

Liguria, health and tourism

L.A. (November 16, 2010)



Presented at ENIT, I sapori della Liguria, an event centered around tourism, culture, longevity and health.

Rockefeller Center, headquarter of [ENIT](#) [2]: Liguria, the coastal region of north-western Italy, is at the center of the stage, presented by a panel of experts through tourism, culture, and health. Sandro Nobbio, President of the Accademia delle Tradizioni Enogastronomiche della Liguria di Ponente, showcased the typical products of the Riviera dei Fiori. At his side, a friend, a doctor, Angelo Ferrari, from [CEROVEC](#) [3] (Centro di Riferenza Nazionale per l'Oncologia Veterinaria e Comparata in Genoa). Journalists, tourist and commercial operators were able to take part in the event sponsored by Region Liguria, Province of Imperia, and several townships of the Riviera dei Fiori.

After the warm introduction by Riccardo Strano (Director of ENIT North America), who reminded everyone of how important the attention of American press is to Liguria, Claudio Bozzo, a thoroughbred Ligurian in New York and president of [MSC Cruises](#) [4], spoke about the territory, from the mountains overlooking the sea to its multicolored villages along the coast that can be reached by boat. And then the gastronomy, and first of all the pesto, which can only be tasted in Liguria, where the right kind of basil grows.

Afterwards Sandro Nobbio and Angelo Ferrari took the stage. The Accademia's work is very important for development of this territory, which is covered in history everywhere from its coast to its hills and mountains. In a territory so rich with past jewels, important gastronomic scenes are strongly present in its Medieval villages. And the producers, thanks to the Accademia, are allowing the local typical products to be known around the world. The discovery is of a Ligurian gastronomy, renewed in its simplicity that keeps up with the food needs of today. Liguria is the only Italian region to have Alps, Apennines and the sea, and it enjoys the mild climate of the Tyrrhenian Sea, remaining protected up north by the mountains. This, together with the commercial and historic tradition of Genoa, created a gastronomy that harmonizes the fruits of the woods, the garden and the sea. For Angelo Ferrari "The quality of life has been improved and lengthened for three reasons, healthy food, movement, and socializing." "Liguria represents these three aspects in a global way." And he reminded us how the Mediterranean diet began in Italy, and how it is based upon pasta, oil and vegetables, all typical Ligurian products with highly important dietary qualities. He then spoke about movement and how Liguria, because of its shape and climate, allows plenty of physical activities in the open. Lastly he explained the socializing aspect, reminding us about the important Ligurian calendar of events, frequently aimed at senior citizens. For Nordio it is important to make clear how the promotion of a territory, today, must go hand in hand with the cultural promotion, and how the culinary experience must use culture to attract attention. This time he presented a pasta from the province of Imperia made with hard wheat kneaded with Vermentino. "This" he said "represents a vehicle for the promotion of the territory if coordinated with a message of correct diet". And he added "We aim toward two elements. Professionalism and high quality of the products for promoting the territory".

Following the presentation, during the tasting of Ligurian products, we spoke a bit with Ferrari.

The message is clear. Also because the spokesman is a doctor: aiming at the marriage between nutrition education and tourism. Therefore health

"Yes. For example in Savona for cardiology we began an initiative called 'The Restaurants of the Heart'. Doctors, veterinarians and dentists teach the chefs to cook by giving them indications on how they should be cooked to avoid those activities that can stress from the point of view of the food. It is important to cook in a healthy fashion also because I saw that in Italy, and even more so here, it is common to eat out..."

And what does it mean to export such a plan, in the US, for instance?

Last year we visited the Embassy in Washington and presented the recipe book called "The Recipe of the Heart". Today we are here and have brought a very articulated plan in that sense. There is great sensibility in the States in this direction and president Obama himself is working on these themes.

Many of our readers are of the younger generations. Do you think that there exist affordable touristic proposals?

Yes, for example there is a circuit of agriturismo, half-pensions for 50/60 Euros, perhaps in the inland hills, which mean places with local products. We strongly aimed at this aspect of health and gastronomy keeping present that 30% of adolescents are overweight and 13% are obese. In America it is even worse.

With Riccardo Strano, director of Enit, we talked about the topic in a more global way concerning ENIT's promotion of tourism through products.



"Tourism becomes even more attractive if one goes in deep with certain products." He said "In North America, but especially in New York, where there is a knowledge of Italian destinations, promotion must be made deep down, by speaking also about products.

In the states where Italy is not as well known, we must still speak about the large cities that attract tourism. Here what we are trying to reach is a meeting between enogastronomy, good living and, as in this case, also a diet for always remaining healthy and live long, which can be a winning move.

It is very interesting that the tastes of the different regions become an element that characterizes the territory. On December 7 a scientific presentation will take place with university professors and doctors regarding the Mediterranean diet and the qualities of the products mentioned, therefore not only with narrations by important chefs through recipes, we will dig deeper where the clinical aspect is concerned."

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