

# CET Syllabus of Record



**Program:** CET Florence

**Course Title:** Introduction to Italian Cuisine, Art, and Practice

**Course Code:** FL/ITLS 346

**Total Hours:** Lecture – 30 hours; Food Preparation Lab - 60 hours

**Recommended Credits:** 3

**Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings:** Italian Studies / Food Science and Nutrition

**Language of Instruction:** English.

**Prerequisites/Requirements:** See food lab/kitchen attire

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## Description

Italy is a country that has been occupied and traversed by many different populations. Each of these groups left behind unique elements that were subsequently integrated into the Italian culture – particularly the gastronomic culture, which in its present day form is characterized by a complex interplay of local ingredients, traditions and cultures. Understanding the interaction of these components enables the chef to better understand what is happening in Italy, where its culinary practices have been exported and adopted around the world, and how global foods are making inroads and changing the landscape of the local cuisine.

This course allows students to experience food on both a theoretical and a practical level. Traditional Italian cuisine provides the foundation from which all core course concepts are developed and explored. Two 50-minute lectures per week introduce students to the fundamentals of Italian food preparation, specifically as they apply to regional Italian cuisine. In addition, a 4-hour production lab per week, focused on the richness and variety of Italian regional cuisine, culminates in the evaluation and enjoyment of dishes created by the students. The cooking lab allows students to apply basic principles of food preparation while producing a variety of typical dishes from selected Italian regions, ranging from pasta, main courses and desserts.

## Objectives

The two components of this course, the lecture and the food preparation lab, allow students to feel confident in preparing multi course meals while applying the principles of Italian Regional Cuisine and honing their culinary skills.

After this course, students will be able to ...

- Develop an appreciation and understanding of cultural and culinary differences
- Apply traditional culinary techniques to prepare a variety of Italian regional dishes
- Identify original local ingredients and utilize them properly
- Develop simple Italian menus and preparation schedules

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## Course Requirements

Students are expected to actively participate during each lecture and food preparation lab. Lectures are interactive and interspersed with short demonstrations. Each food preparation lab concludes with an evaluation of dishes produced in lab. This allows class participants to learn from mistakes that might have occurred and deepen their understanding of the processes that take place during cooking.

While food preparation occurs in teams, each team member is expected to come to lab fully prepared and share assigned tasks equally. This includes the post preparation activities. Timely execution of all tasks is critical.

Students are expected to read assigned chapters carefully. It is expected that assigned lab recipes are carefully read prior to each lab. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize supplemental readings to enhance understanding of topics.

Throughout the semester, there are three quizzes at the beginning of food preparation labs covering such aspects as recipe knowledge, ingredient identification and utilization, etc.

For personal and kitchen safety reasons, students are required to attend food preparation labs with the following attire: Long-sleeved shirt, long pants; closed, leather shoes with non-skid soles, and above-ankle socks. Tools will be provided in lab.

Average Reading per week: 60 pages. The following requirements/expectations are also part of the course.

- Participation in lecture and food preparation lab
- Attendance and full engagement at all phases of food preparation labs
- Exams: one midterm and one final
- 3 lab quizzes

## Methods of Evaluation

Midterm exam	15%
Final exam	30%
Class participation	20%
3 Lab quizzes	15%
Lab performance and preparedness	20%

## Primary Texts

Gisslen, Wayne. *Professional Cooking*. 8th ed. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2011. Print.  
Piras, Caudia. *Culinaria Italy*. H.F.Ullmann, 2013  
Riley, Gillian. *The Oxford Companion to Italian Food*. Oxford University Press, 2009. Print.  
Goh P. & Irving J. *The Slow Food Dictionary to Italian Regional Cooking*. Slow Food, 2014. Print.

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Accademia Italiana della Cucina, Hyams J. *La Cucina: The Regional Cooking of Italy*. Rizzoli Intn.Pubs., 2009. Print

### Supplementary Texts

Joachim, David, Andrew Schloss, and A. Philip. Handel. *The Science of Good Food: The Ultimate Reference on How Cooking Works*. Toronto: R. Rose, 2008. Print.

McGee, Harold. *Keys to Good Cooking: A Guide to Making the Best of Foods and Recipes*. New York: Penguin, 2012. Print.

McGee, Harold. *On Food and Cooking: The Science and Lore of the Kitchen*. New York: Scribner, 2004. Print.

Myhrvold, Nathan. *Modernist Cuisine at Home*. Berlin: Phaidon, 2012. Print.

### Outline of Course Content

**Topic 1 – Lectures:** Historical profile of Italian Regional Cooking: Francesco Leonardi in Apicio Moderno (1790) and the introduction of Regional Cuisine.

The introduction of ingredients from the New World: Corn, Potatoes, Tomatoes

Food labs: *Region: Veneto*

*Corn:* Polenta alla Vicentina and other uses for corn flour in Gnocchi di Polenta

*Regions: Toscana and Campania*

*Il Pomodoro (Tomatoes):* Pappa al Pomodoro; Salsa di Pomodoro

**Topic 2 – Lectures:** Cuisine as Italian National Identity. Pellegrino Artusi  
Tuscan Cuisine from the Medici's table to the present day

Food labs: La Ribollita, Il Caciucco, Il Cinghiale, Gli Arrosti

**Topic 3 – Lectures:** Cuisine as Italian National Identity. Pellegrino Artusi and Messisbugo  
*Region:* Emilia Romagna: history of an opulent cuisine through the Estensi family's banquets

Food labs: Cappelletti, Tortellini, Tagliatelle, Lasagne, Ragù alla Bolognese.

**Topic 4 – Lectures:** Cuisine as Italian National Identity. Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard*  
*Region:* Sicily: A Crossroads of Cultures and Flavors

Food labs: Caponata, Parmigiana, Arancini, Pasticcio del Monsù.

**Topic 5 – Lectures:** Cuisine as Italian National Identity. Apicio and De Re Coquinaria  
*Region:* Lazio. Roman cuisine from Aristocratic Ancient Rome to the popular *Burina*

Italian Jewish Cuisine

Food labs: Cacio e Pepe, Amatriciana, Carbonara, Carciofi alla Giudia, Coratella e Pajata

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**Topic 6 – Lectures:** Specialties of Italian Regional Cuisine.  
La Pizza: from Neapolitan to Italian, from gourmet to street food  
Il Gelato: from China to the Medici's court  
**Food Labs:** Pizza Margherita and Napoletana.  
Gelato Buontalenti

**Topic 7 – Lectures:** Italian Desserts  
Typical desserts that represent regional identities through the use of  
different local ingredients  
**Food labs:** Northern Italy: Gubana (Friuli Venezia Giulia); Cantucci (Toscana); Strudel  
di Mele (Trentino Alto Adige)  
Southern Italy: Pastiera (Campania); Seadas (Sardegna); Cannoli (Sicilia)

**Topic 8 – Lectures:** Food Trends and (Mis)Interpretations of Italian food in different contexts:  
- Massimo Bottura: the “poet” chef who reinvented classical Italian  
Cuisine  
- Nigella Lawson: bringing the spirit of Italian cuisine into the kitchen

**Food labs:** Mystery-box competition; student teams prepare three-course menu based  
on typical regional ingredients “revealed” at the beginning of class