

Easter in Sicily



Article by Jo Bellofiore

The Sicilian Easter is the most intense celebration on the Island. It is an occasion of unity that brings together the sacred and the profane, tradition and culture, family and food. It is a unique moment where Sicily finds itself in its origins. Easter celebrations are everywhere: from small towns to the intimacy of the houses and the noise in the streets.

Easter celebrations in Sicily derive from its Spanish domination, but the influences go back to the Middle Ages and even before to the Greek world and pre-Christian traditions of spring revival. That is why you can see fava green beans, bay leaves, oranges and myrtle carried in the processions. It is the same symbolism that you can find in the architecture of the cities as well as in people's kitchens. The menu during the Domenica di Pasqua, Easter Sunday, is a unique tradition which may vary from town to town.

(Continued page 2...)



(Continued from page 1...)

Lamb is a must on the menu. It is usually cooked in the oven with potatoes, onions, and some spices. Sweets are the quintessence of the Sicilian Easter – almond paste sheep as well as marzipan, the “cuddure or acceddi cu l’ova” which is a large biscuit, often bird-shaped and includes one or more hard-boiled eggs, and of course, the cassata which is the queen of the Sicilian pastries.

From our families to yours, the TSAA Committee wishes you a very Happy Easter.

Buona Pasqua!



End of Year Luncheon

Killara Estate, Dec' 23

Article by Deanna Zammit

The Sicilian Association of Australia (TSAA) culminated a vibrant year of events with an unforgettable end-of-year lunch on Sunday 3rd December 2023. Set amidst the picturesque landscapes of Seville East, Victoria, the event unfolded at the renowned Killara Winery, offering panoramic views of the breathtaking countryside. From the moment guests arrived, it was evident that this gathering would be nothing short of spectacular.

Embraced by the warm hospitality that defines Sicilian culture, attendees were ushered into an afternoon of camaraderie and enjoyment. The winery's ambiance, complemented by delightful weather, provided a perfect backdrop for the festivities.

A poignant moment came as we honoured Carlo Corallo's exemplary leadership, passing the presidency torch to Deanna Zammit. Carlo's tenure, characterized by unparalleled success and unwavering dedication, has left an indelible mark on our association. His continued commitment to the TSAA Committee and mentorship ensures that his legacy of excellence endures.

Undoubtedly, the highlight of the occasion was the sumptuous menu, meticulously curated to tantalise every palate. From traditional Sicilian delicacies to contemporary delights, each dish was savoured, a testament to the culinary expertise of the kitchen staff. Our Member Cesare Zanchi supplied Classico Panettone made from his commercial premises in Brunswick which was well enjoyed with an espresso.

Adding to the allure was the captivating performance by Pat Perri from Memory Lane. His enchanting repertoire stirred the crowd, inciting joy and lively dance amongst attendees, leaving an unforgettable impression on our celebration.

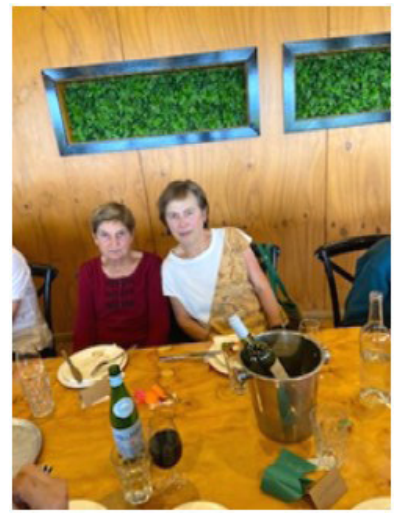
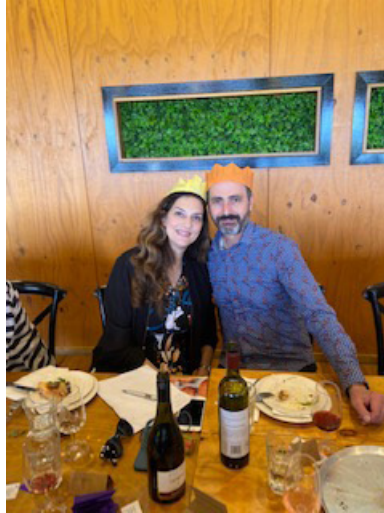
A captivating car rally featuring classic sports cars further heightened the day's excitement. Enthusiasts marvelled at the elegance of these automobiles, enhancing the experience with beauty and excitement.

As the afternoon unfolded, laughter and conversation filled the air as guests reminisced about past events and anticipated future adventures. Bonds were strengthened, friendships forged, and new connections made, exemplifying the spirit of community that defines TSAA.

In retrospect, the end-of-year lunch was an unequivocal success, a testament to the dedication of TSAA members who ensured every detail was flawlessly executed. As the sun set on a day filled with joy and celebration, it was clear the event had exceeded expectations, leaving a lasting impression on all fortunate enough to attend.

End of Year Luncheon

Killara Estate, Dec '23



TSAA Picnic

Article written by Rosa Vocale

The TSAA welcomed its first event for 2024 on Sunday 18th of February.

The Annual Picnic held at the Veneto Club's "La Baracca" area was another success, testament from all of our participants.

We were excited to have on board for the first-time musicians Fabiola and Max, performing memorable Italian songs which the crowd enjoyed very much, sausages hamburgers, rolls, salads, fruit.

Our favorite "Cannoli" were complimented with an expresso coffee, sponsored by Monte Coffee.

TSAA wishes to thank Monte Coffee for their amazing set up and donation.

We had 3 delightful and very pleasing hampers for our raffle.

Again, much thanks to all our committee and partners for the effectless help in organizing the day.

To our wonderful members and friends who attended the day, we value your support and friendship.



Cassatedde di Ricotta (Fried Ricotta Turnovers)



Recipe compiled by Deanna Zammit



Ingredients - Pastry:

- Pastry
- 250g durum wheat flour
- 250g plain flour
- 65g sugar
- 2 tablespoons margarine, melted
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ teaspoons wine vinegar, any variety
- 1 tablespoon brandy
- Grated zest of ½ lemon
- 175ml water, or as needed

Ingredients - Crema di Ricotta (Ricotta Cream)

This is the same recipe for the ricotta filling in cannoli.

-
- 450g full fat ricotta
- 130g sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt, or to taste

Ingredients - Filling:

- ½ Crème di Ricotta (Ricotta Cream), see recipe below the filling recipe
- 50g dark chocolate chips
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten with 1 teaspoon water
- 1.25 ltrs vegetable oil for frying.

As we approach Easter a typical feast day recipe from the book called “**Bitter Almonds**” by Mary Taylor Simeti and Maria Grammatico.

This book is about recollections and recipes from Maria Grammatico early childhood in Erice, Sicily.

The recipe involves making a pastry and a filling, where the filling consists of a ricotta cream. These turnovers were an extravagance since sugar had to be bought and required frying, which consumed valuable lard and where they could spare it, an egg.

Method:

Process the durum wheat flour in a food processor until fine and silky to touch, about 5 minutes.

Blend the two flours and sugar together in a bowl or on a work surface and make a well in the centre. Add the margarine, oil, vinegar, brandy and lemon zest to the well. Rub the mixture lightly between the palms of your hands until the fat is well incorporated. Add just enough water to make the dough stick together. Press together into balls and wrap in cling film or grease proof paper. Refrigerate while you make the filling and start heating the oil. The oil should be about 7cm deep in the pan.

Put the ricotta cream in a small bowl and stir in the chocolate chips and cinnamon.

Divide the dough into 12 portions. Knead each one until smooth and then roll it out into a circle about 12cm in diameter and ¼cm thick. Place 2 tablespoons of the filling on the bottom half of each circle, wet the edge with the beaten egg, fold the top half over, and press to seal. Trim the sealed edge with a pastry wheel.

When the oil registers 185°C (365°F) on the cooking thermometer or when a bit of dough dropped in the oil immediately sizzles, add 2 or 3 of the turnovers; do not crowd. Fry until deep golden brown, about 8 minutes. Remove and drain on paper towels. Bring oil back to 185°C (365°F) before adding each batch. Serve warm.

Recipe makes 12 turnovers.

TSAA Book Review

"Riccardino"

written by Andrea Camilleri

Book review written by Maria Corallo

The TSAA Book club summer read was "Riccardino", the last book in the Montalbano series.

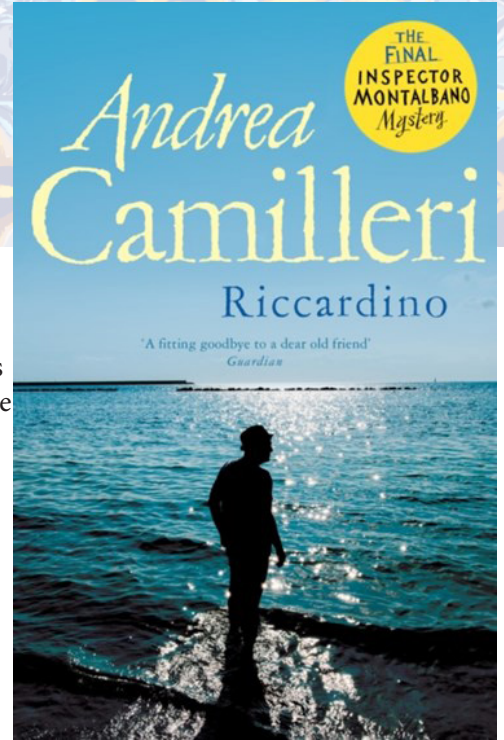
This final novel was released in 2020 in Italy yet author, Andrea Camilleri, wrote it many years earlier to prevent Montalbano's character being continued after he died. The manuscript was left with his publisher on the promise that it would be kept safe and only published after his death.

The mystery involves a young man meeting up with three best friends and is shot dead in the street in front of them. The victim turns out to be loathsome lothario. So, is the killing an honour killing, or something much deeper?

Riccardino does bring a change in tone, with the introduction of a new character, 'the author', his alter ego, who accuses Montalbano of muddling the investigation, whilst arguing with Montalbano about where the story is going and how the case should be solved.

The book successfully employs this literary device, which brings to mind Pirandello's play, "Six Characters in Search of an Author".

The whole book however comes to a fitting end; with wit, warmth, creativity and a feeling of melancholy too. For fans of Montalbano and Camilleri, this book is highly recommended and is a fitting end to the Montalbano series. As Camilleri had noted "one cannot ignore the fact that many, too many things must come to an end!"



Sicilian Vespers Dinner

Article written by Carmela Corallo

Never has a history presentation been so scintillating!

But before that Mr Joseph Vargetto, our host and owner of Mister Bianco briefly explained how he named the restaurant to showcase the legacy from Sicilian parents- one from Ragusa- one from Palermo- so he chose Mister Bianca- a commune in Catania- half way between those two cities. Then the fun began...

Nancy Podimane, back by popular demand- started at the end i.e. that fateful day on the 30th March 1282 in from of the Chiesa dello Santo Spirito in Palermo. It started the massacre of the French with the which the Sicilians began their revolt against Charles 1, Angevin king of Naples and Sicily.

Then Nancy took us on a journey way back through the Ages – to the Roman Empire, the Barbarians, the Saracens, the Spanish- the various Popes with their uniquely nefarious deeds. Then a 10-question quiz provided further entertainment and nudged as into the future with the discovery of America in the 15th century.

Throughout this historical journey TSAA members and friends enjoyed a delightful meal.



Immigration Stories

"Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory"

As the collection of Immigration stories continues to grow, we are also getting some strong feedback for the need of a workshop to offer some guidance on the content of the individual submissions, as well as the format.

We tentatively propose the workshop be held on:

Sunday 23rd June 2024

Venue and time will be advised.

Please save the date.

So, if you haven't already done so, we encourage everyone to start documenting your individual story so that we can all share the experiences of our families and also demonstrate how these experiences all helped to shape the rich tapestry of Australian Multiculturalism.

The stories we are seeking are short and focusing on ordinary people, like most of our families. But from these ordinary people will emerge extraordinary tales and lessons of resilience, stamina, courage, love and family.

We look forward to your inputs.

TSAA Committee

A Thank You Note to **Emma La Rosa**

The TSAA Committee and Members wish to acknowledge the contribution and dedication of Emma La Rosa towards the inception and ongoing development of The Sicilian Association of Australia.

In 2010, Emma was part of a group of enthusiastic second generation Sicilian migrants who established the Association and with it, its purpose and its objectives.

Emma served on the Foundation Committee as Secretary; a position she maintained until 2023.

The TSAA owes much to Emma for all her tireless hard work and commitment.

We look forward to Emma continuing to participate and support the Association as an ongoing Member.

Again, thank you Emma for the 14 years on the Committee as well as your friendship, your initiatives, your spirit and of course, your contribution.

Trivia Answers:

1: D 2: Majolica Tiles

Sicilian Trivia

Question 1:

Verismo was an Italian Literary movement of the late 19th Century and early 20th Century. Its aim was an objective and unadorned presentation of life. Many important Sicilian writers of the era wrote in this style,

Which of these Verismo Writers was NOT Sicilian?

- A) Giovanni Verga
- B) Luigi Capuana
- C) Federico De Roberto
- D) Grazia Deledda

Question 2:

What do you call the hand-painted tiles of the staircase or “Scalinata” in Caltagirone?

Clue: In the tile method, the opaque glaze base and the decoration are fired together in the kiln. This produces a brightly coloured, glossy surface.



TSAA Committee for 2024



Deanna Zammit
Frank Vitale
Rosa Vocale
Marco Cimino
Carmela Corallo

David Seymour
Joe Turrisi
Pat Cutri
Carlo Corallo

Website

www.tsaa.net.au

Social Media



Join our Facebook Group
The Sicilian Association of
Australia

Sponsors



Contact Us

Email us
tsaa@tsaa.net.au

Address
The Sicilian Association of Australia
PO Box 837
Moonee Ponds
VIC 3039

Disclaimer

The Association has accepted and published the material contributed to its newsletter in good faith on the basis that it does not breach any copyright laws. In the event that a copyright claim arises, please contact the Association and it will take all reasonable action.

Copyright

This work is copyright. Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process, nor may any other exclusive right be exercised, without the permission of The Sicilian Association of Australia.
PO Box 837 | Moonee Ponds VIC 3039

Copyright ©The Sicilian Association of Australis 2014.
All Rights Reserved.