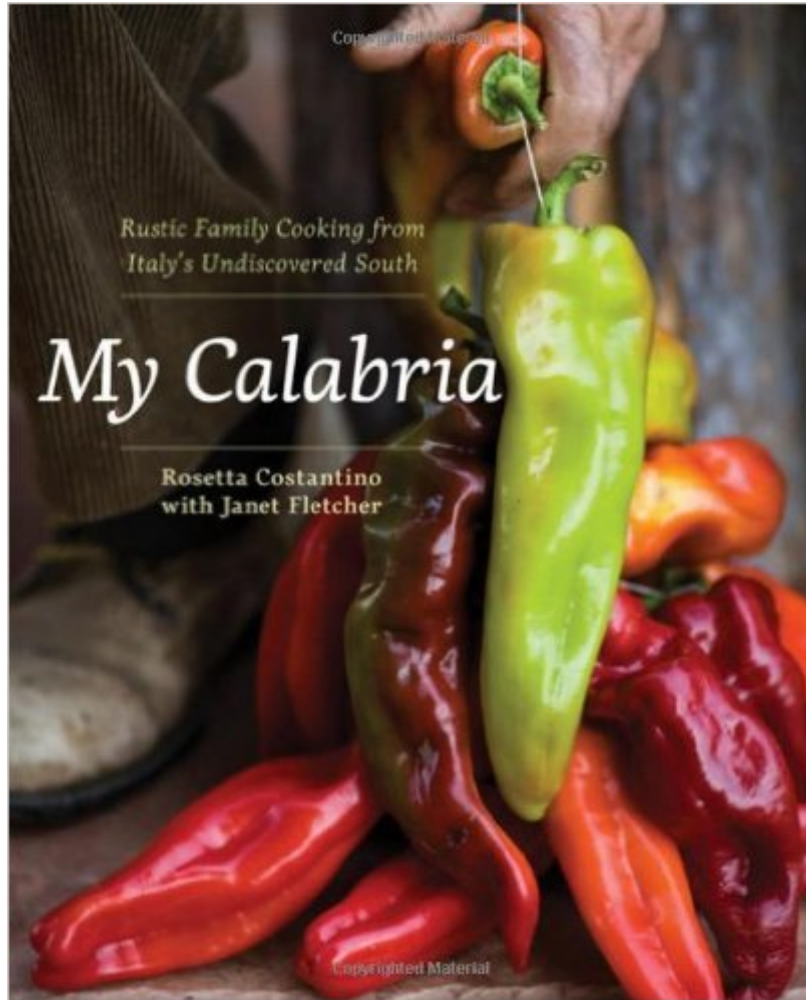


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My Calabria: Rustic Family Cooking From Italy's Undiscovered South



Synopsis

Recipes for easily accessible, fresh-from-the-garden Italian food from a Calabrian native and "bountiful good cook" (The Atlantic). At the tip of Italy's "boot" lies Calabria. It is a beautiful, mountainous region populated by fishermen and small farmers. Rosetta Costantino grew up in this rugged landscape—her father a shepherd and wine maker and her mother his tireless assistant. When her family immigrated to California, they re-created a little Calabria on their property, cooking with eggplant, tomatoes, and peppers from their garden, fresh ricotta made from scratch, and pasta fashioned by hand. A frugal people, Calabrians are master preservers, transforming fresh figs into jam, canning fresh tuna in oil, and sun-drying peppers for the winter. Now Rosetta shares her family's story and introduces readers to the fiery simplicity of Calabrian food. The first cookbook of a little-known region of Italy, *My Calabria* celebrates the richness of the region's landscape and the allure of its cuisine. This is a cookbook for our time: a reminder of how ingenious and resourceful cooks can create a gorgeous local cuisine. 100 color photographs

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've been searching for a cookbook and travel book with Calabrian roots for so long. Many books are 'Southern Italian' but only delve into the well-known Neopolitan recipies. I am a first-generation Italian-American, whose parents immigrated from Calabria so when I saw these recipes in print I almost cried. Very authentic and fun to see the dialect in there too. The history, stories, recipes and photos are outstanding. Thank you for writing this book. Finalmente! p.s. note to author on the 'Peaches' dessert, you can get Alkermes liquor flavoring in the states, Torre Products in New York

carries it. I believe they are in Brooklyn and ship. And if you are reading this wondering if you should buy this book, don't hesitate. I bought a few copies for family to pass on our roots and recipes.

As some background, I am an American of Calabrian heritage who has been living in my ancestors' village in Calabria since 2003; I received this book for review on my blog, *Bleeding Espresso*. Rosetta Costantino was born in Calabria and moved to America with her family at age 14. Although they left behind much of what was familiar to them, the Costantino family never lost their culinary traditions -- and now Rosetta shares them with us in *My Calabria: Rustic Family Cooking from Italy's Undiscovered South*. When paging through *My Calabria*, you feel like an honorary member of the family at the table as you learn about how Rosetta's father recreated their Calabrian garden in Oakland, California; how various members of the family make the same dish; and also the 11 ingredients every Calabrian pantry should have on hand. Rosetta also shares information about the historical and cultural influences on Calabrian cuisine and lifestyle, so aside from being a wonderful collection of recipes (150) that includes appetizers through dessert, *My Calabria* is simply a wonderful resource book on the region -- you're getting so much more than a cookbook here. The recipes themselves are authentic as they come and easy to follow -- one of the best things about Calabrian cooking is that it's user-friendly as it uses so few ingredients -- and the book is just gorgeous. There are plenty of full-page and other sized color photos throughout, not only of recipes but also of various sights from around Calabria. From a personal standpoint as someone who has been making Calabrian food ever since I could cook -- first from my grandmother's recipes and now also from my mother-in-law's -- I give this book five very full espresso cups out of five. Rosetta is a wonderful tour guide through this region's food, history, and culture, and I highly recommend *My Calabria* for anyone who is interested in Calabria, southern Italy, or southern Italian cuisine.

I've lived in Calabria since 2006 and was sent a copy of *My Calabria* to review for my website, *My Bella Vita*. I wrote a review there, as well as a few other sites, but since people come here to buy the book and I always read reviews before making my own purchases, I wanted to write something here, as well. It is hard to find reliable English-language information on Calabria and I loved that this cookbook was more than just a collection of recipes. Yes, it is chock-full of authentic Calabrian cooking, homemade pasta, sauces, meat, fish, veggie and dessert dishes, but it also has the history of various places in Calabria, bright, vivid photos (of more than just the food) and it is written in an easy, conversational tone that makes for easy reading. If you are an Italophile or fan of Calabria,

you'll enjoy this cookbook.

Having travelled to Italy a few times taking cooking classes and experiencing authentic Italian Food, I am often disappointed when I look through/buy Italian cookbooks because the recipes are so "Americano"...This cookbook is anything but and I consider it one of the best cookbooks I have ever purchased. In this book, you are getting the true deal-the author emigrated from Italy to America when she was 14, and she and her family have made a little Italy in their California homes-canning, preserving and growing large gardens that are so common in Calabria (the pictures are in the book and are just delightful!) The author also gives history and insight into the Italian and Calabrian culture, and many of her recipes I recognise from my time in Calabria earlier this year, when I spent time with an Italian family learning the recipes of the region. There are many many recipes-from preserving, appetizers, primi, secondi, contorni and dolce. Many of them contain just a few ingredients that are not difficult to find at your local grocery store or supermarket and are very easy to make! And that is the beauty of Italian food-simple and delicious-not the cheesy, greasy and meatball laden sauces that somehow take over most Italian menus! If you are looking for an AUTHENTIC Italian cookbook, this is it. On a side note, the author conducts cooking classes in California and I am seriously thinking of making a trip to partake!

A Calabrian native, Costantino begins this big, glossy, colorful book of traditional recipes with a tour of the region and its essential foods, a bit of family history and key ingredients of the Calabrian kitchen. Luscious photos accompany many dishes. Organization is by course and each recipe includes background, serving suggestions and wine suggestions. Baked Fresh Anchovies with Breadcrumbs, for instance (Tortiera d'Alici) includes directions for cleaning the anchovies (or sardines) and recommends serving this "savory cake" with a salad or vegetable, preceded by pasta with a seafood or vegetable sauce. Costantino includes a whole chapter of home-preserved pantry items, from sun-dried zucchini or sweet red peppers to various oil-cured vegetables and fish to home-made paprika and candied orange peel. There are recipes for fresh homemade ricotta, rennet and pasta, fennel sausage, bread starter, pizza doughs and Calabrian Rusks. There's Chicken Soup with Ricotta Dumplings, Ribbon Pasta with Chickpeas, Risotto with Fresh Mussels, Pork Meatballs in Tomato Sauce, Potatoes Layered with Artichokes and Breadcrumbs, Sweet Christmas Ravioli with Chestnut and Chocolate Filling. This is the real thing, mouth-wateringly authentic, with a proud joy in the time-honored, leisurely work.

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