



Mais Spinato
di Gandino®

Ricette d'Autore



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di Gandino®

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*To all the men and women of Maisze.
of yesterday of today and above all, of tomorrow.*



INDEX

01 FLAVOURS
AND KNOWLEDGE..... 7

02 THE GANDINO VALLEY,
A LAND RICH IN HISTORY 15

03 MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO:
A SUCCESS STORY 27

04 MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO
THE KEY MILESTONES
OF THE PROJECT 47

05 SHORT SUPPLY CHAIN,
QUALITY SUPPLY CHAIN 49

06 THE NETWORK:
PUEBLOS DEL MAÍZ 63

07 SLOW MAYS: WHEN A SEED
BECOMES A NETWORK 69

08 MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO:
CREATING VALUE 73

09 THE "REINVENT MAIS SPINATO DI
GANDINO AT THE TABLE" CONTEST.. 81

10 PARTICIPATING
SCHOOLS 82

11 RECIPES
SAVOURY DISHES 91

12 RECIPES
DESSERTS 107

13 ESSENTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY
AND WEB RESOURCES 140



01

FLAVOURS AND KNOWLEDGE

In December 2025, Italian Cuisine received its most significant recognition to date, being inscribed on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list. This recognition is not awarded to individual recipes, dishes or food products, but rather celebrates a body of knowledge and practices that make Italian cuisine an expression of culture in its own right. It encompasses everything that, through our innate creativity, we are able to create from primary products, from the field all the way to the table. In this way, the recognition highlights the values rooted in our “know-how”: from cultivation and animal husbandry, and the biodiversity of cultivated crops and reared species, to the many methods of processing and transformation that give rise to outstanding food products. Together, these form a unique heritage of quality and flavours, ultimately finding their highest expression in the art of gastronomy. These qualities are further enriched by traditional knowledge, a heritage handed down from generation to generation and a reflection of the history of the countless communities that inhabit our territories.

Italian agri-food production, with around 900 products – accounting for approximately one quarter of all recognised products – is the undisputed leader in Europe’s certified food sector. Across the continent, more than 3,500 outstanding agri-food and wine products are protected through the PDO, PGI and TSG certification schemes. Alongside these are the PATs (*Prodotti Alimentari Tradizionali*, Traditional Agri-Food Products), an Italian designation created to identify food products whose processing, preservation and ageing methods have become firmly established over time, having been practised consistently within a specific area and according to traditional methods for at least 25 years. Lombardy stands out for the excellence and richness of

its agri-food heritage: the region boasts 34 certified products, including 20 PDOs and 14 PGIs, together with as many as 271 TSGs, a figure that is continually being updated.

Bergamo and its surrounding area are particularly renowned for their food and wine traditions. The province stands out for its nine PDO cheeses, representing the highest concentration in any single European province, while its leading PGI products include wine and a variety of local meats. In 2004, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network was established to promote cooperation among cities that recognise creativity as a strategic factor in local economic development. The cities belonging to the Network are committed to sharing best practices and working together by involving creative communities: local stakeholders who actively contribute to the



development of their cities. Being part of the Network means sharing one's traditions, skills and creativity with the world. Thanks to this unique combination of territorial, gastronomic, cultural and creative assets, on 30 October 2019 Bergamo joined the UNESCO Creative Cities programme as a Creative City of Gastronomy, following Parma in 2015 and Alba in 2017. For Bergamo, being part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network means reaffirming its role as an urban centre committed to sustainable development, not only within the city itself but also throughout the wider provincial area, encompassing plains, hills and mountains. It is precisely thanks to the knowledge of shepherds, passed down and preserved by the cheesemakers known as the *Bergamì* since the 13th century, that Bergamo has become the European Capital of Cheese, with a mission to protect, preserve and promote its Cheese Valleys and rich dairy heritage.



The team behind this publication: from left, Angelo Savoldelli (President of the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community), Giambattista Gherardi (Coordinator of the Le Cinque Terre della Val Gandino District), Antonio Rottigni (Slow Mays delegate for Lombardy), Elisabetta Lupotto (former researcher at CREA), and Filippo Servalli (Mayor of Gandino).

Italy, as mentioned, is a mosaic of knowledge and products of inestimable value, often without any official “label”, yet capable of telling the story of a territory, a community and a landscape. They are crops, traditions and products that belong to a specific environment – and to that environment alone – becoming part of what visitors take away with them: not only a visual memory of the places they have seen, but also a lasting impression of what that land has offered them.

Italy’s agri-food tradition tells the story of the country not only through its history, but also through its environment and landscapes. Many crops have come to define entire areas, becoming symbols and elements of their cultural heritage in their own right: the hills of the Langhe and Monferrato, the wheat fields of Molise, or the vast olive groves of Apulia, to name just a few. Over the centuries, many plant species have reached Italy from distant lands and gradually become part of its traditional agri-food heritage: tomatoes, aubergines, basil, citrus fruits and pomegranates are just some examples. Today, climate change – despite the many negative effects it is having on Italian agriculture – is also expanding the range of species that are slowly becoming established in the country, including avocados, mangoes and other tropical fruits. These forms of “cross-fertilisation” are becoming increasingly common and contribute to the constant evolution that has always been a defining feature of Italian gastronomy.

Looking back through the history of Italian agriculture, rice and maize – two staple cereals within Italy’s agri-food system – also came from distant lands. Rice plays a direct role in human consumption, while maize, grown both for grain and fodder, contributes indirectly to the production of many outstanding agri-food products. Rice reached Europe as early as the time of Alexander the Great and his eastern campaigns in the 4th century BC, before spreading more widely throughout the Mediterranean with the Arabs in the 8th century. Today, Italy is Europe’s leading rice producer, accounting for more than 50% of total European production. Maize – *mahíz* – arrived in Europe following the discovery of the Americas and Christopher Columbus’s voyages at the end of the 15th century. The first varieties came from the tropical regions of the Caribbean and were not suited to cultivation at European latitudes. Only after maize accessions from inland areas and the Atlantic coasts of Central America were introduced did cultivation begin in Europe, rapidly spreading throughout the Mediterranean basin. In Italy, maize cultivation is documented from the first half of the 16th century onwards. It spread across the Italian territories because of its higher productivity compared with winter cereals, but also because, as a new agricultural product not yet officially classified, it was initially exempt from tithes and feudal dues. In his *Discorsi*, dedicated in 1568 to Princess Joan-



na, Archduchess of Austria, Pietro Andrea Mattioli left us one of the earliest descriptions of polenta: *“The peasants who live along the borders separating Italy from Germany make polenta from flour. Once cooked into a firm mass, they cut it with a thread into broad, thin slices, place it on a plate with cheese or butter, and eat it with great appetite.”*

It was only at the beginning of the 17th century that maize became an important cereal crop in Italy and entered the grain trade. Over the following four centuries, countless local varieties and agro-ecotypes developed, each suited to cultivation in different areas of Italy characterised by widely varying soil and climatic conditions. The collection, characterisation and conservation of Italian maize germplasm – and the present-day existence of a Germplasm Bank at the Bergamo branch of CREA (*Council for Agricultural Research and Economics*) – can be traced back to the establishment, in 1920, of the Experimental Station for Maize Cultivation in Curno, in the province of Bergamo. The Station was later moved to Salvagna, on the border between Bergamo and the municipality of Stezzano, where it is still located today. Thanks to the research carried out at the Station during the 1950s and 1960s, it was possible to identify and classify the traditional races of Italian maize. These included the varieties cultivated in the foothill areas of the Alps, mainly belonging to the flint and dent maize groups, with deep orange, vitreous kernels. These varieties are particularly well suited to food use, as they produce highly coloured, coarsely ground flours. These are the traditional local maize varieties that, thanks to efforts to characterise and preserve them, have survived to the present day, following a path quite distinct from that of industrial maize. The latter, represented by the hybrids currently grown, forms the basis of today’s extensive maize cultivation across the Po Valley.

Of the approximately fifty local maize varieties documented in Lombardy up to 1950, only 13 are still cultivated today, mostly in small, localised areas and on a limited scale, with production primarily aimed at enhancing the value of flour for polenta. Four of these are included in the European Register of Conservation Varieties: Mais Spinato di Gandino, Rostrato Rosso di Rovetta, Scagliolo di Carenno and Nero Spinoso della Valcamonica. Spinato di Gandino, Rostrato Rosso di Rovetta and, more recently, Mais delle Fiorine di Clusone are three maize varieties from Lombardy’s Val Seriana that have been awarded De.Co. status (*Denominazione Comunale d’Origine*, Municipal Designation of Origin). This designation certifies their strong local identity and is established by individual municipalities to link the name and production of a product to the history and traditions of its area of origin.

Enhancing the value of a territory cannot be achieved through a single element alone. It depends on the ability to bring together many different forms of knowledge which, collectively,

allow that territory to tell its story. Agricultural production therefore finds its most direct connection with visitors through gastronomy, which becomes a bridge between those who tell the story and those who experience it, creating an exchange of impressions and sensations that is unique to each place. Transforming a primary product into a dish is an art. An outstanding local ingredient, shaped by biodiversity and cultivation methods, is not enough on its own: it must be combined with know-how. And the knowledge of those who practise this craft today is rooted in the experience of the many people who, over the decades, have helped build and pass down this distinctive tradition of expertise. Our work aims to shine a spotlight not only on the value and history of the traditional Mais Spinato di Gandino, but also on the professionalism of those who choose to apply their creativity to the world of gastronomy. Speaking of tradition also means always looking towards the future: recognising the value of the past in order to reinterpret it and bring it into the present, opening it up to new perspectives across both space and time. For this reason, we wanted to involve younger generations and acknowledge the commitment of the hospitality schools of the Bergamo area, which are dedicated to training the chefs of tomorrow and boast a long-standing and widely recognised tradition of excellence. Alongside them are the students themselves, our future chef ambassadors, who worked with great enthusiasm and dedication to create dishes and desserts of remarkable originality and quality. Our sincere thanks go to all of them for their work, which has made this publication possible and allows us to share and promote their invaluable know-how.



Le Cinquecento
del Val Gardina



02

THE GANDINO VALLEY, A LAND RICH IN HISTORY

The medieval town of Gandino, one of the five municipalities that make up the “Le Cinque Terre della Val Gandino” District, lies in the heart of the Seriana Valley, in a broad basin that for around ten centuries was home to a thriving community whose vocation was first mercantile and later industrial. Dominated by the Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta and by prestigious noble residences, Gandino’s history has been marked by events and figures whose names recur in local archives, from Leonardo da Vinci to Saint Charles Borromeo, from Saint Valentine the priest to Saint Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, and from Ugo Foscolo to Giuseppe Garibaldi, to name but a few.

After freeing itself from the feudal rule of the De Ficienis family in 1233, Gandino became the seat of the Valley Vicar. Between the 15th and 16th centuries, it witnessed the flourishing of an important wool industry that helped increase its prestige and wealth. Thanks to the trade in woollen cloth, which crossed the Alpine passes and opened up commercial routes towards Central Europe, the families of Gandino were able to accumulate considerable fortunes.

Gandino, with its fourteen churches and countless historic palaces, is an open-air treasure trove of works of art. Architectural traces from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance can be discovered at every turn, and the town’s urban layout itself dates back to that period. Sections of the ancient defensive walls still survive, together with their watchtowers, such as those at Porta Pomaro and Porta Lacca, both dating from the 15th century. Of the seven gates that once gave access to the town, only one can still be admired today: the gate leading to the main

square, where the Town Hall and the Salone della Valle are located. As already mentioned, the many churches built between the 15th and 18th centuries form a distinctive feature of the urban fabric. Above all stands the monumental 17th-century Basilica dedicated to Santa Maria Assunta. The historic centre is compact, with irregularly laid-out streets and restrained building façades, punctuated by elegant portals opening onto entrance halls. Further inside, the architecture of the palaces – characterised by linear forms and large loggias providing access to the living quarters – becomes more expressive through the repeated rhythm of loggias and arcades, mostly facing south. The smaller-scale architecture that connects the urban fabric often makes use of timber as a structural element. These rustic buildings have a strong and distinctive character, evoking the town's industrial heritage and, in particular, the wooden drying structures known as *ciodère*, where locally produced woollen cloth was hung out to dry.

The Museums

The **Basilica Museum** was inaugurated in 1929, with the support of Monsignor Angelo Roncalli, the future Pope John XXIII, who visited Gandino on several occasions. Today, the museum preserves the historic treasures donated to the churches of Gandino from

Aerial view of Gandino's historic centre, dominated by the Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta.





the 15th century to the present day by merchants and noble families, particularly to the Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta.

Its collections include works from across Central Europe, with particularly significant Italian, German, French, Flemish and Austrian pieces, and are divided into three sections: Sacred Art, Nativity Scenes and Textile Archaeology. The Sacred Art section is the oldest part of the museum.

Among its most precious works are the silver covering of the Basilica's high altar, together with goldsmiths' and silversmiths' works containing valuable sacred vessels and liturgical furnishings. The collection of ceremonial textiles spans the 15th to the 18th centuries and includes dozens of different fabrics made into precious vestments. The museum also houses one of Europe's most important collections of lace and embroidery in gold, silver and fibre, as well as a tapestry collection featuring magnificent 17th-century Flemish examples.

Also noteworthy is the collection of Lombard and European wooden statues and carvings dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries, together with interesting collections of paintings, antique furniture and illuminated manuscripts.

The **Nativity Scene Section** originated from an exhibition presented at UNESCO headquarters in Paris in 1984 and today comprises more than five hundred nativity scenes

from sixty countries around the world. The creation of a permanent exhibition in Gandino was promoted by Monsignor Lorenzo Frana, Observer of the Holy See to UNESCO in Paris. The collection is dedicated to Pope Saint John Paul II, and the museum preserves a nativity scene donated by him, together with his papal zucchetto. The Textile Archaeology Section houses the original machinery and tools used in the profitable wool-processing industry that developed in Gandino from the 15th century onwards. Understanding this activity is essential to appreciating the origins of the wealth and flourishing economy of the Gandino Valley. Located within the 17th-century convent complex in the Castello district, the Museum of the Ursuline Sisters of Gandino offers a reconstruction of two centuries of history of the Institute founded in the town in 1818 by Don Francesco Della Madonna. The collection includes memorabilia, objects made by the Ursuline Sisters, a small but carefully selected art gallery, and a section dedicated to the Institute's missionary commitment.



Aerial view of the village of Barzizza, in Gandino.



The parish church of San Giacomo in Cirano. Much of the church was destroyed in 1968 when the bell tower collapsed. It was rebuilt and consecrated in 1975. The new bell tower was inaugurated in 1987.

Sport and Nature

Its enviable geographical position at the foot of the Orobie Pre-Alps makes Gandino an ideal place to enjoy magnificent natural landscapes. From here, visitors can take in sweeping views across the Po Valley as far as the Oltrepò Pavese and Monviso, as well as over the entire Alpine range from Monte Rosa to the Adamello. Surrounded by vast green spaces, the town and its mountains are the perfect destination for those seeking peace and tranquillity. Scenic walks in the Monte Farno or Valpiana areas offer the chance to relax completely and enjoy close contact with nature. The entire mountain area of the Gandino Valley is well equipped and organised to welcome visitors in complete freedom and safety. Whether you prefer easy walks along marked trails, more demanding trekking routes or even extreme sports, Gandino has something to offer. Activities include cycling, cross-country skiing on a certified 7.5 km circuit, sport fishing, archery at a dedicated range, and paragliding.

In addition to Gandino, four other picturesque towns make up the Le Cinque Terre della Val Gandino District:

- **Leffe**, where the story of the textile industry comes back to life through both historic and innovative machinery housed in the Textile Museum.
- **Casnigo**, home of the *baghèt*, the traditional Bergamo bagpipe, and of the “Garibalda”, Bergamo’s typical bread. The town is also home to the Sanctuary of the Holy Trinity – known as the “Sistine Chapel of the Ber-





gamo area” for its frescoes by the Baschenis painters – and the Sanctuary of the Madonna d’Erba, where the last cassock worn by Blessed Pope John Paul II is preserved.

- **Cazzano S. Andrea**, a lively town whose ancient medieval tower now houses the Town Hall, and **Peia**, characterised by a remarkable multitude of small hamlets and districts. Peia is also known as the home of the wild boar, prominently depicted on the municipal coat of arms in tribute to an ancient hunting reserve once located in the valley.

Concerts, exhibitions, cultural events, sporting activities, traditional festivals and markets bring the towns of the Gandino Valley to life throughout the year. To find out more and stay up to date with upcoming events, visit www.lecinqueterredellavalgandino.it.

On these pages:

2023 – Italian Mountain Running Championships on Monte Farno. A machine on display at the Textile Museum in Leffe. The parish church of Sant’Antonio da Padova in Peia.





Aerial view of Cazzano S. Andrea. In the foreground, the 13th-century medieval tower, now home to the Town Hall.



The mural in San Martino Park in Leffe commemorating the story of the Copertini, travelling merchants from Leffe who reached every corner of Italy selling textile products from the Gandino Valley.



The extraordinary cycle of frescoes by the Baschenis painters preserved in the Sanctuary of the Holy Trinity in Casnigo, known as the "Sistine Chapel of the Bergamo area".



2026 – The festive crowd in Gandino during the historic Corsa delle Uova, first held in 1931. An unusual challenge between an egg collector and a runner, born from a bet between two eighteen-year-olds.



Panoramic view from the Madonna del Monte Pizzo in Peia.
The statue of Mary, Queen of the Peaks and Mother of Life, was erected in 1995.



The arrival of the Three Wise Men at the Sanctuary of the Holy Trinity in Casnigo, on the evening of 5 January each year.



Historic view of Gandino, with Mais Spinato fields in the foreground.

03

MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO: A SUCCESS STORY

Gandino holds a remarkable distinction: it is home to the first documented field cultivated with maize for agricultural production in Lombardy. Mais Spinato di Gandino® is much more than an ancient maize variety: it is the beating heart of a cultural, agricultural and identity-based revival. Introduced to the Seriana Valley town of Gandino in 1632, it was rediscovered thanks to a project launched in 2007, which recovered the original seed, enhanced local biodiversity and gave new life to a virtuous supply chain. The initial idea of creating “a traditional biscuit made with maize flour” was proposed by Giambattista Gherardi, promoter of the “Le Cinque Terre della Val Gandino” project, in preparation for the annual San Giuseppe Fair. The proposal was warmly welcomed by the local Pro Loco association and the Municipal Administration. Filippo Servalli, who was then serving as councillor, worked on the one hand to involve local retailers and, on the other, to identify a native maize variety. A decisive breakthrough came with the discovery of several maize ears, preserved at the historic Ca’ Parecia farmhouse belonging to the Savoldelli family, by Angelo, Giovanni and Bernardo Savoldelli.

Through patient and dedicated work, the maize was restored to its original purity and its distinctive characteristics were documented through a dedicated study carried out by researchers at the Bergamo branch of CREA’s Research Centre for Cereal and Industrial Crops. CREA (Council for Agricultural Research and Economics) is the national agricultural research body of MASAF, the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry. Today, the seeds are preserved in the CREA Germplasm Bank in Bergamo and at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway, bearing witness to the importance of this variety within the world’s agri-food biodiversity heritage.



A view from the 1920s of the Clüsven area above Gandino.
This is where Mais Spinato di Gandino was first cultivated in the early 17th century.



Historic view of Cà Parecia in Gandino. The original seed of Mais Spinato di Gandino was rediscovered here in 2007.



Giacomo (left) and Andrea Savoldelli in the courtyard of Cà Parecia.

The success of the project is the result of close cooperation between public institutions, associations and private stakeholders: the Municipality of Gandino, the De.Co. Commission, the Pro Loco association, the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community, and CREA's Research Centre for Cereal and Industrial Crops in Bergamo, which provided scientific support. Mais Spinato has had a strong and far-reaching impact in educational, cultural, economic and tourism terms.

From school activities and training courses for growers to the flagship event I Giorni del Melgotto, the project has succeeded in engaging both people and local communities. It was the first Lombard maize variety to be entered in the National Register of Conservation Varieties and has played a leading role as a scientific partner in major events and initiatives such as Expo Milano 2015, within the Cereals and Tubers Cluster, and Bergamo Scienza. It was also a founding partner of the ERG2017 – East Lombardy – European Region of Gastronomy project. In Gandino, the evocative “Giardino del Mais” – the Maize Garden – was created, featuring a replica of an Olmec monolith and a statue donated by Zimbabwe: symbols of the deep bond connecting maize-growing communities with ancient civilisations.



Andrea Savoldelli manually shelling ears of Mais Spinato di Gandino at Cà Parecia. The image is taken from a video filmed in 1978 by his son Bernardo, available on YouTube via the QR code below.





2009 – Evaluation of Mais Spinato di Gandino ears. From left: Clemente Savoldelli (grower), Giovanni Savoldelli (seed custodian) and Paolo Valoti (CREA researcher).



Ivan De Bernardi harvesting rye in the field.
Crop rotation is an essential factor in ensuring the quality of Mais Spinato di Gandino.



Alessandro Bertasa, one of the first growers of Mais Spinato di Gandino.



Grower Guido Castelli with maize ears cultivated in the Casèla area.



The 18th-century painting preserved in the parish church of San Giacomo in Cirano, depicting Saint Cajetan of Thiene, protector against famine. The painting includes several ears of Mais Spinato di Gandino and is the earliest known depiction of this precious variety.



2007 – Gandino's bakers gathered for the presentation of the Biscotto Melgotto. From left: Paolo Anesa of "La Spiga d'Oro", Angelo Persico, Fausto Picinali (creator of the original recipe) and Paolo Imberti (who passed away in 2022).



2008 – The set in Gandino for Rai Due's television programme "Mezzogiorno in famiglia", with reporter Roberta Gangeri.



2008 – Husking maize ears in Piazza Vittorio Veneto in Gandino during the first edition of "I Giorni del Melgotto".



The small hobby mill installed at Palazzo Giovanelli in Gandino.
Pictured are Renzino Rottigni (who passed away in 2018) and Giovanni Savoldelli.



2013 – Gusto in Scena in Venice.

From left: Gianluigi Salvi, Daniela Gusmini, Sergio Canali, Elio Castelli, Manuela Caleca, Antonio Rottigni and Andrea Presti.



2014 – Ivan Moretti in Cazzano S. Andrea at the first biointensive field in the Gandino Valley. Ivan tragically lost his life in a road accident in 2015. In 2016, the Pro Loco of Gandino posthumously awarded him the Benemerito Gandinese distinction.



2015 – Bernardo Savoldelli during an educational event organised in collaboration with the Lorenzo Rota Botanical Garden of Bergamo at the Biodiversity Valley in Astino.



2014 – Visit of the Mais Spinato di Gandino delegation to Zimbabwe. Accompanied by Honorary Consul Georges El Badoui were Antonio Rottigni, Marco Presti, Anna Gamba, Andrea Presti and Laura Presti. The relationship with Zimbabwe began as part of the initiatives leading up to Expo 2015, where Mais Spinato di Gandino shared the Cereals and Tubers Cluster with Zimbabwe and other countries, including Bolivia, Congo, Haiti, Mozambique and Togo.



2014 – Chicco Spinato Project. From left: Angela Sabella (who passed away in 2025), Giulia Pasini, Nicoletta Cabrini and Nadia Fantoni.



An image from the book dedicated to Chicco Spinato and the Mais Spinato di Gandino project.



2015 – Clemente and Angelo Savoldelli with Mais Spinato di Gandino grown at the Slow Food pavilion at Expo Milano 2015.



2015 – Final celebration at Expo 2015 in the Cereals and Tubers Cluster.



2016 – Mais Spinato di Gandino maize cakes make their debut paired with Brunello di Montalcino. Thanks to contacts established by Fabio and Roberto Savoldelli, Mais Spinato di Gandino has featured several times in tastings at “Benvenuto Brunello”.



2017 – Presentation of the INCREASE project and the Fagiolo di Clüsven at FAO headquarters in Rome.
From left: Angelo Savoldelli, Filippo Servalli and Roberto Colombi.



2017 – A display of Mais Spinato di Gandino and Mais Rostrato Rosso di Rovetta seeds set up in Bergamo for the G7 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting.



2021 – Signing in Gandino of the “Production Guidelines for Local Open-Pollinated Maize Varieties of the Bergamo Orobie”.
From left: Giovanni Savoldelli, Antonio Rottigni, Elio Castelli (Mayor of Gandino), Angelo Savoldelli and Andrea Messa.



2021 – Course on the Biointensive Method in the Cà Parecia area, led by Angelo Savoldelli and Angelo Mora.



2023 – Diego Percassi filming the short films for the “Semi di Sapere” project. Available online, the videos focus on Mais Spinato di Gandino, the Biointensive Method, Fagiolo di Clüsven, beekeeping, Formaggella Val Seriana, Val Gandino wool, Val Gandino flax and silkworm farming. The project was funded by GAL Presolana e Laghi Bergamaschi.



2025 – Nicola and Mattia Rizzoni with Vincenzo Venuto, presenter of Melaverde, during filming in Gandino for the episode dedicated to Mais Spinato di Gandino, broadcast on Canale 5 on 14 December 2025.

2026 – Food Film Fest in Bergamo, featuring a screening of Daniele Gangemi's documentary film "Lo Spinato di Gandino", broadcast by Rai Tre. From left: Max Amaddeo, Emanuel and Roberto Caleca, Claudio Cecchinelli (Focal Point for Bergamo UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy), Angelo Savoldelli, Danielle Marinoni (Slow Food), Antonio Rottigni (Slow Mays regional delegate), Enrico Radicchi (Slow Food), Sara Parolini and Giambattista Gherardi.





3 April 2008 – Giovanni Savoldelli and Alessandro Bertasa (who passed away in 2021)
during the ploughing of the first Mais Spinato di Gandino field at Cà Parecia.

MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO

04 THE KEY MILESTONES OF THE PROJECT

- **2007** – Launch of the project to safeguard, characterise and promote the variety
- **2008** – Establishment of the Gandino De.Co. designation and Commission; first edition of *I Giorni del Melgotto*
- **2009** – Educational activities in schools
- **2010** – First participation in Terra Madre (Slow Food)
- **2011** – Official production guidelines; seeds preserved in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault
- **2012** – Entry into the Slow Food Community
- **2013** – Establishment of the Mais Spinato Community Association; International Ancient Maize Network
- **2014** – Registration in the National Register of Conservation Varieties; creation of the Maize Garden; PEF study; launch of Chicco Spinato
- **2015** – Expo Milano; editorial publications; international recognition
- **2016** – Establishment of Slow Mays; *Territori del Cibo*
- **2017** – First edition of the *Galà dello Spinato*
- **2018** – Slow Mays guidelines
- **2019** – European INCREASE project; new logo
- **2020** – Extension of the regulations to the Bergamo Orobie area
- **2021** – New production guidelines
- **2022** – Launch of the *AgriCultura – Semi di Sapere* video production project
- **2023** – Relaunch of the Slow Mays network; collaboration with UNESCO
- **2024** – Entry into the international *Pueblos del Maíz* network and first edition of *I Giorni del Melgotto* at Comunità Magda
- **2025** – “Reinvent Mais Spinato di Gandino at the Table” contest
- **2026** – Publication of the volume *"Mais Spinato – Ricette d'autore"*



A panoramic view of the city of Bergamo, a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy since 2019.

05

SHORT SUPPLY CHAIN, QUALITY SUPPLY CHAIN

Since 2007, a rich and varied food supply chain has developed over the years, including: polenta flour, Spinette maize cakes, Melgotto biscuits, Pan Spinato, Camisòcc ravioli, Spinata – an original reinterpretation of pizza – Melgotto ice cream, Scarlatta beer made with maize and yerba mate leaves, and many other products. These specialities are part of the Saperi Seriani tradition and have won over even the most discerning palates.

Among the leading names in Italian cuisine who have collaborated with the project are Gian Nicola Colucci, brothers Enrico and Roberto Cerea, Davide Oldani, the Amaddeo family, and many other prominent chefs and gourmets. Mais Spinato has also appeared at prestigious events such as the Salone Internazionale del Gusto in Turin and Gusto in Scena in Venice and Cortina, and is featured in Marcello Coronini's Cucina del Senza®.

An International Perspective

In 2004, the **UNESCO Creative Cities Network** (UCCN) was established to promote international cooperation among cities that identify creativity as a strategic element of their local economy. The Network is divided into eight fields, corresponding to different cultural sectors: Music, Literature, Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Media Arts, Gastronomy, Film and Architecture.



Hand-sowing Mais Spinato di Gandino. From left: Clemente, Bernardo and Angelo Savoldelli.

The cities belonging to the Network are committed to sharing best practices and working together by involving creative communities: local stakeholders who actively contribute to the development of their cities. Being part of the Network means sharing one's traditions, skills and creativity with the world.

Thanks to this unique combination of territorial, gastronomic, cultural and creative assets, on 30 October 2019 **Bergamo** joined the UNESCO programme as a **Creative City of Gastronomy**, following Parma (2015) and Alba (2017). For Bergamo, being part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network means reaffirming its role as an urban centre committed to sustainable development, both within the city itself and across the wider provincial area, encompassing plains, hills and mountains.

Creative Cities develop initiatives and adopt local governance policies aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the **UN 2030 Agenda**.



2024, Parma – Local administrators and Confcommercio representatives during “Tipicamente Uniche”, the event bringing together Alba, Parma and Bergamo, UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy.



2013 – Clemente Savoldelli during the installation of the stone mill.



2022 – The Mais Spinato di Gandino products stand at the San Giuseppe Fair. Held every year on the fourth Sunday of Lent, the fair is also an opportunity to distribute Mais Spinato di Gandino seeds to hobby growers.



"La Spinetta", a Mais Spinato di Gandino maize cake produced by Clemente Savoldelli.



Melgotto ice cream created by Caffè Centrale "La Spinata" in collaboration with Laboratorio Gelateria Franca by Sergio Pezzoli.



Camisocc, stuffed ravioli. The use of red radicchio and the name itself recall Gandino's textile tradition: in 1860, scarlet shirts known as Camisocc were produced in Gandino for Giuseppe Garibaldi's Thousand.



Emanuel Caleca of Caffè Centrale in Gandino with the Spinata. It was presented to the public for the first time on 10 October 2010.

2013 – Scarlatta beer,
created by Roberto
Caleca (first from left)
using Mais Spinato di
Gandino and South
American yerba
mate. With him, from
left: Adriana Capelli,
Manuela Caleca and
Emanuel Caleca.





The Centralino shortbread biscuit made with Mais Spinato di Gandino, produced by Caffè Centrale "La Spinata".



Mais Spinato di Gandino Melgotti ready to be baked at Panificio Persico in Gandino.



2019 – Angelo Persico and Ileana Nodari with Ellen Hidding, presenter of *Melaverde*, during the episode filmed shortly before the pandemic and broadcast on 1 March 2020.



The Sbrisomais cake made by Panificio Persico and presented at "Gusto in Scena" in Venice in 2019.



Brothers Fabio and Roberto Savoldelli, Mais Spinato di Gandino growers, carrying on the memory of their father Mario. They produce flour and three different varieties of chocolate-coated maize cakes: Golosa, Cocco Golosa and Meringa Golosa.





The "Giardino del Mais" in Gandino houses a life-size reproduction of one of the seventeen monoliths belonging to the pre-Columbian Olmec civilisation and preserved at the Museo de La Venta in Villahermosa, Mexico. The original cast was authorised by the Mexican government in 1992, on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America, and was donated to Gandino by the Bernareggi Foundation of Bergamo. The Maize Garden also features a statue donated to Gandino by the State of Zimbabwe.

06

THE NETWORK: PUEBLOS DEL MAÍZ

In 2022, four cities – Tucson (USA), San Antonio (USA), Mérida and Puebla (Mexico) – launched the Pueblos del Maíz Fiesta, an international multilingual festival celebrating the gastronomy, traditions and culture of maize. Thanks to the pre-existing relationships between the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community and maize-growing communities in Central America – ties that were further strengthened during Expo Milano 2015 – in January 2024 the foundations were laid for Bergamo Creative City, in collaboration with the Municipality of Gandino and the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community, to join the *Pueblos del Maíz Network*.

Participation in the Network offers a unique opportunity for exchange between cultures that are geographically distant but culturally close, with maize at the heart of their joint initiatives, not least because maize originated in Central America. Over the centuries, this cereal has been adopted and cultivated wherever soil and climatic conditions proved suitable. In particular, the characteristics of mountain areas and their relative isolation from the intensive crops of the plains encouraged the development of diverse traditional varieties. Today, these have become conservation varieties and distinctive features of the territories in which they are grown. Lombardy boasts several such varieties – Rostrato Rosso di Rovetta, Mais delle Fiorine and Nero Spinoso della Valle Camonica – alongside Mais Spinato di Gandino. The first official contact between Gandino and the Pueblos del Maíz Network dates back to 22 October 2023, during the first visit of an international delegation to the Seriana Valley town. Following this meeting, Gandino began the process of joining

the Network, which was formalised with an application submitted in January 2024, after its entry into the network in December 2023. The first official event took place in May 2024 in Mérida, Mexico, where a delegation from Gandino, including Antonio Rottigni and chef Diego Fiori, took part in the Network's international meetings. Later, from 3 to 5 October 2024, Gandino welcomed a delegation from the Pueblos del Maíz Network in collaboration with the Municipality of Bergamo. Chef ambassadors from the UNESCO Creative Cities of Tucson, Mérida and San Antonio took part in the initiative, sharing their



2024 – Antonio Rottigni and chef Diego Fiori in Mérida during the international Pueblos del Maíz meeting.

culinary traditions with the public and highlighting maize as an element of identity and culture within their respective communities.

A fruitful cultural exchange followed the next year, with an Italian delegation visiting the United States and Mexico. In this way, the maize-growing communities began an intense and productive relationship that can rightfully serve as a platform for the development of coordinated activities, with gastronomic creativity as their shared strategic element.



2024 – Pueblos del Maíz delegation at Palazzo Zilioli during I Giorni del Melgotto.



2024 – The Pueblos del Maíz delegation in the field and around the table during I Giorni del Melgotto.



Slow Mays

A stylized graphic of a corn cob is positioned between the words 'Slow' and 'Mays'. The corn is composed of orange dots forming the kernels, and green lines forming the husk. The word 'Mays' is in orange, and the 'y' is green, matching the corn's colors. A horizontal dotted orange line is located below the word 'Mays'.

07

SLOW MAYS: WHEN A SEED BECOMES A NETWORK

The recovery of Mais Spinato di Gandino represents one of the most significant examples of the enhancement of Italian agricultural biodiversity. Launched in the early 2000s thanks to the commitment of farmers, researchers, institutions and local associations, the project has shown how a traditional variety can become a driver of local development, bringing together agriculture, culture, tourism, gastronomy and local identity. It was precisely from this experience that, on 19 October 2013, during *I Giorni del Melgotto* in Gandino, the International Ancient Maize Network was created, with the aim of connecting the different Italian communities engaged in safeguarding local maize varieties. This process was further strengthened during Expo Milano 2015, where the Mais Spinato Community served as a scientific partner within the Cereals and Tubers Cluster and contributed to drafting the first Manifesto. It reached full expression in 2016 with the creation of the Slow Mays network within Slow Food.

Today, Slow Mays is the Slow Food network dedicated to the custodians of local open-pollinated maize varieties, whose seed selection and reproduction take place naturally in the fields, without relying on commercial hybrid seeds. The network brings together farmers, millers, researchers, chefs, local communities and enthusiasts who share a common goal: preserving the genetic heritage of traditional maize varieties and the knowledge associated with them, while at the same time promoting a sustainable, participatory model of agriculture deeply rooted in local territories.

The mission of Slow Mays goes beyond the simple conservation of seeds. It means pro-

tecting agricultural biodiversity, supporting seed custodians, enhancing rural cultures, restoring historic mills and local supply chains, promoting scientific research and encouraging new gastronomic uses of maize flours. Each variety tells a different story and represents an environmental, social and economic heritage belonging to the communities that have preserved it over time.

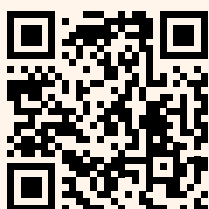
Mais Spinato di Gandino continues to be one of the main reference points in this journey. Not only because of the work carried out to recover the variety, but also because it has shown how a project born in a small valley can become a model that can be replica-



2023 – The people behind the Bergamo Ancient Maize supply chains, photographed by Stefano Triulzi for the multimedia project “Insieme di visi e di voci”, exhibited at the headquarters of the Province of Bergamo.

ted throughout Italy. Collaboration with Slow Food communities, CREA, universities, schools, chefs, local administrations and international networks has made it possible to transform an ancient seed into a permanent laboratory for social and cultural innovation.

Ultimately, Slow Mays is much more than an agricultural network: it is a community of people who regard seeds as a common good and recognise seed custodians as key players in building a more sustainable future. Because every seed that is preserved safeguards a story, every cultivated field keeps a landscape alive, and every community that chooses to care for it helps build a different vision of the world.



On Friday 1 and Saturday 2 August 2025, the Slow Mays National Gathering was held between Piario and Clusone. It marked an important milestone in a journey that, for years, has brought together dozens of local organisations and communities working collaboratively to promote their territories and agricultural excellence. Among the leading examples in the Seriana Valley are Mais Spinato di Gandino, Mais Rostrato di Rovetta and Mais delle Fiorine di Clusone. For the occasion, Carlo Petrini, founder of Slow Food, sent participants a heartfelt video message, which can be watched again via the QR code printed alongside this text. Carlo Petrini passed away on 21 May 2026.



8 October 2023 – Presentation and signing of the Slow Mays Manifesto at the Salone della Valle in Gandino.



08

MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO: CREATING VALUE

There is a subtle thread connecting past and future, and in Gandino that thread is the golden colour of maize. It is a story whose roots reach back to 1632, when a distinctive variety – spinato maize – arrived in Lombardy for the first time and found its first cultivated fields in this very town. For centuries, it accompanied the life of the community, becoming food, culture and landscape.

Then, at the beginning of the 20th century, something changed profoundly. Agriculture gradually gave way to industry. The area's manufacturing vocation – already firmly established in previous centuries through the textile sector – became dominant. Farmland decreased, agricultural practices changed and many traditional crops were abandoned. Mais Spinato was among them, slowly disappearing and surviving only in isolated plots, often grown for family use or simply out of personal passion.

Its story seemed destined to come to an end. The turning point came in 2007.

From a few maize ears rediscovered in a historic house in the town, a project was born that went far beyond recovering an agricultural variety. From the outset, it embraced a broader vision: **to restore the identity of the territory through a process of cultural, social and economic regeneration.**

The “Mais Spinato di Gandino” project took shape thanks to the commitment of the Municipality, with the support of the Pro Loco association and the scientific research commu-

nity. What made it unique, however, was its approach: not a nostalgic or purely commercial initiative, but a long-term strategic process.

From the very beginning, Gandino established itself as a pioneer at national level. Many of the initiatives that are now regarded as best practices – from the creation of a Municipal Designation, or De.Co., to the development of a food supply chain, from the definition of cultivation guidelines to the creation of networks among food communities – were first tested here in a pioneering way. These experiences were later shared, made available to others and replicated elsewhere.



2019 – Presentation of the new Mais Spinato di Gandino brand at the headquarters of the Lombardy Region in Milan (designed by Amanda Bettiga – linoolmostudio.it). From left: Roberto Savoldelli, Elio Castelli, Lucia Sorice, Diego Fiori, Antonio Rottigni and Giambattista Gherardi.

In this sense, the project can be seen as **a kind of territorial “open startup”**: an innovation laboratory capable of generating ideas, models and tools and making them available to other territories, which over time have become followers and partners in a shared journey.

At the heart of this model is the community. It is an agri-food system that goes beyond production, integrating education, culture, social relationships, scientific research and territorial marketing. It is a system based on voluntary participation, cooperation among different stakeholders and the ability to build networks.

This is where another distinctive element comes into play: **its approach to sustainability.**



The gift box created from an idea by Fabio Savoldelli to promote Mais Spinato di Gandino and products from the Gandino Valley.



2026 – New field signs installed by the De.Co. Commission of the Municipality of Gandino.



Here and in the large photo: the De.Co. Commission at work during the filming of Melaverde in 2025.



Today, ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance – is widely discussed, but in Gandino this approach has effectively been practised since 2007. Not as a label, but as an everyday practice, built step by step through concrete and shared actions.

It is a form of genuine sustainability, far removed from slogans, expressed on several levels:

- **environmental**, through the protection of biodiversity and the preservation of seed;
- **social**, through the active involvement of the community, schools and volunteers;
- **governance**, through a transparent and participatory organisational model.

Developed well before sustainability reporting models became widespread, this approach also received official recognition: in 2015, the project was a finalist in the Fondazione Soliditas Social Award and was included in the *Libro d'Oro della Sostenibilità*, alongside major industrial companies and multinational corporations of international standing.

This was a significant achievement, particularly considering the scale of the project: a small community that, through determination and vision, succeeded in demonstrating how even a local initiative can make a tangible contribution to major global challenges.

Although it remains a small initiative, almost “a drop in the ocean”, the project demonstrates that it is possible to generate real impact. Over time, it has become a point of reference and a concrete example of sustainable, replicable development. The claim that sums up this journey is simple yet powerful: **“Continuing to innovate through tradition.”** Over the years, this vision has been translated into tangible actions.

A food supply chain comprising more than forty products has been created, educational activities have been developed with schools and universities, international relationships have been established, and the project has taken part in major global events such as Expo Milano 2015. **Mais Spinato has joined networks such as Slow Mays and the international “Pueblos del Maíz” network, becoming an ambassador for its territory around the world.**

At the same time, the project has also evolved at an organisational and strategic level: skills have been strengthened, regulatory tools updated, the stakeholder network expanded, and communication and territorial marketing activities consolidated. Above all, however, the bond with the community has grown stronger.

During difficult periods – such as those marked by the pandemic – the project demonstrated resilience and an ability to adapt. Landmark events such as *I Giorni del Melgotto* and the *Galà dello Spinato* became tangible symbols of recovery, offering opportunities to rediscover

a sense of belonging and confidence. Mais Spinato di Gandino has thus become much more than an agricultural product. It has become:

- **a model of development;**
- **a process of community regeneration;**
- **a bridge between the local and the global;**
- **a laboratory for sustainable innovation.**

Today, the project is entering a new phase. Challenges remain: climate change, the reduction of cultivated land and the need to involve new farmers. But the direction is clear: **to keep its roots firmly grounded while broadening its horizons, bringing Gandino to the world and the world to Gandino.**

Because, ultimately, Mais Spinato is not just a crop: **it is culture that creates the future.**





Contest Gastronomico 2025

"REINVENTA IL MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO A TRIVULZIO"

Scheda C - Scheda di valutazione

Commissionario (numero di riferimento/nome): _____

Scade _____

Nome _____

PRESENTAZIONE

Presentazione del piatto _____

Aspetto estetico (max 5 punti) _____

Composizione del piatto e _____

Impugnatura (max 10 punti) _____

ESAME GUSTATIVO/GUSTATIVO

Aspetto (max 10 punti) _____

Sapore (max 10 punti) _____

09

THE “REINVENT MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO AT THE TABLE” CONTEST

Looking to the future, during “**I Giorni del Melgotto**” – which since 2023 has developed a number of initiatives in collaboration with the **Cerealìa International Festival** (www.cerealialudi.org) – the project “Reinvent Mais Spinato di Gandino at the Table” was created: a gastronomic contest designed to involve younger generations in the development of a product that has become a distinctive territorial brand and has inspired a wide range of initiatives aimed at enhancing its value.

With the aim of renewing and expanding the collection of Mais Spinato-based recipes developed over the years, the project involved upper secondary schools specialising in hospitality and/or food studies, both state-run and regional, which train young people in the Province of Bergamo for careers in high-quality catering and gastronomy, helping to shape future chef ambassadors of local products. For each participating school, a creative team was formed by a group of students working under the guidance of a chef instructor. The various teams then created the original savoury dishes and desserts with which they competed in the Contest. The project began during the 2024/2025 school year, and the Contest concluded with the presentation of the creations and the final awards ceremony on the opening evening of *I Giorni del Melgotto 2025*, held on 25 September 2025 in the prestigious setting of Palazzo Zilioli. All the creations developed by the participating schools are collected in this publication, promoted by the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community as an initiative to enhance and celebrate Italian Cuisine, which was inscribed on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) list in December 2025.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS



Mais Spinato
di Gandino®

ISTITUTO SUPERIORE
SAN PELLEGRINO



ISTITUTO SUPERIORE SAN PELLEGRINO

Viale della Vittoria 6,
San Pellegrino Terme (BG)

Headteacher:
Giovanna Leidi

Team leader:
Francesco Zurolo

Students: Edoardo
Baratteri, Matteo
Rossi, Dario Capitanio,
Alessandro Beloli, Yu Wu,
Elisa Galizzi, Cristian
Arioli

ABFeu
AZIENDA BERGAMASCA
FORMAZIONE

ABF (AZIENDA BERGAMASCA DI FORMAZIONE)

Bergamo Campus,
Via Monte Gleno 2

Headteacher:
Martina Carrara

Team leader:
Luca Bergamelli,
Walter Baggi

Students: **Arianna Melany**
Arroyo Arrunategui,
Carlotta Buccinà,
Mikaela Guzman, Andrea
Schiavone, Brayson Wilson
Rodriguez Arioli

ABFeu
AZIENDA BERGAMASCA
FORMAZIONE

ABF (AZIENDA BERGAMASCA DI FORMAZIONE)

Clusone Campus,
Via Barbarigo 27

Headteacher:
Annalisa Riva

Team leader:
Filippo Bosio,
Roberto Bonalda

Students: **Maira**
Facchinetti, Cecile Mendy,
Fabio Tomasoni, Tommaso
Villa, Andrioletti Aaron,
Bigoni Marco, Onnis
Silvana



FONDAZIONE ISB

Torre Boldone Campus (BG),
Via Reich 49

Headteacher:

**Gabriella Savoldi
Cortinovis**

Team leaders:

Graziano Rocchetti

Students: **Adelina Cazac,
Maria Ester Sales Arantes,
Elia Pasta, Martina
Mirabella, Denise
Rubolino, Federico Redolfi**



FONDAZIONE ISB

Caprino Bergamasco Campus
(BG) - frazione Celana,
Via Papa Giovanni XXIII 2

Headteacher:

**Gabriella Savoldi
Cortinovis**

Team leaders:

Stefano Bonfanti

Students: **Andrea Poerio,
Gualtiero Cesana, Giada
Cisana, Sara Panseri**



FONDAZIONE IKAROS POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

Via San Siro 4,
Grumello del Monte (BG)

Headteacher:

Ugo Ardiani

Team leaders:

Luca Botti

Students: **Fabio Bertulessi,
Giovanni Finazzi, Gaia
Agazzi, Alessia Facchinetti
Forlani**





Evaluation at Istituto Superiore San Pellegrino.



Evaluation at the ABF Bergamo campus.



Evaluation at the ABF Clusone campus.



Evaluation at the ISB Torre Boldone campus.



Evaluation at the ISB Celana campus in Caprino Bergamasco.



Evaluation at Fondazione Ikaros in Grumello del Monte.



11

RECIPES

savoury dishes

SOUR POLENTA RAVIOLI

Created by **IS SAN PELLEGRINO**

Creative team coordinated by **FRANCESCO ZUROLO**



Ingredients for 12 people

Strong type "00" flour	1 kg
Wine vinegar	400 g
Egg white	100 g
Mais Spinato di Gandino flour	300 g
Extra virgin olive oil	50 g
Celeriac	5 kg
Onions	300 g
Carrots	300 g
Oranges	3 kg
Sugar	50 g
Mugwort	30 g
Seed oil	80 g
Liquorice	10 g
Salt	40 g



Cooking time

Polenta: **1 hour 30 minutes**

Celeriac broth: **2 hours**

Orange reduction: **1 hour 30 minutes**



Recommended wine

Serve with
Valcalepio Rosso DOC

Method

Preparing the sour pasta dough:

Knead the flour with the vinegar until smooth and elastic.
Wrap in cling film and leave to rest.

Preparing the polenta filling:

Bring salted water to the boil in a paiolo (traditional polenta pot).
Gradually pour in the Mais Spinato di Gandino flour and cook, stirring,
for about one hour. Add a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.
Spread the polenta onto a baking tray, leave to cool, then blend until
smooth.

Shaping the ravioli:

Roll out the pasta dough using a pasta machine.
Pipe the polenta filling onto the dough using a piping bag.
Fold and shape the ravioli in the style of *casoncelli*, trimming the edges
with a pastry wheel.

Preparing the celeriac broth:

Clean and chop the vegetables. Place them in a saucepan with
water and salt. Bring to the boil and cook for about two hours. Strain
through muslin cloth.

Preparing the orange reduction:

Squeeze the oranges and strain the juice. Combine with the sugar in a
stainless-steel saucepan. Reduce until it reaches a syrupy consistency.

Cooking and plating:

Cook the ravioli in plenty of boiling salted water for 3–4 minutes. Drain
carefully and arrange in a deep plate.
Pour over the hot celeriac broth. Finish with drops of mugwort oil,
drizzles of orange reduction and a light dusting of liquorice.



SUNDAY LUNCH

Created by **ABF – CLUSONE CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **ROBERTO BONALDA**



Ingredients for 4 people

Maize sauce – 100 g cooked sweetcorn, 50 g cream, 5 g shallot, 5 g extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper to taste

Polenta ravioli – 200 g type “00” flour, 2 eggs, 5 g extra virgin olive oil, 200 g cooked polenta, 50 g grated Grana cheese, 50 g butter, sage, salt to taste

Porcini mushroom (for the cap) – 150 g rabbit meat, herbs to taste (thyme, rosemary), salt, 60 g dried porcini powder

Porcini mushroom (for the stem) – 250 g fairly firm Mais Spinato di Gandino polenta, 100 g Taleggio cheese

Offal croquettes – rabbit offal, herbs, salt, pepper, egg, cornflakes, oil for frying

Tortillas – 100 g type “00” flour, 100 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour, 1 egg yolk, 60 g water, salt, 100 g salamella sausage

Maize crisp, chopped hazelnuts, spreadable cheese, fresh porcini mushrooms



Recommended beverage

Serve with
Scarlatta red beer made with Mais Spinato di Gandino.

Method

Maize sauce – Sweat the shallot in the oil, add the cooked sweetcorn and sauté for 3 minutes. Add the cream, season to taste, blend until smooth and pass through a fine sieve.

Polenta ravioli – Prepare the fresh pasta dough with the flour, eggs and one tablespoon of oil. Cover and leave to rest in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Prepare the filling using the cooked polenta, adding the grated Grana cheese and brown butter with sage.

Porcini mushroom – cap – Debone the rabbit, finely chop the meat with a knife and season with the herbs. Place in silicone half-sphere moulds and cook at 170°C for 7 minutes. Once cooked, dust with dried porcini powder.

Porcini mushroom – stem – Cook the Mais Spinato di Gandino polenta for at least 45 minutes, then shape the traditional schisula: place a spoonful of polenta in a small mould or cup, fill with Taleggio cheese and cover with more polenta. Just before serving, bake at 160°C for 5 minutes to melt the cheese.

Use the rabbit bones to prepare a brown rabbit stock.

Croquettes – Shape the rabbit offal into small balls, coat with cornflakes and deep-fry.

Tortillas – Knead together 100 g type “00” flour, 100 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour, 1 egg yolk, 60 g water and salt to taste. Roll the dough out thinly, cut into rounds with a pastry cutter and cook in a non-stick frying pan. Fill with spreadable cheese and salamella sausage.

Finish with a hazelnut maize crisp and a crouton topped with fresh porcini mushrooms.

Complete the dish with a little cheese fondue and brown rabbit jus.



MAIS SPINATO RICOTTA GNOCCHI WITH POLENTA CONCIA AND BRAISED MEAT SAUCE

Created by **ABF – BERGAMO CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **WALTER BAGGI AND LUCA BERGAMELLI**



Ingredients for 4 people

Gnocchi dough

- 400 g drained goat's ricotta
- 100 g type "00" flour
- 50 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 50 g remilled semolina
- Salt and nutmeg to taste

Filling

For 600 g of polenta (approximately half will be used for the filling)

- 120 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 480 ml water
- Salt to taste
- 150 g Branzi cheese
- 1 egg yolk
- 100 g flavoured butter
- Salt to taste

For the garnish

- 5 dehydrated tomato skins

Method

Preparing the polenta concia:

Bring the salted water to the boil. Gradually add the maize flour, whisking continuously. Cook for 40–50 minutes, stirring frequently, until the polenta is thick and creamy. Cut the Branzi cheese into small cubes and stir it into approximately 300 g of the hot polenta until completely melted and stringy. Remove from the heat, add the egg yolk and stir vigorously to prevent it from setting. Add the butter and mix until smooth and creamy. Leave to cool.

Shape the polenta mixture into small balls to be used as the filling.

Arrange the tomato skins on a baking tray lined with baking paper, laying them flat without overlapping. Dry in a fan-assisted oven at 50°C for approximately 2 hours, until completely dehydrated.

Work the ricotta until smooth, season with salt and nutmeg, then add the sifted and combined flours. Refrigerate and leave to rest.

Roll out the dough into a thin sheet, approximately 2 mm thick. Place a ball of polenta concia in the centre of each disc. Fold the dough around the filling to form a small parcel, sealing the edges carefully to prevent the filling from escaping during cooking.

Bring a pot of water to the boil.
Prepare the flavoured butter with sage.
Heat the braised meat sauce.

Cook the gnocchi in salted water over a moderate heat for approximately 2 minutes, or until they rise to the surface. Remove with a slotted spoon and plate with the braised meat sauce, Parmesan cheese and flavoured butter. Finish with the dehydrated tomato petals.



STUFFED SADDLE OF RABBIT WITH MARBLED POLENTA AND MAIS SPINATO POTATO RÖSTI

Created by **ABF – BERGAMO CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **WALTER BAGGI**



Ingredients for 4 people

- 1 boned saddle of rabbit
- 250 g thinly sliced pancetta
(100 g for the crispy pancetta sheets
and 150 g for wrapping the rabbit)
- 100 g Branzi cheese, thinly sliced
- 200 g Mais Spinato di Gandino
polenta
- 40 g sun-dried tomatoes
- 40 g carrot
- 40 g courgette
- 40 g grated Grana cheese
- ½ glass white wine
- 20 g butter
- 200 g potatoes
- 50 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 1 clove garlic
- Thyme

Method

Finely chop the sun-dried tomatoes and very finely dice the carrot and celery. Also prepare small pearls of carrot and courgette and cook them separately for the final garnish. Cook the polenta* and stir in the finely chopped vegetables. Spread the mixture onto a sheet of baking paper and shape it into a cylinder. Bone and trim the saddle of rabbit, placing the trimmings over the thinner areas of meat. Gently flatten it and season with aromatic herbs, salt and pepper. On a sheet of baking paper, arrange 100 g of pancetta slices neatly in the centre, ready to wrap the rabbit and enclose the polenta filling. Place the saddle of rabbit on top of the pancetta, cover with the slices of Branzi cheese and place the polenta cylinder in the centre. Roll up and tie securely with kitchen string. Brown the roll in the butter with a little oil, salt and pepper. Deglaze with the white wine and continue cooking, adding a clove of garlic. Cook at 180°C for 30 minutes, basting with the cooking juices and, if necessary, a little stock.

For the rösti:

Peel and blanch the potatoes for a few minutes. Coarsely grate them into a suitable bowl and mix in the Mais Spinato di Gandino flour. Shape into rösti and cook in a frying pan with clarified butter for 5 minutes.

Slice the rabbit and adjust the consistency and seasoning of the cooking juices.

Serve with the rösti and finish with the vegetables and cooking juices.

** For the polenta, use the following proportions:*

- 1 part flour
- 4 parts water
- coarse salt



MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO GNOCCHI

Created by **ISB – TORRE BOLDONE CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **GRAZIANO ROCCHETTI**



Ingredients for 4–6 people

For the gnocchi:

- 150 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 250 g Martinengo potatoes, boiled in saturated salted water (375 g salt per litre of water) and mashed
- 1 large egg
- A pinch of salt
- Lukewarm water as needed (it may not be necessary, or only a small amount may be required)
- Extra Mais Spinato di Gandino flour for dusting

For the creamy Mais Spinato and Taleggio sauce:

- 100 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 150 g Taleggio PDO, rind removed and cut into cubes
- 50 g butter
- 50 g grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 clove garlic
- 800 g whole milk
- 200 g cream
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- A few fresh sage leaves for garnish

For the Taleggio fondue:

- 100 g Taleggio PDO, rind removed and cut into cubes
- A pinch of salt and pepper
- 300 g cream

Method

Boil the potatoes in their skins in saturated salted water until tender. Drain, peel while still hot and immediately pass them through a potato ricer. Leave the mashed potatoes to cool completely. This step is essential to prevent the gnocchi from becoming gummy.

On a work surface, arrange the Mais Spinato di Gandino flour in a mound with a well in the centre. Add the cold mashed potatoes, the egg and a pinch of salt. Begin kneading by hand, gradually incorporating the flour into the wet ingredients. At first, the dough may be slightly crumbly.

If necessary, add a very small amount of lukewarm water, one tablespoon at a time, until the dough is smooth, soft and not sticky. Work the dough as little as possible. Shape it into a ball and divide into 3–4 portions.

On a surface lightly dusted with Mais Spinato di Gandino flour, take one piece of dough and roll it into a cylinder about 1.5–2 cm in diameter. Using a dough scraper, cut it into pieces about 2 cm long. Arrange the gnocchi on a tray dusted with Mais Spinato di Gandino flour, spacing them apart to prevent them from sticking.

Preparing the creamy Mais Spinato and Taleggio sauce:

In a large frying pan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the whole garlic clove and sauté for one minute, taking care not to burn it. Remove the garlic, add the milk and cream, bring to the boil and season with salt.

Once boiling, add the Mais Spinato di Gandino flour and stir first with a whisk and then with a wooden spoon. Cook over medium-low heat for 50 minutes.

Lower the heat and add the diced Taleggio. Stir gently until the cheese has completely melted and the mixture is smooth and creamy. Add the grated Parmesan and mix well. If the sauce is too thick, gradually add a little hot milk until the desired consistency is reached.

Season with salt and black pepper to taste.



Serving

- Arrange the gnocchi with the creamy Mais Spinato and Taleggio sauce on the plates.
- Garnish with a few fresh sage leaves.
- Add a few drops of Taleggio fondue to taste.



Recommended beverage

Serve with
Scarlatta beer made with Mais Spinato di Gandino.

For the Taleggio PDO fondue

Heat the cream in a saucepan to 60–65°C, then remove from the heat and add the Taleggio PDO.

Stir with a spoon until the cheese has completely melted. Adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper and keep warm.

Cooking and dressing the gnocchi:

Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil. Gently add the gnocchi. Once they rise to the surface, cook for a further 2–3 minutes.

Remove the gnocchi with a slotted spoon and transfer them directly to the pan with the Mais Spinato and Taleggio cream. Toss gently to coat them evenly with the sauce.

If necessary, add a little more milk or a ladleful of the gnocchi cooking water to make the sauce even creamier and smoother.



MILANESE-STYLE MAIS SPINATO

Created by **ISB – CELANA CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **STEFANO BONFANTI**



Ingredients for 6 people

For the fresh pasta:

- 200 g type “00” flour
- 200 g semolina
- 4 whole eggs
- Salt to taste
- Olive oil as needed

For the filling:

- 150 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 600 g water
- 30 g butter
- 300 g aged Branzi cheese
- Salt to taste

For the brown stock:

- 3 veal shank bones
- Tomato paste as needed
- Flour as needed
- Olive oil as needed
- 40 g carrots, onions and celery, cut into pieces



Recommended wine

Serve with **Valcalepio Rosso Riserva**

For the ossobuco:

- 3 veal ossobuchi
- 1 carrot
- 1 small onion
- 1 celery stalk
- Flour as needed
- Olive oil as needed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- White wine as needed.

For the gremolata:

- 50 g parsley
- 1 clove garlic
- Zest of ½ lemon

For the glazing:

- 100 g butter
- 2 sprigs thyme

For the polenta chips:

- 300 g water
- 100 g polenta flour
- Salt to taste
- Peanut oil as needed

Method

Prepare the fresh pasta by combining the flours, then gradually add the eggs and olive oil. Leave to rest in the refrigerator.

Separate the veal shanks, removing the bones from the meat. Lightly flour the meat and brown it in a saucepan with olive oil. In a separate pan, prepare and sauté the vegetables, then add them to the ossobuco. Deglaze with white wine, season with salt and pepper, and cook for about 2 hours, adding a little water at a time as needed. Once cooked, add the finely chopped gremolata and cook for a further 2 minutes.

Prepare the filling by bringing the salted water to the boil, then gradually add the Mais Spinato di Gandino flour. Cook for 40 minutes, then stir in the butter and cheese. Leave to cool and transfer to a piping bag.

Prepare the brown stock by roasting the bones and vegetables in the oven. Once well browned, add the flour and roast for a further 2 minutes. Transfer everything to a saucepan, cover with plenty of cold water, add the tomato paste, salt and pepper, then reduce and strain.

To prepare the chips, bring the salted water to the boil, add the polenta flour and cook for 40 minutes. Spread the polenta between two sheets of baking paper to a thickness of 1–2 mm and dry in the oven. Once dry, deep-fry in seed oil.

Roll out the pasta thinly, pipe on the filling and cut into rounds, then fold and shape them like wrapped sweets. Cook in plenty of boiling salted water.

Drain the ravioli and glaze them in melted butter. Plate with the ossobuco pieces, brown stock, polenta chips and melted butter.



BEEF WITH MELGÒT

Created by **FONDAZIONE IKAROS**
POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, GRUMELLO DEL MONTE

Creative team coordinated by
DOMENICO DI MICCO



Ingredients

Beef fillet:

- 1 beef fillet, approximately 130 g
- Salt and pepper.

Polenta sbrisolona with Sichuan pepper:

- 137.5 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 50 g almond flour
- 50 g sugar
- 1 vanilla pod
- 50 g butter
- 10 g egg yolk
- Salt
- Sichuan pepper.

Goose liver sauce:

- 120 g cream
- 27 g liver mousse
- 50 g fresh baby spinach
- Oil
- Salt and pepper
- Mixed sprouts.



Recommended wine

Serve with
Valcalepio Rosso Riserva

Method

Beef Fillet:

Trim the beef fillet and cut a medallion weighing approximately 130 g. Tie it with kitchen string and sear in a very hot pan. Finish cooking in the oven at 180°C until rare, approximately 3–4 minutes.

Polenta Sbrisolona with Sichuan Pepper:

Place all the flours, sugar and spices in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment and mix together. Add the cold butter, cut into cubes, and mix for 1 minute. Add the egg yolk.

Spread the mixture onto a silicone baking mat to a thickness of approximately 1 cm.

Bake at 170°C for 10–12 minutes.

Goose Liver Sauce:

Reduce the cream by half over a low heat, then strain it.

Coat the liver escalopes in icing sugar and sear them in a very hot pan.

Blend in a Thermomix for 5 minutes at 50°C.





12

RECIPES

desserts

GARIBALDI CAKE

Created by **ABF – CLUSONE CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **FILIPPO BOSIO**



Ingredients for 4–6 people

For the polenta:

- 200 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 600 g water
- 2 g salt

For the cocoa cream:

- 200 g water
- 100 g unsweetened cocoa powder
- 100 g Modica chocolate
- Icing sugar



Recommended wine

Serve with Passito di Pantelleria,
Moscato di Scanzo, or Tuscan Vin Santo.

Method

Cook the polenta and, in the meantime, prepare the cocoa cream by mixing the cocoa powder with the water at room temperature.

At the end of the cooking time, stir the cocoa cream into the polenta.

Line half of each mould with the chocolate polenta, place the Modica chocolate in the centre, then fill and seal the mould with more chocolate polenta.

Before serving, warm in the oven at 150°C for 5 minutes.

Turn the cake out onto a small plate and dust with icing sugar.

Decorate as desired with berries or strands of caramelised sugar.



MAIS SPINATO BEER BAVAROIS WITH RASPBERRY GELÉE

Created by **ABF – BERGAMO CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **LUCA BERGAMELLI**



Ingredients for 4–6 people

Maize shortcrust pastry:

- 300 g butter
- 150 g sugar
- 50 g egg yolk
- 100 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 350 g type “00” flour
- Vanilla flavouring

Langues de chat biscuits:

- 100 g butter
- 80 g sugar
- 50 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 100 g type “00” flour
- 60 g potato starch
- 65 g egg white
- Vanilla flavouring

Bavarois:

- 300 g Mais Spinato beer
- 50 g white chocolate
- 100 g sugar
- 5 egg yolks
- 10 g gelatine

Raspberry gelée:

- 250 g raspberries
- 50 g sugar
- 10 g food-grade gelatine

Method

Maize shortcrust pastry

Cream the butter with the sugar, add the egg yolks and finally incorporate the flours and flavouring. Mix in a stand mixer at low speed using the paddle attachment. Chill the dough, roll it out and cut a thin pastry base to fit the mould. Bake at 170°C for 10 minutes.

Bavarois

Heat the Mais Spinato beer. In a separate bowl, whisk the egg yolks with the sugar, add the strained beer and heat the mixture to 83°C. Add the squeezed gelatine and chopped white chocolate. Leave to cool, then fold in the semi-whipped cream. Pour into moulds or rings and leave to set.

Langues de chat

Cream the softened butter with the sugar and flavouring. Add the dry ingredients, followed by the egg whites. Line a baking tray with baking paper and pipe or spread the mixture into thin strips, shaping the langues de chat. Bake at 180°C for 8–10 minutes, until the edges begin to turn lightly golden.

Raspberry gelée

Soak the gelatine sheets in cold water for about 10 minutes. Blend the raspberries to a smooth purée, then pass through a sieve to remove the

seeds. Place the purée in a saucepan with the sugar and lemon juice and heat gently without boiling, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Squeeze out the gelatine well and add it to the hot purée off the heat. Stir until completely dissolved.

Assembly

Place the completely cooled shortcrust pastry base inside a stainless-steel ring. Pour the bavarois over the base and level carefully with a spatula to create an even layer.

Transfer to the refrigerator and leave to set for at least 2–3 hours, until the bavarois is completely firm. Once the bavarois is well chilled and set, pour a thin 2–3 mm layer of raspberry gelée over the surface, spreading it evenly.

Return to the refrigerator until completely set.



GOLDEN INGOT

Created by **ISB – TORRE BOLDONE CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **DANIELE MAZZOLENI**



Ingredients for 4–6 people

- 150 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 100 g type “00” flour
- 220 g sugar
- 100 g cream
- 2 eggs
- 100 ml milk
- 90 ml seed oil
- 1 pot banana yoghurt
- 1 sachet baking powder
- 150 g banana
- 1 pinch of salt
- 100 g peanuts
- 2 g Maldon salt



Recommended wine

Serve with
Moscato di Scanzo

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Mix together the two flours, sugar, baking powder and salt.

In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs with the milk, oil and yoghurt until smooth.

Pour the liquid ingredients into the dry ingredients.

Fold in the bananas.

Fill the muffin cases about two-thirds full and bake for 20–25 minutes.

Remove the muffins from the oven and, in the meantime, prepare a salted caramel using 100 g sugar, 100 g cream and 2 g Maldon salt.

Drizzle the caramel over the top and decorate with the toasted peanuts.



ALONG THE ROAD TO GANDINO

Created by **ISB – CELANA CAMPUS**

Creative team coordinated by **STEFANO BONFANTI**



Ingredients for 6 people

For the “smaiasa”

- 1,500 g milk
- 500 g coarse-ground Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 30 g type “00” flour
- 1 apple, diced
- 1 pear, diced
- 250 g strawberry grapes
- 50 g butter
- 10 g finely chopped onion
- 150 g sugar

For the Fragolino reduction

- 200 ml Fragolino
- 20 g sugar

For the frosted strawberry grapes

- 18 strawberry grapes
- 1 egg white, semi-whipped
- Sugar as needed



Recommended wine

Serve with **Moscato di Scanzo**

For the Mais Spinato popcorn

- 18 maize kernels
- 100 g sugar
- 1 tablespoon cold water

For the persimmon spheres

- 200 ml persimmon juice
- 2 g agar agar
- Seed oil as needed

For the maize cream

- 100 g Mais Spinato di Gandino fumetto
- 5 egg yolks
- 500 g milk
- 150 g sugar

For the honey cream

- 150 g cream
- 20 g wildflower honey

Method

Brown the onion gently in 20 g of butter, then add the milk, apple and pear and bring to the boil.

Add the two flours, previously mixed together, whisking continuously. Cook for 30 minutes, then add the sugar and strawberry grapes.

Pour the mixture into a buttered baking tray and bake at 180°C for 30 minutes, dotting the surface with the remaining butter. Once cooked, cut into 18 equal cubes.

For the Fragolino reduction

Reduce the Fragolino and sugar over a low heat until a thick liquid is obtained.

For the frosted strawberry grapes

Wash the grapes, dip them in the egg white, then coat them in sugar and leave to dry. Prepare the Mais Spinato popcorn in the microwave, then combine it with a light caramel made from the sugar and water.

For the persimmon spheres

Place a bowl of seed oil in the freezer. Mix the persimmon juice with the agar agar and bring to the boil for 3 minutes.

Leave to cool for 10 minutes, then draw the mixture into a syringe and release it drop by drop into the cold oil. Leave to rest for 1 minute, then remove the spheres and rinse them under cold water.

Place them on a sheet of baking paper.

For the maize cream

Mix the maize fumetto, sugar and egg yolks, then pour over the boiling milk and bring the mixture to 93°C.

Finally, whip the cream with the honey.



BERGHEM 2.0

Created by **FONDAZIONE IKAROS**
POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, GRUMELLO DEL MONTE

Creative team coordinated by
LUCA BOTTI



Brown Butter and Sage Shortcrust Pastry:

- 70 g whole egg
- 20 g egg yolk
- 300 g type "00" flour
- 115 g butter
- 100 g sugar
- Dried sage, as needed

Maize and Mascherpa Migliaccio:

- 80 g maize flour
- 110 g milk
- 285 g water
- 15 g butter
- 110 g Mascherpa
- 90 g eggs
- 90 g sugar
- Seeds from ½ vanilla pod

Moscato di Scanzo and Pear Gelée:

- 150 g Decana pear pulp
- 100 g Moscato di Scanzo
- 20 g sugar
- 4 g gelatine sheets

Walnut Namelaka:

- 150 g fresh liquid cream
- 70 g whole milk
- 100 g gianduja chocolate
- 20 g walnut paste
- 8 g honey or glucose
- 2 g gelatine sheets

Method

Brown Butter and Sage Shortcrust Pastry

Prepare as you would a classic shortcrust pastry, taking care not to bake it at too high a temperature.

Maize and Mascherpa Migliaccio

Place the milk, butter and water in a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Add the seeds from half a vanilla pod. Place over the heat and bring to the boil, then lower the heat and gradually add the maize flour. Stir immediately with a whisk or wooden spoon to prevent lumps from forming.

Cook over a low heat for about 30 minutes, until the mixture thickens. Remove from the heat and leave to cool. Meanwhile, pass the ricotta through a fine-mesh sieve, working it with a spatula into a bowl. In a separate bowl, crack the eggs and add the sugar. Work the migliaccio mixture for a few minutes until all the ingredients are thoroughly combined.

At this stage, the mixture may still contain a few small lumps. Pour the mixture into a mould and level the surface with the back of a spoon. Bake in a preheated oven at 180°C for about 1 hour.

Moscato di Scanzo and Pear Gelée

Peel the pears and cut them into 5 mm cubes. Place them in a frying pan with a little butter and cook until lightly golden. Gently warm the Moscato di Scanzo, add the sugar and stir until dissolved. Add the pears and the gelatine, previously soaked in cold water.

Walnut Namelaka

Soak the gelatine sheets in cold water. Meanwhile, heat the milk with the honey or glucose without bringing it to the boil. Pour it over the previously chopped gianduja chocolate placed in a tall-sided container. Add the squeezed gelatine and stir with a spatula until the chocolate has completely melted. Add the cold liquid cream straight from the refrigerator and blend with an immersion blender until smooth and homogeneous, obtaining a fluid cream.

Strachitunt Mousse:

- 125 g Strachitunt
- 150 g whole milk
- 150 g fresh whipping cream
- 50 g sugar
- 8 g gelatine sheets
- Finishing: Yellow velvet-effect spray or mirror glaze



Recommended wine

Serve with **Moscato di Scanzo**

Strachitunt Mousse

Soak the gelatine sheets in a bowl of cold water.

Heat the milk in a saucepan without bringing it to the boil, then dissolve the Strachitunt and sugar in it.

Add the gelatine and stir until completely dissolved, then leave to cool to room temperature.

Blend with an immersion blender; the mixture will begin to thicken until it reaches a consistency similar to béchamel sauce.

Whip the cream and, while continuing to whisk, gradually add the cheese mixture until a firm mousse is obtained.



SWEET DREAM OF GANDINO

Created by **IS SAN PELLEGRINO**

Creative team coordinated by **FRANCESCO ZUOLO**



Ingredients for 12 people

For the mirror glaze:

- 250 g white chocolate
- 250 g granulated sugar
- 250 g glucose syrup
- 125 g water
- 65 g condensed milk
- 100 g plain yoghurt
- 16 g gelatine

For the sauce:

- 125 g raspberries
- 125 g blueberries
- 20 g brown sugar
- 10 g red wine
- 4 g corn starch

For the sponge cake layer:

- 160 g egg whites
- 130 g granulated sugar
- 80 g egg yolks
- ½ vanilla pod
- 70 g maize flour
- 50 g type "00" flour

For the sbrisolona layer:

- 60 g type "00" flour
- 60 g maize flour
- 45 g granulated sugar
- 20 g egg yolks
- 50 g butter
- 20 g lard

For the polenta layer:

- 270 g maize flour
- 500 ml water
- Salt to taste

Method

Soak the gelatine and chop the chocolate. In a saucepan, heat the water, sugar and glucose to 103°C. Once the temperature is reached, add the condensed milk and colouring. Squeeze out the gelatine well, add it to the chocolate and pour the hot syrup over the mixture, then emulsify with a blender. Add the yoghurt and blend again. Cover with cling film in direct contact with the surface and leave to rest in the refrigerator for at least 12 hours. Before use, warm in the microwave and use the glaze at 38°C.

In a saucepan, cook the raspberries, blueberries, water and sugar. Once the mixture reaches the boil, add the corn starch and wine. Strain the sauce to remove the seeds and leave to cool in the refrigerator.

Toast the maize flour and leave to cool. Whisk the egg whites with the sugar, add the egg yolks and vanilla, then gradually fold in the sifted flour. Pour into the moulds and bake.

In a bowl, combine the flours and sugar and mix well. Add the egg yolks, followed by the butter and lard. Spread the mixture into a mould and bake.

Bring the water and salt to the boil, gradually add the maize flour while stirring, and continue stirring throughout the cooking time.

Pour the wine and sugar into a saucepan and stir until the sugar has completely dissolved. Add the soaked gelatine, pour into the moulds and leave to cool.

Heat a drizzle of oil in a saucepan, add the maize kernels, cover with a lid and allow them to pop. Once cooked, transfer to absorbent paper. In a small saucepan, melt the sugar and water without stirring. Once the mixture turns to caramel, add the butter, then add the popcorn and mix

For the gelée layer:

- 100 g Moscato wine
- 12 g brown sugar
- 6 g gelatine

For the caramelised popcorn:

- 100 g maize kernels
- 50 g granulated sugar
- 25 g water
- 13 g butter

For the plain yoghurt mousse:

- 450 g plain yoghurt
- 450 g non-dairy whipping cream
- 50 g icing sugar
- 12 g gelatine
- 95 g whole milk



Cooking time

185°C for 20 minutes for the sponge cake

170°C for approx. 26 minutes for the sbrisolona



Recommended wine

Serve with **Moscato di Scanzo DOCG**

well. Spread onto baking paper, leave to cool and finish with a pinch of salt, if desired.

Mix the yoghurt with the icing sugar. Heat the milk and dissolve the soaked gelatine in it, then add to the yoghurt. Semi-whip the cream, gradually add the yoghurt mixture and gently fold together with a spatula.

For the assembly of the individual portion, proceed in the following order: mousse on the base, a very thin layer of polenta, wine gelée, sbrisolona crunch and finally the sponge cake layer. Cover the entire dessert with the glaze.



PAN DI GANDINO BELLE ÉPOQUE

Created by **IS SAN PELLEGRINO**

Creative team coordinated by **FRANCESCO ZUROLO**



Ingredients for 50 people

Pan di Gandino "Belle Époque"

First dough:

- 700 g natural starter
- 1 l water
- 1 kg sugar
- 700 g egg yolks
- 2.5 kg type "00" flour
- 1.1 kg butter
- 200 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour

Pan di Gandino "Belle Époque"

Second dough:

- 700 g type "00" flour
- 700 g sugar
- 300 g acacia honey
- 500 g egg yolks
- 1,550 g butter
- 50 g salt
- 100 g orange flavouring paste
- 3 g vanilla seeds
- 500 g water

Three-Chocolate Chunks:

- 1 kg dark chocolate
- 1 kg milk chocolate
- 1 kg white chocolate

Glaze for the Pan di Gandino:

- 250 g bitter almonds
- 150 g raw almonds
- 100 g toasted hazelnuts
- 800 g granulated sugar
- 20 g unsweetened cocoa powder
- 50 g Mais Spinato di Gandino flour
- 50 g potato starch

Method

First Dough:

Place the sugar and water, at a temperature of 22°C, in the mixer and combine to form a syrup. Add the flour and natural starter. After about 15 minutes, once the dough has formed, incorporate the softened butter (not melted) and the egg yolks. Work the dough until it is almost smooth, taking care not to make it too glossy. Do not exceed 22–25 minutes of mixing time. With the mixer, consider the dough ready when large air bubbles appear on the surface. Continue working until it is almost smooth, without allowing it to become too glossy. Leave to rise in a proofing chamber for 10–12 hours at 28–30°C, or until it has tripled in volume.

At home, the proofing chamber can be replaced by an oven that has been briefly preheated for a few seconds and then switched off, in order to recreate the ideal temperature. Keep a kitchen thermometer inside the oven to monitor the temperature. If possible, use a graduated container to check the increase in volume accurately. If the dough rises in less time, the following proofing stage will be delayed by approximately three times the amount of time saved during the first rise.

Second Dough:

Add the flour and flavourings to the first dough.

Mix in a stand mixer until the dough becomes smooth. Incorporate the sugar together with the honey and one third of the egg yolks. Work the dough until it becomes smooth and elastic again. Add the salt together with another third of the egg yolks and repeat the process. Add the softened butter and the remaining egg yolks. Once the dough is smooth again, incorporate the water.

Mix for 2–3 minutes, then add the chocolate. Divide the dough into portions, shape each into a round loaf (pirlatura) and leave to rest for about 1 hour in a proofing chamber at 30°C. Divide again into the desired weights and place in the appropriate paper moulds. Proof at 30°C with 60% humidity until the dough reaches the edge of the mould, approximately 5–6 hours.

When the cake is ready for baking, glaze with a thin layer of amaretto mixture, add a few almonds, sprinkle with granulated sugar and then with icing sugar.



Baking time for the first dough:

Preheat the oven and bake **at 180°C for 1 hour**. Check that the internal temperature reaches 90–92°C.

Baking time for the second dough:

Preheat the oven and bake **at 180°C for 1 hour**. Check that the internal temperature reaches 90–92°C.



Recommended wine

Serve with
sweet sparkling Moscato

Glaze for Pan di Gandino:

Finely grind all the dry ingredients together in a mixer. Add the egg white and mix in a stand mixer with a medium whisk at medium speed. Using a mixer produces a better glaze and also saves time.

If the glaze is too soft, the cake will be more difficult to bake, may become damp after approximately 8–10 days, and may be more susceptible to mould. For best results, use the glaze after leaving it to rest in the refrigerator for one day.

If the glaze is too hard after baking, there is a high risk that it will detach from the surface while the cake is cooling upside down.

Cooling:

Leave the Pan di Gandino cakes to cool upside down for 10–14 hours, allowing them to cool and stabilise completely.

Package them in suitable bags and seal carefully to prevent air from entering and to slow down staling.





2025 Gastronomic Contest

"REINVENT MAIS SPINATO DI GANDINO AT THE TABLE"

REPORT OF THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 17 September 2025

As part of the Cerealia Festival 2025, the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community, in collaboration with Bergamo UNESCO Creative City and the Municipality of Gandino, organised the gastronomic contest "Reinvent Mais Spinato di Gandino at the Table". The initiative was created with the aim of involving younger generations in rediscovering Mais Spinato in an innovative way. This ancient and prized maize variety has been cultivated in the Seriana Valley (Bergamo) since the 17th century, is now protected by the De.Co. designation, and forms part of a supply chain that includes numerous other traditional local products. The Contest was aimed at hospitality and vocational schools specialising in food studies in the Province of Bergamo. It was held in connection with the international Pueblos del Maíz network, which Gandino joined thanks to its relationships with the cities of Tucson, San Antonio and Mérida.

Preliminary Activities

The Evaluation Committee officially convened on the morning of Tuesday, 16 September, in Gandino, in a room made available by Caffè Centrale “La Spinata”.

- At the outset, the Committee acknowledged that Ileana Persico was unable to participate for family reasons. The Committee ratified her replacement by Giambattista Gherardi, Promoserio’s food and wine delegate and coordinator of the Le Cinque Terre della Val Gandino District.
- The Committee also ratified CREA’s appointment of Rita Redaelli in place of Carlotta Balconi.
- It was also noted that Dr Elisabetta Lupotto, coordinator of the preparatory work for the Contest, was no longer able to attend. The Committee ratified her replacement by Silvano Castelli, President of the De.Co. Municipal Designation of Origin Commission of the Municipality of Gandino.
- The Committee ratified the decision of the Municipality of Bergamo / UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy to be represented by Massimiliano Amaddeo in place of his brother Roberto.
- The Committee was therefore definitively composed as follows: Emanuel Caleca (Mais Spinato di Gandino Community), Nicoletta Colombi (dietitian), Rita Redaelli (CREA Bergamo), Massimiliano Amaddeo (Municipality of Bergamo), Silvano Castelli (Municipality of Gandino), and Giambattista Gherardi (Promoserio). Giambattista Gherardi took on the role of coordinator.

Evaluation Days

- At the outset, the Committee acknowledged the definitive withdrawal of the Sonzogni Hospitality Institute of Nembro, as communicated by email to the Mayor of Gandino.
- The Committee reviewed the registration forms submitted by the participating Institutes (Form A) and the analytical sheets relating to the various savoury dishes and desserts (Form B), attached to these minutes.
- The Committee also reviewed the voting sheet (Form C), which would be used to express its assessment of each proposed dish and dessert.
- On Tuesday, 16 September, the Committee visited the following Institutes: ABF Clusone, ISB Torre Boldone and ISB Celana (both at the Torre Boldone campus), and ABF Bergamo. On Wednesday, 17 September, it visited Istituto Superiore San Pellegrino and the Fondazione Ikaros Polytechnic Institute in Grumello del Monte.
- The gala dinner was confirmed for Thursday, 25 September at 7:30 p.m. at Palazzo Zilioli, with the announcement and award ceremony for the winners.

Award Allocation

- At the outset, the Evaluation Committee unanimously expressed its deep satisfaction with the outcome of the visits to the participating Institutes. At each venue, the Committee had the opportunity to appreciate the quality and variety of the proposals, the expertise and preparation of both teachers and students, and the care and attention devoted to hospitality and presentation.
- Although the Committee was subsequently required to express a formal assessment on merit, it wished to emphasise that the collective contribution of everyone involved — the organising staff, sponsoring bodies, Institutes, teachers and competing students — was of absolute priority. This shared commitment represents the true and expected success of the initiative to promote and enhance Mais Spinato di Gandino, which lies at the heart of the Contest.
- The Committee established that ABF Clusone would participate as a single team, as would ABF Bergamo, since the first dish submitted had been prepared jointly by the two teams and the Bavarois was considered the second entry, being a dessert. By contrast, the independent nature of the proposals submitted by ISB Torre Boldone and ISB Celana allowed the two separate teams to be confirmed.
- The Committee classified the PanSpinato di Gandino entry submitted by Istituto San Pellegrino as “out of competition”, despite its high quality, and considered for the final ranking the more structured, elaborate and plated dessert “Dolce Sogno di Gandino”.
- For an initial analysis, the evaluation forms completed by each Committee member for every individual dish and dessert submitted are collected. Where any corrections were made by a Committee member during the evaluation process, these are duly countersigned. All forms are subsequently stamped by the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community, which will preserve them in its archive.
- The numerical voting results are compiled into an overall table, reproduced below, which serves as one — but not the sole — basis for the final assessment. By unanimous decision of the Committee, although the table forms part of these minutes, it will not be included in the material made available for public dissemination, so that the prevailing message remains the shared sense of satisfaction expressed above.
- After a detailed review of all the elements considered, the numerical results recorded, and the various formal and substantive aspects that emerged, the Committee awards:
- **The FIRST PRIZE in the “Reinvent Mais Spinato di Gandino at the Table” Contest is awarded to ISTITUTO SUPERIORE SAN PELLEGRINO of San Pellegrino Terme (BG).** In addition to achieving the highest overall score in the evaluation, the Val Brembana school stood out for the quality and level of detail of its application mate-

rials (Form B), with particular reference to the nutritional information sheets prepared by the students. The prize is awarded with the following citation: *“for the quality of the gastronomic proposal, the enhancement of Mais Spinato di Gandino within a context of excellence, the detailed presentation — including live presentation — of the recipes and preparation methods, the attention paid to local identity, the wholesomeness of local products, and the overall balance of taste, aroma and visual presentation of the dishes.”*

Headteacher: Giovanna Leidi

Teacher: Francesco Zurolo

Students: Edoardo Baratteri, Matteo Rossi, Dario Capitanio, Alessandro Beloli, Yu Wu, Elisa Galizzi, Cristian Arioli.

- **The award in the “Savoury Dish” category is presented to ISTITUTO SUPERIORE SAN PELLEGRINO of San Pellegrino Terme (BG)** for the proposal: **“Sour Ravioli filled with Mais Spinato di Gandino polenta, celeriac broth, mugwort oil, orange extract and liquorice”**. The following motivation is highlighted: *“The dish offers an overall harmony of flavours and aromas, carefully balanced and capable of creating an intense sensory and visual experience. Further elements taken into consideration include the live plating presented to the Committee, the use of natural ingredients gathered locally by the students themselves, the detailed nutritional values provided in the documentation — which also included a breakdown of production costs — and the professional presentation given by the students, who answered the Committee’s various questions in detail. Further credit goes to the team for choosing to pair the dish with a warm mugwort infusion served chilled, demonstrating commitment and a thorough study of the recipe.”*

Headteacher: Giovanna Leidi

Teacher: Francesco Zurolo

Students: Edoardo Baratteri, Matteo Rossi, Dario Capitanio, Alessandro Beloli, Yu Wu, Elisa Galizzi, Cristian Arioli.

- **The award in the “Dessert” category is presented to ABF – Azienda Bergamasca di Formazione, Clusone (BG)** for the proposal **“Tortino Garibaldi”**. The following motivation is highlighted: *“The simplicity of the recipe and presentation gives the Tortino a distinctive personality, marked by quality and a clear identity. Particularly noteworthy are the strong character achieved through the use of Mais Spinato di Gandino polenta and the pairing — also rooted in history — with Garibaldi and Sicily through Modica chocolate. The unanimous positive assessment of the judges was also supported by the recipe’s potential to be ea-*

sily replicated by local restaurants, as well as by its suitability for customers with common food intolerances, given the absence of gluten and lactose."

Headteacher: Annalisa Riva

Teacher: Filippo Bosio - Roberto Bonalda

Students: Moira Facchinetti, Cecile Mendy, Fabio Tomasoni, Tommaso Villa, Andriolletti Aaron, Bigoni Marco, Onnis Silvana.

- **The Special Mention is awarded to Istituto Politecnico della Fondazione Ikaros of Grumello del Monte (BG)** for the proposal **"Beef with Melgòt"**. The following motivation is highlighted: *"The high scores awarded for taste by the individual Committee members recognise a carefully prepared dish of outstanding quality within the category of meat-based main courses. Also noteworthy are the original creation of a 'Mais Spinato di Gandino sbrisolona', the use of goose foie gras and almonds as a reference to traditional Bergamo cuisine, and the resulting link to the East through the use of Sichuan pepper."*

Headteacher: Ugo Ardiani

Teacher: Domenico Di Micco - Luca Botti

Students: Bertulesi Fabio, Finazzi Giovanni, Agazzi Gaia, Facchinetti Forlani Alessia.

- **The Honourable Mention is awarded to ABF – Azienda Bergamasca di Formazione, Bergamo** with the following citation: *"For the active involvement of the students in the preparation activities and for the welcome extended to the Evaluation Committee, with the jury table uniquely set up inside the kitchen facilities, creating effective interaction with both teachers and students. Particular recognition also goes to the careful preparatory work carried out through repeated practical trials in the preceding months, demonstrating a responsible and attentive approach to the themes and objectives of the Contest."*

Headteacher: Martina Carrara

Teacher: Walter Baggi - Luca Bergamelli

Students: Arroyo Arrunategui Arianna Melany, Buccinà Carlotta, Guzman Mikaela, Schiavone Andrea, Rodriguez Brayan Wilson

- **The Honourable Mention is awarded to ISB – Torre Boldone Campus (BG)** with the following citation: *"For the well-developed contextualisation of Mais Spinato di Gandino across the various gastronomic proposals, with particular attention to bread-making activities, which resulted in a complete selection of focaccia, bread and breadsticks, designed to complement and work in synergy with the dishes presented."*

Headteacher: Gabriella Savoldi Cortinovis

Teacher: Graziano Rocchetti, Daniele Mazzoleni

Students: Adelina Cazac, Maria Ester Sales Arantes, Elia Pasta, Martina Mirabella, Denise Rubolino, Federico Redolfi.

- **The Honourable Mention is awarded to ISB – Celana Campus in Caprino Bergamasco (BG)** with the following citation: *“For the careful development of an effective storytelling concept to accompany the recipes, capable of evoking places, history, culture and traditions for diners. Particular recognition is given to the strong focus on local products, traditional recipes such as ‘smaiasa’, and the seasonality of the ingredients used in the proposals.”*

Headteacher: Gabriella Savoldi Cortinovis

Teacher: Stefano Bonfanti

Students: Andrea Poerio, Gualtiero Cesana, Giada Cisana, Sara Panseri

Final Remarks

- In conclusion, the Evaluation Committee wishes to emphasise, reaffirm and highlight the outstanding quality of the proposals, all of which proved capable of evoking memorable emotions and sensations in each and every member of the Committee.
- Dietitian Nicoletta Colombi points out that, although the evaluations of the various proposals naturally tended to focus on aroma, taste and visual presentation, the final outcome ultimately rewarded the healthiest and most sustainable dishes. This confirms that the principles underlying the Mais Spinato di Gandino supply chain are moving in a highly positive direction.
- Committee members Massimiliano Amaddeo and Emanuel Caleca, both experts in the restaurant sector, confirm the high level of expertise demonstrated by teachers and students alike, a fundamental element in ensuring opportunities for growth within the sector and for Bergamo’s local specialities.

These minutes are closed at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, 17 September 2025, in the presence of the Mayor of Gandino, Filippo Servalli; the President of the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community, Angelo Savoldelli; and Dr Elisabetta Lupotto, connected via live streaming.

Signed

Nicoletta Colombi, Rita Redaelli, Emanuel Caleca

Silvano Castelli, Massimiliano Amaddeo, Giambattista Gherardi

Filippo Servalli - Mayor of Gandino

Angelo Savoldelli - President of the Mais Spinato di Gandino Community

Elisabetta Lupotto - Coordinator



25 September 2025 – Contest Awards Ceremony.



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25 September 2025 – Contest Awards Ceremony.



25 September 2025 – Award ceremony for the overall winners, Istituto Superiore San Pellegrino.



25 September 2025 – Award ceremony for first place in the “Savoury Dishes” category, Istituto Superiore San Pellegrino.



25 September 2025 – Award ceremony for first place in the “Desserts” category, ABF Clusone.



25 September 2025 – ABF Bergamo award ceremony.



25 September 2025 – Fondazione Ikaros Grumello del Monte award ceremony.



25 September 2025 – Fondazione ISB Celana di Caprino Bergamasco award ceremony.



25 September 2025 – Fondazione ISB Torre Boldone award ceremony.

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13

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A video was produced to tell the story of the
“Reinvent Mais Spinato di Gandino at the
Table” Contest. It is available on YouTube
and can be viewed by scanning the QR code
alongside with a smartphone.

The video was made by Diego Percassi,
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by Giambattista Gherardi.

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«Remembering something also means taking care of it: not erasing it, not throwing it away, not wasting it. Local memory must be preserved in order to safeguard something greater: the richness of diversity.»

Carlo Petrini
Founder of the Slow Food Association



CEREALIA
LA FESTA DEI CEREALI



Mais Spinato
di Gandino®



Slow
Mays



Le Cinque terre
della **Val Gandino**

