



# Valentine's Day ITALY & AMORE

By Rosanna Aiuppa

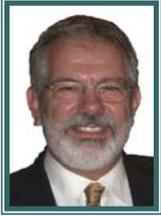
If one had to synthesize Romantic Love in single words, the natural progression might be music, candlelight, hearts, flowers, cupids, and valentines. Italia, being the land of romantic music and heart-stirring vistas, counts among its ancient roots the universal symbol of love, the Roman god Cupid, the son of Venus, a favorite of the Renaissance Masters. Cupid, otherwise known as the adorable, sculpted Putti, was used profusely to decorate the treasure trove of beautiful architecture left for us. What greater symbol of star-crossed love, than that of Romeo and Juliet? Where else could you experience anything more romantic than hearing a melodious tenor's voice, rebounding off the still waters and facades of ancient, beautiful palazzos, as you glide through the narrow, back canals of Venice on a warm moonlit night in the most romantic mode of transportation ever devised, the gondola?

Yet for all these very romantic credentials, Italy can only probably claim half of the credit for this day dedicated to love. Certainly this celebration owes its name and its origin to Italy's pagan roots. During mid-February the Romans celebrated the Lupercian Festival of Fertility, where the youth would choose mates for a year. When a majority of these matches turned into marriages, they were regarded as an important cornerstone of Rome's empire building period. Later, at the height of the Empire, about 269, the Emperor Claudius needed to raise large armies in order



to protect the far flung empire. When Claudius deduced that the reason he was not raising the numbers of soldiers he needed because the men were reluctant to leave their wives, he outlawed marriage. At this time, Christianity was taking root. Many started to go to Bishop Valentine to commit to their love and asked to be married secretly. Claudius jailed and condemned to death Bishop Valentine for his disobedience. While in prison, he was visited often by the jailer's daughter. Legend says that he fell in love. On the day of his death, February 14, 269, he wrote notes of encouragement and loyalty to her and some of his followers. He signed these notes "Love from your Valentine". With his martyrdom, he was elevated and became St. Valentine.

Many of the customs still practiced today for Valentine's Day however, evolved in Europe, most notably in the England of Henry the VIII. In Wales, wooden spoons carved with symbols of hearts, keys, and keyholes were given to the objects of boys' attractions, meaning "You unlock my heart". The heart was considered the seat of all emotion and the organ that sustained life. During the Middle Ages, young men and women would draw names from a bowl and (continued on page 11)



Hello Everyone,

I want to thank the IACC Board of Directors for re-electing me as President for 2012.

Steve Alger has informed the IACC Board that he and Janet will be moving to sunny Florida in the coming year. He felt the club would be better served if he stepped down from the Board, since he needed to devote time to their move. I want to thank Steve for his time serving the IACC and wish him and Janet the best in their new home.

By the time you receive this *Siamo Qui* the new IACC website will be a reality. Our new site will give us a much-needed identity and will be devoted solely to the IACC. Our website will offer club photos and videos of our activities, a calendar of events, and membership information. Organizations will each have a page as well. Please take a minute and look at the new website. Just go to [italianamerican.com](http://italianamerican.com).

Our committees have been hard at work and there are a number of great events coming up in the next few months including the Super Bowl Party, That's Amore Dinner Dance, Comedy Night, and St. Patrick/St. Joseph Mass & Brunch. Please make an effort to support these events.

*G. George Urciuoli, President*

## February Calendar

View our complete online Calendar at [calendarwiz.com/iacc](http://calendarwiz.com/iacc)

Every Monday	Italian Grand Buffet
Every Wednesday	IACC Bowling 6:30 PM
Sunday, February 5	Super Bowl Party
Saturday, February 11	<i>That's Amore</i> Dinner Dance
Monday, February 13	Men's Club 6:30 PM
Tuesday, February 21	Board Meeting 6:30 PM

### Save the Date

Friday, March 2	Comedy Night 6:00 PM
Tuesday, March 6	Jersey Boys 7:00 PM
Monday, March 12	Men's Club 6:30 PM
Wednesday, March 14	Women's League 6:30 PM
Sunday, March 18	St. Patrick/St. Joseph Mass & Brunch
Tuesday, March 20	Board Meeting 6:30 PM
Wednesday, March 21	Book Club 7:00 PM
Thursday, March 22	IAHFI Italian Language Lessons begin
Saturday, March 31	Arthur Avenue Trip Family Easter Mini-Party

ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER  
257 Washington Avenue Extension  
Albany, New York 12205

*a place where family and friends can  
meet, eat, play and  
celebrate Italian heritage*

### IACC Office

Linda Sciocchetti IACC Secretary  
Monday - Friday 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM  
518.456.IACC | FAX: 518.456.0338  
[membership@italianamerican.com](mailto:membership@italianamerican.com)

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Please submit articles, suggestions, or comments to:  
Rachel Cameron, Editor, [rcamero@nycap.rr.com](mailto:rcamero@nycap.rr.com)

## Congratulazione!

At the January 17 Board of Directors' meeting, our new Officers for 2012 were elected: **George Urciuoli** was reelected **President**. Our **Vice President** will be **Angelo Tarantino**. **David Cesari** will serve as **Treasurer**. **Jim Sano** will be **Secretary**.

ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER

Presents

*That's*  
**Amore!**

An Evening of Family, Friends , Food and Dancing...

**Saturday, February 11, 2012**

7 PM - 11 PM

Doors open at 6:30 PM

\$30 Members | \$35 Non-Members

*When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie.....*

Music by DJ Raphael

Cash Bar, Bottled Wine Specials available

Dinner at 7:00 PM, choice of:

- Parmesan Encrusted Haddock with Vegetables
- Chicken Parmigiana with Vegetables
- Eggplant Parmigiana with Vegetables

Meals include: Family Style Antipasto Salad,  
Family Style Pasta, Dessert, Coffee, & Tea

**Reservations Required**

**Open to the Public**

Call 456-IACC (4222) no later than February 7, 2012

Credit Card payments accepted. Call for details.

Mail Payment to: **Italian American Community Center (IACC)**  
**257 Washington Ave Ext | Albany, NY 12205**

# Member Profile

By Anna Acconi



## *Passione!*

When in the presence of **Maria DeNitto**, one senses a passion for life, for family, for work, and for the IACC. All of these mean so much to her and she demonstrates her dedication not only with words, but with actions. Maria and Luigi have created for themselves a good life, one based on family, work, and friendships.

For Maria and Luigi, life began in Italy, in the towns of Ariola and Montesarchio, both outside of Naples. Maria arrived in New York as a young girl in 1956, accompanied by her father, Pasquale Tirino, and her brothers, John and Tony, her mother, Elvira, having arrived 6 months previously. The Tirino family settled in the South End of Albany. Maria attended St Anthony's School and later Cardinal McCloskey High School, where she earned her commercial diploma, graduating as a stenographer. Maria was employed at the State Bank of Albany, which she left when she and her family returned to Italy on vacation. She later worked for several years as a stenographer in a methadone clinic in Albany. She then attended the Colonna Beauty School, where she trained to pursue a career as a hairdresser, a career that she loved until necessity called her in another direction.

We leave Maria at this time to catch up with the life of Luigi DeNitto who arrived in New York in 1971. While in Italy, Luigi served in the Italian army and attended college at the Naples State University where he majored in foreign languages, specifically, English, French, and German. His intention was to become a teacher of languages, but somehow love got in the way, love in the name of Maria Tirino. Maria and Luigi communicated for two years through letters. When Maria and her family returned to Italy for a vacation, Luigi met them at the airport. Two weeks later, in August of 1970, they were married by the Justice of the Peace in Ariola. Maria returned with her family to Albany and Luigi got called into the army. It was not until April of 1971 that Luigi was able to be reunited with Maria in Albany. On July 3, 1971, they were married at St Anthony's Church. Luigi initially worked for Fuller Brush Company and then later for a construction firm where he helped build the South End Mall. In 1979 the opportunity arrived for Luigi to purchase Fiorello Importing on Western Avenue. Several years later he requested the help of Maria. Maria left her position as hairdresser to work to develop a successful family business.



Maria's love for children and family is evident and strong. Their son, Mimmo, was born in 1979 and their daughter, Anna Rita, in 1983. Mimmo is a manager in Fiorello Importing and will eventually take over the business. Anna Rita has earned her master's degree in Special Education and Secondary Education and is currently working as a kindergarten teacher at Henry Johnson Charter School. Maria maintains deep relationships with her close and extended family and her many friends.

Maria's love for the IACC is one of long standing. Maria and Luigi, her parents, and her two brothers, were all charter members. Maria's father worked tirelessly to improve the building and grounds at the IACC and earned the distinction of having the pavilion named in his honor. As current chairperson of the pavilion committee, Maria has demonstrated her devotion to her father's memory and to the family's dedication to the IACC. Maria's many accomplishments for the IACC include the institution of Friday Family Fun Nights at the pavilion and involvement at the Columbus Day Festivals and the annual Festas. As she says, "My heart is in that place and I feel very proud of that." Maria has served the IACC in so many capacities, but she always and sincerely displays a modesty in emphasizing that all successes are a product of many people working together for a common goal. When Maria loves something, she does so with passion and dedication, truly a trait we can all admire.



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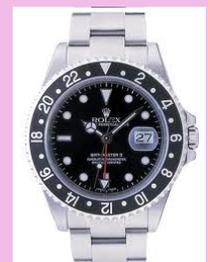
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# St. Patrick & St. Joseph's Mass and Brunch March 18, 2012



Father Anthony Chiaramonte will celebrate Mass at 10:30 AM  
Brunch served after Mass

## Menu

Scrambled Eggs ,Bacon & Sausage, Baked Ziti, Cauliflower & Broccoli Fritters, Corned Beef & Cabbage w/Carrots & Potatoes  
Pasta Cece, Rolls & Italian Bread, Seasonal Fresh Fruit Royale, Cookies, Assorted Juices, Coffee, Tea, Milk

**Adults: \$22 / Children (5-12 years): \$11 / Children (under 5): Free**

**Reservations:** Santa Pasquini at 489-3949 or IACC Office at 456-IACC (4222)

**RESERVATION DEADLINE: March 13, 2012**

**CANCELLATION DEADLINE: March 16, 2012**

Please write checks payable to: **IACC Women's League**  
Credit Card payments accepted. Call the office for details.

Sponsored by IACC Women's League

## Wednesday Nights IACC Bowling Lynn Indelicato

Winter blues creeping into your shoes? Trade them in on Wednesday nights for a few hours of fun, camaraderie, and a little bit of exercise thrown in and join us for an evening of bowling! Wednesday is the IACC bowling night at Westlawn Lanes on Western Avenue in Guilderland (near Hewitt's). No formalized league play, but a fun night out as your schedule permits. No weekly commitment, but an open invitation to join us whenever your Wednesday evening is free. Bowling starts at 6:30 PM and we bowl two games, rather than the traditional three. Do not worry about skill level - what we're best at is enthusiasm! We are certainly not vying for a spot on the pro bowling tour (although there may be a few people who look like they've done this before). However, now that



*Come join us!!*

Armand Marando has his own bowling ball, shoes, and bowling towel, look out - that 200 game could be right around the corner! Cost is \$3.00 per game and \$3.00 for shoe rental. It's an enjoyable evening out for under \$10 (and offers the hidden added benefit of



*Armand Marando waves his victory towel*

keeping you in top form for the start of bocce)! If you need additional information, please feel free to call Gail Tarantino at 428-8200 or Angie Groelz at 861-1015.



*Carolina Mancino concentrates*



*Dom & Lynn Indelicato celebrate a strike*



*Angelo Tarantino demonstrates great form*

# AN EVENING OF COMEDY

Presented By the Italian American Community Center  
Featuring National Touring Comedians



**John DiCrosta**



**Mike Speirs**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 2nd @ The IACC**

**6:00pm: Doors Open & Hors d'Oeuvres Display**

A lavish display of assorted cheeses, breads, vegetable crudites, Italian relishes, fresh fruit, and hot Hors d'Oeuvres

**6:30-7:30pm: Pasta Station**

Penne Pasta with Marinara and Tortellini Alfredo, Mixed Field Greens with House Dressing, Coffee & Tea Station

**7:30-9:00pm: Comedy Show Performance**

Cash Bar and Bottled Wine Specials Available

**Ticket price \$40 members, \$45 non-members**

**Doors Open @ 6pm, Show @ 7:30pm**

Tickets available from the IACC Membership Office / Reservations Suggested



**The Italian American Community Center**  
257 Washington Ave Ext | Albany, NY



**FOR TICKETS: call 518-456-4222 or email membership@italianamerican.com**



## Membership Committee

By Angelo Tarantino

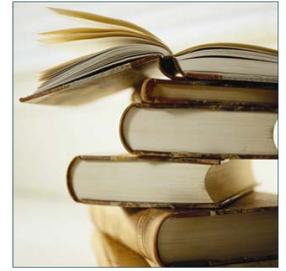
We are in the process of identifying members who would be interested in serving on a Membership Committee and/or a Welcome Wagon Committee for New Members. The purpose of the Membership Committee and the Welcome Wagon Committee is to not only identify ways to involve new members in membership activities and keep them involved, but to work diligently with all members to feel a part of the IACC family.

The membership committee will develop a membership support system consisting of a series of IACC activities in which all IACC members may participate. These activities will be for the sole purpose of strengthening the camaraderie of the IACC. The committee will also identify and implement a major recruitment effort for new members during 2012.

If interested in becoming a member of either of these two committees, please contact Angelo Tarantino at 355-1316 or e-mail atarant1@nycap.rr.com.

## Book Club

By Dick Ognibene



“Family is family, like it or not”

The IACC Book Club’s Next Selection is a Novel about Two Italian-American Families

The next meeting of the IACC

Book Club will be on **Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>**, at 7:00 PM in the Boardroom. The book to be discussed is *The Spaghetti Set: Family Served Italian Style* by Rose Marie Boyd, published in 2011. The novel is set post World War 11 in New Jersey first focuses on relationships within two families, and then the relationship between the families after a son from one and a daughter from the other meet and fall in love.

The Camara family was Italian-born while the Matteos were born in America of Italian immigrant parents. Part of the conflict in the story is related to the different stages of Americanization of these families. Each family is beset with multiple issues which only get worse when multiplied by two. How the two families cope with the absurdities of love, intimacy, and life unfolds in a true comedy of errors, complete with laughter and tears.

The author, born Rosa Maria Maisto, was part of a large, extended family and grew up in the Italian section of Trenton, NJ. Her mother, Emilia, was born in Sicily and had 17 siblings. Othello, her father, was born in the United States, but the family was originally from Naples. Othello was one of 10 children. As you can imagine, growing up and experiencing the idiosyncrasies of so many family members provided real life experiences from which Rose Marie (Rosa Maria) could draw upon for her imaginative novel. An interesting aspect of this novel is the heavy use of Italian vocabulary in the narrative.

The meanings of some of the words are self-evident, while the rest become clear in the context of the sentences in which they appear. For the non-Italian speaker, the novel is also a language lesson.

For further information, contact Dick Ognibene at rtognibene@nycap.rr.com or at 372-4919.

# \$10,000 Sweepstakes

*Still Time to Enter!!*



*Ginny Pezzula & Tess Bonanni*

Each Monday night in January, a lucky Sweepstakes ticket-holder won \$250! Tess Bonanni and her daughter, Ginny Pezzula, were the very first winners in the Sweepstakes drawing on January 9<sup>th</sup>. On January 16, Jackie Palmer of Rotterdam won the \$250 prize.

Al and Jeanne Sacca were the lucky winners on January 23. In the next issue of *Siamo Qui*, we will post the name of the person whose ticket was drawn on January 30.

The grand prize of \$10,000 has yet to be awarded! It's not too late to buy your \$100 ticket for the \$10,000 Sweepstakes! Grand Prize Drawing is planned for February 5<sup>th</sup> at the IACC Super Bowl Party. Remember that we reserve the right to hold the \$10,000 drawing until a minimum of 150 tickets are sold. Call IACC Office at 456-4222 for details.

# Super Bowl Party



**Sunday February 5<sup>th</sup>**

**3PM - 6PM Games of Chance & Bell Jars**

**6PM Pre-Game Starts**

**\$25 Members | \$30 Non-Members**

*(Must be 18 years or older)*

*(Free for Sweepstakes Ticket holders with reservation)*

**Pre-Game Appetizers | Half-Time Buffet | House Wine, Draft Beers, & Soda**

**Raffles, Prizes, Giveaways and \$10,000 Sweepstakes Drawing**

*We reserve the right to hold the \$10,000 drawing until a minimum of 150 tickets are sold.*

**Reservations required**

**Open to the Public**

Call 456-IACC (4222) before February 1<sup>st</sup>

Credit Card payments accepted. Call for details.

# Women's League

Hi Ladies,

We are in the middle of winter and I hope all of you are keeping warm! Spring really is coming! Since our meetings are still on hiatus this month, here's a look ahead to upcoming events sponsored by the Women's League:

- **Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup>** is our St Patrick / St Joseph's Mass and Brunch. Details are in *Siamo Qui*. We are hoping for a great turnout to this popular event.

- **Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup>** from 1-3 PM we will have our Family Easter Mini Party. We plan to host it in the Boardroom and decorate Easter egg cakes. Look for details next month in *Siamo Qui*.

- **Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>** will be our Annual Mother/Daughter Luncheon and Fashion Show. This is one of our most exciting events and many plans are already underway. Look for details next month in *Siamo Qui*.

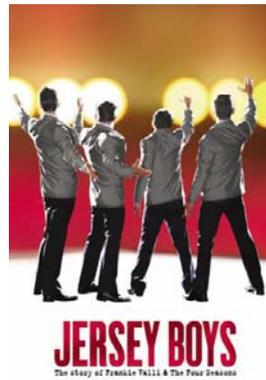
Our meetings will resume on **March 14<sup>th</sup>**. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending all these events.

*Donna Zumbo, Women's League President.*

## Friday fun Night

By Maria Marchio

We have been trying to offer a social evening on Fridays at least once or twice a month, so that members could socialize with other members. It seems that only a few of the same members have been participating in this event. Since joining the IACC 6 years ago, I have happily volunteered to serve on many committees that work hard to offer events such as Friday Fun Night. I would like to encourage more members to attend IACC events.



 **PROCTORS**

Tuesday, March 6th

Only 8 Tickets Left!

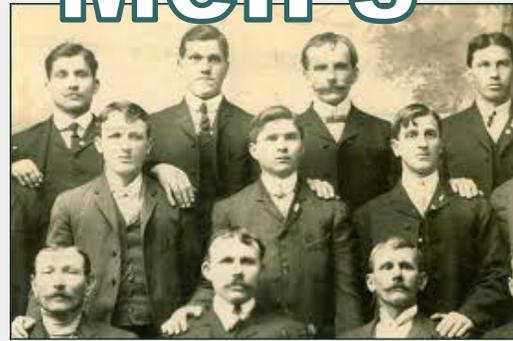
Cost \$72

Call 456-4222 for tickets.

Seats are Section A  
Balcony Center, Rows B & C

IACC

## Men's Club



Men's Club will meet on Monday, February 13 at 5:15 PM for dinner at the Monday night buffet, followed by our business meeting at 6:30 PM in the Membership Room. We will discuss the March 31 Arthur Avenue trip and the May 4 Poker Tournament. To make reservations for dinner before the meeting, to sign up for the Arthur Avenue trip (\$35 Members, \$40 Non-Members), or to register for the Poker Tournament, please call

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# CARING & SHARING By Anna Acconi

## February Birthdays:

Janet Alger  
Frances Blendell  
Tommasino Conte  
Anna Dagostino  
Phyllis D'Antonio  
Kathleen DeFruscio  
Adam Del Torto  
William Dillon  
Michele Doodian  
Joseph Ferracane  
Paul Giuliano  
Lisa Hrimatopoulos  
Judith Ingemie  
Susan Isbell  
Chris Kollias  
Earl Knowles  
Diana Kretschmer  
Mark Lindemann  
Deborah Macaione  
Christine Mallozzi



Bettina Mamone  
Armand Marando  
Salvatore Marchese, Jr.  
Mary Nardiello  
Ann Nunziato  
Richard Ognibene  
Thomas Papa  
Joan Rosetti  
Patricia Rumore  
Albert Sacca  
Ernest Sacco  
Catherine Saglimbeni  
Victoria Sano  
Dorothy Schafer  
Linda Sciocchetti  
Dominic Scovello  
Mary Scuderi  
Gail Tarantino  
Marie Vitillo  
Jeanne Wilson

## Recuperating

**Mario Ferrarese** recently underwent surgery and is currently recuperating. We wish him a speedy recovery.

**Kathleen Clapper** suffered a stroke in June 2011, and has been making a slow but steady recovery. Our thoughts are with her.

Our thoughts go out to **Evelyn DelBrocco** as she is recovering from surgery.

## Condolences

Our deepest sympathy to **Joe and Rose Marie Guastamacchia** on the passing of their daughter, Michele LoPresti, who passed away on January 11. She leaves behind three children: James, Thomas, and Danielle.

We send our thoughts and condolences to **Jack Pelersi** and family on the recent death of his wife, **Dorothy**.

## Bragging Rights

Congratulations to **Mary Lou Ritz** and her Holy Spirit School Future City team. Mary Lou and her teams have finished among the top four every year since entering the contest eight years ago. In 2010, they finished eleventh in the nation.

Congratulations to **Ella Sciocchetti**, daughter of **Michael & Linda Sciocchetti** for winning the Capital Region Youth Advocate Award for Reality Check.

Please contact Anna Acconi at 966-8664 or aacconi111@aol.com

## New Members

### Robert & Christine Bruno, Sr.

Altamont  
Sponsor: Frank Peduto

### Andrea Crisafulli-Russo

Selkirk  
Sponsor: Dom Indelicato

### Gretchen VanValkenburg

Rensselaer  
Sponsor: Angela Groelz

## STRAWBERRY SHORTCUT CAKE



### Ingredients:

1 (18.25-ounce) box strawberry cake mix  
3 cups fresh strawberries, sliced  
2 Tablespoons cognac  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 cup heavy cream  
1/4 cup confectioners' sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 (3-ounce) package strawberry flavored gelatin (recommended: Jell-O)  
Fresh strawberries, for garnish

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F

Follow cake directions as written on cake mix box.

Remove from oven and cool cake completely. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine strawberries, cognac and sugar. Let macerate 20 minutes. Invert and release cake onto a decorative platter.

Whip cream with confectioners' sugar and vanilla at medium-high speed until it reaches stiff peaks. Do not over whip.

Mix gelatin as directed on box. Refrigerate gelatin mix, but do not let it harden. It should cool to a liquid consistency.

Using a straw, poke holes all over the cake. Pour gelatin into holes and spread over the top of the cake.

Spread layer of macerated strawberries on top of cake. Spread layer of whipped cream on top of the strawberries, making pretty swirls and ripples. Garnish with fresh strawberries. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

*Enjoy!*

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ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION  
PRESENTS

# ITALIAN LANGUAGE LESSONS

Intermediate Level

Thursday Nights, 7 PM-8:30 PM

March 22, 29

April 5, 12, 19, 26

May 3, 10



**\$75 Members | \$85 Non-Members**

**\$15 additional will be collected on the first night  
for textbook and other necessary materials**

Call the IACC Office at 456-4222 to register or go to [italianamerican.com](http://italianamerican.com) for more details.

*(continued from cover page)*

pin that name on their sleeve for one week. Hence we now say “You are wearing your heart on your sleeve.” During Victorian times, the love seat had 2 sections and was often S-shaped. In this way, a courting couple could sit together, but not too close. The ladies of this era developed some amusing little romantic beliefs: Pick a dandelion that has gone to seed. Blow hard, count the seeds remaining on the stem and that is the number of children you will have. Think of five or six names of persons you might marry. Start twisting the stem of an apple while reciting the names. You will marry the person whose name you are saying when the stem breaks.

To England again goes the honor for the tradition of sending beautiful cards and poetic verses to a loved one on Valentine’s Day. The oldest Valentine is still in existence, a love poem from the Duke of Orleans to his wife, written in 1415, while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London. Victorian cards were beautiful works of art and sentimental poetry. Flower giving on this day again goes back to St Valentine, who was supposed to have had red roses sent with his loving notes of good-byes. Since then, giving flowers to a loved one is part of the tradition of this holiday. Did you know that when you give a red rose you are expressing a deep passionate love? A pink rose tells of admiration and joy. A yellow rose expresses happiness and warmth. A white rose signifies purity and innocence. Tulips indicate a perfect love. Peruvian lilies denote undying devotion.

The over-the-top American way of celebrating Valentine’s Day is spreading like wild fire. Until very recently, Italy celebrated it as a special day to manifest love simply by saving that day to announce happy events of the heart such as engagements, a wedding, the baptism of a child, and, of course, to wish their loved ones, family, and friends a happy SAINT Valentine’s Day. On the other hand, in Italy, a bouquet of mimosa flowers is given to every woman in one’s life, from your lover to your nonna, on the festa that celebrates women, the International Day of Women, Il Giorno Delle Femmine, celebrated on March 8.



The roots of this holiday falling yearly on February 14th are planted firmly with St Valentine. However, in beautiful Italy, the country that enjoys a reputation as the land of the Latin lover and romance, this will not suffice too much longer. It won’t be long before the signoras and signorinas will expect cards, candy, flowers, to be wined and dined, and to enjoy all the little manifestations of this day... American style!

***TO ALL OF YOU, A HAPPY VALENTINE’S DAY !!***



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