

The Italian Historical Geographical and Cultural Puzzle ☺

The Etruscan Civilization (900-150 BC)



Magna Grecia colonies (8th-4th century BC)



The Roman Empire...(350 BC-476 AD)



Different natural environments...







Before and after the Roman Empire, «Italy» has always been many different countries in one: with different customs, different languages – often a deeply different culture. Italy became a unified «kingdom» only in 1861, and a Republic in 1946.

It is now made of 20 regions, and most of them still preserve a very peculiar character - traditions, language, food...- and are also very proud of it. Some «regional dialects» are actually a second language, and have little to do with Italian 😊



The rich regional diversity makes it hard – and also unfair – to make any kind of generalization about Italian traditions, customs and culture.

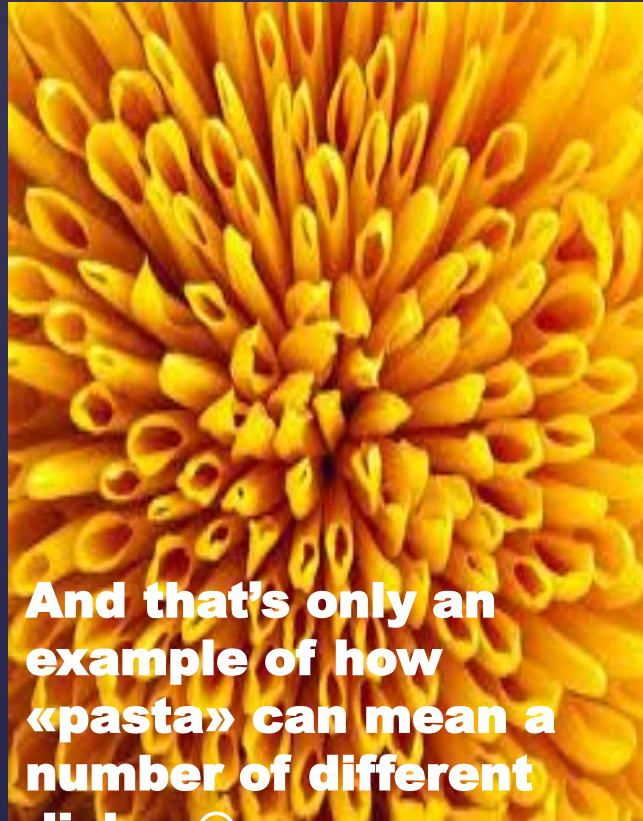
Yet...

We have something in common...

We all LOVE FOOD 😊

We love cooking, eating...and, above all, talking about food 😊

Food is one of the main cultural features where in Italy Difference often becomes a positive chance to share, appreciate, and mix up 😊



**And that's only an
example of how
«pasta» can mean a
number of different
dishes☺**



A part from FOOD...

We have a couple of other things in common ☺

RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS, for instance.

Christmas and Easter are celebrated all over Italy ...though not everywhere in the same way -and with the same food ☺

Epithany (6 th January) is also an important day and it is often celebrated both from a religious (the Three Wise Men bring their precious gifts to the Holy Baby) and a 'pagan' point of view: children wait for the «Befana» (an old woman flying on a broom who comes by night and fills the children's socks with sweets or coal) , adults meet around big bonfires called «Pan e Vin» (they burn the old year, calling it the «old hug»)

«Ognissanti» (31st October) was essentially a religious occasion, and a day devoted to visit one's own dead. Among old traditions there was the habit to eat the first chestnuts and drink «vino novello» (new wine from the last grape harvest). Yet, for children and younger people the event is now mostly associated with «Halloween» and has become a sort of second Carnival.

Moreover, any city, little village has its own Patron Saint: this is a very important occasion and celebrations often go on for a week and more – including both religious and 'pagan' events.

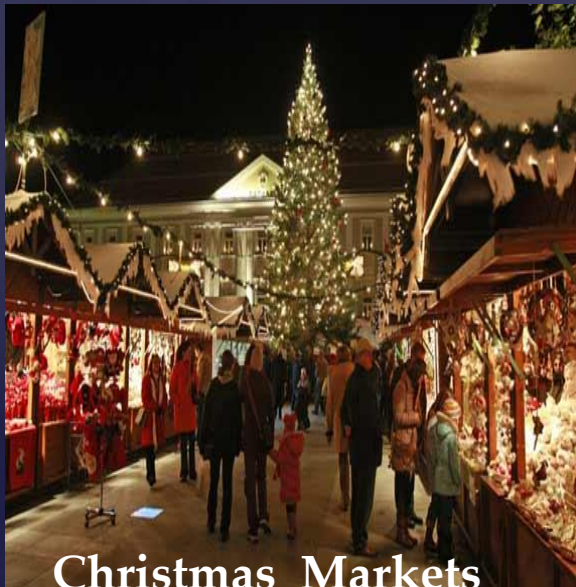
Chistmas Tree



Christmas Presents



Christmas Krib



Christmas Markets



Christmas table...

Christmas

Easter





CARNIVAL is another important moment of national celebration, involving the biggest cities as well as the little villages, especially on Maundy Thursday and Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras – last day before Lent).

Among the most famous are Viareggio (for its incredible floats parade) and Venice Carnival, which attract tourists from all over the world every year.



THE ITALIAN FLAG

It waves outside all public buildings in Italy – schools included – but most Italians look at it mainly as the symbol of our national football team...☺

It became the National flag in December 1947, after the end of the II World War – but it was born in 1794 and inspired by the French Flag and the ideals of the French Revolution: Libertè, Egalitè, Fraternitè.

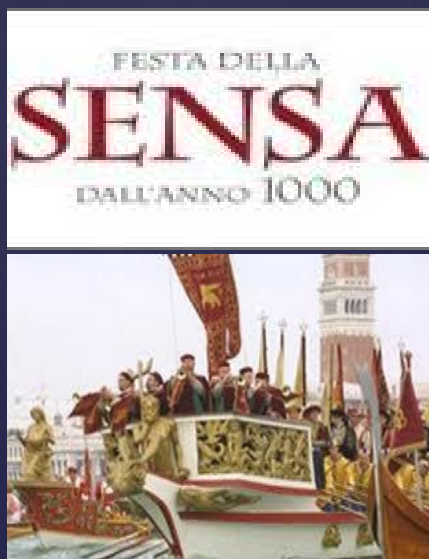
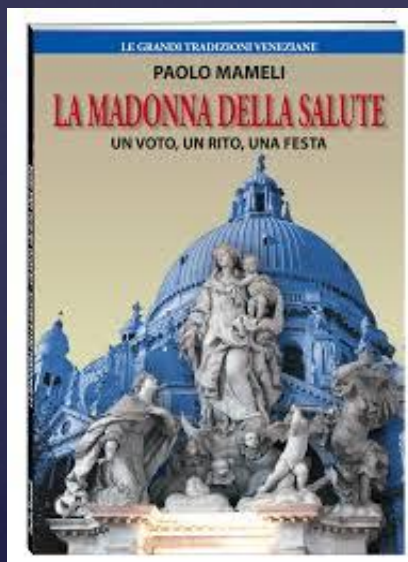
The blue of the French Flag was changed into green to avoid confusion and add an element of 'hope'.

A legend tells a different story: the green is for our plains, the white for the snowy mountains, the red for the blood of the soldiers who died for our freedom.



Some of the most famous Venetian traditional festivals...

- **CARNIVAL**: The flight of the Angel and the Eagle; the Festival of Marie
- **SAINT MARK'S DAY**, 25th April (Saint Patron of Venice) Husbands and fiancé are expected to give a rosebud to their sweethearts ☺
- **FESTA DELLA SENSA**, May (Ascension Day). It celebrates Venice marriage with the sea and the greatness of the Venetian fleet. The water parade is guided by the Doge who throw the ring in the water.
- **VOGALONGA** , May (boat race)
- **SU E ZO PAI PONTI** (running/walking race)
- **FESTA DEL REDENTORE** third Saturday of July (celebrating the end of a plague in 1577; Palladio Basilica was built on that occasion. On Redentore Day, Venetians build a boat bridge, linking Zattere to Giudecca, on Canal Grande; a large number of different boats meet in Bacino San Marco, waiting for the great firework show of the night)
- **REGATA STORICA**, first Sunday in September (Historical boat race)
- **MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE DEL CINEMA** , September
- **MADONNA DELLA SALUTE**, 21st November (celebrating the end of a plague in the XVII century)



ANCIENT JOBS IN

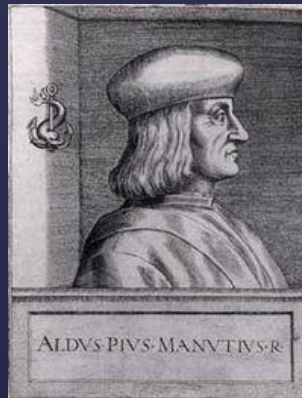
Lace work



Gondola building



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Blown glass

Printing