
La Voce della Dante

Published by the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington (DAS)

<http://das.danteseattle.org>

March 2010

March English Meeting— Chris Zimmerman

Wednesday, March 10th, 2010
Headquarters House, 2336 15th Avenue S, Seattle

Savor a wonderful variety of fine Italian wines on Wed, March 10th, courtesy of Vias Imports, Ltd. Our guest presenter for the evening will be Chris Zimmerman, the Northwest Region Manager for Vias, an Italian wine company headquartered in the city of Trento.

The Vias Imports philosophy is to focus on small, high-quality family farms which practice organic and sustainable farming. They currently represent 70 wineries from 18 of Italy's 20 regions, with a portfolio of almost 400 Italian wines.

Chris will share his love and expertise about Italian wines, gathered from 27 years in the imported wine business. A frequent traveler to Italy, Chris is a well known expert of Italian wines, and a popular speaker at the Aspen Food & Wine Classic, the Monterey Wine Festival, and many other events featuring top quality Italian wines.

Be sure to make your reservations for our pre-Dante pasta dinner on March 10th. If you will attend only the presentation, which starts at 7:30 pm, a reservation isn't necessary.

Upcoming Events

Wed, Mar 10th:
English Meeting

6:30 pm Pre-Dante Pasta

7:30 pm Presentation, Headquarters House



Mon, Mar 15th: Board Meeting,
7:00-8:30 pm,
Faerland Terrace, Seattle
4121 Minor Ave

Wed, Mar 24th: Italian Meeting
7:30 pm, Headquarters House



March Italian Meeting - Gennaro Giordano

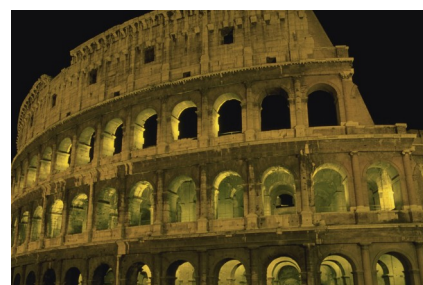
Wednesday, March 24th, 2010
Headquarters House, 2336 15th Avenue S, Seattle

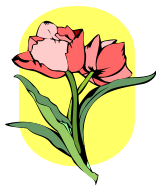
Roman mythology states that the twins, Remo and Romulus were born of the priestess *Rhea Silvia* and the god of war, *Mars*. Abandoned at birth in the river Tiber by the evil uncle Amulio, the twins were rescued and fed by a she-wolf and raised by a shepherd named *Faustulus* with his wife.

Learn the fascinating facts and fanciful myths about the origins of the magnificent city of Roma. A native of Rome, Gennaro Giordano is the Senior Fellow at the University of Washington's Department of Envi-

ronmental and Occupational Health Sciences—but his passion is Rome and her history.

Join us for a delightful evening of antipasti and vino, and discover little-known facts about the most wonderful city in the world.





Welcome to Our New Members

Paul Harris
Maureen Meyer

Benvenuti Nuovi Membri

* DAS Star List *

While we appreciate those who support our Society through membership dues & volunteering, stars are awarded to those making extra cash contributions which allows us to provide additional services. Grazie Mille for supporting the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington.

Bronzo up to \$25

- * Borriello, Rosa
- * Crawford, Dick & Barbara
- * Forte, Giselda
- * Henke, Charlotte & McGrath, Dick
- * James, Mike

Argento \$26 to \$50

- * Cottrell, Dick & Jane
- * Hanlon, Terry
- * Hundertmark, Louise & Fritz
- * Tobe, Robert & Magdalena

Oro \$51- \$100

- * Pietrafesa, Louise
- * Van Tilborgh, Peter

Platino—over \$100

- * Harmon, Gini
- * Riter, Ronald & Beverly

From the President's Desk

Your society continues to be strong as we enter March. Our February program on Italian Fashion from the 1300s to the 1800s was fascinating and very well attended with over 50 people present. Susan Gaylard's program was extremely interesting and very well received. It was fascinating to see how clothing evolved, why, and how the same driving forces are still in effect today! If you joined us for dinner you no doubt were delighted by Carol DeMatteis' Spinach-Ricotta Cannelloni as well as the huge variety of dolce that members brought.

Our board and committee chair positions are starting to fill for next year, many thanks to all of our dedicated volunteers. There still are a few positions that need to be filled as of this writing. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Norizan Pattera, Jane Cottrell, or Barbara Crawford and let them know of your interest. They will be more than happy to find a role for you. I hope you, too, can have the great experience that I am having by being part of the Dante volunteer community.

March is a great time to visit Italy if you have the time. The costs are still in the low season and the weather is getting better. There are a number of fun festivals as well. I'd like to talk about a couple that typify Italian culture.

The first is Festa delle Donne or Women's Day which is celebrated all over Italy on the 8th of March. On this day, the men present flowers, specifically yellow mimosa, to the women in their lives. The purpose of the day is to have society remember the importance of women and their contributions and sacrifices as well as their accomplishments. In recent times the traditions have evolved and women also give the same flowers to each other. The scent of the yellow mimosa flowers fill the air and remind all that spring is near. So, remember all of the women in your lives and celebrate them especially on the 8th of March.

The second is Festa della Primavera, a celebration of spring, held all over Italy on March 21st. The festival is focused on regional foods and mean tasting and competitions within and between regions. A gastronomic delight no doubt! It would be great if Seattle had such an event with our Italian community representing their regions. Ahh until then, I guess we will just have to visit Italy.

Frank Pattera

Emilio Lavazza: 1932-2010

Italy's 'King of Coffee'

by Margherita Stancati (From the 2/18/10 Wall St. Journal)

Emilio Lavazza infused high-tech innovation with caffeinated marketing to transform his family's coffee roaster into a global brand. Mr. Lavazza, who died Tuesday at age 78, started out delivering ground coffee door-to-door to restaurants around Turin, Italy, where his grandfather founded the company as a grocery store in 1895.

Lavazza became a national brand in the decades after World War II, and today is Italy's biggest-selling coffee with almost 50% of the retail market.

But it wasn't until Mr. Lavazza became CEO of Luigi Lavazza SpA in 1971 that the company began testing foreign markets.

Today, Lavazza espresso is brewed in more than 90 countries; the company says it is the sixth-largest purchaser of green coffee beans in the world.

The company credits Mr. Lavazza with having the idea in 1970 of putting coffee in vacuum-sealed packages for export, a practice since adopted by most producers. At a coffee laboratory in Turin, Lavazza developed coffee capsules for single-shot brewing and other technical innovations in roasting and vending. A Lavazza partnership with Catalan gastronome Ferran Adrià produced such edible novelties as coffee "caviar."

Lavazza began opening coffee bars and training centers abroad, and in recent years expanded into India and Brazil.

In the 1960s, Mr. Lavazza developed the characters "Carmencita and Caballero," stars of a beloved Italian television ad campaign. Later, he initiated award-winning ad campaigns featuring celebrities such as the singer Luciano Pavarotti and movie star Nino Manfredi.

Mr. Lavazza, who was knighted in 1991 and known in Italy as the "King of Coffee," was affectionately addressed as "Signor Emilio" by his employees. His death follows that of Ernesto Illy, who for decades ran Trieste-based Illy-caffè SpA, two years ago this month. The two men propelled a postwar Italian espresso boom that spread the coffee-making technique to an international audience.

Mr. Lavazza lived all his life in Turin – home to other Italian business dynasties including Fiat's Agnelli and Nutella's Ferrero families. Not unlike Mr. Ferrero, Mr. Lavazza shied away from the public eye.

The company is still privately held, and a fourth generation of Lavazzas are among the company's senior management. Mr. Lavazza retired in 2008.

--Stephen Miller
contributed to this article

Inclement Weather Procedure

As the seasons change, we are approaching a time when the weather can turn quickly. If schools, community centers, and businesses are closing early or remain closed, we will postpone any scheduled meeting for Headquarters House. We will do our best to have a message on the DAS reservation line, 206-320-9159, to let you know if our meeting needs to be canceled. If the weather is treacherous in your area, PLEASE DO NOT attempt to travel to Headquarters House, we want everyone to be safe.



Perugia Scholarship

Every year, SPSCA offers up to four one-month language scholarships to study at the University for Foreigners in the heart of medieval Perugia. Apply by December 31st by writing to Scholarship Director P a t t y M a t h i e u ; pamkdw@msn.com.

It's a grand experience with students from around the world. Don't miss your chance! The Umbra Institute also offers scholarships to Perugia - up to \$8000 - for university-level courses as well as language study. Application deadline for the fall semester 2010 is next June 15th.

For further information check the SPSCA website:

<http://www.seattle-perugia.org/>



Language Program News by Giuseppe Tassone Italian Language Program - Director

The following is the schedule for the Language Program:

Course Schedule 2009 – 2010:

Fall Quarter 2009:

October 1 - December 10

Winter Quarter 2010:

January 7 - March 16

Pre-registration deadline: December 8

Spring Quarter 2010:

March 30 - June 3

Pre-registration deadline: March 11

Location: Seattle University Campus

Class fee: \$130 per quarter unless otherwise indicated

The Dante Alighieri - Italian Language Program is a non-profit self-sustaining program operating exclusively with the income from the tuition. Thank you students for your support.

Website:

<http://www.danteseattle.org>

Club Alpino Italiano (CAI) - PNW

Upcoming Local Activities:

March 13th

Coal Country, Historical Hike

Classification: (M)

Distance: 7.5 miles RT

Elevation Gain: 1900'

Highest Point: 2050'

Contact: John Burnet at johnsb42@hotmail.com or call (425-881-5736)

This hike will go from the suburbia of Issaquah into the woods of Squak Mountain with interesting reminders of coal country history. Meet 0930 at and hike from the east side of the park behind the Trails Center, First and Bush (110 Bush St.), Issaquah, WA. Contact John by the Thursday evening before if you plan to go.

April 10th

Squak Mountain Hike

Elevation Gain: 800 to 1000'

Contact: Chris Kantor at cmkantor@aol.com

This is an uphill but quite wonderful hike on Squak Mountain from May Valley Road in Issaquah. Time is 2 to 3 hours.

For further information and activities that include CAI's international outings, check their website at: <http://www.cai-pnw.org>

Membership Renewal

Membership renewal was **due January 1, 2010**. It's past time to renew your membership if you joined before September 2009.

Membership is \$30 for an individual or \$40 for a family.

Fill out the membership form on the last page of La Voce and send your renewal in today.



Delivering La Voce to Members

Just a reminder La Voce will not be sent to the membership via an email attachment. For many emails, the file size is too large. Instead, an email will be sent to members that includes a link to the current issue of La Voce on the DAS website. Just click on the link and you will have La Voce to read for your pleasure.



Adobe Reader is necessary to be able to view La Voce. You can download this program from the DAS website.

And be sure your email box isn't full.

You can buy your Dante gear at:
<http://www.cafepress.com/dantewashington>



La Voce Needs You!

Tell a story, write an article, share your Italian heritage; send via email (as a Word document) to lthdesign@comcast.net. You can also mail it via regular mail to Linda Heimbigner, 4355 Little Falls Drive, Cumming, GA 30041, USA. Keep things coming!

Thanks to everyone who is helping.

Article submission deadline:

<u>ISSUE DATE</u>	<u>SUBMISSION DEADLINE</u>
April 2010	March 15
May 2010	April 19

Dante on the Internet!

Check our website. It has links to our recent newsletters (including this one) as well as information on speakers and other matters of interest. Our web address is:

<http://das.danteseattle.org/>

Note the website address has changed!

Pre-Dante Pasta

Join us for the pre-Dante Pasta dinner preceding the English language programs. **To attend the dinner, reservations are required. The only way to make these reservations is by calling the activity line at (206) 320-9159 by 5 pm on the Monday before the meeting.**

Please remember to bring your homemade Italian desserts to finish off this great meal.

This is a communally prepared meal – the preparations start at 5:30 and the meal is served at 6:30. People who come early help with set up and cooking, those who come late help with the clean up.

Pasta dinner cost is \$8 per person, \$15 per couple, if reservations are received on the Activity Line by 5pm on Monday before the meeting. Late reservations and walk-ins are charged \$10 per person and subject to availability. We meet at Headquarters House, 2336 15th Avenue, Seattle, WA. DAS will not be providing wine for the pre-Dante pasta dinners so bring your own wine to enjoy and share with others.



Dante Alighieri Society of Washington

"Società per la diffusione della lingua e della cultura italiana nel mondo"

Mailing address:

PMB #1244

1122 East Pike Street

Seattle, WA 98122

(206) 320-9159

The Dante Alighieri Society of Washington is a nonprofit corporation organized to promote Italian language and culture within the state of Washington. Membership is open to anyone interested in the goals and ideals of our society regardless of ethnic origin. *La Voce della Dante* is published eight times a year by the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington. All rights reserved.

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Helping with the Partigliano *Marcia*

by Louise Sportelli

As many of you know from our presentation in January 2009, one of our regular activities while in Italy is participating in organized walks (*marcie*) that are held throughout the Province of Lucca. Last June we stayed longer in Italy just so we could help put on the walk organized by our local *unione sportivo* (sports club). Here is the entry I wrote for our blog (<http://abbastanzabuono.blogspot.com>) afterwards.

Sunday, June 21st was the annual *marcia podistica* (organized walk) in Partigliano. It was held at the pizzeria in Guzzanello which is up the hill from the village. Unfortunately, after a string of stunningly beautiful days, we had rain and thunderstorms on Friday and Saturday. The *previsione* (forecast) was for improving conditions on Sunday but we woke to more rain. In spite of that, at 6:15 am we headed up the hill in our car eager to finally participate in the production of one of these events.

It actually requires a lot of pre-event planning as well. The weekend before we had seen the four routes (2, 5, 10 and 18 kilometers) being marked on the local roads with freshly painted white arrows. Dom went up to Guzzanello on Saturday afternoon to help set up while I cleaned the house in preparation for our Monday departure. At some point the *premi* (prize packets each participant receives) were also put together. On Friday several of the village ladies had made almost 30 loaves of bread in a wood fired oven.

On Sunday, I was immediately put to work in the "kitchen." Actually, it was a storage room underneath the restaurant where a bevy of ladies made dozens and dozens of *panini* (sandwiches) and wrapped them in paper towels. We were assisted by several men who sliced the meats and cut the bread.

New regulations required that the food workers wear aprons, gloves and hair coverings. As you can see from the picture below it is not terribly attractive.



Outside the "kitchen" the participants returned from their walk or run to find tables full of *panini*, different types of *torte*



(cakes and pies), lemon and orange wedges, sugar cubes, water, wine and sweet tea. At the walks we used to be able to just go up to the tables and take what we want but now someone has to serve you. Word is this is another E.U. requirement. The

servers also had to wear aprons, gloves and head coverings.

Meanwhile, Dom had an orange vest and a flag and was busy park-



ing cars. There is a soccer field next to the restaurant that was used for the parking area. He found that his flag, flamboyant hand gestures and a few stern glares made up for any lack of language skills. However, seeing as they were Italian drivers they generally parked where they wanted.



After I helped make mountains of sandwiches we went up to the restaurant bar and had a coffee. You can see Dom in his orange vest.

When we first got to Guzzanello at 6:30 it looked like it might brighten up and quit raining. No way! It really poured for after the *marcia* began at 7:15 or so. Many



of the participants and some of the workers came back soaked to the skin.

Some of the participants huddled under the awning over the



patio just outside the restaurant's main entry.

Even those handing out the *premi* (prize packages—the common pasta, tomato sauce, canned beans and milk) huddled under their tent. Attendance at the event was down by about one-third over



the previous year.

For the first time we were actually present at the end of the event. Here are the prizes that were distributed at the very end. The participating clubs were ranked according to the number of members participating. The club



with the most participants got to pick a prize first and so it went down through the list of clubs until each one had taken a prize.

There was also a raffle. Here they are drawing the winning



raffle numbers.

Of course after everything was over and all the participants had left, the sun came out. It was actually quite windy while the tents were being taken down. None of that could happen until the trail sweeps had come in and reported there were no stragglers on the course. That was about 10:30 or 11. Then everything was broken down and put away



and the village ladies went to work preparing lunch.

Usually the post *marcia* lunch is held outside but the cool temperatures, brisk wind and possible rain led to the meal being moved indoors. About 70 people sat down to eat at 1 pm. We had spaghetti with meat sauce, roast turkey, green salad, tomatoes, fries, leftover cold cuts from the panini, lots of water and wine and all the leftover torte. It was delicious!



Unfortunately, the room we ate in was incredibly noisy. It would have been difficult understanding what was being said in English let alone all the Italian around us. By 3 pm Dom and I were just about done in. We felt badly that we were the first to leave but we were really tired and needed to finish our preparations to leave the next morning. As we were leaving for the summer there were lots of *baci* (kisses) exchanged and good wishes.

All our Partigiano *amici* were sad to see us go.

It was wonderful being able to participate in this event and we look forward to doing it again in the future.



Gelato Fatto a Casa

from Louise Sportelli

As most of us know, gelato is one of the true joys of visiting Italy. An article I read said it is enjoyed in every region of the country, day or night and in every season. It is the only street food an Italian epicure will eat.

Once one develops a taste for gelato all other frozen confections pale in comparison. For many years, I waited with anticipation for our next trip to Italy, dreaming of that first lick off the top of the cone. The flavors always seem more intense than American ice cream and for good reason. Gelato is traditionally denser (less air is whipped into the product), has less butterfat (5% to 8% versus 10% to 18%), and the proportion of flavoring to milk is higher (so the flavors are not obscured by the buttery cream). The result is a smoother mouthfeel and richer taste.

Gelati flavors include some that are familiar to Americans, such as chocolate, coffee and strawberry, but *stracciatella* (chocolate flake), rice, pistachio, *crema* (cream—no vanilla), *frutti di bosco* (mixed berry) and *gianduia* (chocolate hazelnut) are common in Italy. Regional variations include more citrus flavors in the South and more nut flavors in the North. Many of the *gelaterie* we frequent have seasonal flavors such as *torrone* (nougat and nut) in the winter and blood orange in the summer.

One of my favorite things about Italian *gelaterie* is that often for a reasonable price one can get three small scoops for a total of about a half or three-quarters of a cup of gelato. It is nice being able to sample different flavors and not have too much to enjoy. I am choosy about the *gelaterie* we frequent in the Lucca area. My preference is to go to those that are *produzione propria* or *produzione artigianale*, two ways of saying home-made or made on site. There are two spots between the *autostrada* in Lucca and our house where we often stop on our way back from excursions. Nearer to our house we have to make do with the commercial gelato that arrives at the bars in big tubs. The latter is not bad but the former is far superior and there is usually a larger selection of flavors.

Here in the Seattle area there are a few places where true Italian gelato is available. One is Gelatiamo downtown at 3rd and University and they also sell through a number of other outlets such as Pagliacci Pizza. The gelato at the Tutta Bella restaurants is also good. However, out here on Whidbey Island I have to go quite a ways to find the real thing. So, I started making my own.

It all began with an article in the July/August 2008 issue of *La Cucina Italiana*. The directions seemed so easy that I had to try it, especially since we already owned a small unit for churning and freezing ice cream. It turned out so well that it has become a staple of my Italian cuisine repertoire. I have made some modifications to the recipe and from the basic custard it is possible to make a variety of flavors. Here is the basic custard recipe:

2 ¼ cups whole milk
1 cup heavy cream
1 tsp. vanilla
Pinch of salt
5 large egg yolks
¾ cup sugar

In a heavy saucepan, combine milk, cream, vanilla and salt. Heat mixture over medium heat until bubbles pop around pan's edge. Remove from heat.

While above mixture is heating, in a large bowl, whisk together egg yolks and sugar until pale and thick, about 3 minutes. Have the egg yolks and sugar ready to go when you start heating the milk, etc. and you can do both at once.



Whisk about 1/3 of the warm milk mixture into the egg yolk mixture; then whisk egg yolk mixture back into saucepan to combine both.

Heat mixture over medium-low heat, stirring constantly. Be sure to stir well into pan's edges. Continue heating until mixture is slightly thickened and coats the back of a wooden spoon or registers 170° to 175 ° on an instant read thermometer (I use a candy thermometer that clips to the side of the pan). This takes about 10 minutes.

Allow mixture to cool slightly before transferring to a plastic container (makes about one quart custard). Put container in the refrigerator to cool overnight.

If you are in a hurry, fill a large bowl with ice and add 2 cups water. Set saucepan in ice bath to chill, stirring frequently to speed the cooling process. Once custard is thoroughly chilled, proceed with next step.

Transfer custard to an ice cream machine and freeze according to manufacturer's instructions. Serve at once or place in sealable container and freeze for 1 month. Recipe makes a little over 1 quart. Be sure to let gelato that has been in the freezer sit at room temperature about 10 minutes to soften slightly before serving.

Other flavors:

Marsala: whisk ½ cup Marsala wine (or other liqueur) into the whisked and thickened egg yolk mixture.

Pistachio: in a blender, puree ½ cup shelled pistachios (or other nuts) with the heavy cream before adding to saucepan.

Amaretto: Stir ½ cup crushed amaretto cookies (or other cookies) into milk mixture before heating.

Coffee: Whisk scant ½ cup chilled, freshly brewed espresso into the whisked and thickened egg yolk mixture.

Chocolate: Melt 2 ½ to 5 oz. finely chopped bittersweet or semi-sweet chocolate in the top half of a double boiler. Let cool 5 minutes, then beat into whisked and thickened egg yolk mixture. Use more chocolate for a dark chocolate flavor and less for milk chocolate. I use two 87% Dagoba brand bittersweet chocolate bars.

Italian Ice Cream Translated

from Publix Grape Magazine, Fall 2009, Special Celebrate Italy. This quarterly edition featured Tuscany.

It pays to develop an ice cream vocabulary before heading to Tuscany, after all, Florentines claim they invented gelato, and their frozen treats endure as some of the world's most exquisite.

Affogato: These creations consist of gelato or sorbetto topped with liquid. Examples include vanilla gelato with hot espresso and a fruit sorbetto crowned with a liquor such as grappa. Affogato means “drowned,” referring to the way the frozen treat drowns in the liquid.

Gelato: Italian ice cream that's made with less air and so is denser in texture.

Sorbetto: Italian sorbet, which rarely contains milk and often brings bright, intense fruit flavors.

Granita: A refreshing concoction made by freezing water, sugar, and a flavoring, such as coffee, fruit juice, or wine. Stirring the mixture at various stages of freezing results in its granular texture.

Semifreddo: Literally meaning “half cold,” this term encompasses a variety of semi-frozen or chilled desserts made with cake, ice cream, and fruit with custard or whipped cream. Semifreddo can also refer to a semi-frozen ice cream-like creation made with meringue and whipped cream, which keeps the dessert from freezing to a thoroughly solid mass.



Here is Louise during the annual *marcia podistica* in Partigliano. She is taking a break from *panini* making.

Book Review

Opera d'amore

Passion for Italian language and music drove 12-year book project.

by *Adrian Chamberlain, Victorian Times Columnist* February 21, 2010

(This is about Robert Thomson's new book, *Operatic Italian*. He presented to DAS last September.)

I think the best stories are about passionate people. They're the ones that stick with you years later.

Take for example, the late Victoria sculptor Roland Brener. I still vividly remember interviewing him - and that was 20 years ago. Brener liked to make strange kinetic sculptures. Some used cannibalized bits of mechanical toys; a dissected Teddy Ruxpin comes to mind.

When speaking about his art - or anything that interested him - Brener projected a big-hearted, contagious enthusiasm. For some reason, I recall him being especially knocked out by the hip-hop group, De La Soul, because of their crazy use of samples.

I've met other super-passionate, creative folk; sculptor Mowry Baden, composer Christopher Butterfield, theatre director Glynis Leyshon, conductor Timothy Vernon, Victoria writer Robert Thomson seems a kindred spirit, although his interests are different. Like Brener, Thomson is driven by a powerful, deep-seated passions. In his case, they are language and opera. With his recently published book, "*Operatic Italian*," the two meld rather spectacularly.

Thomson is an expert on his subject. He's a life-long opera devotee with a PhD in romance languages from Yale University. The self-published *Operatic Italian* is a useful too, especially for

the serious opera fan or professional singer. At 453 pages, it's an incredible labour of love; in a way, the book is Thomson's love letter to opera.

He has been writing *Operatic Italian*, on and off, since 1998 (a previous, much shorter version - *Italian for the Opera* - was also published). This book fills a gap. Currently, he says, no books target the use of Italian in opera, although there are, of course, books on Italian grammar.

Italian for the Opera is not a book for the faint-hearted. It is an exhaustive examination of the use of Italian in opera. Parts of speech are rigorously analyzed. Atmospheric adjectives are discussed. Nuances in operatic exclamations are dissected. Outdated expressions used in vintage libretti are considered. Opera lovers are encouraged to "think in Italian."

Operatic Italian may seem an intimidating tome. Certainly, tackling it required more brainpower than perusing the seemingly endless river of self-help books and mysteries that land at this newspaper's doorstep. Yet, for the patient reader, there are rewards. It's a gold mine of information, with scads of excerpts from operas, historical background, and web links so the reader can listen as well.

Most importantly, *Operatic Italian* helps give you insight about what the characters are really saying, thinking and feeling.

Thomson's zeal for his subject is obvious. He's sent me almost 30 emails to do with his book. He's an interesting guy. A native Vancouverite, he grew up in a tough neighborhood, joining a street gang just to avoid getting hassled.

His life changed in 1951, when the 11-year old was taken to see The Great Caruso starring Mario Lanza. The movie about the great tenor Enrico Caruso "really cooked my goose," said Thomson. He became a life-long opera addict.

We seem to live in an age when most of us want a quick fix. In this regard, *Operatic Italian* is an unfashionable book. It is aimed at those who realize, when it comes to the arts, you get out what you put in. Yet, for those willing to make an effort, the rewards are vast.

The book is available at Munro's Books, the University of Victoria bookstore or directly from Thomson: www.godwinbooks.com.





Lidia Cooks from the Heart of Italy

Interview by Alexandria Mott (From House Beautiful, February 2010)

You can never have too many Italian cookbooks – not when they’re by Lidia Bastianich. In her newest, she serves up the hearty regional dishes of her homeland.

You feature foods from 12 regions in Italy, some of which I’ve never heard of.

In my previous book, *Lidia’s Italy*, I covered the better-known regions – Rome and Naples and Florence, places like that. In my new book, it’s the lesser-known regions like Umbria and Abruzzo. I’ve been going to these areas for years and they’re tiny, but the food is so different from town to town. There’s an amazing variety of regional foods for a little country that’s smaller than California.

But these are pretty simple dishes.

I zero in on the straightforward recipes. I choose them because they’re the dishes that most exemplify place. I bring the flavor of these regions home to you.

So you’re in some tiny town, and you find the best recipes...how?

The people. I’ll go to the butcher and I’ll see some great sausages. Then the butcher will say, “Oh, my wife makes it this way.” “So I’ll say, “Take me to your wife!” And I’ll go to their house and she’ll show me. Or I’ll go to a local bakery and ask about what they have. They’re really willing to share their food. I’ll stop women on their stoops and ask them, “How do you cook this? How do you cook that?” They’ll even start getting in arguments about it. That’s what I love.

A real food detective!

Good family cooking. That’s the idea behind a lot of these recipes – to take a simple, familiar dish, just a couple of different ingredients, and make it completely interesting again. For example, we all like chicken, but it can be so bland. So there are dishes like chicken with olives and pine nuts. It’s pan-cooked and caramelized. The olives imbue the chicken with flavor, and the pine nuts add crunch. Simple, and so delicious!

You rarely use skinless chicken.

Chicken with skin is where it’s at. Don’t get too fussy about that kind of stuff. Just eat less and enjoy. As much as possible, you have to try and enjoy.

True Italian wisdom!

Ha! It’s true. The other thing I want to add: most of the recipes rely on a limited larder. It’s the best way to eat. Simple. In season. Americans are really going back to seasonal ingredients.

You also say, waste not, want not.

Nothing goes to waste, including water. You use the same water in which vegetables are cooked to cook the pasta that follows, then you can use that water for making soups or risotto. You cook the outer leaves of cauliflower and broccoli, those kinds of things.

You have a show on public television, six cookbooks, many restaurants, but what really struck me was that you’ve cooked for the pope.

I cooked for him for two days. His mother was a cook and he’s German, so on the second day I made sauerkraut and goulash and all the things I thought he may have had as a child. And he said to me, “This reminds me of my mother’s flavors.” Emotionally it’s hard to connect with someone like that. But my food permeated him through his childhood memories. That was so beautiful. It was a career highlight.

Lidia Cooks from the Heart of Italy by Lidia Matticchio Bastianich and Tanya Bastianich Manuali is published by Alfred A. Knopf (aaknopf.com); \$35

Orange Cornmeal Cake

(This is the delicious cake Gini brought to a February meeting.)

1/2 cup olive oil
2 large eggs
1/2 cup dry white wine

Whisk the above in a bowl, then add 1 cup sugar and whisk again.

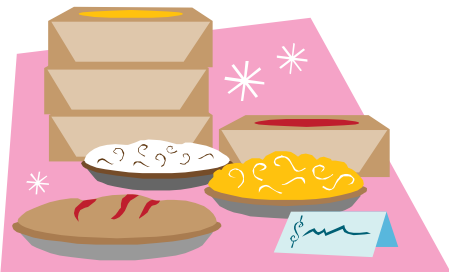
Then add:

1 1/4 cups of flour
1/2 cup yellow fine cornmeal
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
Zest of 1 orange

Whisk until blended then pour into parchment lined 8 x 2 inch pan.

Top with 1/3 cup sanding sugar before baking. (Sanding sugar is coarse sugar, about 1/32 inch size used to sprinkle on top of cookies, cakes, etc. It doesn’t dissolve and provides sparkle to baked goods.)

You can section the orange used for the zest and serve with the cake.



DANTE CALENDAR 2009-2010

Dante Alighieri Society of Washington

<p>September 2009</p> <p>9 Aisha Paterra Summer in Italy</p> <p>23 Robert Thomson Dante and Opera</p>	<p>February 2010</p> <p>10 Susan Gaylard (UW) Italian Fashion 1300-1800</p> <p>24 Claudio Mazzola "La tradizione della commedia all'italiana dal dopoguerra a oggi"</p>
<p>October 2009</p> <p>14 Lisa Dorsey The Divine Journey of Dante's Inferno</p> <p>28 Marcella Nardi Medieval Castles & Italy</p>	<p>March 2010</p> <p>10 Chris Zimmerman Tour of Italian Wine Regions and Wine Tasting</p> <p>24 Gennaro Giordano The Foundation of Rome: Myth and History</p>
<p>November 2009</p> <p>11 Magnus Feil Italian Design</p> <p>No Italian meeting in November</p>	<p>April 2010</p> <p>14 Election night (no speaker)</p> <p>28 Meeting in English Professor Maria Wells - Univ. of Texas Norman Bel Geddes: A Modernist Interpretation of the Divina Commedia</p>
<p>December 2009</p> <p>9 Christmas party</p> <p>No Italian meeting in December</p>	<p>May 2010</p> <p>12 Vincenza Scarpaci The Journey of the Italians in America</p> <p>No Italian meeting in May</p>
<p>January 2010</p> <p>13 Sportelli + Panel: Living Part- time in Italy</p> <p>27 Marcella Nardi Daily Life in Medieval Times</p>	

At the first meeting of each month (English program), pre-Dante pasta is communally prepared at 5:30 pm & served at 6:30 pm. Call the Activity Line (206) 320-9159 by the Monday before to reserve your spot(s). Cost: \$8.00 per person or \$15.00 per couple

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at Headquarters House, 2336 15th Ave S, in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle. Directions are on page 12.

Membership Application

I (We) want to promote Italian language and culture and request membership in the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington. Enclosed is my (our) check in full payment of annual membership dues (\$30.00 for individual, \$40.00 for a family).

Mark one : ☐ **New Membership** ☐ **Membership Renewal**

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Telephone: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Amount Enclosed:

Membership Amount: _____

Contribution: _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Contribution Categories (For recognition stars):

Bronzo (bronze) - Up to \$25

Argento (silver) - \$26 - \$50

Oro (gold) - \$51 to \$100

Platino (platinum) - Over \$100

Please return completed membership application with check to:

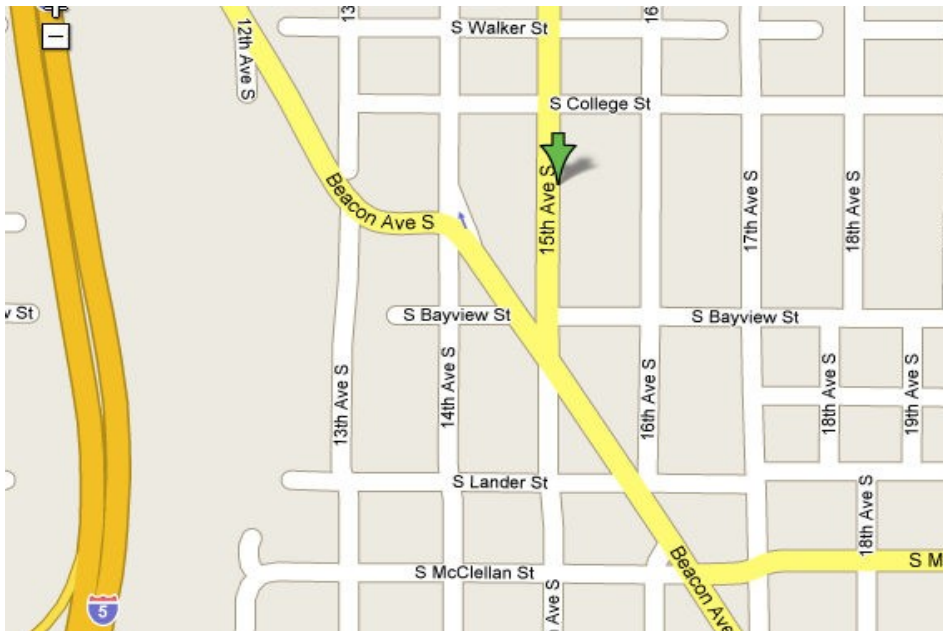
Dante Alighieri Society of Washington

PMB #1244

1122 East Pike Street

Seattle, WA 98122

If you have any questions, please call (206) 320-9159 and leave a message.



Directions to Headquarters House

Headquarters House is located at **2336 15th Avenue South** in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle. From I-5, take the Columbian Way/Spokane Street exit, eastbound. Turn left at the first light, Spokane Street and left again at the next light, 15th Avenue S. After crossing Beacon Avenue, Headquarters House will be on the right side between Bayview and College Streets.