

i-Italy NY. From Internet to TV and on Paper

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At the starting line is the i-Italy|NY network, a magazine and television show dedicated to Italian New York. Presented last Friday at the Consulate General of Italy in New York, i-Italy|NY is a dual publishing initiative inspired by Italy and dedicated to the U.S. marketplace, specifically New York City. i-Italy | NY includes a monthly magazine and a weekly television program about everything Italian in New York.

Exclusively in English and focused on the vast audience of Americans who love Italy, i-Italy | NY is a spin-off of www.i-Italy.org, the largest multi-media portal devoted to Italian and Italian American affairs. Published online in the United States since 2008, it has now developed into a true multi-channel publishing network that spans web, print, TV, and mobile platforms.

A panel discussion about the concept of *italianità* abroad took place before a packed audience at the Consulate. Participants included Consul General Natalia Quintavalle, musician Jovanotti, designer Massimo Vignelli, director of New York University's Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò Stefano Albertini ,



host of the television show i-Italy | NY Riccardo Costa, and managing director of the i-Italy publishing network Letizia Airos.

The discussion was moderated by journalist and writer Fred Plotkin, who has a deep knowledge of Italy and has collaborated on important publications in New York. Plotkin guided the conversation with a format reminiscent of the Maurizio Costanzo Show, moving between the chairs and sofas where panelists were seated. Plotkin interviewed guests about the concept at the heart of this new initiative: *italianità* in New York. Emphasizing his appreciation of i-Italy's editorial projects, Plotkin asserted that "they've always had style, right from the start."

Jovanotti, talking about himself as a recent citizen of New York City, said that he felt proud and honored to be on the cover of the magazine's first issue as well as interviewed for the second TV episode that recently aired. "When I'm in New York, I feel more Italian than when I'm in Italy because this is a city that fosters encounters, diversity, pollination, mixing. We need to open up," he added with a hint of paradox, "we must be less Italian to be more Italian."

Massimo Vignelli, the doyen of Italian design who has been living in New York for decades, underscored the light and shadow of the city, and the significant contribution that Italians have made. As much as online media is favored over print, Vignelli stressed that "timing is everything and the timing of i-Italy | NY is right." Having demonstrated that its online presence is on target, i-Italy has expanded and is now focused on traditional media platforms in a daring move that goes from global to local.

For her part, Consul General Natalia Quintavalle was very pleased to host the launch of this bold initiative that is momentous for the Italian and Italian-American communities as well as all Americans interested in Italy.

Stefano Albertini reiterated the importance of i-Italy's mission, especially for an institution like New York University's Casa Italiana, an established institution which diffuses the spirit of Italian culture to American society at large. "We have worked with i-Italy since its inception, and this new initiative confirms that they are an ideal media partner for bringing Italy to Americans."

"Stay foolish. Stay hungry." Recalling Steve Jobs' famous quote, Letizia Airos summed up the approach of all those who work on this project, in particular the editorial staff. It's no coincidence that in 2008 i-Italy's own name was selected as a tribute to one of the greatest innovators of our time.

Letizia Airos gave special thanks to Anthony J. Tamburri, dean of CUNY's John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, who has supported the project since the beginning, even when few believed in its feasibility. Some of the most prominent supporters of the project also include Giovanni Colavita and John Profaci (Colavita USA) who sponsored the first season of the television show, and Nicola Farinetti and Dino Borri of Eataly, the Italian gourmet megastore on Fifth Avenue, which is one of largest distribution points for the magazine.

The complimentary inaugural issue of the i-Italy | NY magazine is available at Eataly and at other Italian spots throughout the city including bookstores, art galleries, restaurants, wine bars, schools, universities, and institutions.

This issue features exclusive interviews with musician Jovanotti, directors Paolo and Emilio Taviani, president of the region of Puglia Nichi Vendola, as well as articles by experts on food, music, and Italian culture, and columns by Fred Plotkin, Charles and Michele Scicolone, Robert Viscusi, Anthony Tamburri, and others. There are also suggestions for "Italian New York" with a detailed event calendar of exhibits, concerts, shows, recommendations, and reviews of Italian restaurants (this issue is devoted to seafood), ideas for shopping Made in Italy, and a special section dedicated to tourism (Puglia was highlighted in the first issue).

Most of the magazine's content is also available on video. Short segments are viewable by using a smartphone to click on the QR code printed next to articles and interviews. Viewers can also watch the accompanying TV magazine broadcast on NYC Life-Channel 25, the official television station of



the city of New York transmitted to over 18 million people in the New York City metropolitan area and much of the tri-state area.

The program and the entire guide to Italian New York will also be available over the internet and on the iPhone (and therefore viewable from Italy), as well as through IPTV, a new generation of devices popular in the U.S. that includes Samsung SmartTV, Roku, and AppleTV (via iPhone).

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