

NIGELLA GOES MOLTO ITALIANO!

# Tastes of Italia

THE BEST IN ITALIAN COOKING

JUNE 2013

## FOOD & LOVE IN FLORENCE

**FARM  
FRESH  
28**

ways to use  
fresh stuff  
this season

**The New  
Cal-Italia  
Wine  
Movement**

**The Secrets  
of Tiramisu**

THE MAGIC OF  
**OLIVE OIL**

Good for you in so many ways,  
and an essential ingredient for true  
Italian flavor in your cooking

JUNE 2013



U.S. and CANADA \$5.95

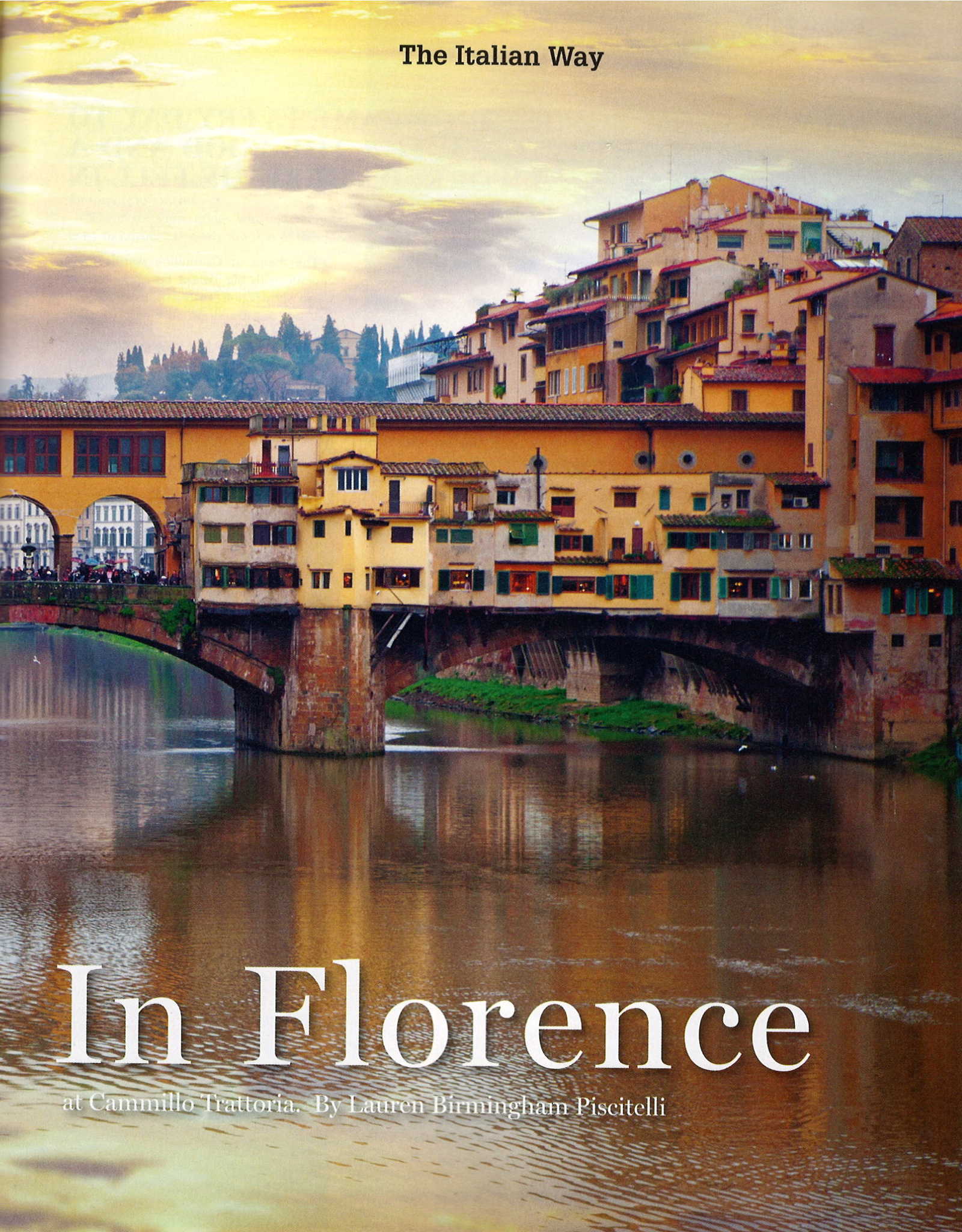




# Food & Love

Visit this beautiful historic city and be sure to stop for dinner





The Italian Way

# In Florence

at Cammillo Trattoria. By Lauren Birmingham Piscitelli



# BRUNO WAS FROM BOLOGNA. HE CAME EVERY DAY TO EAT AT CAMMILLO TRATTORIA, FOR THE FOOD AND A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN WHO WORKED THERE. HE FELL IN LOVE WITH HER.

Chiara Masiero is la signora at Cammillo Trattoria, Florence, and third generation owner. There isn't much of a sign on the outside, and just a small card in the window that reads "Closed Martedì & Mercoledì" (Tuesday and Wednesday). On the other five days the traditional Florentine trattoria is full, serving delicately made local specialties and Bolognese classics.

"Camillo was the original name and is spelled with a solo M, not two. But the grafico made a mistake and wrote two M's and the name remained. Camillo was my grandfather, my mother's father," Chiara says, then tells of her family's history.

"During the World War II, at the end of 1945, my nonno and nonna, along with their two daughters, my mom and aunt, were asked to leave their home by the authorities. It was wartime and their house had been bombed. So they came to live in Florence, without family and without friends. My nonno did not want to leave his family, a wife and two young beautiful daughters, alone during the war. He had already served in one world war from 1915 to 1918. So his idea was to open a trattoria. It was 1942. 'We'll have food and sell food to the military,' he thought. So he took a chance and opened the small trattoria. He always said, 'If we fail, we'll have food.'"

But it didn't fail. Instead, it was a great success. He opened it at the Ponte Vecchio. In the mornings, customers played cards and drank a little wine, and at lunch time, daily specials flew out from the kitchen faster than they could prepare them.

"It was simple peasant food and it was meant to feed the military and povera, poor people of Florence," Chiara says. "The military squad came every day to eat. And in the military squad was my father, Bruno. He was from Bologna. He worked in the stockroom of the nearby military hospital at Costa San Giorgio. He came every day for the food and a beautiful woman who worked there. That woman was la mia mamma. He fell in love with her."

She tells this story while sitting in a simple wooden chair in the trattoria. Overhead, ornate antique frames hold pencil and ink drawings that illustrate a historical past — Italian troops, an American admiral, the black Chianti rooster, and Florence before its bridges were blown up by the Germans.

Wearing an elegant black dress and a long strand of white pearls, she tells how it all came about. She speaks with her hands as she sips a glass of Vermentino dei Colli di Luni and smiles often as she explains how her Bolognese father fell in love with her Florentine mother—and that's why there are tortellini on the menu.

In 1945 when the Germans left Florence, they took down all the bridges and the buildings. Along with the palazzos went Cammillo. It was destroyed, too. So Chiara's father started over, rebuilding at Borgo San Jacopo, 57R, its current location. It took courage to rebuild in this part of Florence, Firenze-Oltrarno, which was considered the poor part of the city, Chiara says.

"But my father, being the vivacious, spirited, warm-hearted Bolognese that he was, succeeded. He started to attract the local Florentines, even from the other side of the Arno. And for many years the family worked together, my grandparents and my parents," she says.

Chiara expresses how fortunate she is because she loves her work. She loves to cook in the mornings and then be in the middle of the bustling dining room in the evenings. "I love to see clients liking what I have cooked. It's like I work in my home, because the trattoria is practically my home; I was raised here," she says.

"Our chefs, sous chefs and wait staff are all like family. For example, Chef Salvatore Spada was 15 years old when he came here to work from Sardinia. Today he is 50. He started in the kitchen, worked his way to sous chef, and now heads the kitchen. 'I grew up with him. I grew up with the entire staff here. *Abbiamo lo stesso sapore in bocca*," she swings back into Italian, saying they have the same taste and understand each other even when collaborating on new recipes.

She talks about her travels to the Orient and its historical and high end cooking schools. She believes that from every land everyone can learn something.

"Everyone loves our French *foie gras*; it's something that I have borrowed from the French, but mine is made with the seeds of coriander, 'the seeds of paradise.' I have never studied cooking classes, I have passion." Not everything can be learned in a book, especially passion, I tell her.

The menu at Cammillo's warms every appetite with big Tuscan favorites, such as warm white fagioli (Tuscan beans served with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil); Tortellini Bolognese (her grandmother's recipe) made by hand each day; wild duck slowly cooked with herbs in a light tomato sauce; fresh fish on Fridays, wines by the glass, and dolci (sinfully delicious desserts).





It is a few minutes after 11 p.m. The last of the diners are clearing out and the staff is removing their long white aprons. Chiara excuses herself from the table and explains that she needs to head to the kitchen to bake for tomorrow's menu.

"There are some things you just cannot trust to anyone. Desserts are one of them," she says.

Lauren Birmingham Piscitelli is founder and owner of Cooking Vacations Italy which specializes in culinary tours, hands-on cooking classes and cultural adventures in Italy. [www.cooking-vacations.com](http://www.cooking-vacations.com); (617) 247-4112.



Cammillo Trattoria in Florence is now run by a third-generation family member, Chiara Masiero. Her parents met and fell in love during World War II, when he was working nearby and came to the restaurant every day. Although many bridges and buildings were destroyed during the war, other landmarks remain, like Florence's Piazza della Signoria. Photography by Lauren Birmingham Piscitelli



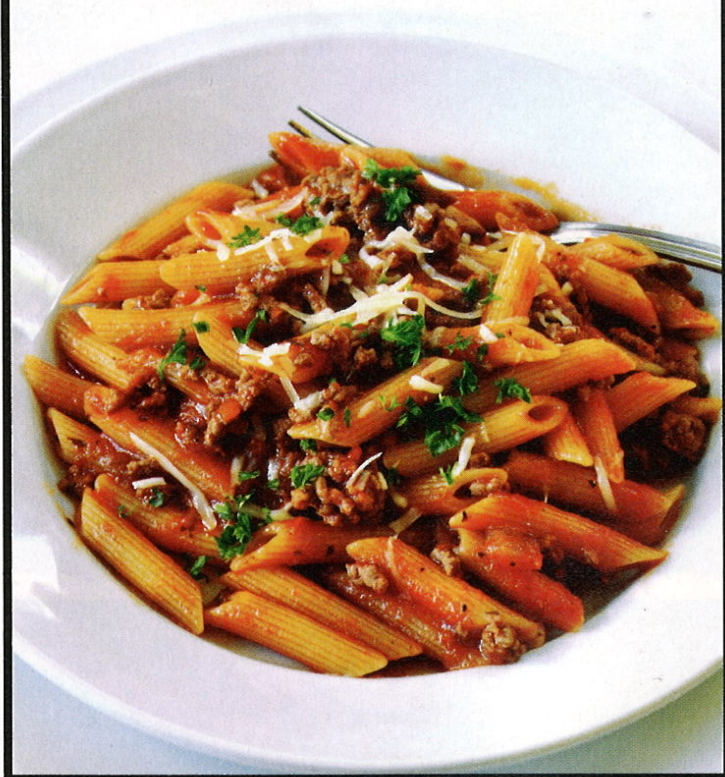
# Penne With Meat Sauce

- 1 medium carrot
- 2 medium celery stalks
- ½ medium onion
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, Tuscan preferred
- 13 ounces ground beef
- 3 ounces ground pork
- 1 pound peeled tomatoes, pureed or 1 (28-oz.) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon tomato concentrate, optional
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 pound penne lisce (smooth penne)
- ½ cup beef stock, if needed
- Parmigiano Reggiano, grated, if desired

Chop the carrot, celery and onion finely. In a large wide pot, heat olive oil and add chopped vegetables and sauté until the onion is pale in color or blonded. Add the

ground meat and sauté until it starts to brown. Add the pureed peeled tomatoes and the tomato concentrate, if desired. Add salt and pepper to taste and reduce heat to low. Cover and cook sauce for about 3 hours over low heat, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon to keep it from sticking to the bottom of the pot. When ready to eat, cook the penne in boiling salted water for about ¾ of the cook time (very al dente). Drain and toss in the pan with the ragu, adding a bit of beef stock if needed to dilute the sauce, and finish cooking the pasta for a minute or two with the sauce. Serve hot with Parmigiano Reggiano grated on top, if desired.

Makes 4 servings.



## Zabaglione Scented with Orange Liqueur

- 2 cups oranges, peeled and cut into ½-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons amaretti cookie crumbs
- 4 egg yolks
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons Grand Marnier
- ¼ cup Marsala
- Fresh berries for garnish
- Fresh mint for garnish



Divide the orange pieces and amaretti crumbs into 4 goblets. Set aside. In a double boiler over low heat, whisk the egg yolks and sugar until frothy. Add the Grand Marnier and Marsala and continue to whisk constantly until the mixture is light and creamy. Spoon the mixture over the oranges and amaretti crumbs. Top with fresh berries and mint. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings.





# PORK WITH SPINACH AND CHICKPEAS

- 3 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 pound boneless pork chops, cut into ½-inch cubes**  
**Flour, for coating the pork**
- 1 pound fresh spinach, stemmed and chopped**
- 1 pound chickpeas, cooked**
- 1 garlic clove, diced**
- Sea salt, to taste**

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Lightly coat the pork cubes in the flour. Add the pork cubes to the pan and sauté until the cubes turn brown and are tender, about 8 to 10 minutes. Test for desired level of doneness. Add the remaining ingredients. Stir and continue cooking about 5 minutes.

Salt to taste, transfer to a serving dish and serve warm.  
Makes 8 servings.



## Florentine Grape Bread

Known as Schacciata all'uva, this two-layer dessert is best when using fresh red or black grapes. If those aren't available, you may substitute other seasonal fruit, such as blueberries or strawberries.

### For the Sponge:

- ½ cup lukewarm (110°F) water**
- 2 teaspoons active dry yeast**
- 1 teaspoon sugar**

### For the Dough:

- 1½ cups lukewarm (110°F) water**
- 6 tablespoons olive oil, divided**
- 3½ cups all-purpose flour**
- 2 cups grapes or berries**
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar**
- 2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar**

### For the sponge:

In a large bowl, combine ½ cup water, yeast and sugar. Whisk to mix well. Cover with plastic wrap for 5 minutes. If yeast is foamy, continue. If not, start over with new yeast.

### For the dough:

Stir in additional 1½ cups water and 3 tablespoons olive oil, then stir in flour. You may use an electric mixer with a bread hook, or mix well with a large spoon. Mix until dough is

well blended and slightly sticky. Remove and, if hand-blended, knead for 5 to 7 minutes (add extra flour if dough is too moist). Transfer dough to a large bowl, coat with 1 tablespoon olive oil, and cover with a plastic wrap. Let sit for 1 hour until it doubles in size.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Remove the dough from the bowl and divide into balls. Roll out the first ball into a thin, flat rectangle and place in a lightly floured 10 x 15-inch baking dish and gently press out with your fingers to fill out the bottom and corners. Take about two-thirds of the grapes or berries and scatter them over the top of the dough. Roll out the second ball of dough and place it on top of the first, taking it to the sides of the pan. Gently press on the top layer your fingers to create little craters. Place the remaining grapes or other seasonal fruit on top of the dough.

Drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil and sprinkle with granulated sugar. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes until the dough becomes golden and the grapes or fruit are cooked. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Cut and serve.

Makes 8 servings.