



- FOODS OF -  
**ITALY**

**Express!**



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# Table of Contents

Cooking the Italian Way	4
Eating the Italian Way	6
Regional Foods	8
Sweet Treats	10
Getting Ready to Cook	12
Insalata Caprese	14
Risotto	16
Pizza	18
Minestrone	20
Glossary	22
To Learn More	23
Index	24



# Cooking the Italian Way



Italy is a country with strong regional **traditions**. Different **climates** and landscapes define each area and the food grown there. Because of this **diversity**, there are many styles of cooking in Italy. Some foods, such as pasta, can be found all over. However, each region has its own way of preparing these **staples**. Families and communities pass down recipes through generations. These traditions ensure that Italian **cuisine** stays rich and varied.

The best Italian cuisine is made simply. Most recipes use just a few ingredients. This usually includes what is grown locally. Italian people go to markets often to make sure their ingredients are as fresh as possible. They also only choose fruits and vegetables that are in season.

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## An Italian Classic?

Pasta wasn't always a widespread dish in Italy. For centuries, people in northern Italy ate more rice than pasta.



# Eating the Italian Way

Italian people love to eat meals with their families. Traditionally, they return home at midday for several hours to eat their main meal. Large meals include at least three **courses**. Pasta starts the meal. The main course is usually a small portion of meat. A sweet treat completes the meal. Sometimes a small course called *antipasto* is served before the pasta course.





## **Fashionably Late**

At dinner parties, it is often polite to show up a few minutes late. If you show up on time, the host might still be cooking!

In general, Italian people have good table manners. They follow several rules to avoid offending the chef. Italian chefs provide the seasonings they believe should go with the meal. Asking for other ones, such as Parmesan cheese, is considered an insult. Italian people also do not eat bread before the meal. At casual dinners, they dip it in the leftover sauces from the main course. It is considered a compliment to the chef.

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