



## Unwrap Your Box and Enjoy a Piece of Italy

Gianna Corti (December 18, 2015)

Imagine receiving in the mail something uniquely special... something to unwrap, discover and taste... with Italynthebox, Italian food specialties will reach you at home, wherever you are. High quality food products which are made in Italy by small, independent producers are now available to all. We have interviewed the representative of a company from Capracotta in Molise. Le IfeTartufi is one of the firsts to take part in the project. Le IfeTartufi is representative of the pristine terrain of Alto Molise, a land between high mountains and idyllic valleys.

A couple of weeks back, i-Italy announced the birth of a very special startup, an enterprise that brings the excellence of foods, treats prepared by small specialty food producers, that are Made in Italy into American homes. The project is called Italynthebox and it's coming to the market through crowdfunding.

Italynthebox is an initiative that comes to life thanks to the collaboration between Alessio Rossi, a digital marketing strategist, and Giovanni Colavita, CEO of Colavita Usa, the first importer of extra virgin olive oil and Italian specialty foods in the United States.

All participating clients will receive, wether once or twice a month, a box called «Italy in the Box» containing six high quality food specialties. The organization helps small businesses arrange shipments, obtain all the necessary US health permits and putting together a story on the origins and characteristics of each product as it enters the American market.

All subscribers, depending on how much they donate to the crowdfunding, will receive either a box or boxes of regional specialties for a first "taste" of the selected specialties. This is the best way to get acquainted with the infinite world of Italian food specialties.

Shipment after shipment, people will receive in their own home real edible treasures prepared by specialty food producers scattered all through Italy. Italy is indeed super rich of small realities that risk being unknown... this project changes things and brings them on the American market. We could say "Think locally, act globally."

Let's go straight to one of these producers: in fact we went to Molise to get the testimony of a participating company. We spoke with Valentina Sammarone, in charge of sales and communications of a company that produces and distributes truffles. Le Ife Tartufi collects truffles, the precious



natural fruit of the region, and features them in refined specialties.

From Capracotta, a small, picturesque town surrounded by mountains and beautiful valleys, Valentina talked about the region of Molise and the company she represents. Here are her own words.

"Molise is a small and pristine region. This small slice of land stretches from snowy mountain peaks to the coast, going through beautiful and fertile hills. We are just a few inhabitants and this, along with the region's low level of industrialization, has allowed the complete preservation of the local natural vegetation; in the hills there are lush oak forests and gorges dotted by willow trees and majestic poplars, while at high altitudes there are extensive and beautiful forests of oak, beech, pine and fir trees, including white firs that extend to the border with Capracotta."

We are talking about idyllic places where the fauna is protected by the confines of the Parco Naturale d'Abruzzo, which actually includes the region of Molise.

Around here agriculture and animal breeding are the main economic resources, and they allow production of excellent food products, including unique meats and famous local cheeses. On top of that, Alto Molise is a territory rich in valuable woodland products such as an incredible variety of mushrooms among which truffles stand out as they are precious key ingredients of local gastronomy."

Indeed the woodlands of Molise are ideal for the growth of truffles, fungi which play the role of environmental sentinels because they won't grow in polluted areas.

"Le Ife Tartufi has decided to become one with this wonderful environment," Sammarone continued, "We process the truffles naturally, but we do that in modern facilities that are ecologically advanced and energized by the sun and the wood of the trees of our woods. The water we use to wash our truffles is recycled and used to irrigate the truffle fields owned by us."

Indeed, small businesses such as this one, pay great attention to the environment and its issues. The land is important, it's a real treasure to be used and promoted but mostly, to be protected. It's not difficult for us to understand the value of these products and this makes us want to try them even more.

"The main value of our products is certainly in the raw material. As I mentioned earlier, our woods are the ideal habitat for the growth and developing of delicious truffles. We simply pick them up at the peak of their ripeness and we process them naturally while mixing them with other ingredients of the highest quality, such as extra virgin olive oil, porcini mushrooms, butter and acacia honey. Even the salts we use are carefully chosen. We hand pick all our suppliers in the most accurate way."

As it often happens, the story of businesses like this one is simple, yet it must be told. "It's important to tell the story that a specific product represents," she told us, "It's the story of a



dream, in this case it was Giuseppe's dream. Giuseppe is a young and brave entrepreneur with a passion for the woods and their truffles, but also for his family and friends. Theirs is a strong and well-matched team that every day works hard at bringing our gastronomic traditions outside of our region and country. Nothing pleases us more than seeing our jars of truffles sporting the Capracotta name. The choice to work in a reality like ours gives us top quality of life and work. Ife is a company made of people not of numbers. Behind the desire to internationalize a small production and to act globally there is a desire to grow but also great pride, the pride to represent our country around the world.

The ability to offer our products to foreign markets implies our growth as a company and as a territory. The process started years ago, when Ife decided to extend our activity, starting from the commercialization of fresh truffles to the production of truffle based products. Our international endeavor has motivated us to move to a bigger facility, modern and functional, where we continue to process truffles naturally."

And Italynthebox? Is it an opportunity?

"This is a unique opportunity," she answered , "because it pairs Ife truffles with other products of great quality and regard. This is important to all of us. Italynthebox is a guarantee for both the consumer and the producers and it's a project created by food professionals who know Italy and its products really well. We are happy to be one of the first companies participating in the project."

How do you picture the arrival of a box in an American home?

"I like the idea of packaging a small piece of our woods. It's like the arrival of something precious. Something to unwrap, discover and taste."

We get it, indeed we also like the idea of American homes opening boxes from Italy, don't you?

If you want to support these producers and open these boxes of pieces of Italy, pledge on kickstarter by clicking on this link... the possibilities are endless.

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