



Litr 268R: Italian Cultural History: Food & Wine
John Felice Rome Center

Fall 2019

Mondays & Wednesdays | 10:30-11:45pm

Sala 3

Instructor: Elizabeth Simari

Email: esimari@luc.edu

Practicum/Site visits fee: \$100

Course Description

Perhaps the best way to learn about the Italian people is to examine the history of the country's gastronomy and its gastronomic traditions. By looking at its individual products and different time periods throughout history together we will gain a greater understanding of Italian history and culture. During our semester together, we will use the food and wine of Italy as way to examine the history of the country and the dramatic changes from Ancient Rome to modern times.

Food is a key for understanding the past and Italy is especially interesting in this respect since modern Italian identity is based, in large part, on food. Many Italian products have been used by chefs and *nonnas* alike to compose dishes which are now famous world-wide. By learning about these individual products and how they are made we can gain insight into Italian culture and history. In a number of tasting experiences, power-point based lectures, discussions, films and one field study we will look at Italian food in antiquity, the Renaissance, and more recent times: while also giving a strong grounding in contemporary Italian food culture.

By the end of the course the students will have acquired a more sophisticated understanding of food history as an interdisciplinary approach to studying Italian culture and society and as a frame for analyzing important aspects of Italian 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

Required Text / Materials

There are no required texts for this course; all required readings will be in the course reader. Additional reading assignments may be made available by the instructor. You can purchase the course reader in the JFRC bookstore at the beginning of the semester.

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.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

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”.

Friday Field Study: Grape Harvest at Fattoria del Fiorano

September and October in Italy is harvest time. Farmers everywhere harvest, wheat, olives and grapes and much more. This year - in a special JFRC pilot program - on **Friday, September 27**, students will travel to Fattoria del Fiorano, an organic farm and winery, located on the edge of Rome and help harvest grapes which will be made into wine. We will spend the day learning about and participating directly in the wine-making process at the winery, which is run by Alessia Antinori, whose family has been making wine for more than 500 years. We will also have the opportunity to tour the grounds and have a picnic lunch prepared solely with ingredients from the farm (Via del Fioranello, 34).

However, because the date that grapes are harvest is dependent on the weather, there is a very small possibility that the farm will have to harvest the grapes before September 27th, so as not to let them go bad. In this case we will have an alternate activity. *Failure to attend this dinner will count as an absence.

Cooking Demonstration with Alice Adams in Trastevere

This dinner –scheduled for two **Wednesdays (October 30 and November 6)** – will be a special opportunity for students to watch and participate in the making of Roman dishes. It will allow students to reflect on and of course taste the food of the city they are living in. Closer to the date of the dinner I will give you detailed instructions on how to reach Alice’s Latteria Studio (Via di Ponziano, 29) with public transportation. *Failure to attend this dinner will count as an absence.

Assessment Components

• Participation	10%
• Field Study Essay	15%
• Midterm Exam	20%
• Roman Neighborhood Blog Essay	15%
• Presentation	20%
• Final Exam	20%

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 attentive listening to others. **Laptops and phones are not allowed in class.** Students who are by nature more reluctant to offer their input will not be penalized; however they are encouraged to participate fully in other aspects of the class.

Field Study Essay (15%)

Drawing on their experience at the grape harvest, students are asked to write and research an essay on a topic of their choosing related to their experience at Fattoria del Fiorano. Potential topics may include: wine making, the process of fermentation in wine, organic/sustainable farming, family businesses in Italy, the importance of knowing where our food comes from, etc. These essays will account for 15% of the final grade. More details to follow. Essays are due Monday, **October 7th at 9 am**.

Students are expected to use correct grammar and spelling in their writing. Failure to do so will result in a max 10% grade reduction.

Midterm Exam (20%)

An exam covering all topics presented in the first half of the course. It will consist of short answer and essay questions. The exam will take approximately 75 minutes to complete and is closed book/closed note.

Roman Neighborhood Blog Essay (15%)

Students are assigned to write an essay on their blog on one of neighborhoods throughout the Eternal City (the Jewish Ghetto, Testaccio, or Esquilino). These essays will account for 15% of the final grade. More details to follow. Essays are due Monday, **November 18th at 9 am**.

Presentations (15%)

Students will be divided into groups of three or four and will be assigned one of two presentation days (November 4th and 13th). Presentations may cover a variety of topics (not-covered throughout the course of the semester, such as any number of recipe writers, foods such as the aperitivo or digestivo). Presentations titles may include: Jewish food outside of Rome; the role of women in the culinary traditions of Rome; Lasagne according to a Roman, a Renaissance and a Modern Recipe; Spices from the Romans to the present; the History of beer-making in Italy and its popularity today, or a biography of a modern chef.

- a. Presentations should last from **10-15 minutes** (groups of four are required to present 15-20 minutes). A timer will ring at the 15/20 minute mark and students will be asked to conclude immediately at that point.
- b. Students will also be required to hand-in a bibliography of at least 5 sources (at least two scholarly) they used to research their presentation.
- c. Students are required to hand-in a presentation proposal including the title of the presentation and a short paragraph describing what you will discuss in your presentation (at least five sentences) via email by 9:00 am on **Monday, October 21** but are encouraged to do so earlier.
- d. Grades will given for the entire group and will be based on preparedness, organization of presentation, did the group demonstrate an understanding of the material, critical thinking skills, did they present coherent/cohesive presentation, taking information from different sources to make something new and did they deliver a clear and concise 10-15 min. presentation.

Final Exam (20%)

The final exam is the final step in the sequential learning process the course involves. In this exam you will bring together the various concepts/topics we have studied. The exam will take approximately 120 minutes to complete and is closed book/closed note. It will constitute 20% of the final grade. This is the only time the exam will be given. No alternative exam dates will be offered.

*All work must be completed to pass this course. Any late work will result in a lower grade (3%).

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

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml. You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

Review Sessions: We will review for both the midterm and the final exam. Students will be divided into groups and give a short five minute review of one of the topics to be covered in the exam. Your performance in these reviews will count in your participation grade. Students are expected to provide a summary/synopsis of what we discussed in class and not read their notes verbatim.

Office Hours: I will be available both before and after class. Alternative times can be arranged but it is always best to make an appointment. We can also be in touch via email if you have difficulties or queries.

Course Schedule

Friday Class Days:

Friday, September 20 – Wednesday schedule

Friday, September 27 – Field Study

WEEK 1

Monday, September 2: Introduction to the Study of Food

Wednesday, September 4: Modern Italian Food Culture

Required Readings: Dickie: 1-10, Parasecoli 257-276

WEEK 2

Monday, September 9: The Food in Ancient Rome

Required readings: Corbier 128-140; Steel 16-17

Wednesday, September 11: Food Practicum: Bread

Required Readings: Franklin 235-241

WEEK 3

Monday, September 16: The Historical and Cultural Context of Wine: Whites

Required Reading: Katz 82-84, D'Agata 111-113, 194-196

Friday, September 20: The Historical and Cultural Context of Wine: Reds

Required Reading: D'Agata 353-358

WEEK 4

Monday, September 23: NO CLASS (Instead we have the field study on Friday)

Wednesday, September 25: Field Study Prep Day

Friday, September 27: FIELD STUDY- Grape Harvest at Fattoria del Fiorano (Via del Fioranello, 34 Rome)

Required readings: Johnson 26-29

WEEK 5

Monday, September 30: The Historical and Cultural Context of Wine - Classification and Pairing

Required Reading: Parasecoli 258-259

Wednesday, October 2: From the Middle Ages to the Columbian Exchange

Required short film: "1492- Globalization and Fusion Cuisines" located on *Kanopy* from LUC Library site

WEEK 6

Monday, October 7: Review for Midterm and Field study essay due at 9 am

Wednesday, October 9: MIDTERM

WEEK 7: FALL BREAK (OCTOBER 11-20)

WEEK 8

Monday, October 21: Food Practicum: Cheese + Hand in presentation proposal

Required readings: Firebaugh 359-364

Wednesday, October 23: The Renaissance

Required Readings: Dickie 65-76; Grieco 307-313

WEEK 9

Monday, October 28: Slow Food Film

**Wednesday, October 30: Offsite Cooking demonstration & dinner – The Food of Rome and Lazio
Students with last names starting with A-K will attend**

Required Reading: Zanini De Vita 5-18, 57-59

WEEK 10

Monday, November 4: Class presentations

**Wednesday, November 6: Offsite Cooking demonstration & dinner- The Food of Rome and Lazio
Students with last names starting with L-Z will attend**

Required Reading: Zanini De Vita 5-18, 57-59

WEEK 11

Monday, November 11: Discuss Slow Food and Roman cooking

Required Readings: Laudan 134-144

Wednesday, November 13: Class Presentations

WEEK 12

**Monday, November 18: The European Food Revolution + Chocolate Practicum
Roman Neighborhood Essay Due today at 9 am**

Wednesday, November 20: The Risorgimento and Food: Unity Through a Cookbook

Required Readings: Dickie 211-232

WEEK 13

Monday, November 25: Mussolini and Futurist Cuisine

Required Readings: Dickie 270-276; Helstosky 63-81

Wednesday, November 27: The Invention of Italian-American Food

Required Readings: Levenstein 75-90

WEEK 14

Monday, December 2: Italian-American food in Big Night (FILM)

Wednesday, December 4: Final Review + bring your laptops to class to fill out course evaluation

WEEK 15 **FINAL EXAM**

Course Bibliography

- Capatti, A., and Massimo Montanari, transl. by Aine O’Healy, *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Corbier, M. “The Broad Bean and the Moray: Social Hierarchies and Food in Rome”, in: *Food - A Culinary History*, ed. J.F. Flandrin and M. Montanari (English edition by Albert Sonnenfeld), 128-140. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- D’Agata, I. “Native Wine Grapes of Italy”, University of California Press, 2014
- Dickie, J., *Delizia: The epic history of the Italians and their food*. London: Sceptre, 2007.
- Firebaugh, S., “Cheese”, in: *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, ed. S.H. Katz, Vol. 1, 359-364. New York: Thomas Gale 2003.
- Flandrin, J.F. “Introduction: The Early Modern Period”, in: *Food—A Culinary History*, ed. J.F. Flandrin and M. Montanari (English edition by Albert Sonnenfeld), 349-373. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Franklin, P., “Bread”, in: *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, ed. S.H. Katz, Vol. 1, 235-241. New York: Thomas Gale 2003.
- Grieco, A.J. “Food and Social Classes in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy”, in: *Food—A Culinary History*, ed. J.F. Flandrin and M. Montanari (English edition by Albert Sonnenfeld), 302-313. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Helstosky, C. *Garlic and Oil: Food and Politics in Italy*. New York: Berg, 2006.
- Laudan, R. “A Plea for Culinary Modernism: Why We Should Love New, Fast, Processed Food,” in *Gastronomica* 1.1. (2001), 36-44.
- “Slow Food: The French Terroir Strategy, and Culinary Modernism. An Essay Review of Carlo Petrini, trans. William McCuaig. *Slow Food: The Case for Taste* (New York: Columbia University Press). *Food, Culture, and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 7. 2. (2004), 133-144.
- Levenstein, H. “The American Response to Italian Food, 1880-1930” in *Food in The USA: A Reader*, ed. C Counihan, 75-90. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Montanari, M., *The Culture of Food* (The Making of Europe). Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
- “Romans, Barbarians, Christians: The Dawn of European Food Culture” and “Production Structures and Food Systems in the Early Middle Ages” in: *Food—A Culinary History*, ed. J.F. Flandrin and M. Montanari (English edition by Albert Sonnenfeld), 165-177. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- *Let the Meatballs Rest*. (English edition by Beth Archer Brombert) Columbia University Press, New York: 2009.
- Mueller, T. *Extravirginity: The Sublime and Scandalous World of Olive Oil*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc, 2012.
- Parasecoli, F. *Al Dente: The History of Food in Italy*, London: Reaktion Books, 2014.



JOHN FELICE

ROME
CENTER

Pollan, M., *Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation*. New York: Penguin, 2013.

Riley, G. *The Oxford Companion to Italian Food*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Zanini De Vita, Oretta. *The Food of Rome and Lazio: History Folklore and Recipes* (English edition by Maureen Fant). Rome: Alphabyte Books, 1994.