



Triangle Sons & Daughters of Italy

Serving the North Carolina Triangle since 2004

2817

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IL GIORNALE DI TSDIA

Gennaio, 2025



Follow us on Facebook at
“Triangle Sons & Daughters of Italy”



And on our YouTube Channel
youtube.com/@tsdoiyoutube7441

Please note that we take photos and videos at our events. If you do not want your image to appear on either Facebook or YouTube, you must tell the photographer at the time.

Il Giornale di TSDIA

Editor Nick Verna

Send comments or suggested materials to
nickverna14@gmail.com

TSDIA Calendar of Events

Feb 2 – Mother Cabrini Movie & Presentation
Mar 2 – Italian-American Food Presentation, Amari, and Antipasto Potluck
Mar 8 – Italian Coffee House & St. Joseph's Dessert Extravaganza
June 8 – Family Picnic and Scholarship Awards
Sep 20 – Festa Italiana
Oct 11 – Italian American Heritage Celebration

January Birthdays

This month we celebrate the birthdays of those members celebrating in January: Ray Rooney (1), Antonino Randazzo (3), Hudson Elliott (6), Marie Federico (6), Bonnie Kunath (6), Anne Magnini (7), Peter Zelek (7), Kerri Passarella (10), Jason Damico (11), Christine Smith (13), Alysia Matteucci (15), Claudia Cobianchi (16), Susan Denman (18), Maria Wolf (13), Diane Damico (23), Karen Bledsoe (24), Sandra DePalma (24), Gina Trombley (25), John Vitale (29), Denise Loeb (31).



Good & Welfare

Vera Cicero has had follow-up surgery. Now that she is back up to strength, they removed the damaged portions of her intestines and reattached the remaining, hopefully get her back to a full recovery. Please continue to keep Vera in your prayers.

This has been a very difficult time for the **Scalco** family. Marie had an injury that put her in the hospital and then into rehab. She is going directly from there into long term care. Please keep the entire Scalco family in your prayers as they navigate this difficult transition.



Letter From the President



Dear Members:

WOW! Together all of us created an incredible year for the Triangle Sons and Daughters of Italy in 2024 and we have entered 2025 with great momentum. Our extended Italian American family keeps growing.

I am very proud of how we are enriching each other's lives through our social, cultural, educational, and charitable programs. Event registration and engagement with members is the best way to get the most from your membership.

If you have not done so, please review the events page on our website (<https://www.tsdia.org/events-2-2/>) and register for the programs of interest to you. If there is any program that you would like to assist with, please reach out to me. We always appreciate helping hands. Also, if you have suggestions for new programs, you can send your ideas to me. My contact email is: donald.cimorelli@gmail.com

I am looking forward to a vibrant 2025 where our organization continues to flourish. I hope to see you very soon.

Don Cimorelli

TSDIA 2817 President

FOOD & CULTURE

Interessante | Web Sites | Food | Culture | Places | Stories

Food & Culture highlights our Italian culture. If you have suggestions we can put it in a future newsletter, please email Nick Verna at nickverna14@gmail.com.

New Members

Please welcome Robert (Rob), Christine and their son Michael Russo to the Lodge. Christine is the daughter of members Bernard and Fran Castellano. They are originally from Long Island, Rob from Hauppauge and Christine from Commack, and relocated to Holly Springs in 2007. Rob's heritage is from Bovino, Foggia and Naples, Campania. He is a Teacher at Wake Tech Community College and enjoys Italian foods and sports. Christine's heritage is from Bari, Sorrento and Messina. She is a Preschool Teacher Assistant and enjoys watching the Carolina Hurricanes and spending time with family and her beagle, Mandy. Michael is the brother of Vinny Russo who has been a Youth Member since 2018. Michael attends Holly Ridge Middle School and enjoys hockey, Legos, and playing the saxophone. Welcome Rob russo218@yahoo.com and Christine crusso1031@gmail.com.

Member Business Spotlight

Each month we will spotlight a member owned business.



Georgina's Restaurant and Pizzeria

Member Name: Roe DeMattia

Address: 3536 Davis Drive, Morrisville, NC 27560

Phone: (919) 388-3820

Website: www.georginasrestaurantnc.com

Email: info@georginasrestaurantnc.com

Services Offered: Georgina's is a family owned and operated restaurant that has been serving Morrisville and the surrounding communities with pride since 2006. Their Italian Restaurant features recipes passed down from family and friends throughout the years. They use only the finest quality ingredients to provide you with the ultimate dining experience. Read about them in Cary Magazine [Restaurant Profile: Georgina's Pizzeria & Restaurant - Cary Magazine](#).



Triangle Disability & Autism Services

At the Triangle Sons and Daughters of Italy, we support the community in which we live in many ways. We understand that local charities and non-profits while serving the community at large, they are also supporting Italian American families in the Triangle that require their services. 20 TSDIA Members volunteered to support a Children's Holiday Party for the clients of the Triangle Disability & Autism Services organization. Let's applaud our members who brought smiles to the children and their parents.



2024 TSDIA Christmas Dinners



USO Cake Walk

The Triangle Sons and Daughters of Italy gave back to the community once again by providing a Cake Walk to USO Military Families. This is one of our annual favorites to bring joy to others. These kids are critical thinkers when we ask them to choose any cake of their choosing out of 45 options if they win a spot on the Cake Walk!



Cookie Exchange

If you missed the TSDIA Cookie Exchange, you missed the holiday treat sensation of the year. The cookies were outstanding. If you would like a pdf version of the recipe book copy of the recipes from this year's exchange, click on <https://www.tsdia.org/.../12/TSDIA-Cookie-Swap-2024-1.pdf>.



Gifts for Family Promise

The generous members of TSDIA Lodge 2817 have helped make this a very special Christmas for 6 families. Not only did your purchase gifts for the 2 families that were assigned to us, but the gift cards enabled the staff at Family Promise to buy gifts for 4 additional families. This will be a very special Christmas for these families.



CELEBRATING 300 FORMAL MEMBERS TODAY!



We Always have a Seat at Our Table for You!

Italy 2025: Is Jubilee Year the Right Time to Visit?

Italy is always an enchanting destination, but 2025 brings unique challenges as the country prepares for the Jubilee Year. This special Catholic celebration, held every 25 years, will draw millions of visitors to Rome and surrounding regions. While the Jubilee offers rare spiritual and cultural experiences, it also comes with considerable crowds, higher prices, and logistical hurdles. If you're considering a trip to Italy, here's why 2026 might be a better time for your adventure.

The Jubilee Impact

Overwhelming Crowds:

Rome will be the epicenter of the Jubilee, with major sites like St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museums, and the Holy Doors seeing unprecedented numbers of visitors. Expect long lines, packed public spaces, and difficulty accessing key attractions.

Other pilgrimage sites across Italy, including Assisi and Loreto, will also experience spikes in tourism, impacting the overall travel experience.

Higher Costs:

The surge in visitors will drive up the cost of flights, hotels, and tours. Budget accommodations and prime locations near major attractions may already be fully booked.

Restaurants and other services might raise prices to capitalize on the influx of tourists.

Logistical Challenges:

Public transport in cities like Rome could face delays and overcrowding.

With many streets blocked for Jubilee processions and events, navigating cities will require extra planning and patience.

Why 2026 Might Be Better

Quieter Destinations:

Once the Jubilee Year concludes, Rome and other pilgrimage sites will see a return to normalcy, making it easier to enjoy iconic landmarks without the stress of large crowds.

Smaller towns and regions, often overlooked during Jubilee fervor, will also be less impacted and more accessible.

Better Deals:

With the surge in demand over, airfare, accommodations, and tours are likely to become more affordable in 2026.

Restaurants and attractions will return to more reasonable pricing, offering better value for travelers.

A More Relaxed Experience:

Visiting Italy in a non-Jubilee year allows for a more leisurely pace, where you can truly soak in the beauty, culture, and cuisine without rushing or competing with thousands of other tourists.

Sites like St. Peter's Basilica and the Vatican Museums will still be magnificent in 2026, and you'll have more time to explore them in peace.

Tips If You Do Choose 2025

Plan Far in Advance: If the Jubilee's spiritual significance draws you, book accommodations, flights, and guided tours as early as possible.

Avoid Peak Times: Travel during the shoulder seasons (spring and fall) for slightly smaller crowds and more pleasant weather.

Explore Beyond Rome: Consider regions like Sicily, Piedmont, or Tuscany, where Jubilee impacts will be less pronounced.

Conclusion

While the Jubilee Year in 2025 offers a once-in-a-lifetime spiritual opportunity, it's not without its challenges. If you're seeking a more relaxed and cost-effective trip, 2026 may be the perfect alternative. Whenever you choose to go, Italy's timeless beauty and

rich heritage await, offering unforgettable experiences at every turn. Buon viaggio! And if you're looking for help booking or planning your trip, reach out to me, Rocky Dimico, owner of Flights and Fables. rocky@flightsandfables.com Buon viaggio e buona fortuna!

The Story of La Befana

<https://orderisda.org/culture/la-nostra-voce/the-story-of-la-befana/>

On the eve of the Epiphany, children all over Italy can expect a special visitor.



The Christmas season in Italy is one that begins with the Novena eight days before Christmas and lasts until the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6th.

Traditionally it is a spiritual event and not so much a secular event of gifting and gift exchange...except with the arrival of "La Befana."

It is not that Italian children do not know of Santa or "Babbo Natale" (they do receive small, useful gifts for Christmas) but, in many regions of Italy, the exchange of gifts awaits the coming of La Befana on January 5th. That night, before going to bed, Italian children hang their socks along the chimney hoping La Befana will fill them with sweets and other treats. For children who were naughty, La Befana leaves hard black candy called carbone (charcoal), as a reminder to do better. In exchange, un goccia di grappa, pane e un po' di formaggio is offered to warm the chilled bones of La Befana and to help her on her way.

Tradition has it that La Befana, an old woman of modest means, lived in a shack at the time of the birth of Jesus Christ. One night, the Three Magi, on their way to find the Christ child, stopped to ask for directions to Bethlehem and for food and shelter. In exchange for her help, the Magi thanked the old woman and invited her to join them in search of the baby Jesus. La Befana initially passed on the invite, saying she had to catch up on chores around the house.

Later that night, while asleep, La Befana was awoken by an unusually bright light. Startled and afraid, she took it as a sign to follow the Magi in search of the Christ Child. Unfortunately, La Befana lost her way, failing to find the Wise Men or the manger.

And so, the story continues: Each year on January 5th (the eve of the Feast of the Epiphany), La Befana takes to the skies and resumes her search of the Christ Child. As she travels from house to house, she drops off treats to sleeping children in hopes that the baby Jesus might also be with them.

What an enchanting story! It is a tradition that will certainly continue for years to come...



In 2026, This Charming Italian Ski Village Will Be Incredibly Crowded. Go Now.

https://www.wsj.com/lifestyle/travel/in-2026-this-charming-italian-ski-village-will-be-incredibly-crowded-go-now-9a76686e?mod=hp_lista_pos3



Savvy skiers rank Cortina d'Ampezzo, future host of the women's 2026 Winter Olympic alpine events, among the best of the Alps. There's never been a better time to discover its many charms.

Rock spires and mountain peaks fade in and out of view behind wispy clouds. Mesmerized by the blue sky above and immaculate slopes below, I don't hear a word my friends Carlo and Massimo say as our chairlift crests the summit. It's my first day in Cortina d'Ampezzo and I've barely even touched the snow yet. But I'm already in love.

Among celebrities and stylish cognoscenti from Rome, Milan and beyond, Cortina ranks with Gstaad and St. Moritz as an iconic place to ski and be seen. (It's even a plot point in "The Talented Mr. Ripley.") But unlike many other alpine destinations in the Dolomite region that are heavily Germanic-influenced, Cortina feels thoroughly and delightfully Italian.

Situated in one of the widest valleys in the Dolomite range, the bustling town has a compact center, thanks to strict, centuries-old laws that limit development and protect open space and farmland. The real draw for skiers like me: the challenging steeps, couloirs and slopes with an impressive vertical drop of nearly 6,000 feet.

Local lifts also connect to the tremendous Dolomiti Superski network, which includes 12 ski areas and 450 lifts surrounded by 10,000-foot peaks. Racers flock to these slopes annually for various events on the Alpine Ski World Cup circuit. And now, for the first time since

1956, the town is gearing up to host the women's alpine ski events for the 2026 Winter Olympics.

All that's to say, while it's always a good time to ski Cortina, this moment feels particularly heady. With the 2026 Milano Games on the horizon, the town is undergoing a flurry of preparation on and off piste. "Usually, Cortina never feels crowded," said Ted Ligety, a former U.S. Alpine Ski Team member and two-time Olympic gold medalist. "The skiing is spectacular, and the town is really family-oriented and authentic."

Skiers who slip in this winter, before the chaos descends, can enjoy both the slopes and the town's charming cultural and culinary scene. At the family-run, Michelin-starred SanBrite restaurant, the Gaspari family grows and raises nearly all their own ingredients. Local cheeses, eggs and meats are everywhere, however, so you don't need to break the bank for an incredible meal.



After a day of schussing, take your pick from bustling hole-in-the-wall pasta restaurants, local favorites like Pizzeria 5 Torri or panini at the always-packed Bar Toto. It's difficult to go wrong. On-slope, the dining is equally strong, with standout independent rifugios like Baita Resch and Rifugio Averau serving traditional Italian alpine dishes.

Some of the most visible pre-Olympic updates are a slew of hotel remodels. The Faloria Mountain Spa Hotel, where the U.S. Ski Team has lodged in the past, recently reopened after an extensive redesign at the hand of architect Flaviano Capriotti. In 2022, the centrally located Hotel Impero was reborn as a sleek inn called the Hotel de Len. And several more upscale renovations are expected, including the Cristallo, which will open ahead of the Games as a Mandarin-branded property. Prefer your rooms with a bit of history? With high ceilings and marble floors, the elegant Hotel de la Poste, which has been family-run since the early 1800s and played host to illustrious guests like Ernest Hemingway, remains a charming link to Cortina's glamorous past.



In 2009, the Dolomite Range was named a UNESCO World Heritage site, elevating the region's profile as a year-round outdoor destination. The slopes are well-suited for intermediate or better skiers, but there's plenty of mellow terrain too. In winter, the valley is surrounded by enviable backcountry ski touring, freeride skiing and mountaineering opportunities, a big draw for off-piste enthusiasts like myself. "You can stay and visit other ski resorts during the day or try a hut-to-hut tour between resorts," explained Agustina Lagos Marmol, who runs Dolomite Mountains, a mountain guide and ski safari operator. Another celebrated local tradition is Scoiattoli di Cortina, or Squirrels of Cortina, a community of globally accomplished mountaineers and guides who have been based in the valley since 1939. Images and large statues of squirrels can be seen all around, in proud homage to the group's exploits.

Yet, in town, extreme skiers and refined holidaymakers coexist in harmony. In the afternoons, old-world nobility and next-generation glitterati stroll the cobblestone Corso Italia, a wide, pedestrian-only road flanked by luxury boutiques and restaurants, stopping to chat and socialize along the way. This, Carlo explains, is the Italian tradition of fare una vasca (literally, doing laps)—the ultimate people-watching excursion.

On my last day on the slopes, Carlo's 9-year old son, Teo, joins us on a tour of tree runs, until storm clouds roll in and prompt a detour inside the cozy Rifugio Scoiattoli. On clear afternoons, the deck offers stellar views of the Cinque Torri, dramatic rock towers that are a favorite of daredevil climbers. But not today. Instead, we join an international crowd gathered around the roaring wood stove and sip creamy hot chocolates that are so good we order a second round.

And in that moment of stillness, the source of Cortina's magic is suddenly clear. It isn't the Italian sophistication, the world-class skiing, the tempting cuisine or stunning geology. It's the one-of-a-kind way they all come together.

Italian vs. American Flours: What to Use for Perfect Results

<https://mangiawithnonna.com/italian-vs-american-flours-what-to-use-for-perfect-results/>



The Italian culinary tradition is renowned for its emphasis on quality ingredients, and flour plays a central role in the creation of its iconic baked goods such as cakes, pizzas, and breads. Italian flours are classified differently from American flours, which often leads to confusion when trying to recreate authentic Italian recipes at home. This guide will explore the types of Italian flours, their characteristics, and their closest American equivalents.

Classification of Italian flours

Italian flours are classified according to the fineness of their milling and their ash content (the amount of mineral residue left after burning a sample). The lower the number, the finer and whiter the flour.

Here is the breakdown:

"00" flour: very fine, soft and white, perfect for delicate baked goods.

"0" flour: slightly coarser than "00", often used for bread and pizza dough.

"1" and **"2"** flours: Even coarser, containing more bran and germ, closer to whole wheat.

Whole Wheat (Integral): Contains all parts of the grain, is rich in fiber, and has an intense flavor.

American flours, on the other hand, are classified according to protein content and intended use, such as whole-wheat flour, bread flour, and pastry flour.

Flours for cakes

Italian flour: Flour "00"

Characteristics: Very fine, low protein (about 8-9%), ideal for soft, tender cakes such as sponge cake or panettone.

American equivalent: Cake flour

Cake flour is also finely ground and low in protein, making it a suitable substitute for “00” flour in cakes. If it is not available, a mixture of whole wheat flour and cornstarch can mimic its texture.

Pizza flours

Italian flour: “00” flour for pizza

Characteristics: Slightly higher in protein (about 11-12%) than “00” for cakes, makes for an elastic dough with a crisp crust.

U.S. equivalent: Whole wheat flour or bread flour.

The higher protein content of bread flour (12-13%) makes it ideal for a chewy crust, but whole wheat flour works well for a thinner, less chewy base. Specialty flours such as Caputo “00” pizza flour are also available in the United States.

Italian flour: Manitoba flour

Characteristics: High-gluten flour often mixed with “00” for Neapolitan-style pizza dough, known for its elasticity.

American equivalent: bread flour

The gluten content of bread flour matches that of Manitoba flour, providing the structure needed for long fermentation.

Bread flours

Italian flour: “0” flour

Characteristics: Slightly coarser milled than “00,” with protein levels around 12-13%, making it versatile for rustic breads and flatbreads.

American equivalent: Bread flour

Bread flour matches the protein level and texture, ideal for sturdy breads and flatbreads.

Italian flour: Semola Rimacinata

Characteristics: Finely ground, yellow durum wheat flour used for breads such as Altamura and to create crispy crusts.

American equivalent: Fine semolina flour.

Semolina available in American stores works well, but make sure it is the finely ground variety to get similar results.

Italian flour: whole wheat (Integrale).

Characteristics: Rich in fiber, with a nutty flavor, perfect for rustic, whole grain breads.

American equivalent: Whole wheat flour.

American whole wheat flour is similar in fiber content and taste, although slightly coarser.

Additional notes on substituting Italian flours

Pay attention to protein content: When substituting flours, check protein levels, as they affect gluten formation and texture. Flours with low protein content produce softer baked goods, while those with higher protein content result in more elastic and chewy doughs.

Mixing flours: Italians often mix flours for specific recipes, such as mixing “00” with Manitoba for pizza or “0” with whole wheat for rustic breads.

Hydration Levels: Italian flours can absorb water differently than American flours, so it is a good idea to adjust hydration as needed when making dough.

Tips for authentic Italian baking

Look for Italian flours: Many specialty stores and online retailers offer authentic Italian flours such as Caputo, Mulino Marino or Antimo Caputo.

Experiment with recipes: Try mixing flours to get the consistency you want for your baked goods.

Understand your flour: Each flour behaves differently, so test to perfect hydration, fermentation and baking times.

Conclusion

Understanding the nuances of Italian flours and their American equivalents is critical to achieving authentic textures and flavors in your cakes, pizzas and breads. Whether you’re using “00” for silky cakes, semolina for crisp breads, or mixing flours to achieve pizza perfection, the right flour makes all the difference. With this guide you will be ready to bring the flavor of Italy into your kitchen!

Crackdown on mobile phone use while driving in Italy



One of the most critical issues, especially for tourists, involves using mobile phones while driving. In

Italy, being caught in the act can result in fines ranging from €250 to €1,000. You may face a one-week suspension if you have fewer than 10 points on your license. The suspension increases to 15 days if you are also not wearing a seat belt or are driving on the wrong side of the road. Repeat offenders face fines of up to €1,400, a three-month suspension, and the loss of 8 to 10 points on their license.

Focaccia della Befana (Epiphany Sweet Bread)

<https://aqueeninthekitchen.com/2017/01/06/focaccia-della-befana-epiphany-sweet-bread/>

Yields : 12 servings



INGREDIENTS

3.5 cups flour type 00
1 pinch of salt
7 gr dry yeast
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 eggs
zest of 1 lemon, grated
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1/3 cup milk, lukewarm
1/2 cup candied orange peels
1 egg + 1 tbsp milk, for egg wash
sugar pearls, to garnish

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl combine flour and salt.

Proof the yeast with 1/4 cup of lukewarm water then incorporate the proofed yeast to the flour mixture.

Make a well in the center then add sugar, eggs, lemon zest, melted butter and mix adding little by little the milk until all the liquids are absorbed.

Move the dough over a floured work surface and knead until an elastic dough forms. Add the candied orange peels and shape the dough into a ball.

Move the dough in a slightly floured bowl, cover with cling wrap and allow to rest in a warm place for 1 hour.



Move the dough over a round baking sheet lined with parchment paper, pat flat then shape into a big flower. Place a water glass or a mug in center of circle. Use a paring knife to cut the dough in 12 petals, leaving the center intact.



Twist each petals twice. Allow it to rest for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile preheat oven at 400 F degrees.

Brush with egg wash and sprinkle with sugar pearls.

Bake for 15 minutes and golden brown.

Allow it to cool before serving.

Ombre Chocolate Cake Bars

<https://www.kingarthurbaking.com/recipes/ombre-chocolate-cake-bars-recipe>

Yield about 36 small (1" to 1 1/4") square pieces

Ingredients

Cake

3/4 cup (195g) almond paste
3/4 cup (149g) granulated sugar
1/4 teaspoon table salt
6 tablespoons (85g) butter, room temp
3/4 teaspoon almond extract
3 large eggs
1 1/4 cups (150g) All-Purpose Flour
1/4 cup (21g) Cocoa Powder, divided
1 tablespoon water, divided

Filling

1/2 cup (170g) jam, divided*

*Choose your own flavor. We like raspberry

Glaze

1/2 cup (85g) semisweet chips

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease three 8" square pans or line each pan with a parchment sling. If you only have one 8" square pan, that's OK; you can bake the layers one at a time.

To make the cake: Break the almond paste into large chunks and place into a mixing bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer. Add the sugar and salt, and mix using an electric hand mixer or the flat beater attachment on a stand mixer until sandy. The almond paste will have broken down into smaller pieces and be uniform in size.

Add the butter and almond extract. Beat until slightly fluffy and lightened in color, stopping to scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed.

Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing until each is fully incorporated before adding the next.

Add the flour and mix until smooth.

Divide the batter into thirds: portion approximately 1 cup (235g) of batter in 2 medium bowls. Leave the remaining third in your mixing bowl.

To one bowl, add 3 tablespoons (16g) of cocoa powder and 2 teaspoons water. Mix until combined. This will be the darkest layer.

To another bowl, add the remaining 1 tablespoon (5g) cocoa powder and 1 teaspoon water. Mix until combined. This will be the middle layer. Do not add anything to the batter remaining in your mixing bowl; this will be the lightest layer.



Transfer each of the batters to one of the prepared pans and spread evenly (a small offset spatula is a helpful tool here); the layers will be thin. If you only have one 8" square pan, start by baking the lightest layer first while the other batters rest at room temperature, then bake the middle layer, then the darkest layer. There's no need to

wash the pan in between bakes — just be sure that the pan has cooled completely before baking the next layer.

Bake the cake for 9 to 11 minutes, or until the cake springs back to the touch and looks dry in the center.

Remove the cake from the oven and cool in the pan for 10 minutes before turning it out to cool completely on a rack. Be sure that all of the cake layers are completely cool before

assembling.

To assemble the chocolate cake bars: Spread 1/4 cup (85g) of the jam on top of the lightest layer of cake, spreading it all the way to the edges. Top with the middle layer of cake and apply firm pressure to sandwich the two layers together.

Spread the remaining 1/4 cup (85g) jam over the top of the middle layer, spreading it all the way to the edges. Top with the darkest layer of cake and, again, apply firm pressure to sandwich all 3 layers together. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap.

Place the wrapped bars in a 9" x 13" pan (or any pan larger than an 8" square) and place an 8" square pan on top. Place 4 to 6 heavy cans (or something of comparable weight) inside the 8" square pan to weigh it down, compressing the cake layers below. Refrigerate overnight with the heavy weights on top.

To glaze the chocolate cake bars: Remove the bars from the refrigerator, unwrap, and place the lightest layer side down on a cutting board. Place the chocolate wafers in a microwave-safe bowl and heat in 20-second increments, at 50% power, until melted. (Alternatively, melt the chocolate in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring frequently.) Stir the chocolate until smooth.

Spread the melted chocolate over the top of the darkest layer of cake, spreading it all the way to the edges. It's OK if some chocolate drips down over the edges.

Allow the chocolate to set either at room temperature or in the refrigerator. Once set, use a warm chef's knife to trim the sides of the square (baker's snack!) for a neat presentation, before cutting the remainder of the chocolate cake bars into pieces. Serve at room temperature.

Lemon Cream Cake

<https://cookingitalians.com/my-moms-most-loved-cake-you-will-make-it-every-week/>

Indulge in the comforting flavors of this cake with mascarpone cream and lemon, a family dessert handed down from my mother. With its buttery, savory short crust pastry and rich, velvety lemon cream filling, this cake is a treat for the palate.

SERVINGS:8

INGREDIENTS:

For the Cream:

2 cups milk

2 eggs

4 tablespoons cornstarch

6 tablespoons sugar

1/3 cup mascarpone or cream cheese

Zest of 1 lemon

For the Dough:

1 egg

1/2 cup + 1 tablespoon sugar

Zest of 1-2 lemons

2 2/3 cups all-purpose flour

1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder

2/3 cup + 1 tablespoon butter (melted)

For Decoration:

Powdered sugar (for dusting)

METHOD:

Step 1: Prepare the lemon cream

In a saucepan, pour the milk and bring it to a boil over medium heat. Meanwhile, in a bowl, beat the eggs with the sugar until smooth. Add the cornstarch to the egg mixture and stir until well combined. Once the milk boils, lower the heat and slowly pour in the egg mixture, stirring constantly. Cook until the cream thickens, then remove from heat. Stir in the mascarpone (or cream cheese) and grated zest of one to two lemons until smooth. Set the cream aside to cool completely.

Step 2: Prepare the dough mixture.

In a bowl, beat the egg and sugar until frothy. Add the grated lemon zest and mix well. Gradually incorporate the sifted flour and baking powder, then the melted butter. Mix gently until it forms a smooth, cohesive ball.



Step 3: Assembling the cake

Roll out the dough and press it into a buttered and floured 10-inch mold, forming an even layer. Pour the prepared lemon cream over the dough and smooth the surface with a spatula.

Step 4: Bake the cake

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Bake the cake for about 35 minutes, or until the top is golden brown and the dough is cooked.

Step 5: Cool and serve

Let the cake cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then transfer it to a wire rack to cool completely. Before serving, dust the surface with powdered sugar.

Tips for success

Avoid lump formation in the cream: Stir the cream constantly during baking to achieve a silky consistency.

Room temperature ingredients : Make sure all ingredients are at room temperature for better mixing and baking results.

Customize zest: For a more intense citrus flavor, use a combination of lemon and orange zest.