

Features... the latest Culinary Guide features



Food Heroes Of Liguria, Italy

Traditional Italian ingredients are getting a makeover – young producers are putting a new spin on old favourites and getting their... [read more](#)



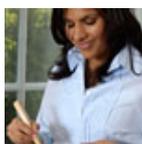
Two-Michelin Starred Chef of the Ming Court Pushes Cantonese Cuisine to the Top of the List

In town for the "Hong Kong - Live in London!" promotion... [read more](#)



An all American road trip in an all American Car

Picking up a Mustang soft top at the airport and embarking on an all American road trip may... [read more](#)



Hot Stuff! Queen of Indian Cuisine, Anjum Anand, launches new range of Indian Curry Sauces from The Spice Tailor

Do you often feel like... [read more](#)



Wagamama Summer Menu

Well, I don't know about you, but when I think about going out for a nice light summer meal, I tend not to think about Wagamama's... [read more](#)



Asparagus Season at Refettorio - The City

It is Asparagus season once again, so expect to see more shoots springing up on your British... [read more](#)



Original Sin - Discovering The Origin with Matt Tebbutt

Much is made these days of the famed PGO status in food and L'atelier des Chefs in Soho's... [read more](#)



Café Bloom - a growing success on Fulham Palace Road

Introducing Bloom, a breakfast, brunch, dinner and drinks hangout on Fulham Palace road... [read more](#)

Food Heroes Of Liguria, Italy

By Rupert Parker

Traditional Italian ingredients are getting a makeover – young producers are putting a new spin on old favourites and getting their products certified by the people that matter.



Liguria is a 200km strip of land, sandwiched between France in the West and Tuscany in the East, caught between sea and mountains. The capital, Genoa, sits bang in the middle. Christopher Columbus was born here and it's still one of Italy's busiest ports. The old town is bursting with huge palazzos, built in the 16th century, when its wealth attracted the best artists of the renaissance. Today its riches are concentrated in the food, and a new generation of Ligurian chefs are treating their high quality traditional ingredients with the respect they deserve.

Pesto

Alberto Sacco's family have been growing basil commercially since 1851 and everything is organic. Basilico Genovese is protected by DOP certification and the best comes from Pra, in the Western part of Genoa where Alberto has his giant greenhouses. The story goes that when Napoleon invaded Italy all his horses died here and their bones made the soil more fertile. Alberto picks his Basil by hand, plucking out single plants, including roots, and gathers 50 together to make a bouquet.



Pesto's first written mention is from an 1865 book where it's described as a sauce to "dress all varieties of pasta" and the recipe hasn't changed much since. I watched Alberto cut up a couple of cloves of garlic and add his fresh picked basil to a stone mortar. He worked his pestle, using coarse grained sea salt to grind the leaves, before adding pine nuts, Pecorino and Grano Padano cheese and finally extra virgin olive oil. Pesto couldn't get any fresher than this and the flavour was almost overpowering, far removed from the jars of insipid stuff we buy in the supermarkets in Britain. He reckons it keeps no longer than

3 days in the fridge, but then he does have an endless source of fresh basil. A typical Ligurian dish is *Trofie al Pesto* (small thin twisted cylinders of pasta) which you can try at Antica Trattoria Lupo, in the heart of the old town.

www.lupoanticatrattoria.it

Olive Oil

Franco Boeri Roi is heir to a grand





Seeing stars at the Boisdale - Johnnie Walker Great Scots Awards at Boisdale Canary Wharf

The Johnnie Walker Blue Label Great Scot Awards 2011 proved... [read more](#)



Sherry and Blumenthal at the Southbank Centre

London's Southbank Centre celebrates Festival of Britain 60th anniversary with a spot of tea... [read more](#)



Grand Gala Opening Night of the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel

First the station was reinvented as the Eurostar Terminal, now the hotel has undergone a... [read more](#)



Learn to Cook With Simon Rimmer in the Caribbean

Television chef Simon Rimmer travels to the Caribbean this May to join the 'Taste Of Rex Resorts... [read more](#)



A taste of paradise

PR executives, journalists and media industry professionals gathered at Trader Vic's bar at the Hilton Hotel in Park Lane to kick-start... [read more](#)



Amico Bio is London's First Italian Vegetarian and Organic Restaurant

A stone's throw from Smithfield Meat Market, Amico Bio chef Pasquale Amico is brave enough to offer... [read more](#)



Indulge your passion for Indian

Indian foodies, who relish the opportunity to sample fresh new innovative flavours and dishes, no longer need to wait until... [read more](#)



Ireland's Wineport Lodge Gourmet Food and Celtic Pampering in the Lough of Luxury

Wineport Lodge is a stunning lakeshore retreat on the shores... [read more](#)



Vino-Passion - Wine tasting festival and events in France's Champagne region

The Champagne region is mainly known for its, well, champagne... [read more](#)



Wagamama's Warming Winter Menu

If you're anything like me, you'll have discovered the joy of Wagamama's a

tradition, started by his grandfather in 1900, in Badalucco in the West of Liguria. He has over 4000 Taggiasca olive trees which produce extra light oil from their tiny fruit. He aims to press his oil on the same day and they're milled using traditional heavy stones, and a cold crush process. This means that the olive paste is not heated, nor hot water added to the oily must, and the process gives the oil its higher bio-nutritional value. For his most prized product, Carte Noir, Franco skims a small amount of the oil that rises to the surface of the oil paste, after cold-pressing, and the result is a delicate yet rich, sweet and flowery oil. It bears the coveted DOP appellation of the Riviera Ligure and annual production is limited to 4,000 bottles, each of which is individually numbered on its black label.



Franco was keen to show off all aspects of his oil so he brought in chef Davide Zunino from the restaurant L'Olio Colto in nearby Taggia to create a tasting menu. Olive oil paste, in toothpaste tubes to squeeze onto bread, salt cod on a puree of potato with olive oil, ravioli with olive oil were among the savoury dishes. The standout was a sort of



reconstituted tomato with oil injected inside, which exploded inside your mouth. After this were 4 deserts including an olive oil cream caramel and a fruit salad dressed with his Carte Noir. The reason all these dishes worked was because of the delicacy and lightness of the oil, which didn't overpower the other ingredients, but enhanced their flavours.

L'Olio Colto Restaurant www.oliocolto.it
Roi Olive Oil www.oliroi.com

Rossese Wine

Filippo Rondelli took over his family vineyard, Terre Bianche, close to the French border, in 1998. It dates back to 1870 and the steep slopes of western Liguria mean ideal growing conditions for the Rossese grape. It thrives on the exchange of wind and temperature and here the days are warm and the nights 12 degrees colder. Rossese di Dolceacqua was the first



Ligurian wine to get DOC recognition back in 1972 and its name derives from the French 'roché', referring to the rocky ground where it's grown.

Terre Bianche produces around 65,000 bottles of this ruby red wine with hints of wild berries, cherry, dog-rose and spices. It's slightly salty, because of the proximity to the sea and has a warm body and bitter notes. Filippo is now experimenting with organic and bio-dynamic methods and his ambition is to produce a wine that can be instantly identified as his creation. On the basis of tasting his wines, with an excellent vegetable pie, he's certainly achieved that aim. The vineyard has a handful of rooms and a good place to sample his wine with local dishes is the Locanda "Le Macine del Confluente" in Badalucco.

www.lemacinedelconfluente.com

Prosciutta Castelnovese

Mirco Bertini patented his "Prosciutta Castelnovese" after years of helping





number of years... [read more](#)



Zurich revealed as the breeding ground for stylishly modern vegetarian cuisine Tickle your taste buds at London's tibits

Zurich is traditionally... [read more](#)



Winter Canal Cruising In Rathgo At The Bridge Inn

It's a bitter winter night. The thermometer had plunged to minus 7C. It's been snowing and... [read more](#)

his mother make sausages at their delicatessen "Antica Salumeria Elena e Mirco" in Castelnuovo Magra. His dream was to create a ham that was both traditional but modern and it took almost two decades of research, experimentation, and curing disasters before he came up with his unique product. Every November, he chooses the best quality pigs and bones the hams before putting them in brine for a week, turning them every day. He then washes them down and adds a mixture of spices before hanging them amongst a collection of mountain herbs. Every 20 days he massages the hams with olive oil, to ensure that the spices penetrate the meat, and each will absorb 2.5 litres of oil during the 9 months they hang. The key to the quality of his product is strict temperature control, the clever use of aromas and flavours and low exposure to light.



Mirco makes only 250 hams each year and it's a premium product selling for the same price, 160 euro per kg, as its more famous cousin from Parma. He's justifiably proud of his creation and he also produces a Gran Riserva, hung for an extra 3 months. What he doesn't sell is his secret stash of hams that have been aged for 5 years which he says are priceless. He reckons they've got another 6 years to go before they're fully mature but won't say what occasion he's saving them for.



www.prosciuttacastelnovese.com

Cheese

Sandro Gagliardo is an organic cheese maker heading the local cooperative in Varese Ligure, located in the green, well wooded, high Vara Valley. The cooperative was formed in 1978 to sell milk to the industrial giant Parmalat, but prices were low and people were quitting farming



because they couldn't make any money. The valley was faced with serious depopulation until, in the early 1990's, Mayor Maurizio Caranza came up with a brilliant idea – why not turn the valley organic and build a new economy based on ecology? Farming methods were still traditional and the pasture hadn't been destroyed by pesticide so, dangling grants from the EU, he convinced villagers to change agricultural practices. Today there are more than 40 organic farms producing milk and meat and agro tourism is booming, visitors attracted by the idea of the "organic valley"

Sandro produces 20 different cheeses, 7 of which are completely organic, the rest made from unpasteurised milk. They're all made using traditional recipes with no preservatives or chemicals and their top organic product is Stagionato de Vaise, aged for 5-6 months. They also produce a version which spends a further 2 months in the local strong Sciacchetrà wine. This is particularly delicious, the longer aging and the flavour of the wine enhancing its taste.

www.coopcasearia.it

In the same village there's an organic butchers, easily identified by the dispensing machine outside offering bottles of raw organic milk. Fulvio Gotelli of the Coop San Pietro Vara explains that the higher cost of his meat is justified because cattle reared in an organic way, free of growth hormones, weigh 25% less than their factory farm cousins, even though they eat the same amount. Certainly, judging by the queues forming outside the shop on a Saturday morning, people are happy to pay the premium. I could see why when I sampled some of his product, in a delicious steak tartare, in the restaurant of the Hotel Amici just round the corner.

www.albergoamici.com

All these Ligurian food heroes welcome visits from foodies wanting to try their products and see how they're made. Genoa is less than two hours flying time from London which makes it a great base for a long weekend touring the province. Of course everyone knows Tuscany, its famous Eastern neighbor, but Liguria's food riches have yet to be plundered.

For more information about Liguria: www.turismoinliguria.it

The Grand Hotel Savoia in Genoa is a good base. www.hotelsavoiaigenova.it

Seasoned Travel runs foodie trips to the region. seasonedtravel.co.uk

Hotels near Cinque Terre www.booking.com/Hotels-Cinque-Terre

All hotels shown on a region map. Book online now. Pay at the hotel.

Buy a house in Tuscany www.casebardi.com

A collection of 22 Premium Villas. Great Location. New on the market!

Translator Jobs www.RealTranslatorJobs.com

\$10-\$55/Hour. Found: 386 Jobs in your area. Hiring Now!

Italian Immersion TV Italian.Yabla.com

The fun way to perfect your Italian Very addictive, extremely effective

AdChoices 