



## Litr 268R: Italian Cultural History: Food & Wine

### John Felice Rome Center

Spring 2024

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 5.15-6.30pm

Office hours: Thursdays 4.00-5.00pm

Instructor: Elisa Ascione, PhD

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Tastings fee: \$100

**All dates are subject to change based on availability at off-site locations**

#### Course Description

In this course, we will explore the history of food and wine in Italy as a gateway to understanding Italian culture. By examining the factors that have shaped Italian food and taste, the variations in eating habits of different socio-economic classes, and the essential role played by food in constructing Italian identities, we will shed light on fundamental patterns in Italian history and society.

Through a mix of discussions, readings, primary source analyses, workshops, and excursions, we will investigate Italian food and culture from antiquity to the present. We will explore how food traditions and local foods are maintained and transformed over time and space, how culinary knowledge is used to mark cultural belonging and differences, studying food as a site of cultural transmission but also of dissent and resistance. Topics include food as cultural heritage, alternative food systems, culinary tourism in Italy. After the completion of this course, students will have developed a critical understanding of food history, an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Italian culture and society, and a framework for analyzing Italian cultural history.

#### Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students should be able to:

- Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view regarding culinary history
- Gather and interpret information from first-hand sources and scholarly material
- Work with non-traditional historical texts
- Develop a more sophisticated understanding of Italian history through the country's gastronomy
- Identify how food and drink has shaped Italy today

#### Sakai:

All course materials will be located on Sakai which can be accessed at <https://sakai.luc.edu>

Sakai is a web-based learning management system. You will be able to access it from any computer connected to the internet. Instructional guides and video tutorials for using Sakai are available at:

<http://www.luc.edu/itrs/sakai/sakai-student-tutorials.shtml>

Course content, including syllabi, reading material etc. will be available online. Students should check Sakai often for announcements, assignments, and other course content.

**Student Support Resources:**

- ITS Service Desk: [helpdesk@luc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@luc.edu)
- Library Subject Specialists: <http://libraries.luc.edu/specialists>
- Student Accessibility Center: [sac@luc.edu](mailto:sac@luc.edu)
- Writing Center: <http://www.luc.edu/writing/>

**Attendance Policy**

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

*This course meets twice a week, thus a total of two unexcused absences will be permitted. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the "approved limit".*

The collective health of the JFRC is everyone's responsibility. DO NOT ATTEND CLASS IF YOU ARE ILL.

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a guiding principle for all academic activity at Loyola University Chicago, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle.

Failing to meet the following academic integrity standards is a serious violation of personal honesty and the academic ideals that bind the University into a learning community. These standards apply to both individual and group assignments. Individuals working in a group may be held responsible if one of the group members has violated one or more of these standards.

1. Students may not plagiarize; the use of AI is considered plagiarism too and treated as such.
2. Students may not submit the same work for credit for more than one assignment (known as self-plagiarism).
3. Students may not fabricate data.
4. Students may not collude.
5. Students may not cheat.
6. Student may not facilitate academic misconduct.

Follow this link for more details about these standards, sanctions, and academic misconduct procedures: ([https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml))

**Bias Reporting:**

It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse undermines the aspirations and attacks the ideals of our community. The university qualifies

these incidents as incidents of bias.

In order to uphold our mission of being Chicago's Jesuit Catholic University-- a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith, any incident(s) of bias must be reported and appropriately addressed. Therefore, the Bias Response (BR) Team was created to assist members of the Loyola University Chicago community in bringing incidents of bias to the attention of the university. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the Bias Response Team at this link:

<http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/>

### **Assessment Components**

- Class Participation (10%)
- Oral Group Presentation: Edible Histories (10%)
- Midterm Exam (30%)
- Two Summaries of Readings (10%)
- Food and Identity: a Personal Heritage Recipe Essay (10%)
- Final Exam (30%)

#### *Class Participation (10%)*

For spirited discussion, we will need your active attention and participation. Class participation grades are not automatic. They are based on oral contributions to the collective learning experience of the class. Participation means active engagement in the course: being consistently prepared for class (having carefully read that day's assignments), asking questions, responding to questions, offering your own insights and opinions, and responding to others. **Laptops and phones are not allowed in class.**

#### *Oral Group Presentation: Edible Histories (10%)*

Students will be divided into groups and will be assigned one of two presentation days. Groups must choose a topic/book from the Edible series available at LUC library (the list will be provided by the instructor).

**Guidelines:** a 20-minute presentation which includes 1) an introduction with a broad historical outline from Edible Histories books and **an original argument** 2) a specific focus on one historical period or theme 3) a critical analysis of the changes of the material and symbolic value of the food through time 4) a clear conclusion 5) **two** questions to elicit class discussion 6) a bibliography with three scholarly references (only peer-reviewed books and articles) 7) slides with no more than five words. You should not read your presentation but rehearse it in advance (you can use notes)

Grades will be an average of the grade of the entire group and the individual performance. Grading will be based on preparedness, organization of the presentation, critical thinking skills, and information from diverse sources to create an original argument. Points will be deducted if the individual presenter reads from a written text or only engages marginally with the material compared to other sections of the presentation. Each member of the group should make an original contribution presenting part of the literature and of the research and not just summing up or introducing the material already presented.

*Two summaries of readings (10%)* A one page/one-and-a-half-page with the summary of the reading. Upload it in Sakai before class begins.

*Food and Identity: a Personal Heritage Recipe Essay (10%)* — Interview a family member and ask them for a recipe that is important for them and/or for your family. Alternatively, find a recipe that's

important for you. Tell the story of this recipe, reflecting on the meaning that it has for you or your family, and how this relates to your cultural background. Reflect on the ways in which food and food habits contribute to the development and transmission of cultural practices and knowledge. Bear in mind the following questions as you prepare the interview questionnaire: What does this recipe signify for the person interviewed? What memories are connected to this recipe? What does this recipe tell us about broader cultural themes (family structure, generations, changing history of certain products, etc.). How do food practices contribute to the construction of personal and collective identities?

In the paper include:

- 1) An introduction with a reference to one of the topics discussed in class
- 2) A description of the person that you interviewed and why, including a picture from the family member if available
- 3) The memories connected to the recipe and the recipe itself
- 4) A quote of at least one of the readings that you've done
- 5) A brief history of that recipe or of one of the ingredients (online or bibliographic research)
- 6) A conclusion
- 7) 4-5 pages, Garamond, size 12 font, 1.5 line spacing.

#### *Mid Term (30%) and Final Exam (30%)*

These exams consist of multiple choice and short answers, bringing together the various concepts/topics you have studied. No alternative exam dates will be offered.

#### **Grading**

94-100: A

90-93: A-

87-89: B+

84-86: B

80-83: B-

77-79: C+

74-76: C

70-73: C-

67-69: D+

60-66: D

59 or lower: F

#### **Late or Missed Assignments**

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. After authorization, late work will incur a 3% percent deduction for every day work is late.

As per the JFRC academic policies, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reasons; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.

#### **Accessibility Accommodations**

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) (<http://www.luc.edu/sac>) requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

### **Course Schedule**

#### **Friday Field Class: March 15, from 9.00am to 3.00pm**

Departure in the morning by private bus, students will participate in workshops on organic agriculture in an urban garden. It includes a light lunch. <https://www.ilgiardinoditorricola.com/il-giardino>

### **WEEK 1**

#### **Tuesday, January 16: Introduction to the Study of Italian Cultural History: Food and Wine**

#### **Thursday, January 18: Bio-Cultural Perspectives on Food and Nutrition**

Fischler, C. (1988) 'Food, Self and identity', *Social Science Information*, n. 27, pp. 275-292.

### **WEEK 2**

#### **Tuesday, January 23: The Food in Ancient Rome**

Kaufman, C., K. (2006) 'Ancient Rome', in *Cooking in Ancient Civilizations*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, pp. 121–131.

Corbier, M. (1999) 'The Broad Bean and the Moray: Social Hierarchies and Food in Rome', in Montanari, M. and Flandrin, J.-L. (eds) *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, pp. 128–140.

#### **Thursday, January 25: Medieval Food**

Montanari, M. (2012) 'Introduction: When European (Food) Culture Was Born', in Montanari, M. (ed.) *A Cultural History of Food in the Medieval Age*. London; New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 1–8.

Montanari, M. (1999) 'Romans, Barbarians, Christians & Production Structures and Food Systems in the Early Middle Ages', in Montanari, M. and Flandrin, J.-L. (eds), Sonnenfeld, A. (tran.) *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, pp. 165–177.

### **WEEK 3**

#### **Tuesday, January 30: The Invention of Pasta**

Dickie, J. (2008) 'Palermo, 1154: Pasta and the Planisphere', in *Delizia! The Epic History of the Italians and Their Food*. New York, NY: Free Press, pp. 13-30

#### **Thursday, February 1: Renaissance Food: The Humoral Theory and the Great Chain of Being**

Grieco, A., J. (1999) 'Food and Social Classes in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy', in Montanari, M. and Flandrin, J.-L. (eds), Sonnenfeld, A. (tran.) *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, pp. 302–312.

### **WEEK 4**

#### **Tuesday, February 6: The Columbian Exchange**

Brosnan, K.A. (2011) 'Columbian Exchange', in *Encyclopedia of American Environmental History*. New York: Facts On File, pp. 301-303.

Montanari, M. (2013) 'Preservation and Renewal of Alimentary Identities', in *Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or Food and the Nation*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 33-40.

**Thursday, February 8: Bees and Sustainable Development Workshop**

Patel, V., Natasha P., et al. (2021) «Why Bees Are Critical for Achieving Sustainable Development». *Ambio* 50, fasc. 1: 49–59.

**WEEK 5**

**Tuesday, February 13: Presentations**

**Thursday, February 15: Presentations**

**WEEK 6**

**Tuesday, February 20: Introduction to Wine: Alcohol as Embodied Material Culture**

Dietler, M. (2019) «Alcohol as Embodied Material Culture: Anthropological Reflections on the Deep Entanglement of Humans and Alcohol». In *Alcohol and Humans*, di Michael Dietler, 115–29. Oxford University Press, 2019.

**Thursday, February 22: Wine: Understanding Terroir**

D'Agata, I. (2019) *Italy's Native Wine Grape Terroirs*, University of California Press, pp. 7-26

**WEEK 7**

**Tuesday, February 27: Midterm Review**

**Thursday, February 29: Midterm Exam**

**Spring Break: March 1-10**

**WEEK 8**

**Tuesday, March 12: The Risorgimento and Food: Unity Through a Cookbook**

Montanari, M. (2013) 'The Artusian Synthesis', in *Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or Food and the Nation*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 47-52.

Dickie, J. (2008) "Florence, 1891: Pellegrino Artusi" in *Delizia! The Epic History of the Italians and Their Food*. New York, NY: Free Press.

**Thursday, March 14: Migrations, diasporic cuisines, "gastro-nationalism":**

Di Giovine, M. A. (2010). "La Vigilia Italo-Americana: Revitalizing the Italian-American Family through the Christmas Eve 'Feast of the Seven Fishes'." *Food and Foodways* 18 (4): 181–208.

Zhen, W. (2019) «Food, Identity and Culture», pp.77-85 "Race and Ethnicity" In *Food Studies: A Hands-On Guide*. London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

*Summary of the readings uploaded on Sakai before class begins (5%)*

**Friday, March 15- Field Class:** Giardino di Torricola, sustainable agriculture workshops in an urban

garden (9.00am-3.00pm)

## WEEK 9

### Tuesday, March 19: Food as Cultural Heritage (1)

Ascione, E. (2017) "Food and Cultural Heritage: Preserving, Re-inventing and Exposing Food Cultures", pp 301-313 in *The Handbook of Food and Popular Culture*, edited by Peter Naccarato and Kathleen LeBesco. London, U.K.: Bloomsbury Publishers

### Thursday, March 21: Food as Cultural Heritage (2)

Come to class with your laptop/ tablet for group work on UNESCO heritage items

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists>

## WEEK 10

### Tuesday, March 26: Food & Religion: Rituals of Charity and Abundance

Kittler, Pamela Goyan, and Kathryn Sucher (2004), *Food and Culture*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, "Food and Religion", pp- 85-107

Field, C. "Rites of Passage in Italy." *Gastronomica* 10, no. 1 (February 2010): 32–37

### Thursday, March 28: (No Class – Make-up time for Friday Field Class)

## Easter Break: March 29-April 1

## WEEK 11

### Tuesday, April 2: Food and Gender Relations in Italy

Harper, D. A, e P Faccioli. (2010) *The Italian Way: Food & Social Life*. University of Chicago Press. "Labor", pp. 125-147

Zhen, W. (2019) «Food, Identity and Culture», pp. 70-77, "Gender" In *Food Studies: A Hands-On Guide*. London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

### Thursday, April 4: Italy and The Global Food System: Opportunities and Challenges

Parasecoli, F. (2014) 'Now and the Future', in *Al Dente: A History of Food in Italy*. London: Reaktion Books, pp. 198-222.

Montanari, M. (2013) 'The "Italian Miracle": Between Modernity and Tradition', in *Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or Food and the Nation*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 59-64.

## WEEK 12

### Tuesday, April 9: Culinary Tourism and Cultural Change.

Stronza, A. (2001) "Anthropology of Tourism: Forging New Grounds for Ecotourism and other Alternatives", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 30, pp. 261-283

Long, L. (2004) "Introduction", pp. xii-xiv/1-19 in Long, L. ed. *Culinary Tourism*, Kentucky University Press  
*Summary of the readings uploaded on Sakai before class begins (5%)*

**Thursday, April 11: Italian Food Activism and Political Food.**

Browse <https://www.slowfood.com/>

Siniscalchi, V. (2014) 'Slow Food Activism between Politics and Economy', in Siniscalchi, V. and Counihan, C. (eds) *Food Activism: Agency, Democracy and Economy*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, pp. 225–242.

Laudan, R. (2001) "A Plea for Culinary Modernism: Why We Should Love New, Fast, Processed Food". *Gastronomica* 1: 36–44.

**WEEK 13****Tuesday, April 16: The "Natural Wine" Movement**

Buranyi, S. (2018) "Has Wine Gone Mad?", *The Guardian*, 15 May 2018

**Thursday, April 18: Final Exam Review****WEEK 14: FINAL EXAM**

April 22-25