



Culinary Institute
of America

Regional Italian Cuisine: The Southern Regions and Italian Islands



Learning Objectives

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





Regions

- Also called the Mezzogiorno
- “Heel of the boot”
- Culturally disconnected from the rest of Italy
- Rich archeological history, beautiful coastlines

Basilicata

- Historic villages
- **City:** Potenza

Calabria

- Nature reserves
- **City:** Cosenza

Campania

- Amalfi Coast
- **City:** Naples

Apulia

- Med. coastline
- **City:** Bari

Sicily

- Med. island
- **City:** Palermo

Sardinia

- Med. island
- **City:** Sassari



Geography & Climate



Farming:

- Long & favorable growing season
- Olives, tomatoes, broccoli rabe, eggplant
- Dry climate → dried pasta

Beaches, coastlines

- Fresh seafood

Apennines Mountains

- Fruits, cheese, honey, herbs

Climate: hot/dry summers, mild/rainy winters, higher humidity

Islands: Sicily, Sardinia, Capri





Flavors

- Coastline brings fish, shellfish
- Olive oil > butter

Preservation: salting, curing, brining
capers, anchovies, olives

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

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

Defining ingredients: tomatoes,
seafood, regional cheeses, citrus, chilis



Cooking Techniques

- Quick, high-heat cooking methods
- Olive oil as primary cooking fat

Frying: for vegetables, seafood, sweets

Grilling: in coastal regions like Sicily & Campania

Sautéing: garlic, olive oil, herbs with vegetables, pasta sauces, seafood

Slow cooking: stews, tomato sauces, braised meats



Pasta

Dried pasta: typical pasta used

Warmer, dryer, sunny climate: durum wheat grown for flour

- Pastas dried using the sun: cheaper to produce

Texture: firm, chewy, dense, grainy, less tender

- Porous exterior: allows hearty sauces to grip better

Flavor: neutral, grainy, wheat forward

Cook time: 8-12 minutes

Popular varieties: spaghetti, penne, fusilli, rigatoni, orecchiette



Basilicata Cuisine

- Historical peasant cuisine (*la cucina povera*)
 - simple recipes, local ingredients

Large grain cultivation: ancient bread baking

Meat: pork, sheep, lamb, no fish

Staples: *Senise* peppers (*peperoni cruschi*), bulbs of *tassel hyacinth* plant (*lampascioni*)

Wine: *Aglianico del Vulture*

Vegetables: tomatoes, artichokes, peppers, eggplants, potatoes, onions

Fruits: apples, pears, cherries

Cheese: *Pecorino*, ricotta



Popular Dishes



**Pasta with tomato,
breadcrumbs,
anchovies**
(*Mollicata*)



**Wide pasta with
chickpeas**
(*Lagane e cicciari*)



**Bread with peppery
broth, poached egg**
(*Acquasale*)

Calabria Cuisine



- Rich tradition of preservation
 - *Pitta* bread served at every meal
- Spices:** many hot peppers (*peperoncino*)
- Meats:** pancetta, capocollo, salsiccia, soppressata
- *'Nduja*: spreadable pork sausage with chilis
- Seafood:** swordfish, anchovies, sardines, squid
- Vegetables:** tomatoes, peppers, *Tropea* onions, eggplants, olives
- Fruit:** bergamots, grapes, peaches, pears, citrus
- Cheese:** *Pecorino*, *Caciocavallo*

Popular Dishes



Chili-stuffed eggplants
(*Melanzane ripiene*)



Spicy pasta
(*Pasta alla Calabrese*)



Swordfish with tomatoes, olives, capers
(*Pesce spada alla ghiotta*)

Campania Cuisine

- Birthplace of pizza: soft, chewy, thin dough + fresh ingredients
- Thriving coffee culture
- Seafood & lemons from the Amalfi Coast

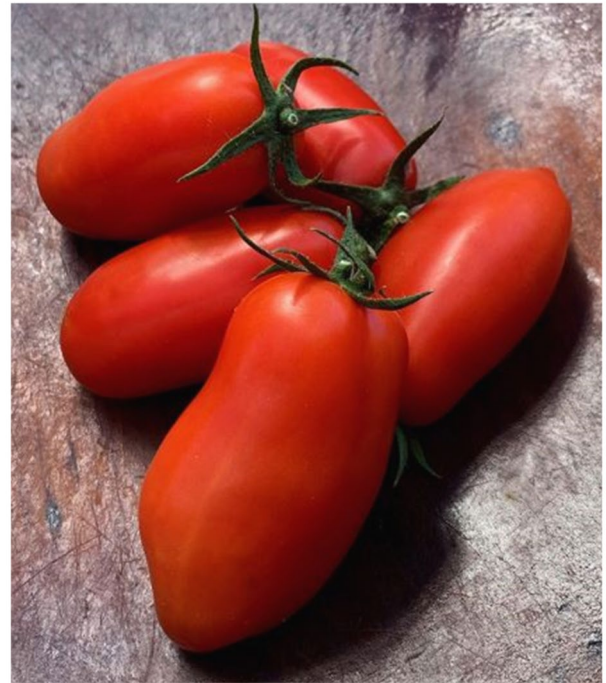
Meat: pork, beef, veal

Cheese: buffalo mozzarella

Vegetables: artichokes, eggplants, San Marzano tomatoes

Staples: Sorrento olive oil, garlic, chestnuts

Wines: *Aglianico, Fiano di Avellino, Greco di Tufo, Falanghina*



Popular Dishes



Neapolitan Pizza
(*Pizza Napoletana*)



Pasta with fish sauce
(*Spaghetti con colatura di alici*)



Caprese Salad
(*Insalata caprese*)

Apulia Cuisine

- Emphasis on raw materials, agricultural
- Simple flavors enhance main ingredients; home-country inspired
- 40% of Italy's olive oil, Coratina

Durum wheat: pasta, breads

Meat: sheep, lamb

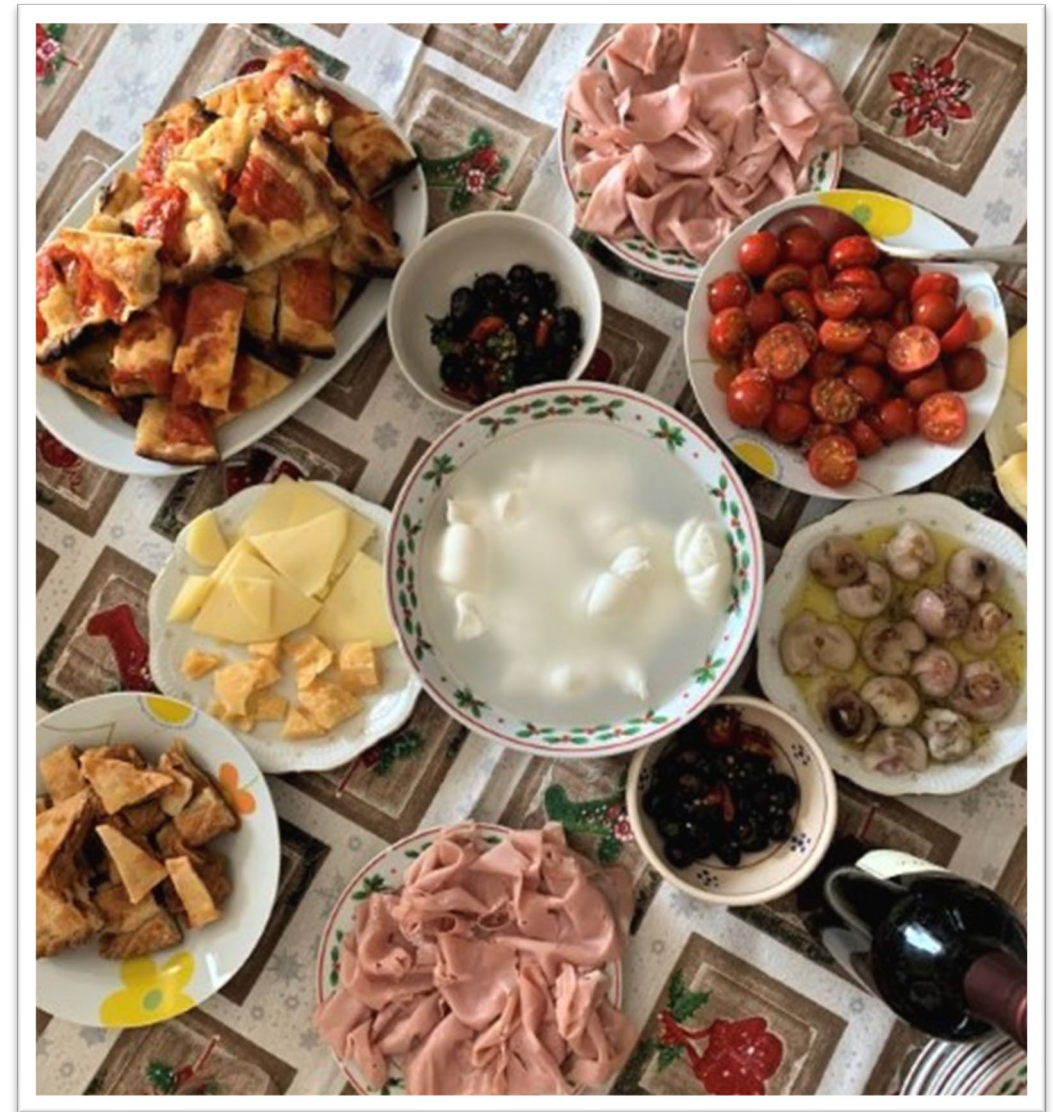
Seafood: mussels, clams, fish

Vegetables: tomatoes, artichokes, fava beans, chicory, turnip greens

Fruits: figs, apples, grapes, almonds

Cheese: *Burrata, Caciocavallo*

Wine: *Negroamaro, Primitivo*



Popular Dishes



**Pie with tomatoes,
onions, anchovies**
(*Calzone di cipolla*)



Pasta with broccoli rabe
(*Orecchiette con cime di
rape*)



**Durum wheat bread
with tomatoes**
(*Friselle salentine*)

Sicily Cuisine



- Greek, Spanish, African, Jewish, Arab influences
- Starters (*antipasti*) are central
- Abundance of fish & seafood
- *Pantelleria* island famous for capers

Nuts: pistachios, almonds, pine nuts

Fruits: figs, apples, grapes, peaches, lemons

Cheese: *Pecorino*, ricotta

Vegetables: tomatoes, olives

Wine: *Nero d'Avola*

Other: sardines, raisins, honey



Popular Dishes



**Stuffed fried
risotto**
(*Arancini*)



**Pasta with eggplant,
tomatoes**
(*Pasta alla norma*)



**Eggplant, olive,
tomato Salad**
(*Caponata*)

Sardinia Cuisine

- Diverse mix of cultures, like Sicily
- Mediterranean coasts, fishing towns
 - Fresh fish, seafood are staples

Wheat production: *Pane Carasau*, whole grain bread

Staples: cured fish roe (*bottarga*), olives, herbs

Fruits: *pompia*/citrus fruits, figs

Vegetables: tomatoes, eggplants, onions, artichokes, fava beans

Wine: *Vermentino*

Other: honey



Popular Dishes



**Crispbread with
tomato sauce, egg**
(*Pane fruttu*)



Small, toasted pasta
(*Fregola*)



Roast pig
(*Porcheddu*)



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Any Questions?