



Culinary Institute
of America

Regional Italian Cuisine: Central Regions



Learning Objectives

- Understand the influences of geography and climate on Central Italian cuisine.
- Describe the flavor profiles of Central Italian cuisine.
- Explain the common cooking techniques used in Central Italy.
- Explain the different aspects of each region's cuisine in Central Italy.
- List the popular dishes particular to each region in Central Italy.
- Prepare a variety of dishes representative of the Central Italian regions using standardized recipes.



Regions

- Known for its rich history, vibrant culture, and stunning landscapes
- The heart of the Renaissance and the Papal States

Lazio

- Ancient Rome
- **City:** Rome

Marche

- Beaches, shoe making
- **City:** Ancona

Tuscany

- Beautiful country
- **Cities:** Pisa, Florence

Umbria

- Medieval hill towns, truffles
- **City:** Perugia

Abruzzo & Molise

- Ancient towns
- **City:** Pescara

Emilia Romagna

- Art, history
- **City:** Bologna





Geography & Climate



Access to the coast: fresh seafood

Lakes/rivers: freshwater fish

- Amo, Tiber rivers
- Trasimeno, Bolsena, Bracciano lakes

Apennines Mountains: extensive pastures

- Meat, cheese production

Hills: fertile soil

- Ideal for olives, grapes, grains, legumes, vegetables, livestock, dairy farming

Woodlands: ideal for chestnuts, mushrooms, truffles, herbs, honey

Climate: warm summers, mild winters

- Extended growing season



Flavors

- Long agricultural tradition with a focus on bold, earthy flavors
- Rich sauces, strong cheeses

Herbs: rosemary, sage, thyme, parsley, bay leaves, oregano, mint

Spices: black pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves, saffron

Defining ingredients: olive oil, tomatoes, cheese, garlic, vinegar, cured/smoked meats, bread



Cooking Techniques

- Rustic, hearty, meat heavy slow-cooked dishes & soups
- Olive oil as primary cooking fat

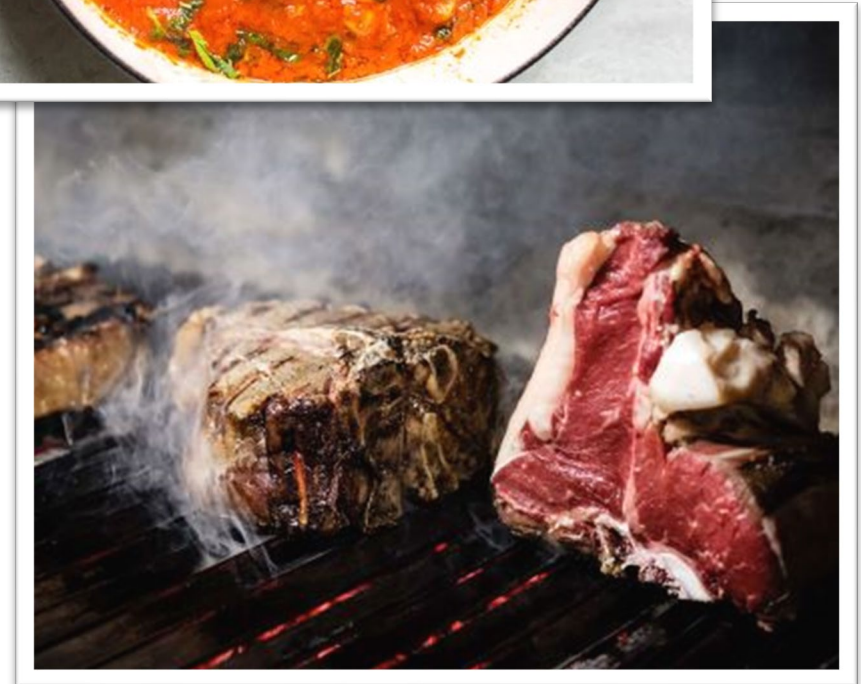
Grilling: for meats, vegetables (*bistecca alla fiorentina*)

Slow cooking: enhances flavors in braises, stews (*cacciatore*)

Baking: for savory dishes (*pasta al forno, pappa al pomodoro*), for baked goods (bread and pies)

Sautéing: used to start sauces, create bases for soups, ragus

Curing, smoking: used for regional salumi (*capocollo, Prosciutto Toscana*)



Pasta

Dried and fresh pasta: both are commonly used

Mild climate: both durum and soft wheat grown for flour

- Each region has its own preference

Dried pasta uses:

- Everyday meals due to longer shelf life
- Paired with heartier, tomato/oil-based sauces

Fresh pasta uses:

- Family style cooking, special occasions, holidays
- Paired with light, creamy, delicate sauces/dishes



Lazio Cuisine



- Influenced by rural & city life
- Rich Roman history
- Rustic dishes (roasts, stews)
- Fresh, seasonal, simple
- Olive oil, wheat production

Meat: pork, lamb, beef

Vegetables: artichokes, endive, chicory (*puntarelle*), fava beans, peas

Fruits: oranges, lemons, grapes, apples

Wine: *Frascatti, Castelli Romani* wines

Cheese: *Pecorino Romano*



Popular Dishes



**Pasta with pork,
eggs, cheese**
(*Carbonara*)



**Veal wrapped in
prosciutto**
(*Saltimbocca*)



Braised artichoke hearts
(*Carciofi alla Romana*)

Marche Cuisine



Inland: meat, vegetable based

- Meat: pork, beef, lamb, chicken

Coast: fish, seafood based

- Egg pasta from *Campofilone*
- Deep-fried foods

Cheese: *Casciotta d'Urbino*, *Pecorino*

Staples: wheat, corn, olives (for oil), green anise

Fruit: apples, pears, peaches

Vegetables: artichokes, tomatoes, onions, mushrooms

Wine: *Verdicchio*, red wines



Popular Dishes



Thin egg pasta
(*Maccheroncini di Campofilone*)



Fish stew
(*Brodetto*)



Fried olives stuffed with meat
(*Olives all'Ascolana*)



Tuscany Cuisine

- Heart of Italian “poor cooking” (*cucina povera*)
- High-quality ingredients; low waste
- Bread accompanies all meals

Staples: wheat, olive oil, truffle production

Meat: beef, wild boar, deer, cured meats

Wine: *Chianti, Brunello di Montalcino, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano*

Vegetables: beans, artichokes, tomatoes, onions

Fruits: black Tuscan figs, grapes, citrus



Popular Dishes



**Young steer
porterhouse**
(*Bistecca Fiorentina*)



**Bread and
vegetable soup**
(*Ribolitta*)



Wild boar pasta
(*Pappardelle al
cinghiale*)

Umbria Cuisine



- Like Tuscany, Italy's "green heart"
- Simple, seasonal, hearty
- Truffle harvesting in Spoleto and Norcia; white and black varieties
- Reliance on hunting

Meat: wild boar, pigeon

Pasta: *Umbricelli*; only flour, water

Staples: pork, white beans, *Moraiolo* olives, *Castelluccio* lentils

Wine: *Sagrantino*, *Grechetto*, *Trebbiano* varieties

Vegetables: broccoli, tomatoes, artichokes

Fruit: apples, cherries, pears

Popular Dishes



Boneless pork roast
(*Porchetta*)



Thick pasta with truffle
(*Umbricelli al tartufo nero*)



Flatbread sandwich
(*Torta al testo*)



Abruzzo & Molise Cuisine

- Cuisine shaped by the mountains
- Hearty, comforting meals; rustic traditions

Staples: lamb, goat, olive oil, saffron, wheat, barley, chiles (*diavolino*)

Wine: *Montepulciano d'Abruzzo*, *Trebbiano*

Vegetables: potatoes, beans, tomatoes, peppers, artichokes

Fruits: apples, peaches, cherries, apricots, plums

Cheese: *Pecorino Abruzzese*



Popular Dishes



**Pasta made with a
guitar tool**
(*Maccherroni alla
chitarra*)



Grilled lamb skewers
(*Arrosticini*)



Spicy roast pork
(*Pampanella*)





Emilia-Romagna Cuisine



- Rich, indulgent, traditional, locally sourced
- Many local, PDO/ PGI-protected culinary specialties and products
- High use of animal fats in cooking

Meat: *Mortadella, Prosciutto di Parma*, pork

Cheese: *Parmigiano-Reggiano, Grana Padano*

Pasta: tagliatelle, tortellini

Fruit: apples, peaches, strawberries

Vegetables: pumpkins, tomatoes, lettuce

Wine: *Lambrusco, Albana, Sangiovese, Trebbiano, Malvasia*



Parmigiano-Reggiano

- One of the finest cheeses in the world
- Different from common Parmesan cheese
- Must be produced in Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena, Bologna, or Mantua to be considered true "parmigiano"

Milk type: cow

Texture: hard

Age: 1-3 years

Flavor: fruity, nutty, hard & gritty texture

Uses: in pastas, soups, risottos, or as a snack



Popular Dishes



**Pasta with meat
sauce**
(*Ragù Bolognese*)



Tortellini in broth
(*Tortellini en Brodo*)



Italian cured ham
(*Prosciutto di Parma*)



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Any Questions?