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THE PBS TRAVEL SERIES WITH KATHY MCCABE

# DREAM OF ITALY®

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UNUSUAL  
EXPERIENCES  
IN BASILICATA

**POLENTA**  
THE PERFECT  
WINTER RECIPE

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Editorial feedback is welcome at [kathy@dreamofitaly.com](mailto:kathy@dreamofitaly.com)

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## Editor's Note



*Dream of Italy*. When I came up with this name nearly 19 years ago, little did I know just how well it would age. In this pandemic, we are in the age of dreams, of what from the past will come next and what will be new. If there's one thing I've learned in the past year, it is that *Italy is the answer*... and I share the reasons why in this issue's opening essay.

I wish I could give you all a big hug during this Covid Winter. Obviously, I can't because we're not in person and because of social distancing, but I think of the *polenta* recipe in this issue as a warm embrace during difficult times. It is a comfort food, though one with a fascinating and mixed history, as *Letizia Mattiacci* explains. *Letizia*, the owner of a wonderful *agriturismo* in *Assisi*, *Alla Madonna della Piatto*, is also a cookbook author. Her latest is the heavily researched and simply gorgeous *Festa Italiana: Recipes Inspired by the Festivals and Traditions of Rural Italy*, available from Amazon. *Polenta* isn't as easy to make as one might think, and *Letizia* leads us through the nuances of making it. Perhaps an activity for a cold winter's day?

Valerie Fortney, another fantastic friend in Italy, also has a new book out, *52 Things to See and Do in Basilicata*. Valerie is an American expat who now lives in the birthplace of her ancestors, *Trivigno* in *Basilicata*. She has personally been an incredible resource to me on this region in the instep of Italy. Though I have visited a handful of times, I turned to Valerie when we were filming our *Basilicata* episode to fill me in on authentic and little-known experiences, and her book includes so much of her insider knowledge.

I always welcome your feedback, questions and comments, so feel free to reach out to me at [kathy@dreamofitaly.com](mailto:kathy@dreamofitaly.com)

Kathy McCabe

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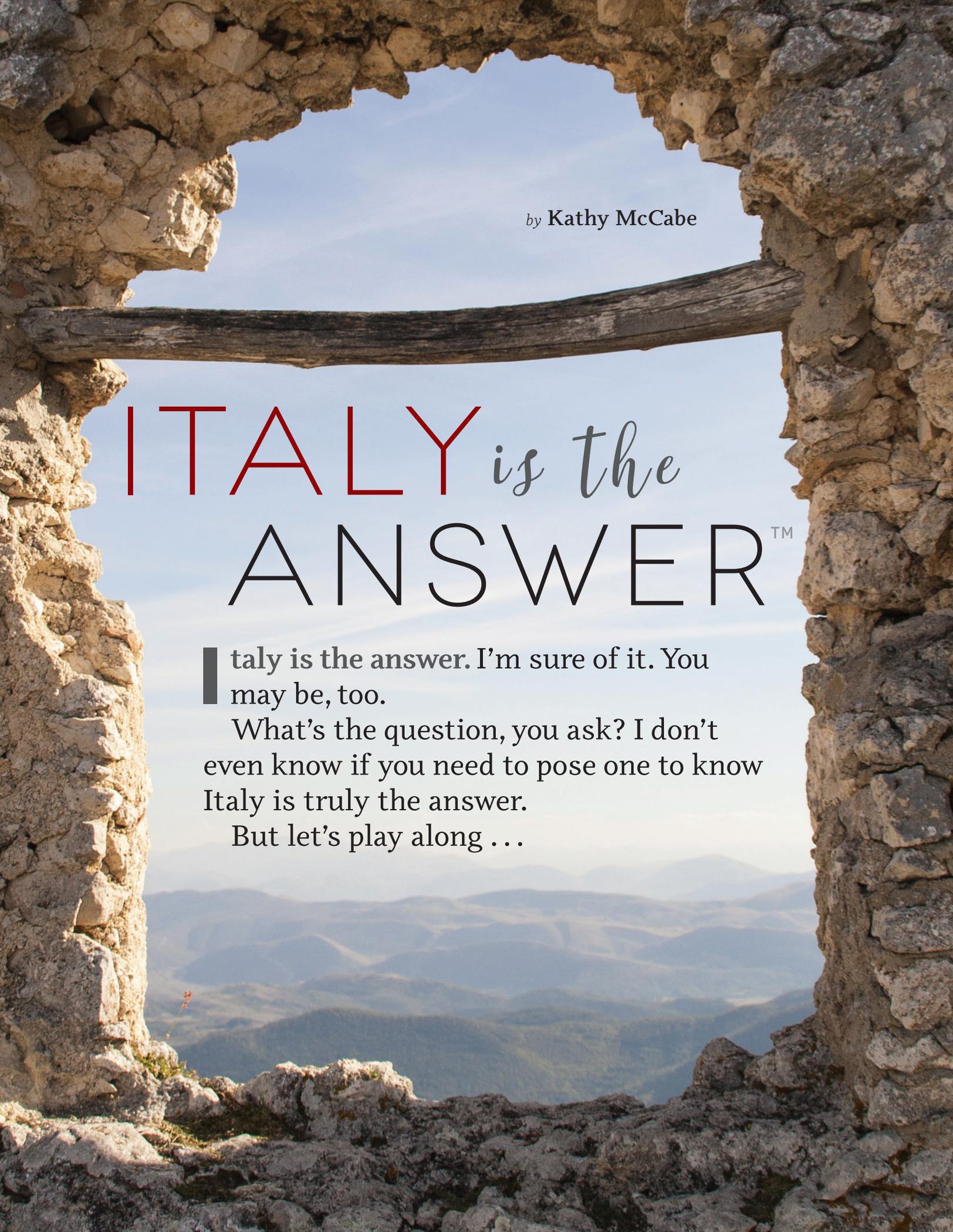
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### RECIPE INCLUDED!

*Polenta*: A Poor Food that Endures

A scenic view of a mountain valley seen through a stone archway with a wooden beam. The archway is made of rough-hewn stone, and a thick, weathered wooden beam spans across it. The background shows a vast, hazy mountain range under a clear sky.

by Kathy McCabe

# ITALY *is the* ANSWER™

Italy is the answer. I'm sure of it. You may be, too.

What's the question, you ask? I don't even know if you need to pose one to know Italy is truly the answer.

But let's play along . . .

What is one word to summarize all that is good in life?

In the darkest moments, what feels like a warm blanket and a hot chocolate?

What do you call the cherry on top?

This past year forced us all into an uncomfortable stillness, an absence of many of our usual coping mechanisms. For me personally, running off to Italy is at the top of that list. As is true with many things in life, this year presented us with an amazing opportunity, disguised as a hardship, to look closely at what we value most in life.

If you're reading this magazine, chances are, we are kindred spirits. Italy has captured our hearts and just *won't let go*. Many of us have built so much of our lives around our travels to *il bel paese*, planning our next Italian journey and counting the days until that plane takes off and we can exhale.

Until the unthinkable happens and we simply cannot go to Italy. We think it won't last long and still it continues. There is so much suffering with the pandemic that we might even feel guilty to be longing to be somewhere else.

But are we really cut off from Italy? Physically yes, but I know personally Italy is what has sustained me through these difficult times. Not only the goal, whose post keeps getting moved, of returning again, but also what it is I experience in Italy and how the culture has added to my life so deeply.

## ESCAPE

For almost 26 years, Italy has been my go-to coping mechanism. Maybe it has been yours, too. I have been fortunate that it has been my work for the past 18 years, making it easier to justify my own travels. When the going gets tough, I go to Italy, the antidote to romantic heartbreak, illness, loss. I run to Italy for her warm embrace. I had the roughest two years of my life just before the pandemic started, losing both my parents. I knew those days of loss would come and took for granted that Italy would be there to scoop me up and save me.

And Italy has, just in a different way, in my mind and in my heart.

## WARMTH

If I had to use one adjective for what draws me to Italy, it is this one, warmth. Every time I am there, I feel like I am back in the small home of my Italian-American grandparents with something cooking on the stove, steam rising, sumptuous smells, two of the people I love most maneuvering around the kitchen in a fine choreographed dance, loud voices, music and love.



Burano (Venice)

## CONNECTION

When you visit Italy, you never are alone. It might be because Italians, much like the terriers I've owned, love to be in everyone's business. I say that with love. Italians are interested in what you're doing. They create community—the *piazza*, the daily check-in at the *caffè*, the age-old celebrations—in everything they do. The pandemic has made us all realize just how vital connection is in our lives.

## SIMPLE PLEASURES

What are your favorites? I miss people-watching in Italy. Their expressions, language, movements are so animated. I miss the simply perfect taste of Italian tomatoes and the strength of a morning *espresso*. The light, especially in Rome, is impossible to duplicate in any other place. Even navigating in real shoes on cobblestone streets, which might seem cumbersome, is something of a pleasure. I remember that I'm just a blip in time in a place where history extends for millennia.

## BEAUTY

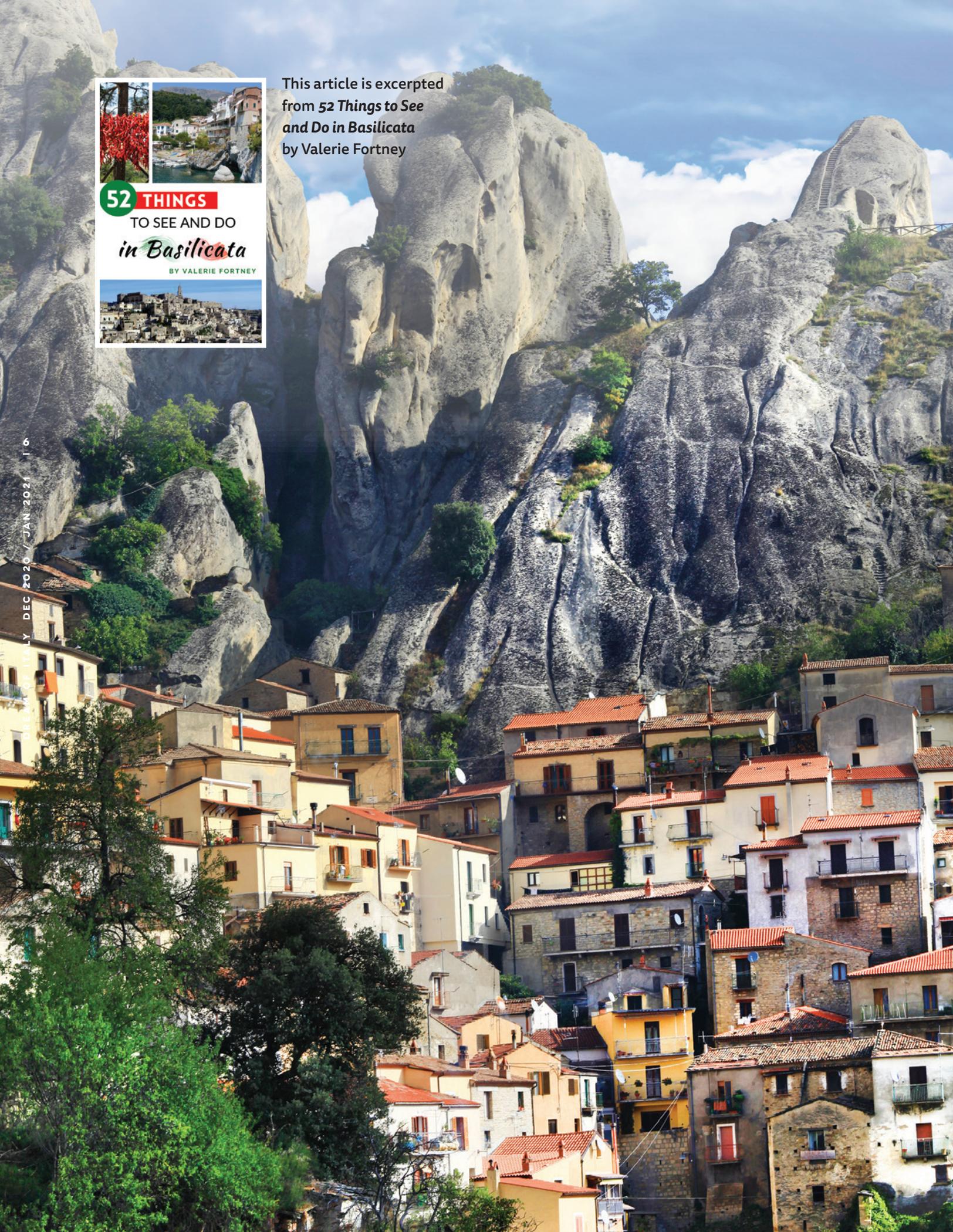
It is like Italy invented beauty, both formally and informally. Of course, this land gave birth to some of the world's greatest artists. But ordinary modern Italians take beauty in their own hands, decorating a table, wearing an accessory, noticing everything around them. I've always felt that beauty and art will outlast humans. Never has there been a more important time to recognize beauty and take joy in it, near and far.

And while I wax poetic on Italy, I know well the reality of it. Italy and Italians are perfectly imperfect. I keep threatening to host a podcast or write an article about revealing the difficulties of Italy, the flip side of the dream. Have you ever stood in line there (or something resembling a line) and noticed that more than one *nonna* feels entitled to cut in front of you and does it so well?

The challenges of Italy are much more than line-cutting *nonnas*, but is anything we love completely perfect? The foibles of Italians and a sometimes contradictory Italian culture only make us love them all the more.

Yes, I'm still sure.

Italy is the answer. 🍷



This article is excerpted from *52 Things to See and Do in Basilicata* by Valerie Fortney



**52 THINGS**  
TO SEE AND DO  
*in Basilicata*  
BY VALERIE FORTNEY



# Basilicata

## ENCHANTS WITH UNUSUAL EXPERIENCES

by Valerie Fortney

**M**y first visit to *Basilicata* in southern Italy was to see where my grandmother's family came from. My husband, Bryan, and I, along with my mom and sister, stood at the high-altitude town awestruck by the beauty that surrounded us. On a subsequent visit I found family members; or rather, they found me.

And they drew me into the *famiglia*, as the timeless traditions and fascinating places of the region drew me back again and again. We discovered this is a region of wonders and natural splendor, of hilltop hamlets, captivating castles, breathtaking scenery and memory-triggering foods. My nana's dishes, I learned, weren't just generic "Italian" but were from *Basilicata*. It connected me to her all over again.

We moved here 10 years ago, and have explored high and low, our fascination with



the places, the people, the food and the traditions still drawing us in, still keeping us enthralled. There are many off-beat and rollicking events, but I especially love the unusual, archaic festivals that celebrate a "marriage of trees," an ancient pagan rite that is also cloaked in religious celebrations. It is one of several only-in-*Basilicata* events that show the uniqueness of this place.

*Basilicata* is one of the least-known and least-populated regions in Italy. It is cuddled between *Puglia*, *Campania* and *Calabria*, forming the boot's oft-overlooked ankle and part of the instep.

While *Basilicata* can boast two slices of coast on two different seas, its bulk is made up



Chiesa San Pietro Barisano, Matera

of mountains and hills. There are billowing wheat fields, vine-striped hills, along with rocky and rugged mountains where squiggly roads reach towns that seem stopped in time, clinging to ridges and slopes. *Francis Ford Coppola*, whose roots are here, said, “When you see *Basilicata* you see fields, vineyards, beautiful landscapes. You see the land as it should be.” I say Amen to that.

The region’s residents are called *Lucani*, a nod to the ancient name of *Lucania*; they are down-to-earth, no-nonsense folks who are hospitable to the max and are likely to take you by the hand to help show you the way, and offer you a coffee in the meantime. The *Lucania* label is still used as much as the region’s official name of *Basilicata*, very proudly, I might add.

The famous liqueur, *Amaro Lucano*, is one example of its modern usage; the digestive liquor is made here in the region but now distributed internationally and highlights the residents’ pride in their heritage. Of course, there’s no shortage of excellent cuisine and world-class wine—some items, like the *lucanica* sausage named for the region and *Aglianico del Vulture* wine, have very ancient roots.

Ten years on and we still haven’t “seen it all”; it has so much to offer. What it doesn’t have? Crowds. Even *Matera* and *Maratea* for all their glories and

attention aren’t packed. The other thing the region lacks? Information in English.

That’s why I finally gathered all the notes from our explorations to write a book, to make this beautiful region more accessible and approachable. Through *52 Things to See and Do in Basilicata*, you will discover the heart and soul of this place that I call home. You will see why it drew me, and why it remains an almost-mystical land that is part of Italy and yet set apart in its own storied traditions and raw beauty. Here are a few of my favorites:

### ATTEND A WEIRD WEDDING

Southern Italian weddings are blow-out parties with hours of feasting, drinking and merry dancing that make *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* look mild. But there are some, uh let’s say unusual, weddings that take place here that . . . well, you have to see them to understand.

The marriage of the trees is an ancient pagan rite that many towns in *Basilicata* still observe, one might say, religiously. The sacred and profane come together in mysterious and mystical ceremonies that harken back to the ancient *Lucani* people. It’s just that now they are also tied (one might say “married”) to a religious feast day, as well.



The procession in Accettura



Escorting the "bride" to the ceremony

The so-called *riti arborei* are still practiced in nine towns around the region, and while there are several names for the *fiesta*, each celebration is an almost primeval joining of man and nature, with a dash of fertility ritual (sort of like the ancient equivalent of the *nonnas* at modern Italian weddings nudging the newlyweds to “get started” on a family). In my area of central *Basilicata* in the *Dolomiti Lucane* mountains, they are called *il Maggio* but despite what might imply May in the name, they generally take place in June. The most famous is in tucked-away *Accettura*.

So just what’s the wedding? Two trees are selected—usually a towering beech or mighty oak, the *Maggio*, which represents the groom; and a fir or holly tree top, the *Cima*, the bride. To say they take the selection and cutting of the trees seriously is an understatement. They obsessively comb the mountains for just the right *alberi* for this arranged marriage.

On the designated day, they are felled and transported separately (groom can’t see the bride before the wedding!) in two processions, either carried on the shoulders of a team of worthy men, or by oxen. The trees are then joined in mystic matrimony and raised up as a towering totem. Then the wedding is “consummated” when courageous (or



“Marrying” the trees PHOTOS COURTESY OF IVYTOUR.IT

crazy) youths climb to the top.

As with all good weddings, there is singing, dancing and dining in the presence of the bridal couple. Sometimes prayers for a good harvest are part of the ritual (that fertility thing).

There are a few differences among the nine towns; for instance, *Terranova di Pollino* is the only town that raises one single, carefully selected fir tree rather than grafting two together. Most are held to coincide with the feast of St. Anthony of Padova (but not all).

If you want to attend one of the weddings, my book gives the run-down of where and when they take place (no gift registries or wedding attire needed).

### DRINK YOUR DIGESTION

If you’ve traveled to Italy, you’ve surely noticed that dining has a pre-determined order. Meals are divided into proper courses, starting with *aperitivi* (to open your appetite for the meal), on to the *antipasto* (the “pre-meal”), then the *primo*, *secondo*, vegetable, dessert, and ritual *caffè*. But it’s not just the order of things that matter: there is another time-honored ritual called the *digestivo*. You see, everything hinges on you being able to properly digest that fabulous meal you just enjoyed.



Equipment for making Amaro Lucano



Amaro Lucano



Museo Essenza Lucano

*Digestivi* are strong alcoholic herbal brews extracted from a variety of herbs and spices. Because the herbs are mostly bitter, they are called *amaro*, and so they are frequently highly sugared to make them more palatable. *Amari* (plural) are popular and each region has its preferred tonic. Some are super-blends of various herbs and plants, like our own home-grown and nationally popular *Amaro Lucano*, which is made from a secret selection of 30 herbs and spices. Get it? *Amaro Lucano*? Made in *Basilicata*, baby!

It all started in pretty *Pisticci* when a pastry chef with a passion for herbal remedies took to the garden in search of the perfect liqueur. *Pasquale Vena* didn't even start out to be a pastry chef. He had gone to Naples with his brother, ready to board a ship to America to find his fortune, but it found him instead, with an internship in a pastry shop in *Napoli*, a city known for its sweets. He returned home and opened his *biscottificio* (cookie bakery). And then the herbal experimentation began.

He obviously hit on the perfect combo for his liqueur and it took off quickly, reaching the royal House of Savoy. The king so enjoyed it that he knighted *Pasquale Vena* for his ingenious digestive and so even today the bottles carry *Cav. Pasquale Vena* on the neck, “cav” for *cavaliere* meaning knight, or, the equivalent of England’s “Sir Pasquale.”

Today, the fourth generation is at the helm, and with their new factory, they can produce more than four million bottles a year. They have added other digestive liqueurs, all locally-based, like licorice, *limoncello* and *caffè*. The coffee cordial, as it is called, for its part, has roots in the small hill town of *Laurenzana*, and was popularized by a local distillery, *Laraia*, who sold the recipe to the *Vena* family. So, it's all still sort of the *Lucania famiglia*.

*Essenza Lucano—The Immersive Experience*. Yes, the *Lucano* brand may bear a peasant woman on the label but they're hip to the times and have a techy multi-media museum that is also billed as multi-sensory (ahem, meaning you get to taste the stuff). The displays walk you through some of the more obvious herbs and essences, while still keeping a tight lid on their family secrets.

The highlight is the bright, airy tasting area, so come with a full stomach and put it to the test—drink to your digestion, and toast the man who put the *Lucano* name on what is now an internationally-known brand.

*Amaro Lucano's Museo Essenza Lucano* is located at *Pisticci Scalo*, right off the SS407 *Basentana* highway. 🍷



Valerie Fortney returned to her roots in the region of *Basilicata* where she is a freelance writer and professional genealogist. She and her husband offer genealogy services and heritage immersion days. For more information, visit [www.mybellabasilicata.com](http://www.mybellabasilicata.com)

by Letizia Mattiacci

# Polenta

A POOR  
FOOD THAT  
ENDURES

**Y**ou probably don't think of corn among Italian food ingredients unless the subject of *polenta*, a cornmeal porridge, comes up. Even then, Italian cornmeal is generally associated with the northern part of the country.



Cornfield in front of the town of Assisi

Yet there is a long history of corn cultivation in central Italy. This is a history that, in *Umbria*, carries with it tales of pain and deprivation.

The life of farmers in *Umbria* was always difficult. Poor, illiterate, dogged by famine and virtual slaves to rich landowners uninterested in investing in their properties, farmers often survived on wild herbs, inferior grain and beans—food now reserved for animal feed. Meat, fish and dairy were rare treats, indulged only during celebrations and holidays.

As if things weren't bad enough, farming life took a turn for the worse in the 19th century with the introduction of corn as a crop. Easy to grow but lacking in essential amino acids, especially niacin, corn soon became the region's crop of choice, with landlords pushing for increasingly abundant harvests.

As a result, farmers used corn as a cooking staple and their diet deteriorated further, being more monotonous and poorer in protein than ever before.

I still recall my *Umbrian* grandmother resisting *polenta* and other old corn flour-based recipes. They brought back too many bad memories.

### THE MIXED HISTORY OF POLENTA

Only years later did I discover that to both my grandparents, farmers born at the beginning of 20th century, corn or maize, as it is also called, represented abject deprivation. Worse, it conjured memories of *pazzia* or “madness,” much of it induced by hopelessly imbalanced diets.

For some three centuries, until the post-World War II period, the farm life diet consisted almost exclusively of corn. Month after month, year after year, *polenta* was at the center of nourishment with lasting consequences.

The chronic absence of protein and the poor nutritional value of edible plants produced epidemic-size cases of pellagra, a debilitating disease that begins with skin scarring and later triggers mental disorders.

Hospitals were packed with demented farmers, and the cause was invariably pellagra from excessively high concentrations of corn.

Sharecropping finally ended in the postwar years, and the improved Italian economy resulted in a significant improvement in farming conditions.

Gradually, farmers gained access to proper food, a more balanced diet and a decent life.

But memories of the misery inflicted by those centuries die hard.

I don't remember when I first tasted *polenta*, but it must have been as a teenager some 40 years ago. And because my family was awash in great cooks and had a variety of wonderful foods at its disposal, corn wasn't a highlight. In fact, understandably, it had become unusual in our diet.

These days the corn stigma is gone and few speak of illnesses that belong to another era.

### COMFORT FOOD

Ours is an age of abundance that can cancel out the past. Delicious *polenta* and other corn-based recipes are now prized. They represent the comfort food of an *Umbrian*



household and are exceedingly popular in restaurants, particularly in winter.

Using my favorite artisanal stone-ground flour, I usually prepare it several times per month.

### CHOOSING THE RIGHT CORNMEAL

Corn comes in many varieties corresponding to different plant shape, ear shape, seed color and, most significantly, kernel shape and hardness. The most popular varieties for human consumption are known as dent, flint, popcorn, flour and sweet.

Dent corn has a high content of soft starch and is used to make sweeteners, masa and grits. Flint corn has a hard outer layer and complex flavor, and is the preferred variety for *polenta*. Popcorn expands and puffs when heated. Flour corn is very starchy and used to make corn flour. Sweet corn has a high sugar content and is harvested early to consume the fresh kernels.

Regardless of the commercial claims you might read on a package, there is no single cornmeal that is suitable for all recipes. Using different varieties allows you to obtain the correct flavor, texture and cooking time.

If you wish your *polenta* to taste like it does in Italy, I suggest buying cornmeal obtained from flint corn or

imported Italian cornmeal for *polenta*. Also note that cornmeal for *polenta* is milled differently from other types of cornmeal, which yields a different texture once cooked.

In Italy, cornmeal is named *Fumetto*, *Fioretto* or *Bramata*, depending on the level of grinding. Each type might be wholegrain or refined, white or yellow, stone ground or steel ground.

*Fumetto* cornmeal is extremely fine and used for cakes and cookies, not for *polenta*. *Fioretto* is medium coarse and *Bramata* is coarse. They are both suitable for *polenta*. Use the wholegrain version of either type, preferably stone ground, for a more flavorful *polenta*.

A lot of markets sell instant *polenta*, made from precooked *polenta*, which is dried and processed into a flour. The quick *polenta* can be reconstituted in boiling water and put on the table within minutes.

Growing up, I ate a lot of instant *polenta* as my mother was not familiar with “real” *polenta* cooked from scratch. However, once you start cooking proper *polenta* with good-quality cornmeal you will probably agree that you would rather just not eat *polenta* than settle for that pale alternative.

### HOW TO COOK POLENTA

If you are not familiar with *polenta* and you have heard that it’s time-consuming and tastes bland, I want to assure you: when properly sourced and prepared, it is delicious and not more difficult than any other porridge.

It is true that it does require some attention as it cooks but, like *risotto*, there are alternatives to constant stirring or messy burned pans.

The most advertised method of cooking *polenta* consists of bringing a pan of water to a boil and adding



80-year-old stone mill near Perugia



Old mechanical flour sieve



Wooden flour mill

the cornmeal to the water in a thin stream while whisking constantly to prevent lumps. This is followed by continuous stirring to prevent the mixture from sticking to the bottom of the pan and eventually burning. This is not the only method and not necessarily the easiest one.

There is also a metropolitan legend bordering on superstition that *polenta* should be stirred always in the same direction and only with a wooden spoon. Needless to say, you will not be struck by lightning if you reverse the wave or use an un-romantic silicone spatula or whisk.

The ratio of liquid to *polenta* cornmeal, the type of pan and the cooking time are factors to take into careful consideration to succeed. Let's take a look.

### 1. SOAKING

Presoak the cornmeal in water for several hours. Then, use the soaking water to cook the *polenta*. This step will drastically cut down on the cooking time.

### 2. THE PAN

To minimize the chance of *polenta* sticking to the pan and therefore reduce the continuous stirring, you need a tall pan with a heavy bottom. You also need to cook it over the lowest possible heat. Use a heat diffuser if your stove is too hot.

This way, it's enough to give it a good stir every 5 to 10 minutes. The rest of the time, you're free to prepare the rest of your dinner. If you do get lumps, vigorous stirring with a firm whisk will get rid of them.

### 3. THE CHOICE OF LIQUID

*Polenta* itself has a light flavor, which you can enrich with the cooking liquid as well as an endless variety of toppings from just butter and cheese, to powerful meat stews, vegetarian sauces and even seafood.

You can cook *polenta* in water, milk or broth. *Polenta*



Stone-ground cornmeal for polenta



Polenta cooked in a traditional copper pan

made with milk is very rich and when combined with even more rich meat-based sauces makes for a heavy meal. That is not my preference, but I like to add some milk (about 25%) at the end of cooking for *polenta* that I plan to bake. I don't cook *polenta* in broth, but if you plan on a light topping, e.g. a vegetarian sauce, using a proper home-made stock is a good way to increase flavor.

In our home we like food that is flavorful but also easy to digest. I find that when the *polenta* is cooked in water, you can still achieve a lovely creamy texture, similar to soft scrambled eggs, which will be not so heavy to process.

### 4. THE RATIO OF WATER TO CORNMEAL

I recommend cooking the cornmeal in ample liquid at least one hour (see my recipe). You will need approximately three cups of water per 3.5 ounces of cornmeal. You will find lots of recipes with less liquid. However, too little water makes *polenta* that is undercooked and heavy.

If you think you have added too much liquid and the *polenta* looks runny, just keep cooking until it looks like custard. You can't ruin it with longer cooking. If your *polenta* becomes too solid before one hour, just add some hot water to it and keep cooking. You will not regret the extra 15 minutes! 🌿



Letizia Mattiacci, author of the cookbooks *A Kitchen with a View* and *Festa Italiana*, is the owner of *Alla Madonna del Piatto Cooking School and Agriturismo* in Assisi. For more information, visit [www.incampagna.com](http://www.incampagna.com)

# RECIPE

## Polenta and Sausages

Serves 6

### Ingredients

- 1 lb coarse or medium coarse cornmeal for *polenta*, organic and stone ground if possible
- 10–12 pork sausages (not spicy)
- 1 each of the following: onion, carrot, celery stick, fresh bay leaf, sprig of rosemary, clove
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 3 lb canned diced or crushed tomatoes
- grated *Pecorino* or *Parmigiano* cheese to taste
- best-quality extra virgin olive oil to finish

### DIRECTIONS

#### To make the sauce:

- Umbrian sausages are flavored with garlic and black pepper, but you can substitute them with best-quality Italian-style fennel sausages.
- Finely dice onion, celery and carrot. Using a pan that can accommodate the sausages in a single layer, sauté onion, celery, carrot and sausages in 3 tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat. When the sausages start to brown, deglaze with white wine.
- Once the wine is evaporated, add canned tomatoes, clove, bay leaf and a sprig of rosemary bound with kitchen string to prevent losing the rosemary needles in the sauce. Simmer over very low heat for at least one hour or until thick and velvety.

#### To make the *polenta*:

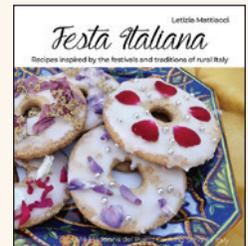
- I advise you to soak the cornmeal for the *polenta* before cooking and use a high proportion of water to cornmeal, typically 3 cups water per 3.5 oz cornmeal. Cooking over the lowest possible heat makes it unnecessary to stir continuously.
- Start by placing the cornmeal into a wide, heavy-bottomed pan, then whisk in 2 teaspoons salt and 2 cups water at room temperature. Soak for at least one hour to shorten the active cooking time and avoid lumps.
- Bring the rest of the water to a boil. Different brands of *polenta* will absorb different amounts of water so you might not need it all.
- Pour most of the boiling water—minus 2 to 3 cups—into the softened *polenta*, whisk to incorporate and transfer to the heat. Cook at the lowest setting, uncovered, for about one hour.
- Stir every 5 to 10 minutes, making sure to scrape the bottom and sides of the pan. If the *polenta* becomes too thick before the 60-minute mark, add the reserved warm water to loosen the mixture.
- The *polenta* is ready when it comes easily off the sides of the pan and it feels like a thick custard. At this point taste it and adjust the salt.

#### How to serve:

- Ladle the *polenta* into deep bowls, cover with a generous layer of sauce, one or two sausages, a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and a sprinkle of *Parmigiano* or *Pecorino*.
- For the vegetarians in the family, you can also serve the *polenta* with a simple tomato sauce piled with steamed leaf vegetables and a dollop of creamy cheese like *gorgonzola* or diced fresh *mozzarella*.



Recipe adapted from  
**Festa Italiana**, Letizia's new  
cookbook, available on Amazon



DREAM OF ITALY

P.O. Box 2025

Denver, CO 80201

# Fill In Your Dream of Italy.....

## WHEN I RETURN TO ITALY, I WILL

Have an *espresso* at a *caffé* in \_\_\_\_\_

Savor a scoop of *gelato* at \_\_\_\_\_

Hike the trails in \_\_\_\_\_

Rent a beach chair along the coast of \_\_\_\_\_

See an opera in \_\_\_\_\_

Book a room at \_\_\_\_\_

Visit \_\_\_\_\_, a region I haven't been to

Drink a \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_

Ride a bike in \_\_\_\_\_

Learn to cook \_\_\_\_\_

Shop at \_\_\_\_\_

See the sights with my favorite tour guide \_\_\_\_\_

Rent a villa in \_\_\_\_\_

Watch the sunset from \_\_\_\_\_

Drive a *Vespa* through \_\_\_\_\_

