

# Untold Italy Episode 90 - Limoncello with Pierpaolo

This is the Untold Italy Travel podcast, and you're listening to episode number 90.

Ciao a tutti and Benvenuti to Untold Italy, the travel podcast, where you go to the towns and villages, mountains and lakes, hills and coastlines of Bella Italia. Each week your host Katy Clarke takes you on a journey in search of magical landscapes of history, culture, wine, gelato, and, of course, a whole lot of pasta. If you're dreaming of Italy and planning future adventures there, you've come to the right place.

## Katy

Benvenuti! Ciao! Welcome dear listeners

It's Katy here with more fun and sunshine from Italy with one of our favorite guests Pierpaolo who's going to let us in on a few secrets of one of our favorite tastes from Italy - and particularly southern Italy and the Amalfi and Sorrentine coast - limoncello! That refreshing and zingy liqueur which not only tastes good but is good for you too!

Before we dive into that though, I wanted to give a big shout out to our listener Rafael who took the time out of his day to leave us a beautiful 5 star review. Rafael wrote..

## Dreaming of Italy

☆☆☆☆☆

I've never reviewed a show before but I had to show my support. My wife and I have traveled to Italy every year since 2015. We're both head over heels in love with the country. Covid ended our streak so all we can do now is dream of Italy. We had our first child during the pandemic and now that the world is opening up we can't wait to get back. Listening to this show on my morning walks has given me so many ideas for our future trips. Thank you so much for inspiring me every day.

Rafael Aka Kiko

Grazie Rafael, that means the world and auguri, congratulations on the safe arrival of your little one. No doubt they have many Italian adventures in their future. And we really do appreciate all of you who take the time to leave us a rating or review.

If you'd like to join in the fun you can go to the Untold Italy show home page on the Apple podcast app and navigate to the reviews page where you can leave your rating or review. Grazie mille, thank you so much to all our listeners for supporting our show. It really does

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mean the world, not just to me and my team but also our guests, many of whom are thrilled to meet you in person when you finally arrive in Italy.

On today's show we're welcoming back one of those people, talented guide for Naples, Pompeii and the Sorrentine and Amalfi coasts, Pierpaolo from Joe Banana Limos. Regular listeners of the show will have enjoyed the generous advice Paulo has shared with us about visiting the Amalfi Coast and of course his passion project - Pizza! But if you're new to the show get ready to be charmed by easy going and friendly Paulo who's letting us in on all the secrets of one of Italy's favorite drinks - limoncello!

**Katy**

Benvenuto Paulo! Ciao! And welcome back to the Untold Italy podcast.

**Pierpaolo**

Thank you very much, Katy. I'd like to give a big hug to all our listeners that now I hope they're getting used to my voice. Today we're here to talk about something that we really care a lot, and that now it became even a very trendy thing.

**Katy**

Oh, it is, isn't it? But first of all, I want to ask you, have you been having a good summer and have you been eating lots of pizza?

**Pierpaolo**

Yes, I did. Unfortunately, not for my line - it's not been the greatest, but for my happiness definitely filled me up.

**Katy**

Goodnes. Okay, everyone, if you missed the episode that Pierpaolo did with us on pizza a few months ago, which was episode number 73, which you absolutely must listen to. But today he's going to come and have a chat with us about something that's really famous from the area where they're from in Southern Italy and it's Limoncello, and it's a very famous and delicious drink that you must must try when you're on the Amalfi Coast or anywhere in Italy, really? Can you tell us, Pierpaolo, what exactly is Limoncello?

**Pierpaolo**

All right, so it seems like the easiest and the hardest question to answer, but I'm ready for it because many people think Limoncello and it has to do probably with an

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instrument - no, no, no cello nothing. It's definitely lemon liquor. And it's very much used as a digestive drink. Of course, I'm telling you all the little details about it, but just the thing you got to know is that it's refreshing. I mean, it's sweet for sure, but at the same time, it gives you a very pleasant feeling at the end of the meal. Even if we're going by of our story, I'll tell you that they didn't drink it only at the end of a meal.

## Katy

Okay, but hang on. Just take a bit of a step back, because we don't have this concept of digestive in maybe America or in Australia. What is that?

## Pierpaolo

Well, I'm telling you, I mean, in Italy, we got the theme that we definitely eat in the order. I mean, we can skip something in our famous and opulence lunches, you know, but we always have to do it from the appetizer, the first pasta dish, then the second main dish, which is always coming with a side dish, like a salad, you know, then you got some pastry. And after the pastry, we need another excuse to get more alcohol on the meal. We definitely need something that makes you feel less stuffed. It's definitely the digestive drink. We still have many digestive drinks. There was a period that we've always tried, the the Amaro. Amaro is definitely a distillate of herbs, and we have a bunch of those in Italy, and it's actually not for everybody. Not for chickens. They're strong, they're tough, and they definitely needed to be taken with care and not to exaggerate. But after that, if the Amaro was not enough, so they came up with the grappa, which is nothing but at the leftovers of the squeezed grapes that you make, the distillation through machine made of copper and little by little, drop by drop, it comes out this drink, which is simply like firing in the mouth because it's quite strong. It starts to least from the 40% of alcohol. And little by little what happened was that this limoncello - it was kind of like the typical thing that comes in slightly, and then it kind of expands everywhere. And the thing is, it is a digestive drink, because with lemon flavor that we have from it, it definitely helps you with digestion. Lemon, it's been very well known to help for many, many things with our health. The market has spread out so much that even if you go to an Osteria, in Rome or you go to one in Venice, even in Bassano del Grappa where they make grappa, they still will give you at the end of the meal beside the grappa, the limoncello. It's spread out so much that now it's almost like a national drink.

## Katy

I think you were calling me a chicken before because I don't really like the Amaro. But I do love the limoncello a lot.

## Pierpaolo

Never say that, especially with you, Katy.

## Katy

It's OK - it's an acquired taste. I think that's how you say it. It's something you have to get used to. But I think it's a really important part of that culture of, like managing your digestion because you're going to have this big lunch. You want to keep going. I mean, he wants to stop, really? So if you have the limoncello.

## Pierpaolo

Yeah, absolutely. Well, let's say that many doctors recommend to do it at the beginning of the lunch. So it's something that it's real. It's not that we made it up to drink more, but if you paradox the Amaro or the limoncello before you started, you start the digestive juices in your stomach, you definitely get ready for the meal. There is something through in the thing. It's not only something that people are convinced that it's real, but then it's not. It is real.

## Katy

So is it something that people have been making for a long time? So they have been making Amaro and digestives, but it's lemon chill, like a new drink or is it an old drink. What's the history behind it?

## Pierpaolo

Well, let's see. The story of limoncello. It actually started even from the fruit, because in the area we got many, many kinds of lemons, but we will stick with the two of them. So the lemons we have is actually belonging always to the citrus family. And besides the two main one that we have in Sorrento and the Amalfi area, we also have another one which is huge, called exactly citrus and used for a different purpose. But of course, all of the trees we have here they reached the 20ft, they got the white flower and then definitely this plant started at the very beginning, believe it or not many, many centuries ago in India, then many centuries ago they started to move here. But like the tomatoes have done it in the Naples area - so they're not from here, but they find themselves very well in this place, like many tourists that come even

plants and vegetables and fruits have done the same. So imagine that so it was used at the very beginning as an antiseptic and an antiaromatic because it has antiaromatic properties. And the Egyptians used this lemon to embalm. It's been considered a Holy fruit for the Islamic and even for the Jewish that they use that very big citrus called cedro in their feast.

## **Pierpaolo**

So consider that this plant has been used from there from the Greeks to wash their clothes for the moths too, because they could give problem the moths in the clothes and in Pompeii, we also have some friscos that represents that they already used it. But the very big use it's really started after the 1300s. They were brought by the Byzantine and Arabian to Sicily and from Sicily was spread to all the places, especially in the Southern Italy. And in the 1300 we started to hear the word limoncello. But the limoncello at the very beginning, in the 1300s, it was meant as a smaller lemon - the typical one that we have here. And their endorsement of the small lemon in the 1700s and they started to use it to cook. This is actually how it was born through the monks because believe it or not, the monks get all the knowledge and everything. And so they started making these farms, especially in the area of Massa Lubrense - that if our listeners at time when they go back home to have a look at Google maps, they open it and they will see actually this Peninsula. The Peninsula, we have it to the Northern part that is definitely the Sorrento Coast and the Southern part, which is the Amalfi Coast that we have talked about it a few months ago and what it happened to me, it was that these Jesuit monks, they started to put the variety of lemon in the area between the north and the southern part of the two coasts.

## **Pierpaolo**

So the exposition of the land of the Jesuits was these are the kind of monks I mean - north to south. So definitely a perfect climate, definitely a way to grow it, which is very particular because when you will be in Sorrento and surroundings, you'll always see these nets right above the lemon trees. It is used to protect the lemon from too much sunlight and from the hail storm cause we can have somebody else on that can ruin it. And in the very past. I mean, like 50 years ago, before the plastic was more used, they had the canopies covered. So you would have seen, like, the sort of boxes made of a canopies and imagine that when you will be in the lemon farm, the difference between the temperature from outside and inside in the winter time can be even two or three Celsius degrees.

**Katy**

Okay.

**Pierpaolo**

You say Paulo, why is that important to have that difference of temperature? Because when it gets too cold - so here we rarely reach the 32, the 32 farenheit or the zero celsius, but once you get it, the lemon can have damages. So that's why we get all of this covering that definitely increases the temperature. So talking about the two variety of lemon, and then I'm ending it up with the story of the fruit itself. We have two varieties, one that is called Femminiello means a Napoli way to call a person that loves the same sex, now, like a man that loves the same men. And I got to tell you, that's the big asset as a gentle shape and it doesn't have a lot of seeds inside.

**Katy**

Oh, that's good.

**Pierpaolo**

And that's why they call it in this way. It has this oval shape, just the point at the end, with a thinner peel and with a lot of juice inside. The other one is the Sfusato. Sfusato means point of the shape. And it's definitely the lemon from Amalfi. It has a thicker rind and that they have different uses of it. And if we want to say so talking about the drink, the first one that has the lemon, where the monks. Who better than the monks can make liquor? Nobody else, because they were the best making all this variety/having the variety of herbs and fruits. And so they had even the drink. So this principle that you take the grain alcohol and you put the lemon peel only the yellow part on it, it inside. It's something that we learned from what the monks taught us. And this is the reason why already some fishermen, they used to have a glass of Limoncello before they started their tip.

**Katy**

Goog idea - to wake them up?

**Pierpaolo**

Brava! So to wake them up and warm them up because the water can be very cold at night. So you leave like 03:00 a.m / 02:00 a.m. you need something that warms you up. And definitely it was happening with the fisherman. But the real thing that made it very popular, it was on the island of Capri - that many people now say, Paulo what's

capri? That's the one that everybody called Capreee. It's not Capreee. Otherwise, you don't look Italian. When you say it, you got to say Capri. Everyone says Capree. No, but it's Capri. And I'm going to tell you that this lady had a little pension where lots of scholars slept. And she was making this drink because her name was Vincenza Canale. She started to make this drink for all this literature men, Well, I'm talking about people of Axel Munth, the steel King, the King of the steel, Mr Krupp. And so they started to drink it, and little by little it was almost like they got addicted to it. And they spread out to the name of - "this drink is phenomenal." "My God. At the end of the meal, I love it." And everybody when something is good, everybody started to know what it is. And it was often and even now, if you go to a restaurant, I mean, rarely you pay for the limoncello at the end of the meal, because once you have a very big meal, the owner says, you know what? This is a drink offered by the house. And so they get this final drink, even for free. But that's because it's the typical habit that we have here. And then normally it's got to be served cold, but not cold from the fridge. Cold from the freezer.

**Katy**

Very cold.

**Pierpaolo**

Yes. Absolutely. And the other drinks, I mean, we really want to be like foodie - like we are! So the other drinks - you drink it at room temperature? Yeah. The Amaro you drink it at room temperature, the grappa as well. This one here, you drink it cold because, paradoxically, you can better feel the aroma. So all the scent, all the perfumes that the lemon has, and with the cold, you actually give a kick of freshness that you really want at the end of a meal.

**Katy**

Interesting. And traditionally, does it have a lot of sugar in it? Because a lot of the limoncellos I've tried.

**Pierpaolo**

That's the big debate that we also have on the recipe that, of course, I'm offering to our guests. I don't use too much sugar, but it's a sweet drink.

**Katy**

Yeah.

## **Pierpaolo**

It's definitely a sweet drink. The fact is, I will tell you about the recipe for sure. But the fact is that when you have a sip of this, I mean, you got something that is like having a taste of the whole area with one single sip, you got a taste or a sample of all the area of one of the most beautiful places on Earth. And the golden color that it has, it reflects the idea of the sun, of the same lemons. And that's why every tourist tries it, because with the sip of this drink, it seems like you're taking a ticket to fly back here again on vacation. That's why then the people refill their bags with this drink.

## **Katy**

It's so true. Once sip and you're there - I agree.

## **Pierpaolo**

Another thing that for sure makes you wonder about it is that they never made any marketing for it, even on the national TV. We have probably seen the limoncello on cello advertising for one or two years, but not even every day. So no marketing campaign and no big advertising. But it's another case that all the marketing students have analyzed. These people never made advertising, and they got the same results of marketing campaign. Incredible eh?

## **Katy**

So in that case, is there particular brands that you recommend? So I was in Napoli most recently I noticed the brand Strega which comes from I think it's from Calabria or around that area in Southern Italy.

## **Pierpaolo**

I was going to recommend it. But of course, I'm telling you, Katy, we got bigger brands that you can find everywhere. I mean, for the people that are not in Italy. No, not that easy to find the small producer out of Italy. So this is the reason why or you order it online. Sometimes you get lucky to have the stuff and everything. Otherwise you take these big brands the same Strega. They actually don't make it, but they buy it from the famous Limoncello Capri. Why? Because nowadays he bought the trademark. It was so smart that nobody else can call it the Limoncello. But it's a guy from Capri. It's called the Limoncello Capri and Strega - to use the name, they buy it directly from them.

**Katy**

Oh - clever.

**Pierpaolo**

Yeah. Talking about Strega, but Strega is more famous the for the liquor that they have, and it's in Benevento, not so far from here.

**Katy**

That's true. That's where my mother in law is from.

**Pierpaolo**

Benevento?

**Katy**

Yes. There you go. All right. So hang on, let's go back a bit. What's actually in it. Are you going to tell us a recipe?

**Pierpaolo**

Oh, yeah, absolutely. With a lot of pleasure. So we started with about 12 lemons. First thing, you got to wash it well. Well, if they're organic lemons that you have it in your garden and so lucky to have a lemon on your garden, you definitely take this lemon and you wash it better if they are in between the green and the yellow color. So not completely ripe because of the oil, the essences, the oily part is in the peel. And somebody also recommends to pick the lemon in the morning, cause in the morning they have a better perfume than the evening. That's what they say. So 12 lemons in between the green and the yellow.

**Katy**

Okay. Paulo, is it the lemon with the thin skins or the lemon with the thick skins?

**Pierpaolo**

Alora. In the reality, it doesn't make a big difference, because when you peel the lemon after you have washed it and dried it well with a cloth, you definitely need to take a potato peeler. Why? Because you only need and you don't even need to press that much to take it off. Because you don't need any white of the peel, only the

yellow part. Because the white part is bitter and it releases the bitter in a drink that's supposed to be sweet.

**Katy**

We don't want that.

**Pierpaolo**

So what they do is definitely to peel this lemon and to put it in a liter of grain alcohol. The grain alcohol for our listeners that don't know, it's definitely a drink, which is probably 190 proof, about 95 percent of alcohol. It's the real alcohol that you get from the wheat with a very long process. Well, that's actually even the most expensive part in the drink.

**Katy**

Okay.

**Pierpaolo**

It's the most expensive part because lemon to us our cheap. But what you do? You leave it from three days to a week, not over that, because otherwise it starts to release a bit of bitter, and we don't want that. So from three days to a week, you leave the lemon peel in a jar in the shade, and actually with the sort of cork on it. So in order that you don't have any variation of the percentage of alcohol or anything, then how does it work? You take a little more than one liter of water and the 75% of sugar, which is 750 grams. So for our listeners that don't know what I'm talking about in terms of liter and grams that don't have to worry, because on the recipe, it's actually written, even with their unit standard size. So, you actually boil the water. You pour the sugar, turn off the flame, stir it, let it cool down. Otherwise you will have a fire in your house that you cannot even expect.

**Katy**

We don't want that.

**Pierpaolo**

Oh yeah, you on the hot water, you pour the grain alcohol - you know you got a problem - a big problem. So the syrup definitely becomes at room temperature. You mix it after that it's stayed one week in the peel. So the grain alcohol, you filter it, you mix it with the syrup. Is it over? Not yet, because it has to rest at least 15 days.

## **Pierpaolo**

And once you pour it in the bottles, you got to take some cotton balls.

## **Katy**

Oh?

## **Pierpaolo**

Yes - cotton balls are very good, so they filter any impurity that there is. So in this way, you got the perfect drink that can last in the kitchen even for seven, eight, nine years, you know - because there is a good percentage of alcohol. The real and good limoncello needs to be taken from the freezer. If it's actually freezing in the freezer, it means that they saved the money on the alcohol, and we don't want that.

## **Katy**

You know, it's really interesting here in Australia, I don't think we can buy 95% proof alcohol. It's interesting. And that's why obviously it doesn't freeze because it's isn't too high concentrated alcohol.

## **Pierpaolo**

Consider that there is even the quantity of sugar and water that you mix. The syrup that you make, it definitely decrease the alcohol because you can never drink it 90 degrees. You can definitely drink it between the 30 and 40%, which is actually between 60 and 80 proof, more or less. So the recipe of the limoncello, so it's been made. The most important is to find the product, because once you have good lemons, you get a good Limoncello. There's nothing to do but the same Limoncello - we drink it even as a break on the boat, because sometimes if you're lucky enough to have a boat and sail around, you definitely can have the sip of Limoncello as a break. So you see how the word has changed before the fisherman used it to go to work and they drank it before they start. Now that we are a more spoilt society, we definitely drink it as a break on a leisure boat.

## **Katy**

Come on, that just sounds a bit too perfect doesn't it? I know you take people out of the boat.

**Pierpaolo**

I prefer the second way, honestly!

**Katy**

Yeah me too.

**Pierpaolo**

I'm a sort of epicurean - I like to enjoy life.

**Katy**

Why not? Why not?

**Pierpaolo**

Katy I would like also tell you about the use that we have for Limoncello because we have the use of Limoncello not only to drink, but very often, even in the pastries.

**Katy**

Yummy.

**Pierpaolo**

Like, for example, many mothers or family, when they make a sponge cake with the custard inside, they definitely wet it with a bit of Limoncello. And trust me, that mixed with some local strawberries and the custard, it's the easiest, but one of the best pastries. You can try that's for sure.

**Katy**

Oh my goodness, that sounds amazing.

**Pierpaolo**

Plus the rum babar, rather than using the rum, you can use also the Lemoncello Baba. Why not? And we definitely have something that is called Lemon Delight, which is nothing but a sponge but shaped like a ball. And it's stuffed with a cream that has got the aroma of the lemon because it's been an infusion the peel in the cream and definitely covered with chantilly cream and with the lemon zest on top. Oh, my goodness.

**Katy**

All right. Where do we get that one from?

**Pierpaolo**

I'll give you the name later, you know always on the list, when I'm telling you about the places. So, of the lemon, we don't have to forget that we are so lucky to have it at our house. We can also get the candy peel in Amalfi. It's a process that it's so long, almost boring to make. They take a week to make it. That's the one that open people miss. But if you pull out some money and you buy some delicious candy peel in the city center of Amalfi, for example, where it's there is the pastry shop called Pansa. And they make this candy peel that are just delicious. You eat it - there is no bitter at all. It's really like a candy, but one of the most natural candy that you can ever try. I mean, you are lucky enough to have the tree. You take the lemon leaf you wash it, you take some smoked mozzarella cheese, not extremely fresh because otherwise it's too watery. So you put the mozzarella on that, use a tooth stick, you close it so you grill it on the charcoals and it comes out and smoke the mozzarella cheese that is melting and it has a slight flavor of lemon.

**Katy**

Oh my gosh.

**Pierpaolo**

It's delicious.

**Katy**

I've never heard of that one.

**Pierpaolo**

Oh even the shrimp - they make it in that way. Well, in a lemon leaf. Oh, yeah, absolutely.

**Katy**

I've never seen that.

## **Pierpaolo**

Yeah, they do some restaurants that they make it. In Sorrento there was the mafia that made it. I don't know if they still do it. I got to check it out. Another restaurant that we got to try again.

## **Katy**

Otherwise we come to your house and you can make it?

## **Pierpaolo**

Oh yeah. Why not? Only that my meals are not short meals. I mean, they can be extended for hours and hours.

## **Katy**

I'm happy to try anything wrapped in the lemon leaf, just letting you know. Okay?

## **Pierpaolo**

Oh, yeah, absolutely. Oh, my word. There is another one. I forgot to tell you that we actually make it with a simple mozzarella. We rolled the pancetta and then we close it with a lemon leaf. Oh, my word. Delicious.

## **Katy**

I'm sorry, I already had dinner, but I'm hungry again.

## **Pierpaolo**

No, but the point is that our listeners do not see my expression because the expression on my face when I'm recalling this food is like - how to say - when you get kind of like you are bewitched from this food and that's what it is happening. So at this point, Katy, I think we should give some names to our listeners, don't you?

## **Katy**

Yes, absolutely. I mean, you've got to have the ones that you can try when you're in Italy, but also if you're feeling a little bit homesick for Italy what about the ones that you can try when you're at home as well?

## **Pierpaolo**

Alright. I start with those that are easiest to find. So I would definitely say Villa Massa. So that one is definitely branded from Campari. So there is Campari behind it - so the distribution for that one it's definitely sure you get a good distribution of it. The other one, which is now. Now it's Piemme. So which is getting really, really popular and the same Strega limoncello - it is for how well known and how spread out - it is it's still a good limoncello to try when you don't find the local ones?

## **Pierpaolo**

Okay.

## **Katy**

So they're the ones you probably can find at home, right?

## **Pierpaolo**

Yeah. But of course, we are a travel blog and a travel podcast - we definitely recommend people to come to try it here.

## **Katy**

Never, never better to do it. You have to have it when you there. Absolutely. And to say the lemon groves because they also a beautiful actually. And it's part of the environment and the coastline and it's a very special thing.

## **Pierpaolo**

But in fact, if it wasn't for the lemon groves, I think they would have built even more and more here. But the lemons have kind of saved lots of area from the building, which is something that helped us not only with the environment, but even too with the good looking of the coast.

## **Katy**

Yeah. Great.

## **Pierpaolo**

For example, in Sorrento now there are places - that I mean, among some buildings made of cement in the 70s. You walk, you cross the corner, you go behind the corner and you find these beautiful lemon yards. It's like the lung of the city. You go in there,

you breath. You definitely have this idea of the lemons that are shading it. Making it cooler during the summer, protecting it in the winter, they definitely have all process about the lemons. And they're talking about Sorrento, as I was mentioning, Sorrento's several places oh, my word. I mean, imagine that in the marketing, like I told you before, they couldn't explain how in Sorrento they could make so many Limoncello factories and not one of those failed, ever, ever failed. Because they had people buying it from all over the world. For example, one of the most recent that they opened in Sorrento, where they have some mental tasting inside. is the Giardini Di Cataldo. So it's definitely in the main city center, you walk. Apparently you don't see anything because the lemon yard, they always covered by a wall. So the height of a man, like 6ft 5/6ft - you look at it, you don't find anything. Then you look right above you see all these lemon trees. So you only need to walk and step in there to see it. And so I would recommend these. You are entering through the town because it's very nice. And another one, which is very good. It's called the Terranova. But these guys, they make a limoncello, which is a kick because they're not stingy with the percentage of alcohol inside. So it's a strongly once, and they make it with their own lemons that they have on the heels right above Sorrento. So they got the shop in the town right in the main square. And plus, they have even the Fattoria, which means farm in Italian. And you can visit also the farm there, which is quite a beautiful place. And of course, we do help people taking them. Then the other one, which is quite interesting, is definitely those that you find in the main alley of Sorrento, there is an alley to rent called the Via San Cesareo, and they lots of brands even there. So even if they look very touristy, they're still good, in my opinion. Yeah. One is called Limonoro, and another one is called Colori E Sapori.

**Katy**

Okay.

**Pierpaolo**

But when you move out from the city center, you definitely have some places where you got to try the Limoncello. And I would start it out with my town, which is because we are going to try a guy called the Gabriele. Gabriele - besides having one of the best gelatos in the area, definitely, it makes some good pastry, like the Lemon Delight that I told you before.

**Katy**

Okay. Now you're talking. All right. Limoncello gelato and lemon delight. That sounds like an afternoon trip.

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## **Pierpaolo**

Oh, my word. It is delicious. Definitely worth a visit. And this guy is actually in the city center of Vico Equense. Then we move on and we go to the extreme tip of the Sorrento coast, which is Massa Lubrense the place where it was born. Not a case, that one of those that I recommend, often it's called Il Convento, and another one is called the La Masseria. So they are definitely the Masseria also give tours, and we have taken some of our clients. They definitely love it. On the Amalfi Coast, instead, I recommend one which is called (he also makes some tours), and it's called a Aceto, which paradoxically Italian means vinegar. It makes me laugh that much. This thing that is called the vinegar, but it's a lemon yard.

## **Katy**

They do it to confuse us, I think. What's going on?

## **Pierpaolo**

Yeah, I hope I didn't. But its name, its Aceto. And definitely these are some of the spots that I will add to the bigger list that we have of the places where you can find the Limoncello.

## **Katy**

Oh Pierpaolo, you're so generous with all of that information. We really appreciate it. But, you know, I think some of them might be a little bit harder to get to, so it's probably worth grabbing a tour or a little drive. I can imagine you do a pretty nice one stopping for lunch?

## **Pierpaolo**

Yes. Very often when we talk about these tours, we forget that you go to cities, but they're harder to reach. So this is the reason why we actually added this tour, I mean, including even some other visits, because you cannot stay in, like, 10 hours only in a lemon yard. And so that's the reason why you definitely have the all day plan and definitely 1 or 2 hours to realize how it is the work of the Limoncello and even how you make it. Because very often when we show the lemon yards, we definitely need to show how it's going on, even the process to make the Limoncello

**Katy**

Yeah, I think, though it's really interesting to see all the bottles lined up and all the lemons on the trees and just show you the process from the land into the bottle, really.

**Pierpaolo**

And which is actually like a zero mile process, because if you think about it, the only thing the best ingredients that you have, you pick it right out of the yard, which makes a big difference.

**Katy**

Sounds amazing. I'd love to do that. Now, if you're going back into Sorrento after a long day of going around, maybe sitting drinking Limoncello on the boat, maybe going around, by car going to visit the, tasting. Some of these restaurants - I know people love these restaurants on Instagram where they have the lemon trees inside in Sorrento. They're so beautiful.

**Pierpaolo**

Oh, definitely. Not only in Sorrento, but even on the Amalfi Coast, we got a list of places which are quite nice. Unfortunately, the last one that I normally recommended was Donna Sophia. That unfortunately has changed location because, of course, the owner of the place, he said "You know what? I'm keeping the lemon yard for me that you can find the restaurant somewhere else?" Well, definitely- it was definitely one of the places that you could pick, but we don't give up because we still have a list of names where you can try the food and definitely see the lemons. So we definitely have the Parrucchiano in Sorrento. Yeah. This is a restaurant which has got some lemon yards and even the restaurant gardens got some lemon at you can definitely use, for example, on the island of Capri, one of the most popular if you happen to be there, it's called the Paolino.

**Katy**

Paolino. Is that named after you?

**Pierpaolo**

No, it's much older than I am, but it's an institution on the island. Trust me. It's good food and definitely a good location. And if you love lemon trees, you definitely are in the right spot. Like, for example, in Maori, which is on the Amalfi Coast still, there is

the restaurant Pineta, which is definitely a place where it has got all of these incredible yards and you literally eat underneath the lemon trees, of course, because we're talking about restaurants, but you just want to have, like, a quick things - appetizers and things like that, then the list extends even more.

**Katy**

It's so beautiful. I love these. So like you're saying before, I think the Amalfi Coast, you've got the beautiful blue sea, and you've got these beautiful cliffs just covered in lemon groves and olive trees. And I think that is what makes it really special. So the lemons are not just for the Limoncello, but they're also for the environment. It's beautiful.

**Pierpaolo**

Yeah. It's definitely a good way to connect the society, the tourism and at the same time to help these people, which are farmers. Think about it. Those are heroes because - you say "Paulo, you're exaggerating your description" I know - but, I mean, would you go on this terracement of land where you got to do, like 300 and 400 steps and to have a back basket on your shoulder and you got to collect the lemons and bring it here and there, here and there. I mean, it's not easy at all. So that's why we call it, like a heroic agriculture, because there is a lot of work behind it.

**Katy**

I think that's worth remembering next time we'll sip our Limoncello. So I have actually one last question for you because I've seen one with cream in it. Is that usual?

**Pierpaolo**

That's that's actually to make it even softer. And that one is actually with the adding of the cream.

**Katy**

Okay.

**Pierpaolo**

It's less digestive, less strong, too. But let's say for the pallet, you could give it even to a younger person. I'm not saying a baby, of course, but you can definitely give it to a younger person, and you definitely don't feel the alcohol like in the Limoncello. So for

those that are not so adventurous trying a very alcoholic drink, you definitely you can do that.

**Katy**

Okay. But I mean, really, you're not drinking a lot when you're having a Limoncello. It's literally like a shot, isn't it? It's not really like - you're not drinking a mug of it.

**Pierpaolo**

Yeah, that's actually what it makes a difference when you come out of the restaurant sober or not sober at all, because you definitely you see from the way of walk from the way you walk out of the restaurant because after you have the 3rd limoncello, then it gives you a kick. So let's plan that we have one Limoncello each at the end of the meal. Then if you got nothing, no programs after that, no driving after that. You definitely get to drink the 2nd and the 3rd one. Even the Avril Lavigne - you know the singer. She's completely in love for the Limoncello. I don't think that she's so nuts about Limoncello, she has only one glass at the end of the meal. I guess she definitely has more. In the same Danny DeVito - he tried, he start the production of a Limoncello on its own.

**Katy**

Did he?

**Pierpaolo**

Believe it or not, there are many actors and singers that they make lemon yards, and they want to make wine instead - this guy was ahead of time. He said no, I'm going straight for Limoncello. So he's making a production of Limoncello. Even the Hollywood actor.

**Katy**

What do they do? They buy up a little patch of lemon groves on the Amalfi Coast and make their own Limoncello.

**Pierpaolo**

Well, I don't know if he uses the lemon from here, but I guess he finds their area where you can find the lemons, because even the raw material, which is the lemon, if it's not good, that you don't get a good product - forget about it. That's why I always insist saying - good quality, you know.

## **Katy**

Well, sometimes I think it's even the feeling, the water, everything that goes into making it and you can't really replicate it. And sometimes why would you want to really? Because it does, as we were saying, the start bring you right back to that time that you spend on the Amalfi Coast and in that part of Southern Italy. And just a little sip of that Limoncello can just make all those memories come flooding back. Now, Pierpaolo, I just love talking about anything related to food and drink and basically anything with you.

## **Pierpaolo**

Gracie Katy. Thank you.

## **Katy**

Other people would like to have a great day out exploring the Limoncello fields around the Sorrento with you and your friends. How can our friends know about how they can get in touch with you to learn about the Limoncello tours?

## **Pierpaolo**

All right, so they can definitely have a look at our tours on our website page on [joebananalimos .com](http://joebananalimos.com) [.net](http://joebananalimos.net) So we got all the domains and definitely we have a tour that I'm proud to say that I gave you the name. I came up with the idea to make it called 50 Shades of Lemon - so I created this catchy name in order that people would have been curious not only to see lemons all day, but in a certain point of the visit, rather than visiting the center of the crowded Amalfi for hours and hours, you spread your time looking at this beautiful scenery - areas of the lemon groves. Which better place than the Amalfi Coast and the Sorrento Coast. But of course, we don't really have one single place that we use because it depends from the availability from the kind of clients, because we like to tailor the tour on the needs of the client, because that's our priority. The priority is not us - it's you.

## **Katy**

Absolutely. I can guarantee that any time that you spend with these guys is going to be so much fun. So Grazie Mille. Thank you, as always, Pierpaolo. I can't wait to be joining you for a cheeky Limoncello or 2 soon. And thank you for joining us on Untold Italy today.

## **Pierpaolo**

Thank you so much. Thanks to all the listeners that have been with us, and I hope to see some of them soon on the Amalfi and Sorrento Coast. So bye bye. Ciao, Ciao.

## **Katy**

Ciao, Ciao.

## **Katy**

Grazie as always to Paulo for letting us all in on his favorite places to visit for limoncello in Italy and the best brands to try. He always goes the extra mile and taste tests everything to make sure we know exactly what's good and how to find it.

I also just love the concept of digestivo or digestive. It makes a lot of sense to finish your meal with something to kick start the metabolism. But even better than that, one taste of limoncello takes your tastebuds on a trip straight to southern Italy and I cant think of anything better than that - can you?

If you're taking a trip to Naples and the Amalfi Coast and would like Pierpaulo to take you on a tour of the lemon groves, reach out to Joe Banana Limos. We've put all their details and the tips shared on this episode into the show notes at [untolditaly.com/90](https://untolditaly.com/90)

That's all for this week, next week we'll be back with another magnifico episode of Untold Italy but until then it's "ciao for now"