

Benvenuto Cousin, We have so much to tell you

“Grazie” to everyone who contacted us after they received the first *Italian Cousins* package. The feedback has been wonderful and it has certainly given us the encouragement to keep creating our packages and matching our wonderful wines to some spectacular Italian delights.



Don't forget that we want the *Italian Cousins* experience to be very interactive and would be delighted to answer any questions about Italian culture, wine, food or anything else you may need to know. If we don't know the answers, we will be happy to find out for you. Keep in contact with our other Italian Cousins on our Facebook page.

It is with tremendous excitement that we announce details of **our 2012 All Things Italian Tour**. Julia Black of Crave Italy Tours (Angelo and Mary's niece) has especially prepared for us, a unique Italian food and wine experience. The tour will take us to Rome, Tuscany and the north of Italy in time for the Truffle season. Market shopping and an opera in Verona are other highlights. Please read the details on Page 2 and we hope that you can join us on 'a trip of a lifetime'.

Italianisms...

FRIENDS: Would knock on your door.

ITALIAN FRIENDS: Walk right in and say “I'm home”

Summer (*Estate*) is time to be out in the garden and planting in preparation for Autumn (*Autunno*) when all the busy work of making pesto, tomato sauce, drying tomatoes etc is done. Now is the time to plant your **Basilico** (if you haven't already!) and your gorgeous zucchini flower seeds and any tomato plants you may have.

But the theme of this newsletter is Coffee (*caffè*), so we thought it would be the right place to talk about **Granita** and **Gelato**.

Granita is a semi frozen dessert made from sugar, water and can be many flavours. It originally comes from Sicily but can now be found all around Italy.

Traditionally in Sicily, **Granita** is served with a **Brioche** (a yeast pastry) for breakfast during summertime and of course the most popular flavour is *caffè*. There is nothing more delicious on a hot summer morning in Sicily than this.

Granita is served in all the cafes as well as in the family home and can take some adjustment when you are more used to eating Cornflakes for brekkie!!

While we are on the subject of icy delights, who can resist a gorgeous **gelato**!

Once again, there is nothing quite like the **gelato** in Italy. Maybe it's the fact that you're in Italy, or maybe they just make it better, but there is something about Italian gelato that cannot be copied.

Many of the cafes handmake their gelato daily and they are deliciously smooth and flavoursome. In any Piazza on any Summer's day, people are partaking of gelato that is available in hundreds of flavours and combinations, but the tried and true *Caffè*, *limone* and *nocciola* (hazelnut) are very hard to resist.

Next time you are in Sicily, head to a village called **St Alfio** where you will find **Vittorio's café**. Try his freshly made **Torrone gelato** and you will truly understand bliss!

BALLANDEAN
ESTATE★WINES

BRINGS YOU...



italian
cousins
All things Italian...

Teach Me Italian

Ordering coffee in Italy can be confusing and there are a couple of important things you should know:

You should only order and drink milky coffee in the morning and never after a meal.

When ordering 'un caffè', stand at the bar to drink it, as it is usually twice the price to sit at a table.

'Un caffè' is an espresso and you can order variations of this to suit your needs eg:

Doppio – double shot
Coretto – touch of grappa

Lungo – more water
Ristretto – less water

Where in Italy. The coffee shops of Rome

On any visit to Italy, Rome is a must see. Not only is it the starting point of many tours, it is also a brilliant city to explore and enjoy. With many of the best tourist attractions in Italy, it can be overwhelming so we suggest that you take some time to sit, relax and enjoy the historic coffee houses of this beautiful city.

Highlights:

- **Antico Caffè Greco** claims to be one of the oldest cafes in the world and is certainly one of the oldest in Rome. The atmosphere is classical and the café has hosted many famous guests over the years. It is expensive but hey, you're in Rome!
- **Tazza D'Oro** (yes, you have probably heard of the coffee) is near the Pantheon and the perfect spot for an authentic coffee experience for tourists. Sit outside in the piazza and watch life go by.
- **Caffè S Eustachio** is also on the piazza outside the Pantheon. The coffee here is regarded as the best in Rome and the café is easily recognised by the queues outside.

Places to stay:

- **Navona Gallery Suites - www.navonagallerysuites.com**
These luxury apartments are situated in a 15th century building that was once the residence of the Cardinal of Rome. It is right in Piazza Navona, near the famous Quattro Fontane and vibrant Campo Dei Fiori not to mention the Pantheon.

Quick Recipe Ideas

Coffee Granita

Blend 4 cups of hot espresso and 1 cup of sugar, until dissolved. Add a good splash of White Liqueur Muscat and the zest of one lemon. Pour into a shallow bowl, cover and freeze. Every hour or so, remove from freezer and scrape with a fork to create a slushy, icy consistency. Serve in glasses, and add a dollop of fresh cream if desired.

Forest-Mix Mushroom and Cream Sauce

Can be used to mix through pasta or served with chicken or beef.

2 cloves crushed garlic

3 Tabs chopped parsley

1 cup dried mushrooms (or porcini's) soaked in 1 ½ cups of hot water for 1 hour (remove any stones from bottom)

½ cup white wine

1 cup cream

Fry garlic in 2 Tabs olive oil and add soaked mushrooms. Add the wine and stir 2 minutes until absorbed. Add mushroom water and simmer on medium heat for 10 minutes. Add cream and parsley and allow to thicken.

All Things Italian Tour

October 2012 will see us saluting the Tuscan sunsets with a vicious drop of Chianti, trekking Mont Blanc in search of the most perfect Truffle, devouring our body weight in elementary Italian cuisine. Our degustation will take the form of a 14 day Family Festa that will weave nonchalantly through Rome, Tuscany, Venice, the Dolomites, Lake Maggiore and Piedmont. For your delight we will partake in a heart stopping evening at the world famous open air Opera - Arena di Verona. We promise to never take part in clichéd sight-seeing and will look forward to singing all the way through the Alps in crisp October. Our guarantee is that we will live with the contadini and feast like royalty. Our lips will shine with freshly pressed golden dew (Olive oil), our senses will pay homage to the glorious sounds on market day, our minds will have moments to wonder and times to dream. Our hearts will beat slowly and purposefully as do the seasons of Italy. This, our darling cousins is a gift you cannot refuse - take it and enjoy.

**Julia Black - Crave Italy Tours
and the Puglisi Family**

Departure Date: 7th October 2012, 14 days. Approx \$9200 + taxes. Incl breakfast and a variety of lunches and dinners.

FOOD, WINE AND LAUGHTER.....

Non dimenticare (Don't forget)

We have some great events coming up at the winery where you can indulge your passion for 'All things Italian'

Pranzo Italiano (Italian Long Lunch)

December 11 2011

April 9 2012

July 8 2012

Five courses featuring Italian food and music.

Primi Piatti (Italian Yum Cha)

November 20 2011

March 25 2012

Gorgeous small plates of Italian delicacies like ravioli, fritto misto, pasta and desserts.

Set the table and invite your friends
Let us tell you what there is to eat and drink

WINES

2009 Family Reserve Chardonnay

This Chardonnay is once again a wonderful example of this fine variety and will be a fabulous accompaniment to the porcini mushroom pasta. The wine boasts a rich bouquet of mellow oak and tropical fruit and the palate is rich and buttery with flavours of honey and melon. The Chardonnay can be aged for up to 5 years, but why wait, enjoy it now with a great meal.

2007 Cabernet Sauvignon

This wine is a typical cool climate Cabernet Sauvignon with a well rounded bouquet boasting cherry and blackcurrant intermingled with oak. The palate is lingering with delicious berry and smooth touches of oak finishing with refreshing mint on the back palate. The Cabernet is medium weight and is well suited to beef dishes or even a delicious BBQ. We love to serve it with Venison Marsala.

White Liqueur Muscat

Well this month's newsletter is all about coffee and this wine is perfect after dinner with a chocolate and a good coffee. The Muscat is beautifully fragrant (perfumed) and boasts a palate of liquid grapes and honey with a rich and smooth texture. The wine is aged in our 140 year old barrels that line the Barrelroom Café and is considered one of the best muscats in the region. A great xmas gift.

FOOD

Handmade Porcini Pasta

This gorgeous handmade pasta is the quintessential flavour of Northern Italy. With a robust, earthy flavour, simple sauces are a perfect accompaniment.

Almond Bread (Biscotti)

There is no better accompaniment to a good espresso than Almond Bread and this delicately light biscuit is reproduced in every part of Italy. Each region has their own special version, but the common theme is almond and their beautifully crunchy texture. Almond bread is traditionally served at weddings, christenings and any other family get together, but we reckon anytime is the best time to enjoy it! Serve with an affogato – In a small glass put one scoop of Vanilla icecream, top with White Liqueur Muscat & a short black.

Forest-Mix Dried Mushrooms

Dried Mushrooms are a great addition to soups, pasta, risotto and as the best pizza topping ever! This blend of forest mushrooms can be ground up in a mortar and pestle or soaked in warm water to be reconstituted. (you can use the soaking water as well for flavour).

Coffee Beans by The Summit Coffee

We just can't help ourselves! To be Italian is to love coffee and generally we love it short and strong. Throughout Italy, coffee is the way the day is started and there are thousands of cafes satisfying the needs of coffee drinking Italians and tourists alike. There are rules however to coffee consumption in Italy and they are taken very seriously, it would be worthwhile knowing these rules before you enter your first café in Italy as it will save you from certain embarrassment!! (See Teach Me Italian).

Black Summer Truffle Pate

This is a very special jar of pate, one of true decadence. Not only can you see the truffle pieces, but there is joy in just opening the jar and smelling the contents. In your package, you will have received either Truffle with Artichoke, Olive or Asparagus. Each one is packed full of flavour and can be used in the same way. You can mix this through plain pasta, or add to a simple cream and chive pasta sauce. Another simply divine idea is to make a grilled bruschetta of the pate with a slice of brie on top.

Captured Seasons Liqueur Muscat Soaked Muscatels

Matt and Bobbi's own brand Captured Seasons preserves the delights of the Granite Belt. These incredible muscatels can be served savoury on a cheese platter or as a delicious garnish on something deliciously sweet like our Tiramisu (see Italian Cousins recipe card no. 3). Once you have tasted these scrumptious morsels of delight, you will be hooked as they truly are "preserved to perfection!"

The Italian Gardener – Zucchini Flower Seeds

Time to find some space in your garden for these gorgeous plants! Zucchini flowers are a delicacy and very difficult to find. Our Italian Gardener has sourced these special seeds that guarantee lovely flowers that are perfect for stuffing and frying. We know they sound odd, but believe us when we say, they are **very** delicious. Take some photos and post them on our Facebook page when your first flowers are ready to pick.

Recipe Cards (to add to your recipe card-holder)

Only our favourite recipes are included and these recipes are no exception. Our Aunties, Mary Puglisi and Connie Scalora have been making Pork Trotter Pasta Sauce for Xmas and Easter for as long as we can remember. It is rich and tasty and not for the diet conscious! We had our Zio Angelo check the recipe and he says you can also add potatoes and peas to the sauce to make it thicker.

The Tiramisu recipe will absolutely rival the best tiramisu you have ever had. Team it with the muscatels for an extreme Italian pick-me-up.

Your Special Gift

Espresso is close to the heart of every Italian. Ordered and consumed standing up at a bar, Our Italian Cousins espresso cups are for everyday use. Find your favourite espresso coffee, whether percolated, drip filtered, or better still with your own espresso machine.
