



UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore

# Discovering Italy through its Culinary Traditions

PROF. BARBARA BETTINELLI

## Overview

**Area:** Cultural studies

**Dates:** 12 – 23 June (2 weeks)

**Campus:** Milan

**Course Number:** CU300

**Term:** Summer 2023

**Credits:** 6 ECTS

## Course description

Italian food and wine are probably as famous as Italy's artistic and historical assets: you'll be surprised by the history behind the food, and how strictly related to the culture and heritage of an area a wine or a dish can be. Food is one of the cornerstones of Italian culture and even if times are changing and life is more and more frenetic, Italians still find a great pleasure in sitting at a table, at home or at the restaurant, and share a good meal together: this is because to the people of Italy, Italian food and wine are part of their culture and, very often, also of their own family history. Italian cuisine can be difficult to define, as recipes, tastes, ingredients and cooking styles vary enormously from region to region. One thing that most people will agree on though is that it is one of the richest and most delicious cuisines in the world.

The aim of this course is to introduce students to Italian culinary traditions and teach them how to prepare some of the most popular and delicious Italian recipes.

## Course contents

Students will explore one of the world-renowned aspects of Italian culture, its cuisine. We will also unveil those Italian cooking mysteries that baffle most people, like what "al dente" means, why there are so many different pasta shapes, why Italians eat their salad with their meal and exactly what Grappa is. Lessons will focus on:

- The History of Italians and their Food
- Italy, its Regions and its Regional Cuisine
- Italian Meals
- Italian Coffee Culture
- Pasta: how to pair different pasta shapes to the right sauce
- The Mediterranean Diet
- Slow Food vs Fast Food: the importance of the Slow Food movement
- Italian wines: pairing food and wine
- Festival Foods
- Famous Italian Chefs

Films, extracts from books, articles, food quizzes will be used to illustrate and explain the role of food and wine in Italian culture.

Students will take part in a field trip to Eataly food-market where they will discover the great variety of Italian artisanal products, learn about Eataly market concept, and will taste high-quality food directly from production sites.



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The course will include cooking demonstrations given by Cattolica chefs. Students will have the opportunity to learn the basic techniques to cook simple Italian dishes, thus gaining the confidence to repeat the recipes for friends and family once back home.

### Method of teaching

Lessons will employ different sources (frontal lectures, slides, documentaries, and films): debates will be held as an important part of the course.

### Course requirements

Students will be required to:

- follow class regularly and participate in class discussion;
- complete assignments and tasks;
- participate in a final project.

### Grading

Class active participation 25%

Final exam 75%

### Course reading and materials

All materials will be available on Blackboard.

### Prerequisites

None

### Credits

6 ECTS

### Instructor bio

Barbara Bettinelli was born and educated in Italy where she worked as a language teacher and teacher trainer in the Italian state system up to her late 20s. She then spent fifteen years in the UK where she completed her PhD and taught Italian at the University of Nottingham Language Centre. In 2001 she moved back to Italy where she is currently teaching English and Italian language and Culture at the Università Cattolica. She also works as Educational Developer for Cattolica CHEI (Centre of Higher Education Internationalisation). She has written many books aimed at students of Italian and English which are published in Italy by Pearson Longman.

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