

# Estrategias innovativas en la gestión y valorización del paisaje cultural:

experiencias italianas y argentinas en comparación



*Compiladores*

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Rodolfo Fernández Ziegler, Miguel Marafuschi Phillips,  
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# Cultural food-scapes from the Italian Marchigian hills to Argentina. An explorative research on the food traditions of migrants

*Gian Luigi Corinto and Miguel Marafuschi Phillips*

## **Abstract**

The goal of our research group is to survey certain aspects of the phenomenon of migration from the Marches to Argentina. Between the ending eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, more than six thousands Marchigians did expatriate to Argentina. The flux was low between 1896 and 1907, stronger in the 1919-1930 period, and continued in the fifties and sixties. The agrarian harsh crisis in Italy and the following social crisis have been supposed as the main causes. Thus the migration received a public support and incentive. The Marchigians emigrated to the rest of Italy and even to other parts of Europe, the United States, the Mediterranean region and Latin America. The building of a new railway network in Argentina did allow the cultivation of vast new areas of fertile land, where many Italians found their fortune after years of sacrifice, hard work and capital accumulation. The research focused on a specific topic, the culinary and alimentary behaviors of migrants, their identity significance and the agricultural practices they have introduced in their 'new world'. Findings will be useful for future bilateral researches.

## **1. Introduction**

After centuries of seasonal rural commuting between the Marches and the Tuscan Maremma and the Roman countryside (Allegretti 1987), an increasing migrating flow began in 1870. The flow soon became very strong and lasted near a hundred years, until the 1970s. In the first decade of the 20th century, the Marchigian emigration rate was higher than the Italian average, even after having started later than in other regions (Moroni 2010).



The Italian economic crisis during the 1890s was particularly painful and pressed people to migrate, especially in the Marches, where an actual exodus took place, in the period 1895-1914, when families and individuals faced a very harsh existence (Brusa 1995; Pongetti 2009; Sanfilippo 2005). It can be estimated that, within near one hundred years, half a million people left permanently the Marches, with a peak in the period 1905-14. In these years the Marchigians emigrated mainly to Latin America and in particular to Argentina, and less to the United States. After the post WWII, the flow of emigrants headed to Australia, Argentina and mainly to diverse countries of Europe (Moroni 2010).

This paper aims at illustrating and interpreting the phenomenon of migrations and settlements of Marchigians in some areas of Argentina under a particular point of view, that of the food as a feature of identity in the process of migration.

The paper is organized as follows. The section 2 is dedicated to background literature, as in particular subsection 2.1 is dedicated to the socioeconomic conditions that forced Italians to migrate, and subsection 2.2 on relations between food and identity. In section 3 we expose the research focus, the related questions and the adopted methodology. Section 4 reports results about areas of settlement and main findings retrievable from the narratives of key-informants (integrally reported in the appendix) about the relation between identity and economic activities they undertook. The discussion of the results and some conclusions are reported in section 5.

## **2. Background literature**

### **2. 1. Socioeconomic situation as determinant for migration**

Farming systems and landscapes are strictly intertwined and both refer to a particular organization of the agricultural habitat. There are functional relations between housing and farming, settlement and the countryside, house and cultivated fields (Gambi and Barbieri 1970; Polidori, 2013). In the central Italian regions, including the Marches, the specific farming system, namely *mezzadria* (sharecropping or *metayage*), was made up by singular units of small family farms (each one named *podere*) and a bigger farmhouse where the landowner lives seasonally or permanently (Anselmi 1990). The so called *fattoria* was actually a central service unit, and in the countryside the civil settlement could have the form of scattered rural houses or small villages or hamlets.

The mezzadria was both a land tenure (podere) and a farming model (sharecropping) which lasted until the 1960s.

The contract of mezzadria had some specific issues, and was annually and tacitly renewable. A worker farmer (mezzadro), which usually was a propertyless male person, was charged by the managing of an undivided farming unit (podere), varying from 2-3 to 8-10 hectares of land, depending on the adopted cultivation system. In turn, he must share the produce, usually the 50 percent, as well as the total cost of managing (farming tools, laboring and fattening cattle, fertilizer, seeds, etc.). The podere must have a house, for the farming family, and a series of structures, farmyard, barn, well and a hut, etc.

The farming system was based on the polyculture, which included field crops (mainly cereals) and trees (vines, olive trees, fruit trees), supplemented by yard animals, a few pigs and a pair of working oxen, and rarely there was a small number of sheep. The entire rural family was involved in farming, in their own vegetable garden, in cattle breeding, in even small scale agricultural industries. Over time, the landlords required the obligatory residence of the working family in the podere, denying the right to work elsewhere. The specific objective was to have enough foodstuffs both for the farming family and the owner and his family. Indeed, the middle-upper class of landlords aimed at living 'off one's own means', and, thus, the overall land tenure was oriented to self-consumption (Jones 1980).

The resulting type of landscape is the representation of a settling, producing and social system and is the typical Italian 'agrarian landscape' (Sereni 1961). In the Marches it adapted to a hilly environment. The resulting rural family was a typically hierarchic system, where women had 'lower duties', such as the child rearing, preparing and serving meals, while men were mainly committed to farming (Goretti 2011). The increasing harsh social conditions and the degeneration of relations between landlords and workers pressed these latter into a dramatic choice (Moroni 2010). Having to choose to become outlaws or migrants, many chose to migrate, and a great part of them opted for Argentina as the 'Promised Land' (Cecchini 2006; Pentucci 1999).

In Argentina, farmers found a totally different type of 'landscape', both in terms of material shape of the land and in term of cultural relationships. The main geographical difference pertains to distances of residences, as in the new world one campo was at least 20 kilometers far from the closer one. Thus families were isolated, having time only for

working with no social contacts (Moroni 2010). Often the women, even just married, were left home in Italy, waiting the occasion to rejoin to the migrated husband, who often has to work hard to save money for the wife's trip to Argentina (Pentucci 2011; Ruffini 2009).

## **2. 2. Food and Identity**

According to Fishler (1988) there are strong relations between food and sense of identity. Food, eating and cuisine are central for determining group diversity, hierarchy and organization, and even oneness and otherness. Food gives identity both to individuals and social groups and also to places, in a very complex way (Fishler 1988). Food and eating are linkable to practices and collective representations (Douglas 1966; Lévi-Strauss 1968). French sociologist Bourdieu (1984) analyzed the social norms governing eating and worked at showing that tastes can be understood as socially constructed and differentiated normative sets of practices.

Relating to Italian ex-rural families, American sociologist Carole Counihan, stated food as voice of family and gender, revealing relations between men's and women's roles, who are separated in 'production' of food and 'reproduction' of sons, the wife 'being factually the head of servants who prepares and serves meals' (Counihan 2004, p. 6). This is even the history of the Marchigian rural families within the mezzadria (Pentucci 2011).

When people decide to migrate, they left something home and maintained something with them facing a cultural 'shock'. Carrying food and cuisine as an individual and social asset was used as a homesickness treatment (Pravettoni n .d.).

## **3. Research Focus, Questions and Methodology**

With the background mentioned before as a frame, the paper focuses on the relation of the Marchigians migrants in Argentina, their food and cuisine, and how they used it for maintaining cultural identity and even making business. Thus, we can formulate the research questions as: did the Italian Marchigians migrants maintain their food preparing behavior in the new country? Where did they get the ingredients? Was the need of ingredients a trigger for entrepreneurial projects? How they adapted this behavior to the local social environment? Did they use their agricultural skills in starting new enterprises?



For this purpose there were collected and analyzed geographical data and qualitatively surveyed narratives of migrants and relatives living in Italy and Argentina over the period June-December 2014. Six narratives of migrants and/or relatives have been directly collected by both the authors in Italy and in Argentina. The detected texts of narratives are reported in the Appendix, and in the following section 4 main findings are reported.

## **4. Results**

This section includes the geographical analysis and reports the findings from the narratives of interviewees. Narratives are about main areas of settlement of Marchigians in Argentina, their food preparing and consuming behaviors. The section also describes the relationship of maintaining cultural identity with the emergence of economic opportunities from foodstuff production and commerce.

Marchigians arrived later than other immigrants to Argentina. Because of that, they weren't included in the land distribution as preceding immigrants. The result was that Marchigians ended up working for others like they use to do in Italy. The initial idea of the first Marchigian migrants was to reach Argentina and the US to get money in order to buy a piece of land in the Marche, because they thought land owners had less probabilities of suffering economic problems.

The port of Buenos Aires was the arrival place for all the Italian immigrants (Ciboti 2009). From there they did spread throughout the country. The first wave of Marchigians stayed in Buenos Aires or went to Santa Fe province along the Paraná River and the Route 9. Most of the Marchigian immigrants had agricultural and farming backgrounds. They also have experience in extra rural jobs, like manufacturing and handicraft production. The successive waves took Marchigians through Route 7 going through San Luis to Mendoza as the final destination. The last group of Marchigians headed to southern cities of the Buenos Aires province through the Route 2, like Mar del Plata and Bahía Blanca. From there, a last group went to the Rio Negro province in the Patagonia.

Each region was in need of different labor profiles. In the Pampas, including Buenos Aires and Santa Fe, there were needed farming workers. In Mendoza the need was for the wine and olives production. In Mar del Plata, Marchigians found jobs related to the fishing industry. Finally in Patagonia labor requirements were in the fruit farming.



Las Parejas, in Santa Fe shows a special case. This town was founded exclusively to be a Piedmontese and Marchigian colony. Around 1870 there was a railroad stop that becomes a real station in 1890. The railroad was a transportation option but it was also an important center of employment.

Around the station the colony has been built and all the agricultural productions settled. Las Parejas was a trial of preserving the ethnical integrity (Pentucci 1999). This was the way Marchigians tried to deal with the loneliness of the Pampas. It was founded by Italians and they tried to maintain ethnic integrity through marriages between members of the colony and new immigrants from the two original regions.

In this locality, also another interesting issue appeared, i. e. the change in the farming area size: from the original five to six acres for self-consumption up to a sixty acre farm. Moreover, completely different features of soils challenged the farmers and obligated them to experiment different agricultural techniques. With the surplus of farming production, immigrants started not farming activities such as the commerce of food products.

All of this allowed immigrants to maintain their 'ethnic' food consumption. Thus, in the case the product was unavailable, it could be imported thanks to the monetary income generated by the surplus production sold in the market.

As mentioned before, each region has a specific production focus. But in all those regions the Marchigians maintained the traditions of farming families. The whole family worked in the farm in what is called a domestic unity. Men maintained the external hard work activities, while women maintained the housekeeping, food cooking and child rearing. Even children must help with the farming. It was mandatory that daughters learned what their mothers did, especially about clothes confection or reparation. The next female generation was allowed to work outside the farm mainly in the educational field, as teachers.

In many houses, the Marchigians kept their vegetable gardens with fruit trees and cured meat preparation. In the case of the Marchigians of Olmos it becomes the way of earning their living. Most of them went from a self-consumption garden to a bigger scale production that allowed them to sale the excess in the market.

Food is an important issue for the definition of identity of the Marchigian migrants to

Argentina. The rural origins of food and cuisine are still evident and proudly maintained as signal of 'Italianism' and even regionalism. During the interviews, some people talked like this: 'I'm not Italian, I'm from Modena!', or 'from the Marches!'.

Food preparation and consumption are occasions for social and economic activities. The farming conditions left in Italy have not been found in Argentina, because the land tenure and the availability of large arable grounds were a real novelty. Nevertheless, most part of immigrants faced big initial socioeconomic difficulties and suffered for nostalgia (homesickness), in particular for landscape-sickness, intending the big difference between the hilly landscape of the Marches and the (mainly) flat ground in the Pampas.

The Marchigians stayed together, establishing ethnic clubs (circuitos), even with the help of Italian organizations, such as the ACLI, and the same Region of the Marches, which still funds the abroad circles of Marchigian in Argentina. This was strictly true for the first wave of migrants, and less for the new generations, especially if born in the new country, even if the family ties are yet very important as a cultural sense of belonging. The feature of being descendants from sharecropper families (famiglie mezzadrili) remains in the male/female labor division, because the man is still the head of the family and the woman is devoted to the housekeeping, at least in the first generation. The second and third generations are facing the modernity of the world and the globalization. Thus, women have been allowed (really conquered the right) to work and study, even abroad, and not only in Italy.

The outland Marchigians substantially maintained their traditional behavior in food preparing and consuming. The daily eating of first migrants was usually frugal, with lots of vegetable in the diet, gathered from the family garden. Yet, on every Sunday, and in the festive days of the year, they used to have a special meal. Often mixing pasta and meat, following a family tradition in preparing rich and more complicated dishes, such as vincisgrassi (lasagne).

This tradition of the festive meal has been maintained even today, when the daily diet is much more richer. The Italian food has been exploited by some Marchigians as an economic opportunity. When they decided to stay permanently in Argentina, some of them became—as in the case of the Pascucci family—food manufacturers, initially as a domestic enterprise, using the recipes of mamma (the mother, the wife), involving the hole family in producing pasta fresca. Over time, the family enterprise developed,

still remaining under the control of the founder and his family, and involved the second and third generation in the managing of many shops and selling points. The Italianism of food is proudly defended and it is even a market leverage, which allows the quality distinction of products and the possibility to have a price premium up to 10 and even the 30%. In the companies we have the opportunity to visit, the range of product offering has been adapted to local tastes, including some Argentinian specialties, such as the empanadas, even though the genuine Italian and artisanal style of making food has been maintained.

On another perspective of doing business, some Marchigians—as in the case of the Vesprini family—used their aptitude in socializing to start an economic activity. The foundation of ethnical clubs (circuitos) had the original goal to put together people around a common sense of belonging to the region of origin. And, for example, food has been used for implementing the Italian feria in Villa Regina. The Marches still host many fairs, wherein pork-food and lasagna are the principal attraction for people, and a mean for making community. And it is a common sense to participate and share 'food and informations', during the sagre (local food-feasts), when people meet and celebrate the rite of sharing common knowledge. The family of Vesprini implemented their fair experience in doing business, undertaking the production of porchetta (roasted pork) into an industry.

In the narrative of Marchigians living in Argentina a particular issue must be noted. The recipes and food preparation are substantially the same of the origins. Yet, sometimes the names of dishes and food specialties are, somehow, partially modified, adapted to local traditions, as in the more evident case of the pasta shaped as penne, which are usually named mostaccioli, which in Italy are actually sweet cookies.

## **5. Discussion and conclusions**

The topic of relations between food and identity has been largely treated in the international literature, and in a minor scale also the food-migration nexus. Yet, more deepened regional insights are necessary, especially in the culinary and alimentary behaviors as marks of migrants' identity. Our survey has confirmed the main issues of preceding researches, and the findings seem to be interesting because they relate to a specific issue, the migrations from a singular Italian region, the Marches, to different provinces of Argentina. In this country the Marchigian communities are still very



active in preserving their original identity, and food and cuisine practices are effective occasions of social cohesion and cultural involvement and commitment.

Through a qualitative method, which consisted in recording the narratives of migrants and their relatives, we have collected data in order to answer the research questions. The findings are to be considered feasible because we have interviewed people both in Italy and in Argentina, all of them having strong and personal knowledge of the topic of migration, moreover being free willing respondents.

The experience of an international research collaboration is very intriguing and fertile for future deepening on the same topic and other issues, related to the socio-economic relations between Argentina and Italy. The research has been performed with an explorative aim, and even if the findings are still partial, they open a large horizon for future collaborations, also with more specific goals and in much broader research fields. Indeed, economics and humanities will be surely common research fields, but our findings show the potentiality of linguistic and semantic studies. The research enlightens social capabilities of cultural blending within communities of migrants to Argentina, both in food preparing and naming recipes, as a testimony of mixing past experiences and ongoing opportunities. Yet, in defining the research focus we posed one substantial question, as if the Marchigians maintained their original identity in making business and building abroad communities of migrants. Only apparently the answer is positive at all. Indeed, they used food and culinary feasts both for 'staying together', trying to maintain community and identity, and 'making business'. This goal have obliged the Marchigian migrants to somehow adapting the food offer in accordance to local tastes, in a complex way of combining old and new social and economic experiences.

The important proportion of Marchigians that went to Argentina along one hundred years has some specific effects, in particular in the food consumption and traditions. Related to the food are the ingredients that Marchigians were obligated to bring to the new country. There were also the production and commercialization of those products. This led to the development of different types of economic activities with a kind of ethnic food that became part of the regular diet in the reception country.

This work presents, based on immigrants or descendants narratives, the different dishes that became traditional even in Argentina and the economic activities that emerged thanks to that. The cases of Mr. Pascucci and Ms. Vesprini are not so

sporadic, because hundreds of other anonymous immigrants dedicated to gastronomy in different regions of Argentina, in view of doing business and maintaining sense of community.

It is important to underline the evolved role of women within the immigrants' families. The past and long-lasting traditional man/woman relations in the farming tenure of mezzadria, typical of the Marche, has progressively faded. The first generation of migrants still conserve some traditional feature of the traditional rural household. The second and the third ones, on the contrary, did emancipate the women from traditional and subject roles to an evident parity of responsibilities both in the household and in doing business.

The role of food in building the sense of community is still important within the Marchigians in Argentina, even because their gastronomy, traditions, family relations, agricultural techniques and productive enterprises have somehow affected the whole country of Argentina.

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## **Appendix - Narratives of key-informants**

### **1. Antonela Caruso (Argentinian of Italian ancestors living in Reacanati, province of Ancona)**

Argentina Bravi is the name of my grandmother, born in Italy in 1928 in Reacanati. Her first duty was the care of her little brother, when she was eight year old. At thirteen, she was working in a 'finandra', a firm producing silk yarn, and when she was sixteen entered a furniture factory, sanding the pieces and polishing with alcohol and lacquering the finishing surface. In the evening she, and her friends, continued to work in private houses, still in polishing pieces of furniture. One day, while working, she looked at her future husband passing by the street, who later asked for meeting her and in few days meeting her parents.

My grandmother remembers when in Italy the family prepared on Sunday pasta with meat sauce, using one hundred grams of veal for all. During the week they used to eat stew vegetables, mainly potatoes and zucchini. They had a kitchen garden, so they have big quantities of diverse food vegetables. Sometimes they have fish with vegetables, mainly codfish.

Argentina married Ulderico in 1948 in the cathedral of Reacanati, where their families live. After some months, they travelled to Argentina, being both called by the sister of Ulderico who just lived there. The travel lasted 27 days, in a troubled trip, being women and men separated in two different floors of the ship. They can meet only during the meal.

Arrived to the port, they missed to find the sister of Ulderico and with few remaining money by taxi they reached the address they knew to have date. After an initial panic, because the house was empty, being the sister at the port, they can finally join all together.

At first, Ulderico find a job as an assistant bricklayer, under the counseling of his brother in law. After two year they can buy a piece of ground, where can build a house, near El Palomar (Buenos Aires). They built the house working in the week end, and living there without water and electricity. At last they can have two rooms, one for the kitchen and the second for the bedroom. My grandmother Argentina did borne her first in 1950 in the bedroom they have built. Over time they finished the house, with a bathroom, another small bedroom and e living room, and in 1995 when the second child, Marina, was born, the house has been totally built.

The diet in Argentina was more rich with meat than in Italy, having cutlets, steaks and 'asado'. Even vegetables can be filled with meal, such as zucchini. They ate also beets, carrots, eggplant and potatoes. The festive meal, on Sunday, was 'pasta al sugo' (pasta with meat sauce) or 'ravioli' and 'lasagne'.

## **2. Mario Pascucci (Italian, living in Mendoza)**

I don't know the exact date of the first trip of our family ancestor Nazareno Tallei from Tolentino to Argentina. Surely it was at the ending of the eighteenth century. My family has only five hectares to be managed in sharecropping. When the family began to enlarge, the land was insufficient at all. In 1923, my father Giulio got married to Adorna, my mother, for traveling to Argentina, after that call of Nazareno. They arrived in Lujan (Mendoza) and in 1924, my sister Augusta, in 1925 my brother Nicolò, and in 1927 my sister Adina were born. Then, my parents came back to Tolentino, managing a food commerce. In 1832, I was born there, as well as my brother Angelo who was born in 1944.

In 1949 my brother Nicolò decided to perform military service in Argentina. I wanted to avoid the Italian military service and then followed him in the backward trip. Over two years, I was a worker in farming, performing also any kind of hard jobs. In 1956, together with my brother, we managed a food shop, and in 1957 a cafeteria—the Bar Roma—having a fifty-fifty business. In 1959 we sold the business, because I wanted to come back to Italy, having a one year residence permit. I married in 1960 and decided to return to Argentina. My pregnant wife came and reached me after five months, traveling by alone.

I can say this is the staring point of my personal business, producing hand-made

pasta with my wife in the municipal market of Lujan. I had the opportunity to buy some Italian Olivetti 'Divisumma' machines and exchange them with machines for fresh pasta production with a provider of food. In 1962, my wife and I were proud producers of Italian fresh pasta.

I traveled in Italy many times, usually visiting the Milano Fair to update my knowledge. I was obliged to use Argentine machineries, and I was not satisfied because they were too labor intensive. I needed two workers per one machinery. In 1976, the President Videla's policy of free market allowed me to buy machineries abroad. I bought the Italian ones from SAIMA to make fresh tortellini. Over many years I bought near 30 machineries and opened 6 producing and retailing shops. I spent a lot of money, but I spared a lot of labor and salaries.

At the very beginning, with my wife, we worked no more than 20 kilos of flour per week, and today at least 70 quintals per week.

In 1982 I opened a shop in Mendoza, and gradually with my aging I wanted my sons to get involved in the business, giving each of them the responsibility of one shop.

The pasta recipe is still that of my mother Adorna, that is one egg per each hundred grams of flour, that is much better than the local usual production. In fact they were accustomed to using very less eggs in the pasta mix. Today we produce more than 20 types of pasta.

The Italian stuffed pasta (raviolis) is served in special occasions, during the festive days, twice or three times in the week or in festive days over the year. It is a typical Sunday food, and we sell better in winter than in the summer time.

Now I sell at a higher average price than competitors, with a premium of at least the 10, and even the 30%. At the beginning, I made a price competition, lowering mine and making a hard advertising campaign all over Mendoza and its neighborhoods. It has been fundamental.

All my sons and daughters have studied, still working in the family business. My nephews studied in more specialized and advanced matters, and, for instance, one is a medicine doctor, and another a designer.



### **3. Federico Ferrarini (Italian, living in Mendoza)**

I arrived in Latin America when I was sixteen, in 1948. Now I'm retired and live in Mendoza and have lots of Italian friends. I was born in the little village of Concordia sulla Secchia, in the province of Modena. It was a trickery that pull me in the Latin America, and precisely in Bolivia. In that year, the Italian Consulate stated an agreement for the furnishing of one hundred trucks for picking up and transportation in the mining sector. My father was attracted by this seemingly great opportunity and stated the agreement with the Italian Consulate. But when arrived in Bolivia, he realized that was a real trick. Because there was non actual agreement with the Bolivian mines. Living conditions of the native people, who constitute most of the population, were still deplorable, with work opportunities limited to primitive conditions in the mines and in large estates having nearly feudal status.

So we decided to turn down to Argentina, as in Mendoza there were 39 mine of copper. That was an Eldorado for us. Afterwards, because the mining activity was actually decreasing, I entered an import export business with Italy of horticultural stuff, and managing in Mendoza a retail of seeds, fertilizers and other nursery products. We founded the Club Italiano de Mendoza where all Italians met and made community, and still do it. Event today, I come always to my friend Pascucci's shop and buy pasta fresca for the festive days during the week. Today we are aged but maintaining our idea about making business and disagreeing the government policy of giving everyone unemployment subsidies. They are killing any entrepreneurial initiative, as we face the third 'not-working' generation. If a family receives from the State the same amount of money of a worker's salary

### **4. Narrative of Claudia Vesprini (Argentinian of Italian ancestors living in Villa Regina)**

Immigrants usually group with their paesani (fellow countrymen). They founded circolo (clubs) and unions where they maintained their traditions. Those efforts continue today. One example is the Italian ferias we held each year. I'm a participant of the Villa Regina Italian feria. Each year there was a Marchigian stand in the feria. At the beginning there was typical food from le Marche and also cultural information. With the passing of the years, the cultural information was abandoned and only remained the food until the

feria ended in 2012. The main dish for that feria, expected by a big part of the visitors was the porchetta, a huge pork without bones, prepared with vegetables and spices in a rolled form, cooked in the oven. This pork was raised in a special farm owned by my aunt Italia Vesprini, a daughter of Marchigians who started a pork business out of this experience. She began with the porchetta and now has a complete boutique pork commerce in Villa Regina.

In this feria there were also traditional dance groups that performed the typical Marchigians dances. Those dancing groups were arrived from Buenos Aires to do their show.

The arriving immigrant grouped in circolos and associations. Circolos were places where immigrants could get some social contention with people that share the same traditions. The first immigrants even marry with paesani, reinforcing the feeling of pertinence to a region.

All this paesani share the dialect, music, dance, food preparation, smells and taste from the original land. The places that they were born and all this memories deeply fixed in their mind by emotional marks were a motive to share time and to be together. But the sons and daughters of these immigrants were born Argentineans and didn't have those emotional attachments. They were assimilated to the local society through the public school. This new generation didn't have the nostalgic feeling of the previous generation. They live the feeling in an indirect way through their fathers and grand fathers. Immigrants also suffered the division of their families, the separation from their loved ones. For the new generation their complete direct family was in the new country. Over the years, those sons and daughters received the direction of circolos and the responsibility of keeping alive the cultural legacy. They got in charge of the organization of the regional ferias mentioned before. But sons and grandsons, with less attachment to the Marches didn't maintain the altruistic spirit of the first immigrants.

Most of the members of the actual Italian associations don't speak Italian now. This element alone shows the difference between the emotional attachment among original immigrants and their descendants.

Many options of pasta are included in the Marchigians families. Some of them were spread in all the population like the vincisgrassi, locally called lasagna and the capelli d'angelo or the cannelloni a là Rossini. Some only remain in Marchigians families like the vermicelli a là vongole.

A very popular food among Marchigians are the crostini: a flour and egg mix, tagliatelle like, irregularly cut and fried with sugar on top.

Filled olives are another tradition, in Patagonia were called aceitunas a là ascolana. Another popular dish is the tomato arrosto, which are grilled tomatoes with garlic, olive oil and parsley.

One typical dish from Italy and the Marches is polenta. In the our family there is a Marchigian tradition: the polenta alla tavola. The polenta is spread in a wood table and each diner guest starts eating from a different corner. The goal is to get to the center part of the polenta where the sauce and the meat are.

Brusquetas are toasts with something (tomatos, cheese, rucola, etc) on the top. This Marchigian tradition has spread in catering for wedding parties and events outside Italian groups.

Some vegetables became common in the Argentinian table: rúcula, zucchini, radicheta, melanzane. Others remain only for Marchigian families: radicchio, pumpkin flowers and grillo.

Anise is an important part of Marchigian cuisine. This tradition was maintained in Argentina. Anise was consumed by Marchigian families as liquor and in the food preparation.

In the cake and sweet options, Vesprini's prepare the Pistingu: a cake based on must from the grapes mix with different types of nuts and almonds. This is a traditional winter cake which is consumed in summer in Argentina generally for Christmas time.

## **5. Narrative of Roberto Renzi (Argentinian of Italian ancestors living in Olmos, Buenos Aires)**

I am 73 years old. I am the son of a Marchigian couple. My father arrived to Argentina in 1923 from Ancona. He went directly to Olmos where he has a friend. My mother arrived later, in 1940, from Senigallia. She arrived in the Conte Grande boat. She was in a trip that couldn't touch the port of Buenos Aires because it was WWII time and there was a German war boat in the Rio de la Plata, the Graf Spee, in patrol duties.



The Conte Grande had to go to Brazil and my mother had to wait 40 days for another boat to go to Argentina.

Most part of my mother's family lived in Santa Fe as other Marchigians. She never wanted to return to Italy. The couple suffered of landscape homesickness (nostalgia del paesaggio) too.

Typical foods in the family were: porchetta, polenta a tavola, melanzane, artichoke, general canned food. Tomate arrosto, lasagna, olives and fried pumpkin flowers. I don't remember dishes with mushrooms. The porchetta and the Bagna Cauda were prepared for family reunions or special days.

I also remember the quadrati (a tagliatelli pasta cut in small squares) for soup. The sugo always included peas. My mother also prepared fried floured melanzane and filled artichoke, filled with meat, bread, eggs and parmesan cheese.

I like a lot the Chambela, a cake made of flour, eggs and sugar but crunchy. Sometimes she cooked bread with chinchorro, which is pork fat.

I am one of the founders of the Olmos Marchigian circolo, which is 25 years old. Olmos is a department of La Plata city in the Province of Buenos Aires. In this circolo there are two big festivities: the Lasagna day, at the end of June and the party at the end of the year, which this year includes, a porchetta. In the circolo children are taught the traditional dances from Le Marche. This dance group performs each year at the annual day of Olmos.

The church of Olmos includes the Virgin of Loreto image. The church has an annual caneloni day, prepared by Marchigians.

Olmos is the biggest producer of tomato of Argentina and is one of the biggest producers of vegetables. There were many Marchigians dedicated to farming. My father used to have vegetables and trees, like basswood, critics and fruit trees. Now we only have: rucula, radicchio, radicheta, tomato, zucchini, artichoke, cauliflower, broccoli, leek, beet and celery.

6. Narrative of Francesca Restelli (Marchigian living in Olmos, Buenos Aires)

I came to Argentina when I was very young. My family use to live in a town in the Marches, but when the germans arrived we have to search for help in a farm. I lived with my mother hidden in the farm for some time while my father was in the hills. That´s why we escape to Argentina. We were in different cities of Argentina until we finally established in Olmos.

I cook many dishes that I remember from the Marches. I remember that when I was young there was no important lunch, especially in holidays, that didn't finished with a delicious dessert called Zuppa Inglese. This dessert was prepared with vanilla embedded in Alchermes, a red liquor, with cream. The Alchermes, was originated in an Arabian word and is a liquor prepared with smashed ladybugs.

There were always le peschette, small cookies with the form of peaches and the le sfrappe. All flavors and smells melt with nostalgia and memories from the distant native land.

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