Sophia Loren and the Eels of Comacchio

By rita cipalla | February 10, 2026

Most people would not put Sophia Loren and pickled eels in the same sentence. Yet in 1954, the beautiful actress, who had just begun her career a few years earlier at the age of 16, played a worker in an eel factory. Called *La Donna del Fiume* ("The Woman of the River"), the film was set in the small town of Comacchio, located on a lagoon in the Po River delta, about halfway between Venice and Bologna.

Once a main rival for the salt trade with Venice, Comacchio is a charming town off the beaten path. Built on 13 little islands, it's crisscrossed by bridges that span canals and inlets, the streets lined with colorful houses. It's easy to see why it's often called the Little Venice of Emilia-Romagna.

Included within the town limits are the Trepponti, a 17th-century bridge combining five elegant staircases; Pescheria, an ancient fish market still in use today; and the Bridge of Jails (Ponte delle Carceri). The Ospedale

degli Infermi (Invalids' Hospital) has been repurposed, housing a new museum with a collection spanning pre-history to the Middle Ages. The 8th-century *Duomo* and its bell tower are also worth a visit.

As with many small towns, there is an active street scene. Older men gather in small groups to converse in the local dialect, keeping the old language alive, and both young and old take advantage of the flat terrain, perfect for bike-riding or strolling along cobblestone streets.



For centuries, life was a struggle for the inhabitants of Comacchio. They were surrounded by water, prone to flooding, and with little arable land. But this unusual geography, where fresh water and saltwater meet, actually led to the solution: Comacchio turned to fishing for its survival, much of it revolving around eels.

The eel season only lasts a few months, from October to December. The fish would, of course, be eaten fresh,



but the locals also needed a way to preserve their catch for year-round use. In the Middle Ages, people began to marinate the eels to preserve them. The process has changed little over the centuries.

Eels are pretty incredible creatures. They can move easily from salt water to fresh water, produce their own electric current to hunt their prey, and live long lives – up to 80 years in captivity. They are also very tasty.

To understand the importance of the eel trade to Comacchio, spend time in the recently renovated

Manifattura dei Marinati. Built in 1905 as a fish-canning factory, this heritage museum, which opened in 2004, offers an inside look at the town's history and key enterprise. Even the approach to the museum is fascinating: a picturesque covered walkway, the *Loggiato dei Cappuccini*, said to be the longest in Italy.

The *Manifattura* is a working museum. In addition to the displays, it operates as a small production facility, keeping alive the traditional recipes and techniques associated with eel preparation. In the Fire Room, visitors can view the 12 massive brick ovens where the eels are slowly roasted on metal spits. Once cooked, they are cooled, then cut into pieces. In the Vinegar Room, they go into huge vats of water, salt and white vinegar to marinate.



A century ago, eel processing in Comacchio was carried out on a grand scale. The endeavor involved the entire town – men, women and children – and everyone had a job to do. The fish – initially packed in barrels, which were replaced by tin cans in the 1920s – were shipped

throughout Europe and as far away as North America.

The museum displays some of the tools of the trade: several small boats, reed floor mats, the mazzuola or wooden mallet, and the bolaga, a large, distinctive bulb-shaped container made out of woven grasses used to collect and store the eels. Its circular lid, also made of woven materials, kept the fish from swimming back out again.



Stacks of vintage metal cans used for shipping are distinctive with their colorful labels; photos and videos that depict the hard-scrabble life of Comacchio are



also on view. A 1942 black-and-white documentary by Fernando Cerchio, filmed in Comacchio, graphically illustrates the grueling life of the eelers and their families. The footage shows the men going out to sea at night, fighting rain and wind, and the townspeople awaiting their return. When the catch comes in, there are frantic hours of processing hundreds of eels – sorting the fish by size, beheading them, threading them onto large metal skewers, roasting and then marinating them.

Processing and marinating eels in Comacchio was carried out on a grand scale, and the large tins were shipped far and wide (Rita Cipalla)

Visitors can purchase canned eels in the museum gift shop or in many of the shops in town. To learn even more about eels, visit Comacchio during the *Sagra dell'Anguilla*, or Eel Festival, which takes place each fall for several weeks, usually beginning in late September.

Another way to get a taste of the life of the eelers is to take a boat trip around the lagoon, where you'll see flamingos, cormorants, falcons and other water species in a timeless and beautifully preserved estuary environment. With our tour group, we visited a traditional fishing hut used by the eelers during the harvest season. In the 1600s, these "casoni" were made of reeds and marsh plants; later, they were constructed of brick. The hut showcased modest living and sleeping quarters, and some sparse furnishings.

And of course, if you are in Comacchio for lunch or dinner, be sure to order the eel. We had it served two ways: over polenta and grilled on a skewer. As someone who shivered with horror at the thought of eating eel, I must admit: It was delicious!

Easter in Milan

Easter in [Milan](#) (**Pasqua**) is a blend of grand religious solemnity and relaxed outdoor celebration. While it is one of Italy's most important holidays, it follows the local philosophy of "Natale con i tuoi, Pasqua con chi vuoi" (Christmas with your family, Easter with whomever you wish), leading to a more festive and social atmosphere compared to the family-restricted Christmas.

Key Events and Traditions

Easter Sunday Mass at the Duomo: The heart of the celebration is the spectacular Mass at the [Milan Cathedral \(Duomo di Milano\)](#), featuring magnificent choral music. Worshipers often arrive 90 minutes early to secure seats.

La Pasqua del Marinaio: A unique Milanese tradition held on Easter Sunday morning at the [Darsena harbor](#). It involves a ceremonial blessing of boats followed by celebrations along the **Navigli canals**.

Holy Week Processions: On **Good Friday**, a solemn candlelit Via Crucis (Way of the Cross) procession typically starts from the Duomo. Another moving reenactment often takes place at the [Basilica di Sant'Eustorgio](#).



Visita alle Sette Chiese: A cherished tradition where the faithful visit seven different historic churches, such as the [Basilica di Sant'Ambrogio](#) and [Santa Maria delle Grazie](#), for prayer and reflection.

Traditional Easter Foods

Colomba Pasquale: The most iconic Milanese Easter treat is this dove-shaped sweet bread. Similar to panettone but lighter, it is topped with pearl sugar and almonds and symbolizes peace.



Torta Pasqualina: A savory puff pastry pie filled with ricotta, spinach, and whole hard-boiled eggs, commonly enjoyed during picnics on Easter Monday.



Risotto alla Milanese: This creamy, saffron-infused rice dish is a staple of the Easter lunch, its golden color representing prosperity.

Agnello al Forno: Roast lamb, seasoned with rosemary and garlic, remains the traditional centerpiece for many Milanese families.

Artisanal Chocolate Eggs: Local pastry shops like [Pasticceria Marchesi](#) and [Peck](#) display sophisticated chocolate sculptures often containing handcrafted surprises.



Easter Monday (Pasquetta)

Known as "Little Easter," this is a national holiday dedicated to relaxation and outdoor fun.

Picnics in the Park: Locals flock to [Parco Sempione](#) or the [Idroscalo](#) lake for leisurely picnics with friends.

Day Trips: Many families take a short train ride to [Lake Como](#) for scenic boat rides and lakeside meals.



Italian Easter Bread

By [James Delmage](#)

SERVINGS: 8 breads



Italian Easter bread is a slightly sweet brioche-style braided bread. Characterized by an Easter egg nestled in the center, and a dusting of sprinkles, this bread is a wonderful treat to serve for Easter breakfast!

Ingredients

For the dough

- 5 cups (625 grams) all-purpose flour
- 3 teaspoons instant dry yeast
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1/2 cup (120 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons lemon zest or the zest of 2 lemons
- 11 tablespoons (156 grams) unsalted butter melted
- 1 cups (240 grams) whole milk warmed
- 3 large eggs beaten
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract

remaining ingredients

- 8 large eggs whole uncooked eggs in their shells
- food coloring for eggs
- 1 large egg for egg wash
- Easter pastel sprinkles

Instructions

For the dough

- Combine the flour, yeast, salt, sugar, and lemon zest in a stand mixer and combine.
- Add the beaten eggs, warmed milk, melted butter, and vanilla. Use the paddle attachment for 1 minute then switch to the bread hook and knead for 8 minutes on a low to medium speed.

- Remove the dough and transfer to a lightly oiled bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Let the dough rise in a warm place for 2-3 hours or until it doubles in size.

Coloring the eggs

- Color raw (preferably white) eggs with your choice of food coloring, then let them dry completely. Before using the eggs lightly rinse and dry the eggs. This will help prevent the egg coloring from bleeding onto the dough.

Making the Easter bread

- After two hours move the dough to a lightly floured work surface. Cut the dough into 8 equal-sized pieces. Cut those pieces in half for a total of 16 pieces.
- Shape and roll each piece into a roughly 10-12 inch rope.
- Attach two pieces together on one end then form a braid and then a circle shape. Pinch the other end together and place each circle on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Repeat the process for the remaining dough, then insert a colored egg into the center of each wreath. **Note:** You can opt to make longer-style double wreaths by using more dough. The choice is yours.
- Cover the baking tray with plastic wrap and allow the Easter bread to rise for another 30 minutes.
- Preheat oven to 350f.
- Beat the egg and 1 tablespoon of water together to make an egg wash.
- Lightly brush each circle of braided dough with the egg wash then top with sprinkles. Bake the Easter bread for 25 minutes or until golden and serve right away.

Notes

- Using a scale is recommended for accurate results but this recipe's measurements aren't too critical. If using cups, avoid packing the flour into the cup.
- Diastatic malt powder can be used (no more than 2 teaspoons) to increase the browning of the bread.
- The bread is best baked and eaten the same day, but the dough can be prepared a day in advance and refrigerated overnight. The dough will need to warm up for 2-3 hours outside of the fridge before using the next day.
- Leftovers can be saved for up to 5 days and is excellent for [French toast](#).

Pizzagaina (pizza rustica)

By [James Delmage](#)

Servings: 8



Pizzagaina is a savory meat pie consisting of homemade flaky pie crust filled with creamy ricotta, mozzarella, Pecorino Romano, provolone, mortadella, and salami.

Ingredients

For the dough

- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour or 450 grams
- 2 sticks cold unsalted butter cubed
- 1/3 cup milk
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar

For the filling

- 7 large eggs
- 32 ounces ricotta drained overnight
- 1 cup Genoa salami cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 1 cup mortadella cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 1 cup prosciutto cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 3/4 cup provolone cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 3/4 cup mozzarella cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 3/4 cup Pecorino Romano grated
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Remaining ingredients

- 1 large egg yolk beaten
- 2 teaspoons water
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter for greasing the dish

Prep the dough

- Add the flour, salt, and sugar to a bowl of a food processor and pulse to mix the ingredients. Add

the cold butter cubes and pulse for about 20-30 seconds or until the mix is well incorporated but still crumbly. You should have small coarse pieces and a grainy mix.

- Next, add the eggs and milk and pulse again until the dough is formed. It will be kind of a mess at this point which is fine.
- Place the dough onto a work surface and knead for a few seconds only. You just want to bring the dough together so that it forms a stuck-together mass. Cut into two balls. Make one large ball with 2/3's of the dough and the other smaller one with the remaining dough.
- Wrap the balls tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour before using. The dough can be made 1 day ahead of time.

Make the filling

- In a very large bowl mix the ricotta, eggs, pepper, and nutmeg until smooth.
- To the bowl, add the cubed prosciutto, salami, mortadella, mozzarella, provolone, and grated Pecorino. Mix together.

Assemble and bake

- Remove the dough from the fridge about 10-15 minutes before rolling to prevent it from cracking.
- Preheat the oven to 375f and set one rack to the lowest level and the second to the middle level. Grease a (9 by 3") springform pan with butter or lard.
- Roll out the larger ball to a circle approximately 1/4-inch thick and about 15-inches round. Place the dough into the pan and tuck in the edges letting the excess overhang. Trim off the excess overhanging dough. Any open spots should be patched with the excess dough.
- Pour the filling into the pie pan, leaving at least a 1/4-inch unfilled. If needed, use a spatula to level out the filling.
- Roll out the second smaller ball to a circle a bit larger than the pie pan. Cut into 1-inch wide strips for a lattice.
- Place the strips in a lattice formation about a 1-inch apart. Make sure to overlap the dough so that the strips stay down while baking. Alternatively, you can forgo the lattice and just cover the pie with the second circle and cut a slit for venting. The choice is yours.
- Use your fingers or a fork to press the strips down into the corners so that they stick. If needed a touch of water can be used to "glue" the strips to the sides. Cut off any excess dough.
- Beat the egg yolk with 2 teaspoons of water and brush the top of the pie crust.

- Bake for 20 minutes on the lowest rack, then move the pan up to the middle rack and continue baking. Full bake time will be approximately 60-70 minutes. Check the pie at the halfway point and if it looks like it's getting too brown cover loosely with foil. Once golden brown, remove from the oven and place on a wire rack to cool.
- After baking, let the pie cool for 2 hours before removing the sides of the springform. The pie can be eaten the same day though it's better to let it sit overnight in the refrigerator. Place the pizzagaina in the oven at 350f for a few minutes the next day. The heat will slightly melt the butter and allow easy removal of the bottom pan plate.
- Pizzagaina is best made the day before and eaten the next day after it has settled and cooled. It can be served either cold or warm. Enjoy!

Notes

- Makes 8 large servings.
- Pizzagaina (Pizza Rustica) is best served cold or at room temperature. Traditionally the dish is served for Easter breakfast or brunch.
- All different meats can be used. Soppressata, capocollo, ham, pepperoni, or even cubed turkey all work great.
- Cheeses like fontina, scamorza, caciocavallo, and smoked mozzarella all work well.
- Leftovers can be saved for up 4 days in the refrigerator.

Torta Pasqualina

<https://www.marcellinaincucina.com/torta-pasqualina>

Servings: 4

1 8-inch (20cm) springform (or cake) pan (Alternatively use a 9-inch pie pan)



Ingredients

1 pound (450 grams) baby spinach leaves See Note 1
 12 ounces (340 grams) fresh ricotta cheese See Note 2
 2 ounces (60 grams) grated pecorino Romano
 2 eggs
 ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
 1 teaspoon salt or to taste
 ¼ teaspoon black pepper or to taste
 17½ ounces (500 grams) store-bought frozen puff pastry approximately (See Note 3)
 5 eggs extra
 olive oil for greasing the pan

Instructions

Filling

- Rinse the baby spinach thoroughly and remove any large stems.
- Preheat a large frying pan or a large saucepan over medium heat.
- Add the spinach to the pan and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until wilted. You may need to do this in batches.
- Remove the spinach from the heat and let it cool.
- Once the spinach has cooled, use your hands to squeeze out any excess moisture.
- Place the spinach onto a cutting board and chop finely.
- In a large mixing bowl, combine the squeezed spinach, ricotta cheese, pecorino Romano cheese, 2 eggs, ground nutmeg, salt, and pepper. Mix well until all ingredients are thoroughly combined.

Assembly and Baking of the torta

- Follow the package instructions to thaw the frozen puff pastry sheets and keep them chilled.
- Prepare an 8-inch springform pan by greasing it with olive oil.
- Use the springform pan to trace a circle on one sheet of the pastry, which will be used as the top crust.
- Place the second sheet of pastry on a lightly floured surface and press the remaining pastry on to extend the dough so that it is large enough to line the springform pan. Line the oiled pan with the extended puff pastry sheet. Cut off excess pastry and use it to patch up where needed.
- Fill the pastry-lined pan with the spinach and ricotta mixture, and even out the surface.
- Make five deep indentations in the filling using the back of a tablespoon. Carefully crack an egg into each indentation, being cautious not to break the yolk. Add a tiny sprinkle salt to each egg.
- Use the previously cut circle of pastry to cover the filling, ensuring that any excess pastry is trimmed off. Fold the sides over onto the top and press the pastry edges together to seal. Brush the top of the pastry with olive oil.
- Create small vents on the top of the pastry using a sharp knife. Preheat the oven and place the pan in it, baking for 55-60 minutes or until the pastry is golden brown, puffed, and the filling is firm.
- Remove the pan from the oven and let the pie to cool for at least 30 minutes before releasing from the springform pan. Serve warm or at room temperature.
- Refrigerate if not serving on the day of baking.

Top Tips

- Squeeze excess moisture from the cooked spinach to avoid soggy crusts.
- Drain the ricotta.
- Filling can be made in advance and stored in the fridge.
- Cut the circle for the top before lining the pan. Use the other pastry sheet and any extra pastry cut-offs to make a sheet of pastry large enough to line the springform pan. It doesn't have to be perfect. Just patch up any holes.