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Gioielli Nascosti

RUBRICA PER ACCOMPAGNARVI ALLA SCOPERTA
DELLE BELLEZZE DEL NOSTRO PAESE

L'Italia è il Paese della grande bellezza. Custodisce tesori paesaggistici e capolavori artistici di valore inestimabile, apprezzati in tutto il mondo.

La FAO Staff Coop Gazette attraverso questa rubrica vuole condurre i lettori nel cuore dell'Italia in una passeggiata nella storia alla scoperta di caratteristici borghi dal fascino antico. Storia, arte, natura, terra e mare saranno i protagonisti della nostra rubrica in cui vogliamo raccogliere curiosità, immagini, colori e bellezze da celebrare e condividere con i nostri lettori.

L'Italia è un paese di poeti, navigatori e paesini addormentati.

Probabilmente in qualsiasi punto dello stivale ci si trovi, nel raggio di un centinaio di chilometri c'è un borgo-gioiello ai più sconosciuto.

Nella nostra penisola la storia si è sbizzarrita con un tale entusiasmo da lasciarsi alle spalle villaggi ed uomini in un alternarsi inarrestabile di invasioni, saccheggi, guerre, terremoti, frane, siccità, povertà, cambiamenti nelle rotte commerciali.

Questi eventi hanno concorso a creare un'altra Italia, quella fuori dal tempo e dolcemente imprigionata in esso.

Un'Italia che si concentra soprattutto nel cuore del Belpaese.

E noi vogliamo partire da qui, dai borghi abbandonati, impregnati di un fascino antico che ancora resiste e che abbiamo il dovere di difendere e valorizzare.

Come sottolineato dall'architetto Paolo Portoghesi

“Questi borghi rappresentano la nostra verginità e conservarla corrisponde ad uno dei pochi ideali del nostro tempo”



di Enrica Romanazzo

Sostiene e promuove da anni le attività della FAO STAFF COOP. Nel contempo segue ed organizza eventi in difesa dell'ambiente e per la valorizzazione del territorio salentino

COPERTINO

Nella terra del barocco leccese, alla scoperta di borghi dal fascino antico.

Il Salento è una lingua di terra fra due mari, lo Ionio occidentale e l'Adriatico meridionale, con coste dalle alte falesie, fiordi bellissimi, calette nascoste, scogliere basse e pescose, lunghe ed interminabili spiagge ed un mare limpido e trasparente. È una penisola nella penisola, è un balcone sul mare Mediterraneo, ricordato nelle navigazioni letterarie come l'Odissea e l'Eneide. Questo territorio attraversato nei secoli da mille rotte marittime e terrestri, costituisce un unicum nel mediterraneo. È una terra dal fascino antico, è la patria del Barocco leccese. Tutti i paesini dell'hinterland salentino, avvolti nella magia di un mix di natura, arte e cultura, sono pieni di memoria e pervasi da un gran fermento culturale. Esistono varie associazioni a cui fanno capo tanti volontari che organizzano eventi ed iniziative volte a valorizzare la bellezza e le peculiarità dei luoghi nati.



Ed esistono cittadine poco conosciute ma non per questo meno suggestive delle mete turistiche più gettonate, che vale la pena di esplorare.

Ho visitato Copertino in occasione della festa organizzata dal Comune per ripercorrere storia e tradizioni del Salento attraverso la valorizzazione dei cortei medievali, che sfilano nel borgo antico della città per rivitalizzare e trasmettere il senso di appartenenza e di identità culturale del luogo. Il corteo storico, che si svolge ormai da 45 anni, parte dal castello, si snoda per le vie della città in compagnia di sbandieratori, arcieri, musici, giocolieri, artisti di strada, con la sfilata di oltre 150 abiti indossati da altrettanti figuranti. Quando la storia rivive nelle piazze del borgo, tra spettacoli di giocolieri e sbandieratori, tornei di scacchi, musica e canti, non si può che applaudire a chi ricorda che la storia educa perché ci racconta chi siamo e ci indica la direzione giusta da intraprendere per evitare gli errori del passato.

Questo grazioso borgo sito nel cuore della Terra d'Arneo, nel Salento Occidentale, mi ha colpita per le sue meraviglie architettoniche, arricchite da fregi che prendono forma dalla caratteristica pietra leccese, il cui successo è dovuto sicuramente al suo pregio di materia calcarea, morbida e plasmabile, ma il merito va condiviso con gli abili scalpellini, ideatori, secondo i casi, di esempi ora fragorosi e crepitanti, ora misurati e sobri, eleganti e raffinati. Questi artigiani hanno scritto col bulino un testamento

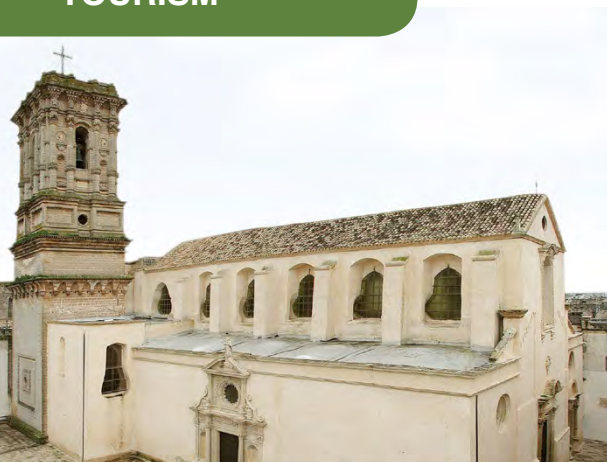




fantastico e pittoresco, pervaso di razionalità e di aspettative, di sogni e contraddizioni. Il barocco leccese rappresenta un popolo con le sue contraddizioni e la sua voglia di essere sempre diverso.

Camminando nel centro storico di Copertino non si può non notare sul portone d'ingresso di palazzo Lupo una curiosa maschera apotropaica, posta a protezione della casa contro gli spiriti maligni. Un'immagine che ricorda la figura di un capo pellerossa, ma sulla testa non ci sono penne di aquile, bensì le foglie di un albero perché questo uomo verde altro non è che lo spirito di un albero che unisce l'uomo alla natura. È un'immagine che evoca la natura benigna, la natura che cura i mali, per ricordare che l'altissima armonia e sintonia che si crea tra noi e la natura è fonte di benessere. Ed è sorprendente scoprire che sui muri delle





vecchie abitazioni possono fiorire piante tenaci come il capperò, specie che ama installare le sue radici nelle fessure della pietra per avere un ancoraggio forte.

Ma quello che davvero impressiona è l'imponenza del castello, uno dei più belli di tutta la Puglia, vero e proprio esempio di architettura militare, che dà l'idea di essere stata una fortezza quasi impenetrabile, viste anche le tantissime feritoie che ne punteggiano le mura. Basta però guardare il balconcino rinascimentale decorato con una balaustra traforata per capire che il castello è stato una residenza signorile nel corso della sua storia.

La tradizione enogastronomica di Copertino si rifà a quella tipica salentina. Tra i piatti locali si possono gustare in particolar modo i passericchi con le cozze (tipica pasta copertinese), ciciri e tria, pittule (frittelle di farina e acqua semplici o ripiene con baccalà o cavoli), vari tipi di verdure a "pignato" cotte in contenitori di terra cotta (papurine, zzanguni e cicore reste), lampacioni (bulbi di cipolla selvatica), orecchiette e pizzarieddhri con sugo di ventresca e ricotta forte, cazzamaru o 'gnummarieddhri





(involtini di frattaglie). Ho avuto modo di assaggiare delle preparazioni a base di carne realizzate dalle macellerie di Paolo Valentino di Copertino: prodotti di assoluta qualità e grande scelta tra bombette, involtini, e molto altro. Esempio di passione, professionalità artigianalità e creatività salentina.

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IF SOMEONE IS INTERESTED IN THE TEXT, CAN CONTACT ME BY E-MAIL: MARAMICICESARE4@GMAIL.COM

Nowadays oriental disciplines are very popular in the West, among them yoga and meditation. This text reflects the outcome of the meetings I have had with great meditators, many of whom I have followed courses with.

People often choose a particular path in meditation without getting information on the relevant context. This book aims at throwing a light on a multitude of proposals.

According to Matthieu Ricard, “*meditation is not about emptying one’s head, but about gradually becoming a better human being. It is necessary to practise meditation in order to identify the causes and mental toxins which are disturbing, and to free ourselves from inner conflicts*” (p. 71).

There are essentially two paths: the first one requires a very serious engagement in a well-structured tradition, with initiation ceremonies, discipleship, etc..., while the other path is a little lighter; through meditation, one usually looks for moments of peace and serenity and above all, well-being. Nowadays it is the pursuit of well-being that is taking hold in our society, a well-being at any cost and to suit everyone’s budget.

The book is mainly structured around **the three most popular meditation proposals in the West**, Tibetan Buddhist meditation (see the Dalai Lama), yoga meditation (which is a step along the way of samadhi) and Mindfulness meditation (a secular meditation, purified of any esoteric aspect and the results of which are evidenced by scientific research). **The main characters** around which the text is developed are: **Matthieu Ricard** (a buddhist monk), **Christophe André** (a psychiatrist) and **Amadio Bianchi** (a yoga master). The book begins with their interviews where they answer a series of questions about meditation. Then there is a simulated interview between an experienced meditator and a sincere researcher; through a series of questions and answers, an attempt is made to guide the reader into the world of meditation. What is meditation, what are the main techniques of meditation, etc. We refer to meditators who are still, almost all of them, alive (many are part of the Italian

and French universe) and could be a reference point to start a path. We will also introduce personalities who have tried to find a meeting point between the various spiritual paths (see p. 111). Among these, Father Anthony Elenjimitam and the mandala of the eight paths, Father Mariano Ballester who created the non-profit association 'Deep Meditation and Self-Awareness (MPA)', and Father Antonio Gentili.

The **Dalai Lama** invites us continuously to experience various paths and choose the one we feel closest to, and above all he reminds us that discipline and perseverance are needed to get results. Westerners often enquire which is the form of meditation that can bring out results in a short period of time and above all at little cost (p. 60). The Buddha himself told his disciples: *“Try one path and see what happens, if it works out for you, use it, otherwise discard it and look for something else”*. **All researches have confirmed that people need practising for long periods to get results.** Research also confirmed that our brain possesses a fantastic property called neuro-plasticity: the ability to change shape and function even in later life. This was demonstrated, among other studies, by the famous case of Phineas Gage, a worker whose prefrontal area of the brain was destroyed in an accident (1848). In 2000, **Matthieu Ricard**, who obtained a doctorate in molecular biology, agreed to undergo a series of **scientific experiments** with **Richard Davidson** (p. 43), thus creating a bridge between Buddhist meditation and scientific research.



What are the benefits of meditation? The results of these studies are as follows: meditating produces greater activation of the left prefrontal cortex, the one associated with positive emotions, resilience and well-being. It strengthens immune system responses - demonstrating a relationship between the brain and the immune system. It reduces the activity of the right prefrontal cortex, which is linked to negative emotions. Other research has shown that meditation helps develop qualities such as focused attention, empathy and compassion, which are characteristics of Buddhist meditation (p. 43).

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Another important aspect is that all these techniques, once considered esoteric, such as meditation, hypnosis, holotropic breathing, listening to sounds and mantras, rituals or shamanic psychology, techniques that combine breath, evocative music, bodywork focused on energy release, artistic expression and group integration, are now accepted in scientific medical circles. Meditation and hypnosis are often offered to cancer patients, and often accompany the patient in the convalescence phase.



Jon Kabat-Zinn and **Christophe André** have been using mindfulness techniques in hospitals for many years. Mindfulness has an effect on the body and a favourable impact on health, which is why **meditation has been integrated into medical care in Western society today**. Moreover, in recent decades it has been introduced in schools, prisons, and companies, as it brings improvement on an emotional level. Meditation also slows down the ageing process. Indeed, the positive effect of meditation on telomeres has been scientifically evidenced. **Telomeres are protective caps** at the ends of chromosomes that become shorter with each cell division.

There are some important milestones in the development of the relationship between science and meditation: first the creation of the **Mind and Life institute**, then the experiments conducted with and on Matthieu Ricard in the first brain scans, as well as on another monk **Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche**, who was subject to brain scanning for 15 years (p. 45). The study that was published by Live Science in 2020, revealed that Mingyur Rinpoche's brain ageing process appeared to have slowed down. The European community has allocated around 7 million euros for a project called **Sylver Santé** to test with reliable data whether meditation can delay the ageing process.

Now let us try to get into details about meditation using the words of Amadio Bianchi (he is the President of the European Yoga Federation and has contributed to a few paragraphs of the book): The word meditate is often misused; **for the Westerner, meditate refers to "mens"**, the mental and its activity. Instead, **for the Easterner**, the practice gets at going **beyond the mental**, in order to reach higher and extra-ordinary states of consciousness and contemplation and to get in touch with the most spiritual part of our being, to our true Self. We live identifying ourselves with the contents of our mind, created above all by emotions; it is an experience shaped by the mental; distorted images are produced which are mistaken for reality, and so we move away from an objective vision.

How can meditation help us? Meditation can help bring man back to the present. The most important practice is to develop detachment, to contemplate our mind without being involved in it: it is called the way of knowledge, to observe our thoughts and return to the present reality. Meditation, however, is a means to better experience the present. Meditation, by reducing mental activity, helps regenerate us, as our cells achieve almost complete immobility. Meditation can increase our ability to focus and concentrate;

we are able to achieve physical and material results, but above all, it helps us reconnect with our self. The path is difficult, and it takes trust, perseverance, and an approach to meditation devoid of expectation.

What does a person need to meditate? One needs a suitable environment, dimmed light, silence, finding the right time, having completed one's daily duties, and a blanket because there is a slowing down of body activities. Meditation is an invitation to prepare oneself to listen, it involves an awakening of the state of attention, attention will turn into awareness, and awareness will lead us to consciousness. Life consumed without awareness is like having never lived through it, or having lived in the dream state; the moments of meditation are the most intensely experienced moments .

First, meditations must be divided into two types: meditation of suggestion and meditation of knowledge; meditations practised in the West are suggestion meditations and are not in line with oriental meditation. These sound-accompanied guided meditations are considered propaedeutic, they produce the right conditions to eventually go further and can help bring about the qualities necessary for knowledge meditation. During this later meditation, the meditator is alone, not even with a teacher. The senses are totally annihilated and one uses the only suitable instrument - consciousness -, to get to know



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the reality which is our Self. The Self is the part of us that we have in common with all manifestations, it is the only reality; everything else is impermanent and does not belong to us, nothing belongs to us, we leave everything behind when we die. We only leave with the drop called our self. And with this drop, man goes to meet his divine part, he tries to come into contact and know this divine part, this is the goal of knowledge meditation.



The correct path would consist of three steps with practical exercises:

- awakening of attention;
- attention that transforms into awareness;
- awareness leading to consciousness; consciousness is the appropriate tool provided by nature for the practice of meditation.

Disidentification. You should become a spectator of the body, of the breath, become aware of the emotions, of your thoughts and the content of your mind. “I am not the body, I am not the breath, I am not my emotions, I am not the mind, but I am also the mind, the emotions, the breath, the body”. The next degree is to become aware of being aware. The one who is making this statement is the witness within you. The witness is a quality of your self, recognise the self and repeat ‘I am the self, I am the self, I am self’.

Buddhist teachings aim to demonstrate impermanence, non-self (or inconsistency of self) and nirvana (elimination of suffering or dukkha). **Any teaching that does not bear these three principles cannot be considered as a buddhism teaching. Nothing has a separate existence or a separate self. Everything has to interact with everything else.**

Nirvana means extinction, especially extinction of ideas - the ideas of birth and death, existence and non-existence, coming and going, self and other, one and many. All these ideas make us suffer.

The Four Noble Truths are:

- The Existence of Suffering.
- The Emergence of Suffering.
- The ending of Suffering
- The Emergence of Well-Being.

There is a noble path (the Eightfold Path) that leads to well-being.

They specify that **in Buddhism there are two paths**: that of relaxation, **samatha** (mental calmness) which should be associated with deep insight, **vipassanā**. (pg.151) - Only through calmness, one could access to a state of deep vision, to get directly in touch with true reality, and thus understand and accept it for what it is. Both are based on attention and breath control. At first, the mind observes the breathing or the movements of the body, then it becomes one with them.

Following the Western point of view, the central point of meditation consists of three stages: concentration, i.e. focusing all attention on an object which is usually the breath, then letting the mind calm down and then moving on to introspection.



Citations. *“Meditation is a path to connect with the sacred, our divine part, with our true Self”.*

“Meditating is a great opportunity, an open door to infinite possibilities and potential. Something, moreover, that is within the reach of everyone, young and old, educated and less educated, healthy or unhealthy. To all, meditation brings benefits, physically, mentally, spiritually. Through meditation it is possible to rediscover oneself, recover harmony and embark on a very specific path of self-realisation” - Paola Giovetti (p. 9)

“At the end of the 20th century, meditation was a sleeping beauty: it was only practised in the silence and secrecy of monasteries, or in small groups of initiates or the exalted. Today, in the third millennium, everything has changed: meditation has become a fashionable phenomenon and a social fact. It is practised in full view of everyone, in hospitals and schools, in companies and artistic or political circles” - Christophe André (p. 12)

“Most of the time, our instinctive and clumsy search for happiness is based on deceptions and illusions, rather than on reality, and so we wear ourselves out trying to shape the world to make it fit our fantasies, or we artificially alter our states of consciousness. Would it not be better to transform our minds?” - Matthieu Ricard (p. 15)

“Never forget that your life passes so quickly, like a flash in the summer sky or a hand sign. Now that you have the opportunity to practise, do not waste a moment. Consecrate all your energy to the spiritual path”. - Dilgo Khyentsé Rinpoche (p. 31)

“Meditation or other disciplines enable man to access, step by step, the way, his true nature, the Buddha nature, and through this path man can liberate his true Being. It is a path to the highest state of consciousness to which man can attain, and through which he opens himself to contact with the living Absolute in its essential core. It is through severe discipline and humbly repeated action without ceasing that man gradually becomes imbued with the living Essence of all things in the unconscious depths of his individual self and prepares himself for the Great Union with the Whole” - Karlfried Graf Durckheim (p. 34)

“Awareness of the interconnectedness of the whole with the whole can only lead to deep and compassionate civic and social responsibility.” “In meditation there must be no separation between subject and object, between inside and outside. So when we sit in zazen, we are already inside, there is no inside and outside, and we recognise ourselves as One with the whole” - Dario Doshin Girolami (p. 90)

“Let our message be our own life.” “Mindfulness is the full awareness of the present moment”. *“Meditation is not an escape from, but a peaceful encounter with reality” - Thich Nhat Hanh (p. 93)*

“In reality, you are also your thoughts, your beliefs, etc., but not only those: you are above all the consciousness in which they appear. You are Everything: the observer and the observed, what changes (thoughts, perceptions, sensations) and what does not change (consciousness), you are the sea and the waves” - Mauro Bergonzi (p. 118)

For Pope Francis, in fact, meditating must mean “going to the encounter with Jesus, but

always guided by the Holy Spirit”. In short, some methodological experience coming from other religious universes may well be welcomed within the practice of Christian prayer, but this must not in any way introduce different doctrinal perspectives, nor insinuate theological doubts, nor contaminate or languish the dogmatically defined contents of the Catholic Creed. (p. 111).

Meditation is the medicine of the mind, a technique for returning from the artificial state (the mind that lies) to the natural state (p. 120).

In presenting the various meditators, as well as putting them in context, we have **tried to point out the various nuances of meditation.**

People like **Tony Parsons**, one of the most radical exponents of non-dualism, have a simple, clear and direct message: there is no one within the body-mind called ‘me’, there is no individual, but there is a single Self that lives through different forms (p. 122).

For **Eckhart Tolle**, the goal of meditation is this: to re-discover Presence, the light of Presence in us, in our inner reality. This allows us to see thoughts, feelings, etc. in a detached way, ‘to be aware, that we are aware’ (p. 138).

Some meditators depart from **the three most common approaches to meditation teaching**: the first consists of observing the thoughts that pass through our mind without dwelling on them; the second consists of trying to control the mind, to empty our thoughts through techniques of focusing on a precise point, e.g. a statue, a candle, the breath, etc., to the exclusion of all else; the third approach is to merge with the divine. They propose a different and revolutionary approach to meditation, sitting without expecting anything, without anything to seek. They propose developing an attitude of full presence and letting go of the emotions you are experiencing here and now (p. 140).

The book also talks about **the role of the teacher in meditation, the relationship between meditation and science, between Buddhism and science, and the relationship between meditation and death.**

Meditation certainly helps us to face death as it urges us to live life to the full, whether we are young or old. What really matters in existence is to use the time we have left as fruitfully as possible, for our own good and that of others. I quote the thought of **Gampopa, a Buddhist sage**: *‘At the beginning, one should be haunted by the fear of death like a deer escaping a trap; halfway through, one should have nothing to regret, like the farmer who tilled his field with care. In the end, one should be as happy as one who has accomplished a great feat’* (p. 53).

A possible meeting point is the fact that both Buddhism and science have **experimentation as their main focus**. Richard Feynman said: ‘The principle of science is as follows: The text of knowledge is the experiment; it is the sole judge of scientific truth.’ And here is how the **Dalai Lama** echoes him: ‘When the question of validating the truth of a certain assertion arises, Buddhism places the greatest authority in experience, then in reason, and lastly in scripture’ (p. 163).

The goal of meditation is to arrive at a state of awakening, to perceive reality differently and to an experience known as enlightenment, which involves a perfectly clear vision of things.

The regular practice of meditation leads to a **personal condition described by all meditators in terms of four elements**: the absence of a kind of outer self, emptiness, the absence of a kind of inner self and impermanence. (p. 168). This approach converges with Buddhist thinking of the lack of a

controlling self. It is also possible to see a correspondence between this theory of forms in modern psychology and the impermanent character that Buddha attributed to the five aggregates. In Buddhist doctrine, the five skandhas or aggregates are the constituents of the empirical person, namely: form (rūpa); sensation (vedanā); perception (saññā); karmic formations such as habits, unconscious reflexes, (sankhāra); consciousness (viññāna).

Relationship between science and meditation. Many great physicists and Nobel laureates of the 20th century consider consciousness as the foundation of the world, something that includes everything.

“Absolute knowledge is a totally non-intellectual experience of reality, an experience that arises from a non-ordinary state of consciousness, which can be called a meditative or mystical state” - Fritjof Capra (p.169). He wrote the **Tao of Physics** and sentences from this text are written at CERN in Geneva (The European Organisation for Nuclear Research) under a statue of Shiva Nataraja donated by the Indian government.

John Hagelin (1954 -) is a world-renowned American quantum physicist, and says: “We must assume the existence of a conscious, intelligent mind. This mind is the matrix of all matter.” Max Planck (1858-1947) asserted: “The consciousness is the main basis and matter is a derived from consciousness. We cannot go beyond consciousness and everything we talk about, everything we consider to exist, postulates consciousness.”

David Bohm (1917-1992), an American physicist and philosopher wrote, with Jiddu Krishnamurti, the book *Where Time Ends*. He said: “Consciousness is the vessel that contains everything, absolutely everything that happens in the universe, and outside of it nothing exists”.

Erwin Schrödinger (1887-1961), Nobel Prize winner for physics came into contact with Indian philosophy around 1918, through the writings of Schopenhauer. He said ‘Consciousness is the foundation of existence beyond the brain and whatever we can imagine, hypothesise or intuit’.

Amit Goswami (1936 -), Indian quantum physicist, is the pioneer of a multidisciplinary scientific paradigm based on the primacy of consciousness, known as ‘Science within consciousness’.

Werner Karl Heisenberg (1901-1976) was a German physicist. and one of the main originators of quantum mechanics. Fritjof Capra says about him: In 1929 **Heisenberg** spent time in India, as a guest of the famous Indian poet **Rabindranath Tagore**, with whom he had long conversations about Indian science and philosophy. This introduction to Indian thought brought Heisenberg great comfort, he told me. He began to see that the recognition of relativity, interconnectedness and impermanence as fundamental aspects of physical reality, which had been so difficult for him and his fellow physicists, was the very basis of Indian spiritual traditions. After these conversations with Tagore, he said, *“some of the ideas that had seemed so crazy suddenly made a lot more sense. This was a great help to me”*.

Fred Alan Wolf wrote the text *The yoga of time travel: How the mind can defeat time*. **Albert Einstein** in 1930, met Nobel Prize winner for literature Rabindranath Tagore in Berlin, thanks to their mutual friend Dr. Mendel.

L'UVA



Le sue origini si perdono nella leggenda, scomodando addirittura il patriarca Noè per nobilitarne uno dei suoi derivati più celebri, il vino ricavato dalla spremitura degli acini e dalla fermentazione del loro succo. Secondo le Sacre Scritture proprio Noè, dopo essersi salvato dal diluvio universale, avrebbe piantato la prima vite con l'intento di raccoglierne i frutti per farne vino. Sembra inoltre che la zona dell'Ararat, tra Turchia ed Armenia, dove si sarebbe arenata l'Arca, coincida con l'area d'origine della vite.

La civiltà mediterranea ed europea è strettamente legata a questa antica pianta ed al suo frutto. In epoca classica la coltura della vite si era ampiamente estesa. I Greci svilupparono la viticoltura e la vitivinicoltura in Europa e la introdussero in Italia dove gli Etruschi appresero quest'arte e la trasmisero ai Romani.



Nelle favole si diffusero aneddoti in cui l'uva era menzionata; si pensi, ad esempio a una delle favole più celebri di sempre: "la volpe e l'uva". Già in quel periodo si faceva riferimento sia all'uva da tavola, destinata al consumo domestico, sia a quella più succosa adatta quindi alla produzione del vino. Le uve si possono ricondurre alla "vitis vinifera"; con il tempo poi si sarebbe scoperta l'esistenza della "vitis lambrusca" meno nota, proveniente dall'America del Nord ed adatta a ricavare piccole quantità di uva da tavola, sia bianca che nera, con acini piccoli o grandi, sferici o ellittici. La nostra Italia, che continua ad investire sulla qualità e la varietà di questo frutto, è il primo produttore mondiale di uva da tavola.

PROPRIETÀ

Ricca di proprietà nutritive, l'uva è uno dei frutti più energetici, consigliata per i bambini e per gli anziani, data la rapida assimilazione degli zuccheri in essa contenuti.

L'uva stimola tre grandi organi: reni, fegato e intestino. La polpa dell'uva è ricca di vitamina A, B e C e sali minerali utili per l'assorbimento di calcio nelle ossa, mentre nella buccia della varietà nera si concentrano numerosi polifenoli antiossidanti e antinfiammatori. Il resveratrolo (un fenolo non flavonoide) contenuto nella buccia e semi dell'uva ha un'azione antinfiammatoria, antibatterica, antifungina, diuretica, antiossidante, riduce il colesterolo, fluidifica il sangue, combatte gli effetti dannosi dei radicali liberi, depura il fegato.

La melatonina di cui è ricca, aiuta a regolare i ritmi circadiani perciò è utile nei periodi di stress o dopo le vacanze. L'uva ha un alto contenuto di acqua che aiuta a mantenere il corpo idratato. Inoltre previene l'osteoporosi ed è consigliata anche a chi soffre di anemia, gotta, artrosi e dolori reumatici. Contiene poche proteine



e pochissimi grassi, però è un frutto molto ricco di zuccheri, glucosio e fruttosio perché gli acini maturati al sole dell'estate sviluppano grandi concentrazioni zuccherine, per cui ha un alto valore calorico che aumenta in caso dell'uva sultanina. L'uva va consumata con moderazione da chi soffre di ulcera, colite, patologie renali e diabete.

L'UVA IN CUCINA

In cucina si utilizzano tutte le tipologie di uva e ogni suo derivato: il vino, che può essere di varia gradazione alcolica, il succo d'uva che è analcolico, l'uva da tavola e l'uva passa. Il vino è un ingrediente fondamentale di sughi e salse che accompagnano sia carne sia pesce; con l'uva si possono fare marmellate, torte, biscotti e focaccine.

Ricetta Muffin con uva

250 gr di farina integrale
 100 gr di zucchero o 33,3 gr di stevia
 1 bustina di lievito in polvere
 1/2 cucchiaino di bicarbonato
 1 pizzico di sale
 250 ml di yoghurt bianco
 1 uovo
 50 ml di olio di arachidi/oliva
 200 gr di acini d'uva



In una ciotola setacciare e mescolare la farina, lo zucchero, il bicarbonato, il lievito e il sale. Togliere i semi agli acini dell'uva e tagliarli a piccoli pezzi. In un'altra ciotola sbattere l'uovo, mescolarlo con l'olio e lo yoghurt. Aggiungere il composto e l'uva a pezzetti nella ciotola degli ingredienti secchi. Amalgamare con delicatezza e suddividere l'impasto nell'apposita teglia per muffin precedentemente unta con del burro. Fare cuocere a 180° per circa mezz'ora. Saranno pronti quando introducendovi uno stecchino ne uscirà asciutto e pulito.



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WHITE BEAN DIP RECIPE SIMPLE AND DELICIOUS!



by **Pasqualina Raspaolo**

Founder and owner of Culinary Genes, LLC. Pasqualina pursued her passion in nutrition, the culinary arts and genetics. She holds annual Tuscan Culinary Adventures, where she shares her enthusiasm and love of food. She currently blogs about gluten-free baking and cooking, taking traditional family recipes and converting them into gluten-free alternatives. Pasqualina released her first cookbook in November 2020 entitled, 'Pasqualina's Table, Our Italian Family Traditions... The Gluten-Free Way' and is currently working on a second book, which will feature her family's traditional dessert recipes converted into gluten-free deliciousness. Pasqualina is passionate about people, and the triple L's - love, laughter, and living ... it's in her DNA! - www.culinarygenes.com

Sometimes, you're just in the mood. My family and I love beans, especially cannellini beans, which we always soak overnight before cooking them. We use the pre-soaking method because although good for you, beans have the unfortunate side effect of causing the formation of gas. Soaking reduces gas-producing compounds. The reason beans are soaked overnight is to break down some of the complex sugars that make beans hard for some to digest. For as long as I can remember, my family has always used the soaking method. We discard the soaking water and by doing so you are getting rid of up to 80% of the sugar molecule that causes flatulence. You can also add a bay leaf when cooking the beans because they too are known to have gas-reducing properties, which is then discarded after the beans are cooked.





Years ago, practically every family in small towns in the outskirts of Naples had a pot called **La Pignata** (clay pot) or as they say in Naples, “O’ Pignat”. They were used to slow cook everything from beans to stews to ragu’s and soups. It was part of “*La Cucina Antica*” - the ancient way of cooking and are still fairly common in Italy. Beans are cooked by adding the soaked beans to the pot followed by cold water covering the beans 2 to 3 inches and then placing the pot in a wood fire oven and allowing them to cook for a few hours. Salt is always added at the end. This was done often because beans could be utilized in so many ways.

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I wish we could all cook beans in this traditional way because the taste is quite different.

We recommend you use a Dutch oven when cooking beans.

Feel free to use your favorite herbs and spices for this dip. To add color, consider adding fresh beets or pomegranates. The possibilities are endless!



Yields: 1 cup

Ingredients:

- *1/2 cup cannellini beans, soaked overnight, drained, and rinsed*
- *2 cups water*
- *1 bay leaf*
- *1/2 teaspoon sea salt*
- *1 garlic clove, minced*
- *2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more for garnish*
- *1/2 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice*
- *Salt to taste*
- *Ground black pepper to taste*
- *1/2 cup roasted sesame seeds (optional)*





Directions:



1. Transfer beans to a two-quart Dutch oven and cover with fresh water. There should be about 2 inches of water above the beans. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer, covered for 1 1/2 to 2 hours, stirring occasionally, until beans are tender but still keep their shape. Add salt when beans are finished cooking.

2. Drain beans and remove bay leaf, reserving bean liquid.

3. Using a food processor or high-speed blender, combine beans, garlic, olive oil and lemon juice. Blend to a creamy consistency, using reserved cooking liquid if necessary. Transfer to a mixing bowl, season to taste with salt and pepper, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

4. Garnish before serving with extra virgin olive oil and roasted sesame. Serve with gluten-free toasted pita, crackers or crudité!



Enjoy!



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- SPECIALIZED SERVICES: NURSING ASSISTANCE, PHYSIOTHERAPY, AND ACCOMPANYING SERVICE FOR THE ELDERLY, SICK AND DISABLED.

OUR ADVANTAGES:

- IDENTIFICATION AND TAKING CHARGE OF THE PROFESSIONAL CAREGIVER BY THE STRUCTURE
- ZERO BUREAUCRATIC BURDENS FOR FAMILIES
- COST OF THE SERVICE INCLUDING: CONTRIBUTIONS, SEVERANCE INDEMNITY, THIRTEENTH SALARY, CIVIL LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERAGE
- REPLACEMENT SERVICE FOR HOLIDAYS AND SICKNESS AT NO COST TO THE FAMILY
- SUSPENSION WITHOUT CONSTRAINTS AT THE REQUEST OF THE FAMILY
- DEDICATED FAMILY CONTACT PERSON AT YOUR DISPOSAL
- COMPETITIVE AND ALIGNED TO DIRECT HIRING COSTS
- DEDUCTIBILITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW

THE QUALIFIED HOME CARE SERVICES ARE FULLY CUSTOMIZABLE.

THE STAFF IS SPECIALIZED AND TRAINED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PATHOLOGIES AND SITUATIONS SUCH AS:

- ALZHEIMERS
- PARKINSONS
- SENILE DEMENTIA
- STROKE
- DIABETES (TYPES 1 AND 2)
- BEDRIDDEN PATIENTS
- CONVALESCENCE
- INTUBATION

THE DUTIES OF A HOME HELPER (OR CAREGIVER) INCLUDE:

- HELP THE CLIENT GET OUT OF BED
- TAKE CARE OF PERSONAL HYGIENE
- MAINTAIN RESIDUAL CAPACITIES AND MOTOR SKILLS OF THE CLIENT
- DRESSING AND ADMINISTERING MEALS
- SUPPORT THE PATIENT IN WALKING
- SUPERVISE AND KEEP THE CLIENT COMPANY
- TAKE CARE OF THE BASIC CLEANING OF THE ACCOMMODATION
- ASSIST IN RUNNING HOUSEHOLD ERRANDS.

WHY CHOOSE ASSISTIAMO GROUP:

NO BUREAUCRATIC BURDEN FOR THE FAMILY
COMPETITIVE COSTS ALIGNED TO THE MARKET
FLEXIBLE AND UNCONSTRAINED SERVICE

THE PROMOTION FOR FAO STAFF COOP MEMBERS INCLUDES:

- **5% DISCOUNT ON RATES APPLIED TO HOME CARE AND HOSPITAL CARE SERVICES (WHICH CAN BE CONSULTED AT OUR AGENCIES);**

- **5% DISCOUNT ON RATES APPLIED TO DOMESTIC HELP, BABY SITTING AND OTHER SERVICES;**

- **50% DISCOUNT ON THE ACTIVATION FEE.**

ACTIVATION FEES:

- €150 — €75 FOR LONG-TERM CONTRACTS
- €80 — €40 FOR SHORT-TERM CONTRACTS

FOR INFORMATION:

FAO-STAFF-COOP@FAO.ORG / 0657053142

KINDLY NOTE THAT FAO HAS NO RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SERVICE PROVIDER AND DOES NOT IN ANY MANNER ENDORSE THE PROVIDER.

THE SHARING OF THIS SERVICE IS A MATTER LYING ENTIRELY WITH IN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COOP AS AN INDEPENDENT LEGAL ENTITY.

FAO STAFF COOP IS IN NO WAY RESPONSIBLE FOR SERVICES PROVIDED BY THIRD PARTIES, WHO RESPOND DIRECTLY TO CLIENTS.