



Regional Coffees in Italy

- ❖ In Italy, there is incredible diversity from North to South. Each region is characterized by its own food, wine, culture, costumes, and dialect that sometimes is a true language.
- ❖ Every Italian region developed coffee blends according to the taste of its inhabitants.
- ❖ *Coffea canephora*, commonly known as Robusta, plays a crucial role in Italian coffee culture, particularly in crafting espresso, contributing to the coffee's intense flavor and rich crema.

Preferences in Italian Espresso



North Italy:

- ❖ Arabica beans
- ❖ Delicate flavor notes
- ❖ Lightly roasted coffee

Central and Southern Italy:

- ❖ Robusta-enhanced blends
- ❖ Robust, bitter profiles
- ❖ Short espresso with darker crema



Regional Coffees: From North to South

Coffee in North-East

- ❖ In Venice was opened the first coffee houses.
- ❖ Trieste is home to one of the major coffee harbours.
- ❖ In this region, the preferred choice is a **lightly roasted coffee**, subtly bitter with hints of chocolate and vanilla.
- ❖ The result is a balanced and sweet coffee, characterized by **modest acidity and fruity, spicy aromas**.



Coffee in North-West

- ❖ In Piedmont, the coffee taste is characterized by **marked acidity with traces of fruit**. The coffee also exhibits a faint bitter taste and a well-defined body.
- ❖ In Milan, coffee is **quite long and delicate**, pairing well with a light lunch. It is influenced by both 'eastern' coffee (fruity) and 'western' characteristics (marked acidity).
- ❖ There is a high demand for **coffee-based drinks** such as cappuccino, 'marocchino', and latte macchiato.



Coffee in the Center

- ❖ Florence and Rome, two touristic and international cities are influenced by both northern and southern characteristics.
- ❖ Coffee has a **strong body** and a **quite bitter taste**, obtained using blends with **Robusta and Arabica**.
- ❖ Brown cream is one of the most important elements that characterize Roman coffee, where traces of dried fruit can also be noted.
- ❖ Romans usually prefer drinking coffee in a glass cup; this allows them to evaluate its "crema," which should be as thick and as high as possible.



Coffee in the South and Islands



- ❖ In the south, espresso is **intense, dark, and aromatic, featuring a bitter taste and brown cream**. This dark roasted coffee is crafted from blends with a **high percentage of Robusta**.
- ❖ The number of coffees consumed at bars in Naples is double that of the rest of Italy, with more than 350 cups on average compared to 175 elsewhere in Italy.
- ❖ Coffee in Naples is typically served as a "ristretto." To request a standard Italian coffee, one should ask for a "lungo." Additionally, a glass of water is always provided free of charge!



Why are there these differences? Where do they come from?

Historical map of the Italian peninsula

Historical events and differences in the timing of coffee adoption have played a major role in coffee preferences among populations.

- ❖ Different states and foreign influences impacted on the spread of coffee houses.
- ❖ The spread of coffee culture was initially slow due to opposition from some religious figures who, citing its origins in the Muslim world, saw it as religiously and culturally divergent from Christian Europe.





First Coffee Houses

- ❖ The **Austrian influence on Italian coffee culture is significant**, especially in the introduction of coffee houses that opened from the northern part of the peninsula.
- ❖ One of the first Italian coffee houses, **Caffè Florian, opened in Venice in 1720.**
- ❖ Following the opening of Caffè Florian in Venice, Italy's coffee culture continued to spread with the establishment of other historic cafés. These included **Caffè Greco in Rome**, founded in 1760, which quickly became a meeting place for artists, writers, and intellectuals.



Coffee in Naples and in the South

- ❖ In Naples and the south of Italy, the introduction of **coffee initially spread slowly within small, exclusive circles of the aristocracy and intellectuals.**
- ❖ Queen Maria Carolina of Vienna, who married Ferdinand of Bourbon in 1768, played a significant role in making coffee popular in Naples by promoting **Viennese customs and foods at the Neapolitan court.**
- ❖ In Naples and in the South, apart from the church's scepticism, the dark colour of coffee also contributed to superstitious beliefs.
- ❖ The **black colour of coffee was associated with negative connotations**, such as the occult or forbidden substances. These beliefs made some Neapolitans reluctant to include coffee in their daily lives.

BILANCIO DEL COMMERCIO ESTERNO DEL REGNO,
FATTO D'ORDINE DEL RE.

1771 IMMISSIONE.

Acquavite giulebbata, lib. 1700, a gr. 15		255
Acque di odori, lib. 300, a gr. 10		30
Animali. Cavalli ronzini, num. 2500, a duc. 10	25000	
Afini, n. 10, a d. 7	70	
Capre, n. 7, a d. 10	70	
		25140
Aromati. Cannella terziata, lib. 18125, a d. 2.40	43500	
Detta garofanata, lib. 1480, a gr. 25	370	
Detta minuta, lib. 325, a d. 1.20	400	
Detta matta, lib. 900, a gr. 30	270	
Pepe, cantara 945, a d. 60	56700	
Detto garofanato, c. 11, a d. 40	440	
Garofani, lib. 280, a r. 50	400	
Tè, lib. 818, a gr. 45	368	
		102448
Cacao caracca, c. 500, a d. 90	45000	
Selvaggio, c. 1400, a d. 30	42000	
		87000
Caffè di Levante, c. 4, a d. 90	360	
di Ponente, c. 1100, a d. 30	33000	
		33360
Canapa di Venezia in genere lavorata in funi	41640	
	15890	
		57530
Canne d'India		600
Carboni di Romagua, tartane 112, a d. 1000		112000
		418363
Car-		

Chocolate Consumption

- ❖ When coffee began to spread, Neapolitans were already significant consumers of chocolate. **In Naples, like in France, chocolate was served at the end of official meals.**
- ❖ Records from 1771 indicate a considerably **higher expenditure on cocoa imports** compared to coffee. This underscores the local palate's preference for richer, creamier flavours.
- ❖ To achieve a creaminess similar to traditional chocolate drinks, local coffee producers began blending 'Arabica' with some 'Robusta'. Their secret was also to **roast the blend "to the right point"** so that the coffee takes the typical dark colour and the aromas are properly exalted.
- ❖ This blend, preferred in Naples, started to differ from the lighter arabica coffee infusion favoured in Trieste.



Cocoa, Coffee and Superstitions

- ❖ Coffee in Naples faced superstitions due to its dark color and bitter taste, often associated with "jettatura," a term for bad luck or the evil eye.
- ❖ **Vincenzo Corrado**, a chef from Puglia, was among the first in Naples to publish cocoa and coffee recipes. He dedicated the second edition of his work "*Il Credenziere di buon gusto – La manovra della cioccolata e del caffè*" (1794) to Nicola Valletta.
- ❖ **Nicola Valletta**, a professor at the Royal University of Naples, was known not only for his academic contributions on law but also for his knowledge and study of "jettatura."
- ❖ By tasting and endorsing coffee, Valletta helped shift its perception from a suspect substance to a celebrated beverage, exemplified by his coffee toast in honor of King Ferdinand I of Naples.



NICOLA VALLETTA

From Beverage to a Symbol

- ❖ Coffee reached a large part of the population thanks to the street coffee vendors known as "**Caffettieri ambulanti.**"
- ❖ With the introduction of the "**Cuccumella,**" a reversible coffee pot, many families were able to prepare coffee at home.
- ❖ Coffee evolved from a simple beverage to a **symbol of hospitality and friendship**, and later became a symbol of **social cohesion and resilience** within Neapolitan society.



Cuccumella

Cuccumella derives from 'cuccuma', meaning "copper or terracotta vase"

The "Napoletana," or "cuccumella," represents the Neapolitan adaptation of Morize's reversible coffee pot (1819).

The brewing process utilizes gravity by heating the water until boiling, then flipping the pot to let the water filter through the grounds.

The invention was well received and improved by the Neapolitans that used the inexpensive aluminium (instead of copper), to make filtered coffee accessible to many families.



Italian Coffee Features

- ❖ After the unification of Italy (1861) and the following emigration, the popularity of a **Robusta coffee blend spread and gained appreciation throughout the peninsula.**
- ❖ Milan, Turin, and northern Italy became centres of industrial and working life.
- ❖ The development of the espresso coffee machine (Angelo Moriondo; 1884), the Moka pot (Alfonso Bialetti; 1933), and **the practicing of quickly consuming coffee while standing at a bar have become defining features of Italian coffee culture.**



The Certified Italian Cappuccino

Cup with a capacity of about 160 ml:
25 ml espresso and 100 ml steam-foamed milk.

*Source: Italian National Espresso Institute,
International Institute of Coffee Tasters*

Italian Morning Daylife

- ❖ Vienna's Kipferl (the legend of the Austrian Baker Peter Wandler)
- ❖ Croissant (France/Germany)
- ❖ Croissant/Brioche (North Italy)
- ❖ Cornetto (Center/South Italy)



“Cappuccino” and brioche in Milan”

“Caffè e cornetto per favore!
...and a small glass of water in Naples”



Thank you!

Mariano Peluso

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