



Triangle
Lodge 2817



Serving the North Carolina Triangle since 2004

IL GIORNALE DI TSDIA

Luglio, 2026

Table of Contents

TSDIA Calendar of Events.....	2
July Birthdays.....	2
Good & Welfare.....	2
TSDIA Lodge 2817 - 2026 Scholarship Winners.....	3
Annual Picnic.....	4
Triangle Lodge Launches Inaugural Book Club Meet-Up!.....	5
Triangle Lodge #2817 Celebrates America with Inaugural Community Service Awards.....	5
IL FORUM DELLA LOGGIA TRIANGOLO - The Triangle Lodge Forum.....	6
New Members.....	7
Support Our Member Owned Italian Themed Businesses.....	10
Member Business Spotlight - Mina's Italian Market & Deli.....	10
The Spritzes and Carbonaras That Ate Italy.....	11
Where Do Sicilians Spend their Vacations Inside Sicily?.....	13
Top Sicilian Dishes Sicilians Truly Eat.....	14
Busiate alla Trapanese.....	15
Bussolai' Venetian Butter Cookies.....	16



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

Jul 18 – Durham Bulls

Jul 26 - Triangle Lodge Executive Council Open Meeting for Members

Jul 27 – Conversational Italian

Jul 28 - Scopa

Aug 8 – Palio di Siena

Aug 25 – Scopa

Aug 31 – Conversational Italian

Sep 19 – Festa Italiana

Sep 22 – Scopa

Sep 28 – Conversational Italian

Oct 10 – Italian Heritage Celebration

Oct 17 – Sicily Trip

Oct 26 – Conversational Italian

Oct 27 – Scopa

Nov 24 – Scopa

Nov 30 – Conversational Italian

Dec 5 – Christmas Dinner Maggiano's

REMINDER: The Triangle Lodge membership directory is for the sole use of members if they need to contact another member. The roster cannot be shared or given to any person or organization outside of the Triangle Lodge.

July Birthdays

Diane Goodman (3), Ann DeLorenze (5), David Gifford (5), Lorraine Passaretti (5), Teresa Johnson (6), Anna Gardiner (8), Joanne Tucci (9), Karen Rutigliano (10), Paul Caci (11), Kerri Kosakowski (11), Becky Stinnett (11), Ralph Iovino (12), Katherine Mooney (12), Mark Savoldi (12), Meghan Schrottenboer (12), Timothy Curtin (13), Annette Amoroso (13), Ethan Biamonte (14), Melanie Elliott (14), Sergio Simonettli (14), Arnold Coda (15), Julie Galens (15), Peter Galluzzo (15), Angela Morrissey (17), Cheryl Cavalieri (18), Pat Corpora (18), Chris Huddleston (18), Donna Levy (18), Krista Caviletti (19), Penny Smith (19), Frank DeMaria (20), Andrian Schaller (20), Carol Blackford (21), Mary Muth (22), Lauren Scheetz (23), William Ward (23), Marne Patana (27), Joseph Smolenski III (27).



Good & Welfare

Lisa Anne Giannuzzi, daughter of members Fran and Bob Giannuzzi, and sister of Triangle Lodge member Caroline Connor passed away peacefully at the age of 51, at home on June 15, 2026, after a two-year battle with ALS. We are deeply saddened by this passing of a young energetic and spirited woman brought on by the aggressive and devastating nature of ALS over a short 18-month period. Memorial Donations may be made to ALS United North Carolina (<https://alsnc.org/donate/>) and Feeding San Diego (https://give.feedingsandiego.org/fundraiser/7361311?is_new=true).



Letter from the President

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Calling all Triangle Lodge Ambassadors! Don't look to your right, left, or behind; I am referring to you.

Our Lodge is currently running a new member special. This is the ideal time to join, and I need your help to refer new members.

If a member joins now and pays the annual rate for the membership cycle September 1, 2026 - August 31, 2027, we will provide them with Free Membership for the period now through September 1st. That's right, members can get 14 months of membership for the price of 12 if they join in July 2026.

Our Lodge is among the largest in the nation offering an extraordinary and comprehensive menu of events at one of the lowest annual membership dues rates. Plus we offer a discounted rate when additional members join in the same household. We are hitting all cylinders across social, cultural, culinary, educational, language, games, day trips, Italy travel, and special interests and hobbies. If a person enjoys the Spirit of Italy, we are pulling out a chair at the table for members of all ages and ethnicities.

If someone joins and they mention your name, you will be formally recognized and publicized in our communication channels as a Triangle Lodge Ambassador. Plus, we will be surprising the Ambassadors with special periodic rewards. Tell your referral to contact me and request membership information at tsdoi.president@gmail.com.

In addition to having new members mention your name when they join, you can also give me (tsdoi.president@gmail.com) a prospective member's name and email address and I will contact them about membership. If they join, then you become an Ambassador and receive the publicity and periodic surprise rewards. If you have already made a successful referral in the last 6 months, we are going to do a look back and give you Ambassador recognition.

We wish to maximize referrals in the next 90 days. Please help us recruit new members, and you will earn special Ambassador recognition status and surprise rewards.

Don Cimorelli

President Triangle Lodge 2817 OSDIA



TSDIA Lodge 2817 - 2026 Scholarship Winners

On behalf of the Triangle Lodge Scholarship Committee and the entire Lodge, we are pleased to award a \$1,000 scholarship to support the upcoming academic pursuits of Peter Manns and Victoria (Tori) Horner.

PETER MANNS



Peter Manns is graduating from East Chapel Hill High School with a weighted GPA of 4.55, and he will be attending UNC Chapel Hill in the Fall where he will explore his interest in business and medicine. He is the grandson of Triangle Lodge Members Jan and Tony DiSantostefano.

Peter's pride in his Italian Heritage has clearly been influenced through his travel to Rome, Italy where he soaked up history, culture, food, and soccer.



More importantly, his grandparents and mom have played a very active role in his life incorporating Italian culture through culinary learning, social activities such as Italian card games, and instilling the importance of

giving back to the community.

In his essay he wrote "These moments remind me that heritage is not only about where you come from, but about the values and traditions like "family time" that you carry forward.

Examples of Peter's accomplishments include:

- Team Lead for Water Quality Monitoring, Assessment, and Clean-up at Bolin Creek Site & Eno River
- Food Drive Leader
- Volunteer at Ronald McDonald House
- Speaker Coordinator for Nat. Tech. Honor Society
- College Board AP Scholar
- North Carolina Scholar
- Latin Honors

Somehow Peter also finds the time to devote about 20 hours per week playing league soccer for the past 10 years at Triangle United Soccer, NC Football Club, and East Chapel Hill High School. He's also a lifeguard too!

Peter's credentials clearly bring to life his passion for excelling at academics, athletics, and volunteerism and having an impact in the community.

VICTORIA (TORI) HORNER



Tori Horner is graduating from Willow Spring High School with a weighted GPA of 4.0., and will be attending Eastern Carolina University. She is the daughter of Triangle Lodge Member Monica Inzaina.

Tori's appreciation for her Italian heritage has been cultivated by her mother throughout her life. Tori holds dual citizenship with Italy, and she is well travelled to her family's roots in Sardinia, and visited Florence, Rome, Pisa, Bologna, Verona, and many other small towns. Perhaps the most impactful way that Tori's grasp of Italian culture has been cemented is by repeatedly hosting her Italian cousins at her home during the summers where native Italians and Italian Americans teach each other. In her essay Tori wrote "Family history has always been important to my family and our origin

story is celebrated".

Tori is a multi-faceted performing artist and will be pursuing a degree in music.



Examples of Tori's accomplishments include:

- Tri-M Music Honor Society
- Varsity Dance Team
- Spirit of America Dance Stars
- Isenberg Entertainment Mentorship Program
- American Dance Championships
- Star Talent National Dance Finalist
- Velocity Dance Scholarship Recipient
- Trained vocalist and featured in many stage productions, film, tv projects, and even modeled for Vogue Italia
- Competitive dancer for 10 years and is employed as a Dance Instructor and choreographer

Tori's credentials reflect her appreciation for the arts and Italy. In fact, her audition for the ECU School of Music was singing the Italian piece "Dolce Scherza".

On behalf of the Triangle Lodge Scholarship Committee and the entire Lodge, we are pleased to award you a \$1,000 scholarship to support your upcoming academic pursuits.

Annual Picnic

Over 200 members and guests attended this years picnic making it the largest event we have ever hosted.

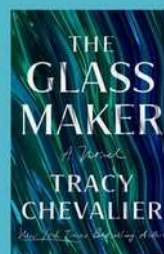


Triangle Lodge Launches Inaugural Book Club Meet-Up!

The creativity behind our Lodge programming is endless. Whether the book's setting takes place in Italy or touches upon Italian or Italian American culture, our Book Club is ready to dive in and discuss.

Thank you Jill Odle for facilitating our inaugural meet-up. Ongoing sessions are planned. Watch for an email from Don Cimorelli for details.

This is simply another reason to join our Lodge, and book club events are included in your membership.



Triangle Lodge Inaugural Book Club

Our Facilitator

and Book Club Attendees



Check out the recipe for **Venetian Sugar Cookies** found at the end of this newsletter. It was a big hit at the book club.

HAPPINESS IS



Talking about books with friends
and eating cookies

Triangle Lodge #2817 Celebrates America with Inaugural Community Service Awards



Community Service is an integral component of who we are as a country. Service to others makes individuals, families, organizations, and our country stronger. As America celebrates its 250th Birthday, the Triangle Lodge honored Members Kristen Zimmer and Nick Verna with inaugural Lodge Community Service Awards.

Kristen Zimmer chaired the Triangle Lodge Tia DeMaria Memorial Bocce Tournament which raised \$10,000 for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

Nick Verna chairs multiple Triangle Lodge events throughout the year where the Lodge supports the Family Promise charity and non-profit organization to provide transitional housing and comprehensive support services to families experiencing homelessness.

Additionally in 2026, the Triangle Lodge raised more than \$2,400 for Cyclone Harry Disaster Relief in Sicily.



As America celebrates its 250th Birthday, the Triangle Lodge continues to demonstrate it is a valuable difference maker in the form of community service.

Congratulations Kristen and Nick on your Triangle Lodge Community Service Awards.

IL FORUM DELLA LOGGIA TRIANGOLO - The Triangle Lodge Forum

Sunday, July 26, 2026, at 3:00 pm, Keller Williams Legacy Realty Office, Apex, NC (1483 Beaver Creek Commons Drive, Apex, NC 27502)



Come get a close-up and inside view of the Triangle Lodge and how the Executive Council makes the magic happen!

This experience is like taking a backlot tour at a Film Studio or being in the Studio audience to observe production underway. The Executive Council has a Special Feature Presentation for you!

Provide your brainstorm ideas for new types of engaging experiences for 2027. You get to put your fingerprints on the planning blueprint that we will go after on your behalf. We know that you have creative suggestions for the next 12-18 months and wish to hear from you.

Explore if you have potential interest in serving on 2027 committees, chair assignments, or pursuing future Council positions.

Enjoy a Sunday Afternoon with Free Social Hour, Meal, & Drinks.

Click on the SignUp Genius Link below to register:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040A4DAAAF2EA6FE3-64441700-thetriangle>

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

Sheri and Kyle Brady Durkin - Sheri and her son Brady heard about the Triangle Lodge through our Facebook page. Sheri is originally from Niagara Falls, NY and Brady is from Raleigh. They live in Durham. Her heritage is from Abruzzi and Sicily. She is a semi-retired Assistant Principal and Exceptional Children (EC) Director. She enjoys cooking, Broadway, sports games, concerts, traveling, learning Italian language and learning to play Bocci Ball. Brady is a Line Cook and enjoys fishing, traveling and campfires. Welcome Sheri sheris16nc@yahoo.com and Brady bubbabeen9@gmail.com.

Ronald Conti - Ron heard about the Triangle Lodge from a friend. He is originally from Cleveland, Ohio and lives in Fuquay Varina. His heritage is from Sant'Agata, Messina, Sicily. He is retired from a career in Facilities Management and enjoys the Italian language and culture. Welcome Ron ronald.conti@gmail.com.

Maryann and Craig Valente - Maryann and Craig heard about the Triangle Lodge through our Facebook page and by attending our Scopa event. They are both originally from New York; Maryann is from Brooklyn and Craig is from Rome and they live in Cary. Their heritage is from Naples and Florence, Maryann works in Health Care and stays busy parenting. Craig owns and operates a small transport company and enjoys speaking Italian. Welcome Maryann maryann.valente@gmail.com and Craig mkarston@yahoo.com.

Joseph Grippi - Joseph heard about the Triangle Lodge through our brochure that he obtained while shopping at Capri Flavors Italian Market. Joseph is originally from Detroit, Michigan and lives in Raleigh. His heritage is from Palermo, Sicily and he is a Key Account Manager at a RTP Chemical Company. His interests/hobbies are golf, gardening, beach, walking/hiking and eating food. Welcome Joseph joe@ohp.com.

John and Debbie Piazza - John and Debbie heard about us from a friend. They are both originally from Massapequa, Long Island, NY and live in Durham. John's heritage is from Palermo, Sicily and he retired from a career in Mortgage Lending at Citibank.

Debbie's heritage is from Bari and Trapani, Sicily and she is a Home Care Professional. They enjoy cooking, pickleball, and small music venues (jazz and old rock). Welcome John johnp11758@gmail.com and Debbie dpiazza11758@gmail.com.

Penny (Stephanie) Smith - Penny heard about us from her best friend and Triangle Lodge member Laura Russell. Thank you, Laura. Penny is originally from Westfield, New York and lives in Cary. Her heritage is from Casalincontrada a town in the province of Chieti, Abruzzo. She is a Senior Manager in Software Development at SAS Institute. Her interests/hobbies are crocheting, reading, video games, healthy lifestyle and baking. Welcome Penny pennysmithnc@gmail.com.

Nicholas and Samantha Giuggio - Nicholas and Samantha heard about the Triangle Lodge through our Facebook page. They are both originally from Massachusetts; Nicholas is from East Longmeadow and Samatha is from Feeding Hills. They live in Apex. Nicholas' heritage is from Naples and Calabria, and he is owner of Apex Wings Bar and Grill. His interests / hobbies are golf, reading and walking. Samantha's heritage is from Calabria and Ragusa, Sicily and she is an Executive Real Estate Consultant. She enjoys walking, the beach, family, food and music. Welcome Nicholas ngiuggio@gmail.com and Samantha sgiuggio@yohoo.com.

Rosemarie Morelli - Rosemarie heard about us from her daughter and through the Triangle Lodge Facebook page. Rosemarie is originally from Bayonne, New Jersey and lives in Fuquay Varina. Her heritage is from Naples and Casteltermini, Sicily. She is retired from a career in Finance and Medical Coding and enjoys baking, candy making, shopping and meeting new people. Welcome Rosemarie nicolebauer16@gmail.com.

Paula Bruno - Paula heard about us through the Triangle Lodge Facebook page. Paula is originally from Springfield, Massachusetts and lives in Durham. Her heritage is from Calabria and Sicily. She is an Administrative Coordinator at UNC Chapel Hill, and enjoys hiking, exercising, drinking wine, traveling and being at the beach. Welcome Paula paulajbruno@hotmail.com.

Channah Wells - Channah heard about us while shopping in the Capri Flavors Italian Market. Channah is originally from Phoenix, Arizona and lives in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Her heritage is from Calabria and Sicily and she is a Resort Hospitality Specialist. She

enjoys crocheting, socializing, entertainment, hosting, reading and spending time with her family and dog. Welcome Channah wellschannah@gmail.com.

Lucy Funiciello - Lucy heard about the Triangle Lodge from member Fran Giannuzzi. Thank you, Fran. She is originally from Poughkeepsie, New York and lives in Garner. Her heritage is from Naples and she is Office Manager NC Forest Services - Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in Raleigh. She enjoys church, movies, games, cooking, baking, eating, road trips, beach, mountains, music, dancing and hanging out with friends. Welcome Lucy lfuniciello1968@gmail.com.

Catherine Ward - Catherine heard about the Triangle Lodge from her son and member Billy Ward. Thank you, Billy. Catherine is originally from Bethpage, Long Island, NY and lives in Morrisville. Her heritage is from Maschito and she is an Instructional Teacher's Assistant at the Franciscan School in Raleigh. She enjoys cooking, baking, watching sports and listening to music. Welcome Catherine wardc0125@gmail.com.

Midge Bowers - Midge heard about the Triangle Lodge from members John Vitale and Susan Denman. Thank you, both. Midge is joining as a Social Member. She is originally from East Meadow, Long Island, NY and lives in Durham. She is a Professor and Nurse Practitioner at Duke and enjoys sports, arts, theater, travel and reading. Welcome Midge midge2031@gmail.com.

Janice Newell - Janice heard about the Triangle Lodge through our Facebook page. She is originally from New Haven, Connecticut and lives in Garner. Her heritage is from Forio, Ischia and Sant'Antimo, Naples. She is a Certified Medical Coder and enjoys cooking, baking, Mustang automobile, bowling and Carolina Hurricane hockey. Welcome Janice jcnewell58@hotmail.com.

Michael Spero - Michael heard about the Triangle Lodge from member Dave DeFalco. Thank you, Dave. He is originally from Mount Vernon, New York and lives in Cary. His heritage is from Northern and Central Italy. He works at IBM and is retiring soon. He enjoys working out, playing ball, hockey, socializing, traveling, beach, mountains, skiing and cooking. Welcome Michael mas1991@aol.com.

Father Izrael Thabang Nkadimeng - Father Thabang heard about the Triangle Lodge through social media. He was born in an Italian neighborhood in Johannesburg, South Africa and his adopted parents are from Taranto - Puglia region. As a seminarian he lived in Rome, Pescara and Taranto. He was the first African born Italian priest of Holy Rosary Church, the Italian national parish in Washington, DC. He currently lives in Manchester, New Hampshire and will be relocating to the Durham area to conduct research at Duke Divinity School. His interests/hobbies are reading, writing, teaching/lecturing, cooking Italian dishes,

going to the orchestra, singing and hiking. Welcome Father Thabang father.thabang@gmail.com

Cassie Volpe - Cassie heard about the Triangle Lodge from member/owner Anthony Misso while shopping in Capri Flavors Italian Market. Thank you, Anthony. She is originally from Easton, Maryland and lives in Apex. She is joining as a Social Member. She is owner of a Marketing Agency and her interests/hobbies are learning Languages, cooking, hiking, playing piano, and hanging out with family. Welcome Cassie cassie.volpe@gmail.com.

Donna Fussell - Donna heard about the Triangle Lodge from member Gina Cozzi Noble. Thank you, Gina. Donna is originally from Glen Cove, Long Island, NY and lives in Raleigh. Her heritage is from Sturno, a town north of Naples. She is a retired Elementary and Special Education School Teacher. She enjoys gardening, cooking, Mahjong, and traveling. Welcome Donna bdfussell@gmail.com.

Sandy Richardson - Sandy heard about us from Triangle Lodge member Trish Green. Thank you, Trish. Sandy is originally from Geneva, Illinois and lives in Cary. Her heritage is from Tuscany and she is a retired Elementary School Educator. She enjoys biking, golf, reading and pickleball. Welcome Sandy labmom64@aol.com.

Bill Pomarico - Bill heard about the Triangle Lodge from his wife. He is originally from Hudson Valley, NY and lives in Cary. His heritage is from Northern Italy and he lives in Cary. He does Construction Homebuilding and enjoys golf. Welcome Bill bill@pomaricoconstruction.com.

Nicole Bauer - Nicole heard about the Triangle Lodge from Jersey Girls of the Triangle. She is originally from Rutherford, NJ and lives in Apex. Her heritage is from Naples and Sicily and she is a retired Attorney. She enjoys cooking and socializing. Welcome Nicole nicolebauer16@gmail.com.

Sal Tringali - Sal is a former member who has relocated to Fuquay Varina. His heritage is from Sicily and he is Software Engineer. His interests/hobbies are 3D printing, travel and Artificial Intelligence. Welcome Sal saltringali15@gmail.com.

Gary and Claire Forsyth - Gary and Claire heard about us from Triangle Lodge members Maryann and Barry Gilbert. Thank you, both. Gary is originally from Oswego, NY and Claire is from Scotch Plains, NJ and they live in Clayton. Claire's heritage is from Abruzzo and Calabria and she is retired from a career with Verizon. She enjoys cooking and reading. Gary is retired from a career with Bell Labs and he enjoys history. Welcome Gary and Claire cgforsyth@comcast.net.

Janet Salvio-Littlejohn - Janet heard about us from Triangle Lodge member Sarah Danevich. Thank you, Sarah. Janet is originally from Queens, NY and lives in Cary. Her heritage is from Naples and Sicily. She is a retired Elementary School, Third Grade Educator. She enjoys lots of dancing, singing and crafts. Welcome Janet janetlittlejohn2@gmail.com.

Linda Leonard - Linda heard about the Triangle Lodge from the Triangle Woman's Italian Heritage Club (TWIHC). She is originally from Brooklyn, NY and lives in Cary. Her heritage is from Abruzzo and she is retired from IBM and Bayer Environmental Science. She enjoys mahjong, Bunco, and researching health issues. Welcome Linda lindaleonard1@yahoo.com.

Karen and Matthew Rutigliano - Karen and her son Matthew join John Rutigliano who recently became a Triangle Lodge member. They heard about us from their good friend and Triangle Lodge member Frank Demaria. Thank you, Frank. Karen is originally from Miami, Florida and Matthew is from Apex. Their heritage is from Troia, province of Foggia, Apulia region and Banale in Stenico, Trento province. Karen is an Administrative Assistant, and she enjoys travel, art, pilgrimage and singing. Matthew is a Validation Engineer and enjoys soccer, travel, and exercise. Welcome Karen krutigli2007@gmail.com and Matthew matrutig@gmail.com.

Elizabeth Pesapane - Elizabeth heard about us from Triangle Lodge member Jim Pepe. Thank you, Jim. Elizabeth is originally from New Haven, Connecticut and lives in Durham. Her heritage is from Naples and is retired from the Yale School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics Research Administration. She enjoys cooking, baking, photography, gardening, reading and traveling. Welcome Elizabeth bpez59@outlook.com.

Barbara Leone - Barbara heard about us from Triangle Lodge member Jim Pepe. Thank you, Jim. Barbara is originally from Mount Morris, NY and lives in Durham. Her heritage is from Valledolmo, Palermo, Sicily and she is a retired Dental Hygienist. She enjoys cooking and reading. Welcome Barbara bleone1@nc.rr.com.

Joseph D'Amore - Joseph heard about the Triangle Lodge from recently joined member, Barbara Leone. Thank you, Barbara. Joseph is originally from Brooklyn, NY and lives in Durham. His heritage is from Naples and he is a Clinical Immunologist. He enjoys cooking, history and gardening. Welcome Joe iluv2cuk@gmail.com.

Joseph Cozzi - Joseph heard about Triangle Lodge from his daughter and member Gina Cozzi Noble. Thank you, Gina. Joseph is originally from Chicago, Illinois and lives in Raleigh. His heritage is from Senerchia in the Campania region. He is semi-retired from Sales of bank security equipment. He enjoys photography, shotgun sports and Ikebana (a traditional Japanese art of flower arrangements) Welcome Joe joseph_cozzi@yahoo.com.

The Lucky Pine Cone

<https://www.visitsicily.info/en/the-sicilian-lucky-pine-cone/>



Among the most recognizable symbols of Sicilian tradition, the lucky pinecone occupies a special place. Found on balconies, in courtyards, in homes, and in artisan workshops across the island, the pinecone is much more than a decorative object: it is an emblem of abundance, fertility, and good luck, deeply rooted in Sicilian culture and collective imagination.

Part of the flavors and knowledge of tradition, the pinecone tells the story of a Sicily made up of ancient symbols, craftsmanship, and a connection to the land.

The pinecone has its origins in the ancient world. Already in Greek and Roman times, it was considered a symbol of life, regeneration, and immortality, due to its shape and the large number of seeds it contains. In Sicily, a crossroads of civilizations, this meaning has become layered over time, becoming a sign of good luck linked to family prosperity and continuity.

With the advent of Christianity, the pinecone retained its symbolic value, becoming associated with rebirth and hope, and finding its place in architecture, decoration, and the applied arts.

The pinecone has always been considered a lucky charm. Given as a gift on important occasions, such as weddings, inaugurations, new homes, or businesses, it is a symbol of success, fertility, and well-being. Traditionally placed at the entrance to houses or on balconies, the pinecone has the symbolic function of protecting and attracting positive energy, becoming an integral part of the island's urban and rural landscape.

Buying or receiving a pinecone does not just mean taking home a decorative object, but choosing a story made up of history, identity, and tradition.

A simple and powerful symbol, capable of recounting, even today, the cultural and spiritual richness of Sicily.

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 (Offers custom individual Italy Travel Support, and Group Trips to Italy)

Flights and Fables Travel Agency (Offers custom individual Italy Travel Support, and Group Trips to Italy)

Farina Neighborhood Italian Restaurant (Comprehensive Restaurant & Catering Raleigh)

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

Mamma Mias Italian Bistro (Comprehensive Restaurant & Catering Morrisville)

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)

Mina's Italian Market & Deli (Italian Market & Deli)

Nero's Pizzeria (Italian pizzeria in Triangle Shooting Range Academy, Brier Creek, Raleigh).

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

Of Love Realty Estate Consulting International Of Love Realty Estate Consulting International
President@italianrealestateassoc.com (315)794-9629 (Buy Your Dream Place in Italy)

Sandra Pesoli Italian Language Classes 919-618-5579, sandra.pesoli@yahoo.com. (Express Your Italian Heritage through Language)

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

Member Business Spotlight - Mina's Italian Market & Deli



<https://www.minasitalianmarket.com>

8450 Honeycutt Rd Suite 106, Lafayette Village, Raleigh, NC 27615

(919) 594-1544

Mina's Italian Market & Deli is distinguished by its commitment to authenticity; sourcing ingredients directly from Italy and local producers to maintain true Italian flavor and quality.



We offer a range of handmade, artisanal items, including handcrafted sandwiches, sausages, fresh pasta, desserts and traditional Italian meals. We also carry a wide variety of Italian dry goods and offer many catering options from platters, to pans, salads and even large subs. Our knowledgeable staff enhances the experience with personalized recommendations, cooking tips, and pairing advice, capturing the charm of old-school New York delis. We are conveniently located in Lafayette Village with plenty of seating and shopping options to enjoy while you fill up on our Italian foods.



Supporting Italian Culture & Community

The Spritzes and Carbonaras That Ate Italy

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/18/world/europe/italy-tourism-restaurants.html?searchResultPosition=2>

Tourism has turned some Italian streets into monochromatic eating zones. Some officials have banned the opening of new restaurants.



There seemed to be no end to the sprawl of Italian delicacies. Deep-fried arancine rice balls, cannoli and fluorescent Aperol spritzes spilled across the red-and-green checkered tablecloths of the 31 restaurants packed in a single street in Palermo, feeding a polyglot and ecstatic crowd.

"This stretch here is magnificent, it is — bang! Just restaurant after restaurant," said Mark Smith, 55, an Australian tourist sipping an Aperol spritz on the street, Via Maqueda.

For Palermo's mayor, that was one spritz too many. He banned the opening of new eateries on Via Maqueda and surrounding streets this year, conceding that even the holy Italian grail of food had reached its saturation point.

"Too much sugar spoils the coffee," said the mayor, Roberto Lagalla, occasionally chewing on an unlit cigar during an interview in a palazzo inside the historic center of Palermo, Sicily's capital. Central Palermo "must not turn into a food village," he said.

Although Italians are rabid fans of their national cuisine, many now fear it is swamping their city centers, drowning out local stores and everyday life in favor of the tourist trade. In Bologna, Florence, Rome and Turin, streets have been turned into what critics see as endless open-air restaurants serving carbonara in Instagrammable pans as women roll out tagliatelle behind display windows, in zoo-like simulations of Italian grandmothers.

Italians' concerns are not simply a snub at tourists or an aesthetic quibble, but an issue that officials are taking seriously. The authorities in Florence have also banned the opening of new restaurants on over 50

streets. While food is central to Italy's identity and economy, some officials and residents worry that too much of it could undermine the very authenticity it celebrates, turning parts of Italy into a caricatured and anachronistic version of itself.

"It's an amusement park, not a city," Karen Basile, a social worker and a resident of Palermo, said of Via Maqueda.

Over the past decade, increasing tourism has transformed the historic centers of Italian cities. Some have become livelier and more multicultural. Some have started to hollow out from within. Rome's center lost over a quarter of its residents in the past 15 years, and populations fell in the centers of both Venice and Florence at much faster rates than elsewhere in those cities. Italian cities increasingly rely on tourism, which represents 13 percent of the country's economy, and food and wine tourism nearly tripled in the past decade, according to the national tourism agency.

The shift is visible in bed-and-breakfasts nameplates crowding the entryways of residential apartment buildings, and in fleets of minivans, 10-seater golf carts and extra-large suitcases bumping along cobblestones in narrow alleys. And one of the most pervasive urban manifestations of the tourism age is an explosion of limoncello stores, tiramisù bars and ubiquitous bowls of spaghetti that have overwhelmed central streets.

Bars and restaurants around Via Maqueda often display images that reinforce a popular, if stereotypical, image of Italy. Hundreds of new restaurants have opened in the largest and most visited urban destinations over the past decade, as well as in stops that were once less popular.



Tourism alone is not responsible for the closure of traditional shops or market stalls. Italians often shop at supermarkets, at malls or online. Yet for many food vendors, selling a stereotypical lineup of Italian cuisine to high-spending, easy-to-please crowds descending from cruise ships has proved more profitable than eking out a living from a fruit or fish stand that caters to a dwindling local clientele.

"It's as if on a street appeared consumers who were blind, with no taste buds and a stomach made of iron," said Maurizio Carta, Palermo's official in charge of urban planning. "Businesses took advantage."

In Palermo, where tourism accounts for nearly 10 percent of the economy, the number of central city restaurants has doubled in the past 10 years, according to Fipe, the Italian federation of food and tourism businesses. After UNESCO recognized Palermo's Norman and Arab architecture in 2015, visitors began to increase. Last year, over one million arrived, a 50 percent jump from five years earlier.

One day last month, some visitors marveled at the city's opulent cathedral and opera house or the magnolias in its botanical garden. For others, it was more about the arancine.



A cruise ship at the port in Palermo. Tourism accounts for nearly 10 percent of the city's economy.

"It's about the food and drink and being with friends," Jack McAuley, 71, a retired Air Force air traffic controller from Florida, said at a food market in central Palermo between croquette tastings. "I did not care much about the history."

Experts say that a global food frenzy has contributed to what they call "foodification," or food-based gentrification. The Italian government has embraced the culinary obsession, recently submitting a UNESCO heritage bid for its varied and flavorful cuisine.

"Sometimes the Colosseum is an excuse for an American between a cacio e pepe and an amatriciana," said Roberto Calugi, the director general of Fipe, referring to some of Italy's most popular pasta dishes.

Instead of blaming the tourists, the Italian anti-pasta agitators say the government has done too little to develop other industries.

According to a recent ranking by The European House-Ambrosetti, an Italian consultancy, Italy lags in innovation, scoring below all major European economies.

"Why don't we try to get a new Galileo instead of just a bunch of excellent chefs?" asked Salvatore Settis, the former director of Italy's Normale university college in Pisa.

Ms. Basile, the social worker, was disturbed by the ostentatious glee of Palermo's happy hour streets while the region continued to struggle with high youth unemployment, low productivity and a brain drain.

"It's like the last days in Pompeii," she said. "Before Vesuvius erupted, people ate and sang."

Domenica Mondello, 93, has lived in Palermo her entire life. In the past few years, several bed-and-breakfasts have opened on her street near the Mercato del Capo, part of the shift she has witnessed in the city from postwar ruins to a tourist destination.

At the same time, tourism provides a key employment lifeline for many. At an industry conference in Rome in September, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni called tourism an "extraordinary generator of wealth and well-being." Officials in Palermo said that refurbishments aimed at attracting tourists enhanced an area that was dilapidated and dangerous until the early 2000s, still bearing the scars of World War II bombings and a history of Mafia killings.

The tourist upgrades are "making the city center better than it was before," said Alessandro Anello, Palermo's top tourism official.

Valeria Vitrano, a tour guide in Palermo, complained that her go-to vegetable vendor recently converted his stall into a restaurant and that rising rents had pushed her friends out of the city center. Still, she acknowledged that tourism offered her a job.

On a recent Wednesday, visitors to Palermo strolled past the few vegetable and fish stands left in Palermo's Capo food market. The market, which used to sell zucchini, peaches, fish and beef to local residents, now mostly offers spiral pasta on a stick, cannoli-shaped marzipan cookies and deep-fried street food to tourists.



One stopped to ask a fruit seller if he would give her a large, round chestnut from his stall as she wielded a selfie stick.

Paolo di Carlo, 67, a third-generation fruit seller, said that on some days, he barely cleared 100 euros, or about \$117. "We lost all our customers," Mr. Di Carlo said. "Now it's all fast food here."

Where Do Sicilians Spend their Vacations Inside Sicily?

Sicilians love staying close to home and it's different from where foreign tourists usually go — the island is big, diverse, and full of micro-cultures. The most popular spots are:

1. **Aeolian Islands** (Lipari, Salina, Stromboli, Vulcano) - Sicilians treat these volcanic islands as their version of the Caribbean: beaches, boat days, and slow evenings.



2. **Mondello** (Palermo's beach district) - A classic summer weekend escape for Palermitani — turquoise water, beach clubs, and evening strolls.



3. **San Vito Lo Capo** - A favorite for families: shallow water, white sand, and the famous Cous Cous Fest.



4. **Lampedusa & Linosa** - Remote, stunning, and beloved by Sicilians for Spiaggia dei Conigli — often ranked among the best beaches in the world.



5. **Pantelleria** - A rugged, volcanic island between Sicily and Tunisia — thermal springs, dammusi stone houses, and wine.



6. **Ragusa, Noto, and the Baroque Southeast** - Sicilians go here for food, architecture, and quieter beaches.



Top Sicilian Dishes Sicilians Truly Eat

Sicilians have a very clear set of “top dishes” that locals actually eat all the time — and they’re different from what most tourists expect. Based on the most authoritative Sicilian food guides, these are the dishes that consistently appear as the most iconic and widely

1. Pasta con le Sarde (Pasta with Sardines & Wild Fennel) - Fresh sardines, wild fennel, pine nuts, raisins, and saffron tossed with bucatini, topped with toasted breadcrumbs. Considered the signature Sicilian pasta.

2. Pasta alla Norma - Catania’s famous dish: fried eggplant, tomato sauce, basil, and ricotta salata. Simple, deeply Sicilian, and eaten everywhere.

3. Arancini (Stuffed Fried Rice Balls) - Sicily’s most famous street food — risotto balls stuffed (ragù, cheese, pistachio, etc.), breaded, and fried. A daily snack for many Sicilians.

4. Fresh Seafood (Especially Swordfish & Sardines) - Seafood is central to Sicilian cuisine — grilled swordfish, sardines, anchovies, and seafood pasta are staples.

5. Pane e Panelle - Chickpea fritters in bread — a classic Palermo street food eaten by locals for generations.

6. Caponata - Sweet-and-sour eggplant cooked with vinegar, capers, olives, and sometimes raisins. Served as a side or appetizer across Sicily.

7. Busiate alla Trapanese - A western Sicilian pasta with twisted noodles and almond-tomato pesto (pesto Trapanese). Very common in Trapani and Erice.

8. Grilled Meats & Sausages (La Grigliata Siciliana) - Sicilians grill pork, lamb, sausage, and skewers (spiedini), often seasoned simply and cooked over wood or charcoal.

9. Granita with Brioche (Breakfast!) - The most Sicilian breakfast: almond or lemon granita served with a soft brioche bun. Locals eat this all summer.

10. Cannoli - The iconic Sicilian dessert — crisp shell filled with sweet ricotta. Eaten year-round, especially during holidays.

Why These Dishes Matter

Across multiple sources, Sicilian cuisine is described as a blend of Arab, Greek, Spanish, and North African influences, with heavy use of seafood, eggplant, citrus, almonds, and wild herbs. These dishes appear consistently across Sicily’s cities — Palermo, Catania, Trapani, Ragusa, and Messina — and represent what Sicilians actually cook and eat at home and in local trattorias.

Panelle (Sicilian Chickpea Fritters)

<https://www.mangiabedda.com/panelle-sicilian-chickpea-fritters/#recipe>

Panelle are a typical Sicilian street food. These crispy little bites made with chickpea flour are exceptionally delicious served in a panino and drizzled with fresh lemon juice.

Ingredients

1 ½ cups chickpea flour
3 cups water

1 teaspoon coarse sea salt or kosher salt

2 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

avocado oil for frying vegetable or canola oil also works

Instructions

Place the chickpea flour, water, and salt in a medium sized sauce pan and whisk until smooth. Set over medium heat, and whisk constantly as the mixture slowly heats. Cook and keep whisking, scraping the bottom and sides of the pan frequently, until the mixture is smooth, thick and starts to pull away from the sides of the pan, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the parsley.

Pour the mixture onto a parchment covered baking sheet (approximately 12” x 15”) and spread it quickly with a spatula, before it cools and sets, so it fills the pan in an even layer, about ¼ inch thick. Let cool in the refrigerator for approximately an hour, until completely firm.

Once cooled, cut into squares with a sharp knife. Carefully lift the cut pieces from the pan with a spatula or your hands.



To fry the panelle, pour enough oil in a wide heavy skillet to cover the bottom to a depth of ½ inch, and set over medium heat. When the oil is hot, fry the panelle about 3 minutes, until the underside is crisp and golden, then flip and brown the other side about 2-3 minutes more.

Place the panelle on paper towels to drain excess oil.

Drizzle lightly with salt and serve hot. The panelle may also be served in a panino.

Busiate alla Trapanese

<https://www.savoringitaly.com/busiate-with-trapanese-pesto-busiate/>

A flavorful summer pesto from Sicily that is perfect for an easy weeknight dinner.

Servings: 4



Why you'll love this Trapanese pesto?

- Super quick recipe
- The recipe is completely vegetarian
- You can use a food processor or a mortar and pestle
- The pesto can be used on pasta, as a dip, or as a spread for sandwiches
- It's flavorful and delicious!

Equipment

- Mortar and Pestle
- Food Processor

Ingredients

1 ½ lbs ripe tomatoes or 15oz can Diced Tomatoes drained
4 ounces pignoli
2 medium cloves garlic peeled and roughly chopped
20 basil leaves
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
¼ C grated Pecorino Romano Cheese

Mortar and pestle directions:

Blanch tomatoes in small pot of boiling water. Peel them and chop into quarters. Remove the seeds and drain them while getting other ingredients together.

Finely grind the pignoli with the garlic. When it is combined, add in the basil and grind until incorporated. Add the tomatoes in 3 portions making sure they remain chunky. Transfer the

mixture to a large bowl and add the salt and pepper to taste. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil and mix with a wooden spoon. Cover the bowl and set aside for up to two hours until ready to use. Refrigerate if will be for longer than that time.

Food processor directions:

Place blanched and drained tomatoes, pignoli, garlic, basil and salt in the bowl of the processor. Pulse until you get a chunky paste. Slowly add the olive oil through the feed tube and blend well. Check the seasoning and add salt and pepper to taste.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and when the water boils, add salt to taste. Add the pasta and cook until al dente, for 9-12 minutes depending on the brand. If using fresh pasta, it will be ready in about 1-3 minutes. Drain pasta and transfer to the bowl with the pesto and cheese and mix very well; serve immediately.

Variations of Trapanese Pesto

Sun-Dried Tomato Trapanese Pesto: This variation replaces fresh tomatoes with sun-dried tomatoes, which gives the pesto a more concentrated and intense flavor. It can be made with either roasted or raw almonds.

Pistachio Trapanese Pesto: This version of the recipe swaps almonds for pistachios, which are a common ingredient in Sicilian cuisine. The pistachios add a distinct flavor and texture to the pesto.

Vegan Trapanese Pesto: For those who follow a plant-based diet, this recipe uses nutritional yeast instead of Parmesan cheese to give the pesto a cheesy flavor. It also omits the garlic for a milder taste.

Grilled Trapanese Pesto: This variation involves grilling the tomatoes and garlic before blending them with the other ingredients. This gives the pesto a smoky flavor and a slightly different texture.

Arugula Trapanese Pesto: This recipe incorporates arugula in addition to basil, which adds a slightly peppery taste to the pesto. It can be made with either almonds or pine nuts.

Lemon Trapanese Pesto: This version of the recipe includes the juice and zest of a lemon, which adds a tangy and refreshing flavor to the pesto. It can be made with either almonds or walnuts.

Bussolai' Venetian Butter Cookies

<https://www.saveur.com/recipes/bussolai-venetian-butter-cookies/>

Makes 18–20 cookies

Bussolai' are Venetian butter cookies which originated over six hundred years ago on the Venetian island of Burano, a fishing settlement. Once popular only during the Easter season, eventually the Bussolai' were baked year round as a source of nutrition for the fishermen since these cookies had such a long shelf life. Bussolai' comes from the word buso or busa which means 'hole' in the Venetian dialect. These cookies were originally baked in the shape of rings. Now, the Bussolai' or Essi are commonly s-shaped and perfect for dipping in coffee and wine. The recipe that follows has tastes of citrus (i.e., lemon and orange) and requires '00' flour, which is finer and produces a smoother, more elastic dough. The baker in our household is my husband, John Graham who was kind enough to bake these cookies for our Italian book club.



Ingredients

3 extra-large egg yolks
½ cup (100 g) superfine sugar
1¾ cups (250 g) '00' flour
8 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed and softened
1 Tbsp. finely grated lemon zest
1 Tbsp. finely grated orange zest
3 tsp. vanilla extract
Pinch fine sea salt

Instructions

Step 1

Using a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the egg yolks and sugar on medium speed until pale yellow and creamy, about 1 minute. Add the flour, butter, lemon and orange zests, vanilla, and salt, then mix on low until they are fully incorporated and the crumbly dough holds together when pinched between your fingers, 2–3 minutes. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Step 2

Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 350°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment.

Step 3

Divide the dough into 1-ounce portions, then use your hands to roll each portion into a 4-inch log. Form each log into an "S" or ring shape, then transfer to the prepared baking sheets, spacing about 2 inches apart.

Step 4

Bake until the cookies are pale on top and golden brown on bottom, 15–18 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. The cookies can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 1 week.



Photo by Nick Verna