



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

The Discovery of Italy through its Culinary Traditions

PROF. BARBARA BETTINELLI / CHIARA CASAGRANDE

Area of study:	Italian Culture: Literature, Theatre, Cinema, Music, Philosophy and History
Area Code:	CU300 A & B
Method of Instruction:	in-person and live-streaming (dual mode)
Participation:	synchronous/live and asynchronous

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.

Video recordings will teach the basic techniques to cook simple Italian dishes. The recipes are intentionally uncomplicated and will allow students to discover the best of traditional and contemporary Italian regional cuisine. Students will be encouraged to cook along the recipes as often as they can, thus gaining the confidence to repeat them for friends and family. Students will learn how to prepare and enjoy a full Italian meal: antipasto, primo, which is generally pasta or rice, secondo, a meat dish, and a dessert.



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Should COVID restrictions be lifted and circumstances allow it, students who are in Milan may be offered the opportunity to take part in cooking classes under the guidance of Cattolica chefs.

Prerequisites

None

Method of instruction

Online lessons and video recordings. Online 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.

According to UCSC International curriculum policies, attendance for live-streamed classes is mandatory. Students are required to have a connection that supports classes in streaming and to activate their microphone and unless otherwise specified by the instructors. We advise you to use a pc or laptop and not a mobile device (smartphone/tablet). Unexcused absences during live-streamed classes, attendance without activating microphone and video or a frequent failure of Internet connection will have a negative impact on your grade. Make sure to inform your instructor in a timely manner of any connectivity issues you might experience or of any absences.

Credits

6 ECTS

Grading

Final project presentation	50 % of final grade
Tasks and assignments related to online classes	20 % of final grade
Tasks and assignments related to video cooking lessons	10 % of final grade
Practical cooking exam	20 % of final grade

Course readings and materials

All materials will be available on Blackboard.

Instructor bio

Prof. 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 Italian and English at the Università Cattolica. She has written many books aimed at students of Italian and English which are published in Italy by Pearson Longman.

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