



**NOVEMBER**  
2025

# fao CASA gazette

Mensile - No 11 - 2025 - Reg. Trib. N. 574 dell'8/10/1990

- GIOIELLI NASCOSTI: SAGRE DEL TARTUFO

- MICHELANGELO: AN ITALIAN GENIUS IN  
PAINTING - PART 1

- I PERICOLI DELL'INDIFFERENZA

- CHESTNUT AND CHOCOLATE CAKE

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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

## SAGRE DEL TARTUFO

*Un viaggio irresistibile tra profumi e borghi che sanno d'autunno.*

*L'autunno veste i paesaggi di nuove sfumature. Il giallo e l'oro delle foglie diventano lo specchio del tempo, il preludio silenzioso al riposo della natura.*

*Il suo clima che regala giornate né troppo calde, né troppo fredde come ad inverno inoltrato, è ideale per viaggiare alla scoperta dei borghi incantati che ci avvolgono in un'esperienza sensoriale indimenticabile. Non sono solo la vista e l'olfatto a godere dei profumi e delle tinte calde del paesaggio autunnale, ma anche l'udito ed il gusto.... In autunno infatti, le regioni italiane da Nord a Sud si sfidano con appuntamenti che*

  
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*profumano di sottobosco, vini novelli e piatti tipici. Tra le più attese ci sono le sagre del tartufo che propongono un ricchissimo calendario di feste, concerti ed eventi. Novembre quindi è un buon mese per organizzare dei weekend alla scoperta di borghi autentici, mercati profumati e piatti deliziosi: le sagre del tartufo in Italia sono l'occasione perfetta per vivere la fine della stagione mite all'insegna del gusto e della tradizione. Per non andare troppo lontano da Roma basta organizzare rilassanti gite nella campagna romana o spingersi verso l'Umbria o la Toscana alla scoperta dei più bei borghi da visitare nel periodo autunnale che regala emozioni uniche, grazie ai suggestivi colori di cui si tinge il paesaggio.*



## **MOSTRA MERCATO DEL TARTUFO BIANCO DI SAN GIOVANNI D'ASSO (SI)**

*Appuntamento l'8-9 e 14-15-16 novembre 2025 per celebrare l'oro bianco con un ricco programma di degustazioni, nel mercatino dei prodotti agricoli, artigianali e biologici del territorio, con visite guidate e dimostrazioni di "cerca del tartufo" accompagnati dai tartufai senesi e dai loro cani.*

Nel Municipio di San Giovanni d'Asso, nel comune di Montalcino, torna per la 39<sup>a</sup> edizione la Mostra Mercato del Tartufo Bianco delle Crete Senesi, che prevede anche incontri con ospiti di rilievo, intrattenimento e laboratori per famiglie e bambini. Uno dei punti di forza sono gli stand gastronomici delle eccellenze locali che offrono pranzi e cene a tema, assaggi dei piatti più tipici della cucina locale ma anche ricette gourmet perfette per esaltare il profumo e la complessità del tartufo bianco.

Questa splendida manifestazione che da anni richiama cittadini e visitatori, offre l'occasione per scoprire la bellezza della Val d'Orcia che è una delle gemme più preziose della Toscana. Famosa in tutto il mondo per il Brunello di Montalcino e per le sue rigeneranti terme naturali, questa valle regala borghi medievali intatti, abbazie millenarie, strade panoramiche bordate di cipressi e sentieri ideali per il trekking tra vigneti e colline dorate a perdita

d'occhio. Sono paesaggi da cartolina dove natura, storia e tradizione si intrecciano in perfetta armonia, dando vita ad un mix unico per il quale la Toscana è conosciuta in tutto il mondo e considerata meta perfetta per chi è in cerca di relax, cultura ed esperienze autentiche.

***Il paese più bello della Val d'Orcia è **Pienza**, Patrimonio Mondiale dell'UNESCO.***

## PIENZA

***Merita una visita il suo centro storico che Giovanni Pascoli descrisse come "nato da un pensiero d'amore e da un sogno di bellezza".***

Pienza, una meraviglia da cartolina che si dispiega tra panorami mozzafiato e dolci colline, è molto sviluppata dal punto di vista ricettivo. Ci troviamo in provincia di Siena, in una zona ad alta vocazione turistica che attrae visitatori provenienti da tutta Italia e non solo, spinti fin qui per la bellezza di paesaggi unici, ma anche per degustare alcune delle prelibatezze locali, tra cui il famoso pecorino di Pienza, oltre naturalmente alle eccellenze gastronomiche per cui la Toscana è famosa, come l'olio extravergine d'oliva e il vino. Le bruschette al tartufo, accompagnate da un buon bicchiere di Montalcino, sono una delizia per i palati più raffinati, perché l'olio extravergine locale esalta il profumo intenso dell'oro bianco delle Crete Senesi. Con i suoi tanti hotel, ristoranti ed agriturismi, Pienza rappresenta un'ottima base per esplorare le bellezze paesaggistiche della Val d'Orcia che la circonda.



Francesca Furino

EMCC, EIA Senior Practitioner  
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Pienza rappresenta il primo modello urbanistico di concezione umanistica del tempo, tanto da essere stata riconosciuta come sito Unesco nel 1996 per il suo grande valore universale e la sua dimensione di **"città ideale rinascimentale"** che è stata d'esempio per altre città in Italia e all'estero.

Il Bel Paese non finisce mai di sorprendere per la sua storia, la sua cultura e la ricchezza dei suoi gioielli immersi in paesaggi incantevoli.





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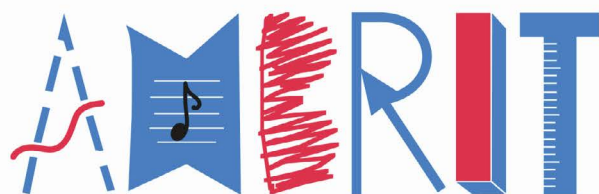


## MOSTRA MERCATO DEL TARTUFO BIANCO DI SAN MINIATO (PI)

*Il centro storico di San Miniato, in provincia di Pisa, si accende il 15-16, 22-23 e 29-30 novembre. La Mostra Mercato del Tartufo Bianco arriva alla 54ª edizione e festeggia un mito: qui nel 1954 fu trovato un tartufo da 2,52 kg, un gigante consegnato al presidente USA dell'epoca.*

San Miniato, città di vescovi ed imperatori, si trova su un colle, tra Pisa e Firenze. Nelle sue campagne si coltiva la varietà di **tabacco Kentucky** usato per la produzione del sigaro toscano. È un importante centro economico e industriale del Distretto del cuoio, ma anche città d'arte, città **slow food** e luogo di eccellenza del tartufo bianco. Oltre al tartufo pomodori, carciofi, olive... L'attività agricola è concentrata nella parte a sud del territorio: il **pomodoro grinzoso**, il **carciofo**, il **mallegato** (un insaccato tipico toscano che assume denominazioni e contenuti leggermente diversi a seconda della zona), l'**oliva mignola** sono solo alcuni dei prodotti tipici che hanno contribuito a fare di San Miniato la città del gusto e dello "slow food". Non a caso è nato qui il "**mercatale**", il mercato delle produzioni agricole e artigianali del progetto "Filiera corta" per favorire il consumo in zona delle produzioni locali, riducendo l'impatto ambientale dei trasporti e migliorare il consumo stagionale dei prodotti.





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# GETTING HEALTHCARE IN ROME: A PRACTICAL COMPASS FOR NEWCOMERS (AND NOT ONLY)

Arriving (or returning) to Rome is exciting. Figuring out **how to access care** in the capital—between cards, insurance, emergency rooms and certificates—can feel like a maze. With this **introductory article** we launch a **6-part monthly series** designed for the FAO community and anyone living an international life. Our goal: give you a clear map of public and private options and help you make **informed, quick choices**.

**Why a series?** Because everyday health plays out in different situations: from the documents you need, to emergencies, to prevention pathways. Over the next **five articles**, month by month, we will cover:

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# MICHELANGELO: AN ITALIAN GENIUS IN PAINTING (PART I)



by **Fahmi Bishay**

*Dr Bishay is an FAO retiree. He is a Senior Consultant in Agricultural Policy Analysis and Environmental Protection. He is an economist, writer and artist. This is his self-portrait.*

## Introduction

Michelangelo was a renowned Italian genius in both painting and sculpture. This article (Part I) highlights the master as an outstanding painter, focusing on his famous painting of the Sistine Chapel. Another article (Part II) will follow, focusing on Michelangelo, the genius master of sculpture.

## Upbringing of the Master

Michelangelo was born on 6 March 1475 at Caprese, in Casentino, a village near Florence, in a simple home. He was entrusted to a wet nurse, who was the wife of a stonecutter. Thus, he took his first steps among the village craftsmen. A fact that laid the foundation for his future passion to become a master sculptor. In this regard, Michelangelo used to joke that he acquired his vocation along with the milk that he drank as a baby.

At school in Florence, he was only interested in drawing. His father didn't like that, as he had a low opinion of artists. He tried hard to change his son's mind, but without success. And finally, he allowed his son to pursue his chosen profession.

After being trained in a few art studios, the young artist believed that "painting" was unworthy of the term "art," as sculpture was the true art form. He thus turned to sculpting, and by his twenties, he had become a master in the field. Eventually, Michelangelo was discovered by Lorenzo de' Medici, the prince and intellectual elite of Florence, who took a liking to the young artist and let him live in his palace. There he was, surrounded by great artists and poets of the Italian masters of art of that era, and a genius master of the masters in art was born.

## Anatomy and Beauty of the Human Body

Michelangelo admired the beauty of the human body as it emerged from the Creator. The human body thus became Michelangelo's medium of expression. To this end, he turned to anatomy in corpses to study the human body's structure, bones, muscles, postures, and more. He would spend hours dissecting until their stench made him sick. Yet, that was the way he was able to create outstanding statues. Later in his life, his paintings of the human body were remarkably realistic and amazingly accurate, as seen in his sketch of the human body in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Study for *The Creation of Adam* (1510)  
Red chalk (193 x 25.9 cm)  
The British Museum, London

\* Caprese Michelangelo is a village and commune in the province of Arezzo, Tuscany, Italy. It is the birthplace of the Renaissance artist Michelangelo. The village is roughly 100 kilometers (62 mi) east of Florence.

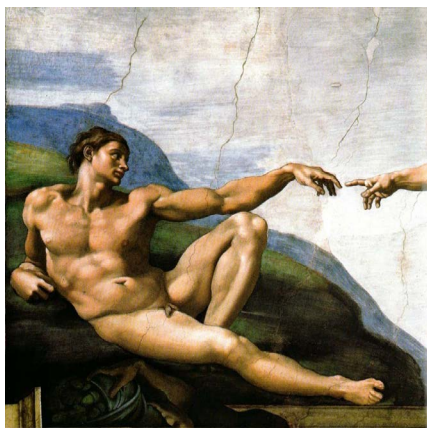


Figure 2. The Creation of Adam (1510-1511)  
Fresco (280 x 570 cm)  
Ceiling of Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome

## Master of the Masters in Painting: The Sistine Chapel

Michelangelo didn't hide his disrespect for oil painting in comparison to sculpture. He asserted the inferiority of drawing to sculpture. In a letter to Benedetto Varchi, he wrote: "The more painting resembles sculpture, the better I like it, and the more sculpture resembles painting, the worse I like it. Sculpture is the torch by which painting is illuminated, and the difference between them is the difference between the sun and the moon".

With such a fundamental belief, we can imagine what he felt when, de facto, he was forced by Pope Julius II to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. This task would cover approximately 1,000 square meters and would involve composing and painting around 300 figures. Yet, it is most astonishing that an artist who disliked painting has achieved world glory, recognition, and admiration over the centuries as the master of the masters in painting. A few examples of Michelangelo's outstanding paintings are presented in Figures 2 and 3 from his works in the Sistine Chapel.

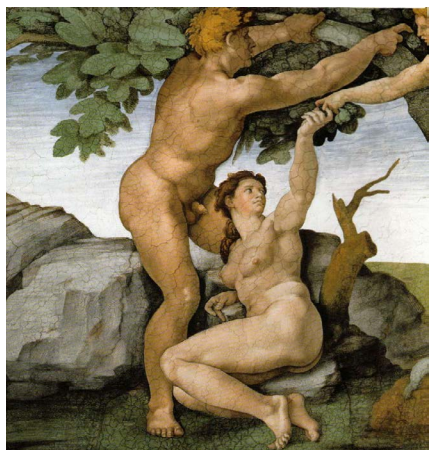


Figure 3. Original Sin, Adam and Eve in Paradise (1509-1510)  
Fresco (280 x 270 cm)  
Ceiling of Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome

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It took Michelangelo about four years to complete this massive and most challenging task. In 1507, Pope Julius II summoned Michelangelo to Rome to order him to fresco the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Michelangelo refused, stating that he was a sculptor, not a painter. As the Pope insisted on his request, Michelangelo felt that perhaps he had not shown sufficient respect to the Holy Father. Thus, given the authority of the Pope, whose power in those years was virtually unlimited, he decided to seek the Pope's forgiveness. Later, Michelangelo stated that "I was forced, a rope around my neck, to go and ask his pardon", and very reluctantly, Michelangelo accepted that enormous undertaking of painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

Michelangelo started work on the Sistine Chapel in 1508 and completed it in 1512. He refused the help of the experienced fresco painters suggested by the Pope and brought from Florence to advise him. He decided to re-innovate the existing techniques of fresco painting. To this end, he locked himself in the Chapel with a couple of workmen. And he reinvented the fresco technique from scratch. It is fascinating that a sculptor who despised painting would not only excel in painting but also reinvent an outstanding painting technique of fresco. What a genius artist, Michelangelo was. As noted above, it took him four years to complete that monumental task. Figure 4 shows a partial view of Michelangelo's frescoes in the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. To further appreciate Michelangelo's exceptional skill as a painter, Figure 5 shows a close-up of the face of a lady depicted by the master, showing how great he was as a painter.



Figure 4. Partial View of the Frescoes on the Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (1508-1512)  
Fresco (Approximately 300 figures in over 1000 m2)  
Ceiling of Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome

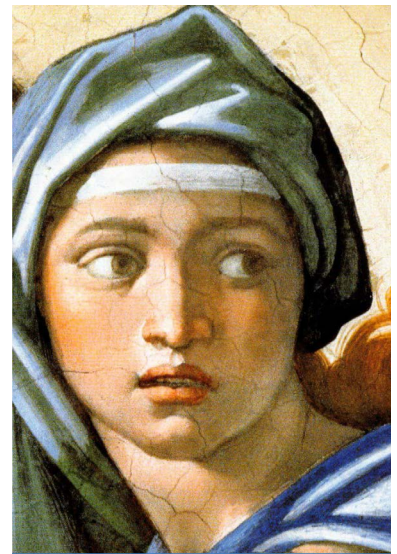


Figure 5. The Sybil of Delphi, detail from the face (1509)  
Fresco (part of 350 x 380 cm)  
Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome

### ***Concluding Remarks***

There aren't enough words to do justice in reviewing some of the outstanding paintings of Michelangelo. However, a prominent feature that impressed me the most in his paintings of men and women in the Sistine Chapel is what he learned from Socrates, that the object of painting was to represent the soul. He demonstrated this perception by depicting humans in his paintings as if sharing the soul of the Creator.

***Michelangelo was, indeed, an Italian genius in painting.***

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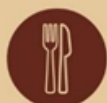


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# I PERICOLI DELL'INDIFFERENZA

*Cos'è l'indifferenza? Qual è il vero significato di questa parola e quali gravi pericoli essa nasconde? Ce lo spiega Elie Wiesel, scrittore e Premio Nobel per la Pace, durante una sua conferenza dal titolo "I pericoli dell'indifferenza".*



## ANTONIO MAGGIO

*Hello! I'm Antonio Maggio, a Rome-based polyglot teacher, translator, cultural mediator and expert in multilingual communication. I am fond of international literature and I can speak seven languages, including my mother-tongue Italian, that I teach with great passion to people of any age and nationality. After several years of teaching experience all around the world, I moved to Rome, where I also study acting and write for my personal blog "Il Tè di Anthony" ("Tea with Anthony"). (<https://insiemeperilte dellecinque.blogspot.com/>)*

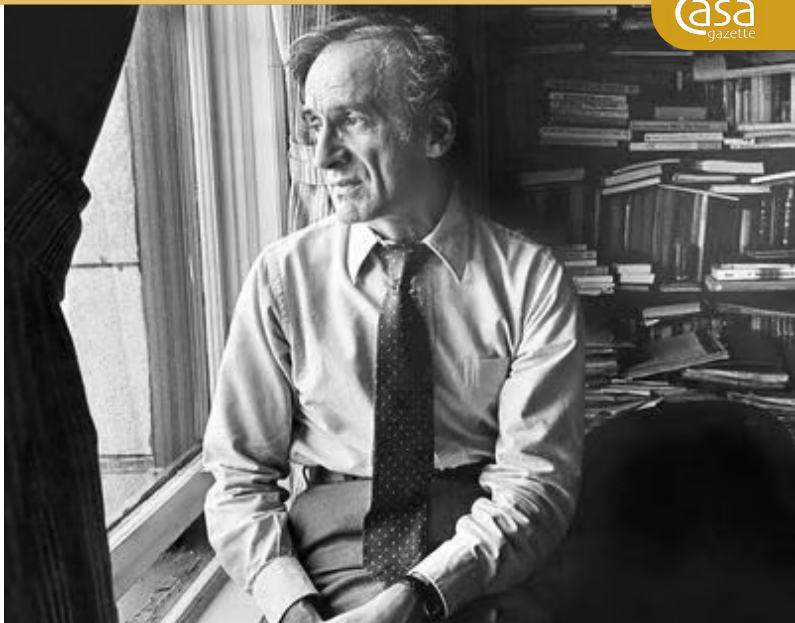
Elie Wiesel (1928-2016) è stato uno scrittore, attivista di diritti umani, docente e Premio Nobel per la Pace (1986). Nato nel 1928 in Transilvania, Romania, venne deportato nei campi di concentramento insieme alla sua famiglia. Riuscito a sopravvivere, si trasferì in seguito a Parigi, dove divenne un giornalista. Successivamente emigrò negli Stati Uniti, diventando cittadino americano nel 1963. Di lui ci restano più di 40 libri e due memorie. Si spense a Manhattan nel luglio del 2016, all'età di 87 anni.

Il passaggio che state per leggere, che ho tradotto dall'inglese all'italiano, è tratto da "I pericoli dell'indifferenza", che Wiesel presentò nell'Aula Est della Casa Bianca il 12 aprile 1999, all'interno delle cosiddette "Millennium Lectures", una serie di conferenze tenute in lingua inglese da studiosi, scrittori e intellettuali di tutto il mondo. Il tema principale è, come dice il titolo stesso, il pericolo dell'indifferenza, che Wiesel definisce come il peggior nemico dell'umanità.

*"Cos'è l'indifferenza? Etimologicamente, questa parola significa **"senza differenza"**, quindi una strana e innaturale condizione in cui si confondono i confini tra luce e buio, alba e tramonto, crimine e punizione, crudeltà e compassione, bene e male. Ma che atteggiamento assume l'indifferenza? E quali sono le sue inevitabili conseguenze?*

*È essa una filosofia? Ma è plausibile una filosofia dell'indifferenza? Ed è possibile considerarla virtuosa? È necessario, a volte, rimanere indifferenti col fine di preservare la propria salute mentale, vivere una vita normale, godersi un buon pasto e un calice di vino, mentre il mondo intorno a noi è funestato da terribili catastrofi?"*

L'indifferenza può essere certamente allettante o, ancor meglio, seducente. È molto più semplice distogliere lo sguardo dalle vittime. È molto più semplice evitare quelle scoccianti interruzioni del nostro lavoro, dei nostri sogni e speranze. Dopotutto, è complicato, fastidioso subirsi il dolore e la disperazione altrui. Una persona indifferente vede l'altro come insignificante. E considera la sua vita come inutile. La sua angoscia latente o persino visibile non desta alcun interesse. Insomma, **l'indifferenza riduce l'altro a una mera astrazione.**



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In un certo senso, essere indifferente alla sofferenza altrui è ciò che rende l'essere umano disumano. **L'indifferenza, dopotutto, è più pericolosa della paura e dell'odio.** La rabbia può talvolta essere creativa.



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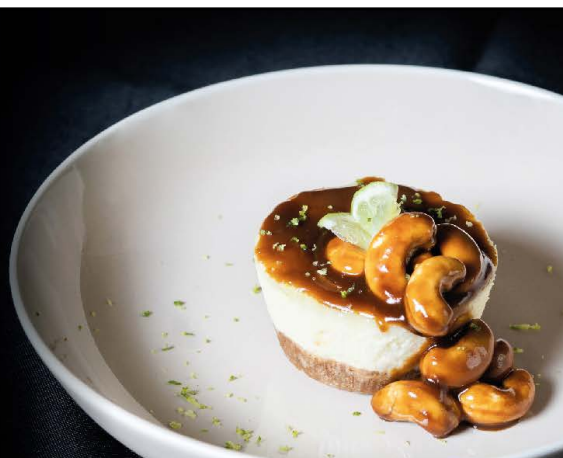
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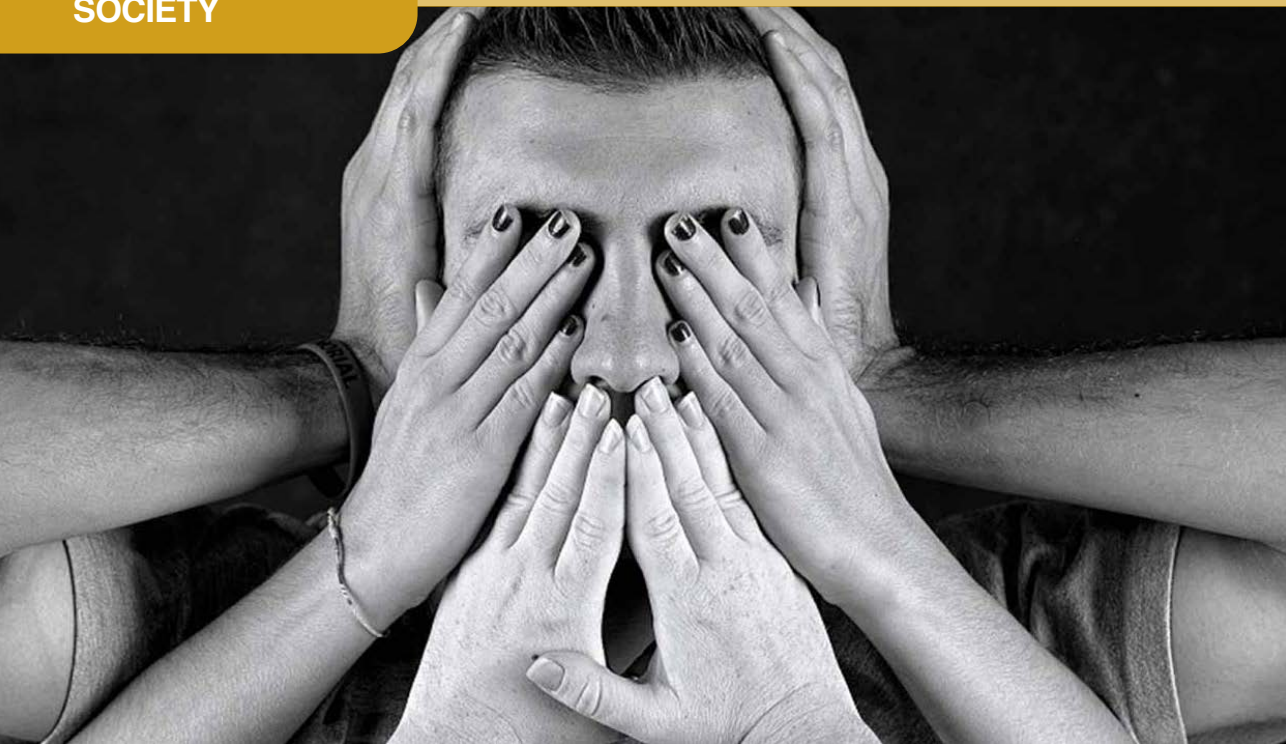
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L'indifferenza non è un inizio, è una fine. Per questa ragione, essa è sempre amica del nemico perché beneficia l'aggressore, mai la sua vittima, il cui dolore si amplifica quando viene lasciata completamente a sé, dimenticata del tutto. Ogni volta che ci troviamo di fronte alla disperazione di gente che muore per carestie, del dolore per le vite spezzate dalla violenza di disastri naturali e dalle guerre, e nessuno si preoccupa di tendere una mano, di offrire un barlume di speranza per alleviare la solitudine di chi subisce impotente, abbandonato al proprio destino..... ci stiamo macchiando di un grave delitto. Ogni volta che ciò accade, non facciamo altro che esiliare tutte queste persone dalla memoria umana. **E nel momento in cui neghiamo la loro umanità, tradiamo la nostra.**

L'indifferenza, pertanto, non è solo un peccato. È una punizione. E questa è una delle lezioni più importanti sul bene e sul male di questo secolo.

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# CHESTNUT AND CHOCOLATE CAKE



by **Pasqualina Raspaolo**

*Pasqualina is a chef, nutritionist, and founder of Culinary Genes, LLC. She hosts annual culinary experiences in Italy, sharing her passion for food and culture. On her blog, she transforms authentic family recipes into gluten-free alternatives. Her heartfelt cookbooks, 'Pasqualina's Table, Our Italian Family Traditions...The Gluten-Free Way' and 'Pasqualina's Table, Our Family's Traditional Desserts...The Gluten-Free Way' reflect her dedication to bringing happiness back to the table. Her philosophy revolves around love, laughter, and living – key ingredients in both her personal and professional life. Pasqualina's culinary creations are a true testament to her vibrant spirit. [www.culinarygenes.com](http://www.culinarygenes.com)*

Calling all fellow chestnut and chocolate lovers!

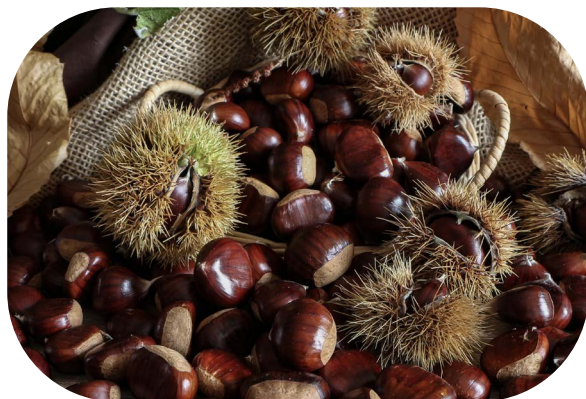
Some time ago, a family member in Italy sent me a wonderful gift - chestnut flower - because she knows how much I adore chestnuts and love baking with this special ingredient. And of course, chocolate always has a special place in my heart! :) This cake, in particular, is a favorite amongst family and friends, especially at Christmas.



One of my fondest childhood memories growing up in Italy was when we would go hunting for chestnuts in the fall. Chestnuts are harvested between September and October and we would wander through the woods, searching for chestnuts that had naturally fallen to the ground once they ripened. It was like a magical treasure hunt, and the joy of those moments, along with forever memories, has and will always stay with me through the years.

Chestnuts are a versatile ingredient, perfect for both sweet and savory dishes, but there is something truly special about roasting them on an open fire, just like my grandparents did in their wood-burning stove. The flavor, the warmth, and the memories - priceless.

This is a beloved family recipe that I've transformed into a gluten-free and dairy-free delight, filled with love and tradition. And the best part? Chestnuts are packed with vitamins and minerals that nourish your body from head to toe. So, indulge in this heartwarming, wholesome cake and savor the season!



## Ingredients

- 2 cups plus 2 ½ tablespoons chestnut flower
- ½ cup organic cocoa powder
- 1 ½ tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3 eggs, room temperature
- 1 cup plus 1 tablespoon caster superfine baker's sugar
- ½ cup organic sunflower oil
- ½ teaspoon psyllium husk
- 1 cup almond milk (or milk of your choice)
- Powdered sugar for garnish

**Yields: 6 to 8 portions**  
**I'd lean more towards 6 abundant servings!**

**Prep Time: 10 minutes**

**Cooking Time: 35 to 40 minutes**



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## *Directions*

1. Preheat oven to 355 degrees F.
2. Grease and flour a springform pan and set aside.
3. In a large mixing bowl, sift together flour, cacao powder, baking powder and baking soda. Add psyllium husk, mix well and set aside.



4. In a stand-up mixer with whisk attachment, mix eggs and sugar until light and fluffy. Add sunflower oil and mix until well combined. Slowly add the flour mixture and mix well. Slowly add milk and mix until you have a homogenous mixture.
5. Transfer mixture into the prepared pan and bake for 35 to 40 minutes. Insert toothpick or skewer into the middle of the cake. If it comes out clean, the cake is done.

6. Once baked, allow to cool in the cake pan for 5 minutes, then remove and allow to cool on a wire cooling rack. This cake is delicious when served warm. Garnish with powdered sugar.



## *Notes:*

Store in an air-tight container and in a cool dry place for up to 3 days - if it lasts that long!

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