

# IL POSTINO

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We welcome submissions, letters, articles, story ideas and  
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# Letters to the Editor

Ontario

## ONTARIO HELPS GROW RIDEAU CANAL FESTIVAL

*McGuinty Government Invests in Ottawa's Newest Festival*

### NEWS

July 31, 2008

Ontario is helping to increase tourism in the nation's capital by investing in a new festival that celebrates the Rideau Canal's heritage.

The Rideau Canal Festival helps local tourism benefit from the international reputation of the historic canal, which was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2007. Ontario is helping grow the new festival and attract visitors by providing \$327,500 to support its programming, operating costs, and marketing efforts.

The Rideau Canal Festival showcases Ottawa as a tourist destination by:

- Celebrating the Rideau Canal's heritage and historical contributions to the development of Ottawa as Canada's capital.
- Showing Ottawa as a boater's paradise whose downtown core is easily accessible by boat and by promoting Ottawa as a cycling friendly city; and
- Showing Ottawa's commitment to an environment friendly use of the canal.

The festival – which runs August 1-4 – will be held at the Bytown Museum, Confederation Park, and Commissioner's Park.

### QUOTES

"The Rideau Canal Festival has the potential to be a major contributor to Ottawa's tourism economy. As a World Heritage Site, the canal offers tourists a compelling reason to visit our province and to experience other great Ontario attractions," said Ottawa Centre MPP Yasir Naqvi.

"The canal has helped define both our nation's capital and the entire country. We're pleased that Ontario recognizes the potential of this festival as an economic driver for the province," said Rideau Canal Festival President and CEO Michel Gautier.

"The Rideau Canal has become a world-renowned symbol of our great City. The Rideau Canal Festival not only celebrates the Canal for its rich heritage and history, but it also boosts our local economy by attracting visitors and showing tourists from across the world what our City and our beautiful province has to offer," said Ottawa-Vanier MPP Madeleine Meilleur.

### LEARN MORE

Find out more about The Rideau Canal Festival @ [www.rideaucanalfestival.ca/](http://www.rideaucanalfestival.ca/)

**Yasir Naqvi, MPP./député Ottawa Centre**



## Il Postino Background Spotlight Rideau Canal Quick Facts

• The Rideau Canal, also known as the Rideau Waterway, connects the city of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada on the Ottawa River to the city of Kingston, Ontario on Lake Ontario. The canal was opened in 1832 and is still in use today, with most of its original structures intact.

• The canal system uses sections of major rivers, including the Rideau and the Cataraqui, as well as some lakes. **It is the oldest continuously operated canal system in North America.**

• The Rideau Canal was built primarily for strategic military purposes at a time when Great Britain and the United States vied for control of the region.

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to / *intestato a:* Preston Street Community Foundation Inc., Suite 101 Gladstone Avenue 865, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7T4



# Local Announcements

## Congratulations Cristina Buffone and John Zinati



Congratulations to Roberto Luberti and Dottoressa Luciana Addario  
Vice Sindaco, Rocca Monte Piano on their 22nd Anniversary!

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Albino Pescatore  
on their 55th Anniversary





# Local Stories

## Ottawa Mayor Larry O'Brien Marries His Angel

Article / Photo Giovanni

It was a rainy day for a white wedding, as Ottawa's Mayor, Larry O'Brien, 58, wed his beautiful bride, real estate agent Colleen McBride, 44. Their wedding ceremony was held at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in the Glebe.

The wedding was the first for Ms. McBride and the second for Mr. O'Brien, a self-made high-tech millionaire.

As the bride walked down the aisle, a pianist played "Feather Theme," by contemporary composer Alan Silvestri. Since the bride had opted not to have any bridesmaids, all eyes were on Ms. McBride in a strapless white satin and crushed organza gown, carrying a simple bouquet of cream-coloured roses, as she and her father, Rod McBride walked down the aisle to Mayor O'Brien.

The hour-long ceremony was filled with prayers, music, laughter, and one long kiss shared by the bride and groom that brought the congregation to its feet in loud applause. The ceremony was presided over by Father Joe LeClair, better known as "Father Joe" in the community, who put everyone at ease and kept the ceremony intimate and warm.

After the ceremony, invited guests headed to City Hall for a private reception in the main hall, Jean Pigott Place.

The rotunda was elegantly decorated monochromatically, from the satin ribbon-edged tablecloths to the cream-coloured roses with tulle lace. Ottawa-based Brian Browne Trio provided the music, while glasses of wine were passed out on trays along with canapés, hors d'oeuvres, and sweet treats.



The event was low-key, but by no means low-profile. Guests included politicians, journalists, prominent business men, and foreign diplomats, among the 500-plus people in attendance.

After receiving all the guests, the groom made a series of toasts, and thanked his new wife "for bringing peace, kindness and love into my life and for making me a better person, as many of you know, I married my angel Colleen today".

The couple gave guests mini, triple-tiered, wedding cakes to take home instead of slices of traditional fruit cake.

Contact Giovanni at [giovannipublicist@yahoo.ca](mailto:giovannipublicist@yahoo.ca) for up coming events

## Look Who's Reading Il Postino!



Fred Dinardo reading Il Postino

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Vitesse Re-Skilling™ Canada and Ontario's Talent First Network Provide Support to Graduate Students**

**(Ottawa, ON - Thursday, July 31, 2008)**

Vitesse Re-Skilling™ Canada and the Ottawa Talent Initiative in partnership with Ontario's Talent First Network are pleased to offer scholarships and assistantships for 10 qualified graduate students admitted to the thesis option of Carleton University's Technology Innovation Management (TIM) program.

**Date:** Wednesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Time:** 4:30 to 6:30 pm  
Networking – 4:30 to 5:00 pm  
Presentations – 5:00 to 6:00 pm  
Q & A/TIM program – 6:00 to 6:30 pm

**Location:** 359 Terry Fox Drive,  
Suite 210,  
Ottawa, ON  
March Road and Terry Fox area – North Kanata

**Cost:** FREE – refreshments served

"We are looking for the best of the best graduate students to join the thesis and project options of the TIM program this fall," says Professor Tony Bailetti of Carleton University. Information on the TIM program can be found at [www.carleton.ca/tim](http://www.carleton.ca/tim).

Vitesse Re-Skilling™ Canada, a non-profit organization, was created through a partnership between the National Research Council, University of Ottawa, and Carleton University. Vitesse was formed to address a critical human resource shortage and subsequent barriers to growth in knowledge-intensive industries.

The Ottawa Talent Initiative (OTI) was created and funded by three levels of government and OCRI in 2003 to assist high tech talent with their employability. The Ottawa Talent Initiative Action Centre merged with Vitesse Re-Skilling™ Canada in 2008.

**##30###**

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# General Interests

## The Magic Running Shoes

By Renato Rizzuti

Santino Scarpe was a jovial older man who owned Santino’s Shoe Repair near College Street in the “Little Italy” section of Toronto. It was a modest business operation. Santino had converted the garage of his house into a shoe repair shop. It was a bit cramped with all the shoes and equipment but it was a cozy place to work in.

It was a hot and humid morning in Toronto. Santino was up bright and early and brought his espresso coffee with him into the shop to drink while working. As usual, Santino turned on the radio which was tuned into CHIN Toronto. Just then the song “Senza le

Scarpe” sung by Silvana Mior came on. The lyrics seemed to be mocking Santino, “Senza le scrape caminero/Senza l’amore non ci sto /Senza le scrape caminero/ Senza l’amore non ci sto” The lyrics translate, “Without shoes I walk/ Without love I won’t stay/ Without shoes I walk/ Without love I won’t stay.” Santino laughed a full hearty belly laugh. Then he said in Calabrese, “Ma chisa e pazza, senza scarpe camina? Illa se rupia i pedi and pare commu na ciotta senza scarpe! Si tutti fanu cusi, u businissu mi va a finamentu!” This translates as, “But this woman is crazy, walking without shoes? She is going to hurt her feet and she’ll look like a dummy without shoes! If everybody did the same as her my business would go bankrupt!” Santino then started working on a pair of woman’s shoes that needed new heels.

A few blocks from Santino’s place, there lived a young athletic Italian man named Gaetano Gambe. Gaetano was finishing off his usual breakfast of three poached eggs on whole wheat bread. This would give him the protein he needed to sustain his 54 city block jog which would be equal to 9 km. Gaetano was going into his final year of study of engineering at the University of Toronto. During his summer break, he was in training for the Toronto City Marathon. Gaetano was building up his endurance for the 40 km he would have to run in four weeks. He would finish his run by backtracking towards his home, but first he would stop at Santino’s place.

Gaetano had left his expensive Italian leather dress shoes for Santino to resole. He loved to go out “clubbing” and had worn out his shoes on the dance floor. Gaetano never drank alcohol at the clubs because it would hamper his training. His favourite drink was soda water with a slice of lime. As Gaetano warmed up at the front of the house by stretching his well developed thigh muscles, his mother had come out to sweep the front porch. His mother said to him in Calabrese, “Ma cusu cavuru va fuere! Ta portatu na buttiglia e acqua? Te vene cunu stroku se non ti vivi l’acqua!” This translates as “You are going running in this heat! Did you bring a bottle of water with you? You are going to have a stroke if you don’t drink water!” Gaetano reassured his mother he had his water bottle and off he went for his run.

As Gaetano ran, Santino was back at his shop working on another pair of shoes. Just then Dean Martin could be heard on the radio singing “Luna Mezzo Mare.” The lyrics go like this, “C’e la luna mezz’o mare/Mamma mia me maritari/Si ci dugnu lu scapparu/Iddu va, iddu veni/ ‘u matteddu manu teni/Si ci pigghia la fantasia/Mi matteddia la figghia mia.”

This translates as “There’s a moon in the middle of the sea/Mother I must get married/

If I give you the shoemaker/He will come and he will go/But he’ll always hold his hammer in his hands/If he likes the idea/He’ll hammer you oh my daughter.” Santino laughed and said, “Quanu era giuvenu io!” This translates as “When I was young!”

Meanwhile, Gaetano finished running 48 blocks, then 50 blocks and finally 54 city blocks! By then the sweat was pouring off of Gaetano’s face and remembering what his mother said, he polished off the rest of the water in his water bottle. It was just a short distance to Santino’s place so Gaetano walked the rest of the way as part of his “cool down.” Santino greeted Gaetano in his heavily accented English, “My boya you run likea thea winda!” Gaetano replied, “Hi Santino are my shoes ready?” Gaetano did not need a ticket to get his shoes. In fact, Santino did not give out a ticket for any shoes left for repair. Santino’s explanation for this was, “I not needa a ticketa becausea I remember your face and the shoes you bringa in.”

Santino gave Gaetano his shoes and then they started chatting about Gaetano’s upcoming marathon. Gaetano said, “I need a good pair of shoes to keep me going for 40 km.” Suddenly Santino had an idea, “I canna make a great pair of running shoes using Italian leather and some Australian rubber I get from my cousin in Australia, they gonna makea you run and jump like a kangaroo!” Gaetano agreed to have Santino make the shoes for him. Santino added, “One more thinga, I goona put some “magic” ina da shoes so you gonna finish in first place!” At first Gaetano laughed and then he became very serious and pensive. Gaetano thought to himself, “That’s what I need, some magic…”

During the next four weeks, Gaetano trained like a demon. He had to wear his old running shoes while Santino waited for the rubber shipment to come in from Australia. Santino promised to have the “magic” running shoes ready in time for the marathon.

Gaetano woke up early every morning and warmed up for his daily run. He gradually increased the distance he ran, working his way up to 30 km in the last week of his training. The training was going well but Gaetano something was missing. He could not figure out what it was. Gaetano thought that maybe he needed the new running shoes with their “magic.”

Finally, the day of the marathon arrived. Gaetano had picked up his new shoes from Santino the night before. As Gaetano laced up the shoes, his feet felt kind of funny. It was like there was an electrical current running through them! He stepped out into the street and started bouncing up and down and in a furious burst of speed he ran off! Gaetano then came back got a lift from his mother to the marathon starting point.

The first 10 km were a breeze. The next 20 km were like running on air; the shoes were so comfortable. The last 10 km were when Gaetano started getting a cramp in his leg. The pain was excruciating and brought him to a dead stop. Gaetano remembered the “magic” that Santino had put in the shoes. He summoned up all the physical, mental and emotional energy he could muster. Gaetano then walked off the cramp and started running at full speed again. He thought to himself, “It’s the magic!” Gaetano finished the 40 km marathon in first place with a new record time of 2 hours and 5 minutes!

The next morning, Gaetano went to see Santino in his shop to tell him the news. Santino said, “Congratulations! I know you coulda do it!” Gaetano said, “It was the magic, the magic in the shoes!” Santino replied, “Yeaha surea I putta magic inda shoes, but the reala magic was ina your minda and ina your heart. And thatsa isa why you finished ina firsta place!” They both smiled broadly and drank a toast with some espresso coffee!



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# Food - Let's Eat!

## Grilled Salmon with Herbed Lemon Butter Sauce alla Rizzuti

By Maria Rizzuti

Okay, for all you salmon lovers out there, I have a quick summertime recipe for you. To all the avid fishermen, you would probably already know that salmon live in both the Atalantic and Pacific Oceans, as well the Great Lakes.

Typically, salmon are born in fresh water, migrate to the ocean, then return to fresh water to reproduce. Folklore has it that the fish return to the exact spot where they were born to spawn. Wouldn't be amazing if we humans could do that? What would the purpose of that be? Well, it might give us a sense of who we are and where we came from.

Okay, enough with the philosophy and back to salmon. Salmon can make amazing journeys, sometimes moving hundreds of miles upstream against strong currents and rapids to reproduce. That's a real determined fish! It is amazing to see this phenomenon. I personally have seen these great fish in a nearby park trying to jump over this high wall of water every year. Fisherman gather in this river to catch these stupendous fish.

There is a popular fisherman's saying that goes, "A hook's well lost to catch a salmon." There are a lot of stories about "salmon mythology." Most of the stories are a result of the rather vivid and wild imaginations of fishermen who tell the tale of, "The big one that got away!" I actually saw a fisherman "milk" a salmon for its eggs. Not sure if that was legal or not, but interesting to see.

Salmon is a great healthy choice as it is high in protein, vitamin D and high in Omega-3 fatty acids.

Whether you are up the cottage or in your own backyard, don't you always find yourself using the barbeque to cook anything and everything just to be outside? Give my Salmon recine a trv! You can also use this herbed lemon butter sauce on trout,



Have any great recipes to share?

Email them to [info@ilpostinocanada.com](mailto:info@ilpostinocanada.com)

### Grilled Salmon with Herbed Lemon Butter Sauce alla Rizzuti

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 3 cloves of garlic cut into slivers
- 1/3 cup of freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1/3 cup chopped Italian flat leaf parsley
- 1 tablespoon of grated lemon peel
- 1 tablespoon of salt
- ½ teaspoon of freshly ground black pepper
- 4 (6-ounce) salmon fillets

#### Assembling the Pasta Salad:

First of all, prepare outdoor grill for barbecuing.

On medium high heat, in a small saucepan, melt butter and garlic and sauté until slightly golden. Remove the garlic and add lemon juice, parsley, lemon peel, salt and pepper.

Lightly oil folding wire grill, then place salmon fillets in folding wire grill.

Place fillets onto grill, brushing frequently with butter mixture. Grill salmon for 2 to 3 minutes per side for medium-rare or longer for your personal desired taste.

You can reserve some of the Herbed Lemon Butter Sauce for plating of the fish.

Serve the Salmon with your favourite side dishes

Buon appetito!

## ITALIAN STYLE 2008

Music, Labour and Love  
Early Memories of Ottawa Italians

June 28, 2008 - Sept. 1, 2008  
at ByTown Museum

The Museum will be open on Wednesday evenings  
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from June 25 until August 27.



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# General Interest - Travel

## Exploring sun-splashed Venice’s City Squares

A summer sojourn reveals a serene yet steamy city.

Sip a refreshing aperitivo and enjoy the wonders of it all.

Susan Spano - Los Angeles Times

### Pianissimo, pianissimo.

That’s how morning comes on the Campo Santa Maria Formosa. Pigeons dawdle around a trash can, in no rush to pillage. The young woman who tends the newsstand gives her dog a bowl of water. Then the grate at the Bar all’Orologio clangs open, a sure sign that another summer day has begun in Venice.

The paved square -- or campo -- around the Church of Santa Maria Formosa is one of dozens hidden among the tangled streets of Venice, affectionately known as La Serenissima, the serene one. Each campo is the hub of its own little universe, where a church, bank, bar, tobacco shop, ancient well head and long shopping street supply all the necessities of life, from religion to pasta.

I’d been to Venice before, gawked at San Marco -- St. Mark’s -- seen the Veroneses at the Accademia, ridden the water buses, or vaporetti. When I returned last month, I settled into three little campi not nearly as famous as San Marco but full of wonders that I never had to stray far from my hotel to explore.

### CAMPO SANTA MARIA FORMOSA, CASTELLO

Leave San Marco from the piazza’s northeastern corner, cross the Campo San Zulian, jog left, then right and if you’re lucky you’ll end up on the Campo Santa Maria Formosa.

The church that gives the campo its name is thought to have been founded in the 7th century but was rebuilt in the early Renaissance by architect Mauro Coducci. It has an exceptional setting, within the square, not on a flank, and a comely campanile that seems to have been decorated with a tube of frosting.

The campo is a large rectangle bounded on two sides by canals where gondoliers fan themselves while waiting for the next romantic couple. The other two sides are lined by fine palazzi with peaked Venetian Byzantine windows. Some are given over to small businesses -- the neighborhood pharmacy and funeral parlor -- but others, like the Palazzo Querini-Stampaglia, have grander purposes. Reached by its own little bridge, this palazzo is a library and picture gallery. Across the campo is the imposing Ruzzini Palace Hotel recently opened as a luxury hotel.

I stayed at the Hotel Casa Santa Maria Formosa around the corner. Like many small Venetian hotels, it has no sign or elevator. The reception desk is minuscule, and the air conditioner in the breakfast room couldn’t cope with the heat.

But my room was cool enough, decorated with the warring fabrics, patterns, decoupage and gilding well known to budget-loving aficionados of Venice.

I liked going out in the relative cool of the early morning, getting a newspaper, having my first cappuccino at the Bar all’Orologio and watching one of the last authentic neighborhoods in Venice come to life. In the last several decades, rising real estate prices have driven residents out; the population dropped from 171,000 in 1951 to fewer than 62,000 in 2006, leaving the city a tourist ghetto.

But you wouldn’t know it in this campo, where I watched men with briefcases hurrying to work. Old women pushing shopping carts quarreled at the vegetable stand. Finally, the tourists started coming out, studying maps until they got the idea of looking up at the church.

It is one of the most companionable in Venice, with two main facades, one facing the canal, the other overlooking the campo where tourists enter. As the interior restoration proceeds, visitors can watch workers on ladders scour stone moldings and chip away old paint.

Reconstructed many times over the last millennium, the church now takes the form of a Latin cross superimposed on a Greek cross, paved with smooth stones set in diamond-shaped patterns. Side chapels were endowed by the guild of cofferers, who made dowry chests for Venetian brides, and the guild of fruit sellers, who dedicated a shrine to their patron, St. Jehosophat.

Among the church’s treasures is Bartolomeo Vivarini’s “Our Lady of Mercy” triptych (1473). With no need to rush off, I found my own favorites, including the wood-backed “Holy Father With Angels” (late 15th century, attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani) and an altar relief (1719) by Giuseppe Torretti, showing a decapitated St. Barbara, her head rolling on the ground.

Back outside, I looked into shops along the Calle Lunga Santa Maria Formosa. At the Schegge atelier, I watched the owner paint handmade Carnival masks, while at Casa Mattiazzi Veneto, wine from casks was being sold in recycled plastic water bottles.

I discussed the derivation of the word “campo” with Luigi Frizzo, proprietor of the Acqua Alta bookstore, and made a dinner reservation at Osteria al Mascaron after seeing the squid and sardines on the antipasto counter.

Osteria al Mascaron -- from mascherone, a kind of talismanic monster sculpted on many facades in Venice -- is decorated with old copper pots, books and a picture of Elvis Costello. It was hot and stuffy the night I dined there, but the food transported me. After the olive oil-drenched antipasti, I had a perfect plate of pesto spaghetti with basil that tasted so fresh I could have sworn it was still growing.

About the time catechism class let out, I found a table at Zanzibar on the campo. I ordered a Spritz, made of white wine, soda water and a bitter-tasting aperitivo called Aperol. It doesn’t sound good, but once you get used to it, nothing else will do to cut the heat of a Venetian summer.

Zanzibar is close to the western flank of the church that bears one of the city’s most frightful mascheroni. John Ruskin, the opinionated 19th century authority on Venetian architecture, called it “too foul to be either pictured or described.” But after dinner and a Spritz, I quite liked it.

### CAMPO SAN ZACCARIA, CASTELLO

Wise men do not come to Venice in the summer. Being neither male nor wise, here I was, sweating from every pore as I dragged my luggage from Campo Santa Maria Formosa to Campo San Zaccaria, five minutes as the crow flies or 15 through the maze of streets. If you get lost, you’ll just end up back at San Marco. All streets in Venice lead there, it seems.

At the Hotel Villa Igea, I was given a room that was stuffy even with the air conditioner on high, so I asked for and got a cooler chamber. It had a bathtub -- a rarity in modest Venetian hotels -- and came with an excellent breakfast buffet.

Best of all, the hotel was right on the campo, looking directly at the white Renaissance facade of the Church of San Zaccaria, which looks like a hairstyle worn by Marie Antoinette. *Continued on page 13...*



# Community SnapShots

## Abruzzese Picnic 2008



Sabatino and Nello



Volunteer's Cooking



Franco Ricci Francesa, Gino, Jenifer, and Tony Mariani



Benny Colasante with Friends



Tony Ianucci with Gino Nicolini



Participants enjoying the picnic at Bratania Park



# Community SnapShots

## Rapinese Picnic 2008



Nello Scipioni and Emidio Peloso with Friends



Volunteer's home-made treats



Guests enjoying home-made cooking



Lorenzo Micucci President with ladies making pizzelle



Nello Scipioni and Lorenzo Micucci with Friends



# General Interest

## When Accordion Music Ruled the Airways

By Italians R Us by Cookie Curci

When my Italian grandparents, Isolina and Salvatore Rizzolo, immigrated to this country at the turn of the century, they knew there was a dream here worth attaining. Like many of their generation, they brought with them the music of their old country, music that both inspired and comforted them while they searched for that dream.

My Nonna Isolina was a whiz on the concertina (a musical instrument similar to the accordion, but with buttons instead of a keyboard). She played it as a child in the streets of her hometown of Abruzzi, in the province of Pescara, Italy. She beguiled me for hours with her wonderful stories of the old country, how she and her little band of musicians would roam the cobble stoned streets of her town playing their tunes for tips and handouts. Playing the concertina was not only a way for grandma and her siblings to earn money, but, more importantly, it was a joyful way for them to express themselves in a lifestyle that was often filled with economic suffering and political suppression. So, it was only natural, when these children of Italy made that courageous journey of a lifetime to the new world that they took with them the musical instruments that had given them so much comfort and pleasure.

My grandparent’s taste in music was simple. They shared the same musical philosophy as famous accordion man Lawrence Welk who once said, “If they can’t hum it after I play it, then it’s not for me”.

Most Italian immigrants found it difficult to keep a job or to find career prospects. For many, the ability to play the accordion or concertina served as a way to increase their income by playing in little bistros and cafe’s.

Like most Italian American’s, who grew up in the 1940s and ‘50s, the accordion was more than just a musical instrument; to me it was like a piece of household furniture as familiar to us as our grand Philco radio or Packard Bell TV set. In a way, it was an extension of ourselves, our family traditions and our heritage.

Our Italian ancestor’s talent for playing the accordion shouldn’t be compared to the abilities of professionals such as Lawrence Welk or Dick Contino. Instead, they should be judged by the amount of joy and entertainment they brought their family and in that sense, their talents and contributions were immeasurable.

My grandmother, like many who came with her across the sea, planned many times to return to her homeland, but world events or the economy prevented her from ever going home again. I remember how Grandma would sit alone in her room, for long hours, playing her concertina. By the look of contentment that shown in her eyes, I suspect she was returning, again and again, if only in memory to her home and family, to the beautiful coastal region of Pescara, Italy, and to the echo of music made by a little band of musicians skipping down the cobble stoned streets of Abruzzi.

My grandparents are gone now, but sometimes, on warm summer nights, when soft, southern breezes blow, I think I can still hear their timeless rendition of “O Solo Mio” echoing through the neighborhood, reminding me of a special time in my life, of love and family bonds that will never fade away.

Today, we diehard fans of the accordion can still fondly remember the days when the concertina was one of our favorite instruments and its melodic music was tops on the modern music charts.

Soft relaxing sounds played by recording stars such as the unforgettable “Three Suns” secured accordion music a lengthy say on the 1940s and ‘50s top tune music charts their beautiful rendition of the enchanting and romantic, “Twilight Time.”

With a flashy, energetic style, accordion virtuoso Dick Contino wooed audiences



In Italy, the accordion plays an important role in folk music, being many times the leading sound of the tarantella.

The Tarantella is an Italian dance, its name coming from the town of Taranto, where it originated. It is the most recognized of Italian music, and is the popular theme song of pizzerias and restaurants. Throughout Italy it is different with every region but has the same basic upbeat tempo.

across the country with his powerful rendition of ‘Lady Of Spain and Return to Sorrento.’ Contino’s accordion was much more ornate than others of his ilk. His accordion shimmered and sparkled brightly under the stage lights adding glamour and excitement to his performances and to the accordion. Dick Contino is an exceptional talent and a beloved Italian-American icon whose fans will tell you that he can make his accordion almost sing, and that his fast moving fingers play the many pearlescent keys and buttons like a fast moving hummingbird, just too fast for the eye to see. I was fortunate enough to attend one of his concerts in San Jose and I can verify their opinions of this tantalizing entertainer.

Inspired by Contino’s success on the accordion it didn’t take long for every Italian American household to own an accordion of their own, with the profound hope and desire to also become famous.

When I was a kid, Just about everyone had at least one relative who could really play the accordion. The rest of us just picked out tunes and struggled with those heavy bellows.

In my family it was my Aunt Ann Furduto who possessed that kind of talent. She was honored to take lessons from the popular musical instructor Louis Figone. in 1939 when the World’s Fair came to San Francisco, she performed daily with Mr. Figones’ most talented students. Later, in the 1940s, she and her group, known as the Quintets, played at concerts on the beach at Santa Cruz, CA, and were featured weekly on the San Francisco radio station KGO am and KFRC am. In those days if you played the accordion you were well respected. but as sought after and esteemed as accordion music once was, sad to say, like many of those popular instruments we once loved, it has become just another thing to lose favor with the fickle public. The era of the accordion will have to remain just a happy memory , a time to wistfully look back on and remember with a smile, along with our banjos and xylophones boxed away in attics and closets across America.

## Vegetariano anyone?

Italian Notebook.

Italy - With the availability of fresh vegetables in all seasons of the year, you would think that there would be a considerable percentage of vegetarians among the population. Not so.

In fact, Italians usually respond with a mix of amazement and adversion to anyone that declares “non mangio carne” (I don’t eat meat). Semantics don’t help the situation either, because “carne” generally translates “meat” but it specifically translates “beef”. Therefore a not unusual response is, “ok, then how about some prosciutto?”

In spite of all that, vegetarians have carved a niche in Italy albeit a small one, and every city has a few carefully run and highly frequented restaurants. We were tempted in Rome at Il Margutta and were quite pleased. Here’s one of the recipes for a very Italian vegetarian dish:

Cut 2 inch thick disks of Pecorino cheese. Flour, dip in beaten egg, and encrust with chopped almonds. Then cook slices of pear in a red wine, cinnamon, and sugar reduction. Prepare some agretti with olive oil. Then cook the Pecorino disks in a pan with some olive oil until the almonds are golden and the cheese is soft. Serve on a bed of agretti, and garnish with the pears and some coarsely crushed red peppercorns.



# Local Stories

## Spain Takes Over Top Spot in FIFA Rankings

The Sports Network



The FIFA/Coca-Cola Men’s World Rankings for the month of July were released on Wednesday, and Euro 2008 champion Spain moved up three spots to No. 1.

Spain is just the sixth team ever ranked No. 1 by FIFA, joining Brazil, France, Germany, Italy and Argentina.

Italy, which lost to Spain in the quarterfinals of Euros in penalties, moved up from third to second. Euro runner-up Germany jumped two spots to third. The Netherlands, which beat Italy, France and Romania at Euros, moved up five spots to fifth to put four Euro quarterfinalists in the top five.

Brazil, which was second in the last rankings, dropped to fourth and Argentina slipped from first to sixth. Argentina had been ranked No. 1 since October of last year.

Four other European countries that participated in the Euro finals - Croatia, Czech Republic, Portugal and France - round out the top 10.

Russia, which made a surprising run to the semifinals of Euro 2008, made the biggest move in the top 50 by going from 24th to 11th. Turkey, the other Euro semifinalist, jumped six spots from 20th to 14th.

Cameroon remained the highest ranked African nation at 13th and Mexico remained the highest ranked CONCACAF team at 19th, despite slipping five spots. Japan is still the highest ranked Asian nation and moved up five spots to 34th.

Euro 2004 champion Greece, which failed to win a game at Euro 2008, made the second biggest drop among the top 50 by slipping 10 spots to 18th. Honduras was the worst by falling 11 spots to 48th.

England joined Greece as one of two nations to fall out of the top 10. England slipped six places to 15th.

The United States also took a big drop, slipping nine spaces to 30th. The U.S. lost to England and Spain in the last month, but also tied Argentina.

Iran made the second largest jump among the top 50 by moving 11 spots to 37th.

The biggest movers this month were Africa’s Suriname (87th, up 58) and Burkina Faso (64th, up 47). Both of these teams played at least two 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifiers in recent weeks.

The next FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking will be published on Aug. 6, 2008.

FIFA ranked Euro 2008 champion Spain No. 1, with 2007 World Cup Winner Italy #2, . **Italy was the only team to hold Spain to a 0-0 score, to lose on PKs.**

## Fans see real deal: Ronaldinho signs AC Milan contract during presentation

The Canadian Press - MILAN, Italy

MILAN, Italy — The news conference was called to show off Ronaldinho, AC Milan’s new star, before the Brazilian star had his name or his number on the team’s red-and-black jersey. Ronaldinho didn’t even have a contract yet.

So Thursday night’s presentation at Meazza Stadium began a few minutes late and was hastily turned into a signing ceremony.

“Put your signature here,” Milan vice president Adriano Galliani told Ronaldinho, as they sat side-by-side in front of TV cameras, and the player took pen in hand and signed the papers.

Galliani told reporters that right down to Thursday night “there were all kinds of problems,” the Italian news agency Apcom reported. “It got down into the nitty-gritty, such as the rating of the bank giving the guarantee” for the transaction to acquire Ronaldinho from FC Barcelona.

Even before he signed, Ronaldinho, speaking in Portuguese, told the news conference that “I already feel home here.”

“It’s a really special moment,” the player said. “Everyone wants to be on this team for the importance of Milan’s history. Putting on this jersey is already a victor for me,” Ronaldinho said.

AC Milan is aiming for a quick rebound, back to the top of European football, now that Ronaldinho has joined Kaka and Alexandre Pato in an all-Brazilian attack.

Milan finished a dismal fifth in Serie A last season and was eliminated by Arsenal in the second round of the Champions League. This season, Milan will play in the second-tier UEFA Cup.

Ronaldinho told reporters that while his time with the Spanish club “had

been very positive, with great victories, at a certain point the championship titles weren’t coming any more, there were disappointments and displeasure, and thus the time came to part ways.”

“Here I can go back to being happy and to reaching new personal and team objectives,” he said.

Ronaldinho scored 91 goals in 200 appearances in five seasons at Barcelona, and helped lead the club to consecutive Spanish league titles in 2005 and ‘06, and the Champions League trophy in 2006.

After he signed, Ronaldinho stepped onto the field to the cheers of fans, who attended the presentation for free.

The Rossoneri won the Champions League in 2003 and 2007, and lost the 2005 final to Liverpool.

Barcelona said AC Milan will pay US\$33.6 million for Ronaldinho and an additional \$6.4 million if the Italian club clinches a place in the 2009-10 Champions League.

The transfer amount was considerably less than what Barcelona said Manchester City had offered.

AC Milan owner and Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi has said Ronaldinho is “worth” the money.





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# International

## Italians Dial Up Best Food Price

BBC World Service - By Alka Marwaha

A text messaging service set up by the Italian government is helping its citizens to haggle on their high street.

The rising cost of food is a growing concern for many people across the world.

There have been protests, and even riots, in countries including Mexico, India and Egypt, clear evidence of the struggle that many people are now facing.

However, if Italians feel that their local food retailer is charging unreasonable prices, they can now call on a new service to help them haggle or walk away.

After a few seconds you will receive an SMS that will tell you the different prices in the different areas of Italy

Luca Di Maio, Consumer Federation, Rome

Thanks to a short message service (SMS) text system set up jointly by the Italian agriculture ministry and consumer associations, shoppers can check the average price of different foods in northern, central and southern Italy.

With prices spiralling out of control in some parts of the world, some people feel that it is high time consumers could check just how much traders are profiting.

Luca Di Maio is a consultant for the Consumer Federation in Rome, and explains that the new system lets consumers type the name of the food product they want to price check into their mobile phone and send a free text message to a dedicated number.

"After a few seconds you will receive an SMS that will tell you the different prices in the different areas of Italy", he says.

Trading tomatoes

BBC reporter Emma Wallis from BBC World Service's Culture Shock programme decided to find out how much 2kg of tomatoes cost in a market in Rome.

She found that the wholesale price of a kilo of cherry tomatoes is 69 euro cents (54p).

Whereas the retail price in the north is 2.9 euros, in central Italy it is 2.8 euros, while in the south its 1.85 euros.

We are in a free market and consumers should be able to buy or not buy, or go around and check for better prices

Luca Di Maio

By contrast, for bigger tomatoes the wholesale price is 62 cents compared with 2.15 euros in the north, 1.85 euros in central and 1.50 euros in the south.

However, the tomatoes are bought by the wholesalers for only 22 cents a kilo

from the farmers.

Mr Di Maio explains that the problem facing Italian shoppers is that there are a large number of traders and prices can vary hugely between them.

He explains that the price checking system is there to let the consumer know and understand the pricing dynamics of the market, and make a more informed choice.

"We are in a free market and consumers should be able to buy or not buy, or go around and check for better prices", he adds.

Dealer's prices

Emma Wallis hit the streets of Rome to find out how many people had actually heard about the new price checking service.

Markets are more efficient when you have got more information

Tom Standage, Economist magazine

"I've heard about this line and I think it's a great idea" said one woman, adding that everyone puts the prices they feel like putting.

"If you stroll down this market for instance, there are courgettes for two euros, 2.5 euros and 1.5 euros, you never know which ones to choose", she adds.

Another woman explains that she would be interested in using the price checking service, but only in certain situations.

"I do my shopping pretty quickly but I do try and check prices when I can. But I trust this stall holder so I wouldn't really need it here," she says.

But she was not sure she would use the service for shops.

In perspective

According to Tom Standage, business editor at The Economist magazine, markets are more efficient when you have more information.

"If you are in a supermarket and there's a price for tomatoes and that's the only piece of information you have, you've got no idea whether you should be protesting by not buying it," he says.

He explains that for supply and demand to work at its best, consumers need to be able to compare different prices from suppliers on the spot, something the texting service and others like it should help make easier.

"There are even services where you can scan a barcode in with your mobile phone and it tells you how much the internet retailers are selling a particular product for," he says.

If a price is too high, people will not buy the product and the trader will have to drop it, he adds.

With many analysts warning that high food costs are here to stay, Italian consumer are unlikely to be the only ones hoping to find the High Street's best prices.

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# General Interest - Travel

*Continued from page 7 .....*

This campo is smaller and more dignified than Santa Maria Formosa, less a neighborhood living room than a thoroughfare for people headed to the vaporetto stop at the waterfront promenade of Riva degli Schiavoni. There are only a few businesses. An interesting antiques shop in part of the old churchyard closed the day I got there, and the man at a snack bar sadly told me he wasn’t allowed to put umbrella tables out front.

The campo narrows on the far side, where a carabinieri barracks occupies the old Convent of San Zaccaria, founded with the church around 1000. The convent was an old friend of Venice’s dukes, or doges, to whom it gave lavishly decorated ducal caps, the official headdress.

During the debauched 18th century, sisters wore pearls and entertained gentlemen, as depicted in “The Nuns’ Parlor at San Zaccaria” (1750), a painting by Francesco Guardi on display at the Ca’ Rezzonico Museum on the Grand Canal.

I could imagine them filing into the church next door, where Venice displayed its piety by decorating opulently. The walls of the nave and choir chapel are covered with huge paintings, mostly by 16th and 17th century masters, though the best is unarguably Giovanni Bellini’s peaceful little “Virgin and Child With Saints and Angel Musicians” (1506), taken to Paris as booty during the Napoleonic wars, then returned to Venice in 1816.

Architects admire San Zaccaria for its blending of Renaissance and Gothic features and for its oldest chapels, where a fragment of 9th century mosaic pavement can still be seen. A doubtful-looking stone staircase leads to the crypt, where some of Venice’s first doges are buried. It is traversed by a wooden boardwalk, attesting to high water in winters past.

Afterward, it was a shock to emerge onto the sun-blasted campo, where instinct led me to the nearby Rio dei Greci, settled by Greek immigrants. Their church, San Giorgio dei Greci, with its precariously canted campanile, is in an enclosure on the canal. Next door is a museum with a 17th century icon I especially liked that depicts the ascetic Christian saint Simeon Stylites, who lived for 37 years on the top of a pillar in Syria.

From there, I retraced my steps and took the Salizzada San Provolo to the Rio di Palazzo, a canal spanned by the Bridge of Sighs. People headed toward San Marco generally pass over the waterway, unaware that there is a Gothic gem nearby, the dreamy Benedictine cloister of Sant’Apollonia. On the floor above is a Diocese of Venice picture gallery, showcasing artworks from the city’s endangered and deconsecrated churches.

Outside, I joined the streaming crowd, went from shadow to bright light again, blinked hard and realized I was in the incomparable Piazza San Marco, along with all the other 18 million people who visit Venice every year, it seemed.

A vast banner obscuring the facade of the Sansovino Library showed tennis pro Roger Federer’s Rolex watch. Even the stone faces on the capitals at the Doge’s Palace looked stultified by the heat.

The only thing I could think to do was to retire to the roof terrace atop the fabled Hotel Danieli, occupying a 15th century palazzo on the Riva degli Schiavoni, where George Sand and Charles Dickens stayed. But my gin and tonic cost \$30 and a pigeon stole one of my hazelnuts.

A refrigerated late afternoon nap restored my good humor, and when I woke I walked along the waterfront to the Arsenale, the renovated shipyard east of San Marco that hosts the Venice Biennale, Europe’s great showplace for contemporary art.

At the Teatro alle Tese, I stood in line for a ticket to a modern dance performance that ended just as the sun was melting into the boat basin.

I meant to go straight home. But along the way, I passed Al Covo, considered one of the best fish restaurants in Venice, so I stopped in. I will never forget my meal. It began with steamed mussels and zucchini flowers, followed by delicately fried, black ink-crusted baby squid, available only that week, the owner said.

## CAMPO SAN BARNABA, DORSODURO

Guidebooks pay scant attention to the Campo San Barnaba, near the Ca’ Rezzonico Museum on the western side of the Grand Canal, perhaps because the 18th century church of the same name is somewhat forlorn.

Deconsecrated and emptied of its best art, it is an exposition space now, currently hosting a show on the whimsical machinery designs of Leonardo da Vinci.

A 10-minute walk from Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, with its divine “Assumption of the Virgin” (1516-1518) by Titian, and the Gallerie dell’Accademia in the other direction, the small square is found only by wandering.

It’s never crowded, which has endeared it to filmmakers. Katharine Hepburn fell into a canal here in “Summertime” (1955), and Harrison Ford sought the Holy Grail at San Barnaba in “Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade” (1989).

But the campo has its own stories to tell, some even verifiable, like the one about Lucrezia Contarini, who was attended by 150 ladies when she married the doge’s son at San Barnaba in 1441.

Another somewhat more doubtful tale concerns the noisy ghost of a French crusader whose mummy was unearthed nearby. Apparently, he got drunk and drowned in a canal before ever reaching Jerusalem.

The campo has a well, two restaurants with outdoor seating favored by students from the nearby Ca’ Foscari University of Venice and a floating greengrocery laden with blessings from the countryside.

The boat is permanently moored by the Ponte dei Pugnì, where rival gangs once brawled and a man with a knife sometimes sits, expertly extracting artichoke hearts from their thorny coats of armor.

A string of shops and restaurants lines the Calle Lunga San Barnaba, which emanates from the southwestern corner of the campo. I especially liked the Pizzeria Al Profeta and a fabric store called Annelie Pizzi e Ricami that sells soft, white, cotton First Communion gowns.

I stayed at the Hotel Locanda San Barnaba on Calle del Traghetto, which runs between the campo and the Ca’ Rezzonico vaporetto stop on the Grand Canal. The best of all the hotels I tried, it has big, old-fashioned rooms without too much fake Venetian froufrou, a decorous parlor on the second floor and a terrace in back.

There was time to visit the Ca’ Rezzonico Museum in an elegant palazzo created in part by the great Venetian Baroque architect Baldassare Longhena. Devoted to the arts of the 18th century, it has marvelous, frothy ceiling frescoes so masterfully executed by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo that the allegorical figures he depicted seem to float in the sky above.

In another room, I found old friends dallying with cads in “The Nuns’ Parlor at San Zaccaria” by Francesco Guardi (about 1750). But I did not tax myself by following a checklist of great sites. Instead, I adopted the rhythm of a Venetian summer by spending the late afternoon quietly in my room, with the curtains drawn and one of Donna Leon’s addictive mystery novels set in the Lagoon City and featuring the wise and patient Venice police Commissario Guido Brunetti.

Church bells summoned me to the campo around 6 p.m., where people began to emerge, whistling, with shopping bags and a beautiful array of dogs, surely the best-loved domesticated creatures on Earth.

I thought about walking to San Marco but left the notion on the table along with the toothpick that had skewered the slice of orange in my Spritz.

So, I really can’t say how long the lines are at the Doge’s Palace this summer.

But I do know where to get artichoke hearts and First Communion gowns.



# Local Announcements

## Celebration of Giorgia Leonforte's Baptism



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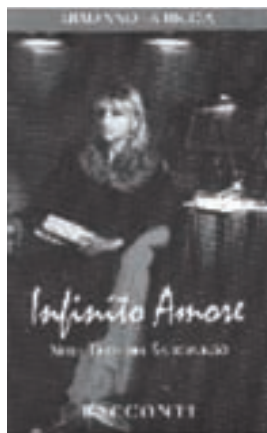


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