

Untold Italy Episode 152 - Dishes to try in Bologna and the Emilia Region

This is the Untold Italy Travel podcast, and you're listening to episode number 152.

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! I'm hoping you've already eaten today because this episode is sure to make you hungry. We're off to the Emilia region to discover some of the tastiest bites Italy has to offer. Where is that? I hear you say. Well it's the Emilia part of the Emilia-Romagna region whose capital is Bologna - and I'm sure you've all heard of that foodie city - but it's also where you'll find Parma (home of prosciutto di parma and the region of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese) and Modena of balsamic vinegar fame. So with all that going on Emilia is often regarded as the heart and soul of Italian cuisine.

And while it would be fine to basically munch on all that delicious produce on its own, the Emilians had to take it all to another level and create delicious recipes and dishes utilizing these incredible ingredients and other things they just happen to have lying around. I'm joking. They take their food production very seriously in Emilia

Joining me today is my lovely friend Giulia Tamarri who you may remember from episode 114. Giulia is a tour leader and food and wine expert of her region with a wealth of knowledge and a tonne of good humor. My family and I spend a couple of wonderful days with Giulia exploring her beautiful region and it was one of the highlights of our trip to Italy in June this year.

Giulia's going to share all the amazing food you can eat in her region and then at the end of the show, we're going to let you in on a little secret about how you can join her and have a similar experience to what we had.

So let's welcome Giulia, "star sign tortellini" - love that - back onto our show.

Katy

Bentornata Giulia, welcome back to the Untold Italy podcast.

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Giulia

Oh, Grazie Katy I'm so excited to be back. Thank you for having me.

Katy

Oh, it's so good to see you. I can see Giulia, but you can't - we've got a video on. We're just recording the audio. Giulia, how have you been? And what's happening in gorgeous Spilamberto?

Giulia

Oh Katy, it's now November, and it's really the time when everything feels it's getting slow. It's actually the perfect weather for curing our meats, make our amazing cheeses. It's probably not my favorite season of the year because I prefer the summer and the spring. However, luckily, we have the fog and luckily we have got this cold weather, which we absolutely need to make our excellent food.

Katy

Absolutely. Well, when I was there when we were there earlier this year, it was so hot, wasn't it? Oh, my goodness. So I'm sure you're enjoying a little bit of cool weather anyway.

Giulia

Yeah, sometimes it gets extremely hot. So, yeah. Also, to add the fourth season, that's what happens here.

Katy

So everyone, Giulia lives in the prettiest town. It's got, like a lovely little castle feel about it. And it's got the best ever gelato shop. And it's also home of the consortium of balsamic vinegar, which is a very serious business in that part of the world, isn't it?

Giulia

Well, yes. Something you cannot joke about is definitely traditional balsamic vinegar. You know that here we have the Coterie, which is this association that safeguards the production of this product and also make sure that the only excellent L'Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale can be bottled. So for sure, we cannot joke about any step of the production. And actually, there was actually this event, it was the 20th birthday of the museum, and that was actually a big recognition. So for 20 years, we've had a museum in my town. And I feel very proud that we want to safeguard and promote this product, because some people are a little bit naughty and try to say it's balsamic, but it's not really our traditional balsamic vinegar.

Katy

Oh, my goodness. You'll have to listen to our earlier episode about Emilia Romagna and Giulia goes into quite a bit of detail about what is balsamic and vinegar of Modena the traditional balsamic vinegar because it is very different to the one that you get to put on your salad. And it's like, oh, my God, it's so good. And I was very lucky to visit the museum when I was in

Spilamberto, and it's really interesting. And when I was up there, they actually are making balsamic vinegar in the museum, which is like so it's kind of like a living museum, isn't it?

Giulia

Absolutely. There are volunteers, actually, the maestro, that are there every day, Katy. They make sure they check the fermentation, that it has got the right bacteria, the right acidity. It's very, very controlled.

Katy

Yeah, it is very controlled. And when I was up there in the batteria, which is where they are doing all that, making the vinegar. I was being a bit nosy myself and I did notice some special barrels up there for a very famous person. And I was like, Whose barrels are these? And they're actually the barrels of Massimo Bottura, who is one of the most famous chefs in the world and especially from your area. And I was quite shocked. And was Christina, wasn't it? She said, oh, yes, he makes his vinegar here. I was like, oh, wow.

Giulia

Yes, this is definitely one of the batteria that are kept at the museum that are very, very precious. Actually, they belong to the daughter of Massimo Bottura, because you might have heard that traditional balsamic vinegar is passed on as a dowry, normally through women, through the rezdora in the end. So it's women that get the L'Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale. So we are very lucky. So, yeah, definitely. That's a very famous batteria that we have there. We also have one that belonged to a very important and wealthy family of the area. That is Katy, 200 years old. Imagine. A batteria so old is so precious and rare. And it's still used to make the balsamic vinegar. It's crazy.

Katy

Have you tasted that one?

Giulia

Yes. And actually, yesterday, for this birthday celebration, I met the Gran maestro. So there is only one Gran maestro which is kind of like, I don't know if you would like this name, but I like him, the pope of the traditional balsamic vinegar. I went to him and I said, oh, Gran Maestro, congratulations. Do you mind if I try some vinegar? And he said yes ok Giulia. And he made me try two very special ones. One made with juniper wood, because you remember, Katy, that we use different types of wood. Normally we mix different types, but you could even have a set of batteria, like different barrels made of only one type. And juniper wood is also so rare and it's really different. And then you also made me try one with cherry wood. And, you know, I love cherries, so it's completely different. It's really totally different. It's

something that you absolutely have to try. But those two I mentioned are so rare and they only produce - I don't remember how many liters per year, but not a lot. I felt very privileged Katy.

Katy

Lucky you. Okay, Giulia, we're old friends now, but maybe some of our listeners don't know you. So could you introduce yourself a little bit and then we'll get started on talking about our Emilia menu.

Giulia

Yes, Katie. So, my name is Giulia. I go under the nickname of Travel with Rezdora. And at this point, everyone should start saying, what is Rezdora? Rezdora actually is a very difficult name. It's a dialect word that means the woman that leads the house. It's actually from the Latin, regeter to lead. Okay. Because in this society, in my area, we have these incredible women that manage the house so well. And obviously it goes without saying, Katy, that also are those that make all the yummy, super excellent food that we can find in my area. So Rezdora are very important. Now, I'm not a Rezdora, just to make it clear for the kitchen. Okay. I call myself the Rezdora of Traveling, it's very hard. When they ask me, Giulia, can you cook? And Katy I'm like well, yes, I can cook. But stating that you can cook here, has got very high standards, so I prefer to say, well, yes, I can, but I still have to work on my cooking skills, you see.

Katy

I've seen you roll some tortellini, though, and you did a very good job. You've got some skills there.

Giulia

I prefer to be always modest. Competition is too high and definitely I don't want to compete. Okay. I'm still very much learning. And, yeah, I do food tours of my area. My area is the land in between Modena and Bologna, that's where I was born. And Katy, I took you there. Do you remember? I took you to Castelfranco Emilia, which is the town where the tortellini were born. Yes, I am from there. So I have tortellini in my veins.

Katy

Yeah, born under the star sign of tortellini. As soon as she said that, Giulia, I knew you would always be friends for life.

Giulia

I'm happy.

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Katy

All right, so, everyone, Giulia. I've invited Giulia on to tell us a bit about the dishes of the region, because everyone knows Prosciutto di Parma, they know the balsamico, the traditional balsamic vinegar of Modena, and they also know Parmigiano Reggiano, and they're the main produce that people know about. But the people of Emilia are super, super clever and super inventive. And they don't just sit around and eat that, although you really could, couldn't you just sit around and eat those products all day. I mean, I wouldn't have a problem with that. But they've invented some amazing recipes that make use of the products and all sorts of other produce that they take pride in caring, making. So if anyone's going to Bologna or Modena or Parma or anywhere in this region, I thought we'd share the types of dishes that you can eat while you're there. And so Giulia is going to take us through a bit of a menu. So, what do we have for Anti Pasti?

Giulia

Well, Katy, so if we were sitting at the table, I would like to imagine the situation. Katy, me and you have a very nice osteria chit-chatting, catching up, and you trust me to order our food. So, the first antipasta that would for sure come on our table would be gnocco fritto with a full charcuterie board full of our Prosciutto di Parma or Prosciutto di Modena, because many people talk about prosciutto di Parma, but actually, we have an amazing prosciutto also in this area, too, which is aged for at least 14 months. Sorry, Prosciutto di Parma is twelve months minimum. Modena is 14 months, minimum. Sweet. Very nice. With this gnocco fritto, I think you have tried it. It's this fried pasta, which in different cities is called different names. So it's called gnocco fritto. But for example, if you go to Parma, it's called Torta frita. It's the same concept. It's this pasta made of flour and water that will fry up and it's great with our meat. So, prosciutto you can put on top. You can put on top. Mortadella, Salami, Cicciole. Have you heard of cicciole, Katy?

Katy

No, what's that?

Giulia

This is actually a less-known one. As you know, Katy, we nickname Bologna la grasso 'the fat' because in general, our food is not the healthiest. Okay? And also there is the saying that we don't throw anything from the pig. So to have a pig, it was very important. You probably had one pig per year, so it would be actually his during the winter. And because you have to have the food for all the year long, we have to invent how to taste everything of the pig. And when I say everything, we literally use every bit of it. So, for example, I was talking about gnocco. To be excellent, gnocco should never be fried in olive oil. No, no, no. It should be fried in strutto - it's called. It's basically pork fat and Cicciole are actually all the left parts that are crushed and mixed. And we make a meat out of it and you can slice it and it's perfect with this gnocco fritto. And actually, when we mentioned this, no zero waste type of food, we

have lots of Emilia, especially when we talk about the pork. We have invented amazing dishes with all this kind of concept.

Giulia

So, for example, another special one is Zampone. That's actually one of the different menu mains. Another thing that we use as using the waste is called Zampone, which is not an antipasto, but it's actually something that we for example, at Christmas, it's very traditional. Zampone is made from very selective pork meat combined with rind. And it's flavored with pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, wine. And then all this meat with all this added spicing is stuffed into a natural casing, which is the skin of the leg of the pig, the front leg, because, as you know, the back legs are used for the prosciutto. You might think it's a bit strange, but actually we have created a perfect balance and it's what actually what we eat Christmas.

Katy

Amazing. So do they save all the front legs up for Christmas then?

Giulia

Do they just it's funny because at the moment, Katy, because everyone, we buy this Zampone and just next to my town, there is a town called Castelnuovo Rangone where they make the most amazing meat, cured meats. And they are not even sleeping because they are making lots of Zampone to be sold at Christmas. And next week, Katy, you will find this hilarious next week. So the very first week of December, if you are around my area, you should actually visit this Sagra. Sagra is a fair. It's actually a fair for locals. And in Emilia Romagna, there are lots of fairs around food. So first weekend of December, they do this Sagra della Zampone. And every year they try to beat the Guinness World Record because they are trying to make the longest Zambone ever. And we're talking about 3 meters long. And so there would be a celebration of imagine this huge pig's leg filled with all the meat that I told you before, brought to the main square and cut. Everyone goes and eats Zampone or obviously drinking lots of Lambrusco. This is one of the things that we're doing now. And actually, I'm going there this Sunday, so I'm very excited.

Katy

All right, you better send me some photos. I need the photos. I need that big Zamponi.

Giulia

I know for sure. And actually, just to tell you how far we take it, about the pork, in the main square of this town, Katy, there is a pork statue.

Katy

We saw it though, did we?

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Giulia

Yes, exactly. Wherever have you seen the statue of a pig in the main square? I mean, it's crazy.

Katy

All hail the pig is what we're saying. The pig is king in Emilia.

Giulia

Yes, absolutely. So going back, Katy, to our amazing antipasto, so the charcuterie boards with all this cured meats and beautiful meats that we just mentioned with this gnocco. Or another way of eating the cured meats and charcuterie would be with Tigelle. That's another very typical food of my area.

Katy

I think you did make us try it and it was delicious.

Giulia

Yeah, of course. Please trust me. You have to try this Tigelle because it's very typical. It's actually a food that has got its origin from our mountainous area. So it's very traditional. It's basically a type of bread. Let's call it bread. It's not really a shape that you would have seen if you didn't come to my area. So think of round bread that you can cut in half and fill with prosciutto meat or cheese. And on top of this bread, there is kind of a star sign. Why is that? Because in the past, that star sign had it was linked to pagan ritual, to origins, like with the Celts that conquered our mountains. And nowadays we still like to keep the design on top of it, but some people have created their own kind of let's call it logo, you know, like some kind of like shape and so on. In past, they were cooked using clay discs that were made with sand and clay cooked like kind of terracotta. So you would put this clay disc into the fireplace when they were warm, you would stack up one clay disc, then this bread, then one clay disc, one on top there they would cook. And actually, I haven't mentioned that in between the clay disc and the bread, you would also put a leaf from the chestnut, a chestnut leaf, and actually it will also add some kind of flavor. And nowadays, I mean, it's very rare that you can still find someone that would cook it like that. But everyone at home has got this special machine that used stone, a special stone that warmed up to kind of reproduce the same idea of these clay discs. And there is again, a big competition. If you came to my area, you would hear some people call this bread round bread, Tigelle. Some other people call them Crescentina. It's the same thing. It's just that Tigelle used to be the name for the clay disk. Either Tigelle or Crescentina. We understand what you're going to eat.

Katy

You have to pay attention to Giulia, everyone. And we'll have all of this in the show notes because she knows everything and it's all delicious.

Giulia

I love my food. So, you know, like, I could keep talking and talking while eating would be better.

Katy

All right, is that enough antipasti or can we move on to the pasta? Or you got a couple more?

Giulia

Well, Katy, if you let me, if you let me, I would actually ask our waiter to bring us some Calzagatti. Okay, so obviously, it depends on the season. When you would come to Gnocco and Tigelle, you can find any time of the year, whereas this Calzagatti that I've mentioned would be the perfect dish to taste now, when outside is very cold, we need some comfort food. And Katy, we really like this Calzagatti dish. Again, the idea of we don't throw away anything, remember that in the Emilia Romagna, we are very much linked with our rural origins. So many of our dishes have got like, very rustic and let's call them nickname them poor origins and poor ingredients. Okay? So Calzagatti are actually sticks - fried again, because we like food. Okay? We all know that fried things up makes them excellent most of the time. So again, they're fried sticks made of polenta and beans that have been stewed in garlic and some tomato and parsley. So these are again, not so easy to find. Actually, some gourmet restaurants, now they are bringing them up. But normally this dish you either find at a Sagra. So one of the fairs I mentioned before, or even at home, this is a very family dish. This is why I really love it. So there is, of course, you know that we love our legends linked to our food.

Katy

Yes.

Giulia

Calzagatto. Katy, does it remind you of any Italian word, Calzagatto?

Katy

Something about a cat.

Giulia

Bravissima!

Katy

Hot cat?

Giulia

Kind of. Well, Katy, I'm not feeding you with cat, okay? Let's make it clear actually what happened to this dish. Born by chance. Thanks. Not to a pig, but thanks to a cat. There was this rezdora in her kitchen making polenta, and she was bringing the polenta on the table. Rezdora are very organized. So she had already set up all our table with all her side dishes and sauces. And in the middle of the table, there was already a warming plate with beans to be shared. As she was bringing the polenta that she was just making on the side, she stepped on the cat and all the polenta fell into the plate with the beans. So by accident, she had polenta mixed with beans with this bean stew that she had made, and she thought, okay, what am I going to make? Ah boom! Invention! I will try this new recipe. So she thought of making this new interpretation because Calzagatti can even eat as, like, Calzagatti like kind of polenta and beans. Or you can actually make that, leave it, and then when it's hard, you can cut it into sticks and fry them up. Grazie, Gatto! Thank you to the cat.

Katy

Brilliant. And that one you can really find in the Sagra or at home. Would you know any restaurants that you could try it out?

Giulia

No. It's actually a recipe that has been re-took by a very good friend of mine who has a restaurant in the center of Modena called Santa Chiara. Osteria Santa Chiara. So not again. You need to ask Stefano that's the name of the chef, Stefano Corghi, if he can make it for you, because he doesn't always have it.

Katy

Okay.

Giulia

Okay, just in the winter. Osteria Santa Chiara might have it. He also makes and uses Zampone a lot. And sometimes he uses also to flavor some of other dishes, the broth, kind of the sauce that he gets from cooking the Zampone, because Zampone, I mentioned that has to be cooked. Again, slow, cooked. And Katy, you know already, everything is slow.

Katy

Piano, piano.

Giulia

So this is important at least 7 hours, because, Katy, another thing that we should mention is we argue a lot about recipes. When you ask a recipe to an Emiliano, Emiliano is the inhabitant of Emilia. You enter the world of it, but however, you never, ever get the same answer. Okay, and one thing we all agree on, if you ask me, Katy - Giulia, what is the best? I don't know. Tortellini? Everyone will always say, oh, I know the best is my nonna, my mum or mine. Our bragging rights, like, oh, mine is the best. Mine is the best. There are even associations that have been created around the recipe, and they claim it's the official one.

Katy

I love it. I love it. It's so good. If you're going to get really passionate about something, why not just get passionate about a recipe? People getting angry and frustrated about certain things, but if you're going to get really fired up about something, I reckon a recipe for Zampone or Tortellini sounds fine to me.

Giulia

Oh, Katy very fired up. But then what happens? We don't argue anymore in front of a well-laid table. That's when we stop arguing and we start enjoying and comparing, contrasting. This is what we love. Like one of my best friends, Katy, I don't think I've mentioned that to you when we met when we were eating our tortellini. I forgot if I mentioned about the Confraternita del Tortellino. So let me tell you, Katy, about this super cool thing. So we like to say that the tortellino is one of our king food of Emilia Romagna. Okay? So some of the people that are so passionate for Modena decided to create a scientific committee with a president. Okay? So basically, they kind of written like, documents where they promised to each other that they would again promote the idea of making excellent tortellini. And they actually organized some kind of tasting. And actually, what do you call when you go to a restaurant and you don't know?

Katy

A secret customer.

Giulia

Yes, exactly. Thank you for that. So they were secret. So they selected some restaurants. They would be secret customers, and then secretly, among them, they would actually have marking sheet and they would give marks. And then at the end of all the restaurants that they wanted to try, they met up again and they declared which were the very best tortellini that they had tried. It's kind of like they created this award. It kind of stopped a little bit during covid, but they then give a word to the most reputable and delicious tortellini.

Katy

I bet that gets a bit controversial.

Giulia

We are so proud that, for us, winning the pride of your tortellini is excellent.

Katy

So what does make a good tortellini, then, according to Giulia?

Giulia

Well, according to me well, first of all, I like when the feeling of the tortellini is very well balanced. So you don't have one of the ingredients that pushes the other. So it has the different meats in the filling - has to have a good balance. And I also like because again, my nonna this reminds me of my nonna. I also like to fill the nutmeg.

Katy

I think that's the thing I think I've mentioned to you when we were eating a tortellini is that in Italy, they do use the nutmeg. And if you buy, say, if you buy tortellini in your country, and definitely here in Australia, you don't know what they do. They don't put nutmeg in it. Well, they don't put enough. The nutmeg just takes it to a whole nother level.

Giulia

I think I think it you're right. And also the fact that to use nutmeg is not that easy because you need the right balance, because if it's true, nutmeg, you need to really balance it. And Emilians really like it because it's always linked with our roots, with our nonna. It was a spice that was so precious in the past that only the Este family or the kind of like the Medici families of our they would have yes, it was like our Medici, because they used it to be able to use the nutmeg meant that we had something so special. And back in the time, you would eat tortellini only once per year at Christmas. Now we are lucky enough to be able to enjoy tortellini. Obviously not every day, but definitely once a week. Sunday for sure, especially in the winter, for sure. And another thing is that the purists say that it should always be tortellini in brodo, in broth. So even the broth has to be made very well. And another thing, another huge debate how do you make your broth? How many hours? Which good broth? Even the broth is amazing. I could never survive winter without good broth. So in my area we use capon.

Katy

Is it chicken broth?

Giulia

Yeah, kind of. That's what I say. But yes, absolutely. Brodo di Cappone. Okay. When you come to Emilia and you talk about broth, you would hover here while at the dinner table, cappone. So listeners know very well what this is now. And of course, we have a saying that a saying that a real Bolognese or Modenese eats tortellini in broth, also on the 15 August. 15 August is one of our big holidays when it's extremely hot. So if you are a real one, it doesn't matter if the weather is hot, you still have your tortellini in broth.

Katy

Well, we had it when it was I remember it was so hot, but it was still delicious. So it doesn't matter what time of year it is, you can always eat tortellini. Definitely. Now, Giulia, tell us we can't go and knock on all the doors in your region, finding the right nonna. So can you tell us a restaurant or two where you know that the tortellini in brodo is really good?

Giulia

So if you are in Modena, you should definitely try Trattoria Al Dina, which is actually in a cool location because it's just opposite Mercat Albinelli. Mercato Albinelli is a beautiful covered market in Modena. And this restaurant is actually on the first floor on a building. You don't even think there is a restaurant there. Still in Modena, you can go to Enzo. Da Enzo. This is also in the city center. If you are in Bologna. Instead, I definitely recommend Trattoria da Me. Me means me. Or Trattoria di Via Serra. Trattoria di Via Serra. This is also very good. But I must say that sometimes when you go to a big city like Modena and Bologna, sometimes you need to go a little bit outside of those cities to even try less known places. So, for example, my area there are amazing restaurants. It's just that you need to be a bit more adventurous. And I know sometimes it's difficult because you might not have your car, your own car, but it's definitely worth a little bit - the drive and the energy to reach these places. So definitely you should try Osteria del 32 in Spilamberto, which is my local restaurant, which is really Buona, buona, buona. And they've got amazing gnocco. And there they have their Calzagatti too. Or if you are in the area of San Giovanni in Persiceto, there is a restaurant which has tortellini and here are what we call the eratical tortellini. These are very special. They call this dish Tortellini con panna da affiorament del Parmegiano Reggiano. Captured the word Parmegiano Reggiao. Okay, you captured maybe the word panna. Panna is the fat part of the milk. Okay. So they actually have a special broth made of panna from the Parmigiano Reggiano. So from the way of the Parmigiano Reggiano. And, oh, my gosh, this is going to be mind-blowing. Okay. I asked my partner to bring me there for my 40th birthday. You know, Katy, how bad I am with my food, and I'm picky, and I like to select those places. And it's very important that even if we have to drive an hour - we just go, we don't care.

Katy

Thank you, Giulia. She's always got all the good tips. I love it, but you just need to have those local connections when you're going around these places because it just makes all the big difference. Okay, is there any other pasta dishes that we should try in your region?

Giulia

Other pasta? For sure. By the way, the name of that Osteria is called Antica Osteria del Mirasole. Okay. So another pasta dish that you definitely have to try, and this I'm sure you've heard of is tagliatelle ragu. More Bolognese than Modenese, whereas tortellini is really from both cities, and you know that they are big rivals on where the tortellini were born. Lasagna actually is definitely more Bolognese dish. Ragu is actually what makes them special. It has to be slow-cooked for many hours. Some people, to make it very flavorsome, they even add sausage. Others prefer to keep it just beef. I like with sausage. Okay, so again, healthiest, but obviously you don't have tagliatelle every day, so once a week or so it's okay.

Giulia

Another one, maybe you haven't seen it because it's more for Christmas. Katy should be definitely in your eating list is Rosette, and they are rolled disc of dough. In the middle, you've got bechamel, Parmegiano Reggiano, and prosciutto. So think of roses made of pasta. It's beautiful.

Katy

Oh, my gosh. And is that served with a sauce?

Giulia

This is baked and in the oven. So that top is a little bit crunchy, if you like. Well, maybe the taste is not as strong as the ragu, with tagliatelle. This is more smooth because you've got more bechamel and more cheese. So if you're not too much of a meat lover, but you can still eat your meat, you can try the Rosette. So ragu, proper bold and strong dish. If instead, you prefer something, I cannot say light, but smoother, you should try for Rosette.

Giulia

And if I can also mention something for vegetarians, this is also an amazing plate. This can be found both in Emilia and Romagna, and it's actually one of my favorites, passatelli, Katy. This is actually another recipe made with Parmegiano Reggiano and bread. So it's very easy. You mix bread crumbs, Parmesan Reggiano, and one egg, and then you make a big bowl, you put it in the fridge for a couple of hours. When this bowl is ready and hard, then you pass them into something like a potato masher. They're not super beautiful to look at because they look like a little tiny worms, but they are delicious, very comforting, especially during this winter

time. And you can again eat them in broth. Or they can be dry into a sauce that could be a mushroom sauce, a carbonara sauce, or anything you like.

Katy

Wow. What's another mane we could try?

Giulia

If you want to experience something very Emilian, we are more famous for our pasta dishes, okay? And we know that pasta for us, it's always egg-based and rolled with rolling pin and so on. We never talk very much about the second courses, but something very, very Emilian also has Zambone and it is called bolliti. Especially now at Christmas. This will be something that many people will do. So it's called carrello dei bolliti. So some restaurants still have this amazing social eating experience that they offer. So really imagine an actual trolley, different sections. Every section has different boiled meats in the boiling broth. The owner of the restaurant, very proudly with this trolley, with this cart, goes from table to table. Katy, this is honestly something that you have to try before it disappears. So imagine the restaurant owner very proudly bringing around destroy of boiled meats and it cuts the meat that you like in front of you and it serves it to you. So you imagine all these different types of meats, including Zambone, that you've got cotechino, you've got beef. Actually, those two are taken from, you know, after you have made your broth. It's a way to reuse that type of meat. And again, here, Katy, this is for the real adventurous one. I must admit I am not one of them. Okay. There is also tongue.

Katy

No, that's not for me either.

Giulia

I know it's not for me either. Katy, I think me and you should go for a passatelli date. Okay?

Katy

Yeah, definitely.

Giulia

Once in a lifetime, you should really even see the experience of eating at a very traditional restaurant with this Carrello dei Bolliti. It's very funny because when I went last time, there is a restaurant here called San Pellegrino. It's still one of the surviving ones serving this type of meat. He says to me, Giulia, okay, look at me. This is El Paradiso - paradise, the heaven, okay? The paradise of meat. Okay, which one would you like? Okay, I will pass the tongue and he will of course be upset about it. Okay. But he would not force it if you don't want to. And I would say, okay, can I have some caponne and manzo? And then it serves it with mashed

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potato. And also there are different sauces. One of them is a green sauce that we make, very country style, very nonna style again, so that would be one of our mains. And to be honest, after two dishes of a pasta dish, because normally when we go out to the restaurant, we get antipasti. Then we might try 2 primi, then we have a secondo. Okay? Yeah. Katy I know, it's crazy. And then dessert.

Giulia

I mean, we cannot pass a dessert.

Katy

Well, I have to say that I just loved that gelato, that gelato with the drizzle of balsamic vinegar of Modena on it, the traditional one. It was outstanding. And I could just happily have that, to be quite honest with you.

Giulia

Honestly, hearing it from you, it makes me so proud, because sometimes you go to amazing cooks okay. And gelateria and you're like, oh, my God, this is amazing. And they're like, oh, really? I'm like, what do you mean? You are an artist. Personally, I travel a lot around Italy, too, and I tried different gelato. And, Katy, you are very passionate about gelato, so you clearly know the difference between ice cream or average gelato and very extremely excellent stuff and here is Spilameberto. If you come around after you've tasted the l'aseto balsamico tradizionale, another experience that you definitely have to try is try the gelato with the balsamico.

Katy

So good.

Giulia

And he has another one, Katy, that I recommend, because this you can never find anywhere else in Italy. And it's also in my area, it's called gelato amaretti. Amaretti is a biscuit. And not the same amaretti biscuit you are familiar with because you have amaretti in other regions of Italy, especially Tuscany. Ours are actually different. They are biscuits that are made with flour and almonds. And the texture is they are soft inside and a little bit fancy outside. And these biscuits were created, again, for the Este family because almonds are not very much from my region. So bringing almonds mainly from Sicily, okay, that's the area where the almonds are the best was something very special, very rare that only someone extremely wealthy or noble could afford. Okay? So they created this invention using this very specific ingredient. And, oh, my gosh, if you love almond, that's another amazing biscuit. So this gelato is made with these biscuits. So you can have both worlds. You can have the biscuit and the gelato combined into one.

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Katy

Let's just go for it. When in Emilia, you just go for it. Like, there's just no holding back. I think it's the best now. That's absolutely outstanding. And Giulia knows that. I had a big discovery when I was in Emilia and I discovered that I loved Lambrusco, which is the main wine of the region, and it was just so different. I think everyone in maybe English-speaking countries has a bad Lambrusco memory, but we got sent the bad stuff. We didn't get the good stuff, everyone. So you have to actually try the local wine because it's made to go perfectly with the local dishes, and it really does because it's got that little bit of a fizz happening and it just cuts through the fattiness of the meat, and I just can't recommend it enough. So I'm really trying to find a good Lambrusco here, in Australia, but I haven't had much luck, unfortunately, because it's a very young wine and I don't think it travels very well either. So, when in Emilia got to try the wine, right?

Giulia

Thank you, Katy, for bringing this up, because all my clients are the same. They're like, wow, Giulia first of all, we're angry because you made us into food snobs now, second of all, thank you for you have completely changed our minds about Lambrusco. Lambrusco, it's the first most popular wine for exporting, so it has been the most exported red wine, which actually was good on one side, but also very bad because it was sold as not a super, very good one, excellent quality one. But here, when you are in Emilia, you could even do a day of trying different Lambrusco and meet different producers. And actually, a cool thing to do is to try Lambrusco de Sorbara compared with the Lambrusco Grasparossa. So in my area, we have the Grasparossa, which comes from a beautiful town, which is also next to me, called Castelvetro, which is on a hill. So this type of Lambrusco is a little bit sweeter because the sun rays hit the vineyard more than the Lambrusco distributor, which is on the other side of Modena, which is a bit more plain and it's a little bit more dry as the Lambrusco.

Giulia

I have to definitely take you out for an afternoon trying to boast Lambrusco, meet different producers, and if you want to taste very good Lambrusco from Grasparossa grapes, please write this name down. Fattoria Moretto is definitely a very good producer. Also, Galvana Superiore is a very good one. La Pian. There is also Cleto. Cleto Chiarli is a big brand, for sure. I know that you would like to go to the smaller vineyards. If you like natural wines, there is another producer in another town called Quilia, which is called Terra Quilia. I am more familiar with this type of Lambrusco, but Lambrusco de Sorbara, for sure, you can try, Paltrinieri. This is also excellent, but I promise you I will stay on a Lambrusco day so you can compare.

Katy

All right. So I'm booking that in September. Okay. Because that's when we're coming. And, you know, my whole family loves your area. We love it so much, and everyone can't wait to come back. When I asked everyone where they wanted to go, they said, we want to see Giulia in Emilia Romagna. So anyway, everyone, Giulia and I have been scheming away for a few months, and we're going to share something pretty special with you today. That's especially for all your foodies out there. So when I was in Giulia's region and in the town of Spilamberto and exploring these beautiful villages and all the producers that they had from there, I was so amazed. And most people know I've done quite a lot of travel in Italy and I was just so - I just thought it was incredible what was available there and how friendly and kind everyone was and how just how knowledgeable and passionate they were about their food. And I thought to myself, oh, my goodness, I couldn't let people not have the same experience. So today I'm really delighted to announce that our Untold Italy small group tours of the Emilia region will be led by Giulia.

Katy

And we are so excited.

Giulia

I'm so happy, and I really can't wait to make you explore my area. And also the fact that you mentioned about the people you met. I really feel that in our region, we really have a big heart, and many of the times our generosity is also shown through food and altering and making you feel comfortable and happy. So I am already here with my open arms ready to welcome you and give you a big Emilia Romagna hug.

Katy

She does like a cuddle, and that's really great because I do too. So we're going to be doing these tours in May and November because they're actually the best months to travel because, well, we can't give too much away, but there's a lot of fun things happening around those at times. And like, when we were there, it was super hot, and I think you don't want it to be too hot because some of these dishes are really best served when it's slightly cool, I think. So you want to really enjoy it.

Giulia

I'm very happy, Katy, actually, that you decided to come and visit our region during two different types of the year. So actually you can choose which is the season that you would like to experience the most, or maybe you can decide to come two times because my area, especially being so seasonal, it changes very much. So we have May, which is an incredible month where all the flowers and the cherry blossoms, and maybe we can go and meet the cherry producer because we haven't mentioned our amazing cherries from Vignola. And of course, there will be gelato with ciliegia coming up, by the way. Okay. Or if you come in

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November, then you can try more our hearty dishes. Maybe I can make you come and meet one of our artisan meat producer and we can be warmed up by this feeling of the fog and the mist. Very different times of the year, many things that we can discover. The only season, as you said, probably August, definitely not July, if you are very much adventurous and you don't want to be in the heat too much.

Katy

Okay, you know, what we're going to do on this tour is there are some people that will take you to see and taste some of the things in Giulia's region that do it in one day. But we decided to do things a little bit differently and take things slowly. Piano, piano. And we're not going to any of the really big producers. Giulia knows some of the amazing artisan producers that do some incredible things with their produce. And one example of that, which was really one of my favorite experiences of our whole trip, was when we went up into the mountains and we tasted the Parmegiano Reggiano made by the Bianco Modenese cows. I think they have actually appeared on *Searching for Italy* by Stanley Tucci. I believe Stanley Tucci was up there. And Giulia is actually one of the few guides that can actually take people around that farm. And it's really necessary to go with someone like Giulia because they don't speak English. So at that point, I was very grateful to have my husband, who does speak very good Italian, to be translating because I had so many questions about this dairy and it's such a beautiful place up there and they're so kind and so generous and I'm just thrilled to be able to share that with everyone. It's a really special thing. And sometimes if you've been lucky enough, like me to have traveled quite a bit, you can get a bit jaded about things. But this was a really incredible authentic experience and most people know that I have a problem with the word authentic, but I mean, these people have been making this cheese for a very long time. They're just doing their thing. There's no bells and whistles. It's very humble, but boy, does the cheese taste good.

Giulia

Oh, yes. For us, Katy, I think in my reason we are really no frills. Go to the excellent. Pragmatic. Straight to the bone. For us, it's very important that we keep our humble origins and we work very hard to make everything we do the best.

Katy

Yeah, exactly. It's very straight to the point, no one's messing around. They really want you to have a great experience and I really think that's something that's really special. And I know sometimes you feel like in some places you might be being sold something, but no, they just really want you to appreciate the work that's gone into what they're doing. And I really loved that about Emilia Romagna and the time that we spent in that beautiful area. Now, the other thing that's really important to go with someone like Giulia is that she knows what to order. So you've heard about all these dishes and half of them have different names. And a lot of the restaurants are known for specialty dishes, which can be difficult to find out. And let's face it, most of these places aren't on Google. Italian restaurants and places in general are not

very good at getting on Google, so you're not going to find them there, unfortunately. And so Giulia has been really generous and shared some of her secret places that she loves. But obviously when we're going on tour, we're also going to be exploring some other ones too.

Katy

I'm very excited about this, and I hope that everyone who is curious about our tour, which is called Beyond Bologna, if they can head on over to untolditalytours.com/bologna, where you'll find the detailed itinerary. I'll also pop it in the show notes because it will be easier to find there. But I just know that everyone's going to fall in love with your region and with you too, Giulia. But in the meantime, maybe they can't join us on the tour, but how can they stay in touch with you?

Giulia

So I have my website, but also a quite active Instagram account, so you can reach me either through one or the other platform. And if you are interested in any food tour or experience with locals in Modena, Bologna or the area around both cities, I'm very happy to welcome you as well as I offer travel consultation service. So if you come to my area but you prefer to have my guidance also in thinking about how to plan or where to go, I can offer that help too.

Katy

Okay, and what's your website, Giulia?

Giulia

It's travelwithrezdora.com and on Instagram with rezdora R-E-Z-D-O-R-A rezdora.

Katy

Rolling of the Rs. It's definitely a skill I want to cultivate. Thank you, Julia. We'll put all of those into the show notes for everyone. So Grazie Mile Giulia. Thank you so much for chatting us about all those delicious dishes. And I already have my dinner, but I'm so hungry now, and I just hope that others can experience that magical experience that we had with you, hopefully in 2023 or 2024.

Giulia

I really hope to meet you all and thank you so much for your attention.

Katy

Grazie Mile, Giulia. Ciao. Ciao.

Giulia

Ciao. Grazie. Ciao. Ciao. Ciao

Katy

Well I hope you enjoyed my chat with Giulia who is as charming in real life as she is over the podcast airwaves. Collaborating with her is so much fun and I hope some of you will join us on this adventure as it is shaping up to be one for the ages.

Our Untold Italy group tours very small - 10 guests maximum - so we can access artisan producers and visit restaurants and places that large groups cant get to. You'll experience deep local immersion so you'll meet people with Giulia and really get a sense of what makes their region special.

On our recent tour of Piemonte, our guest Patii said that she'd been to Italy several times but never like this and she learned so much. On that same tour, Vicki loved being immersed in the local culture - the shops, truffle hunt, restaurants and local people. It gives us such a thrill to hear this because this is exactly what we are hoping our guests get out of our tours.

Anyway, to learn more about the tour in Emilia and other regions - we have put up quite a few new ones lately - head on over to untolditaly.com/152 for episode 152 where you'll find all the information about the dishes Giulia mentioned plus links to our tours

Thanks to all our wonderful listeners for your ongoing support of Untold Italy. I hope you enjoyed today's show. That's all for today. Next time we're heading to the beautiful South Tyrol region to hear all about their Christmas markets - can you believe it's that time already?

But until then it's "ciao for now".