

The Art of Making the Neapolitan Pizza

Natasha Lardera (January 22, 2015)



Rossopomodoro, a Neapolitan restaurant and pizzeria located in Manhattan's West Village, hosted an event supporting a petition urging UNESCO to add Neapolitan pizza to a list designated to protect cultural assets from disappearing. Moderated by Simone Falco, CEO of Rossopomodoro US, Rossopomodoro, the panel included Italy's former Agriculture and Environment Minister and petitioner Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio, Franco Manna, President and Founder of Rossopomodoro and Nicola Farinetti, Owner/Partner of EATALY.

On January 20th, Rossopomodoro, a Neapolitan restaurant and pizzeria located in Manhattan's West Village, hosted an event supporting a petition urging UNESCO to add Neapolitan pizza to a list designated to protect cultural assets from disappearing.

The evening started with a presentation on the petition and its importance.



Moderated by Simone Falco, CEO of Rossopomodoro US, the panelists of the evening were Italy's former Agriculture and Environment Minister Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio, Franco Manna, President and Founder of Rossopomodoro, Sergio Miccu, President of Associazione Pizzaiuoli Napoletani, Antimo Caputo, CEO of Antico Molino Caputo Flour of Naples and Nicola Farinetti, Owner/Partner of EATALY.

The evening was also an opportunity to have a delicious aperitivo with authentic Neapolitan pizza from Rossopomodoro's Neapolitan Pizzaiolo Rosario Granieri and other small plates from Rossopomodoro Executive Chef Kenneth Welch.

UNESCO's "List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding" is composed of intangible heritage elements that concerned communities and State Parties consider require urgent measures to keep them alive.

"Recognition of the art of making Neapolitan pizza by UNESCO would protect the pizza and the economy associated with it" Scanio said, stating that inferior products that use Italian names to suggest authenticity are not only sub-standard, but threaten Italy's economy. False 'Italian-sounding' products (in latest estimates given by Italian Farming Association Coldiretti) are estimated to potentially cost Italy 300,000 jobs, with turnover in this sector having already reached 60 billion Euros.

"Pizza is one of the most widely known Italian food products," Scanio states in the petition, "it is one of the most important symbols that represent our country. Neapolitan pizza is the only type of Italian pizza that is officially recognized on a national and international level.

Since February 2010 it is officially known to be A Guaranteed traditional specialty of the European Union. It is only fair that Italy asks UNESCO's central headquarters in Paris to insert pizza in the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. UNESCO's recognition would be a "weapon" used to protect pizza itself and the economic advantages linked to it, in the battle against the Italian Sounding phenomenon.

We need to protect our Made in Italy. We are talking about a tradition that was born in Naples and that is passed on from generation to generation. It is now widespread not only in Italy but all over the world."

On March 26, 2011 an official request for the inclusion of Neapolitan Pizza and the Art of Pizza Making in the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding was presented in Paris. Then in 2012 UNESCO changed the procedures and each country can present only one petition a year, so this petition is in line waiting to be addressed.

"My request is," Scanio continued "that our petition be considered in the first months of 2015 in order to be taken care of by the beginning of Expo Milano."

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