

# About culture(anthropology)



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Culture Order no. 214908 No. of pages: 2 Premium 6530 Most people eat to live, but there is a niche group of people that live to eat. According to the Florentine culinary culture, food is important for the pleasure of eating. Basically they are all food lovers and love both talking about and eating good tasty food. Their culinary system was varied and deeply rooted in the Mezzadria system with simplicity as its core point. Food was essentially composed of fresh, in- season fruits and vegetables in addition to the regular meats, pasta, rice and bread which made up the bulk of their diet. Breakfast or Colazione usually consisted of toast, bread, pastries or cookies with espresso coffee or cappuccino coffee. Pranzo was the mid- day meal was the most important meal of the day which consisted of grain products. Some of their specialties consisted of anchovies or tuna on bread, pickled vegetables (sott'acetti) and well preserved meats such as salami or prosciutto which was served along with fresh sliced cantaloupe or fresh figs. Most Florentines love the primo course the best which consists of a filling minestra – pasta or bread in soup.

In the 1980's, Polenta which is another well loved soup made of cornmeal mush which could be eaten either fried, or cooked with tomato sauce or even just plain. Traditionally meat played a minor role where Florentine cuisine was concerned because most people did not find it very tasty and used it mostly as toppings or flavorings. Now –a – days most of them eat vegetables cooked in either sauce or fried with eggs.

Dinner was called cena and was eaten between 7. 30 Or 8. 00 pm. It was much lighter than pranzo and consisted of bread with butter, wine, sugar or olive oil. But in the 1980's the merenda (snack) was made up of sweet cookies, bread and Nutella (processed chocolate hazelnut) By the fag end of

the 20th century, the variety of snacks outside meals increased considerably. (Vercelloni 1998, 985) There was a strict separation between sweet and salt that the Florentines adhered to. Now – a – days I feel don't have such a distinction and eat whatever they feel like eating. Sweets were rarely eaten and deserts were prepared only on special occasions. Every meal of pranzo or cena concluded with a fresh seasonal fruit. Sundays were special and special meals were cooked which usually included chicken. Christmas and Easter were special occasions where meals were elaborate- but not any more because people's attitudes have changed and they feel – everyday is a holiday!

The most important item in Florentine cuisine is bread. According to Taddei (1998, 31) “ The entire history of mezzadria foodways is the history of bread and grains.” Bread was eaten extensively as it was nutritious and filling. Bread had a symbolic connotation to them and had to be there at every meal and everyone respected its presence. Tuscan diet mainstay had always been legumes such as chickpeas, lentils and many different varieties of beans cooked and flavored with herbs and sauce or eaten in soups. Pasta was the basic food of the Florentines which was eaten with sauce, cooked beans, eggs or meat.

The peasants grew all kinds of vegetables which included artichokes, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, mushrooms, Swiss chard, beans, peas, leeks, onion, greens, kale, zucchini and tomatoes which was used extensively in all their pastas and soups. Fruits played a very important role in their diet and consisted of apples, apricots, peaches, grapes, figs, hazelnuts, walnuts, olives, pears and plums. Therefore it is quite evident that Florentine people gave a lot of importance to food and eating. They loved eating and gave a lot

of respect to it. Their food culture is something to be admired because we don't find that kind of food culture in many countries. In these days of rush, life is based more on a job- centric pattern and most people do not give the importance to food that it really deserves.

References:

Book - Florentine Diet and Culture.