

Ambassador



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BUON NATALE!

Holiday Wine Tasting Notes

Setting a Different Holiday Table

Zampognari's Second Wind

Virtual Wanderlust

The Truffle Hunters

Finding Italy in Miami

Italy's influences in everyday life in America are everywhere, from the best Italian restaurants and most popular festivals, to historic architecture, museums and must-visit markets. In NIAF on Location, our staff, members and friends provide insider insight on special places that make them feel more Italian in their own hometowns. This issue, longtime NIAF friend Jenifer Mangione Vogt finds Italy in Miami.

What is the most Italian part of Miami?

Italy is exploding in Miami! People assume a South American influence, but there are now also so many Italian expatriates and Italian businesses that you can spend days speaking only Italian. You'll encounter this vibrant community at certain restaurants, events and venues, many I'll mention, but there's no specific neighborhood, and when locals say "Miami," they're generally including neighboring Miami Beach and Coral Gables.

What are your favorite Italian restaurants there?

For a power lunch with clients or beautiful night with friends, I love Toscana Divino in Brickell. It has the best chef, Andrea Marchesin, and its impeccable team are ambassadors of true Italian hospitality, including much-loved manager Francesco Giovanelli. Owner Tommaso Morelato significantly invested in sustainability initiatives, like what you'll find in Italy, to safeguard the environment and revitalize the post-Covid hospitality ecosystem. I admire his emblematic Italian dedication to community. For informal gatherings, I love Salumeria 105 for its *salumi e formaggi* boards. The pizza at O'Munaciello is *come un sogno*. In Miami Beach, I go to Forte dei Marmi because its pistachio gelato, which has a cult-like fan base, is the best I've had outside Italy.

When you need some Italian culture, where do you go?

I go to Ironside Culinary Campus in the Upper East Side where the

authentic Italian restaurants surround an outdoor sculpture garden that faces my favorite art gallery, Galleria Ca' d'Oro, owned by Gloria Porcella, a third-generation art dealer. Ironside Kitchen has my favorite *gnocchi* and *focaccia*, which are *fatti in casa*. There are many Italian speakers and there's a charming garden with fluttering butterflies. At night, live music and whimsical string lights imbue a warm, romantic glow. It's as magical as a piazza in Rome.

To cook an authentic Italian meal, where do you go to get those hard to find ingredients?

I'm so obsessive about only buying authentic Italian that I drive 40 minutes north to Doris Italian Market in Coral Springs, which is part of a family chain and co-owned by my friend Gary Mulé. He and his team have the type of old-school customer service that makes me wax nostalgic for the Dunwoodie Italian neighborhood where I grew up in Yonkers, N.Y.

How about Italian fashion? Any designers have a special place there??

Aspiring *fashionistas* are fortunate because the Italian fashion school, Istituto Marangoni, opened a branch here two years ago in the Miami Design District. You'll also find many Italian luxury brand boutiques there.

What's the most Italian day of the year in your community?

There are two. Each year, in June, the Italian consulate hosts a beautiful event to celebrate Festa della Repubblica with people in the community who



Jenifer Mangione Vogt and Gary Mulé, co-owner of Doris Italian Market

have committed time and resources to promoting our culture. In the fall, the Italy-American Chamber of Commerce Southeast produces the Authentic Italian Table, a large tradeshow that showcases the authentic Italian food and beverage industry and the Made in Italy products that fuel it. The venues for these events change.

Where's the best morning espresso served?

La Giulietta, a bakery-café that is also at the Ironside Culinary Campus, because they also have the best homemade pastry. I can have my *cappuccino e cornetto*.

Is there a special monument, museum, or cultural center based on Italian or Italian American culture?

Società Dante Alighieri in Coral Gables is our community cultural center that hosts concerts, language lessons and cultural events, and often stages Italian art exhibits at the Coral Gables Museum across the street. ▲