



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



**Discover the incredible tastes of authentic Italian food:  
Italian Culture Institute of Abu Dhabi is bringing an unforgettable medieval feast  
to Villa Toscana at The St. Regis Abu Dhabi**

*Held in tribute to Dante Alighieri, the world-famous Italian Poet, this specially curated menu  
will take guests through the finest flavours of this enrapturing country and its legendary,  
heart-warming and uplifting culinary traditions*



**Abu Dhabi, UAE – November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021** – With a rich and colourful history of culinary craftsmanship and boasting an abundance of quality fresh produce, Italy is widely regarded as having one of the best cuisines in the world. Encouraging guests to discover more about this cuisine, **The Week of Italian Cuisine in the World**, organised by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and brought to Abu Dhabi by the **Italian Culture Institute of Abu Dhabi**, is inviting foodies from across the world to experience the true nature of authentic Italian food and wine. Presenting an action-packed programme of delicious initiatives taking place in major cities and locations across the globe, local food connoisseurs will be delighted to hear that the event is visiting Villa Toscana at The St. Regis Abu Dhabi for an exclusive one-night themed dinner.

Set in the warm, welcoming and elegant fine-dining restaurant and hosted in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute Abu Dhabi, **'A Dinner with Dante Alighieri'** invites food connoisseurs to devour a special set menu on **Sunday, November 28**. Inspired by the beautiful countryside of Tuscany and created in honour



of the 700<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Dante, the legendary Italian poet, writer and philosopher, the lavish feast is filled with enticing surprises and expertly crafted palate pleasers.

Prof. Simone Pregolato, Expert in ancient Italian cookbooks at the Catholic University of Milan will introduce the theme to diners and encourage them to explore the role of Medieval literature and cookbooks in the society.

Curated by Villa Toscana's Executive Chef Rosario Martorana, the 'A Tavola nel Medioevo' menu takes diners on an immersive journey through the most enrapturing tastes and dishes in Italian culture, right through from the Middle Ages to the vibrant present day. The four-course decadent dinner starts by inviting guests to relax in the chic and timeless dining room with some sweet wine and fresh fruits. The first course then features a selection of heart-warming starters, including creamy pumpkin soup with almond essence and sauteed mushrooms with ginger and nutmeg. The second course is then dedicated to Italy's finest seafood specialties, with marinated fried fish with aromatic ginger, saffron and herbs, and a succulent grilled tuna with a tantalizing yellow sauce.

The main course then presents the unique opportunity to try the classic Italian recipe of charcoal-grilled hare infused with wine and lemon, and a juicy grilled T-bone steak served with salsa verde. Finally, the indulgent sweet conclusion stars a creamy and wonderfully nutty hazelnut pudding and a serving of delicate rose-scented almond biscuits. Joined by a selection of Italy's finest wines, all the featured recipes have been specifically concocted and perfected for this special occasion only. Every detail has been carefully thought out to create a treasured night that each and every guest is guaranteed to remember forever.

**Dr. Ida Zilio-Grandi, Director of the Italian Cultural Institute of Abu Dhabi**, noted: *"Spreading and promoting the Italian language and culture is the main aim of the Italian Cultural Institute, and there is no better way to impact people's hearts and minds than through the power of stupendous food. The Week of Italian Cuisine in the World is a fabulous idea that we are proud and delighted to be a part of, and it only continues to grow with each passing year. I am delighted that the people of Abu Dhabi can approach Italian cuisine through its ancient traditions, which testify the interaction with Arab cuisine, for example through the abundant use of spices. It provides a reimagined and exciting take on Italian cuisine that many people may not have experienced before."*

Meanwhile, **Villa Toscana's Executive Chef, Rosario Martorana**, said: *"I'm so honoured to join together with the Italian Cultural Institute for this treasured celebration of Italian cuisine and honour Dante. For this exclusive event I have poured all my knowledge and passion into one curated menu that I'm sure every Italian food fan will adore. I have intentionally included dishes that showcase the best flavours, ingredients and cooking techniques of traditional Italian cuisine. I can't wait to present them to our distinguished guests on November 28. Inspired by the Middle Ages and the landscape of Tuscany, it will be a fabulous evening full of fascinating culture, great wine and food and wonderful company."*



Finally, **Prof. Simone Pregolato, Expert in ancient Italian cookbooks at the Catholic University of Milan**, commented: *“Through collaborating with the Italian Cultural Institute of Abu Dhabi and the team at Villa Toscana, we have created an authentic voyage through Italian cuisine. By harking back to the Middle Ages and looking at what delicacies were consumed by Dante and some of Italy’s other famous historical figures (Marco Polo, Giovanni Boccaccio or even Frederick II) we have come up with some unique historical dishes that will blow each and every diner away. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to experience the true essence of Italian cuisine as handed down by literature and show that it goes far beyond just the usual pizza and pasta recipes.”*

The four-course ‘A Tavola nel Medioevo’ menu is exclusively available to enjoy on Sunday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm. For additional information, please contact [abudhabiic.segre@esteri.it](mailto:abudhabiic.segre@esteri.it).

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### **About the Italian Cultural Institute of Abu Dhabi**

A body of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), the Italian Cultural Institute of Abu Dhabi, the only one in the Gulf area is responsible for spreading and promoting the Italian language, culture and arts to the United Arab Emirates. As the cultural arm to the Italian Embassy in the UAE, the body strives to organize cultural, artistic and scientific initiatives for the UAE’s richly diverse population - with Italy as their central theme. The Italian Cultural Institute of Abu Dhabi is one of 83 Italian Cultural Institutes (IIC) around the world which, together, promote the image of Italy and its rich culture abroad.

By acting not only as a showcase and source of current information on Italy, but also as a driving force behind initiatives and projects of cultural cooperation, the Italian Cultural Institutes have become a focal point for both the Italian communities abroad and the growing demand for Italian culture throughout the world.

For high-res images, please click [HERE](#).

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