

Untold Italy Episode 115 - The Art of Aperitivo

This is the Untold Italy Travel podcast, and you're listening to episode number 116.

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

Ciao friends! Well today's the day! I finally get to do a podcast on one of my favorite pastimes and topics - aperitivo! This Italian ritual is something I love to experience at home but most of all when in Italy and if you're the type of person that enjoys a quite drink in a lovely setting with some delicious nibbles then I am sure you will too!

Before we get started I wanted to say a big Grazie! Thanks, as always, for joining us today. We just love all our listeners from around the world and your kind messages of support and suggestions, do keep them coming and of course the best way to show you love the podcast and want more episodes is to leave us a rating or review in your favorite podcast app.

So onto Aperitivo...

Aperitivo is not just an extra meal or snack, it's part of the Italian culture and lifestyle and so today we're going to explain what it's all about and how you can get in on the action when you're in Italy.

Today I'm joined by my good friend Raffaella Ceddia who has spent many years living and traveling in Italy. The founder of Flavourhood tours here in my hometown of Melbourne Australia, Raff and I bonded over all things Italian and of course aperitivo.

In this episode, we're going to explain all about aperitivo and give you some tips on where to go for your pre-dinner drinks when in Italy. We're sharing our favorite bars and a surprising tip on how to find great local aperitivo spots

And, for our listeners in Melbourne and for those of you planning to visit (and you really should!) we love international and interstate visitors here, we've got a little aperitivo surprise for you at the end - so make sure to keep listening to the end of the show

Katy

Benvenuta Raffaella. Welcome to the Untold Italy podcast.

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Raffaella

Hi, Katy. Thank you for having me today.

Katy

Oh, I'm so excited. I've been waiting to do this episode for a while with you, and I'm really, really excited because it is one of my favorite, favorite topics. But before we start our chat on The Art of Aperitivo, let's introduce you properly to our listeners. We are old friends, but why don't you tell everyone your story and your background?

Raffaella

So I grew up in Melbourne in an Italian family. So obviously, food has always been a massive part of my life. My nonna used to actually live with us, and she was always cooking, baking. She was just great at everything. I eventually, after doing many different things in my life, I ended up working with Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, discovered the food tours world, and I fell in love with it. So I did a bit of research and realized that nobody was doing any food tours out in Melbourne's neighborhoods. I grew up in one of Melbourne's most multicultural areas, and I thought - how is it possible that nobody is doing this? So I started taking my friends just on tours of a place called Sydney Road, which is one of the most multicultural streets in Melbourne. You literally can find so many different nationalities, a lot of family businesses, really authentic food, amazing prices. And I started doing that, and then they said, you should do this as a job. And eventually I did. And so from there, it expanded to other neighborhoods, and it's been going since 2016 and survived covid somehow.

Katy

Yeah. You've also spent a lot of time in Italy yourself, haven't you?

Raffaella

I have, yes. So when I finished University, I decided that I wanted to go on a working holiday backpacking trip to get to know my family. I have a lot of relatives over there, and also just to get to know my culture better. So I lived there. I worked there. Polished my Italian skills, speaking skills, and just totally fell in love with the country.

Katy

And whereabouts did you live in Italy?

Raffaella

I lived in a few places. I lived in Rome, I lived in Bologna, I lived in Modena. But also because my mom is Sicilian and I have a lot of relatives there, I spent a lot of time in Sicily. So every

summer I would go there because I became close with my family. I would go there every time there was a wedding or graduation, any family celebration, I would fly over to Sicily. So I also know Sicily really well.

Katy

Amazing. And how long were you there in total?

Raffaela

So actually, I went to live there twice. The first time was for a year, and the second time was for a year and a half.

Katy

And so it's really like a second home for you.

Raffaela

Yeah. Plus I traveled, well pre-covid was going there, like once a year or once every two years. And yeah, definitely. Especially in Sicily. I feel very at home.

Katy

I know we've got that bond that we love Sicily so much, don't we? So now we're going to be talking about today about aperitivo. So we've got listeners from all over the world, and everyone hears me carrying on about aperitivo and how amazing it is. Pretty much everyone/guests that we've had on the show - that's their favorite thing, too. So I thought we would have a little bit of a chat today about what it actually is and why is it so special and what's so great about aperitivo initially? So let's start. What is it exactly?

Raffaela

So I guess really for the people that participate in the aperitivo, it's an excuse to catch up with your friends, with your family. If you live in a small town, you don't even have to call anyone to say meet me here at this time - you know that if you go to this particular bar at this particular time, you're going to see your friends and be able to catch up. So it's an excuse to catch up with people, have a drink, and some food that's always served with the drink, which we'll talk a little bit more about later. And from the restaurant and bars perspective, it's a chance to bring people in, really bring people in, give them a chance to open up their appetite. That's where the word comes from. It's all about opening up your appetite. So you have a drink, you have some nibbles, and then hopefully people will stay on.

Katy

Yeah, that's right. Because aperitivo hour - when is it? When does aperitivo start?

Raffaella

So usually around 07:00 pm ish. And then by around 8.30 something, Italians will start to have dinner. Very different to what we do here in Australia.

Katy

Yeah. So if you want to head to the bar at around seven to grab your little aperitivo, which means to open up your appetite, and then you get started with a little drink and a little snack. And do we know how it got started? Do we have any idea about the history of aperitivo?

Raffaella

So it started in the north of Italy in a place called Piemonte, and that was around the 18th century. So it's something that's been around for many years, but then it spread to Milan in around the 20th century. And it's really in Milan where it took off. It became like a kind of after work thing, although people don't really go straight after work because Italian like to go home and shower and spruce themselves up, don't go anywhere unless they feel that they're looking good. So in Milan with the working scene, it really took off. And then from there, the word spread. And now literally it's everywhere in Italy, even in small towns, because everyone loves it. Why wouldn't you? There's nothing not to love about it.

Katy

I know. It's amazing. Yeah. I think it's really fascinating. Like Turin and Milan have this ongoing rivalry between them.

Raffaella

About who does the best for aperitivo? Yeah.

Katy

Who has the best football team? Of course, I don't know if you've been in the Galleria in Milan and they've got this Bull where you're supposed to do like a spin on the bull and it's the Bullet of Turin and you sort of spin on its private parts.

Raffaella

Is always about something to do with private parts, isn't it?

Katy

It's like one of those things like they've got the aperitivo wars as well. I love it. It's so funny. They've been fighting about everything since forever. So you can find it all over Italy, even in

small towns. And it can be pretty fancy and it can be pretty chilled out and laid back too as well.

Raffaela

Yeah. I've been to places where you might go at that time and you order just, for example, a spritz and without you ordering it, it just naturally comes with some olives and some crisps, maybe some mini pizzas. Or it can be something really elaborate where they go all out in some places, like you said, competitive, obviously different businesses and the more creative you are with your food offerings, the better it is. So you can literally find all types of aperitivo, from the simple to the really creative and elaborate.

Katy

Yeah. I think it's really funny. When I first experienced it, I didn't know what it was. We were sitting there, we're going, oh, this is pretty cool. They're just bringing us chips.

Raffaela

I know. Same for me when I first discovered it while I was living in Bologna because in Bologna it's something that's really popular as well. And I remember going with a friend and we ordered a Spritz was my first time having a Spritz. Now in Australia, everyone knows spritz and it's really popular, but back then it wasn't. We're talking 2005 and I was thinking how amazing that they give you these little bits and pieces of free food like here just doesn't happen. So I thought it was the best thing ever.

Katy

I think it was like the chips and the peanuts were one thing. But when they started bringing out the little pizzas - my husband's eyes were just going out of his head, it was like "free food. I love this place".

Raffaela

Yeah.

Katy

It's got to the point where now it's almost some of these places you can go there for dinner, basically. And they could actually call it *apericena*, which is like a *cena* means meal, doesn't it?

Raffaela

Yes. Although they're kind of starting to change that a bit again because they found like in some places you could go and spend €10, have a drink, an alcoholic drink and eat because

normally the food is all laid out on the counter, on the bar counter, and you could eat enough for dinner for €10. But obviously, bars started to realize that this isn't really profitable. So they put out a certain amount of food by around eight-ish it's definitely all gone. And then at that point, you would say, okay, well, I'm still hungry, so I'll stay for dinner. But yeah, for a while, definitely that was happening. But yeah, that's starting to change again because it's just not sustainable.

Katy

I think they have it as well they have like a cover charge, especially the fancier places. And you have to spend a certain amount of money and it will buy a certain amount of drinks to take advantage of it. But there are some amazing places that you can go and to have your aperitivo experience. And I think it's really good to compare and contrast because you have these fancy places, but then you have all these small little piazzas in tiny towns where you're probably not going to get that whole fancy food, fancy cocktail experience, it will be more just like a glass of wine and some chips or something like that.

Raffaella

Yeah, exactly and some places it's more about the view. There's really no such thing as a typical aperitivo anymore because it's so varied. Some places you'll go because you love the rooftop view and not so much. It's not so much about the food. Other places, it's because you love the food offering. You can find a little bit of everything. It really just depends on what you're interested in. Is it because you want to sit in a gorgeous piazza? I don't know any of you that are listening. If you've ever been to a place called Ortigia and sat in the main Piazza Duomo there, I don't care what I'm eating or drinking. I just love being there.

Katy

Our regular listeners will know that I have this undying passion for Ortigia.

Raffaella

Me too. I just love it. I have an uncle that lives there, and he bought an apartment in the historical town back at the time when the historical town was a bit kind of rough. And when he bought the apartment, people were saying, what are you doing? You're crazy. And now you can't buy places there anymore. It's so expensive. And he's got this amazing view of the port where all these yachts come in. He tells all of us relatives that once Lady Diana's yacht came in, he could see it from his balcony. And it's just - I love going there. Just love it.

Katy

Oh, my goodness. Well, I'm sure he's down at the Piazza for aperitivo every night.

Raffaella

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Yes.

Katy

And do you think Italians normally do aperitivo a few times a week?

Raffaella

Definitely younger people for sure. I guess a lot of the women are at home cooking dinner at that time. But it depends on your lifestyle.

Katy

Yes.

Raffaella

Why not?

Katy

Why not? Yeah, if I could, I would. Definitely. Can't wait till those kids are grown up. I mean, that's the beautiful thing about the aperitivo as well, is the kids are welcome. So if you go to a little piazza and each in fact, one of my favorite ones is actually Piazza Santa Croce in Florence. And look, I don't even know a bar to recommend because I just go there. And like you say, it doesn't matter, it's just the ambiance of it. And you've got the local children of Florence, and they're playing football or soccer in the piazza. They're running around. They've got like they're blowing bubbles, and everyone is just sitting out having a glass of wine.

Raffaella

Yeah. It's very family-friendly. It's not like going to a bar here where you have to be an adult and you've got to find someone to look after the kids. Over there it's just completely different.

Katy

Yeah. It's a beautiful experience. All right. So I know there's no such thing as a typical aperitivo, but there is some specific kind of drinks and foods that you do tend to have. Can we talk about some of the drinks?

Raffaella

So definitely typical is Prosecco. You could find that everywhere. Wine, obviously. White wine, red wine, the Spritz - not always, Aperol, sometimes it's Campari, and then you go to your fancier places and you could have a cocktail, but usually, it's a Prosecco or a wine or a Spritz. If we're talking typical.

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Katy

I do like a Negroni, too.

Raffaella

So you like a stronger drink, is that right?

Katy

Well, I think in winter the Negroni is really nice because that's a vermouth, Campari and gin, right? And it's a longer drink - like with a Sprite sometimes it feels very summery to me, and it feels very light and you can sip away on that. But after a while, the ice melts

Raffaella

And it starts too watery?

Katy

But with the Negroni, you can kind of like make it last a bit longer and everything. But you know what I discovered last time I was there? I think this is the best. This is like my ultimate aperitivo drink. And that's the Sbagliato, which means mistake. And apparently, someone grabbed sparkling wine instead of gin when they were making a negroni. So it's kind of like - yeah, they've got the Prosecco with the vermouth and Campari, so it's really fresh. It's kind of like maybe that's the spring and autumn version.

Raffaella

Okay. In between. The In-between seasons.

Katy

Yeah. It's really fresh and fun. I love it if you want to try Italian cocktails - and this is a great way to do it as well because there's nothing better. And I'll tell everyone another place where I've loved having aperitivo, and that is at the Aperol Bar in Milano. And Aperol is like, as you say, the Spritz is synonymous with aperitivo. So their bar is actually in the Galleria Emmanuele, which overlooks the Duoma. And so you go up the stairs and it's on this terrace outside and I went there in February and it was freezing, but they've got heat lamps and they give you a blanket.

Raffaella

Oh, wow.

Katy

Then you order your drink and you've got the Duomo in the background, all lit up, beautiful with all the light shining on the gargoyles.

Raffaella

You would never want to leave get nice and comfy under your blanket.

Katy

Yeah. And then they started bringing the food that was pretty good, too. So we're bringing all those. And this is the other interesting thing. I mean, we talked about the chips and the olives, but then this is one of those ones where they do a really good one, like they have the trapizzino, which are the little sandwiches and lots of other yummy things.

Raffaella

Or the skewers. Did they give you things on skewers or sometimes some places serve seafood on skewers?

Katy

Yeah.

Raffaella

There's all different amazing stuff or fried cheese. You can find places that have fried cheese. Oh yum this is making me hungry. Polenta. Little polenta cakes.

Katy

Delicious. I think that's the exciting thing. And then you can try a little bit of the local cuisine, too. So, yeah, we did have polenta in Milan because obviously Milan and Lombardi, you have a lot of polenta dishes. And actually - making me drool now because I remember this because they made it into like little cubes, but they'd obviously shaved probably half a ton of cheese into this polenta and mixed it up and then fried it. And it was - I think, because it's salty and it's got a bit of fat and it's got the cheese. And so it matches perfectly with these drinks.

Raffaella

Yeah.

Katy

So what I like to do when I'm traveling in Italy is because we often have the kids with us. So what I like to do is I like to have my main meal at lunchtime and then aperitivo for dinner.

Raffaella

Do you usually have dinner after that?

Katy

No, I do.

Raffaella

I'm still hungry. I want to eat. I love eating.

Katy

You're still hungry.

Raffaella

You always tend to put on a little bit more weight, whatever - your stomach seems to fit more for food in when you're in Italy. But I could literally eat all day when I'm there. That's my favorite thing to do.

Katy

Yeah. I mean, it depends on the aperitivo, but if it's one of the ones with more kind of substantial snacks. It's a pretty good strategy, because sometimes when you're traveling, you do - it's different to living there. I think, like, you manage your eating experiences a bit more when you're living somewhere, but when you're traveling, you just want to eat all the things. But at some point your body is kind of saying, no. I know yours doesn't. Mine just says no. Oh dear. People really do eat their dinner afterwards, though, don't they?

Raffaella

Oh, yeah, absolutely. You might go home to have dinner with your family or you might stay out with friends. More typical that you would go home maybe once or twice a week you might go out for dinner with friends, but usually you would go home and have dinner with family. That's the most important thing. One of the most important things in Italian culture, as well is spending time with your family. So if you don't have the luxury of being able to come home for lunch and have the family meal together at lunchtime, then definitely at dinner you're together.

Katy

Yes. Isn't that beautiful? So you can catch up with your friends at aperitivo and then go home for dinner.

Raffaella

Yes, exactly. It's a nice life. For anyone that lives in a busy city you would know, you've got to make calls and okay, let's plan to meet up and it's like three weeks away and schedules and this and that, but in Italy, it's completely different. Like I said, you just go to the place where you know your friends will be. You don't even have to call and you just show up and they're there.

Katy

It sounds like the Cheers Bar, but on steroids.

Raffaella

Yeah, that's true. Cheers bar with better food and drinks maybe.

Katy

Yeah. Okay. So I thought we would go through and tell people some great places to have aperitivo. I mentioned a couple so far. But how about we start in Rome?

Raffaella

Yes. There's one that just definitely stands out just because it's so popular and everyone knows it - it's called Freni e Frizioni and it's like a little piazza again. It's one of those places where friends catch up. They just know that they're going to see each other there. It's popular with tourists as well. So you get a bit of that experience of the locals and the tourists.

Katy

Yeah, it's in Trastevere and it's just close to the river there, so you just walk over the bridge and you can't really miss it. And it's pretty like relaxed and chilled-out place. This is not a fancy place at all. It's definitely a local bar, but they're pretty famous for a pretty good spread, too. I've been there. It's pretty good.

Raffaella

Yes. Well, like we said, it's one of the most well-known, most popular places. And that's the way to keep people coming back, isn't it? Apart from a nice piazza and everything, the food there is just known as a great aperitivo place.

Katy

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So everyone that is Freni e...

Raffaella

How do you say it?

Katy

Frizioni! The other one that I wanted to mention was there's one - we were talking about views before, and this one is overlooking the Colosseum, and it's a little bit fancy. So you have to make a booking for this one. And it's called the Court at Palazzo Manfredi, which is a very nice five-star hotel right near the Colosseum.

Raffaella

Yeah. Another one.

Katy

And they've got expensive cocktails. But I mean, like you said, the view.

Raffaella

Yes, exactly. It's all about the experience. So it's a place that if you're in Rome and you love aperitivo and you want to have that experience at least once, you would go there. You might not go there every day, but at least once to treat yourself, you'll go.

Katy

And the other one that I wanted to mention and this is like just a general tip for Italy, actually, for me. Is that the Department store, the very well known in Italy, La Rinascente. They always seem to have a rooftop bar.

Raffaella

Yes. I experienced one in Palermo in Sicily. And they always do have a beautiful rooftop bar. And it's always got a great view. Could be of the cathedral or the piazza.

Katy

Yeah, they do a great aperitivo, and it's pretty well priced as well. You're probably not going to get, like, heaps of food with that one, but yeah, I've been to the one in Milan. I've been to the one in Florence, and they were all good. And I've heard that one in Rome is very good, too. And I think that one's called Up Sunset Bar in Barbarini. It's right near the Spanish Steps. So again, you've got some pretty nice views there.

Raffaella

All right.

Katy

Now what about Florence? Did you know any in Florence?

Raffaella

No. To be honest, whenever I've been to Florence when I was living in Italy, sometimes I would go there like, this is how amazing Italy is and the fact that it's so small geographically and easy to get to - when I had to buy an important gift for someone, I would take a day trip and either go to Venice or Florence. But I never stuck around for aperitivo hour. I've only ever gone to Florence, really, for day trips.

Katy

That's an amazing tip, though. And I think last week we had on a friend of mine who lives in Modena and this is the thing about that region is what Raff just said is that you can actually use Bologna as a base to get to so many places. Imagine going to Florence for a day trip to buy a present.

Raffaella

I know. Or Venice sometimes. I used to go to Venice - when it was, for example, my sister. When she got married, I wanted to buy her a really special wedding gift. And so I went to Venice for the day to go searching around all the most beautiful shops and shop for a beautiful gift in Venice. What an amazing day. It really felt like a dream.

Katy

Oh, my goodness. There are some pretty amazing places in Venice to have aperitivo. One is I think a really amazing place is Caffè Florian, which is right in Piazza San Marco.

Raffaella

Yeah. That's where you'd want to be.

Katy

It's going to set you back a bit. I think, though, that one, especially if you want to sit outside in the piazza, but I mean, really one of the most beautiful piazzas in the world and you're sipping on your Bellini and - amazing.

Raffaella

Yeah. It just feels so special. It gives you that sensation of a love life, those moments when you just feel like you love life.

Katy

Exactly. And I think Venice is like because they've got the Cicchetti there. It's an automatic aperitivo place, right? Yeah. And I've mentioned to our listeners before I really have a favorite one there that's called Al Squero, which overlooks the gondola workshop. So you can get your spritz and your snacks and you can make your way outside and lean against the sort of wall that overlooks a little canal and you can look into the gondola workshop.

Raffaella

Amazing. I want to go to all of these places.

Katy

Well back to Florence. And I do have one recommendation for everyone. And it is a very small piazza. I do love Piazza Santa Croce because it's a huge piazza and there's always children playing and the sunset when it comes down there and it bounces off the Cathedral. It's just absolutely stunning. Like I can't think of another place that I want to be. But this one is in the little piazza Santa Spirito, and that's on the other side of the river. And it's a rooftop bar of the Palazzo Guadagni. It's up on the lodger there. And that again, beautiful views. Stunning. And it overlooks this little piazza. And amazing.

Raffaella

Because nowadays when I go to Italy, I spend most of my time in Sicily, mostly because my family is there and I ended up marrying a Sicilian and so we go there to see his family as well. But one of my favorite parts of Sicily is Catania. Even though it's a big city, it's just a beautiful big city. And there's just so much to do and see and eat - I love everything about Catania. So friends of mine, when I go there, they've taken me to aperitivo places. And some of the best ones are not your obvious ones, so not the ones in the beautiful piazzas, but they're actually in the rooftops of hostels of youth hostels. So when you go up there, it's not just backpackers that are there, but the locals go, a bit of everyone goes and they're they're pretty amazing, too. I have two names for you. So one is The Yard. It's called the Yard. And that's a youth hostel. And then the other one is Ostello degli Elefanti. So the Elephant hostel it translates to and that's got a view of the main street there, which is Via Etnea. And at the end of that street you can see Mount Etna. So that's a beautiful one, too.

Katy

Rooftop in Catania, you would definitely get the volcano in the background. Oh, my God.

Raffaella

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Yeah. And in winter, obviously, it's cold or whatever, but in winter Etna just looks spectacular with the snow.

Katy

The little plume of smoke coming out.

Raffaella

Yes.

Katy

Amazing. This is the thing like you were saying, there's something you either go for the food, you go for the drinks, or you go for the view. And there's always something that's going to drag you there. But I think the nicest thing is to actually just sit down and relax. And when you're traveling, it's a lovely thing to do is join in this aperitivo, because you can then reflect on your day and you can sit there with your drink and your little snacks and you can watch everything going on around you and then reflect on what you've done that day, what you've experienced and what you loved about it. And you know what? It's really funny because it ends up being one of my favorite parts of the trip is my aperitivo hour because it's just that time where you just stop, relax and enjoy what's going on around you.

Raffaella

Yes, it's a time - well actually now many places in silence call it a happy hour. They don't even call it aperitivo anymore.

Katy

Well, that's just wrong.

Raffaella

I know for us it sounds less romantic and special, but for Italians, they like the sound of a happy hour. Everyone is and does look happy during that time.

Katy

Yeah. I think it has different connotations here, doesn't it? The word happy hour. Yeah, that's the thing is people are going there to meet their friends, not to consume a large amount of alcohol. It's a really slow, slow experience.

Raffaella

Yeah, definitely. It's not about going there and getting drunk. It's just about catching up and having a nice time. And like you said, reflecting on your day, catching up on local gossip or news or whatever it is. It's just a time to be together.

Katy

Yeah. Now I've got one more recommendation for our listeners, which is Franco's Bar at Le Sirenuse in Positano, because not only is the view spectacular, but just everything about it, the draping vines and the flowers. But that's definitely in the exclusive must-book aperitivo places. But I do love a bit of fancy. I won't lie. I love it. Why not? Yeah, why not? But my favorite part is actually just going to if we're staying in a smaller town outside of the main cities and you just wander in for your aperitivo when the sun is setting and everyone's just relaxed and having a great time, as you said, it's happy hour. And yeah, it's been some of my fondest memories, actually, of being in Italy.

Raffaella

Yes, you can have your destinations and I like to do that as well. But my favorite thing to do when I travel around Italy is to just ask the locals, where should I go? And there are definitely some types of locals that know that will always give you a good recommendation. So the local Carabinieri, the police, the municipal police, they always know the best places to go, whether it's for lunch, whether it's for aperitivo they can always give you good recommendations. I've actually seen many times police during aperitivo hour in their uniform, in a bar, smoking a cigarette and not noticing what's going on around them, something that you just would not see here in Australia. There's the local tabacchio. That's the people that run the Tabacchi they always have good recommendations. And even your taxi driver, or Uber driver these days, can also give you good recommendations on where to go whether it's like I said, aperitivo or lunch or dinner. So if you want to just discover and be surprised, it can be hit and miss. But usually, they'll give you good recommendations.

Katy

I love it. Ask the Carabinieri.

Raffaella

They've always got good - some of the best lunch places that I've found have been by asking the Carabinieri.

Katy

Amazing tip. I love it. I've never heard that before. And you know what, I can totally see it. And they're probably surprised because they probably think, oh, here we go. I'm getting asked the directions to go to the Trevi Fountain again, whatever. Something really obvious, that you should know the way to. And then someone comes up and says "Excuse me...."

Raffaella

"Where can I go for aperitivo? Where's the best place?" They're excellent sources of information.

Katy

So Raff, it is Friday, but it's not quite aperitivo hour yet, but I'm still getting ready for that apparel spritz and a little plate of chips and olives, because sometimes I do that actually on a Friday, just at home, just to make it aperitivo hour. But can you let everyone know how they can stay in touch with you and something exciting that's happening in Melbourne very soon?

Raffaella

Yes. So as I mentioned at the beginning, I've been running food tours in Melbourne for quite a few years. But there's a part of Melbourne which is known as our Little Italy. Of many big cities have their Little Italy, but ours is called Lygon Street. And something I've been wanting to do for many years is to run an aperitivo tour, specifically for this reason, to share the aperitivo culture, introduce it to those who don't know it, for those that do and want to continue to experience it outside of Italy - it's an excuse to do that, and also bring people to Melbourne, this beautiful part of Melbourne called Carlton. So in two weeks, we'll be starting it's been two years in the making with all these lockdowns and everything. It's just set everything back. But finally, it's about to start happening. So we're going to be running it twice a month to begin with between 5 to 7pm. And it'll be like a progressive aperitivo. Normally in Italy you would probably stay just in one place, but since it's a tour and all about experiencing the area, we're going to go to five different places and have a bit of a drink and a nibble at each of those five very different places, as in different from each other. So I can't wait. It's going to be amazing, beautiful experience, definitely great food, I can guarantee. Definitely great drinks. And we usually have groups, always lovely people, so great company as well.

Katy

I'm so excited about that. And so for our international listeners, we would love you to come to Melbourne too, because Melbourne is a really big hub of Italian culture and history and we're a big foodie city and we can't wait to get out and about and I can't wait to go on one of Raf's Flavourhood tours. That's her company Flavourhood tours. And it's going to be a lot of fun. So we're going to have a special one for our Untold Italy listeners coming up in early April, too, so stay tuned on Instagram and Facebook for that information and we'll put everything into the show notes as well. So Grazie Mille. Thank you so much for joining us on Untold Italy

Raffaella

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Good after Katy. Thank you so much. It's been fun talking about aperitivo and you've seriously made me so hungry. I really want to go have a spritz right now and something to eat.

Katy

I know. Me too. And I can't wait to see you for aperitivo very soon. Chin Chin!

Raffaella

Chin Chin!

Katy

Ciao

Raffaella

Ciao

Katy

Are you excited for aperitivo now? If you hadn't already guessed I absolutely love this ritual for the drinks, the food, the views but most of all the people watching and taking a moment out of our trip to really relax into Italian culture. I can't wait to experience it every day of our vacation. But while we're waiting to go to Italy why not join me and create your own little aperitivo moment - mix some drinks, make a few snacks and put on some Italian tunes - we have a Spotify playlist list I'll share with you all and I'll put it in the show notes

We went through the list of aperitivo bars quite quickly so if you want to know where to go they're in the show notes too at untolditaly.com/115 for episode 115 or you could always ask a carabinieri as Raffaella suggested. Honestly I think that's my favorite tip of all time. You'll find Raffaella's details and social media accounts on there too plus details of the surprise I promised at the start of this episode which is a new Aperitivo tour in Melbourne

Raffaella and I have been chatting about an aperitivo tour for quite some time now but silly covid got in the way like it did with most things. So if you happen to be in Melbourne on 1st April we're going to be heading to the streets of Carlton, our little Italy, to aperitivo around some of the classic and new bars and restaurants offering traditional and modern Italian food, wine and drinks. Raff designs such fun food tours and it's going to be a lot of fun. You'll discover new restaurants to try and learn some of the fascinating stories about the history of Italian migration to Australia. Plus, if you haven't been to Lygon Street for a while, prepare to be surprised - things have changed a little and it's a lot of fun. All the details are in the show notes or head to untolditaly.com/aperitivo for more details. I hope you can join us and can't wait to meet some of you lovely listeners in person. You can book online at untolditaly.com/aperitivo

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Wherever you are in the world, we appreciate our Italy loving audience and can't wait to connect with you on our Facebook group, on Instagram or in our Untold Italy Amici group or on tour with us.

Stay tuned next week when my lovely friend [Corinna Cooke](#) returns to the podcast to chat about her top ways to stretch your Italy trip budget further. There are soooo many great ideas to help you save money on big ticket items so you can splurge on the experiences that you've been dreaming of. You're going to love it

But until then it's "ciao for now"