

The sea, the beach, the verdant Pinewoods and hills, the dazzling white of the "Apuane", the marble mountains. Versilia is the land of natural beauty, postcard scenery, landscapes designed by nature but adorned by man. This land is also the joy of life, fun loving and the delight in being together, at the table for meals too.

For the tourist who chooses Versilia nothing is better than mixing with the locals to discover its thousands of gourmet secrets.

In this booklet we want pass some of them on to you for example: to recognize Maestro Puccini as a huntsman and a gourmet, to invite you, at dawn, to the fish market in Viareggio, to show you that in Versilia there is an ancestor to the' happy hour which is the marble quarryman and sculptor's snack.

This is not a cookery book (even if there are some recipes included) but the narrative of a region that reveals its specialities, bearing in mind that behind each product and dish there is a story that goes back centuries and everyday cooking.

enjoy your meal!

*the Director
dott. Renato Baldi*



GREAT EXAMPLES OF “GOURMET” VERSILIA

Viareggio was “The Land of Milk and Honey”, and that's that, wrote Gino Paoli in “*Sapore di Note*”, his last biography, which refers to the sixties. «Along the seafront at 4 o' clock in the morning was like being on a ring road during peak rush hour».

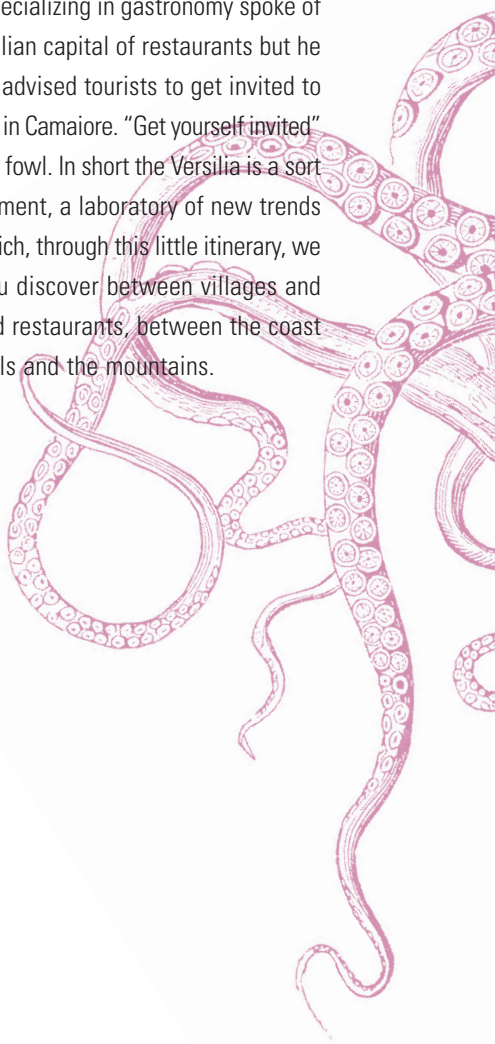
That Viareggio and the Versilia were “The Land of Milk and Honey” was something Giacomo Puccini, the Maestro, the creator of Mimi and Tosca had discovered nearly a century ago. «People in a bad mood, pedantic, fussy, dull with weak stomachs and any other wretches are not admitted and are thrown out with fury by members» this is clause 2 from the regulations at the

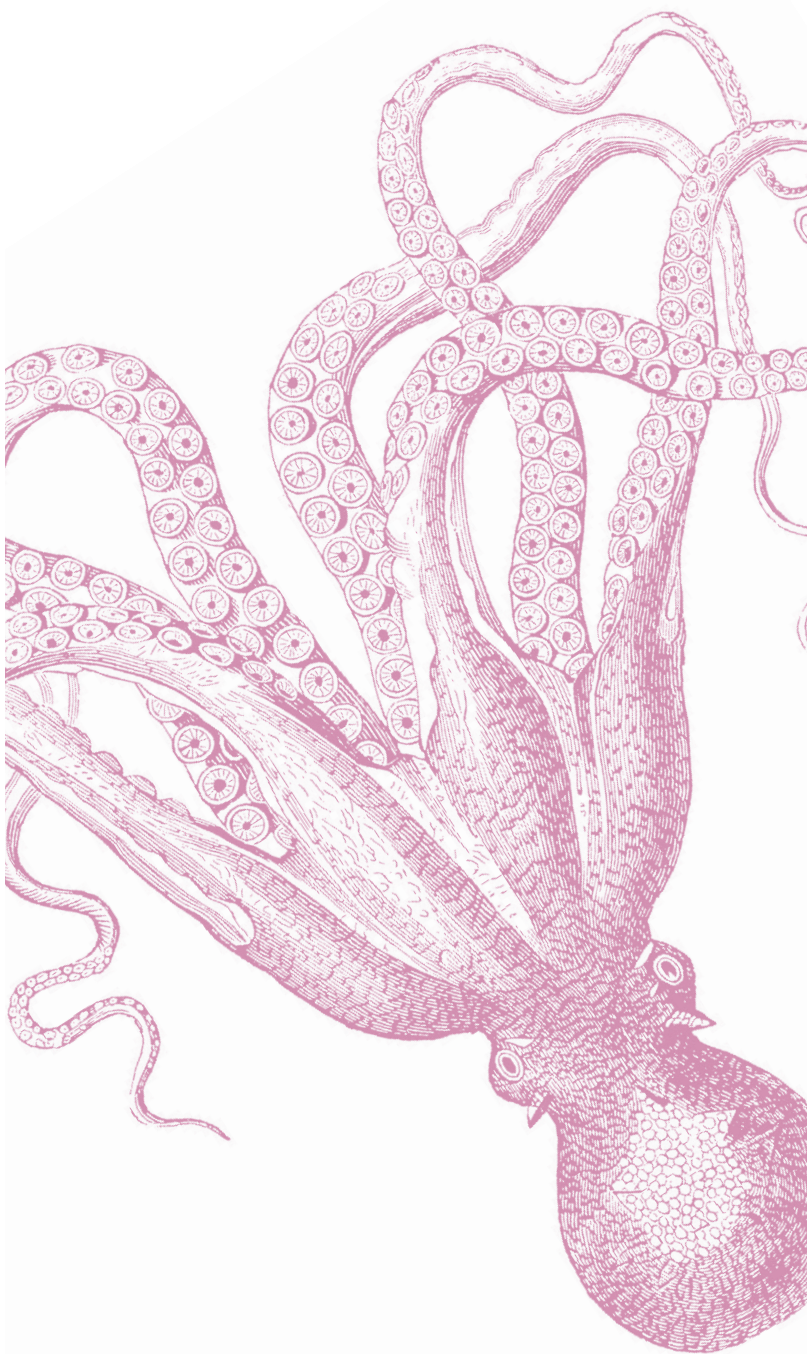


Club della Bohème, founded by the Maestro at Torre del Lago to glorify gluttony. Susanna Agnelli, in *Vestivamo alla Marinara*, the saga of the family that founded Fiat, refers to the seafood she savoured every week at the Bonamico restaurant, when they all came to Viareggio from their villa in Forte dei Marmi just to eat in a famous trattoria at the harbour. This is the thirties era another golden decade for the coast between Viareggio and Forte dei Marmi. The long-standing fame of the Versilia as one of the capitals of gastronomy in Italy has never diminished if anything it has grown over time first because of the coast being discovered then Lake Massaciuccoli and now the hills and



the peaks of the Apuane. Every district within these few kilometres in Tuscany offers: gourmet surprises, authentic gastronomic minefields, unheard of but delicious products and places where you can eat and drink whatever you want at any hour. Luigi Veronelli, the greatest journalist of the past century specializing in gastronomy spoke of the Versilia as the Italian capital of restaurants but he did not stop here: he advised tourists to get invited to a countymen's cottage in Camaiore. "Get yourself invited" he wrote to eat boiled fowl. In short the Versilia is a sort of gastronomic movement, a laboratory of new trends and rediscoveries which, through this little itinerary, we now wish to help you discover between villages and artisans, markets and restaurants, between the coast and the plain, the hills and the mountains.





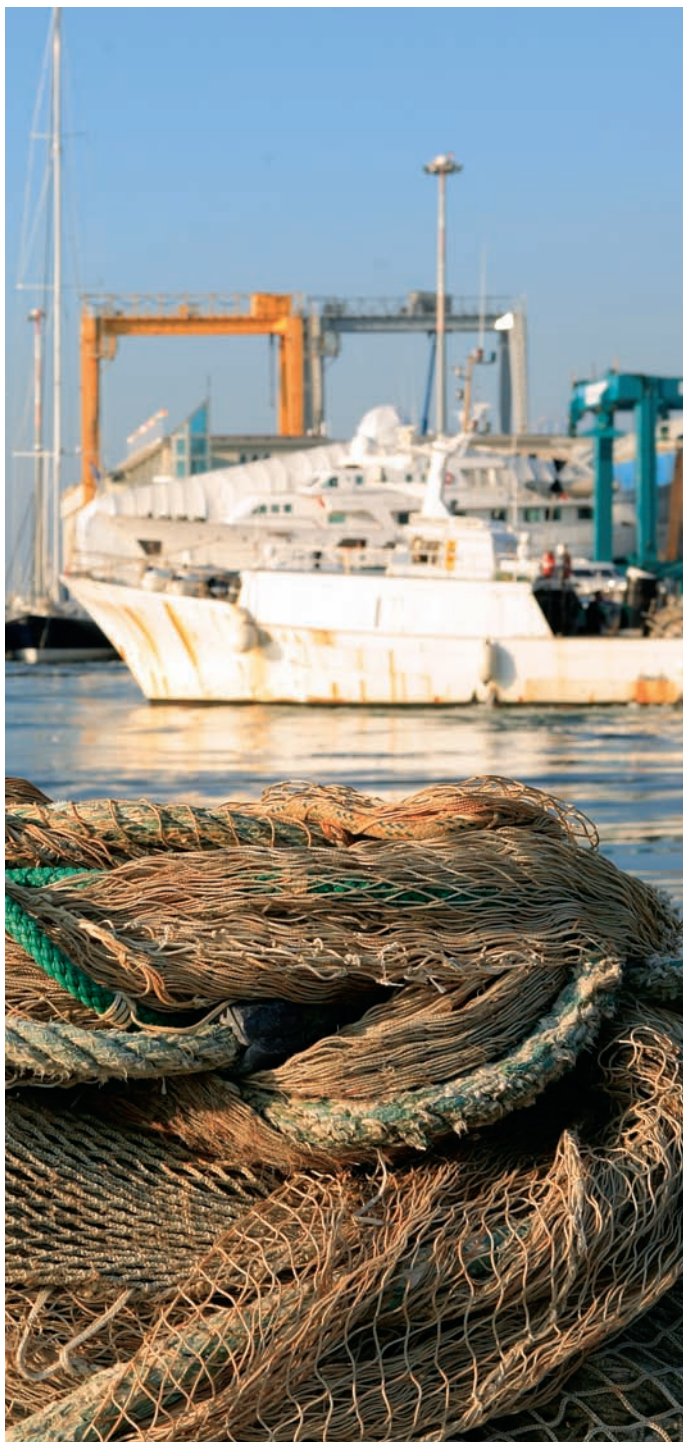


TWO TYPICAL DISHES: *IL CACCIUCCO - IL TORDELLO*

The sea and the land, the beach and the hills and special recognition in its own right must also be given to the Lake and the area of Massaciuccoli and to its abundant game: Versilia at the table always enjoys two culinary moments the "land" and the "sea" - often complementary and without taking into account Lucca and Garfagnana, a few kilometres away, with the products from the Apennines. Two typical dishes from this area suspended between the sea and the mountains: *Il Cacciucco* and *I Tordelli* (written with a d instead of a t as opposed to the rest of Italy: *tordelli - tortelli*. *Cacciucco* originated in Livorno, but soon after transferred to Viareggio, where this fish soup was prepared in a lighter more gentle way. This change was officially approved by the same Pellegrino Artusi, the gastronomist from Emilio Romagna who at the end of the 1800's classified the cuisine of the then emerging Kingdom of Italy. *Cacciucco* is made with fish that is found at Viareggio's harbour, where over 100 boats unload thousands of crates of ultra fresh fish every day. In the recipe there is: gurnard, rock fish, weever, sea bass, smooth hound, conger eel, octopus and squid (cuttlefish). Naturally it is served with "not today's" homemade bread: *posato* (rested) as they say in Tuscany.

CACCIUCCO

500 g. fish per person
made up of: 100 gr. fish with
bones (gurnard, common
star-gazer, conger-eel, scad,
sea bream and mullet),
100 g white fish, 150 g. octopus
and squid (cuttlefish)
100 g. mussels and clams
50 g. prawns and squill fish
garlic, oil, white wine, bread
toasted in the oven and
flavoured with garlic.





Tordelli (the word is medieval and derives from *torta*) are pieces of stuffed pasta that are prepared even today in households from Camaione to Pietrasanta and as far as Seravezza and Stazzema. There exists a form of an itinerary comprised of restaurants, trattorias, freshly homemade pasta shops and working class clubs, where you can taste the *Versiliese tordelli*. The filling, made with beef, pork, mortadella and vegetables, is covered with a firm enough pasta and served with a rich meat sauce. From district to district changes are based above all on the aromatic herbs added to the filling starting off with *peporino*, a type of wild thyme. *Tordelli* are eaten at parties, anniversaries and at patron saint celebrations. Street festivals are dedicated to the *tordello*, especially those organized in summer by the localities involved in the *Palio di Querceta*, a donkey race that takes place every May and situated a few kilometres inland from the beach at Forte dei Marmi.

TORDELLI

the homemade pasta:
600 g. flour, 1 egg, salt, water
mix well then knead. Roll out the
dough thinly make discs measuring
about 4cm with a glass.

*In the middle place a tablespoon
of filling; fold them into the shape
of a half moon sealing the edges
with a fork taking care not to
break the dough.*

the filling:
150 g. minced veal, 300 g. minced
beef, 150 g. brains previously
boiled and skinned (today can be
replaced with ricotta cheese or
with bread previously soaked in
milk), 500 g. everlasting spinach
boiled and cut into small pieces
1 sausage, 2 eggs, 50 g. grated
parmesan cheese, 15 g. grated
pecorino romano cheese, a pinch
of salt, pepper; cut everything into
small pieces, fry the minced beef
and veal in a little butter, take
away from the heat then add the
other ingredients mixing well.





THE "REDISCOVERED" RECIPE : SPAGHETTI ALLA TRABACCOLARA

I trabaccoli were the boats of the fishermen from San Benedetto del Tronto. On horseback in the 1900's they moved in mass from the Adriatic coast to the Tyrrhenian coast. Whole families settled in the Darsena area of Viareggio. Modest houses and moored in front the boats: the *trabaccolari*. Historically, the *Viareggini*, (the original population of Viareggio) have never been fishermen but only captains or seamen. As the great writer of the 1900's, Mario Tobino who was born in Viareggio points out, our "master e commander" were famous all over the Mediterranean and in the big ports of the oceans from Montevideo to Valparaiso. The people from San Benedetto who made up the largest settlement, many families from Gaeta, Porto Empedocle and Marsala joined them after the war, saw to the fishing.

But above all, these inhabitants of the Marche brought with them their traditions and cuisine. The dish eponymous of their tradition is the fishing or trawler sauce *alla trabaccolara*: lots of garlic and onion as a base for the flesh of white fish (especially angler-fish). Today it is enhanced with muscles and other

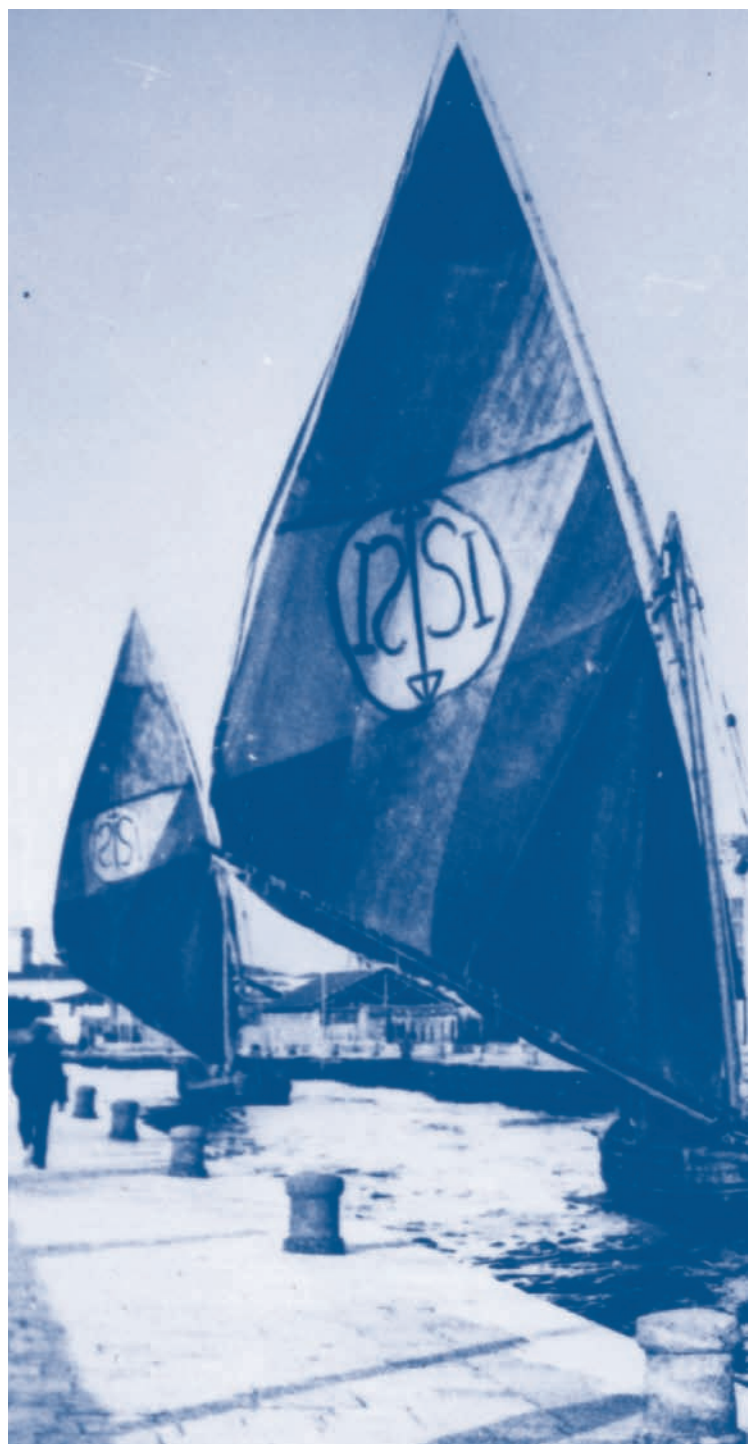
TRABACCOLARA

Ingredients: hake, rock fish, gurnard, mullet, parsley, garlic, oil, a tomato, white wine, salt, pepper.

Procedure: put in a pan a little oil, some chopped onion, a clove of garlic a fresh tomato cut into cubes, some white wine and finally the filleted fish add salt and pepper. Cook for as long as necessary.

Cook the spaghetti in salted boiling water. Drain just before it is ready. Add to the fish sauce to finish off the last stage of cooking mixing well.

more reputable fish, but the essence does not change. It was a sauce prepared aboard a boat, perfect in its simplicity. Today it is found in all the trattorias around the port of Viareggio and the central market in Piazza Cavour, a dish rediscovered after too many years of *spaghetti allo scoglio* (mixed shellfish sauce) and *penne* (a type of macaroni) with salmon. The *trabaccolaro* also has a deeper meaning: the flair of the *Viareggini* to appropriate other traditions and cultures. Viareggio, by definition, is a melting pot where cuisine is the offspring of the territory but also of suggestions that arrive from all over the Mediterranean.



trabaccoli returning
period photo





JEWELS IN THE SAND

The sea, as the older generation said, "is Nature's chemist". A wound, suffered a blow, any other minor diseases? Take a dip in the sea, they said it would cure anything. In fact, the sea has always been a sort of bank with deposits to draw from during times in need, before but also after the Second World War. Just take white baby clams *arselle*, (in Italian the correct term is *telline*), tiny shellfish that the *Versiliesi*, from Torre del Lago to Forte dei Marmi, collect from under the sand with a special rake. What fun it is afterwards, for youngsters to help adults take off the shells then prepare great dishes of spaghetti with the flesh inside. A sort of ritual that is carried out over and over again on the beach establishments today, where lifeguards young and old help you to discover all the secrets of the Tyrrhenian sea. Actually the sea along of the Versilia coast, is even useful in winter. The storms bring razor fish *coltellacci*

to the shore. This term, which is in local dialect, refers to the long form of the shellfish that resembles a cutthroat razor. In Italian they are called *cannolicchi*. The firm, tasty flesh is ideal for making sauces for pasta.

ARSELLE IN PADELLA

lightly fry the baby clams in their shells in a pan with a little extra virgin oil, a clove of garlic, and a sprinkling of chillie powder, add a little white wine; Just before serving add some chopped parsley to give a bit of colour.





LE CEE

For decades the favourite show of the locals *Viareggini* and winter tourists alike. During the cold months while strolling along the "Ponente" pier, you could enjoy watching many local professional and non professional fishermen throw the *cerchiaia* in the Burlamacca canal to catch the eel alevins. The *cerchiaia* is nothing other than a long stick at the end of which is attached a sort of net basket. The *cee* are the tiny eel alevins that go back up the Burlamacca canal to go into Lake Massaciuccoli in order to grow. They were caught in Viareggio, Pisa and Livorno, always in the same way: while they went up rivulets and canals. What joy to serve them up. Perfect with sage, superb in a plain sauce on spaghetti, or in *frittatine* small Italian omlettes. We are talking about recipes of the past because for two decades now fishing for eel alevins in all the area inland from the Tyrrhenian coast is forbidden. The reason is simple: fishing for alevins prevented their growing which consequently impoverished the ichthyic fauna. So a stop was put to it, albeit reluctantly, to a pursuit that epitomized good food but also tradition. When the local population was poorer and tourism was the privilege of a very few, catching eel alevins was a way to help make ends meet for many families. So if you go to the pier in Viareggio on a winter's evening you will no longer experience seeing that unique spectacle of groups of fishermen warming themselves over small fires.

"Sciapino" fishing for cee alevins
period photo





LESS PRESTIGIOUS FISH: BOGUES AND SCADS

The sea sustains thousands of species but we only consume about ten. Forgotten or "poor" fish (as they have been renamed) are that very tasty fish which for various reasons are not eaten (mainly because of the numerous bones). Fortunately over the last few years restaurants in the Versilia have rediscovered bogues, scads, pickerel (young pike), weever and the dear, original skate. Very good sauces are prepared with them, they can be used in fish soups but they are also relished on the grill. Rediscovering these species originated in Viareggio at the end of the 80s, when some restaurants wanted to use them to rebel against the fashion of eating sea bass which was on menus everywhere. Let's not forget, though, that those same chefs had already created recipes which had subsequently become considered "haute cuisine" classics, such as: prawns with beans, squid stuffed with shellfish and vegetables, fish *carbonara*, spaghetti cooked directly in the fish sauce. Above all, Versilia established itself as an innovator of a type of cuisine where fish was accompanied with vegetables. A way of cooking that emerges spontaneously from the territory: where the treasures from the sea are always associated with the fertility of the cultivated plain and vegetable plots.

ACCIUGHE AL FORNO

for 4 people:

*400 g. fresh anchovies filleted,
400 g. uncooked, peeled potatoes
cut in thin round slices, parsley,
garlic cut in slices fresh tomatoes
cut in round slices lemon juice.*





LA CECINA: "STREET FOOD"

Great for a break, when you start feeling pangs of hunger but it could be the main dish of a dinner, maybe before going to the cinema or to the disco.

It is the oven baked chickpea batter (in Spezia it is called *farinata* and in Pisa *torta di ceci*, in Savona *fainà* and in Nice (you can find it there too) *soccà*, with the accent on the final a we are talking about that food, which in American terms, could be called the street food of our riviera. You find it in all take away pizzerias in Versilia. It is a typical recipe on the coast because these "big suns" were put on board ships to be eaten instead of bread and it seems that their origin even dates back to the battle of the "Meloria". Many variations of how to eat them. Among the most popular are: *la focaccia imbottita di cecina* oven baked pizza dough filled with

cecina, a speciality from Livorno, it is still called «5 e 5» because you used to ask for 5 centesimi (old lira) of *focaccia* and 5 centesimi (old lira) of *cecina*. A petition has been sent to the EU, requesting that this recipe be officially recognized as typical and traditional of the area.

LA CECINA

It is a simple mixture made of water, chickpea flour and salt. The batter is prepared and poured on to special big baking pans called "teglie" which measure more than 1 metre in diameter; they are then placed in the oven preferably heated by wood; what come out are shapes like "big suns" crunchy and crispy on the outside but soft on the inside. Best eaten piping hot with a sprinkling of ground pepper.





AGRICULTURE REBORN: **SCHIACCIONI** BEANS FROM PIETRASANTA

Let's leave the sea to go up towards the hills and discover inland Versilia, where agriculture gains new energy from products that for a time were no longer taken into consideration. This is the case of the flat bean, cultivated from August to October in the fertile plain between Capezzano and Pietrasanta. Just a few hectares (only 50 thousand squared metres) for producing this white, long legume with a flat shape from which it takes its name. The taste comes from the earth that remains cool even during the hottest of summers. The perfect accompaniment to *schiaccioni* is naturally pork (but on the coast they also go magnificiently with shellfish starting off with *sparnocchi*, (a large prawn and a *viareggino* term for *mazzancolle*). *Schiaccioni*, a legume that is becoming more and more popular but production still remains limited to the point where demand exceeds supplies.

SPARNOCCHI E SCHIACCIONI

*for 4 people:
1kg. fresh beans to shell, 12
large prawns (or king prawns)
a sprig of sage, 2 cloves of
garlic extra virgin oil salt and
pepper to taste.*





THE GREAT PORK BUTCHERS

An old tradition reborn thanks to young skilled workers is that of the versiliese pork butcher's. The original area is Gombitelli, a little village between Camaiore and Lucca, famous also for being a "linguistic island" where they still speak a German origin dialect because some blacksmiths settled there after the armies of Carlo V. It is not by chance that for centuries Gombitelli was also famous for its manufacturing of nails in addition to the production of local lard and mortadella. The tasty lard from Camaiore vies with that of nearby Colonnata, a village above Carrara suspended between the marble quarries. In Pietrasanta, on the other hand, many small pork butcher's produce *il bioldo*, a sweet tasting black pudding, delicious when still warm. And at Giustagnana, a village in the Seravezza area at the foot of of mountain Monte Altissimo - (where Michelangelo used to go to choose the blocks of marble for his sculptures) - there is a pork butcher who makes *Tizzone*, a very soft salami that is matured in ashes, hence its name (*tizzo-tizzone* means ember).

FEGATELLI DI MAIALE

*for 4 people:
600-700 g. pig's liver,
wild fennel seeds
bay leaves, garlic and chillies,
4-5 bunches of turnip tops
extra virgin oil
salt and pepper.*





EXTRA VIRGIN OIL FROM MASSAROSA AND SERAVEZZA

The beautiful hills of Versilia overlook the sea but also the Gods of Olympus. Because they are covered with olives that originated from Athena's head. The extra virgin oil from Versilia has, among very few in Italy, the Controlled Denomination of Origin. Extra virgin oil which has less than one degree of acidity comes from local oil mills within the protected area of Lucca, one of the capitals in the world for the production of oil. The most common cultivar is the oil mill, where the plants cover 90% of the olive land surface, the rest has small oak trees. Something not to miss, a soup made of *farro* (spelt) from Garfagnana dressed with newly pressed oil that has just been produced, maybe from a farm dating back from early times in Massarosa. But it only needs a drop



of oil from the Versilia to enhance a simple but splendid seafood salad too with fish caught off our shores. The easiest way to try the extra virgin oil, however, from Massarosa to Seravezza via Camaiore and Pietrasanta, is to taste the *fettunta*, a recipe that could be defined as almost Franciscan. Take some Tuscan unsalted bread, toast it and pour a little oil on top. It used to be the most popular snack also for picnics in the county. There's who enriches it by rubbing garlic on the bread, or who prefers an even richer version of the *bruschetta* rubs a mature tomato on the toasted bread and dresses it with oil and salt. In each way you sample typical and genuine Tuscan cuisine: simplicity and great ingredients.





A SCULPTOR AND A QUARRIER'S SNACK

Today the name of happy hour is given to the informal way of dining on canapé together with the aperitif. A fashion that has caught on throughout the whole of the Versilia. But on our coast happy hour has a noble ancestor, which is very much a habit today and still thriving. It is *merendare*, or that is to say having a snack at about 5 pm with salami, *biroldo*, *pane sciocco* (unsalted bread), characteristic of Tuscany and local marinated olives. All washed down with red wine from Strettoia (a small village surrounded with vineyards, situated on a hill that overlooks Forte dei Marmi) or with white wine from Candia, Controlled Denomination of Origin (authenticated trademark for wines) in the area of Massa. Snacks used to be eaten in taverns by quarrymen and sculptors from Pietrasanta or whoever worked in marble in general. They left the studio or the quarry and stopped to have a drink to help their throats which had by that time become dry from the marble dust. But around the wine, paid for by measure, there were various pick-me-ups including marinated anchovies and hot fried *baccalà* (dried cod). Today having a snack is still greatly enjoyed even if paying for house wine according to how much you drink has been replaced with bottles of great red Tuscan wines and sparkling white wines. And moreover, today, the old taverns between Pietrasanta, Seravezza and Stazzema have even changed their names to wine bars.









A BIT OF HISTORY: WHEN MAESTRO PUCCINI COOKED

We are a land of huntsmen. It couldn't be otherwise. Hunting originates with man, in fact it was the main means of survival. In Tuscany, hunting is historic and tradition. Today it is also a way to conserve nature, thanks to the help of shotguns. Versilia has always been a land of huntsmen just like the rest of the coast given that there are many lakes (in the south Massaciuccoli, in the north Porta), pinewoods, thick copses (before the first pinewoods which were planted in 1700 s), swamps, rivulets and canals. The riviera is abundant with migratory and resident game and the wild boar has been the king for centuries because it is also diffuse on the

FOLAGA IN UMIDO

*ingredients: coot cut into pieces
celery, onion, a carrot, red wine,
oil chillie, bitter olives.*

*procedure: put the coot in a pan
cut up into pieces add to oil after
lightly frying the celery, onion,
carrot and the chillie then put in
the wine and bitter olives*



Alpi Apuane. Among the millions of huntsmen who have taken a shot in our coppices, the most famous has been without a doubt Giacomo Puccini, the composer of *Bohème* and *Tosca* and who lived the greater part of his life in Torre del Lago. Recipes have been dedicated to him. The most famous, perhaps, being "*Folaghe* (Coot) *alla Puccini*" found in many trattorias at Torre del Lago and Massaciuccoli. The cooking of game in Versilia, is supplemented by other traditional dishes such as: *pappardelle* with hare sauce, wild boar with olives and hare hunter style. Recipes nowadays are lighter, plainer and often revised to take into account current tastes.





TRADITIONAL CAKES AND BISCUITS

befanini, cenci, scarpaccia from Viareggio
and *marzapane* from Pietrasanta

Mario Monicelli, film director of masterpieces like the *Grande Guerra* and *i Soliti ignoti*, was born in Viareggio in 1915. He spent his childhood and youth there then flew off to Rome to the golden world of the cinema. He has never forgotten his origins, though, in fact, with *Amici miei* he opened the way for Tuscan comedy that produced geniuses like Roberto Benigni. Monicelli has always loved the traditional Tuscan dishes but also the humble cakes and biscuits like the *castagnaccio* (*castagna* means chestnut) which is typical of the villages in the Appennini but you can also find it in Versilia where the slopes of the Apuane are abundant with chestnuts. Found in take away pizzerias and in patisseries but in households as well due to the great tradition for homemade varieties, likewise *necci*, also prepared with chestnut flour. Eat them with *ricotta* from local shepherds who are still present in this area mainly in the plain behind Viareggio or in the hills. Viareggio's sweet tradition, however, is particularly symbolized by *befanini*: biscuits made with short crust pastry and cut into various shapes to come out of the oven resembling Christmas trees, shooting stars and oxen. In fact, their name reminds us that they

BEFANINI

500 g. plain flour, 300 g. sugar
200 g. butter, 3 eggs
a pinch of salt, grated rind of
1 lemon, 1 packet of raising
agent, 16g., 1 glass of liqueur
rum or anisette.

SCARPACCIA

300 g. flour, 400 g. washed
courgettes, 1 glass of milk
250 g. sugar, 50 g. butter,
2 eggs, 1 packet of vanilla
5-6 basil leaves cut up a little
salt.

CENCI

250 g. white flour, 2 eggs, 20 g.
butter, 20 g. sugar, grated
rind of 1 orange, a pinch of salt,
1 tablespoon of rum or anise.

are typical of the Christmas period, particularly Epiphany because it is the *Befana* (an old witch) who brings presents to children on the 6th January. Father Christmas is a north European and American invention imported to us only after the second world war. Another humble and simple cake is *scarpaccia*, prepared in the courgette season with flour, eggs and sugar but beware because *scarpaccia* is sweet in Viareggio whereas in nearby Camaiore it is savoury. Peculiarities of history and cooking! Finally may we draw your attention to another biscuit which is coming back into fashion now: “marzapane” typical of Pietrasanta and very similar to macaroons.





BOMBOLONI

Gianna Nannini, a famous rock star called an album by that name *Bomboloni*. Sirio Maccioni, the greatest restaurateur in the Usa, served them at the end of a meal in minature portions, hot and filled with custard cream *bomboloni*, doughnuts, those bombs of bread dough that are fried in boiling hot oil. *Bomboloni* and frati (when the dough is in the shape of a *ciambella*, that is to say a doughnut ring) are symbolic of the summer, cakes that you eat on the beach or in the pinewoods. Once taken out of the boiling hot oil (never use a fryer) they are generously doused with sugar then served piping hot on a piece of paper, not on a plate to be eaten straight away. A triumph of cholesterol? No, a triumph of what Americans call comfort food, food that we like, food that satisfies our need for cuddles. The barmen who arrived from Altopascio and Valdinievole brought them to the Versilia immediately after the second world war. The "domain" of the doughnuts today is two stalls in the *Ponente* Pinewoods in Viareggio.

BOMBOLONI

*300g. flour , 250g. boiled
potatoes , 30g. butter
20g. fresh yeast dissolved in
a little lukewarm milk
2 heaped tablespoons sugar
2 eggs, 1 packet of vanilla
mix all the ingredients together
then knead, leave to rest
for about 30 min.*





DISCOVERING MARKETS

Of all the markets in Viareggio, the ichthyic (fish) market is the most characteristic. You are in the area of Darsena, where hundreds of boats unload fresh fish: mullet, squill fish, soles, squid but also king prawns and lobster caught in the waters around the Tuscan islands. And not to mention the various types of sea bass, octopus and gurnard. Delicacies that you then come across in the restaurants in the Versilia area. Often these fish dishes are served with vegetables: shrimp with beans, tuna with artichokes and king prawns with carrots. Prime vegetables are found at the "Fruit and Vegetable Market" at Lido di Camaiore a centre surrounded by a very fertile plain and only 1000 metres inland from the sea. Both markets, despite trading wholesale are also open to the public.

FRITTO DI PARANZA

for 4 people:

1 kg. mixed fish: sole, goby, mullet, anchovy, local squid, gurnard douse the fish with flour shaking off the excess in a sieve heat up some sunflower oil in a frying pan fry the fish in the boiling hot oil until golden brown.





Viareggio, the old fish market
period photo





WHEN IT'S *SAGRA* IT'S *SAGRA*

As in all the great capitals of the world, in Versilia, you can eat anywhere at any hour. Working-class neighbourhoods but also where all social classes can enjoy themselves, is where the *sagra* "street festival" takes place. The most common are those dedicated to *tordelli*. Don't miss those organized by the localities involved in the *Palio dei Micci* at Querceta that take place every summer and situated slightly inland from Forte dei Marmi. *Tordelli* are prepared by local housewives. At Massarosa don't miss the "Frog" Street Festival (*la sagra della Ranocchioccola*). Given that you are in the fens try at least once fried frogs and stewed snails! And fish? There's the *Trabaccolar* cooking or in other words the great *baccanale*; the best place for this is in the Darsena area of Viareggio during the Carnival period. Three dishes to try: *risotto al nero di seppia* (with black squid (cuttlefish) sauce), *fritto di paranza* (mixed "trawler" fry) and *cacciucco* mixed fish soup. Finally there's Enolia in April at the Palazzo Mediceo at Seravezza, an exhibition dedicated to Italian oils, a great gastronomic moment with oil tasting, debates, workshops dealing with flavour; here's the chance to savour the best extra virgin oils in Italy.

RISOTTO AL NERO

for 4 people:

300 g. squid (cuttlefish) cut into pieces, 300g. rice already half-cooked, finish off in the black squid (cuttlefish) sauce garlic, white wine, extra virgin oil.





THE FLAVOURS OF VERSILIA

Certain products risk being forgotten, others seen altered to follow short-lived fashions. For this reason, the Association of the Flavours of Versilia was founded in 2004 in order to protect but also to highlight the merits and quality of products and typical specialities of the Versilia, especially the "land" ones. The president of the association is Gabriele Ghirlanda, a genuine food manager who has surpassed himself in promoting "gourmet" Versilia. There are 21 businesses and manufacturers that offer products ranging from bread to salami, honey to beans and flour to cheese. Recently a wine manufacturer has joined the association because in Versilia, the area in the hills which borders with Candia, also produces wine. The association has taken part in fairs and tasting demonstrations so that the quality of its products is maintained. A task that is not easy in an area that until now has been dominated by its fish cuisine. Among all the products in the association, the one that must be singled out is honey. Versilia is establishing itself as the "land of honeys", in particular the brand that is produced from the flowers within the boundaries of the "Regional Park of Migliarino, Massaciuccoli and San Rossore". This honey, which owes its particular delicate flavour to the flowers which grow near the beach, is very special. It is perfect spread on bread but also served with a slice of Tuscan *pecorino* cheese (Controlled Denomination of Origin). Excellent honey is evidence of bees in Versilia, above all though, their presence is a guarantee that the air in our area is healthy and unpolluted.

MEMBER COMPANIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

Azienda Agricola Barbieri Barbara - Montignoso

producer of honey

Azienda agricola Fortunata Pader - Stazzema

producer of honey

Azienda agricola Andrea Tommasi - Pietrasanta

Maranno mais flour and the flat beans

Azienda agricola Felice Lorenzoni - Giustagnana

producer of salumi

Azienda agricola La Focaia

producer of oil from Massarosa

Azienda agricola Il Feudo - Montignoso

producer of wine from the hills of Candia

Azienda agricola Il Castiglione - Strettoia

producer of wine and *quercetane* olives (from Querceta)

Azienda agricola Daniela Simonelli - Pietrasanta

producer of flat beans

Azienda agricola Il Sanatoio - Stazzema

producer of chestnut flour, oil and wine

Azienda agricola La Penna - Camaione

producer of oil, cheese and farm holidays

Azienda agricola l'Aia - Seravezza

Rearing and breeding in the outskirts of Siena

La Bottega di Adò - Montignoso

producer of salami

Salumificio Triglia - Gombitelli

producer of salami and lard hearts

Salumificio Albertina Barsanti - Cardoso

producer of salami and mortadella

Salami Bonuccelli - Camaione

producer of salami ham in barrels

Il Camuciolo Consorzio Apicoltori

Produttori Biologico - Camaione

producers of biological "beach" honey

Apicoltura la Paulownia - Camaione

producer of honey

Mulino Anna Ulivi - Querceta

stone grinding mill

La Parigina - Seravezza

producer of "Medici" biscuits

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