

Colavita: Three Generations and 75 Years of Success

Francy Loiolo (November 14, 2013)



Three generations of the Colavita family celebrated the company's 75th anniversary at Caterina de' Medici restaurant, located in the Colavita Center For Italian Food and Wine on campus at the Culinary Institute of America (CIA). They were the first to bring Italian extra virgin olive oil on the American tables and now they are launching a wine line. STAY TUNED FOR OUR SPECIAL VIDEO ON I-ITALY|TV

Three generations of the Colavita family celebrated the company's 75th anniversary at [Caterina de' Medici restaurant](#) [2], located in the Colavita Center For Italian Food and Wine on campus at the Culinary Institute of America ([CIA](#) [3]), home of some of the country's most renown chefs.

International importers and distributors of the Colavita products came from 75 different countries just to celebrate the 75th year of life of this grand family institution.



Hundreds of guests which included the Colavita family from Molise, the Profaci family and the top of international food importers, were welcomed at the Colavita Center by Giovanni, Leonardo and Enrico Colavita with [John Profaci](#) [4], honorary chairman of Colavita USA, [Dr. Tim Ryan](#) [5], the president of the Culinary Institute of America, [Mr. Bill Terlato](#) [6], president of Terlato wines, the Consul General of Italy, [Natalia Quintavalle](#) [7], and the director of the Italian Trade Commission of New York, [Pier Paolo Celeste](#). [8]

“Decades ago it was basically impossible to find in the USA genuine Italian extra virgin olive oil,” the consul said, “but then Colavita showed up and they became the national leader of Italian products in the USA. It's thanks to them that Italian products are today integral ingredients in the kitchens of Americans country wide.”

As reiterated by Pier Paolo Celeste who, as the director of [ICE](#) [8], is responsible for the promotion of Italian products abroad.

“I have to thank you all individually,” he said, “because you make our job possible. You help us continue to push and introduce new Italian goodies on the American market.”

In addition to extra virgin olive oil, Colavita authentic Italian specialty products include durum wheat semolina pasta, a full selection of balsamic and wine vinegars, traditional and organic pasta sauces and olive-canola blended oils. All of them are the ingredients of choice for chefs in home and professional kitchens.

The Colavita family traces its roots to the small town of [Sant'Elia a Pianisi](#) [9], by [Campobasso](#) [10], in the region of Molise. It was there, in 1938, that [Giovanni Colavita](#) [11] founded the family olive oil production tradition and Colavita Extra Virgin Olive Oil was born.

A few decades later, in 1978 to be exact, [Enrico Colavita](#) [12], one of Giovanni's sons, came to vacation in the US and met, by chance, John J. Profaci. In just a few, Colavita USA was founded and Mr. Profaci began importing the Colavita oil to America.

It was a success and expansion was rapid... new facilities were opened, production increased and Colavita Extra Virgin Olive Oil is now sold in 72 countries around the world with the US being its largest market.

The Colavita Center For Italian Food and Wine, located on the grounds of the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) was opened in 2001.

The center is the only facility of its kind in the entire US and every CIA student must complete a course of study there in order to graduate. “At CIA we believe in education,” Dr. Ryan said, “and the Colavita family understands the importance of education. We found each other.

We are true believers that education can change the life of a young person for the good so here we are.” “In 2001, the Culinary Institute of America had the need to teach its students everything about Italian food,” Mr. Profaci said, “they were looking for the right partner and we accepted the invitation with pleasure. My son told me “Dad, it's a no brainer” and I followed his advice.

Centro Colavita plays a key role in the spreading of Italian quality cuisine in the USA. The Colavita family should be proud of the contribution they have given and keep giving to the development of the Italian food market in North America.”

Through partnership agreements, Colavita USA distributes leading Italian brands, including [Cirio tomatoes](#) [13] and beans, [Risco Scotti](#) [14] traditional and quick-serve rice, [San Benedetto mineral water](#) [15], and [Motta Panettone](#) [16], to thousands of grocery and specialty food stores nationwide. It is also the sole importer and distributor of Perugina products, so if you enjoy Baci chocolates, it is thanks to Colavita!

And their mission continues with a new, exciting chapter: wines. Indeed Colavita has partnered with



Terlato wines to bring consumers great Italian wines under the well established and superior Colavita name. "We only work with family run businesses and there was immediate chemistry the Colavitas. Together we have created a collection of super premium Italian wines."

"We knew that the Terlato family would be the ideal partner for our brand," Enrico Colavita, the company's CEO said, "They are the strongest company for marketing luxury wines and their vision for the Colavita wine brand is precisely what we are looking for. We are confident that our partnership with the Terlato family will enhance the Colavita brand."

The first four wines ready to be launched are [Pinot Grigio](#) [17] [Verdicchio](#) [18], [Pinot Noir](#) [19] and [Valpolicella Ripasso](#) [20]. Wine was a logical product extension for Colavita, "It has always been our passion," Enrico Colavita said, "But it took us a while because olive oil has always been our main focus. Once we have accomplished what we have with olive oil we were ready to branch out a little bit. Olive oil and wine go hand in hand. We are incredibly excited by out newest endeavor."

Rarely do we see vineyards not flanked by olive groves in the Italian countryside. This is because both grapes and olives enjoy and thrive in similar climates and soils... so they do go hand in hand.

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