



Italian Historical Society of America Newsletter

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BY JANICE THERESE MANCUSO

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Tutto Italiano Benvenuto a *Tutto Italiano*

Italy knows the importance of its food; one of the most popular products throughout the world. According to [Coldiretti](#) (scroll down) – the major agricultural association in Italy – from January to October 2021 “[export sales of Italian F&B products increased by +11%.](#)” The Food and Beverage (F&B) Industry “includes fresh food, packaged food, and beverages (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic). From food sold at the grocery store to cooked meals served at restaurants, institutions, and events, [this industry serves a huge variety of retail outlets.](#)”

In November 2021, it was reported that [Italy's food exports would reach 52 billion euros](#), with China, Russia, and the United States (in that order) having the highest increases in imports of Italian food for that year.

The European Union has established three categories of agricultural products: PDO, protected designation of origin; PGI, protected geographical indication; and TSG, traditional specialties guaranteed. ItalianFood.net notes: “At the base of the success of Made in Italy products, there is agriculture that has become the greenest in Europe. Italy can boast the leadership in organic farming with 80 thousand operators, the highest number of [PDO / PGI / TSG](#) food products (316), and wines (526) as well as 5,333 traditional food products. Italy is the first European producer of rice, durum wheat, wine, and many typical vegetables of the Mediterranean Diet such as tomatoes, eggplants, artichokes, fresh chicory, endives, celery, and fennel.”

In the packaged food division, “[Up to 13 thousand processed food products contain Italian PDO/PGI ingredients](#)” combining “the world of food industry and craftsmanship.” Condiments (42 percent) and first courses (41 percent) lead this group of products, with cured meats, desserts, cheese, gelato, jams, pizzas, and drinks following.

One of the major difficulties the Italian food and beverage industry faces is “[Italian Sounding](#)” products: “the use of geographical names, images and trademarks that evoke Italy to promote and market products that cannot be attributed to our country. It represents the most striking form of unfair competition and deceives consumers, especially in the agri-food sector.”

This isn't a new occurrence, but a growing concern over the decades of both the Italian government and the food industry. In the latest news dated August 2021, ansa.it reported, “[Italy to step up fight against Italian sounding food fakes.](#)” Other articles date back to 2018: “[Fake Italian Food: 6 Out Of 10 Products Are Forgeries](#)” (Italics Magazine) and from ItalianFood.net, “[Italian sounding: a €90 billion problem.](#)” Another, dated February, 2014, “[Food Piracy: The Phenomenon Of The Italian Sounding Food Products.](#)”

From the July 2007 issue of *Tutto Italiano*: “Italian food producers promote DOP products and are quite concerned with ‘Italian sounding’ or ‘fake Italian food.’ According to a recent study, authentic Italian food – that's food imported from Italy – accounts for only one-third of Italian food purchased in the United States.” The November 2017 issue provides more details about Italy's food industry. To read the

PDF go to the [Italian Historical Society of America](#) (archived newsletters) and scroll down to click on the November issue.

Last year – in what appears to be a first – the results of several psychological studies conducted to evaluate the importance of the Made in Italy brand were posted online. The Introduction states “The food industry is the second most important sector of Italian economy, making Italy the 10th exporter of this sector in the world. Agro-food ‘Made in Italy’ products—with features evoking an ‘Italian’ concept in the world, including history, culture, and tradition—are typical goods of the Mediterranean, and they currently spearhead Italian exports in terms of technologies, procedures, and intrinsic transformation of raw materials.”

In concluding, the researchers noted: “Our results, consistently across Studies 1, 2, and 3, suggest that the perceived ‘Italianness’ of a product increases its perceived reputation together with endowing a premium price: thus, the more a product is perceived to be ‘Italian,’ the more this perception increases the believed quality features applied to the product, which gains an added cost.”

The complete detailed report, “Italian Food? Sounds Good! Made in Italy and Italian Sounding Effects on Food Products’ Assessment by Consumers,” is available on [Frontiers in Psychology](#).

Despite the continuing battle against fake Italian food, Italy is proceeding in its efforts to reach diversified worldwide markets, including [Bulgaria](#), [Columbia](#), and the [United Arab Emirates](#).

Italian American Press

The Italian American Press offers a great selection of books – culture, history, memoirs, art, family, food, the supernatural, the natural beauty of Italy, and more – for every interest. Help preserve Italian American heritage and history. Support authors of Italian heritage who write about Italian American and Italian culture and let them know you found their books on the Italian American Press.

New on the Italian American Press

[*A TUSCAN TREASURY. Stories from Italy’s Most Captivating Region*](#) by Paul Salsini
Spanning over 100 years, a collection of stories – from letters mailed during World War I to a twenty-first century pandemic – exemplifies the beauty, intrigue, and culture of one of Italy’s most visited regions.

Make it a Movie

The lack of films and good-quality television shows depicting Italian American history and culture can be easily filled with the many books written about the Italian immigrants’ experiences ... [Read Part I of “Make It A Movie” on La Gazzetta Italiana](#).

Italian American Heritage Project

Keep your Italian heritage alive. An excellent source for learning about Italian American culture and heritage is a museum specifically established to focus on the Italian American experience. Many have virtual exhibits and tours available on their websites. [List of Italian American Museums](#).

Talk with your children (no matter what age), grandchildren, other family members, friends, and educators. Tell them about the significant contributions people of Italian heritage have made to America ... and the world. [List of more than 70 contributors on Thirty-One Days of Italians](#).

Learn about Columbus. It’s difficult to correct over 30 years of misinformation, and the rapid spread through digital sources is disheartening. In 2018, the Italian American Heritage Project was established to provide educational resources about Italian American history, heritage, and culture. The website also addresses the Columbus Controversy by providing facts about Columbus, how the controversy started, and why

it continues. Read [What is the Truth About Columbus?](#)

Three articles have been posted, all thoroughly researched and providing numerous credible resources. The first, [Blaming Columbus](#), gives an overview of how information about Columbus was manipulated to denigrate him. The second, [Is Columbus the cause of a blending of civilizations or the source of a clash of cultures?](#) provides an overview of the culture of Spain, the culture of what is now the Caribbean Islands, and the letter Columbus wrote after his first voyage. ([Click for lesson plans about the letter.](#)) The third article, [Was Columbus responsible for connecting European and American continents or to blame for wiping out native populations?](#) describes some of Columbus's interactions with the Natives, and briefly notes some major events that occurred after his voyage. To understand how Columbus became an important part of American history, read [Christopher Columbus: When Did the Hero Become a Villain?](#) (Some links are no longer active.)

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The groups opposing Columbus Day have an organized agenda to eliminate it from America. Our inherent Italian nature of independent communities – stemming from centuries of fluctuating foreign rulers and ever-changing borders – has been a disadvantage in attempts to suppress detrimental stereotypes (of Italian Americans) and in supporting Columbus. In 2021, Italian American organizations throughout the States formed a coalition noting this cultural impediment: [“Other groups have been much more effective at promoting their agendas throughout our country because they are better organized than we have been. It is time for Italian Americans to establish a sense of national unity ...”](#) The statement also includes the acknowledgement of the [“need to find ways to work together to save Columbus Day and protect our heritage from this onslaught of anti-Italian American bias.”](#)

Columbus Day has lost much of its relevance in American history. Italian Americans need a nationwide program to battle the campaign to abolish Columbus Day or it will be lost; even though Indigenous People already have a designated day, and Native Americans have a day and a month to celebrate their culture.

Indigenous Peoples Day – August 9

Native American Month – November

Native American Heritage Day – Friday after Thanksgiving

Visit the [IAHP website](#) to read my articles, learn about the lesson plans, see the resources I've used, and support my work. Donate for a cause – preserving Italian heritage and Italian American history and culture through education. [All donations are tax-deductible.](#)

### On the Radio

[The Italian Radio Show](#), presented by West Coast Italian Radio is hosted by Tony La Stella and Marzia Clyons every Monday throughout the United States, with an hour of “everything Italian.” In 2021, the show became part of [ABC News Radio](#), broadcasting from station KMET 1490AM Palm Springs, California.

In December, Tony and I talked about Christmas traditions in Italy. After the interview, we continued the conversation on the show's podcast, discussing additional Christmas traditions and the popular Christmas game Tombola, the origin of Bingo. [Listen to the show.](#) At the top of the page, click on “Buon Natale – Christmas in Italy ...” or scroll down to the show dated December 13, 2021. For the podcast, click on an icon under “Where to Listen.”

### Italian American News

[The \[2022\] Winter Fancy Food Show moves to Las Vegas](#) (ItalianFood.net; December 29, 2021)

[6-Foot Statue Of Legendary Frank Sinatra Unveiled In Hoboken](#) (CBS New York;

[Italy's Måneskin corrects how Americans say Italian foods](#) (wantedinrome.com; November 23, 2021)

## NIAF 2021 Photo Contest Winners

## News about Italy

## Italy is Simply Extraordinary

## Famed White Cliffs of Sicily Are Defaced in an Act of Vandalism (January 10, 2022)

[Italy's Government Will Not Block Cannabis Legalization Referendum](#) (January 10, 2022)

[The Day We Stepped Into A Page Of Italian History](https://italicsmag.com/2021/12/29/the-day-we-stepped-into-a-page-of-italian-history/) (italicsmag.com; December 29, 2021)

[The Economist: Italy is the Country of the Year](#) (italiani.it; December 17, 2021)

[Lina Wertmüller, the first woman to be nominated for a directing Oscar, dies](#) (cnn.com; December 9, 2021)

[This Famed Italian Museum Has New Plans to Teach Children About Da Vinci, Michelangelo, and More](https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/this-famed-italian-museum-has-new-plans-to-teach-children-about-da-vinci-michelangelo-and-more) (architecturaldigest.com; November 29, 2021)

*Buon anno, buon tutto, buona vita,*  
Janice

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