

## The Biodiversity Behind Italian Food

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Each of Italy's 20 regions boasts a unique cuisine that draws on the local biodiversity, traditions, and culture.

### BIODIVERSITY

Surrounded by gentle seas, Italy's narrow peninsula stretches from the mountainous Alps to the volcanic islands. From north to south and east to west, the wild sea winds meet the calm mountain breezes, creating a series of microclimates (i.e., terrain, soil, wind, etc.). Over hundreds of thousands of years, a vast variety of funghi, plants, and animals evolved in these fertile but different microclimates. This unique biodiversity provides each region with its specialties.

So, just as Americans appreciate peaches from Georgia and oranges from California, Italians seek saffron from Umbria and pasta made in Campania. The best and most authentic products naturally thrive in certain areas.



## TRADITIONS AND CULTURE

Over centuries, the locals perfected the production of the food and wine varieties that naturally grew in their region; through trial and error, traditions were born. In turn, these culinary traditions slowly permeated each region's culture.

This is still apparent today, even with a dish like pasta. While the ingredient is ubiquitous throughout Italy, the traditional style still varies based on the microclimate and readily-available ingredients. Northern Piemonte is known for its *tajarin con burro al tartufo* (left image), a tender fresh egg pasta tossed with a rich butter sauce and topped with truffles hunted in the nearby hills. This is hardly in the same category as southern Campania's *paccheri con sugo di mare* (right image), an air-dried pasta made with flour and water tossed with a fresh seafood tomato sauce.

### "ITALIAN FOOD"

Italy was not unified as a country until 1861, so these regional traditions continue to run deep in local markets, restaurants, and nonna's tables. Before Oscar Farinetti created Eataly in 2007, it was difficult to find fresh *pesto alla genovese* outside of its home region of Liguria or sweet San Marzano tomatoes beyond Campania.

Eataly promotes traditional Italian food and drink by working with small-scale regional producers to introduce their authentic products to the world. Each new taste introduces a world of art, stories, and tradition, so you can explore all 20 regions without leaving the table.

Discover our regional Italian food and drink at our online store (including an all-new series of regional gift boxes), or visit our markets, restaurants, and cooking schools in New York or Chicago!

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