

Spice Academy & **Nutrition Philosophy and Sensorial Food** - a new learning through food

SAVE THE CHILDREN FROM JUNK-FOOD



FRANCO'S TELEVISION LESSONS AND TALK SHOW ON THE SUBJECT



Franco's Spice Academy lesson on Spices at Vatican Television TV2000.

Franco Calafatti with Spice Academy and Accademia delle Spezie (Italian translation of Spice Academy) under-titles (left picture)

Colorful unique pasta (right picture) made with different Franco's spices mix



Franco's lesson on spices blends and mix, on Italian national television. Program: "Persone" (People) Title: "La vita speziata" (The Spicy Life)



Franco talk show and Spice mixing and blending cooking lesson and at the main Television Food Program on national television - in Italy, "la Prova del Cuoco" (the Chef's Proof)



Above pictures clockwise from left: detail of Spice mixing and blending; a bottle of Mulsum Wine (Franco's popular ancient Rome spicy wine with Cinnamon, Vanilla, Hibiscus Flower, Star Anise and Ginger); Franco's renowned and unique Spicy Taralli (Special backed bread) with 20 different color/flavor varieties

SPICE ACADEMY'S YOU TUBE "IL GENOVINO D'ORO CHANNEL" (The Golden Genovino Channel)

Spice cultural and entertainment self-produced video footages - shot in Spice Academy's own studio in Rome and in spice plantation in Zazibar and in Côte d'Ivoire

CULTURE, SPICE TRAVEL & FOOD

Translation of a four page article on the main Italian Food Magazine "Il Gambero Rosso" (The Red Prawn) on Franco's Spice Academy Spice-Food unique preparations, travel and courses on Spices around the word, Master and stages on spice plantations.

Gambero Rosso magazine May 2010



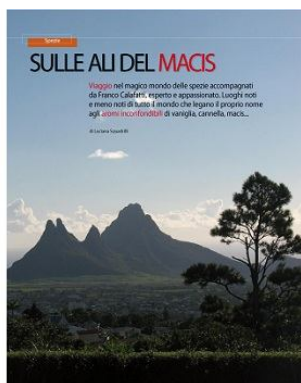
ON THE WINGS OF THE MACE

JOURNEY INTO THE MAGICAL WORLD OF SPICES

accompanied by Franco Calafatti, experienced and enthusiastic.

Known locations and less known around the world which link their names with the unmistakable aroma of Vanilla, Cinnamon, Mace ...

Spices, written by Luciana Squadrilli



According to Rudyard Kipling, the great English writer and traveler of the late nineteenth century,

travel is to know the countries involving themselves in an experience complete and profound that touches all the senses, beginning with the sense of smell.

In those days already the writer warned about the forthcoming risks of the progress that allowing faster displacements shortened travel time length and, mainly, didn't allow the traveler to get in the different territories gradually, step by step, surrounded by distinctive aromas. Nowadays that airplane has become the most popular transport, sometime is worth to pay attention to local smells and flavors, giving yourself the chance to better understand far away Countries and cultures.

Traveling with this approach could become a knowledge occasion! Starting from sensorial experiences - tasting foods, listening to the music, noticing unusual details, but mainly smelling the aromas - a travel could greatly enrich our cultural luggage (background) of new awareness, along with our trolleys full of souvenirs.



We think about our personal memories: a trip to Morocco can not be reminded without the aroma (loved or hated) of cumin, memory of a tour of India lives on the smell of curry and masala, the power of allspice (like a pepper berry, actually a very powerful concentrated of flavors reminiscent cinnamon, clove, walnut, nutmeg) brings to mind the wonderful beaches of Jamaica.

Spices are, in fact, an essential element of culture and history of many places and peoples.



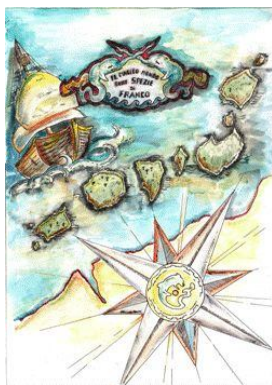
To read their history and trace the ancient routes means to drive back the history of civilization and trades that led to the current geopolitical assets.

For example, the Eritrean spicy blend known as Berber (made with chili, ginger, nail cloves, coriander and more), it seems a "raw" version of the refined and velvety Indian masala. Probably result of a progressive contamination on the same journey that has made the coffee: from the Horn of Africa to India, through Yemen.

But beyond all this, spices are above all a powerful and fascinating basic element of ethnic cuisines and excellent and creative dishes. "It's enough to know them and how to dose the right way, not allowing them to drive you too far away, with their aromatic seduction - explains Franco Calafatti, owner of Il Genovino d'Oro (the Golden Genovino) and animator of Spice Academy in Rome - so a journey into the lands where they are born can help to understand and then to use them, in base of our needs, in the best way once back home. "

In his small store in Rome Calafatti mills personally leaves, roots, berries and so on, collected in Italy and around the world, and creates fantastic mixtures.

We asked him to guide us on a virtual journey of discovery of the most fascinating places in the world drawing an original "route of spices" of the twenty-first century. This was in fact the name of the sea route linking Europe to India: arrival point were Moluccas, also known as the Spices Islands for the richness and uniqueness of their vegetation.



The route of spices linked Europe to India until Moluccas where born mace, nutmeg and an amazing vanilla

"Many don't know - explains Calafatti - that this Pacific Ocean archipelago is now part of Indonesia. It was once indeed the basis of the spices trade between East and West. In addition to nutmeg and mace, originating directly in these islands, here grows a unique vanilla even if little known, with spectacular green flowers."

Each variety of this valuable spice, widespread throughout the equatorial belt, has different flowers belonging to the orchids family.

"The Bourbon variety is the most valuable, but not necessarily the best - Franco explains - there are other fantastic varieties, but they don't correspond for commercial standards applying for pods all the same weight and length. For example, brown vanilla from Zanzibar has a intense and enveloping aroma, stronger than black that grows on the same island, but the berries are not homogeneous, are flocking ... " Zanzibar as well (another island, or rather archipelago in the Indian Ocean off Tanzania) is known as "Spices Island". In addition to vanilla, here grow cinnamon, nutmeg, pepper and saffron as well.

"The market wants that products are homogeneous, standard. I often prefer branches and leaves less perfect, but richer in aroma, as for the Zanzibar cinnamon"

"On the Pemba island - says our spice man, which follows several study projects with Italian Universities and collaborates with foreign institutions and local firms for the enhancement of territories through local resources

such as spices - comes an excellent saffron, but the work is still rudimentary and not very attentive to the quality. I want to teach them how to treat at best to make it a valuable product.



In Zanzibar I met a cinnamon carver, a real master: it takes a great skill to carve the bark so that it forms a perfect curl, which enhances the flavor and content the aesthetic requirements of the market. I, instead, try the outer branches, perhaps damaged or imperfect: for me are the best."

Performing a long jump across the oceans, the journey ends in an enchanting Caribbean resort: the island of Grenada, one of the smaller independent nations in the West hemisphere.

"It's one of the major mace producers - Franco explains - a precious spice derived from the outside of the nutmeg. The powder made from mace has got a color and an aroma more intense than walnut, but more rich and elegant."

A new, fascinating destination to be added to our Spice Route.

FROM ZANZIBAR TO GRENADA FOLLOWING YOUR NOSE

For those not satisfied with a virtual trip in the world of spices, there is the possibility of a real travel, a journey to discover spices locations led by Franco Calafatti (pictured below), in collaboration with Veratour Tour Operator and with a travel agency in Rome.

Among the destinations: Mauritius, Zanzibar and Madagascar (probably Grenada will be added). The next departure is September 23rd, destination Zanzibar. The trip includes guided tours of the plantation, exclusive laboratories dedicated to spices and their use in cooking, excursions on the mangroves island where Franco prepares stunning grilled lobster "sprinkled" of vanilla.
Spice Academy's "Il Genovino d'Oro - Genuine Store"

via Collina, 22 - 00187 Rome,

E-mail: francocalafatti@tin.it

Web: www.italyexport.com

THE FOODS THAT AMAZED MARINETTI & CO.

The spices of Golden Genovino are often protagonists of theme dinners organized by Franco's Spices Academy and la Taverna dei Futuristi (Futurists Tavern) of Rome.

This is a very particular place that was born three years ago within the Association M.I.C.RO. which deals futuristic culture to 360 degrees. Michele Vaccarella (right) food historian, studies the recipes elaborated by Marinetti & Co in the 20s and with the chef Peppe la Manna collaboration suites them to the modern taste, transforming recipes into dishes as "revolutionary" as those

original. Among the proposals dedicated to spices, the "Rice all'Alchechengi" with pumpkin, turmeric and curry leaves.

FRANCO'S SPICE ACADEMY TEACHING LESSONS

Here following a nice post on a blog of one of my student after a lesson on organoleptic analysis of spices in the professional course "Chef Profession" – including Franco's unique Spice organoleptic analysis Form ([Organoleptic Sheet for Spices Olfactory determination](#)).

Sam's Roman Kitchen

An American's adventures in the Italian culinary world

When I was climbing a cinnamon tree in Zanzibar...

Posted: April 26, 2011 | Author: [Sam's Roman Kitchen](#) | Filed under: [Ingredients](#) | Tags: [spices](#) | [2 Comments](#) »

That's not exactly the start to a sentence you expect to hear every day. And you can imagine that the kind of person who would say such a thing would have to be a character, to say the least.

And Franco Calafatti, the man behind the [Spices Academy](#) is just that, a character.

He talked to us for almost two straight hours, seemingly without breathing, about his experiences across the globe looking for exotic spices, and how, when the globetrotting spice-hunter side of him returned to Rome, he becomes a mad-spice-scientist looking for new combinations of spices and salt to wow people's palates.



While I'm not going to recount his stories, partially because they were so run together I wouldn't know where to start or finish, and partially because I don't remember half of them, he did start out his discourse with an interesting thought.

"It's important to have a touch of home mixed with something exotic. If it's just exotic people will say, 'Well, they eat that over there and I'm going to eat what I know'. If they feel mostly at home they'll more likely eat and enjoy it."

He was saying this as he unpacked his duffle bag full of 32 different jars of mix salts and spices. They ran from the reasonably simple – paprika and onion or salt and capers – to curious – salt and rose petals or laurel and fennel fronds – to the downright bizarre – vanilla, cinnamon, star anise and hibiscus flower or manna, cacao, mint and wild mint. That's right, manna, as in the biblical food God provided the Israelites.

Once they were all laid out on the table in front of the classroom, his previous statement made a lot more sense. I could see people having trouble with the idea of manna as a spice, but mixed in with the very familiar flavors of cacao and mint it wouldn't be that much of a stretch. After the first two hours of him rambling we spent the last hour evaluating our perceptions of the mixes and their best pairings. The evaluations forms looked something like the layout below, and were a great exercise in spontaneous creativity.

Spice - *Pasta Mix with Chives* (consisted of chives, garlic, chili peppers and coarse salt)

Flavor - fine, medium, intense – *fine*

Aroma - (1-10 from soft to decisive) - 7

Perception - (i.e. first thoughts) – sharp, herbs of Provence with a kick

Persistence - (1-10 from short to lasting) - 8

Levels of Perceptions - singular, gradual or sequential – *sequential*

Scents evoked - *aioli, chili peppers stays with you*

Ideal Pairing - fish soup, like a bouillabase

Creative pairing - *marinated anchovies with apple vinegar*

Immediate recipe - *mussels, clams, moscardini, calamari, other little fish, tomato sauce*

The goal of the exercise was to do it reasonably quickly and trust our olfactory senses rather than spend time thinking things through. I've only done a few of the spice combos so far, but the idea is to have all of them done when Franco comes back in a month so we can pool everyone's ideas together and see what comes out of it all.

And back to the quote from the beginning - here's a cinnamon tree, which can apparently grow up to 50 feet and the reason Franco was climbing one, was to get to the outer branches. Apparently the tips of the branches have an entirely different flavor from the thicker parts and the trunk (which we usually eat), that we might not even recognize as cinnamon.