

Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park



MANGIA PARCO



EXPO and REGIONS

FROM THE PROTECTION
OF BIODIVERSITY
TO THE QUALITY PRODUCTIONS

Paddaccio, cacioni, tritico and lampascioni. And more, lucanica, pappaluni, giuraje, farrate, solina, gruttazzo. Strange names, often ancient and mostly unknown, but hiding extraordinary cheeses, delicious desserts, rare vegetables, exquisite sausages, old cereals. In other words one of the most precious treasures of Italy: our excellent food.

What few people know is that many of these delicacies are produced and guarded in the Italian's Parks, where protected nature and human labor have been inextricably linked since thousands of years. Some of these products were already part of the typical regional cuisines, others have been saved from extinction and are back on the tables thanks to the tenacity of expert farmers whose work has been promoted and supported by their own parks and local administrations.

What comes out is a scenario characterized by tastefulness, healthy food and local agricultural traditions which are perfectly bound together with natural landscapes and flora and fauna conservation.

From the protection of biodiversity to quality productions: **Expo and Regions** is an initiative designed to discovery Italian gastronomic delights and to connect Milan Expo with small villages, fields and kitchens of Italian families. A journey across the places where food is produced, across our



cultural and natural heritage, across Italian traditions and warm hospitality. But it is also the story of the connection between each local product with its territory: history, art, lifestyle. This initiative will allow us to discover over 80 high quality products, many different flavors and many different regions, all rich in beauty and valuable natural diversity.

The initiative is coordinated by the President of the Council of Ministers - Department for Cohesion Policies and performed with the operational support of Invitalia, the National Agency for inward investment and economic development. The project involves all the Italian regions which have conceived a local package, and five ministries: Foreign Affairs; Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies; Heritage, Cultural Heritage Activities and Tourism; Education, Universities and Research; Environment and Protection of Land and Sea.



Nature conservation in Italy was born on these mountains, to save the last brown Marsican bears and the Apennine chamois who were on the brink of extinction.

On October 2nd 1921, the *Pro et Montibus Sylvis* Federation leased 500 hectares of the Costa Camosciara, located in the higher part of the Fondillo valley, from the municipality of Opi. The “autonomous body of the Abruzzo National Park” was established the following month.

On September 9th 1922, a territory of 12.000 hectares (owned by Opi, Bisegna, Civitella Alfedena, Gioia dei Marsi, Lecce dei Marsi, Pescasseroli and Villavallelonga municipalities) became the Abruzzo National Park. That was the initial core of the current Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park, which today covers an area of 50.000 hectares, a buffer zone of about 80.000 hectares, 24 municipalities and three Regions.

A century long successfully history of fighting in defense of animals as the brown Marsican bear (a subspecies, which is genetically different from alpine bears), the Apennine chamois (now saved from extinction risk), the Apennine wolf (fundamental species for maintaining the ecological balance between predators and prey), the golden eagle, red deer, roe deer. In the Park there are 66 species of mammals, 230 birds, 52 reptiles, amphibians and fish, and several species of insects (including important endemic species).

Flora is extremely rich: more than 2.000 different species of higher plants have been listed, besides mosses, lichens, algae and mushrooms. Iris (*Iris marsica*), endemism of the Park, blooming between May and June and the Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*), an orchid blooming in the most hidden corners between May and June, are considered among the most beautiful ones. Another rare species is the European black pine (*Pinus nigra*) of Villetta Barrea, that dates back to the Tertiary period.

Park typical food is very simple, and refer to ancient agro-pastoral culture based on meat, sheep offal and spontaneous common herbs, such as “*orapì*” (wild spinach that grows above an altitude of 2.000 meters). Handmade popular food products are the cheeses: the pecorino (produced from sheep) and the *Marzolina*, made by goat milk.

www.parcoabruzzo.it





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Marzolina

Marzolina or *Marzollina* is a typical cheese from Ciociaria*, which comes from an old manufacturing handed down by ancient shepherds who settled in the area of Vialla Santo Stefano. Even today Marzolina (from the Italian word Marzo = March) follows the traditional method of production: in March goat's milk is taken from two milking and mixed with kid's rennet.

After the rennet is "broken", in order to take buttermilk off, the cheese paste is left to drain on *frascèlle*, typical wooden panels, for about 24 hours. Then is pressed, shaped by hand and salted.

The aging - made on a wooden structure called "caialo" - lasts about one month. Traditionally the Marzolina is consumed fresh, right after the aging.

Its shape is cylindrical or like a truncated cone, with no crust but a tough and dry skin while the paste is white, solid and has small irregular holes ("occhiate"). It has a characteristic "goaty" smell and the taste is sweet, rich and unctuous. The more is aged, the more has a powerful and spicy flavor. The shepherds from Villa Santo Stefano used to taste grated Marzolina over the pasta with goat sauce.

* Ciociaria is the territory of the Lazio region that extends to south-east of Rome, until the Abruzzo and Molise regions.



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Je Frascatieglie

This traditional soup was usually cooked without legumes and vegetables, because it was served to nurses and mothers during breastfeeding. The basic recipe contains few ingredients easily found in farmhouses. The name Frascatieglie derives from the lumps formed by flour when mixed with water. This recipe is the new interpretation of the traditional preparation

How to prepare:

Prepare mixed meats stock adding the tomato sauce. While the broth is cooking, prepare a dough with flour and eggs, mixing until it gets soft. Crumble the dough to obtain small grains.

Gradually pour the grains of pasta into the boiling stock, stirring constantly. Cook until stock and grains are smooth and creamy.

4/6 people

Mixed meat stock

1 onion

white flour 400 gr

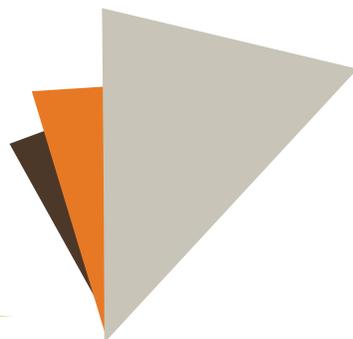
one egg

salt q.s.

oil q.s.

water q.s.

tomato (sauce) 200 gr.





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Pecorino di Picinisco

Pecorino is the most popular cheese in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park. It is produced by pure sheep milk, just milked or heated. The main ingredient of this cheese comes from Comisana and Massesi kind of sheep and from the Grigia Ciociara and Bianca Monticellana goats. After the curd is “broken” and the dough is pressed, the cheese is seared in the buttermilk, then dried, salted and put it to age.

Pecorino di Picinisco is a traditional shepherds cheese, derived from free and natural fed animals which have grazed on fresh herbs. This is the reason why the flavor of the cheese is so intense. The dry salting process is handmade and the aging is made on pine or beech wooden boards. Depending on the aging period, the cheese can be divided in two types: the Scamosciato that reach maturity from thirty to sixty days and the Stagionato, aging beyond three months. They both have different and unique flavor: the Scamosciato tastes mild and the Stagionato tastes spicy.

Pecorino di Picinisco’s consistency is solid with small irregular white or yellow holes (“occhiature”). Can be eaten alone or with a slice of wood - fired oven bread and a glass of red wine.





Conciato di San Vittore

The *Conciato* is one of the oldest cheeses from the Lazio region. The recipe has been passed down since the Samnites. Cicero and Martial described this cheese as

one of the most consumed products within the area between Lazio and Campania borders. In recent years it has almost disappeared due to a failure of communication of local dairying tradition. Now, *Conciato* has finally been acknowledged as DOL product (origins of Latium). The cheese is produced with 100% of sheep milk and its main features are the spicy seasoning, that lasts from 45 to 90 days, and the envelopment in 15 herbs, including wild thyme, laurel, juniper, sage, rosemary, wild fennel, anise, garlic, coriander, black pepper, white pepper and basil. Besides spicy fragrances, herbs and grasses smell, such as chamomile, herbs, bushes, come through in the flavor of the cheese. That reminds of the many kind of pastures grazed during spring and summer by different sheep breeds, Sopravvissana, Camosciata and Massese.

This peculiar spicy seasoning dates back to the ancient traditions carried on by shepherds from Ciociaria who used the herbs and spices mix, that inhibit bacterial growth thanks to the high content of antioxidants, to preserve the cheese for the whole year.

The *Conciato* is great eaten alone, but is also very good as an aperitif or as an ingredient for other dishes. Best way to taste it is with homemade bread and a glass of white wine.



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Turnips and potatoes

Turnip greens are among the few vegetables grown during winter in the Park, as they require small quantities of water and are not affected by low temperatures. In the old recipe the rapeschia, a kind of wild turnip, was traditionally used.

4 people

Turnip greens 300 gr.

potatoes 300 gr.

olive oil q.s.

salt q.s.

garlic q.s.

How to prepare:

Boil turnips and potatoes and drain them when cooked. Fry over low heat garlic with oil. When the sautéed is ready, add turnip greens and coarsely chopped potatoes, continuing to cook.





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Caciocavallo di mucca

Caciocavallo (literally “horse cheese”) is made of cow’s milk and is one of the most popular cheese in Italy. Unpasteurized milk is heated and coagulated with cow’s rennet: in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise

National Park is used the milk produced by “Pezzata Rossa”, a fine breed of cows. The cheese has a mild, slightly salty flavor and a firm, smooth texture. As it ages, the flavor becomes sharper and the texture more granular.

Trittico

The most famous caciocavallo cheese, weighing from 8 to 25 kilos, has a cylindrical shape and a unique and intense flavor. Trittico cheese delightfully mixes three types of organic milk from cows, sheep and goat raised in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park. Their milk is proportionally measured in order to obtain a sharp, savory and slightly spicy taste.

The one year and a half long-lasting aging requires a chamber with controlled humidity and temperature.

Caciocavallo barrique

The *caciocavallo* aged in barrique is the finest recipe of this “*pasta filata*” cheese, organically produced mainly with *Pezzata Rossa* raw milk, without any fermentation process.

After 6 months of natural aging the cheese finish its ripening in oak barriques (wooden barrel) for about one year, covered with bran in order to control the level of humidity. That makes the cheese more savory thanks to the absorption of wine flavors contained in the barrel and to the slightly bitter taste that comes from the bran. Serve this cheese after dinner with a teaspoon of honey, which enhances its fragrance and taste. It is also good as aperitif or starter.



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Cipollata (onion based dish)

This traditional dish was mainly prepared during the summer period in August, when onions were pulled out and hung up to dry.

How to prepare:

6 people
onions 800 gr.
pork and chicken meat
500 gr.
eggs (one per person)
tomatoes 200 gr.
oil q.s.
8 slices of stale bread
water q.s.

Prepare a mixed meats stock, browning the chopped meat in a little oil, with a few pieces of chopped coarsely tomato.

Once all sides of the meat are colored, cover with water.

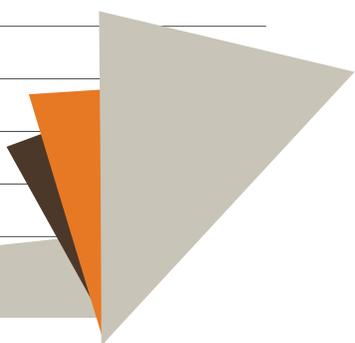
Cut the onion into thin strips and fry it in a separate pan.

After a few minutes, add the stock. Whisk the eggs in a bowl.

When the onions and the stock are boiling, add the beaten eggs and cook for a few seconds. Place the slices of bread on the bottom plate and pour into the Cipollata.



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Gregoriano

A soft pecorino cheese, aged only 3 months and made from raw sheep milk. The Gregoriano making process, a new version of the Valle del Sagittario ancient dairy tradition, does not include any rennet and it takes more time than the traditional one, in order to have a more soft and aromatic cheese.

It has a flat round shape and a white or greenish ring; the pasta cheese gets softer with the aging, almost acquiring the consistency of the Stracchino cheese. Best way to taste it is with black bread and dried fruit, especially walnuts, which enhance its bitter taste and the peculiar smoothness. Organoleptic characteristics of Gregoriano cheese are brought out when served with blackberry, blueberry and rosehip jam. Great with red wine or sweet wine such as Muscat.



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Marinated potatoes

Typical recipe from Pescasseroli area, in the province of L'Aquila, the ingredients are the ones that were used during the pastoral life. It was considered a basic but very nutritious dish.

How to prepare:

Cut potatoes into slices and put them at the bottom of an oiled baking pan. Make a layer of potatoes, then add parmesan, finely chopped scamorza, salt and herbs. Repeat this process until you have three layers. Sprinkle the top with Parmesan, scamorza cheese and breadcrumbs to create a crunchy crust. Bake in a preheated oven at about 180° C for 15 minutes with a lid on and continue to cook without a lid for another 10 minutes.

6 people
potatoes 1 kg.
parmesan q.s.
scamorza cheese 300 gr.
(scamorza is a semi-soft white cheese made from cow's milk)
bread crumble 250 gr.
oil q.s.
salt q.s.
laurel and rosemary q.s.





Pan dell'Orso (Bear bread)

Dedicated to the bear, the great mammal become the symbol of the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park, Pan dell'orso is a soft sweet made with almond paste, barley, butter and “mountain taste” honey. The sweet is covered with chocolate, making it even more delicious and yummy.

Traditionally prepared by women before their husbands left for the winter transhumance, its name comes from the embroidered version of an old story about a group of shepherds attacked by a bear. It seems that the mammal was attracted by the sweet scent of the *Pan dell'orso* and assaulted the sacks with the sweets, not the shepherds or the sheep.

Since then, this sweet is called Pan dell'orso (Bear bread) and can be found in two versions: classic and with chocolate drops. A genuine flavor and a long lasting fragrance that make it an excellent food for a snack or for breakfast.

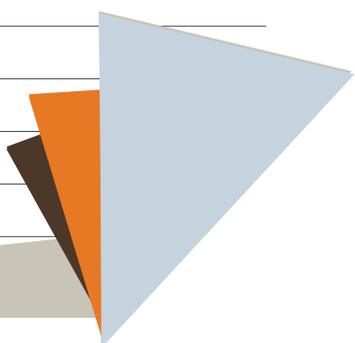
Wildflower honey

The Wildflower honey from L'Aquila is obtained by flowers found on the mountain pastures, 850 meters high. More than 80 different species in spring and 130 in summer blossom in this area.

The characteristics of the pastures protected by the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park, ensure a product with a unique flavor: delicate and perfumed during spring, richer in summer.



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Turnips Pancotto (cooked bread)

Shepherds used to prepare this dish in their typical rural settlements located in the high pastures, where they spent summer season.

6 people

turnip greens 1,5 kg.

stale bread 500 gr.

extra virgin oil q.s.

salt q.s.

How to prepare:

Cook turnip greens in boiling water. 5 minutes before the end, toss the stale bread in the pot. After having retrieved the bread and drained turnip greens, put them in a soup plate and season with salt and oil. In recent years the recipe has evolved with a sprinkle of Parmesan or pecorino cheese on the top.



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Orapi and beans soup

Orapi (*Chenopodium bonus-henricu*) are wild spinach that grows during autumn and winter above an altitude of 2.000 meters.

5/6 people
orapi 600 gr.
beans 400 gr.
red garlic q.s.
bacon cubes 100 gr.
chili q.s.
oil q.s.
bruschetta bread q.s.

How to prepare:

Boil *orapi* and beans in two separate pan, keeping the cooking water. In a pan or a large crock pot, fry over low heat the bacon and 4 crushed red garlic cloves. Cook bacon and garlic for a few minutes then add boiled *orapi*. Season with chili and bring to a boil using orapi cooking water. As last ingredient, add the beans together with a glass of their cooking water. Cook until liquids heat to evaporation and serve with toasted bruschetta bread.

Maccheroni alla chitarra with lamb meat sauce

(*Maccheroni alla chitarra* is a typical Abruzzese pasta made with an egg dough and an implement called “chitarra”, guitar, a multi-stringed rectangular wooden implement with metal wires across the top).

Maccheroni alla chitarra are part of the traditional kind of pasta in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park, although - depending on regional dialects - can be differently named.

How to prepare:

Mix flour and eggs for about 35-40 minutes until smooth. Flat the dough with a rolling pin, making a not too thin pasta sheet. Cut into rectangles about 60 cm long and 20 cm wide. Place each rectangle on the “chitarra” (lengthwise) and press it with the rolling pin. The wires will cut through the pasta sheet, forming strands. Separately, prepare the sauce frying onion and carrot, tomatoes, meat, butter and oil. Leave to simmer the sauce for an hour on low heat.

Cook maccheroni in boiling water and drain when they are still “al dente”. Mix pasta with the lamb sauce and sprinkle with grated parmesan or pecorino cheese.

6 people
flour 350 gr.
4 eggs
lamb 200 gr.
pork lean meat 200 gr
tomato sauce 2 lt
butter 50 gr.
oil q.s.
1 small onion
1 carrot
salt q.s
parmesan or pecorino q.s.





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Horizontal lines for writing, arranged in a grid within the white writing area.





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Horizontal lines for writing, arranged in a regular grid across the central white area.





Santoreggia honey

The rare and excellent *Santoreggia* is produced thanks to low impact agricultural activities and richness of plant species conserved by the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park. The honey is named after the *Satureja montana L.*, a small plant growing in the L'Aquila area.

The flowering of *Satureja* occurs from July to September and the honey has a special yellow-green colour, becoming gray-green when it crystallizes. The Santoreggia is now produced by few beekeepers and is therefore protected by Slow Food. For this reason it is important to keep producing all Park honey variety, thus enhancing the protection of agricultural and mountain biodiversity of these areas.



Caciotta cheese

Many sweet, spicy or tasty table cheeses can be found in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park. All these varieties are traditionally aged in caves and can be eaten grilled or fresh. Besides, the caciotta can be also enjoyed alone or combined with pears.

During the first 15 day maturation period the cheese is still soft. Aged cheese can be used grated over pasta or sliced as a starter. Traditional farms recommend to grill the cheese and serve it with honey or salty marmalade.

Stuffed caciotta cheese

The fresh or semimatured stuffed caciotta is characterized by many different ingredients that make this cheese savory. Depending on the season, the taste can be enriched by lemon, nuts, orange, chives, pepper, chili, mint, truffle, fennel and almonds. Perfect as an aperitif, with an aromatic white wine that enhances its taste of herbs and dried fruit.