



ISSUE 599

FEBRUARY 2024

SUPER BOWL 58 PARTY



SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11

12 FOOT HD SCREEN

RAFFLES & PRIZES



Doors open: 4:00 pm



Pre-Game Buffet: 5:30 pm

PRE-GAME BUFFET

Garden Salad
Dinner Rolls
Chicken Parmigiana
Eggplant Parmigiana
Penne Ala Vodka
Meatballs
Mixed Vegetables

Cost: \$45 for members
\$50 for non members

HALFTIME BUFFET

Pizza
Cheeses and Crackers
Fresh Hot Popcorn
Dessert
Complimentary
Beer, Soda, Coffee
& Tea will be served.
Cash bar is available.



H A P P Y Valentine's

• • • • • D A Y

FROM THE ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER

NEWS & EVENTS

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FRENCH TOAST

SOCIAL CALENDAR



February

02/05/24 ~ Monday Grand Italian Buffet - 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

02/11/24 ~ Super Bowl 58 Party - 4:00 pm - 10:00 pm

02/14/24 ~ No Womens League Meeting - Winter Break

02/18/24 ~ Sunday Brunch - 10:00 am - Noon

02/22/24 ~ Chair Yoga Begins - 6:00 pm

02/26/24 ~ Intermediate Italian Language Classes Begin - 7:00 pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

03/03/24 ~ SAINT PATRICK - SAINT JOSEPH MASS AND BRUNCH - 12:00 PM

03/23/24 ~ ARTHUR AVENUE "LITTLE ITALY IN THE BRONX" SPRING BUS TRIP - 8:45 AM





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone had a great holiday season full of love, peace, and happiness. With our 50th year in the rearview mirror, I look forward to 2024 being an exciting year filled with great events, great programs, and time with friends.

This month, we will hold our annual Superbowl 58 party on February 11th in our newly renovated ballroom. This party is always a great way to watch the big game. If you haven't made your reservations yet, there is still time. You can make a reservation by calling the membership office or registering online at www.italianamerican.com.

Starting this year, we have introduced a member-only section of the website that provides detailed information on your membership. It is password-protected and for members only. You will receive the password with your new membership cards.

If you still need to pay your dues, please do not delay. Dues payments must be received by February 28th to avoid losing the loyalty discount.

I wish you the best in 2024 and hope to see you soon.

Ciao,

FRANK ZEOLI
ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER
PRESIDENT



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EXPERIENCE NEW YORK CITY'S "REAL LITTLE ITALY"

Join Us On Our Annual Bus Trip To Arthur Avenue!

03/23/24

Cost: \$50 I.A.C.C. Members / \$55 Non-Members

Location: The Italian American Community Center ~ Parking Lot

(257 Washington Avenue Ext, Albany, NY 12205)

Time: 8:45 am (Depart From Albany) / 4:00pm (Depart From NYC)

RSVP: Call the Membership Office at 518-456-4222 or visit www.italianamerican.com





Intermediate Italian

Spring 2024

Learn the world's most beautiful, romantic,
and musical language this spring!

This 8 week class focuses on improving your conversational skills by utilizing both familiar and new phrases and vocabulary. An elementary level knowledge of Italian is required.

Classes Start: February 26, 2024

Class Time: 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Cost: \$75 I.A.C.C Members / \$85 Non-Members (Plus \$10 for Materials)

Location: The Italian American Community Center ~ 2nd Floor
257 Washington Avenue Ext, Albany, NY 12205

Register: Call (518) 456-4222 - OR - Visit: www.IACCFoundationAlbany.org

CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED REGISTER TODAY!

BY SERGIO PANUNZIO

CIAO CIAO, CHINA: ITALY WITHDRAWS FROM CHINA'S GLOBAL TRADE SCHEME



Two belts are off now in Italy. On Wednesday, Rome officially withdrew from China's Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing's signature global infrastructure, trade, and investment scheme. In 2019, Italy – then governed by a strongly Euroskeptic coalition– became the only G7 country to officially join BRI. For China, it was a coup to bring aboard Europe's third largest and the world's seventh-largest economy. Rome, for its part, hoped for a bonanza of trade and inbound investment from Beijing. Italy's trade deficit with China soared, and debates raged about Chinese access to key Italian firms and infrastructure. Meanwhile, the EU and Italy's NATO allies saw BRI participation as both a strategic risk and a symbolic blow to Western unity in the face of growing challenges from Beijing. Italy's current prime minister, right-winger Giorgia Meloni, sees BRI membership as a mistake but has sought to delicately exit the scheme without angering the world's second-largest economy. While the Italian government will not renew its BRI agreement when it expires next year, local governments and some companies will continue to work with China under BRI terms. Meloni's move comes on the eve of a big EU-China summit, the first since 2019, where the two sides will seek to manage an increasingly contentious and competitive relationship.

E MORTO GIGI RIVA

È morto all'età di 79 anni la leggenda del calcio italiano Gigi Riva, rinomato per la sua straordinaria capacità di segnare e considerato uno dei più grandi attaccanti di tutti i tempi. Nel corso della sua carriera, Riva è stato acclamato come uno dei migliori giocatori della sua generazione, con reti impressionanti. Record per il Cagliari. La sua presenza fisica e il tiro potente gli valsero il soprannome di Rombo di Tuono. I successi di Riva si estesero alla scena internazionale, dove trionfò nel Campionato Europeo del 1968 e si assicurò un secondo posto nella Coppa del Mondo del 1970, cedendo solo alla formidabile squadra brasiliana guidata da Pelé. Ha rappresentato l'Italia anche ai Mondiali del 1974. Con 35 gol in 42 presenze ufficiali tra il 1965 e il 1974, Riva è ancora in testa alla classifica dei migliori marcatori italiani di tutti i tempi. Nessun nazionale italiano attualmente attivo ha nemmeno la metà della sua carriera totale.



ITALIAN STRIKER GIGI RIVA LAID TO REST

Italian football legend Gigi Riva, renowned for his extraordinary goalscoring ability and widely considered to be one of the greatest strikers of all time, has died aged 79. Throughout his career, Riva garnered acclaim as one of his generation's standout players, with an impressive scoring record for Cagliari. His physical presence and powerful shooting earned him the nickname Rombo di Tuono (thunderclap). Riva's accomplishments extended to the international stage, where he triumphed in the 1968 European Championship and secured a runner-up spot in the 1970 World Cup – yielding only to the formidable Brazil team led by Pelé. He also represented Italy in the 1974 World Cup. With 35 goals in 42 official appearances between 1965 and 1974, Riva still tops the list of Italy's all-time leading goalscorers. No currently active Italy international has even half of his career total.



The Cathedral, Torre Civica, and Piazza Grande in Modena

BY JIM SANO



Modena is a charming city with many beautiful historical sites to visit. The UNESCO World Heritage Site in Modena, including the Cathedral, Torre Civica, and the Piazza Grande is a must-see for anyone visiting the city. These three interconnected monuments in the heart of the city's historic center are considered to be some of the finest examples of Romanesque art and architecture in Italy and Europe. The Duomo di Modena, also known as the Cathedral of Modena, stands out as a stunning example of Romanesque architecture and art for its richly decorated façade, octagonal baptistery, and interior adorned with frescoes, mosaics, and sculptures. The Torre Civica, a majestic bell tower, sits at the center of the Piazza Grande, symbolizing the city's history and cultural heritage. These extraordinary monuments have been recognized for their cultural and architectural significance and have been designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites since 1997.

The city of Modena has a long and varied history dating back to the Etruscan period. Celts founded it in the 3rd century BC, and it became an important agricultural center during the Roman Empire. The well-laid-out Roman town of Mutina, which can still be seen in the heart of the oldest part of the city, sits on the present-day Via Emilia. After being ravaged by barbarian invasions in the 5th and 6th centuries, Modena underwent a period of decline and degradation. Several new buildings were erected on the Piazza Grande between the 5th and 7th centuries, including the basilica that held the relics of Saint Geminianus, the bishop's residence, and the cathedral chapter house. However, the construction of the Duomo di Modena marked a restoration of the city. Work on the Cathedral began in 1099 to accommodate the remains of the patron saint, Saint Geminianus. The episcopal seat was vacant at the time, indicating the people's obstinate desire for rebirth even without authoritative ecclesiastical power. Work on the Palazzo Comunale and houses on the southeastern part of the Piazza Grande began in 1194. The left side of the Cathedral borders the Piazza to the north, while the Palazzo del Vescovo (bishop's palace) borders the west. The old and new Palazzo Comunale was combined into one building by the Torre dell'Orologio (clock tower). The Palazzo del Vescovo is connected to the Cathedral by a private passage.

Mantua briefly governed Modena in 1289 before coming under the dominion of the Este family, who ruled it until 1796. The Estes brought many changes and significant contributions to the city, particularly in the arts and sciences. In 1598, Modena became the seat of the Este Dukedom. This period

enriched the city with several significant buildings, including the Palazzo Ducale and the Palazzo dei Musei, contributing to its grandeur and magnificence.

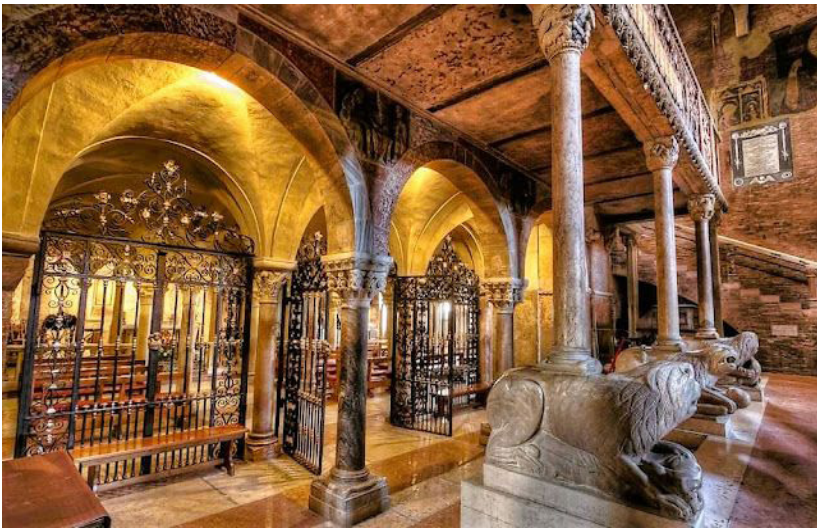
Today, Modena is well-known for its production of salami and balsamic vinegar made from Trebbiano grapes grown in the hills surrounding the city. The nearby town of Maranello is also renowned for producing luxury sports cars such as Ferrari and Maserati. Additionally, Modena is the location of the Italian Military Academy and the birthplace of the world-famous opera singer Luciano Pavarotti.

The Duomo di Modena, also known as the Cathedral of Modena, is a remarkable example of Romanesque architecture and one of the most important landmarks of this style in Europe. The Cathedral is dedicated to Saint Geminianus, the patron saint of Modena. The construction of the Duomo di Modena started in 1099 and ended in 1319 with the completion of the Ghirlandina bell tower. This masterpiece resulted from the collaboration between two leading artists of the late 11th century, the architect Lanfranco and the



sculptor Wiligelmo, which was uncommon during medieval times. The Cathedral is well-known for its richly adorned white marble façade, decorated with intricate sculptures, mosaics, and reliefs that depict scenes from the Bible and the lives of saints. It also boasts a unique octagonal baptistery, built in the 12th century, adjacent to the main building. This work became a model for Romanesque architecture and sculpture throughout Europe and took many years to complete. In 1106, the relics of Saint Geminianus, a 4th-century bishop,





were transferred to the Duomo di Modena from the old Cathedral nearby. The funeral of the famous tenor Luciano Pavarotti, who was a native of Modena, was also held at the Cathedral.

The Piazza Grande, also known as the Piazza del Duomo, is a large public square in Modena's center that dates back to the twelfth century. It has been the center of civic life in the city for centuries, serving as a venue for exercising political, civic, and religious power and as a marketplace for trade and exchange. The Piazza is surrounded by significant buildings, such as the Cathedral, the Palazzo Comunale (which houses the city government offices), and the Palazzo dei Musei (the city's art museum). It also boasts several landmarks, including the Monumento a Vittorio Emanuele II (a statue of Italy's first king) and the Fontana del Nettuno (a 16th-century fountain). Over the years, the Piazza has hosted various events, including religious processions, sacred representations, and joyous feasts in honor of the city's patron saint. It has also been the site of masked parties during Carnevale and other fairs, tournaments, and acrobatic shows. The Piazza Grande

is the heart of the city, where the sacred and the secular intersect and where the community's life is celebrated and shared.

The Torre Civica, also known as the Ghirlandina (little garland) Tower, is a bell tower located in the center of Modena in the Piazza Grande. The Tower is nearly 100 meters tall (289 feet), has a distinctive red brick exterior, and is an iconic part of the city's skyline. The Tower was built in two phases: the first phase, consisting of the lower six sections, was completed by Lanfranco and Wiligelmo in the 12th century and is characterized by its rugged Romanesque style. The second phase, consisting of the octagonal drum and dome, was completed by Arrigo da Campione between 1261 and 1319. The Tower is connected to the Cathedral by arches and serves as a symbol of the city. It is visible from all directions and had an essential civil function, with the bells tolling to announce the gates opening or gathering the citizens in case of danger. The Tower was partly built to compete with the many towers in the nearby city of Bologna.

The top of the Torre Civica is adorned with two ghirlande or marble railings that resemble garlands, hence its name "Ghirlandina." The Tower can be reached via a spiral staircase with about 200 steps. On the fifth floor at the top of the Tower is the Torresani Room, where the tower keepers once resided. From the top, visitors can enjoy a breathtaking 360-degree view of Modena.

In conclusion, the UNESCO World Heritage site consisting of the Cathedral, Torre Civica, and Piazza Grande in Modena bears witness to the city's rich cultural and historical significance. Furthermore, it holds great value for the world as a representation of medieval European art and architecture development.

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PER TUA
INFORMAZIONE
(FOR YOUR INFORMATION)

BY JOE SANO



What Happened to St. Valentine's Day?

With over fifteen saints named Valentine and one named Valentina, in 1969 the Catholic Church determined that in the official church calendar February 14th would no longer honor St. Valentine. Some think that the increased commercialization of the day and confusion over which Valentine was being honored led to that decision but who knows? The most famous Valentine may be the one martyred on

February 14, 269. He was the Bishop of Terni, Italy. Yet another Valentine, a priest around the same time, was also executed by Claudius the Cruel. Legend tells us that this emperor needed young men to draft into the Roman legions and he decided that outlawing marriage would force men to yield their loves and join the army. The story continues that one of these Valentines kept marrying men so they could avoid military duty. Valentine wasn't seen as a proponent of love, but as a



criminal and was imprisoned and eventually killed. The story continues that while imprisoned he fell in love with his jailer's daughter and sent her love notes simply signed...From your Valentine.

In 496, the Pope named the 14th of February as Festa di San Valentino as an alternative feast to a pagan fertility festival usually held in early February. As time passed these tales about St. Valentine (or Valentines) were retold, and the story of his blessings grew. St. Valentine eventually became the patron saint of people with epilepsy, lovers and beekeepers. Yuup ... beekeepers!

In the ancient world, honey was considered an aphrodisiac. It was a custom to give the newly married a bottle of mead which is a honey based alcoholic drink. Thus, the term "honeymoon" was associated with the newly minted couple and the link between the saint of love, honey and beekeepers was made.

Well, that decision to oust St. Valentine from his feast day meant little to the people of many Italian towns that adopted St. Valentine as their patron. They were not abandoning their patron. Terni, Italy celebrates his feast to this day and his skull and bones remain interred under the church altar and are brought out to bless all those in love or wanting to be loved. On February 14th, the town of Vico del Gargano in Puglia is decorated with thousands of oranges. The statue of San Valentino covered in oranges is slowly processed

through the streets. Tradition states that he protected their crop from the winter frost, and they honor him in return. The oranges surrounding the statue are later removed and crushed into a juice shared by the people in hopes of experiencing love and joy. Italian tradition also claims that the flowers of oranges are a symbol for lucky and happy brides as well.

The *La Festa Degli Innamorati*, as it is known in Italy, has many wonderful traditions and has not yet reached the intense commercialization of the American Valentine's Day. The Italian chocolatier, Perugina partnered with Dolce & Gabbana to produce a special Baci (kiss) -a chocolate confection topped with a hazelnut and enriched with raspberry flavored crystals wrapped in red or blue foil with a tiny love note - for this special day.





Another trend is *Lucchetti dell'Amore*. Italian couples profess their love by locking a padlock in a public place such as on a bridge. Rome, Florence and Venice are full of bridges with these “Locks of Love” where the lovers have tossed the key into the water below. It is important for couples on the 14th but the tradition is practiced all year long. Public officials often cut the locks off as both a safety (weight) and beautification measure.

Of course, let us not forget the star-crossed lovers, Romeo and Juliet. The city of Verona pays special homage to all lovers with a giant heart erected in the Piazza del Signori. Heart-shaped illuminated lanterns are spread throughout the city giving it a romantic glow to all visiting for the ambience, free concerts and restaurant specials offered that day.



As stated earlier, the Basilica di San Valentino in Terni, Italy continues its celebration of their patron saint by hosting a nuptial extravaganza on the Sunday preceding the 14th where couples exchange vows in front of the remains of San Valentino. It is said that San Valentino of Terni grew roses and would bestow them upon young couples that sought his blessing. Thus, the symbolism of roses being shared with lovers on this day. In Terni, there is also a very narrow alley in the center of the historic district- Vicolo del bacio- where lovers meet and exchange a kiss. As the legend states, this kiss will seal their loyalty to each other forever.



Many believe that the sharing of love notes or Valentines began in the 1300s as a suggestion from a poem Parliament of Fowls by Geoffrey Chaucer. Regardless, love notes have been written and shared for centuries on this day and, of course, on any day when the romantic spirit soars.

Today’s Valentine’s Day is truly a product of the industries that benefit from it. The cards, chocolate, flower and jewelry businesses welcome billions of expenditures on this day. While the exchanging of cards and handwritten letters to both lovers and friends was common, it was in 1840 that the first Valentine’s Day cards were mass-produced in the US. Esther A. Howland soon became known as the “Mother of the American Valentines”. It was her company that became the foundation for the company known as Hallmark Cards. According to Hallmark, over 145 million cards are exchanged on the 14th and that does not even count those exchanged in classrooms. Card sales for this day are only dwarfed by the sale of Christmas cards. Over 250 million roses are grown in the US, Ecuador, Kenya, Chile and Colombia to meet that day’s demands. That heart shaped box of chocolates was the brainchild of Richard Cadbury who in 1861 was looking for a gimmick to increase sales for his dad’s chocolates.

We cannot forget the little candy hearts with sayings on them. These printed little hearts with “Hug Me” and “Kiss Me” on them are the byproduct of what started out as a throat lozenge which morphed into a candy wafer (NECCO wafers) and eventually to the heart shaped message bearing candy of today. Today, there are over fifty-eight million pounds of chocolate produced and sold for the festa. Total sales for Valentine’s Day for all industries are estimated to be more than \$35 billion for 2024.



So goodbye to St. Valentine’s Day and hello to Valentine’s Day. While the day no longer is associated officially with a Catholic saint and has truly become a commercialized “Hallmark” holiday, let us remember the legend of the one who inspires us all to love others and to be loved.

Happy La Festa Degli Innamorati!

ATTENTION: LADIES OF THE ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER

Did you know that as a member of the IACC, you are automatically a member of the Women's League?

The IACC Women's League offers an opportunity to get together once a month to socialize, have an evening out, enjoy dinner, meet with both old and new friends and take part in a variety of activities or community service endeavors. Some examples of our past activities include summer pool aerobics, themed potluck dinners, speakers addressing women's health issues, beauty tips, cooking/baking demonstrations, chair yoga, and even bingo! Some of our community service activities include making blankets for Uncle Shawn's Hugs, putting together Easter baskets for the children at



a local women's shelter, providing essential toiletries and personal care items for the women at the shelter, as well as for St. Catherine's, providing an Italian themed lunch at the VA Hospital, and supporting Ronald McDonald House, to name a few.

Our first 2024 Women's League meeting will be on Monday, March 4th at 6:00 pm for the Monday night buffet followed by an organizational meeting upstairs to discuss the coming year, events, wish list of activities, etc. **We would love to have you join us!**

Please contact Terri Fazio at 518-452-9265 or via email at theodora.fazio1130@gmail.com to make a reservation with the group. Cost will be \$20 plus tax/gratuity.

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Current I.A.C.C. Membership expire Sunday, December 31st, 2023
Membership renewal starts December 26, 2023.
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. (A 3% service fee will be added on credit card payments).

Thank You For Being A Member.

Here's To An Amazing 2024 At The Club!

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Roslyn Adair
Shay Allen
Frannie Andriano
Frances Blendell
Daniele Bracaglia
Rocco Brienza
Suzanne Calabrese
Paul Califano, Jr.
Jose Casabianco
Marie Coluccio
Phyllis D'Antonio

Angelina Donadio
Michele Doodian
Rhiannon Fitzpatrick
William Fitzpatrick
Eileen Foster
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Chris Hoffman
Dr. Michael Horgan
Lisa Hrimatopoulos
Judith Ingemie
Amy Lamena
Fred Luciani
Armand Marando
Thomas Papa

Amalia Pawlak
Sheri Peluso
Joan Rosetti
Albert Sacca
Catherine Saglimbeni
Patti Sheffer
Gail Tarantino
Kerri Tily

February Birthdays

CONDOLENCES



William Kemp

We would like to send our condolences to the family of William

Kemp. Bill graduated from Hudson Valley Community College, where he received a degree in accounting. Bill was employed by the Italian American Community Center for more than 20 years, and provided bookkeeping work for various area restaurants thereafter.

Dennis Quadrini

We would like to send our deepest condolences to members Dave and Marilyn Quadrini on the loss of his brother and her brother-in-law, Dennis Quadrini.

Randall Louis Mann

Condolences to Carole Mann whose son, Randall Louis Mann, passed away on Dec. 2, 2023.

Paul Stelmaszyk

Condolences to Mariann Stelmaszyk whose husband, Paul Stelmaszyk, passed away.

WELCOME

new members

Harold & Ann Marie Vadney

Gail Spratt

Clifford & Toni Craft

Robert & Cheryl Haskins

Arthur & Grace Wagoner

Joseph & Sheri Peluso



ITALIAN AMERICAN
COMMUNITY CENTER



Mangia Bene E Vivi Bene!

By FRANK ZEOLI



Italian Americans enjoy a special treat called Christmas Bread or Panettone during the holiday season. Panettone is a sweet bread loaded with candied fruit, lemon zest, and raisins and baked in a cylindrical mold, which gives it a distinctive look. It can be eaten plain, with butter, used to make bread pudding, or, as my family would do, used to make French toast. It has become our Christmas morning breakfast tradition for years.

If you use panettone, can you still call it French toast? You decide.

- Prep Time: 10 Minutes
- Cook Time: 15 Minutes



This recipe uses 1/2 of a large panettone bread. You can double it if you want to make the whole bread.



Panettone French Toast



INGREDIENTS

- One Christmas Panettone (whatever flavor you like)
- Four eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon
- One teaspoon of vanilla extract
- Powdered confectionery sugar for dusting
- 1/2 stick of butter to coat the pan

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a mixing bowl, add the eggs, cinnamon, and vanilla. Beat the eggs until they are frothy.
2. Cut the panettone in half and then in half again. That makes the best size for serving.
3. Dip the panettone in the egg mixture and turn to make sure both sides are completely coated.
4. Add the butter to a frypan or griddle on medium-high heat. Add the panettone, and cook on both sides until golden brown, about 4 minutes.
5. Remove from the pan and put it on a plate, dusting powdered confectionery sugar to the top. You can also add maple syrup or fresh berries and whipped cream. It is your choice.

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