

"WE ARE HERE"

Siamo Qui

ISSUE 551

DECEMBER 2019

HOLIDAYS

AT THE



ITALIAN AMERICAN
COMMUNITY CENTER

1973

Christmas
Tree
Lighting

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1
5:00 PM

Family
Christmas
Party

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15
Noon to 4:00 PM

La Befana

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5TH
12:00 PM to 4:00 PM

For reservations call 456-4222



Background: Designed by Freepik

NEWS & EVENTS

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President of the Italian American Community Center
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SOCIAL CALENDAR



- 12/1/19** **Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony - 5:00 pm**
- 12/3/19** Fall Chair Yoga - 6:00 pm
- 12/4/19** Member Exclusive: Weekly Co-Ed Poker Game - Noon*
- 12/4/19** Member Exclusive: Weekly Men's Poker Game - 5:00 pm*
- 12/10/19** Fall Chair Yoga - 6:00 pm
- 12/11/19** I.A.C.C. Women's League Meeting - Special Time - 6:00 pm
- 12/15/19** **Family Christmas Party - Noon To 4:00 pm**
- 12/17/19** Fall Chair Yoga Ends - 6:00 pm
- 12/18/19** Board Meeting IACC Foundation and IACC 6:30 pm
- 12/25/19** **Merry Christmas - I.A.C.C. Membership Office Closed**

*Co-Ed and Men's Poker are held every Wednesday.

Upcoming Events

- Jan. 5** **Lunch with La Befana - Noon**
- Feb. 2** **Super Bowl 54 Party 4:00 pm - 10:00 pm**
- Feb. 22** **Carnevale Dinner Dance 6:30pm - 11:30 pm**





President's Message



The club will certainly be buzzing with the holiday spirit once again this December and January. We will kick start the Holidays with the lighting of our Christmas tree on December 1st, followed by the Family Christmas Party on December 15th and culminating with Lunch with La Befana on January 5th.

I do not think it is any big secret that I am not a fan of cold weather or snow but what I am a huge fan of is the Christmas holidays. Growing up in the same house as my grandparents, I was able to experience the celebration of so many wonderful traditions along with the constant parade of relatives and friends stopping by. Time passes and things do change but my mother did a great job of keeping all the traditions going well into her 90's and now my wife, Nancy, continues carrying on the old traditions along with some new ones which we'll pass on to future generations. We will celebrate Saint Nicholas' Day, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Saint Lucy's Day, and, of course, the entire family will gather for the Feast of the Seven Fishes and for Christmas Day. When I was a kid, it was about getting presents but it was so much more growing up. It was a great time for family to stop, take a break and visit and get caught up with relatives we hadn't seen in a while. Of course, you could forget about dieting. The food and drink were never ending from Christmas Eve through New Year's Day. It just seemed like one continuous party! Such fond memories. As adults it is our responsibility to pass on these great ethnic traditions to the next generation so that they know their heritage and culture. They need to remember their bold ancestors who, in order to make a better life, left family, friends and all that they were comfortable with to come to a foreign country to create a new and better life than they had in Italy. This year when we gather around and celebrate the season, remember your family's pioneers by continuing the traditions that they brought over or bring back some that may have slipped away.

God bless you all and a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Jim Sano

JIM SANO
ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER
PRESIDENT



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COLUMBUS DAY GALA~ FRANK ZEOLI,

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HOURS: M-F 9:30AM TO 2:30PM

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----- ❄️ -----
Christmas
AT THE
ITALIAN AMERICAN
COMMUNITY
CENTER

----- ❄️ -----

Join us as we kick off
the Christmas season,
light the tree,
sing Italian Christmas
carols and enjoy
authentic Italian
dancing!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1st
IACC PARKING LOT
AT 5:00PM

Refreshments will
be served after the
tree lighting.

THE I.A.C.C. IN THE COMMUNITY

VA LUNCHEON



God bless and Thank you to all our Veterans! Here are some photos of the Monday, November 4th luncheon that we sponsored at the Stratton VA Hospital. We are happy to offer this as a small token of our appreciation and respect to all that have served!

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Current I.A.C.C. Membership expire Sunday, December 31st, 2019
Membership renewal starts December 26, 2019.
New enrollment begins January 2nd at the I.A.C.C. Membership office.

REMEMBER TO SPREAD THE WORD TO YOUR FRIENDS

You may enroll by sending your invoice (with payment)
in or by calling the I.A.C.C. Membership Office at (518) 456-4222.
Cash, Checks, Credit and Debit cards are accepted.

Thank You For Being A Member.

Here's To An Amazing 2020 At The Club!

THE ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER PRESENTS

family
CHRISTMAS
Party

Sunday, December 15th
Noon to 4:00 pm

Children 12 years old
and under are free

Children's Menu: Chicken Fingers
and Fries. Ice Cream sundae
for dessert.

Adults: \$26.00

Menu: Salad served family style, entrée
choices of Chicken Picatta with veggies or
Eggplant Parmigiana with veggies
and Dessert.

Music, Raffles, Games and, of course,
A Visit From Santa and Mrs. Claus!

Please call the office at 456-4222
with your reservations!

All reservations must be paid in advance.

*Please bring a wrapped gift with your child's
name on it for Santa to give out.*

Friuli Venezia Giulia

REGIONS OF ITALY

By JIM SANO



Udine

Friuli Venezia Giulia is Italy's north-easternmost region. It covers an area of 3,030 square miles comprising the provinces of Udine, Pordenone, Gorizia, and Trieste and is the fifth smallest region of the country. It borders Austria to the north and Slovenia to the east, the Adriatic Sea to the south, and the Veneto region to the west. One of Italy's newest regions, Friuli Venezia Giulia has only been part of Italy since 1954 and, as a result, many Italians still don't view the region as being truly Italian. The Friuli Venezia Giulia region is one of the smallest yet most culturally diverse areas in all of Italy. Its climate is equally diverse. The climate of the Friulian plain is humid sub-Mediterranean which makes this area suitable for growing white wine grapes. 2.5% of wine produced in Italy comes from this part of the region. The hills, however, have a continental climate and the mountainous regions have an alpine climate.

A Quick History Lesson: This region's vulnerability to invasion is evidenced by the fortifications built here from the Bronze Age to the Cold War. The region was easily accessible from outside of Italy and traditionally acted as a gateway for Germanic and Slavic invaders over the centuries. Known in Roman times as the Julian region, the area was divided after the barbarian invasions into a coastal part dominated by the Byzantines through the city and port of Grado and an inland zone ruled by the dukes of Friuli and the counts of Gorizia. The rise of the Roman

Catholic patriarchate of Aquileia to prominence in the 11th century brought Friuli and the Istrian peninsula, as well as the seacoast, under the control of this ecclesiastical sovereignty. The period of Aquileian rule ended when Venice became the great power in north-eastern Italy in 1420 and shared its dominion over the region with Austria (at Gorizia and Trieste). After 1815 all of Venezia Giulia and Friuli fell under Habsburg rule. Udine province (including Pordenone) became part of Italy in 1866, and the rest of the region (including much of what is now Slovenia and Croatia) was added in 1918. After World War II the Istrian peninsula, the hinterland of Trieste, and the Carso plateau became part of Yugoslavia, while Trieste and the area surrounding it became a free territory divided into northern and southern (A and B) zones under U.S., British and Yugoslavian administration, respectively. Udine province was detached from the Veneto and united with Gorizia province to form Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The London agreement of 1954 restored the city of Trieste and part of zone A to Italy and the semi-autonomous region of Friuli Venezia Giulia came into being with Trieste becoming the capital. A statute of autonomy for the region was passed on January 31, 1963. The

province of Pordenone was formed in 1968.

While the region today is a picture of quiet prosperity, much of the 20th century was another story. War, poverty, political uncertainty and the ongoing threat of devastating earthquakes saw Friulians become the north's largest migrant population with most bound for Australia and Argentina.

Did You Know: The region sits in the geographic center of Europe. As a result of having switched hands between countless empires and republics, the region is a multicultural melting pot of Slavs, Austrians and Italians. The people speak multiple languages, ranging from Venetian dialects in the south, Slovene and Bavarian in the north and the native Friulan dialect as well as the official language of Italian.

The region ranges in terrain from the rocky Alps and foothills in the north, to arid or marshy lowlands in the south. The rainfall in the north (the highest in Italy) favors the development of natural meadows for livestock and the ham and dairy products of Friuli are famous. Corn and some other cereals are grown in the valley of the Tagliamento. The southern part of the region is a low coastal plain, some of it occupied by the shallow lagoons of Grado and Caorle. To the southeast, territory along the coast is mostly



Trieste



Vineyards in the Northeast Italian wine region of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

plains. Between Trieste and the Alps, there is a wide, limestone plateau, the Carso, which was an important battlefield in WWI where innumerable Italian and Austrian soldiers lost their lives. The region is one of Italy's most seismically active. A May 1976 earthquake centered north of Udine killed more than 1,000 people.

Economy: Although small, Friuli Venezia Giulia has played an important role in connecting Italy and the Mediterranean to Central and Eastern Europe. The economy of Friuli Venezia Giulia is one of the most developed in the country. Its core is largely based on agriculture with the main crops being maize, sugar-beet, wheat, soybeans, and the production of renowned wines. There are also many medium and small-sized industries in the chemical, textile, silk, paper, and furniture sectors. These are centered around the towns of Manzano, Maniago (knives) and Brugnera (furniture). Several large enterprises are also present in the region in both the industry and services sector. Some of these companies are world-leaders in their relevant sectors such as Fincantieri (world's largest cruise ship builder) who has offices in Trieste with shipyards in Monfalcone, Zanussi-Electrolux (makers of electrical appliances) in Pordenone and Assicurazioni Generali (a leading insurance company in the world) who has their world headquarters in Trieste.

Wine: Friuli Venezia Giulia produces more than half of Italy's white wines and its white wines are typically refreshing with a delicate

fragrance and floral flavor. The region's position between the Alps and the Adriatic produces a breezy, sunny microclimate that benefits its vineyards and gives the territory its unique characteristics. Wines made using traditional grapes from this region, such as Pinot Grigio, take on unique flavors. Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Pinot Bianco using indigenous grapes tend to be fresh and fruity. The pricey Ramandolo and Picolit white wines are difficult to find and are special treats for the white wine connoisseur. Friuli Venezia Giulia is the home of Prosecco. The sparkling wine takes its name from the town Prosecco-Contovello outside Trieste. Italy produces 150 million bottles of Prosecco from here per year with global sales exceeding Champagne. Friulian Grappa made from stems and skins after making wine is considered the best in Italy. This native liquor, the only true Italian spirit, once had a nasty reputation as "Italian moonshine" and was not usually found outside Italy. However, it is finally becoming popular outside of Italy thanks to standardization in the distilling process and some savvy marketing.

Regional Food: The food of Friuli Venezia Giulia is indicative of the region's history. The Friuli portion is more rustic and resembles the cuisine of other Italian regions. The cuisine in the Trieste area reflects the German/Slavic traditions of Venezia Giulia. Many Italians regard Prosciutto di San Daniele (the king of the hams) to be the best prosciutto in Italy. Surely the Parma prosciutto lovers would disagree but that debate is indicative of Italian

regional pride. For over 200 years, olives have been grown around Trieste and all along the Friulian coast. The premier olive oil is Tergeste DOP extra virgin olive oil. This oil has an intense fruity fragrance, but the flavor is spicy and bitter, which makes it a great finishing oil for simple dishes.



Montasio (DOP licensed) is an ancient alpine cheese revered all over Italy as a particularly versatile cooking cheese. Montasio was first made by monks at Moggio Udinese Abbey in the thirteenth century as a fresh cheese, but these days it is made all over the Julian Alps. Montasio can be matured to varying degrees. A minimum maturation period of sixty days gives you smooth, creamy Montasio Fresco and the cheese gets crumblier and more intense the longer it ages up to a maximum of eighteen months.

Brovada DOP is a sharp, fermented turnip that you might mistake for sauerkraut, although the two are different. It's fairly clear that brovada has its roots over the border in Austria. Whereas sauerkraut uses cabbage, brovada takes thin slices of turnip and marinates them in red wine vinegar and grapes before cooking it all down with oil, bay leaves and a nice chunk of fatty pork.



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Friuli Venezia Giulia



Salamini Italiani alla Cacciatora (DOP licensed) are little salumis (cured meats) which supposedly appeared around the sixteenth century to provide soldiers and hunters, with long-lasting rations, hence the name 'alla cacciatora'. The salamini are made from pork shoulder, neck and bacon. The cuts are trimmed of excess fat, seasoned with salt, pepper and garlic and then stuffed into a sausage casing. After just ten days of maturing, they're ready to eat.

Since the 1800s, white asparagus has been grown in the flat lands around Udine. Originally planted in the vineyards to reduce the excessive moisture of the soil, these vegetables are today considered a true delicacy.

Cherry gnocchi are part of the region's Austrian heritage. These dumplings are common in the summer months in the northern part of the region and in autumn there is a version made with plums or prunes.

Dessert: Regional desserts again reflect the diverse cultural history with such offerings as apple strudel, cuguluf (a ring cake that originated in Vienna) and gubana, a spiral-shaped yeast cake with a rich filling of nuts, raisin, pine nuts, sugar, and lemon zest. Yet this region, to the upset of many Venetians, lays claim over the birth of tiramisu and has named it a traditional regional dish. For years the Veneto region's claim was given most credence. The region, which encompasses Venice, asserts that the dessert was originally invented at Le Beccherie restaurant in Treviso in the 1960s.

Recently, food writers Clara and Gigi Padovani reignited the controversy by finding recipes for tiramisu in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region that dated from the 1950s. Again, it's very Italian to disagree. Whatever its origins, one thing can be agreed upon, Tiramisu is delicious!

Sites to See: This region is one of the least visited by tourists but certainly not from lacking interesting things to see. The region has many fine art cities and cultural centers, medieval castles and Venetian villas, museums of the Great War and fine seaside resorts as Tarvisio, Grado and Lignano Sabbiadoro. Scuola Mosaicisti del Friuli, the mosaic school in Spilimbergo is one of Friuli's most fascinating places. It was established in 1922 in a post-war effort to provide vocational skills for the poverty-stricken area.

The Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta in Aquileia, a Latin cross-shaped basilica rebuilt after an earthquake in 134, features an entire floor covered with one of the largest and most spectacular Roman-era mosaics in the world. Risiera di San Sabba was a former rice-husking plant in Trieste that became a concentration camp in 1943 and has been a national monument and museum since the 1960s. The site commemorates the 5000 people who perished here.

Piazza dell'Unità d'Italia in Trieste is Italy's largest sea-facing piazza and is an elegant triumph of Austro-Hungarian town planning and contemporary civil pride. The Roman Empire stretched far and wide in its time, so it's not surprising that Roman ruins can be found even in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Aquileia is merely more than a village these days but the site of Aquileia is believed to be the largest

Roman city yet to be excavated. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is rich in vestiges from the forum to the ruins of the river port and the basilica. It is also one of the most important examples of early Christian art. The Friuli Venezia Giulia region is home to the Guinness Book of World Records holder for the largest tourist cave on Earth, the Grotta Gigante. It is a single cavern that is estimated to be around 10 million years old and stretches an astounding 280 meters long, 65 meters wide and 107 meters high. The Dolomites, another addition to the UNESCO World Heritage List, are a highly valuable natural monument and offer extremely charming sceneries and colors such as crystal clear water stretches and lush valleys in summer and snow-covered peaks in winter.

On a personal note, my father in law's family (surname Cardinale) is from the Friuli Venezia Giulia region and the town of Aviano. Much of the town was destroyed in both World Wars and by earthquakes so instead of rebuilding after World War II, much of the town was incorporated into the air base. Aviano Air Base is a NATO base at the foot of the Carnic Pre-Alps, 15 kilometers from Pordenone. The Italian Air Force has ownership and administrative control of the base and hosts the U.S. Air Force's 31st Fighter Wing.



AVIANO AIR FORCE BASE, Italy (March 20, 2011) U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons return to Aviano Air Base after supporting Operation Odyssey Dawn.



WOMEN'S LEAGUE

*H*ello ladies,

For our November 2019 meeting, we were joined by Barbara Quinn from St. John's Center along with some of the ladies who help her out with many projects. Barbara spoke to us about the work they do including a food pantry which they share with their neighbors in the community. In addition, they have a Welcome Table (soup kitchen) and this is open to anyone who would like to come and participate. In addition to these forms of assistance, they have a clothing outreach and some furniture which can be provided to people who need it. They do take donations of clothing and furniture but it is a good idea to contact them first before dropping off any donation as they have limited space to accommodate it. In addition on Tuesdays, they have a program where they help people to study to get their GED.

Our December 11, 2019 meeting is our Christmas Party. We will be having a grab bag. Please bring a wrapped gift with a price limit of \$20, if you wish to participate. We will also have an ugly hat contest and an ugly sweater contest. Prizes will be given to the winners.

For our meal, we will be having the following: Hors d'oeuvres: Brie with Chutney, Boneless chicken wings, Fried Calamari, Assorted cheeses and breads and fresh vegetables with dip followed by our Entrée Choices: Chicken Marsala with Vegetables; Bruschetta Salmon with Vegetables; or Tortellini Primavera; Salad with House Dressing; Johnny's Blackout Cake and Coffee and Tea. Please call Marilyn Quadrini at 518-438-7602 by Sunday, December 8th with your reservation and meal choice. We are reducing the price of this dinner from \$23 to \$20. The cancellation policy remains in effect and any cancellation must be made no later than December 10, 2019.

In addition at our December meeting, we will hold the election of officers. The following people were nominated for office for 2020:

Gretchen VanValkenburg - President

Marilyn Quadrini - Vice President

Lynn Indelicato - Secretary

Joan Wallis - Treasurer



Vector upper image: Designed by BIZJELI / Freepik. The Ugly Sweater Shop.com/Flickr.com

I look forward to seeing you at our Women's League Christmas Party and I hope that everyone has a very Happy Thanksgiving with their friends and families.

We will not be meeting in January or February. Our guest for March 2020 will be Dr. DeSemone who will be talking to our group about Diabetes.

Thank you,

Gretchen VanValkenburg
President



LINGUINE

AGLIO



E OLIO



This might be the easiest and quickest weeknight meal ever invented! This dish was a staple in my house growing up. Now a busy mom myself, I realize why my mom made it so often. It's also super cheap, so some consider it a "poor man's" meal. Super quick, inexpensive, and delicious....a big win all around!

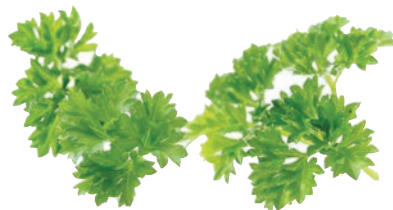


Ingredients:

- 1 pound of linguine
- About 1/2 cup of extra virgin olive oil (EVOO)
- 3-4 cloves of garlic, minced or chopped finely
- Crushed red pepper
- Fresh parsley, chopped
- Salt
- Grated Parmesan Cheese (optional)

Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. In a separate saucepan, put the EVOO and garlic over medium heat. Let the garlic infuse the oil while it is being heated. Do not wait to add the garlic after the oil is hot. This will only burn the garlic and the oil won't have time to develop the garlicky flavors.
3. Once the oil gets hot and begins to simmer the garlic, bring the heat down to low and add the parsley and crushed red pepper (as much or as little as you'd like).
4. Once the salted pot of water comes to a boil, add the linguine and cook according to box instructions (al dente).
5. Reserve a ladle of the cooking water and drain the linguine when done. Make sure you taste the linguine first to see if it has enough salt. If it needs more, you must add it to the cooking water before draining.
6. Pour the oil and garlic mixture over the linguine as well as the reserved cooking water and toss it all together.
7. Add Parmesan cheese if desired



Buon appetito!



For other great recipes by Nata Pagialonga go to:
MangiaMom.com



ANNUAL ITALIAN CHRISTMAS MARKET

Friday & Saturday, Dec. 6 & 7: 10 am - 5 pm

Sunday, December 8: 11 am - 3 pm

Share this festive Italian Tradition with us in our American Italian Heritage Museum building, 1227 Central Avenue in Albany, NY. Our exhibit rooms will be transformed into market places filled with so much for you to enjoy ~something for almost everyone on your Christmas shopping list, including yourself! Be sure to look for unique Italian merchandise that will be available for purchase featuring things that are hard to find: Italian language greeting cards, Made-in-Italy items, hand-made wood Ceppo, Befana figures, themed ornaments, plaques, Italian novelties, delicious homemade Italian baked goods & much more. We are thrilled that Nini's Sicilian Salsa & Testa's Pantry will return as vendors. Come, see the always beautiful, uniquely original room-sized Italian Nativity Special Exhibit and celebrate our culture at this most beautiful time of year.

****Find food, beverages & fellowship in our Market Café.**

Featured Special Exhibit: ITALIAN CHRISTMAS NATIVITY

Visit our Vendor Room: NINI'S SICILIAN SALSA,

Testa's Pantry, Kelly's Cookies, Embroidery Gifts.

Buon Natale!

AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE ASSOCIATION & MUSEUM

1227 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12205

(518) 435-1979 | www.americanitalianmuseum.org

CELEBRATING AN ITALIAN SAINT:

The Feast and Legend of Santa Lucia

Santa Lucia (Saint Lucy) is a saint venerated by the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and Orthodox Churches. Born in Syracuse, Sicily in 283 AD, she was martyred at the age of 20. Though she lived a considerably short life, she is still celebrated in different parts of the world almost two thousand years later.

Few facts are known about Lucia's life and death though several stories and legends have evolved over the centuries. Just about all stories start the same way: Lucia was born into a wealthy Sicilian family. At a time of Christian persecution, Lucia vowed at a young age to live her life in the service of Christ. Lucia's mother attempted an arranged marriage for her daughter to a pagan man. When Lucia refused her suitor, she gave away her wealth by feeding and clothing the poor and homebound and possibly to Christians staying in the catacombs. She would often distribute these gifts in the darkness of night to avoid detection. She would carry a lamp or wear a



crown of candles (to free her hands for carrying food) to light her way. Because of this, the lamp and wreath of candles are also symbols of St. Lucy. The legend continues that the rejected and angry

suitor reported her to Roman authorities and Lucia subsequently was sentenced to life in a brothel and forced into prostitution. It is said that her devout life brought about divine intervention. When it came time for her to be placed in the brothel by Roman guards, she became immovable; it was as if she had turned to stone and the guards could not move her. The soldiers then built piles of wood around her in an effort to burn her alive. Lucia was untouched by the flames and survived the inferno. Lucia ultimately met her death, however, when she was stabbed through the neck.

Another version of the St. Lucy's legend holds that while in captivity her eyes were gauged out by the Romans because her pagan suitor loved her beautiful eyes. God then provided her with new eyes. St. Lucy is often depicted holding a small plate with two eyes on it. She is the Patron Saint for Eyesight and the Blind and her feast day is celebrated on December 13th.

The Malocchio-The Evil Eye

Despite being a devoutly Catholic country, superstition still prevails in Italy. You will often here the phrase, *“Non è vero ma ci credo”* (It's not true but I believe it) which shows how strong certain traditions and superstitions can become. It's far easier to avoid certain things than risk some ill-fate. It is said that the malocchio (Evil eye) which is present in lots of different cultures can be inflicted both intentionally and accidentally. It can be as seemingly innocent as paying a compliment while being jealous of someone or wishing intentional ill fate on someone. Sports team losing? Malocchio. Bad hair day? Malocchio. Things going wrong recently? Yep, you've guessed it.

So what can you do? Well, my mother-in-law (God rest her soul) knew the cure for the malocchio. It involved a special ceremony where an elder puts three drops (Trinity) of olive oil into a bowl of water. If the oil forms an eye shape, the evil eye is present. As the drops separate, those present make the sign of the cross and recite the words “in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Participants then make the sign of the cross on the afflicted person's hands and recite three times the prayer: “Father, this prayer is being said for (name), and I pray it works in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” (*Padre, questa preghiera viene detta per (nome), e prego che funzioni nel nome del Padre, del Figlio e dello Spirito Santo*)

Then all present join in reciting an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.

So can I learn the prayers? Sure, but legend has it that the true power to remove the malocchio is **passed down through the women of the family on Christmas Eve.**

An amulet that Italians believe will ward off the evil eye is the horn (corno or cornicello). This horn shaped pendant is often found on necklaces, in people's houses, car mirrors or on key rings and is thought to protect you against the evil eye. Often in bright red plastic, gold or silver (pictured here), by keeping it close you are able to keep bad thoughts away. Buona fortuna a tutti!



CARING & SHARING

December Birthdays

- Dina Ariemma
- Lynn Aronowitz
- Lucy Bremm
- Stephen Bubonia
- Gabriel Castellanos
- Jeanne Ciampino
- Cathleen D'Ambrosio
- Laurie Elmendorf
- Marie Faccioli- Erkes
- Alfred Fargione
- Jack Greene
- Diane Hasenbein
- Merry Hutchinson
- William Iannone
- Ann Keneston
- Josephine Knack
- Anna Marie Logrippo
- Mary Ellen Manzella
- Joseph Marchese
- Gregory Massaroni
- Michele Mealy
- Marc Merrill
- Angelo Paglialonga
- John Paolucci
- Sharon Patrei
- Maran Person
- Fred Peters
- Nick Piccirillo
- Loren Place
- Joseph Restifo, Jr
- Ambrose Rinaldi
- Peter Scavullo
- Connie Seeley
- Ann Marie Slyke
- Margaret Smith
- Linda Staples
- Susan Supliski
- Maryellen Tedesco
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By JOE SANO

Le Bafana- The Italian Christmas Witch

The Feast of the Epiphany is celebrated in January with an Italian national holiday. For Italians, La Festa dell'Epifania in January is as significant a holiday as Christmas Day especially for Italian children!

According to the Italian legend, La Befana, a witch-like woman riding on a broom, refused to join the Wise Men on their journey to see the baby Jesus. When she regrets her decision, she sets out to bring gifts to the Child but never finds him. Instead



she leaves gifts for other children. Italian children leave out their shoes or put up stockings for the Befana to fill on Epiphany Eve.

The legend continues that every Epiphany Eve, the old, tattered and soot-covered Befana flies around the world on a broomstick and comes down chimneys to deliver candy and presents to children who have been good during the year. For those who have fallen a bit short of model behavior, la Befana will leave lumps of coal. Knowing that all kids can't be perfect year-round, some shops in Italy sell carbone or black rock candy that actually looks like pieces of coal... so even those not quite perfect can still enjoy a sweet treat.



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