Plemmirio Marine Protected Area

PLEMMIRIO
★ THE PARK ★

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MANGIA PARCO

EXPO and REGIONS

FROM THE PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY TO THE QUALITY PRODUCTIONS

Paddaccio, *cacioni*, *trittico* and *lampascioni*. And more, *lucanica*, *pappaluni*, *giuraje*, *farrate*, *solina*, *gruttazzo*. Strange names, often ancient and mostly unknown, but hiding extraordinary cheeses, delicious desserts, rare vegetables, exquisite sausages, old cereals. In other words one of the most precious treasures of Italy: our excellent food.

What few people know is that many of these delicacies are produced and guarded in the Italian's Parks, where protected nature and human labor have been inextricably linked since thousands of years. Some of these products were already part of the typical regional cuisines, others have been saved from extinction and are back on the tables thanks to the tenacity of expert farmers whose work has been promoted and supported by their own parks and local administrations.

What comes out is a scenario characterized by tastefulness, healthy food and local agricultural traditions which are perfectly bound together with natural landscapes and flora and fauna conservation.

From the protection of biodiversity to quality productions: **Expo and Regions** is an initiative designed to discovery Italian gastronomic delights and to connect Milan Expo with small villages, fields and kitchens of Italian families. A journey across the places where food is produced, across our

cultural and natural heritage, across Italian traditions and warm hospitality. But it is also the story of the connection between each local product with its territory: history, art, lifestyle. This initiative will allow us to discover over 80 high quality products, many different flavors and many different regions, all rich in beauty and valuable natural diversity.

The initiative is coordinated by the President of the Council of Ministers - Department for Cohesion Policies and performed with the operational support of Invitalia, the National Agency for inward investment and economic development. The project involves all the Italian regions which have conceived a local package, and five ministries: Foreign Affairs; Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies; Heritage, Cultural Heritage Activities and Tourism; Education, Universities and Research; Environment and Protection of Land and Sea.

PLEMMIRIO

THE PARK

Plemmirio holds one of the most rich in history parts of the Italian coastline, although it is one of the youngest marine protected areas in Italy, born only in 2005. Fifteen kilometers of sea extending in the south of Syracuse, along the Maddalena Peninsula from Capo Castelluccio to Fanusa, crossing Capo Murro di Porco.

Natural landscapes, high and rocky coasts, small bays and caves following one another. This area, which has 35 access points to the sea, is surrounded by the evidences of human presence from prehistoric times to the present day. During ancient times, its sea was crossed by Carthaginians, Greeks and Romans fleets: artifacts of those times are still in the sea bottoms and can be seen during amazing diving activities. The depths of the Ionian sea provides habitat for Posidonia meadows, large specimen of Pinna nobilis, the rare Mediterranean bivalve, and colonies of the scleractinian corals. Marine fauna is characterized by the presence of stone basses, tunas, kingfishes, dolphins and sperm whales.

When we discover the Plemmirio mainland, the surroundings are equally amazing: Mediterranean scrub includes the presence of dwarf palm, while in the wet and salty marshes, once used as a salt mine, it is possible, during spring and autumn, to watch pink flamingos flying.

Then Syracuse, the main city of Magna Graecia, the ancient commercial and trading centre which is still influencing the surrounding area thanks to its cultural, artistic and gastronomic heritage.

www.plemmirio.it

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★ THE PRODUCTS ★

Femminello lemon of Syracuse

In 2011 the lemon of Syracuse got the PGI - Protected Geographical Indication. This species originates from an old cultivar of the *Citrus* × *limon* and is one of the most representative and popular citrus fruit in Italy. Syracuse is the largest exporter to Italy and Europe and a real reference point for the cultivation of this juicy and tasty species.

The *Femminello* is also famous for its oily part, produced by the external skin, that makes this lemon the first citrus in the world to be grown for the high quality of its essential oils.

Its main feature is the triple bloom, which produces three different types of lemons: the *primofiore*, ripening from October to March, the *bianchetto* from April to June and the verdello from July to September. The unique fertility of the plant has given the lemon of Syracuse the nickname "femminello", a dialectal Italian word meaning "feminine".

This plant is also used in cosmetics and herbal medicine. Dior, Chanel, Hermes and Dolce & Gabbana have included the sweet and citrus extract of the lemon in their perfumes.

Traditionally *Femminello* of Syracuse is linked to Saint Lucia, the patron saint of the city: during the procession of the saint statue from the countryside to the city - each December 20th - the saint is celebrated by bringing her the bigger and more juicy fruits.

Pretiosa white wine

From a traditional grape variety located nearby Syracuse, this wine is elegant, structured and perfumed, as its homeland. Known since 1600, this typical wine, distinctive product of the Plemmirio Marine Protected Area, is now only produced by the winery in Contrada Fanusa. After being harvested, grapes are laid on cane mats in a well ventilated room, making the *Pretiosa* or *Albanello di Pretiosa* a sweet and syrupy wine, considered by experts to be an excellence among Sicilian wines.

Saliens sparkling wine

Saliens, from the Latin name meaning "bubbly", is an Italian sparkling wine made from muscat grapes of Syracuse partially dried. Thanks to the high quality of this wine the exquisite muscat grapes of Sicily are now returned to their former glory.

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THE RECIPES

Tagliolini with DOP* lemon of Syracuse

This traditional first course is popular for its freshness and delicacy. Main ingredient is the typical product of this area, the *Femminello* lemon.

00 flour 200 gr.

2 eggs

semolina flour 4-5 spoons

butter 40 gr.

1 big lemon (zest and juice)

oil, q.s.

fresh thyme

salt q.s.

How to prepare:

Tagliolini fresh pasta are made by mixing flour and semolina flour with the eggs. Spread a thin dough out, roll it and cut into 1-2 mm wide strips.

With a potato peeler remove the lemon zest paying attention to avoid the white part, that tastes bitter. Cut the zest into thin strips and squeeze the lemon juice.

In another bowl, melt the butter in a pan then add the strips of zest. Pour not yet cooked tagliolini into the pan, drizzle with lemon juice, then pour boiling salted water. Cook for a few minutes. After the fire is turned off, spice it with thyme.

* Protected Designation of Origin (P.D.O.)

Canned seafood

Local fish fillets preserved in oil, such as tuna, mackerel, swordfish, are typical products coming from the area of Syracuse. Some companies uses these kind of fishes to make pâté and creamy fillings, ideal as an aperitif or appetizer.

Local fishes

Various species of fishes are found in the marine protected area, such as dolphin fish - *Coryphaena hippurus* - and its highly appreciated meat quality like tuna and bonito, red mullet and sardines. Some of these are the bases of traditional local recipes. Small-scale artisanal fisheries is allowed in some areas only and selective gears must be used to protect living marine resources and preserve the environment.

D.O.P. * Oil Monti Iblei

The production area of these olives is located along the southeastern hills of Monti Iblei, nearby the city of Noto, within the Tellaro valley. The Protected Designation of Origin (P.D.O.), according to guidelines approved by the European Union, inform consumers about place of origins and traceability through all stages, from production to consumption.

Olives are mainly from the "moresca" variety, harvested and milled no later than October 30th. The result is a rich and robust oil, with a green color, a fruity smell and a light herbaceous aroma. The taste gives a medium spicy fruit sensation.

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* Protected Designation of Origin (P.D.O.).

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THE RECIPES

Sardines "alla beccafico"

Sardines "alla beccafico" (sardi a beccaficu) are a popular traditional Sicilian dish, listed in the Traditional Italian farming products, approved by the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies. The name of the recipe comes from a bird species, the warbler (beccafico), that was traditionally served only on the aristocrats Sicilian tables. Working class, however, could use raw materials available, such as "poor fish", preparing at least a basic plate very similar to the noble recipe.

Sardines 1 kg
1 lemon
bread crumbs 100 gr.
2 garlic cloves
2 shallots
salted capers 60 gr.
black olives 60 gr.
sultana raisins 40 gr.
pine nuts 40 gr.
oil q.s.
bay leaves q.s.
parsley q.s.

Ho to prepare:

Clean the sardines, removing the entrails and cutting them along the length from the abdomen to the tail. Carefully wash and dry them. Arrange the sardines on a plate with the inside facing upwards. Soak raisins and capers in two separate bowls with a little water for about 10 minutes. Meanwhile peel shallots and garlic, and pit the olives. Drain raisins and capers and mince them with parsley, pine nuts and 4 sardines. Grind the bread crumbs and let them brown with two tablespoons of oil. Add about ¾ of this mixture to the raisins, capers, parsley, pine nuts and sardines.

Uniformly distribute this mix over the sardines, then roll them leaving the tail outside. Use a toothpick to close the rolls and place them in a baking dish with the bay leaves. Put salt and sprinkle with the remained bread crumb. Drizzle with oil and lemon juice.

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THE RECIPES

DOP* Lemon of Syracuse cake

Icing sugar 240 gr
butter 195 gr
3 eggs
whole milk 150 ml.
peeled sweet almonds 150 gr
00 flour 120 gr
potato flour 75 gr
3 lemons
1 vanilla bean
candied lemon zest 90 gr
baking powder 7 gr
salt 3 gr

How to prepare:

In a bowl beat icing sugar with the butter (left out at room temperature) for about 5 minutes, using an electric mixer. Carefully grate lemon zest, paying attention to avoid the white part, that tastes bitter. After the first two ingredients are whipped, add grated lemon zest, salt, vanilla and candied lemon, finely chopped.

Stir in the eggs - one at a time - repeatedly whisking.

Separately, sift flour, potato flour, baking powder; add the almonds to the powders. Then, add the butter and icing dough, mixing well while slowly pouring milk. Put the dough into a buttered and floured cake pan, and bake in preheated oven at 160 ° C for 50-60 minutes. Once the cake has cooled, sprinkle over icing sugar.

Bavette alla lampuga (Dolphin fish pasta)

How to prepare:

In a pot prepare water to cook pasta. Separately, fry over low heat garlic and parsley then add diced tomatoes, saffron, salt and pepper. Cook for 10 minutes. When ready, stir into the sauce the dolphinfish cut into pieces, adding oil and chopped basil. Drain the pasta "al dente" and put it back into the pan with the sauce for one minute.

Bavette, 500 gr.
(Bavette are a kind of flattened spaghetti, virtually identical to linguine)

4 dolphin fish fillets

½ garlic clove

parsley q.s.

cherry tomatoes 300 gr.

saffron q.s.

oil q.s.

salt q.s.

pepper q.s.

basil q.s.

Baked Lampuga

dolphin fish fillets 800 gr.
breadcrumbs 1 cup
2 lemons
cacio ragusano (tasty and slightly spiced cheese) 20 gr.
parsley q.s.
oregano q.s.
oil q.s.
salt q.s.
pepper q.s.

How to prepare:

Wash and dry the dolphinfish, marinade it with oil and ½ lemon juice. Then cut into square pieces.

Mix breadcrumbs with chopped garlic and parsley, cacio ragusano, oregano, pepper and a little oil.

Drain dolphin fish from the marinade, dip into the flavored breadcrumbs and thread it onto some skewers. Place them in an oiled baking pan, season with salt and sprinkle with oil.

Bake in a preheated oven at 200 ° C for 10 minutes. Serve the kebabs hot, lying them on a bed of lemon slices.

Pasta with sardines

bucatini 500 gr. (this pasta name comes from 'buco', which means hole in Italian, because bucatini is like a hollow version of spaghetti)

sardines fillets 500 gr.

wild fennel

8 salted and cleaned anchovies fillets

1 onion

sultana raisins 50 gr.

pine nuts 50 gr.

1 sachet of saffron

oil q.s.

How to prepare:

Clean two bunches of wild fennel and cook them in boiling salted water for about 15 minutes. Drain, squeeze and cut into small pieces, keeping the cooking water. Soak raisins in a bowl.

Lightly fry the finely chopped onion with half cup of olive oil, add the salted anchovy fillets and cook them until "melted" in the oil and onion. Mix the sardines and brown together for a few minutes. Then add the fennel, stir and cook for another 10 minutes. Dilute saffron with a spoonful of the fennel cooking water and mix it with raisins, pine nuts and salt. Add the saffron mixture to the sardines sauce and continue cooking for 5 minutes always mixing. Add oil if needed.

Cook pasta using the fennel cooking water, drain it "al dente" and put it back in the pan with sardines sauce for 1 minute.

Baked red mullet

8 big red mullets

fresh tomato sauce 300 gr.

½ glass of white wine

½ spoon of Pantelleria capers (Pantelleria, an island off the Sicilian coast, is known for producing the world's best capers)

parsley q.s.

1 garlic clove

oregano q.s.

salt q.s.

pepper q.s.

oil q.s.

How to prepare:

Put tomato sauce in a bowl with finely chopped garlic and parsley, oil, oregano and freshly ground pepper. Season for about 15 minutes.

Flake and gut the red mullets; wash, dry and place them in a baking dish. Salt the fish and cover with fresh tomato sauce and ½ cup of white wine. Bake in a preheated oven at 200 ° C for 10 minutes. Serve red mullets hot.