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HSIT 350: The History and Culture of Food in Italy (4 credits)
Course Syllabus
Spring Semester 2017

Instructor: Olivier de Maret, Ph.D.

Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisite: None

Classes Meet: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:45pm-3:15pm

Room: 5

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30pm-1:30pm (faculty room) or by appointment

Lab/Site-Visit Fee: 480 €

Course Description

What can the history of food tell us about culture? In this course, we will explore the history of food in Italy as a gateway to understanding contemporary Italian culture. By examining the factors of change that have shaped Italian foodways, the wide variations in eating habits of different socio-economic classes, and the fundamental role played by food in shaping Italian identities, we will uncover various trends in Italian history and society, including processes of social and cultural exchange, government influence over food, the gradual process of political unification, the migration of Italians and their food, and the effects of industrialization on food culture.

Through a mix of lectures, discussions, tastings, and field trips, we will explore Italian food and culture from prehistorical times to the present. A series of theoretical and practical case studies will provide students with hands-on experience in order to contextualize certain foods and their history in relation to contemporary Italian culture.

Course Objectives

The course will ask students to:

- Expand their critical understanding of historical methodologies and food history
- Engage in analysis by applying these methodologies to specific course topics
- Integrate theory and practice as it applies to the study of Italian foodways
- Develop a nuanced, interdisciplinary framework for understanding of how historical events are shaped by cultural, economic, political, and social factors

Assessment

20% Class Participation

10% Quizzes

25% Mid-Term Exam

25% Final Exam

20% Research Paper

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Grading

Grading will be done on a percentage basis:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A A-	93% - 100% 90% - 92%	Exceptional Excellent
B+ B B-	87% - 89% 83% - 86% 80% - 82%	Superior
C+ C C-	77% - 79% 73% - 76% 70% - 72%	Satisfactory
D+ D D-	67% - 69% 63% - 66% 60% - 62%	Low Pass
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Course Requirements

Course grades are based on quizzes, mid-term and final exams, research paper, and participation. All quizzes and exams will test knowledge cumulatively. There will be review sessions and discussions of quizzes, exams, and the research paper during the semester in order to adequately prepare students.

Quizzes (10% or 100 points = 2 x 5% or 2 x 50 points)

Two quizzes covering all topics previously presented will each consist in short answers and a brief essay. Each quiz will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and is closed book/closed notes. *No alternative dates will be offered.*

Mid-Term Exam (25% or 250 points)

An exam covering all topics presented in the first half of the course will consist of short answers and an essay. The exam will take approximately 90 minutes to complete and is closed book/closed notes. *No alternative exam dates will be offered.*

Final Exam (25% or 250 points)

An exam covering all topics presented during the entire course will consist of short answers and an essay. The exam will take approximately 120 minutes to complete and is closed book/closed note. This is the only time the exam will be given. *No alternative exam dates will be offered.*

Research Paper (20% or 200 points)

A hand-out with the guidelines will be distributed to students during the first weeks of the semester. A paper proposal that includes a preliminary title, an annotated bibliography, and the thesis must be submitted electronically by the end of the 7th week (worth 20 points of students' grade) and both a hard and an electronic copy of the final paper submitted before the final exam. Late paper submission will be penalized by 10 points for each day that passes. Topics are chosen by the students based on their interest from Italian food history with my approval. Previous topics have included: "Jewish Food in Italian History," "Roman Women and the Consumption of Wine," "Lasagne according to a Roman, a Renaissance and a Modern Recipe," "The Influence of Spices in Italian Food from the Romans to the Present," "Sex and Food among the Romans," and "The Invention of Pizza."

Class Participation and Required Readings (20% or 200 points)

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed **two "free" absences** during the semester, which they do not need to justify. Each additional absence, unless it is for a very serious reason, will lower students' final grade by one grade level (e.g., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B). It is the policy of the Institute that any

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student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class. Note that it is the absent student's responsibility to find out what he or she may have missed or what work he or she must catch up with either from the teacher or from colleagues.

Please Note: Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important for student performance in this class. Missing a mandatory field trip, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will lower students' final grade by one grade level (e.g., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

Class Participation: Class participation grades are based on oral contributions to the collective learning experience of the class. Participation means active engagement in the course: being consistently prepared for class (having carefully read that day's assignments), asking questions, responding to questions, offering insights and opinions, and attentively listening to others in and out of the classroom. Students' grades will be calculated based on the following criteria: punctuality, respectfulness, teamwork, initiative, and personal investment.

Required Readings: Reading assignments should be done for the class day they are assigned.

Academic Misconduct

This includes all forms of cheating i.e., copying during exam or quiz either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes and plagiarism, i.e., presenting, as one's own the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation (e.g., papers, presentations, written tests, etc.) without proper acknowledgment. This includes also insufficient or incomplete acknowledgement or failure to acknowledge a source that has been paraphrased.

Classroom Policy

All students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute. They are expected to develop the appropriate respect for the historical premises which the school occupies. Please note that cell phones and computers must be turned off before the beginning of each class.

Office Hours

My office hours are on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:30pm to 1:30pm. Students can also email me if they wish to schedule another appointment or have a question.

Textbook

There are no required textbooks; all required reading will be in the course reader. Additional reading assignments, both optional and required, will be made available by the instructor or the Institute.

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Course Schedule

All the activities, topics, lectures, and readings might be subjected to change, though always with due warning.

Week 1

Jan 16 (Mon) Course Introduction

Lecture Themes:

- course structure
- general introduction

Jan 18 (Wed) Approaching the History and Culture of Food in Italy

Lecture Themes:

- exchange as the key to understanding Italian food history and culture
- key themes we will explore
- historical sources and interpretation

Reading Assignment:

- Capatti and Montanari, "Identity as Exchange," xiii-xx.
- Dickie, "Tuscany: Don't Tell the Peasants," 1-7.

Week 2

Jan 23 (Mon) Prehistory and the First Civilizations (5M BCE - 800 BCE)

Lecture Themes:

- Brief overview of food culture during prehistory
- Mesopotamia and the development of agriculture
- Etruscans, Phoenicians, Greeks, and Celts in the Italian peninsula

Reading Assignment:

- Parasecoli, "A Land in the Mediterranean," 28-46.

Jan 25 (Wed) History and Culture of Olives in Italy

Lecture Themes:

- Evolution and spread of olive cultivation in the Mediterranean
- Practices, discourses, and representations of olives and olive oil in Italy

Reading Assignment:

- Lanza, "The Ancient Roots of the Olive" 12-28.

Jan 25 (Wed) Coffee in Italian Food Culture

Meeting Time/Place: 6:45pm in the courtyard

Lecture Themes:

- Coffee as global commodity
- The history of coffee in Italy: biology, history, and cultural context

Optional Reading:

- Economist, "The Internet in a Cup."
- Morris, "Making Italian Espresso, Making Espresso Italian."

Week 3

Jan 30 (Mon) The Roman World (800 BCE - 500 CE)

Lecture Themes:

- The Greek heritage and the Mediterranean triad
- Integrating various food cultures into the Roman model
- Culinary philosophy and Roman cuisine

Reading Assignment:

- Laudan, “Roman Republican Cuisine as an Alternative to Monarchical High Cuisine” & “From Republican to Imperial, Hellenistic-Inspired Roman Cuisine,” 74-87.

Jan 31 (Tue) The Aperitivo in Italian Food Culture

Meeting Time/Place: 6:45pm in the courtyard

Lecture Themes:

- The Italian aperitivo
- The history of bitter drinks (e.g. Vermouth, Campari)
- The aperitivo’s social function in Italy’s present-day youth culture

Optional Reading:

- Black, “Amaro: A Boozy, Bitter History of Digestive from the Pharmacy to the Bar.”

Feb 1 (Wed) History and Culture of Wine in Italy

Lecture Themes:

- Evolution and spread of grape cultivation in the Mediterranean
- Practices, discourses, and representations of wine in Italy

Reading Assignment:

- Millon, “Across Wine-dark Seas: A Brief Overview of the Spread of Viticulture,” 27-46.

Week 4

Feb 6 (Mon) The Middle Ages (500 - 1300)

Lecture Themes:

- The birth of European food culture
- Food culture and social distinctions

Reading Assignment:

- Montanari, “Introduction,” 1-18.

Feb 8 (Wed) Quiz #1 + History and Culture of Spices in Italy

Lecture Themes:

- Evolution and influence of the global spice trade
- Practices, discourses, and representations of spices in Italy

Reading Assignment:

- Czarra, “Spices in the Medieval World,” 39-60.

Quiz #1:

- All material and reading previously covered
- 30 minutes, closed book, no notes
- Short answers and a brief essay

Feb 10 (Fri) Field Trip to Firenze

Meeting Place/Time: TBA

Lecture Themes:

- Field trip to Florence’s main covered market and seventeenth-century pharmacy
- Historic cooking class: Recreating (and eating) a Roman meal
- Covered markets and supplying cities: past and present perspectives
- Pharmacies: spices, liquors, and unguents
- Food as medicine

Week 5

Feb 13 (Mon) **The Renaissance (1300 - 1600)**

Lecture Themes:

- Cooks, cookbooks, and cooking
- The international fame of Italian food and its specificities

Reading Assignment:

- Albala, "Introduction," 1-28.

Feb 13 (Mon) **Olive Oil in Italian Food Culture**

Meeting Time/Place: 6.45pm in room 2

Guest Lecturer: local olive oil expert Maurizio Pescaro

Lecture Themes:

- The technical history of extra-virgin olive oil
- Olive oil production and tasting characteristics

Optional Reading:

- Mueller, *Extra Virginity*.

Feb 15 (Wed) **History and Culture of Sugar in Italy**

Lecture Themes:

- Evolution and spread of global sugar cultivation and trade
- Practices, discourses, and representations of sugar in Italy

Reading Assignment:

- Smith, "Early Sugar History" & "New World Sugar to 1900," 11-43.

Feb 18 (Sat) **Field Trip to Città di Castello: Truffle Hunting**

Meeting Time/Place: time and location TBA

Guest Lecturer: EU Young Farmer President Matteo Bartolini

Lecture Themes:

- Truffles and global climate change
- Truffles and the climate
- Truffles and their place in Italian juridical and culinary culture

Optional Reading:

- Nowak, *Truffle: A Global History*.

Week 6

Feb 20 (Mon) **Early Modern Times (1450 - 1800)**

Lecture Themes:

- The internationalization of food
- The Columbian Exchange between the Old and New World
- The slow acceptance of new foods and drinks

Reading Assignment:

- Flandrin, "The Early Modern Period," 349-373.

Feb 22 (Wed) **History and Culture of the Tomato in Italy**

Lecture Themes:

- Introduction and spread of tomato cultivation and consumption in the Mediterranean
- Practices, discourses, and representations of tomatoes in Italy

Reading Assignment:

- Gentilcore, "'Strange and Horrible Things,'" 1-26.

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Week 7

Feb 27 (Mon) Mid-Term Review Class

Mar 1 (Wed) Mid-Term Exam

Submit research paper proposal via email by Friday at midnight

Week 8: Break

Week 9

Mar 13 (Mon) Industrialization (1800 - 1900)

Lecture Themes:

- Industrial revolutions
- The industrialization of the food chain
- New food-related techniques, products, and consumption patterns

Reading Assignment:

- Pedrocco, "The Food Industry and New Preservation Techniques," 481-491.
- Capatti and Montanari, "Appert in Italy: The Flavor of Preserved Foods," 252-258.

Mar 14 (Tue) Pizza in Italian Food Culture (A-L)

Meeting Time/Place: 6:45pm in the courtyard

Lecture Themes:

- Pizza-making
- Thermal geography of the wood-fired oven

Optional Reading:

- Nowak, "Folklore, Fakelore, History: Invented Tradition and the Origins of the Pizza Margherita," 103-124.
- Mattozzi, *Inventing the Pizzeria*.

Mar 15 (Wed) History and Culture of Chocolate in Italy

Lecture Themes:

- Introduction and spread of cocoa and chocolate in Europe
- Practices, discourses, and representations of chocolate in Italy

Reading Assignment:

- Moss and Badenoch, "Inventing Chocolate," 7-30.

Week 10

Mar 20 (Mon) Political Unification (1848 - 1918)

Lecture Themes:

- The *Risorgimento*
- Cultural unification through food and war
- Pellegrino Artusi's Italian cookbook

Reading Assignment:

- Dickie, "Florence, 1891: Pellegrino Artusi," 211-232.

Mar 22 (Wed) History and Culture of Pasta in Italy

Lecture Themes:

- Evolution and spread of pasta-making and consumption in Italy and the world
- Practices, discourses, and representations of pasta in Italy

Reading Assignment:

- Serventi and Sabban, "The Industrial Age," 150-168.

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Mar 23 (Thursday) Beer in Italian Food Culture

Meeting Time/Place: 6:45pm in the courtyard. **TBC.**

Lecture Themes:

- Beer as an “Italian” beverage
- Beer culture in Italy
- Italian food culture as dynamic, not static

Week 11

Mar 27 (Mon) Fascism and World War II (1918 - 1945)

Lecture Themes:

- Fascism, food autarky, and the “frugal diet”
- Futurism, art, and food
- World War II, food systems, and dietary advice

Reading Assignment:

- Sorcinelli, “Identification Processes at Work: Virtues of the Italian Working Class Diet in the First Half of the Twentieth Century,” 81-97.

Mar 29 (Wed) Quiz #2 + History and Culture of Pizza in Italy

Lecture Themes:

- Pizza consumption, street food, and eating out
- Practices, discourses, and representations of pizza in Italy

Reading Assignment:

- Helstosky, “History Lesson On a Plate: Pizza in Italy,” 20-48.

Quiz #2:

- All material and reading previously covered
- 30 minutes, closed book, no notes
- short answers and a brief essay

Mar 29 (Wed) Pizza in Italian Food Culture (M-Z)

Meeting Time/Place: 6:45pm in the courtyard

Lecture Themes:

- Pizza-making
- Thermal geography of the wood-fired oven

Optional Reading:

- Nowak, “Folklore, Fakelore, History: Invented Tradition and the Origins of the Pizza Margherita,” 103-124.
- Mattozzi, *Inventing the Pizzeria*.

Week 12

Apr 3 (Mon) Migration (1876 - 1976)

Lecture Themes:

- Italian food and migration history
- the creation of Italian food traditions and stereotypes abroad
- the global spread of Italian food

Reading Assignment:

- Levenstein, “The American Response to Italian Food, 1880-1930,” 1-24.

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Apr 5 (Wed) History and Culture of Ice Cream in Italy

Lecture Themes:

- Development and spread of ice cream making through migration
- Practices, discourses, and representations of ice cream in Italy and the world

Reading Assignment:

- Sponza, "Italian 'Penny Ice-Men' in Victorian London," 17-41.

Week 13

Apr 10 (Mon) The Postwar Years (1945 - Present)

Lecture Themes:

- The Italian Miracle and its consequences on Italians' diet
- Constructing regional cuisines and the Mediterranean diet
- Contemporary Italian food trends

Reading Assignment:

- Helstosky, "The Challenge of Abundance, Italy 1945-1960," 127-150.

Apr 12 (Wed) Conclusions

Lecture Themes:

- Italian cuisine and domestic cooking
- Course conclusions
- Review for final exam

Reading Assignment:

- Montanari, "In Search of Home Cooking," 73-83.

Apr 13 (Thu) Cheese in Italian Food Culture

Meeting Time/Place: 6.45pm Room 2

Lecture Themes:

- Cheese as the ultimate cultural (as opposed to natural) food product
- Cheese culture in contemporary Italy
- Taste a number of different kinds of Italian cheese

Apr 14-15 (Fri & Sat) Field Trip to Parma and Modena

Meeting Place/Time: 7:30 am at the fountain.

Lecture Themes:

- Field trip to family-run prosciutto factory, a parmesan cheese cooperative, and a farm that makes balsamic vinegar
- Evaluation of different modes of production (family enterprise vs. cooperatives)
- The dynamism of Italy's culinary past
- The meaning of culinary cultural heritage

Week 14

Apr 17 (Mon) Easter Monday - No Class

Apr 19 (Wed) Film Screening and Discussion

Week 15

- Exam TBA
- A hard and an electronic copy of the **final paper must be submitted to me prior to the exam**

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Course Bibliography

- Albala, Ken. "Introduction." In: Ken Albala. Ed. *A Cultural History of Food in the Renaissance*. London: Bloomsbury, 2012. 1-28.
- Capatti, Alberto, and Massimo Montanari. *Italian Cuisine. A Cultural History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Czarra, Fred. *Spices: A Global History*. London: Reaktion Books, 2009.
- Dickie, John. *Delizia! The Epic History of the Italians and Their Food*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2007.
- Flandrin, Jean-Louis. "The Early Modern Period." In: Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari. Eds. *Food: A Culinary History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. 349-373.
- Gentilcore, David. *Pomodoro! A History of the Tomato in Italy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
- Helstosky, Carol. *Garlic & Oil. Food and Politics in Italy*. Oxford & New York: Berg, 2004.
- Helstosky, Carol. *Pizza: A Global History*. London: Reaktion Books, 2008.
- Lanza, Fabrizia. *Olive: A Global History*. London: Reaktion Books, 2011.
- Laudan, Rachel. *Cuisine & Empire. Cooking in World History*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013.
- Levenstein, Harvey. "The American Response to Italian Food, 1880-1930." *Food & Foodways* 1 (1985). 1-24.
- Millon, Marc. *Wine: A Global History*. London: Reaktion Books, 2013.
- Montanari, Massimo. *Italian Identity in the Kitchen*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.
- Montanari, Massimo. "Introduction." In: Massimo Montanari. Ed. *A Cultural History of Food in the Middle Ages*. London: Bloomsbury, 2012. 1-18.
- Moss, Sarah, and Alexander Badenoch. *Chocolate: A Global History*. London: Reaktion Books, 2009.
- Parasecoli, Fabio. *Al Dente. A History of Food in Italy*. London: Reaktion Books, 2014.
- Serventi, Silvano, and Françoise Sabban. *Pasta: The Story of a Universal Food*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
- Smith, Andrew. *Sugar: A Global History*. London: Reaktion Books, 2015.
- Sorcinelli, Paolo. "Identification Processes at Work: Virtues of the Italian Working Class Diet in the First Half of the Twentieth Century." In: Peter Scholliers. Ed. *Food, Drink, and Identity. Cooking, Eating, and Drinking in Europe Since the Middle Ages*. Oxford & New York: Berg, 2001. 81-97.
- Sponza, Lucio. "Italian 'Penny Ice-Men' in Victorian London." In: Anne Kershen. Ed. *Food in the Migrant Experience*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002. 17-41.

Optional Readings

- Black, Rachel. "Amaro: A Boozy, Bitter History of Digestive from the Pharmacy to the Bar." 1–10, conference paper, *Association for the Study of Food & Society*, 2010.
- Economist*, The. "The Internet in a Cup." *The Economist*. 18 Dec 2003. Available online <http://www.economist.com/node/2281736>.
- Mattozzi, Antonio. *Inventing the Pizzeria: A History of Pizza Making in Naples*. Edited and translated by Zachary Nowak. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.
- Morris, Jonathan. "Making Italian Espresso, Making Espresso Italian." *Food and History* 8.2 (2010). 155–84.
- Mueller, Tom. *Extra Virginity: The Sublime and Scandalous World of Olive Oil*. New York: Norton, 2012.
- Nowak, Zachary. "Folklore, Fakelore, History: Invented Tradition and the Origins of the Pizza Margherita." *Food, Culture and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 17.1 (2014). 103–24.
- Nowak, Zachary. *Truffle: A Global History*. London: Reaktion Books, 2015.

Recommended Reading

- Albala, Ken. *Three World Cuisines: Italian, Mexican, Chinese*. Lanham: Altamira Press, 2012.
- Cinotto, Simone. *The Italian American Table. Food, Family, and Community in New York City*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013.
- Civitiello, Linda. *Cuisine and Culture: A History of Food and People*. 3rd ed. Hoboken: Wiley & Sons, 2011.
- de Maret, Olivier. *Of Migrants and Meanings. Italians and Their Food Businesses in Brussels, 1876-1914*. Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2016.
- Flandrin, Jean-Louis, and Massimo Montanari. Eds. *Food: A Culinary History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Freedman, Paul. Ed. *Food: The History of Taste*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- La Cecla, Franco. *Pasta and Pizza*. Chicago: Prickley Paradigm Press, 2007.
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Parasecoli, Fabio. *Food Culture in Italy*. Westport, Conn. & London: Greenwood Press, 2004.

Parasecoli, Fabio, and Peter Scholliers. Gen. Eds. *A Cultural History of Food*. 6 vols. London: Bloomsbury, 2012.

Quinzio, Jeri. *Of Sugar and Snow. A History of Ice Cream Making*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

Zanini De Vita, Orietta. *The Encyclopedia of Pasta*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.