

GAMBERO ROSSO

- SPECIAL CALABRIA
- 70 YEARS OF BADIA DI COLTIBUONO

GIN DO ITALIANS DO IT BETTER?





TRAVEL

text and photography
by Massimiliano Rella

Two parks, two peaks, two seas

Touched by two seas, and held tightly between the mountains of two national parks, the Sila and the Pollino, the province of Cosenza embraces a variety of microclimates, soils and landscapes that make themselves felt even at the kitchen table.



CALABRIA

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FEBRUARY 2016

From the woods of black pine on the Sila plateau, more than 1,200 meters above sea level, to the crystalline waters that bathe the beaches of Belmonte Calabro, a wealth of flavors and unique products, on their own, make a journey worthwhile. And if then we add the beauty of the places, for example the preserved zones of Cosenza's historic center, the Riserva dei Giganti on the Sila, villages like Morano on the Pollino and Longobardi on the Tyrrhenian coast, we have the ingredients for a long off-season weekend. We started from the Pollino National Park, the largest protected area in Italy. We drove from the Salerno-Reggio Calabria road, finally less crowded after the summer is over. We stopped in Saracena, a town of ancient origins at an altitude of 700 meters. It's said that it descends from Antica

Sestio, founded by the Oenotrians around eleven centuries B.C.. The historic background is fascinating, and we later deepened our understanding in Cosenza, in the Museo Civico dei Brettii e degli Enotri. Afterwards, at the Osteria Porta del Vaglio, we found young chef Gennaro Pace, who invited us to a more sensual experience. In the first of his three dining rooms, a complete wall is lined with Calabrian wines – this is the country of Moscato di Saracena. The menu grows out of research into local ingredients, then reworked with an experimental approach. "Among our dishes is fillet of black calabrese pork seasoned with pine needles from the Pollino. They introduce balsamic aromas," Pace told us, "that we use in fish recipes too. Mackerel with cuttlefish ink on whipped potatoes from the Sila we enhance with sprigs of pine."



HOT-BRANDING OF CACIOCVALLO SILANO DOP, PAESE DAIRY, CAMIGLIATELLO SILANO (COSENZA)



DEMETRIO SCANCARÌ AND FLAVIANO BLOTTI, PRODUCERS OF ALTA QUOTIA, THE FIRST SPUMANTE OF THE SILA

Another wonderful celebration of regional products brought us to a plateau on the Sila, La Tavernetta in Camigliatello, where chef Pietro Lecce, alongside his son Emanuele (the other son, Biagio, is working in Rende in a new place connected with the Ferrocinto Winery) offered us an 'extract' of Calabria. Filetto di Vero Nero – literally 'fillet of true black' – combines the meat and pancetta of black Calabrian pork, licorice root, Sila potatoes and clementine gelatin (Calabria IGP). "It is a synthesis of the varieties of our land," Lecce told us. "The Silano plateau offers us mushrooms, cheeses, wild herbs and many other good products, the fruit of an uncontaminated environment hidden among the peaks of the region." Following Pietro Lecce's advice, we visited the colorful Sunday market of Moccone, a bright triumph of flavors, and the dairy farm of the Paese family. They make excellent



CHEESE CACIOCAVALLO

At 1,200 meters above sea level, on the great Sila plateau, the Paese dairy farm transforms milk from their own animals into flavorful cheeses: Caciocavallo Silano DOP, burrino (a small cylinder of caciocavallo with butter hidden inside), delicate little wheels of goat cheese, fresh ricotta and ricotta smoked with black alder wood, local of course. The family-owned farm raises 50 cows - frisona, jersey and pezzate rosse breeds - and 30 Saanen and nero di Calabria goats, which give 700 liters of milk every day. From spring to autumn, the animals graze on the 35 hectares of meadow and brush, dining on spontaneous grasses and herbs.

CASEIFICIO PAESE |
 SPEZZANO PICCOLO (Cs) |
 LOC. CAMIGLIATELLO SILANO |
 VIA DELL'AGRICOLTURA 73 |
 TEL. 0984 579 930 |
 WWW.CASEIFICIOPAESE.IT

traditional cheeses with the milk of their own farm animals, not far from the Cecita Lake.

From Sila we returned to the valley towards Cosenza and into the countryside of Aciri and Bisignano where we met a simpatico family of wine producers, Demetrio Stancati and his wife Flavia, owners of the Serracavallo winery. They turn out whites and reds, a grappa from magliocco grapes and an extra-virgin olive oil from carolea, rogianella and cassanese cultivars. The surprise is the new metodo classico spumante of Sila, among the first bubbly of the plateau. Another is Dovi made by Ferrocinto, also a chardonnay (but a monovarietal) grown in the mountains in the zone of Castrovillari on the slopes of the Pollino. The Serravallo wine is called Alta Quota (High Altitude) and combines chardonnay and riesling, grapes that

come from an extreme vineyard, 1,200 meters above sea level. For now, they only make a few thousand bottles. But we were struck also by an aperitif we had before we reached Carpaccio, a restaurant and wine bar in nearby Aciri. Wine enthusiast Gianluigi Micheli greeted us with a parade of specialties and local recipes with dialect names. Among the dishes were *schiaffettune*, homemade ravioli with anchovies and crisp bread crumbs. The main dishes included roast lamb with *imbacchiuse* potatoes, a sort of hash brown, and local podolico veal *scorzetta* cutlets with grilled porcini mushrooms. This kilometer-zero trattoria is also a wine bar with over 400 Italian labels in its cellars, including regional glories such as Gravello by Librandi, from as far back as 1999 and Ripe del Falco Ippolito from 1987.

PREPARATION OF GAMMUNE, THE CULATTELLO-STYLE PROSCIUTTO FROM BELMONTE CALABRO, NOW A SLOW FOOD PRESIDIO. PRODUCER MARIO ARRIA



After a stroll around old Cosenza and an espresso at Gran Renzelli, the historic café on Corso Telesio, we took the road for Altilia, about fifty kilometers away, towards the Tyrrhenian Sea. In the nearby countryside, butcher and livestock breeder Adriano Ferrari raises his black Calabrian pigs in a natural way. They provide the meat for exquisite cured products that he makes in collaboration with the Moretti family of Marano Principato. The animals are raised and pastured outdoors, freely grazing on chestnuts and acorns. Among his classic Calabrian products are spicy *nduja*, *soppresata*, *capocollo*, *pancetta* and *guanciale* (cured cheek), as well as aged shoulder prosciutto and boned ham.

A few kilometers further brought us to Longobardi, an uninhabited village, like many on the Calabrian mountains. Nevertheless, it is the destination for a pleasant pilgrimage that attracts many food enthusiasts from inside and outside the region. Degustaria Magnatum has made a virtue of necessity. It is part bar, part newsstand, part specialized shop and osteria, part tasting center. The idea is Francesco Saliceti's, the city culture councilor, a man fascinated by good and thoughtful food and wine products. Try the delicious layered potato frittata, the appetizing greens, gorgonzola and sausage crostini (bruschetta-like), the wine-marinated *culatello* (prosciutto-like cured pork), or *taleggio* cheese and dehydrated peaches on toasted fig bread crostini. Everything is carefully selected – meat, cheese, cured meats, olive oil, wine and food pairings. Many products are for sale, such as over 30 extra-virgin olive oils from all the Italian regions.

At the end of our trip, Belmonte Calabro awaited, an authentic town of taste experiences. In the summer we would find gigantic seedless tomatoes (weighing as much as two kilos



DOTIATED FIGS OF GOSSENZA, MADE BY COLAVOLPE IN BELMONTE CALABRO

CONFECTIONERY THE POETRY OF DRIED FIGS

For the Colavolpe family of Belmonte Calabro, figs are not just a fruit like any other. For three generations, they have purchased dried ones and transformed them into memorable confections. They start with a local variety with white flesh, no seeds and a thin skin. Shaped into crosses, the figs are filled with almonds and orange zest, then bathed in a syrup of herbs, myrtle berries, licorice, anise and other ingredients or else, covered with bittersweet chocolate. Larger figs are filled with candied orange peel and almonds. The art-nouveau designs on the boxes are part of the fun.

COLAVOLPE |
BELMONTE CALABRO (Cs) |
P.LE N. COLAVOLPE |
TEL. 0982 47017 |
WWW.COLAVOLPE.COM

BELMONTE CALABRO



each) rosy and sweet. In the winter, we find a Slow Food presidio product, Gammune, and excellent sweets that fill the best pastry shops of Italy, made by the century-old confectioner, Colavolpe. Gammune is a sort of culatello Calabrese, a deboned black-pig prosciutto, salted and seasoned with a bell pepper sauce, air-dried and aged for at least 16 months. The sweets from Colavolpe celebrate local figs, a Cosenza variety that is stuffed with almonds, orange zest and garnished with white and dark chocolate.

"You don't know Calabria fully without a stop in Belmonte Calabro. From sweet to salty, the meals here are complete!" joked Mario Arlia, head of the Slow Food presidio for Gammune in Belmonte. He has a point. The latest project concerns bread. Five 19th-century mills are being restored to bring

FARMERS MARKET SUNDAY IN CAMIGLIATELLO

Every Sunday morning in Camigliatello, on the road to Moccone, in an area equipped with shacks and wooden stands, a peasants' market comes to life, overflowing with Sila and Cosenza specialties, ranging from dried and oil-preserved mushrooms to vegetables, cured pork and wild boar products, cheeses, chestnuts and large, purple-striped mountain beans. The aromas and flavors of local tradition rule and the stands are overseen by the farmers themselves.

back the grain, milling and bread-making connection of Belmonte. The so-called 'ugly' bread may not be pretty, but will certainly be the best-tasting in the region.



FARMERS' MARKET ON THE ROAD FOR MOCCONE, EVERY SUNDAY AT CAMIGLIATELLO SILANO (COSENZA)



POTATOES AND MORE MOUNTAIN FLAVORS

The Sila zone, its climate marked by sharp temperature excursions and its woods surrounding the cultivated fields, is perfectly suited to growing potatoes. The mountain spring water used to irrigate the soil doesn't pass through livestock farms or industrial settlements but runs through pristine territory. Sila potatoes, an IGP, are grown in about 15 varieties (marabel, agria, nicola, ditta) each with its own zesty flavor. All are ideal for frying thanks to their high percentage of dry matter. Among the 30 producers is the cooperative Orti dei Monti, which also sells directly to the consumer.

TENUTA DI TORRE GARGA |
SAN GIOVANNI IN FIORE (CS) |
LOC. GARGA | KM 83,400 S.S. 107 |
TEL. 0984 992 879 |
WWW.TENUTADITORREGARGA.IT

WHAT TO VISIT

PARKS, TOWNS
AND MONUMENTAL
TREES

PARCO NAZIONALE DELLA SILA. Eighty marked walking trails wind through the 800 kilometers of Italy's largest mountain plateau. The visitors' center in Cupone a Camigliatello includes an historic sawmill with antique machinery and a nature museum. (INFO: WWW.PARCOSILA.IT)

I GIGANTI DELLA SILA. In this national park are centuries-old pine trees, some 40 meters high, with trunks two meters in diameter. (INFO TEL 0984 76760)

MUSEO CIVICO DEI BRETTH E DEGLI ENOTRI. Located in the monumental complex of San Agostino in Cosenza. An antique cloister and a central well joined by underground cisterns to the Crati River. On show are finds from the stone age to the ancient Roman era.

(COSENZA, SALITA S. AGOSTINO, TEL. 0984 23303, WWW.MUSEODEIBRETTH EDEGLIENOTRI.IT).

CATTEDRALE. The Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, in Romanesque and Gothic style is a treasure chest of art and history. Along the left nave are two Baroque chapels, one dedicated to the Madonna del Pilerio, a Byzantine icon of the Madonna nursing her child. (PIAZZA DUOMO, COSENZA, TEL. 0984 77864, WWW.CATTEDRALEDIGOSENZA.IT)

COSENZA VECCHIA. Many noble buildings line the narrow streets, such as the 15th-century Palazzo Ciaccio, the Palazzo di Giustizia, the Ducal Palazzo Gaspare Sersale in Largo delle Vergini and others. The Norman castle, Svevo, is in the upper part of town. It has been under renovation for many years. Guided visits, on foot and by bus, museum entrance for adults is 8€, reduced price 6€, at 10, 17 and 21.30. Information

on Piazza XI Settembre, jPiazza dei Bruzi and Piazza Valdesi.

(WWW.COSENZATURISMO.IT E WWW.COMUNE.COSENZA.IT)

WHERE TO EAT

ANTICA LOCANDA DEL POVERO ENZO | Via Montesanto 42 | Cosenza | TEL 0984.28861 | WWW.ANTICALOCANDADALPOVEROENZO.COM | Three courses 35€ | Closed Sat lunch and Sun even | The modern cuisine of young Ivan Carelli revisits regional dishes.

DEGUSTERIA MAGNATUM | Via Indipendenza 56 | Longobardi (Cs) | TEL 0982.75201 | Average cost between 30 and 35€ | Closed Sun even

IL CARPACCIO RISTORANTE ENOTECA | C.DA COCOZZELLO 197 | Acri (Cs) | TEL 0984.949205 | WWW.ILCARPACCIO.IT | Antipasti, primo and main course 29€ | Closed all day Mon and Sun even

LA TAVERNETTA | C.DA CAMPILO SAN LORENZO 14 | Camigliatello Silano (Cs) | TEL 0984.579026 | WWW.SANLORENZOSIALBERGA.IT | Cost 60€ | Closed Mon

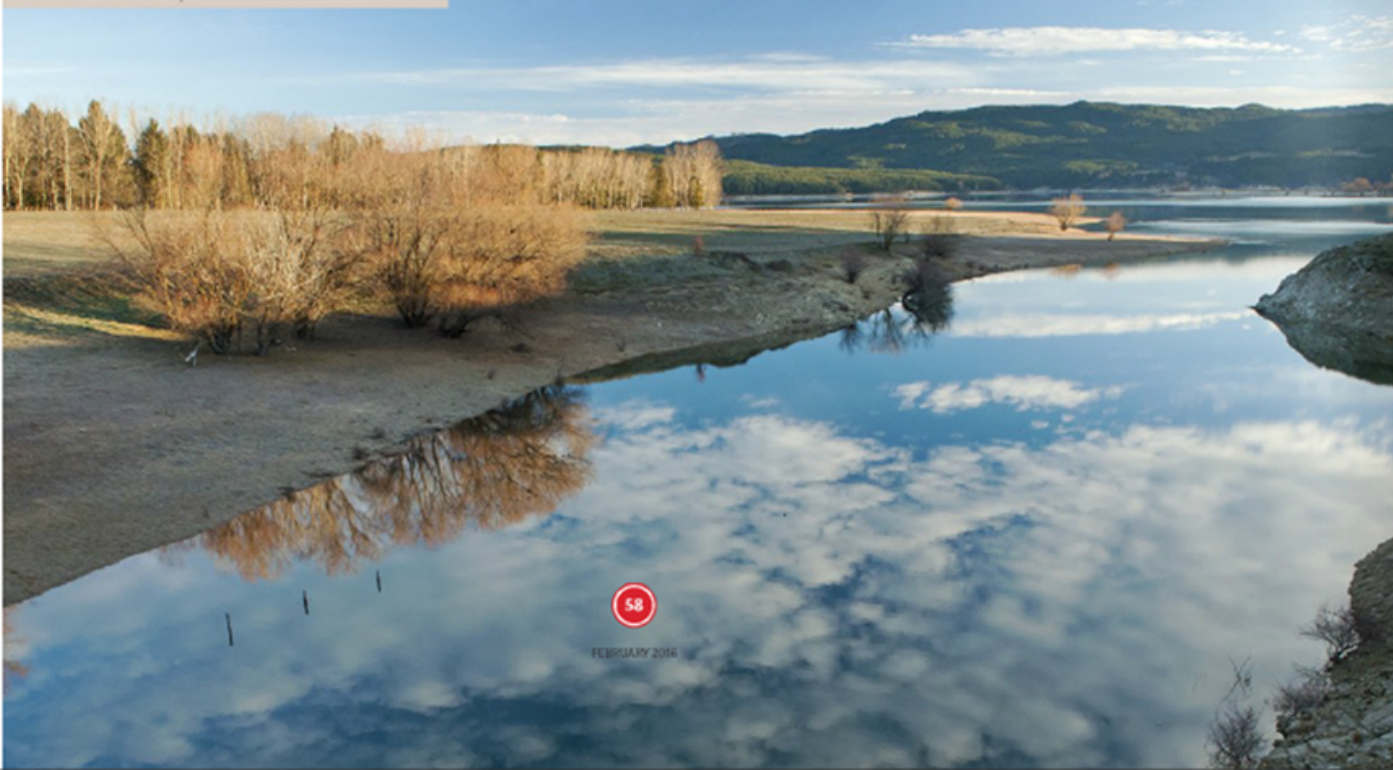
OSTERIA LA CORBELLERIA | Via Galeazzo Di Tarsa 21 | Cosenza | TEL 328.1927206 | Cost 20€ without wine | Always open | Rustic, typical cucina in a narrow street of the historic center

OSTERIA PORTA DEL VAGLIO | Vico I.S.M. MADDALENA 12 | Saracena (Cs) | TEL 0981.1904655 | WWW.OSTERIAPORTADELVAGLIO.IT | Cost 3 courses without wine 30€, with dessert 36€ | Closed all day Mon and Tues lunch

RISTORANTE NABUCCO | Via Marconi 59 | Rende (Cs) | TEL 0984.401010 | WWW.HOTELEXECUTIVECS.IT | Cost 3 courses 28€ | Always open |

FERROCINTO | Via Alfieri, 58 | Rende (Cs) | TEL 329 747 5443 | WWW.CANTINECAMPOVERDE.IT

VIEW OF GLICIA LAKE, PARCO NAZIONALE DELLA SILA



WHERE TO SLEEP

ALBERGO DIFFUSO ECOVACANZE
| VIA CAVOUR 65 |
BELMONTE CALABRO (Cs) |
TEL 0982.400576 | WWW.ECOVACANZEBELMONTE.IT |
25€ per person per night
including typical breakfast,
gratis under 5 years, from
6 to 12, 50% discount |
Thirteen houses in the
center restored according
to rules of bio-architecture.

B&B VIA DELL'ASTROLOGO
| VIA R. BENINCASA 16 |
COSENZA | TEL 338.9205394
| WWW.VIADELLASTROLOGO.COM |
Double room and
breakfast with local
pastries from 60€

HOTEL EXECUTIVE | VIA
MARCONI 59 | RENDE (Cs)
| TEL 0984.401010 |
WWW.HOTELEXECUTIVECS.IT |
Double room and
breakfast from 75€ | Near
the highway, modern 4-star
with spacious rooms

ROYAL HOTEL | VIA DELLE
MEDAGLIE D'ORO 1 | COSENZA
| TEL 0984.412165 | [\[HOTELROYALSAS.IT\]\(http://HOTELROYALSAS.IT\) | Double
room and breakfast from
69€ | Near historic center](http://WWW.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

SAN LORENZO | C.DA
CAMPO SAN LORENZO 14 |
CAMIGLIATELLO SILANO (Cs)
| TEL 0984.570809 | WWW.SANLORENZOSIALBERGA.IT |
Double room and breakfast
with local pastries 109€ per
night. Modern mountain
hotel with minimalist
design.

VILLAGGIO ALBERGO
BELMONTE | LOC. LE PIANE
| BELMONTE CALABRO (Cs)
| TEL 0982.400177 | WWW.VABELMONTE.IT |
Double
room and breakfast from
110€

VISITS TO WINERIES AND ARTISANAL SALUMERIE

CENTRO CARNI SILA |
VIA FORGITELLE 62 |
CAMIGLIATELLO SILANO (Cs) |
TEL 0984.578012 |
WWW.SILAESILA.IT | Cured meat
production from their own
black pigs

GAMMUNE DI BELMONTE CALABRO
| LOC. SANTA BARBARA 98 |
BELMONTE CALABRO (Cs) | TEL
328.4620955 (SIG. MARIO ARLIA)
| WWW.GAMMUNEDIBELMONTE.IT |
Outlet for the Colavolpe firm
of Belmonte Calabro

SALUMIFICIO SAN VINCENZO |
C.DA ACQUACOPERTA | SPEZZANO
PICCOLO (Cs) | TEL 0984.435089
| WWW.SANVINCENZOSALUMI.IT |
Cured meat specialties DOP
and from Calabrian black
pigs. Company outlet.

SERRACAVALLI | C.DA
SERRACAVALLI | BISIGNANO (Cs)
| TEL 0984.21144 | WWW.VINISERRACAVALLI.COM |
Winery
visit and free tasting of three
wines. Every day, but reserve
ahead. Tasting of 8 wines, 10€
per person

SHOPPING

BARRESE | VIALE VIRGILIO 12 |
C.DA MOCCONE | CAMIGLIATELLO
SILANO (Cs) | TEL 0984.578681
| WWW.BARRESE1929.COM |
Mushrooms and vegetables
from the Sila

CASEIFICIO SANT'ANNA |
C.DA MIRABELLA | CAMPORA
SAN GIOVANNI (Cs) | TEL
328.8917412 | WWW.FORMAGGIASANTANNA.COM |
Excellent cheeses made with
milk from the dairy's own
Saanen-breed goats.

ALLEVAMENTO FERRARI |
C.DA MONTI | ALTILIA (Cs)
| CELL 334.5639303 | WWW.NEROCALABRESE.IT

G.B. SPADAFORA GIOIELLI | VIA
ROMA 3 | SAN GIOVANNI IN FIORE
(Cs) | TEL 0984.993968 | WWW.SPADAFORAGIOIELLI.IT
For five generations, artisanal
jewelry, classic shapes and
local symbols derived from
the Arab-Byzantine tradition.

SCUOLA TAPPETI CARUSO | VIA
GRAMSCI 22 | SAN GIOVANNI IN
FIORE (Cs) | TEL 328.4577671 |
Artisanal shop specialized in
weaving, an ancient tradition
in the Sila zone.



THE CATHEDRAL OF COSENZA