Diversity in the City
First African councillor to sit in city government

Senegalese Pape Mbaye Diaw has the daunting task of being the first African city councillor to enter Florence’s governing body. Diaw has jumped enthusiastically to the task, well aware of the significance of this role.

Diaw was called to office to fill the seat of Luigi Ontanetti, of the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC), who stepped down for health reasons. Diaw’s name came up because he had received enough votes during local elections held in 2005 to come in as the first non-elected candidate on the PRC list.

46-year-old Diaw was born in Dakar, Senegal, and arrived in Italy over two decades ago, initially for study. After he received his degree in languages from the University of Florence, he remained here and went on to have a family (he has four children) and to develop a career in the social sector. Diaw has long been an advocate of immigrants’ rights. He himself received Italian citizenship in 1996 but he firmly believes that non-citizen residents must be able to have a political voice in their place of residence. He has pushed hard for foreign residents to obtain the right to vote.

Because of this long and heartfelt involvement in the social sector, Diaw announced he would continue to dedicate his new political efforts to the ‘weaker’ members of the community, primarily immigrants and the elderly.

This month sees the launch of three major exhibitions devoted to three major Florentine artists. Together, Giambologna, Leonardo da Vinci and Leon Battista Alberti make up the ‘Holy Trinity’ of art exhibitions in Florence this March. The show on Giambologna opened with a bang at the beginning of the month, and the exhibition dedicated to da Vinci is set to start at the end of the month. Between them comes the Alberti exhibition.

Due to open on March 11 at Palazzo Strozzi, the event will be titled: ‘The Renaissance Man. Leon Battista Alberti and the'.
BARBERINO DESIGNER OUTLET.
GRAND OPENING MARCH 12  FROM 10.00 A.M TO 9.00 P.M.

The official opening of the new Barberino Designer Outlet, an island of shopping only one half hour from Florence, is Sunday, March 12 from 10AM-9PM. In a small Renaissance styled village, city, you will find yourself amongst more than 90 stores of clothing, accessories, sports equipment and home furnishings. We have selected the highest quality merchandise, and from only the most prestigious designers to provide our discerning shoppers with year round discounts of up to 70%.

AUTOSTRADA: A1 Bologna-Firenze Exit Barberino di Mugello
FROM PRATO AND FIRENZE: Strada Provinciale 8 “Le Croci”, direction Barberino di Mugello
FROM FIRENZE: SS65 Bolognese direction Fiesole, San Piero a Sieve, Barberino di Mugello

Free Shuttle Bus from Firenze and Bologna (leave from the Station Square) each day throughout March. For timetable see www.mcarthurglen.it
Diversity in the City
First African councillor to sit in city government

To allow more time for his new role as councillor, Diaw will step down as president of the Senegalese community in Tuscany, which counts between 6,700 members. His many initiatives in this role included the ‘Multi-ethnic Market’ located on the Lungarno Pecori Giraldi. The market was an effort to create a legal space and meeting centre where Senegalese and other foreigners could sell their goods.

Not only will Diaw be the first African to serve in Florence’s governing body but he is also the only Muslim. He was quick to point out that his religious identity would take the back burner while he confronts the primary issues that face him during his time in office. In fact, in response to a recent controversy over Christian crucifixes in public buildings, Diaw responded that he didn’t feel this was a major issue.

Florence’s Council of Foreigners, which is a part of the local government but does not have the power to vote, considered Diaw’s entrance as a significant step ahead. ‘The reciprocal relations and cultural exchange between the various communities in Florence will definitely make headway. With Diaw’s arrival we will be able to discuss more profoundly some of the fundamental themes of our city, particularly those of social inclusion.’

---

THREE’S A CHARM
Alberti exhibition rounds out Florence’s March art extravaganza

Arts in Florence between Reason and Beauty (L’Uomo del Rinascimento. Leon Battista Alberti e le Arti a Firenze tra Ragione e Bellezza). The show will be the climax of celebrations marking the 600th anniversary of the designer of some of the most important Renaissance monuments in Italy. Here in Florence, Alberti was responsible for the façade of the church of Santa Maria Novella (completed in 1471 and considered his greatest accomplishment) and the Palazzo Rucellai.

The exhibition will include 160 works of art by Alberti and his contemporaries, Donatello, Ghiberti, Beato Angelico, Bernardo Rossellino, Andrea del Castagno, Scheggia, Filippo Lippi, Filarete, Botticelli, Fra Carnevale, Andrea Sansovino, Neri di Bicci, and others.

Born in Genoa in 1404, Leon Battista Alberti was a true Renaissance man of letters, philosophy and science. Although he never officially studied architecture, his architectural work effected a fundamental transformation in the Arts in the mid-15th century. Even before Leonardo da Vinci, Alberti incarnated the universal ideals of Renaissance Humanism.

As an interesting aside, Gabriele Morolli, Professor of the History of Architecture at Florence University, also pointed out that beneath the famed ‘Ideal City’, which hangs in the National Gallery of the Marche at Urbino and that has long been attributed to Piero della Francesca, is a drawing by none other than Alberti. The ‘Ideal City’ has been revered for centuries as the testament to the essential rules of architecture and town planning. Now, it appears that the large panel was drawn in detail and perhaps even coloured by Alberti, before being painted over by Piero della Francesca.
A Glimpse Into the Future
According to the latest estimates by IRPET (Institute for the Economic Programming of Tuscany) by 2020, Tuscany will most probably be host to over 400,000 foreign residents. Today, these numbers barely surpass 200,000. This would be the equivalent of 12% of the total population, thus sharply changing the demographic makeup of the region. According to IRPET, the best way to achieve integration is through employment. A positive trend has already been registered in recent years, with over 52,000 foreigners newly employed in 2005. This is equal to 30% of the total employment rate in Tuscany - a higher rate than that in many other regions in Italy. However, there was also a negative trend registered. Injuries at work were among the highest for foreign employees (60 per 1,000 per year) compared to Italian employees of the same sectors (45 per 1,000 per year).

News in BRIEF

Dog Days for Cats
After news that a cat in Germany had been infected with the H5N1 virus, local animal control officials have been inundated with calls by alarmed Florentines. People were seeking advice on how to tame their cat’s temperature or what to do with feral cats that had been captured. Health authorities have stated that, at this point, there is no reason for alarm and anyone found disturbing or injuring cats and feline colonies in Florence will be fined and possibly even jailed.

New Designs on Piazza Santa Croce
The winner of the public competition to redesign the square was the Gruppo Ferrara and the 2.5 million euro project must be complete by the end of this year. On March 15, the new designs will be officially presented.

Children’s Summer Village Enrollment Still open
Children’s International Summer Villages (CISV) is a unique youth exchange organisation that by encouraging respect for cultural differences and the development of self-awareness, empowers each participant to incorporate these values into their lives as they become global citizens and strive for a more peaceful world. The Florence CISV Chapter is currently selecting candidates (age 21+) for the volunteer position of Leader in centres in Brazil, Germany, Greece, Iceland, and Sweden. Applications are still available for children in the following international centres: Denver, USA, and Hamburg, Germany.

Contact information contact: CISV, c/o Studio Legale 055/471776 or 329-3995738 - firenze@it.cisv.org, www.cisv.org, or www.it.cisv.org/firenze

U.S. Politics: Spectator or Participant?
Spring lecture series aims at motivating political participation

Democrats Abroad Florence (DA-F) is an international organisation dedicated to helping Americans living abroad to remain active in the democratic process. This lively group meets on the third Saturday of every month to work on issues important to American values. Non-partisan voter registration is a priority, since overseas ballots can tip an election, as was seen in recent history. DA-F has helped organise a lecture series this Spring on the importance of staying politically involved – even while living abroad.

Aristotle defined politics, an ancient Greek word for ‘community, reciprocal relationship’, as a voluntary social institution comprising family, religion, friends, schools and business. He thought this combination of activity is what made man moral, good and virtuous. Aristotle wrote in ‘Politics’ that man requires institutions and relationships to achieve his natural end of perfection and self-realisation. ‘It is from this concept,’ explains Jo-Ann White, Chair of Democrats Abroad in Florence, ‘that the idea of government was derived.’

Thus, ‘The Importance of Politics in Our Daily Lives’ became the theme for a non-partisan lecture series which will take place this Spring in Florence.

‘Many people look on politics – if they pay attention at all – as something in which they do not have a vested interest,’ says White. ‘They do not stop to think that they are personally impacted by global economics, judicial appointments, marketing, journalism or immigration policies, to name only a few.’ Consequently, many people become spectators of politics and democracy instead of active participants. However, democracy cannot function as it should unless everyone participates.

In the interest of reviving democracy, the first lecture on March 20 focuses on recapturing the vitality of democracy and ‘The Role of Politics and Civics.’ Eric Jones, resident professor of European studies at The Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) will help stimulate thought and discussion on the role of politics in the life of a well-rounded person, and will help bring people of all ages and beliefs into the political process. Non-partisan voter registration will also be offered as a public service before and after the lecture to aid American citizens living abroad to remain active in the democratic process.

You can join others in our community who are interested in making democracy function as it should by attending the lecture on Monday March 20, 6.30–8.30pm, at Villa Rossa, Syracuse University, 15 Piazza Savonarola, Florence.

Women Celebrate by Speaking Out
Two demonstrations emphasise political importance of International Women’s Day

Through March 8, International Women’s Day, has largely lost its original significance in most of the world. Florence has, however, instead marked the occasion with two important political events returning the day’s commemorations to its roots: the defence of women’s rights.

On March 8 U.S. Citizens Against the War spent International Women’s Day protesting against the war in Iraq, in response to an international appeal by the likes of Alice Walker, Susan Sarandon, Barbara Lee, Dolores Huerta, Eve Ensler, and many more, to unite women on this day against the agenda of war. The Florence based U.S. group organised a rally and demonstration in front of the prefecture in the centre of the city. The rally was also an occasion to announce to passers by that an even larger international effort was being made to organise anti-war demonstrations in cities throughout the world on March 18.

In the meantime, Florentine women’s associations are busy organising a demonstration in defence of women’s rights on Saturday March 11. The meeting, which has been set in Florence’s largest public square, Piazza Santa Croce, hopes to attract many participants to voice criticism over recent attacks by the current Italian government on laws that the Italian feminist movement has long fought to conquer. Primary issues concern recent attempts to limit abortion laws and refuse access to artificial insemination technologies and the RU486 pill. These issues will also be some of the primary concerns for the upcoming general election on April 9–10.

For those interested in participating, the demonstration will begin at 15.30 on Saturday in Piazza Santa Croce.

THE VERDICT IS OUT
Presentation of Chianti Classico 2005 at the Stazione Leopolda in Florence

The Chianti Classico and Gallo Nero Consortia made the official presentation of the Chianti Classico 2005 harvest wines at a recent two day extravaganza held in the attractive Stazione Leopolda of Florence. The presentation included a sample of 351 different wines that could be tasted, provided by over 120 different estates. It ran through a preview of the 2005 vintage (barrel samples) and extended to the bottling of the latest vintages from 2004 to the 2000 Riserva.

There were also thirty-three Chianti Classico DOP olive oils available for tasting. A relatively complete panorama of the production in the denomination of origin of the Chianti zone.

So, what’s the final judgment on the 2005 harvest? According to Dr. Daniele Rosellini, ‘the production of clusters per vine was extremely well balanced. It was possible to determine that it would be an excellent quality vintage but with a reduction in quantity of 10 to 15% in comparison with the preceding years. Rosellini concluded, ‘The wines have moderate structures in which there is an excellent balance between alcoholic concentration and the acidic framework.’

THE VERDICT IS OUT
Presentation of Chianti Classico 2005 at the Stazione Leopolda in Florence

The Chianti Classico and Gallo Nero Consortia made the official presentation of the Chianti Classico 2005 harvest wines at a recent two day extravaganza held in the attractive Stazione Leopolda of Florence. The presentation included a sample of 351 different wines that could be tasted, provided by over 120 different estates. It ran through a preview of the 2005 vintage (barrel samples) and extended to the bottling of the latest vintages from 2004 to the 2000 Riserva.

There were also thirty-three Chianti Classico DOP olive oils available for tasting. A relatively complete panorama of the production in the denomination of origin of the Chianti zone.

So, what’s the final judgment on the 2005 harvest? According to Dr. Daniele Rosellini, ‘the production of clusters per vine was extremely well balanced. It was possible to determine that it would be an excellent quality vintage but with a reduction in quantity of 10 to 15% in comparison with the preceding years. Rosellini concluded, ‘The wines have moderate structures in which there is an excellent balance between alcoholic concentration and the acidic framework.’
Picture Perfect  
UK passport photos must meet international anti-fraud standards

The British Embassy in Rome is reminding its customers to make sure that photos supplied with their passport applications meet the international requirements announced last summer. The Embassy will not be able to issue a passport unless the photographs you supply meet these standards.

Passport photos need to meet more stringent, internationally-agreed standards to enable facial recognition technology to work properly. The requirements were agreed by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in 2006 and will enable the production of new, more secure biometric ‘ePassports’ as well as the use of facial recognition technology to counter passport fraud and to improve checks at international border controls.

These new passports will provide more protection from fraud for the holder, as well as making border crossings faster and more secure. Existing passport holders will not need to have their current passports updated but they will have to comply with the new guidelines for photos when they renew or replace their passports.

The guidelines, which will help boost the security and integrity of British passports, are set out in a leaflet which is available at: www.britishembassy. gov.uk/italy/photos

Since the standards were announced in August 2004, the UK Passport Service has been working with the photo industry to prepare for the implementation of the new requirements.

Home Office Minister Andy Burnham said: ‘The British passport is currently one of the most secure in the world, but it would not stay that way were we to stand still. In addition to developing new biometric passports, we have been piloting the use of facial recognition technology to detect fraudulent applications. Even at this early stage, facial biometrics are proving to be an effective tool for the Passport Service Fraud and Intelligence Units to detect attempted passport and identity fraud.

Countries such as the UK which are part of the US visa waiver scheme must comply with the ICAO standards and begin issuing biometric passports incorporating a facial image by October 2006 to remain in the scheme. The EU has also mandated facial biometrics for Member States’ passports within the Schengen area.

Bernard Herdan, Chief Executive of the UK Passport Service, said: ‘In the face of the growing threat of forgery and identity theft, countries all around the world are tightening the security of their passports to the internationally-agreed standards. The standards will also allow passports to be read by border control equipment, so that automated controls at international borders are faster but more secure.’

Museums cut back hours for lack of funds

Mayor Leonardo Domenici recently announced that the ‘finanza act of Berlusconi’s government has forced’ the City of Florence to shorten the hours of operation of its museums due to the funding cuts effected on local governments. Domenici noted that not only would museum opening hours be reduced, but that funding for restoration projects had dwindled to almost nothing. Only the bare minimum would be available for essential maintenance projects. Though the hours will not be changed at the city’s two most popular museums, Palazzo Vecchio and the Cappella Brancacci, all other city museums, including Santo Spirito (Fondazione Romano), Firenze com’era, Santa Maria Novella and the Donazione Loeser, will be cutting back on their hours.

Letters to the EDITOR

Dear The Florentine

I am an Australian who lives between Brisbane on the tropical north-east coast of Australia, and at my home in the centro storico of Florence. The Florentine has become the conduit between my two lives, so that when I am in Australia I can follow events in Florence online through your wonderful paper. I love reading it when I am there, and I find the elegant format perfect. I particularly enjoy the online version though, and I now use the archive back-copies constantly as a source of information and reference. The balance between articles, news and advertising is perfect. I have been told that Italian friends read it too, so it appeals to a wide range of Florentine readers. It is also valuable for teachers of English as it does not give only an American perspective but a wide English-language view of the city and its people and culture.

Complimenti,
Jan Dickinson

Cows hit the auction block  
Benefit for Children’s Hospital reaps thousands

The international travelling artistic exhibition, CowParade, roamed through Florence this year and recently ended in a successful auction for charity on February 21. Over 50 life-size bovine sculptures were sold, reaching an average of 3,000 euros per cow.

At the end of the auction held by Sotheby’s the charity event managed to collect nearly 240,000 euros for Florence’s new Meyer Children’s Hospital, currently under construction near Careggi Hospital.

The cow sculptures were created by artists of varying fame and with even more varying results. With the help of local butcher of international fame, Dario Cecchini, all 53 cows were sold off to the many willing buyers who attended the auction. The highest bid was for Allumeuse by Luigi Fragola and Fiona Corsini. This sculpture depicts a cow on its back with four lampshades (that really light up) perched on its hooves. The second highest bid went to ‘Fiore’; by Miguel Fabrucci, a cow wearing the purple uniform of Florence’s own soccer team Fiorentina. Ironically, this cow was not sold to a Florentine but to a Chinese bidder who snatched it up for the small sum of 9,000 euros.

Museums cut back hours for lack of funds

Mayor Leonardo Domenici recently announced that the ‘finanza act of Berlusconi’s government has forced’ the City of Florence to shorten the hours of operation of its museums due to the funding cuts effected on local governments. Domenici noted that not only would museum opening hours be reduced, but that funding for restoration projects had dwindled to almost nothing. Only the bare minimum would be available for essential maintenance projects. Though the hours will not be changed at the city’s two most popular museums, Palazzo Vecchio and the Cappella Brancacci, all other city museums, including Santo Spirito (Fondazione Romano), Firenze com’era, Santa Maria Novella and the Donazione Loeser, will be cutting back on their hours.

Letters to the EDITOR

Dear The Florentine

I am an Australian who lives between Brisbane on the tropical north-east coast of Australia, and at my home in the centro storico of Florence. The Florentine has become the conduit between my two lives, so that when I am in Australia I can follow events in Florence online through your wonderful paper. I love reading it when I am there, and I find the elegant format perfect. I particularly enjoy the online version though, and I now use the archive back-copies constantly as a source of information and reference. The balance between articles, news and advertising is perfect. I have been told that Italian friends read it too, so it appeals to a wide range of Florentine readers. It is also valuable for teachers of English as it does not give only an American perspective but a wide English-language view of the city and its people and culture.

Complimenti,
Jan Dickinson

Cows hit the auction block  
Benefit for Children’s Hospital reaps thousands

The international travelling artistic exhibition, CowParade, roamed through Florence this year and recently ended in a successful auction for charity on February 21. Over 50 life-size bovine sculptures were sold, reaching an average of 3,000 euros per cow.

At the end of the auction held by Sotheby’s the charity event managed to collect nearly 240,000 euros for Florence’s new Meyer Children’s Hospital, currently under construction near Careggi Hospital.

The cow sculptures were created by artists of varying fame and with even more varying results. With the help of local butcher of international fame, Dario Cecchini, all 53 cows were sold off to the many willing buyers who attended the auction. The highest bid was for Allumeuse by Luigi Fragola and Fiona Corsini. This sculpture depicts a cow on its back with four lampshades (that really light up) perched on its hooves. The second highest bid went to ‘Fiore’; by Miguel Fabrucci, a cow wearing the purple uniform of Florence’s own soccer team Fiorentina. Ironically, this cow was not sold to a Florentine but to a Chinese bidder who snatched it up for the small sum of 9,000 euros.
National News

Berlusconi Broadcast Ruled Fair Play
TV network did not break election rules by broadcasting Berlusconi’s speech to U.S. Congress

because it could be considered coverage of a major topical event.

The opposition, however, claimed that Berlusconi’s speech, along with his entire visit to Washington, amounted to propaganda for the April 9 elections. But centre-right allies pointed out that his visit was an important event rather than political maneuvering, noting that Berlusconi was the first Italian premier to speak before U.S. Congress in 20 years. Berlusconi also received the Freedom Award during his visit, which allies consider to be significant recognition from the U.S. for the country’s involvement in anti-terrorism activities.

During his speech to Congress, Berlusconi lauded U.S. efforts against terrorism and its defence of democracy. He claimed Europe should follow the U.S. example and that the only way to beat terrorism would be to turn the world into a great America.

On returning home, Berlusconi rejected opposition complaints, defending his visit and claiming that it was evidence of his success at foreign policy.

Italian Agent Remembered
President Ciampi presents memorial in honour of Nicola Calipari

A NSA reported that Italian intelligence agent Nicola Calipari, who was slain in Iraq a year ago, was remembered with the unveiling of a memorial stone at the headquarters of the SISMI secret service.

Nicola Calipari was killed on March 4, 2005, U.S. troops manning a temporary roadblock opened fire on a car which was taking Calipari, together with another agent and released hostage Giuliana Sgrena, to Baghdad airport.

Italian President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi unveiled the memorial at a ceremony attended by Calipari’s widow, Rosa, and their daughter Silvia, House Speaker Pier Ferdinando Casini, Defence Minister Antonio Martino and the joint chiefs of staff. Minister Martino announced that from now on every March 4 will be celebrated as SISMI Day in memory of Calipari.

An unprecedented joint investigation by Italian and U.S. military experts failed to reach a shared conclusion. American members cleared the soldiers of all responsibility while the Italians blamed the U.S. organisation of the roadblock. Last December, Rome prosecutors formally placed under investigation the U.S. Marine who had opened fire on Calipari’s car.

Rosa Calipari has now accepted to run next month as an independent on the Democratic Left in order to demand answered questions regarding the collision.

The joint investigation concluded that Calipari’s car came under ‘friendly fire’ from a temporary roadblock manned by ten U.S. soldiers on their first day of service. According to the American side, the car was travelling at high speed, about 80kms per hour, and the driver panicked. The Italian report said that the soldiers stuck to the rules of engagement for this sort of situation and therefore no action should be taken against them.

The Italians involved in the joint enquiry refuted the claim that rules of engagement were respected. They argued that there were no set procedures for the mobile ‘blocking point’ set up by the soldiers.

Libyan leader responds to attacks against Italian Consulate in Benghazi

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi upset Italian politicians on all sides after his angry comments in response to recent attacks on the Italian Consulate in Benghazi, Libya. According to ANSA, Gaddafi claimed the protests were in support of Libyan demands for reparations from Italy for its period of colonial occupation. He stated to the Libyan People’s Assembly that an attack on the Italian Consulate in Benghazi had little to do with anti-Islamic cartoons printed in Denmark.

Following Gaddafi’s accusations, Italy’s Northern League immediately demanded an apology from political allies and foes who had forced out League minister Roberto Calderoli for wearing a T-shirt bearing the Danish cartoons. The League claimed that Gaddafi’s statement was clear proof that Calderoli’s action had not stoked anti-Italian sentiment in Libya, leading to the attack in which 14 Libyans died in police fire.

However, upon further reading of the full transcript of Gaddafi’s statement, the leader actually accuses minister Calderoli as being a fascist minister who used racist and colonialist language.

Calderoli then asked for apologies from Gaddafi himself. In an effort to quell the discord between the two countries, Foreign Minister Gianfranco Fini insisted that the statements by Gaddafi were no more than an inflammatory speech geared towards his own citizens.

Fini announced that Rome’s position on Italy-Libya relations had been restated by the cabinet on February 23. Significant measures were being taken to resolve all questions regarding the colonial period, in exchange for an end to discrimination against Italian refugees who have lost their livelihoods and property.
Fiorentina: a Difficult Victory Earns Team Fourth Place

Roma falls behind after tie with Inter

Fiorentina had to win against its 'Tuscan cousin' Siena if the team wanted to keep ahead of close rival Roma. Both Fiorentina and Roma are battling for fourth place in the classifications which would allow them a place next year in the most prestigious European tournament: Champion’s League.

After the usual goal by 'Super Toni', Siena managed to tie with a 'gift' from Fiorentina goalkee- ler Lobontby. However, young Fiorentina talent Pazzini (who substituted an exhausted Toni at the end of the second half) scored at the very end of the game, breaking the tie just in time.

Thanks to this latest victory, as well as Roma's tie with Inter, Fiorentina has taken the advantage in the battle for fourth place in the classifications. Fiorentina also moves its way even closer to Milan, who seem to have given up any hope of regaining first place.

At the end of the 20 games in the Italian championship, the first six ranking teams will qualify to play in the European Championships next year. The first four will play in the Champion's League, and the fifth and sixth in the UEFA Cup. The lowest four ranking teams will be excluded from the first division category Serie A, and enter the second division Serie B.

Round 28

date   hrs   home team   opponent points
sat 18.00   Siena   Treviso  3
sat 20.30   Inter   Sampdoria  2
sun 15.00   Ascoli   Roma  1
sun 15.00   Cagliari   Fiorentina  2
sun 15.00   Empoli   Chievo  1
sun 15.00   Lazio   Reggina  1
sun 15.00   Messina   Lecce  1
sun 15.00   Palermo   Udinese  1
sun 15.00   Parma   Livorno  1
sun 20.30   Juventus   Milan  1

Round 29

date   hrs   home team   opponent points
sat 18.00   Siena   Treviso  3
sat 20.30   Inter   Sampdoria  2
sun 15.00   Ascoli   Roma  1
sun 15.00   Cagliari   Fiorentina  2
sun 15.00   Empoli   Chievo  1
sun 15.00   Lazio   Reggina  1
sun 15.00   Messina   Lecce  1
sun 15.00   Palermo   Udinese  1
sun 15.00   Parma   Livorno  1
sun 20.30   Juventus   Milan  1

Round 30

date   hrs   home team   opponent points
sun 15.00   Chievo   Siena  1
sun 15.00   Fiorentina   Ascoli  2
sun 15.00   Inter   Lazio  2
sun 15.00   Lecce   Parma  1
sun 15.00   Livorno   Juventus  1
sun 15.00   Reggina   Empoli  1
sun 15.00   Roma   Messina  1
sun 15.00   Sampdoria   Palermo  1
sun 15.00   Treviso   Cagliari  1
sun 15.00   Udinese   Milan  1

Top 5 scorers

player   team   goals
1. Toni   Fiorentina  23
2. Trezeguet   Juventus  18
3. Shevchenko   Milan  16
4. Gilardino   Milan  15
5. Totti   Roma  15

Florence Adds Value to National Team

4-1 victory against Germany

Florence has not hosted Italy’s national team for over 13 years but the team’s return here on March 1 went even better than expected with Italy winning 4-1 against Germany.

The friendly match was a sort of test of skills for the upcoming Germany World Cup in June. It was the first game of its sort played at Florence’s Franchi stadium since the harshly contested match against Mexico in 1993. At the time, the leaders of the national team were under criticism by Fiorentina fans, prompting vocal insults and even cheers for Mexico’s team by Florentines. Though it had never been officially stated, the national team had, since that game, refused to return to Florence. So, their return here last week signified that peace has finally been made.

Not only was Italy satisfied with the convincing victory against Germany, but Fiorentina fans appeared to have been rewarded for their good behaviour as the second goal of the match was scored by Fiorentina’s own star player Luca Toni.

After the match, coach Marcello Lippi announced he was convinced that Italy not only had a fighting chance in the upcoming World Cup games but even a prospect of winning the title.

When in Florence...

Tourism unites foreign students in Florence

Within the splendid sports complex Asi Giglio Rossa, at the foot of Piazzale Michelangelo, the second 5-player soccer tournament for foreign students in Florence was successfully concluded. The tournament, open to all foreigners attending language school Lorenzo de’ Medici claimed victory over Europass. After a second year of successful attendance, organisers intend to repeat the tournament again next year.

Phantom Goals are Under Surveillance

International Board says yes to using video for settling disputes.

An Italian proposal to settle arguments about whether a goal has been scored was accepted by the international soccer federation FIFA on March 4.

Under the proposal from the Italian Soccer Federation (FIGC), high-powered and high-definition digital TV cameras will be used to see whether the ball has completely crossed the goal line. The cameras should be installed by 2007.

FIGC’s proposal beat a rival plan to put electronic chips in balls. The chip idea was being pushed by several other federations and would have sent an electronic signal by interacting with sensors in the goal line. But FIGC insisted that there was too much of a risk that either the chip or the sensors could be knocked out of order during play. Four representatives from FIFA and four each from the ‘home’ federations of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, made the final decision to accept the Italian proposal.

FORZA VIOLA!!!
Movies in English Showing in Florence

by James Douglas

Weeks: 9 March - 23 March 2006

Thursday 9 / Monday 13
ODEON THEATRE
SYRIANA
Steven Gaghans’s monumental political thriller, Syriana, is the kind of film that allows you to get lost in its devilishly complicated plot yet not lose it because you are drawn so convincingly into the world it portrays. It is a world of international deals, corruption, terrorism and personal struggles for justice and revenge, centred on the oil industry and CIA investigations in and around it. It is about what happens when people realise the truth about the rapidly disappearing commodity that our world depends on.

Monday 20
ODEON THEATRE
PROOF
In Proof, Gwyneth Paltrow gives a memorable reprisal of her stage role (in the West End with the same director, John Madden) as Catherine, the daughter of a mad mathematician (Anthony Hopkins). Who is forced to come to terms with her late father’s legacy, possibly including his insanity, as well as with the obsessive love of his assistant, Jake Gyllenhaal, and an intrusive over-dominant sister (Hope Davis). A remarkably true-to-life recreation of campus life, and translation of David Auburn’s play, the movie is a mathematically controlled investigation of the line separating genius and madness, and seeks proof of the theorem in an elegant exploration of beautiful minds.

Wednesday 15
BRITISH INSTITUTE
Femme Fatales’ series
THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE
‘Their Love was a flame that destroyed!’ One of the best film noirs ever, The Postman Always Rings Twice was the third screen adaptation of James M. Cain’s novel about a drifter who falls for an unsatisfied married woman and conspires with her to eliminate her husband. As femmes fatales go, they don’t get much better (or worse) than Lana Turner as the vicious and fatally seductive but doomed Cora in this excellent foretaste of the erotic thriller.

Tuesday 14
ODEON THEATRE
CASANOVA
Giacomo Casanova, the legendary lover and sexual adventurer, is played by versatile Heath Ledger in Lasse Hallström’s period comedy Casanova, filmed entirely in the romantic setting of Venice, and set in 1753. Tame by the standards of the man himself, the movie is a cheerfully anachronistic and sanitised soft-core romp in sub-Goldoni territory. Colourful, busy and bland.

Wednesday 22
BRITISH INSTITUTE
Femme Fatales’ series
DEAD RECKONING
Lizbeth Scott is the femme fatale in this 1947 noir, playing opposite Humphrey Bogart. Hard-boiled dialogue and shady characters are staple fare for this genre, and a needlessly complicated plot is almost de rigueur. Dead Reckoning has it all. While decidedly B-movie standard, its overall mediocrity shouldn’t get in the way of its intriguing representations of female sexuality.

Tuesday 16
ODEON THEATRE
WALK THE LINE
Walk The Line is James Mangold’s biopic about country/rock/blues legend Johnny Cash, played by Joaquin Phoenix, and his partner June, played by Reese Witherspoon. Unsurprisingly, the movie compresses the life into significant episodes of deprivation, determination, failure, success and excess, but it delivers an immaculate soundtrack, and surprisingly, the vocals are the actors’ own. Everything you ever wanted to know about the life and works of Johnny Cash.

Tuesday 21
ODEON THEATRE
CAPOTE
Another biopic of a contemporary American legend is Bennett Miller’s Capote, featuring the always watchable Philip Seymour Hoffman as the flamboyant writer researching his “non-fiction novel” In Cold Blood, with devastating consequences to his health. Capote’s casual journalistic interest in the murder of a Kansas family in 1959 gradually draws him into the mind of the murderers. What ensues is a literary and personal adventure that all but destroys him as justice and morality take their course.
Friday 10

CINEMA

L’avventura by Michelangelo Antonioni (1960)
Grand classic of Italian film. In Italian with English subtitles.
Istituto Stensen, via don Minzoni 25/c, tel. 055 676551, www.stensen.org, 21.00

EXHIBITS

Immagini by Sergio Scatizzi
Salone delle Rotonde, Posta, Lungarno degli Uffizi 6, tel. 055.2135602/284034, 10.30-12.30, 15.30-17.30

Marc Kostabi
Maison Enrico Coveri, Lungarno Guicciardini 19, tel. 055.281004, until March 8, 10-18.30-19.30

MARKETS & FESTIVALS

Salone Immobiliare di Firenze
See ongoing

Furniture Trade Fair
See ongoing

MUSIC & CONCERTS

Renato Zero
Nelson Mandela Forum (ex PalaSport), viale Pascualle Paoli, tel. 055.6798441, www.mandelaforum.it, 21.00

Massimiliano Pinzauti Trio

Per certi versi
Songs and music by song-writers
Teatro Cantiere Florida, via Pisana 11r, tel. 055.5738577, 21.00

Per questo mae infinito di gente
A tribute to Ivanos Fossati
Settignano Casa del Popolo, via di San Romano 1, 21.30, free

Scaramuzzini
Ambasciata di Marple, via Mennelli 2, tel. 055.6950765, www.ambasciatabritannica.org, 23.00

Solea Group
Ottavio J Bistrò, via delle Oche 12/16r, tel. 055.251151, 21.00

Titta Nasti + House Band
Jazz Club, via Nuova de’ Caccini 3, tel. 055.2479700, 22.15, € 7

Gennai, Gorgone, Di Tanno, Riggi

THEATRE (in Italian unless otherwise noted)

My stupid Dog
Commedia show by Zuzzurro
Teatro Puccini, via delle Cascine 41, tel. 055.362067, www.teatropecinini.it, March 9-10, 21.00

Don Chisciotte by Bolek Polivka
Teatro di Valetta, via Volterrana 4/b, tel. 055.2921754, www.teatrodovest.it, 21.00

Gran varietà
Teatro 13, via Nicolodi 2, tel. 055.2767822, 21.00

Saturday 11

EXHIBITS

Marc Kostabi
See March 10

GUIDED TOURS

Medici and Savoia in the suburb-bana of Villa La Petraia
Starting point: Villa La Petraia, at 15.00, info Akropolis, via S. Zanobi 84r, tel. 055.461428

MUSIC & CONCERTS

Orchestra Barocca di Venezia
Teatro della Pergola, via della Pergola, 18, tel. 055.22641, www.pergola.firenze.it, 20.45, on Sun, 15.45, €15/29

Dance andWindows from the Rinascimento at the gior- no nostro
concert by Quartetto Saxofour
Giardino dei Semplici, sez. Orto Botanico, via Michel 3, tel. 055.2757456, www.unifi.it/mms, 21.00

Calomito
Ambasciata di Marple, via Mennelli 2, tel. 055.6500786, www.ambasciatemente.org, 23.00

Six Disters
Jazz Club, via Nuova de’ Caccini 3, tel. 055.2767822, www.pergola.firenze.it, 20.45, on Sun, 15.45, €15/29

Leonidas Kavakos violin
Filharmonica di Praga
Teatro di Pergola, via della Pergola, 18, tel. 055.22641, www.pergola.firenze.it, 20.45, on Sun, 15.45, €15/29

THEATRE (in Italian unless otherwise noted)

Storie imperfette
Theatre Puccini, via delle Cascine 41, tel. 055.362067, www.teatropecinini.it, 21.00, Sun 16.00

Endangered Species Quartet
Teatro del Sole, Via dei Macchi 111r, tel. 055.201492, www.theatredelsale.com, 18.00, buffet starting at 18.30, € 24, membership mandatory
SUNDAY 12

EXHIBITS
Sergio Staino: Graphics improvisation
A famous illustrator of improvised satirical cigarettes
Galleria Varat, via dell’Orcido 47-49, tel. 055.284265, 21.15

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Dolce Parigi
Ursula Rucker Live set (USA)
Teatro della Pergola, via della Pergola, 18, tel. 055.226641, www.teatroverdifiorenze.it, 20.00
Giancarlo Cardini, a modern day com-poser
Lyceum Via degli Allani 48, 17.00
Concerts at St. Mark’s English Church
See ongoing

TUESDAY 14

MUSIC & CONCERTS
V. Mullova, K. Labeko, G. Capucon
teatro della Pergola, via della Pergola, 18, tel. 055.226641, www.teatroverdifiorenze.it, 21.00

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Casanova (in English)
Odeon Cinema, via Nazionale 111r, tel. 055.214068, www.cineitalia.it, 16.00, 18.15, 21.45

EVENTS
The Official Tribute to Blues Brothers
Ritmo Bar
Saschall, Lungarno Aldo Moro 3, tel. 055.2479700, 22.15, € 7

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Mercato delle Camicine
Cladding, leather, fruit, shoes, house-hold appliances
Parco delle Camicine, 8-13

Ireland Festival
See ongoing

THEATRE (in Italian unless otherwise noted)
Orchestra della Toscana ORT
ouverture, interludes, arias from operas by Puccini
Teatro Verdi, via Ghibellina 99, tel. 055.212230, www.teatroverdifiorenze.it, 21.00

TUESDAY 14

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Jam Session + House Band
Jazz Club, via Nuova del Caccoz 3, tel. 055.2479700, 22.15, € 7

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Cassini, Ungaro Aldo Moro 3, tel. 055.6504112, www.saschall.it, 21.00

Jazz Fusion
Modo Via Il Prato 57/59 r, 23.00, free

THEATRE (in Italian unless otherwise noted)
Il Dottor Celine
Teatro Puccini, via delle Caccine 41, tel. 055.362067, www.teatroopunicoinf, 21.00

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Maria Cassi nel labirinto del cinema
Teatro dei Macci, via dei Macci 111r, tel. 055.2549192, www.teatrodelsale.com, 19.00 buffet, 21.30 show, € 24, member-ship mandatory

EVENTS
Waiting for Godot
Chicchi di caffè
Chi ha paura di Virginia Woolf?
See ongoing

Wednesday 16

CINEMA
The postman always rings twice (in En-glish title)
British Institute of Florence, Lungarno Guic-ciardini 9, tel. 055.28778270, 20.30, member-ship mandatory

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Deserto Rosso by Michelangelo Anto-nioni (1964)
Grand classic of Italian film. In Italian with English subtitles
Istituto Stensen, via don Minzoni 25/c, tel. 055.2876551, www.stensen.org, 21.00

LECTURES & CONFERENCES
The robber in the cathedral: John Hawkwood and the mercenary age by Frances Stonor Saunders
Her first book, Who paid the piper?, was translated into 10 languages and won the William Gladstone Memorial Prize. Her new biography of John Hawkwood, subtitled Diabolical Englishman, was described by Terry Jones as "Simply the most vivid account of the late medieval world I have ever read."
British Institute of Florence, Lungarno Guic-ciardini 9, tel. 055.28778270, 18.00, free

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Sinistroke 2006
Auditorium Flog, via Mercati Michele 24b, tel. 055.487145, www.flog.it, 21.30

MUSIC & CONCERTS
La zia d’America
Teatro Verdi, via Ghibellina 99, tel. 055.212230, www.teatroverdifiorenze.it, 21.00

SPECIAL EVENTS
Lascia il Sangue e canta così
Teatro Puccini, via delle Caccine 41, tel. 055.362067, www.teatroopunicoinf, 21.00

MUSIC & CONCERTS
Deserto Rosso by Michelangelo Anto-nioni (1964)
Grand classic of Italian film. In Italian with English subtitles
Istituto Stensen, via don Minzoni 25/c, tel. 055.2876551, www.stensen.org, 21.00
Events in FLORENCE MAR 10 TO MAR 23

MARKETS & FESTIVALS

Fortezza Antiquaria (antique market) - Piazza Indipendenza - tel. 055.3283500, all day

Taste. Travelling through the diversity of taste
Stazione Leopolda, viale Fratelli Rosselli 5, tel. 055.216262, www.stazioneleopolda.it, all day

MUSIC & CONCERTS

Otterbein College Concert Band and the Big Jazz Band
Concert of marches, fanfare, spirituals, American folk, Broadway, Jazz
Chiesa di San Giovanni, via San Francesco, atto, Borgo San Jacopo, tel. 055.689573, 21.00, free

Quartetto Hagenn
Teatro di Piazza, via della Pergola, 18, tel. 055.22641, 16.00, free

Dubwise Gang Feat. Rankin’Alpha
tel. 055.215151, 21.30, free

Ottorino Jazz Bistrò, via delle Oche 12/16r,

Cris Pacini Group
Offi ce network, 21.00

International Day of Poetry 2006
San Salvi citta aperta, via di San Salvi 12, tel. 055.6363915, www.chilto.it

International Festival of Poetry in Ac-

tion “A + Voices”

MARKETS & FESTIVALS

Mercato delle Cascine
See March 14

MUSIC & CONCERTS

Jam Session + House Band
Jazz Club, via Nuove de’ Caccini 3, tel. 055.2477900, 22.15, €

Jazz Fusion
See ongoing

THEATRE (in Italian unless otherwise noted)

Maestro di Cappella del Maggio Mu-
sicale Fiorentino
See March 17

SPORTS & ACTIVITIES

Fiorentina - Ascoli
Stadio Comunale Artemio Franchi, 15.00

THEATRE (in Italian unless otherwise noted)

Scarti Variabile Amleto
See March 18

Monday 20

CINEMA

Piazza delle Erbe, L. da Vinci 2, tel. 055.572831, 21.00, Sun 13.50

Merenda futurista
Fondazione Primo Conti, via G. Dupré 18, Fiesole, tel. 055.576851, www.fondazioneprimoconti.org, 21.00

Chisciotte e gli invincibili
See March 17

Il cimitero delle domande
See March 17

Sunday 19

CINEMA

Francesco Giuliare di Dio by Roberto Rosellini (1950)
Grand classic of Italian fi lm. In Italian with English subtitles
Instituto Stensen, v.le don Minzoni 25/c, tel. 055.576851, www.stensen.org, 21.00

LECTURES & CONFERENCES

The importance of politics in our daily
lives
Professor Erik from Johns Hopkins Uni-
versity: School of Advanced International Studies will inspire participants to recapture the vitality of democracy and investigate our role in politics and civics. Non-partisan voter registration will also take place.
Villa Rossa, Synagogue University, 15 Piazza S.Ambrogio, 18.30, free

MARKETS & FESTIVALS

MARKETS & FESTIVALS

Saint Joseph fair
Piazza S.Croce, all day

The little fair of St. Joseph and wo-
ducers
Piazza Santo Spirito, all day

Lo gnozzo del libero scambio
Non-profit and private associations sell the man of the Renaissance: Leonardo da

Vinci and the art in Florence
Palazzo Strozzi, Piazza Strozzi, tel. 055.362067, www.teatroverdodelfirenze.it, 21.00

Sinistrok 2006
Auditorium Flog, via Mercato Michei 24b tel. 055.487145, www.flog.it, 21.30

Joy de Julio
Jazz Club, via Nuove de’ Caccini 3, tel. 055.2477900, 22.15, free

International Festival of Poetry in Ac-

tion “A + Voices”

MUSIC & CONCERTS

Negretria Quartet cuban music
Jazz Club, via Nuove de’ Caccini 3, tel. 055.2477900, 22.15, €

Casasola Night Party
Auditorium Flog, via Mercato Michei 24b tel. 055.487145, www.flog.it, 21.30

Le Mon
Ambasciata di Mare, via dell’Ambasciata, tel. 055.579207, 17.30-19.30

THEATRE (in Italian unless otherwise noted)

Chiedo asilo nido by Andrea Muzi
Teatro 13, via Nicolodi 2, tel. 055.2767822, 21.15

JAM Theatre
Galleria Varat - Via dell’Oriuolo 47-49r, tel. 055.281940, www.teatrodelsale.com, 18.00, 21.30 show, €24, membership mandatory

On going

Exhibits
The man of the Renaissance: Leon Bat-
tista Alberti and the art in Florence

Historical highlights: openings on Sundays
fi , until May 14 opening of the Sun

Paintings by Silvio Loffredo
Galleria Panari, Palazzo Rodolfi, via Maggio 15, tel. 055.2760111, www.panari.com,
until March 19

Voli d’Africa
Photos by Silvia Amadio
Museo Archeologico, Sala Costantini, via Portinegri 1, Fiesole, tel. 055.5961276, un-
til March 26

Paintings and graphics by F. Casalini
Galleria Giottoniana Stazione Santa Maria Novella, until April 2

Retrospective
Exhibition about Giorgio Gaber
Teatro Puccini, via delle Cascine 41, tel. 055.362067, www.teatroverdodelfirenze.it,
until March 13

Paintings by Mauro Benelli
La Corte Arte Contemporanea, via de’ Co-
it, until May 23, 16-19

Enduring Culture
Photos by Marco Keegan
SACI Gallery Studio Art Centers Internatio-
org, until March 31, 9-18

Leonardo da Vinci Mec
Galleria degli Ufizi, Piazzale degli Ufizi, tel. 055.8888961, www.uffizi.fi renze.it, until Ja-

Thursday 9 March 2006

guided tours

Tour of the Medici Chapels
Palazzo Medici Riccardi, tel. 055.212322, 10.00-12.00

Tour of the Accademia
Piazza della Signoria, tel. 055.212280, 10.00-12.00

Tour of Palazzo Pitti
Palazzo Pitti, Piazza Pitti, tel. 055.212322, 14.00-16.00

Tour of the Uffizi
Uffizi, tel. 055.2388651, www.uffi zi.fi renze.it, until March 25, 16-19

Tour of the Boboli Gardens
Boboli Gardens, Viale di Boboli, tel. 055.212280, 10.00-12.00

Tour of the Oltrarno
Porta al Prato, Viale di Porta al Prato, tel. 055.212280, 10.00-12.00
Events in FLORENCE MAR 10 TO MAR 23

Rice fritters and doughnut food festival
Anselmo city center (Montespertoli), tel. 0571.8545271, March 12 and 19, all day

Fiereculla della casa
Monthly market of ecological and biological biodiversity, natural, hand-crafted products of the Prato area
Pasquale Buonamici and Piazza S. Maria al Castello, Prato, March 12, 9-19

Week-end of March 18-19
Exchange mart of toy soldiers and dolls
Centro Congressi Delta Florence, Calenzano, tel. 055.6866441, March 19, all day

Spring truffle festival
Montelupo Fiorentino historical center, tel. 0571.652440, March 17, 18, 19, Spazio Sagre c/o Piscina Fiammetta, cer-

Plant and flower market
Figline Val d’Arno historical center, tel. 0571.242717, March 18-19

Handicraft and collector market
Handicraft and collector market
Piazza Boccaccio, Certaldo, tel. 0571.686341, March 19, all day

HAPPY HOUR EVERY DAY 7:00 PM-10:00 PM
THE BEST BEERS, THE BEST LIVE MUSIC IN TOWN - FREE ENTRANCE
IRISH PUB & CELLAR BAR

Catia Ballerini
DITALS certified language instructor
Certification of Competence in Teaching Italian to Foreigners - University of Siena

20 Years
Teaching experience in Australia and Italy
Available for adult students for private or semiprivate Italian language lessons
English spoken fluently
Flexible Schedule Available Mon to Fri

WebPuccino in Florence
PIAZZA MADONNA (CORNER OF VIA DEI CONTI 22R)
www.campustelecom.it
Ph. 055 2776469

Make VoiceoverIP calls using
HIGH SPEED WIRELESS INTERNET

THE MICHAEL COLLINS
IRISH PUB & CELLAR BAR
The best beers, the best live music in town - free entrance
Happy hour every day 7:00 pm-10:00 pm | Open from 11 am to 2 am
Firenze | Piazza Della Signoria 30R | Tel. 055 295232
Concerts start approximately at 10:30pm

www.agilelogica.it

PARKS
Sculptures in a woodland
In an untouched wood of ilex and oak trees in the heart of Sienese Chianti, many internationally renowned artists from five continents have created imposing contemporary sculptures in accordance with their own creative ideas and style.
Parco scultura dei Chianti, La For- nace 48/49, Pieveciciata, Siena, tel. 0577.8057151, www.chiartisculpturepark.it, open all year

SPORTS & ACTIVITIES
Billiard tournament
Casa del Popolo, Grassina, tel. 055.642639, March 19, April 10

Every Florentine Deserves
Cellar live events program:
March 2nd > U2 live tribute - Ultraviolet band
March 3rd > Kjal Funky/Reggae Project
March 8th > International Women’s Day - the M.C. pays homage to ladies with its pink drinks offers
March 9th > Last Minute Dirty Band - back to 60’s
March 10th > JANS JOPUN live tribute - Tell Mama band
March 11th > Kjal Funky/Reggae Project
March 16th > LENNY KRAVITZ live tribute - Band Robber band
March 17th > St. Patrick’s day - irish music and ...slainte
March 23rd > Punk rock karaoke - be a rock star for one night, choose your song and sing it with a real live band
March 24th > Gas Gas acoustic trio
March 25th > About blues band
March 30th > Last Minute Dirty Band - back to 60’s
March 31st > THE ROLLING STONES live tribute - Crazy Mama band
Warming up for Saint Patrick’s Day celebrations

An Interview With H.E. Frank Cogan
Ireland’s Ambassador to Italy

“...we seem to get on very well, that is Irish people and Italians.”

The Roman Forum: Your Excellency, what distinguishes the Irish community in Italy, given the country’s ancient ties with Catholicism?

H.E. Frank Cogan: There’s always been a strong presence of Irish religious people in Rome for obvious reasons, Rome being the centre of the Catholic Church. For many years Irish clergy were educated here but the numbers have declined an awful lot in the last 20 years or so. That presence is not nearly as strong as it used to be. Nevertheless there are important Irish colleges – the Pontifical Irish College is the main one and quite an important part of the Irish community. More and more you have a different kind of Irish person, a lot for business, as well as younger people looking for a bit of experience working abroad. So the Irish community is a rather dispersed one really. We reckon there are up to about 2,000 Irish in the Rome area. The Embassy doesn’t necessarily meet them all but the Irish Club of Rome acts as a focal point and the centre of their activities is the St. Patrick’s Day celebrations.

RF: Has the Irish Embassy’s work changed in recent years?

F. C.: I suppose it has changed. For example, Irish weddings are big business in Italy. About a thousand Irish couples get married here every year, probably about 75 per cent are in Rome, which is quite a significant bit of business for the embassy because we have to process all the paperwork, the legal permission, but it’s a nice part of the job, helping people to get married.

We have a lot of consular work too which is dealing with people from outside the EU coming to us for Irish visas. Ireland has got a reputation in recent years of being a good place to go both to work and to study so there has been an extraordinary upsurge in interest from people from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and even Latin America wanting to go to Ireland for one reason or another and this has contributed to a significant increase in our consular work.

The work in recent years has also become a lot more commercially oriented. We try to do more to stimulate interest in trade and tourism to Ireland so we assist our promotional bodies who are all based in Milan and act as the Rome agency.

RF: What lasting memories will you take back with you to Ireland?

F. C.: I considered myself extremely fortunate to be posted to Rome as it’s a wonderful city and Italy is a marvellous country. The variety of landscape and the richness of cultural life, history, art and architecture available in this country are fantastic. You can’t go anywhere really without finding something that is fascinating in one way or another. The food, the wine and the sunshine, for most of the year, is great. And Italians are very nice people. We seem to get on very well, that is Irish people and Italians. Generally people are helpful and sympathetic. People give out sometimes that things don’t always work like clockwork here and it’s true, they don’t, but there are other compensations. To spend a few years in Italy really is a privilege.

RF: What lasting memories will you take back with you to Ireland?

F. C.: I considered myself extremely fortunate to be posted to Rome as it’s a wonderful city and Italy is a marvellous country. The variety of landscape and the richness of cultural life, history, art and architecture available in this country are fantastic. You can’t go anywhere really without finding something that is fascinating in one way or another. The food, the wine and the sunshine, for most of the year, is great. And Italians are very nice people. We seem to get on very well, that is Irish people and Italians. Generally people are helpful and sympathetic. People give out sometimes that things don’t always work like clockwork here and it’s true, they don’t, but there are other compensations. To spend a few years in Italy really is a privilege.

RF: March 17 is St. Patrick’s Day – what celebrations are planned throughout Italy?

F. C.: Well, the embassy is involved in events both in Milan and Rome that week as we have a minister visiting
ITALIAN VOICES: A Window on Language and Customs in Italy...“Dipende” by Linda Falcone

In the middle of lesson, my student pulls her desk up closer so we can understand each other better. In Italy, it’s best if you can touch whoever you’re talking to. Before traipsing into my classroom, three weeks ago, Marilena had never studied English before. Her generation speaks French. She decided to pay for individual lessons so that we can produce only conversations that interest her personally. She’s too old to be bored with nonsense, she says. Supposedly it’s one of the benefits of being fifty-five.

As of yet, our conversations would not entertain a fly. There’s only so much you can do with the verb ‘to be’ and a handful of adjectives. ‘What is your favorite color?’ I ask in my slow-mo voice.

Marilena thinks a moment and answers me in Italian ‘Color? Dipende’. For what? A room? A jacket? For eyes? Cream for a room. Black for a jacket. Green for a man’s jacket? For eyes? Cream for a room. Dipende with my student’s ability to delve so deeply into the world of chromatic preference. Also, I am fascinated by the Italian dependence on the word *dipende*. For years, their incessant use of the word has filled me with an inexplicable feeling of being fifty-five. It could also be out of fear of what others will say. With several responses, there is a better chance of saying something acceptable.

It was a stupid question, really, Francesca argued, when I complained about my student’s inability to commit to a color. ‘She’s right that each shade has a special role in our lives.’

‘Both, I suppose.’ Francesca smiled, ‘We say dipende because we are too creative a people to be tied to one possibility only. But, dipende. It could also be out of fear of what others will say. With several responses, there is a better chance of saying something acceptable.’

‘So you’re afraid someone will use your favorite color against you?’ I asked.

‘Fine,’ I sighed. ‘It’s a superficial question. But, I couldn’t very well ask the woman to discuss existential theories. She knows four words. As I find the answer to a pressing cultural issue, another question pops up to disturb my new-found sense of order. No sooner did it mean to live than another begins. That is how it is to live in Italy. It’s a nice country, but it offers no rest for the weary.

Try Sam’s for a bit of America !!

Over 250 products imported by Sam’s from the USA:

- Skippy Peanut Butter (Crunchy and Smooth), A & W Root Beer, Mountain Dew, Dr. Pepper, 7-Up, Welch’s Juices (grape, cranberry), Lipton Cup a Soup, Oreos, Hunt’s Chie con Carne, Starkist Tuna, Starbucks Coffee, CoffeeMate, Heine Baked Beans, Jiffy Pie-Crust & Cake Mix, Reeses Pieces, Hershey’s Candies, Quaker Instant Oatmeal, Chips Ahoy, Squirt, Planters Salted Peanuts, Chef Boyardee Soups, Betty Crocker Cake Mixes, Crotons and Stuffing, Pumpkin Pie Mix, Hellmanns Mayo, Nutter Butter Cookies, Kraft Macaroni & Cheese, Cheez-It, Doritos, Pop Tarts, Campbell’s Soups, Nabisco Salamines, Pop Secret Popcorn, ... and a lot more !

SAM’S HAS IT !

Sam’s is located in the center of Florence near the Bargello Museum

Via Ghibellina 117r. - Tel. 055-7189020

Store hours: Mon-Sat 11.00 am – 7.00 pm

www.sams-market.com
Athletes at this year’s Winter Olympics may have been surprised to find that the coveted medals they had come to the Apennines to compete for were missing their golden centers. The Olympic officials who had commissioned the new medal design said that the hole was no mistake - it represented the piazzas of Italy.

It should come as no surprise that the piazza was chosen as the symbol of Italy at such an esteemed international gathering. These open spaces have defined and nourished public life and Italian culture for centuries. Italy, one might argue, wouldn’t be Italy at all if it weren’t for its piazzas.

Parole di Piazza:
Tales of the City, Santa Croce Speaks
by Mari Kenton Wright

Athletes at this year’s Winter Olympics may have been surprised to find that the coveted medals they had come to the Apennines to compete for were missing their golden centers. The Olympic officials who had commissioned the new medal design said that the hole was no mistake - it represented the piazzas of Italy.

It should come as no surprise that the piazza was chosen as the symbol of Italy at such an esteemed international gathering. These open spaces have defined and nourished public life and Italian culture for centuries. Italy, one might argue, wouldn’t be Italy at all if it weren’t for its piazzas.

Florence is abundant in piazzas, all of which are steeped in history and the unique character of each one’s respective neighborhoods. One of the city’s most distinctive piazzas is that of the basilica Santa Croce, situated in one of the oldest districts of the city. Today, Piazza Santa Croce is lined with chic leather shops and touristy pizzerias and sits in the heart of a vibrant and bustling quarter. But this rectangular expanse of uninterrupted stone hasn’t always been a destination for Italians and tourists looking for good buys and eats.

In the 12th century, the area surrounding the piazza was suburban marshland, prone to floods and pestilence. Despite this, it became a lively neighborhood of laborers and artisans who lived outside the ancient urban walls of the city. It’s no coincidence that the streets nearby the piazza bear names like Tintori (wool dyers) or Conciatorti (tanners), for these were the kinds of occupations that were most common in this area, and similar workshops are still prevalent near the square today. It was a worker’s quarter that had developed depressed slums, making it the perfect spot for the austere mendicant order of the Franciscans to settle.

Construction of the basilica began in 1295 under the expert direction of Arnolfo di Cambio. The front of the church looked out onto the large, rectangular square, thought to have been used for sporting events as far back as the 5th century by the Romans. But the Franciscans had other intentions for the space. As the first monastic order to be allowed to preach to the public in the vernacular, the Franciscans of Santa Croce drew massive crowds to the square or oratory in front of the church.

They needed that much space, more in fact. They could pack the piazza all day long with their marathon sermons. Vernacular lectures on religion were the height of entertainment for the weary laboring citizens of medieval Florence. The Franciscans breathed new life into the district and artisan greatness. Benches for quiet contemplation now sit where spectators once stood to watch joust tournaments. Like all of Florence’s piazzas, Santa Croce is a space of historical significance and present-day importance.

Because the space was so friendly to crowds, the piazza became a popular city-wide meeting place for celebrations and important religious days. It was the location of the May Day festival each Spring and during the Renaissance was used for jousts and tournaments, many of which were attended by city elite, like the Medici.

Violent and colorful football matches were played in the piazza, beginning in the 15th century. Four teams, verdi, rossi, bianchi and azzuri represented the four main districts of the city. In 1530, when Florence was under the attack of Charles V of France, a football match was organized in the piazza between verdi and bianchi as a contemptuous gesture to the invaders and a clear statement that Florentine culture could not, and would not, be interrupted. Matches were staged frequently and were a popular pastime for young, rowdy noblemen. In 1865, a frowning statue of Dante was placed in the center of the piazza, making it impossible for the football matches to take place. But the Florentine public was unhappy with this development and the statue was later removed, allowing the games to continue. The tradition of Storia Calcio continues to this day, as players in period costume meet on June 24 and several other days in early Summer to bring the renaissance sport back to life.

Today, you’ll find the piazza much quieter than in the days when it was a Franciscan oratory. The putrid smells of tanneries have been replaced by orderly leather shops that surround the square as proud reminders of the area’s legacy of labor and artisan greatness. Benches for quiet contemplation now sit where spectators once stood to watch joust tournaments. Like all of Florence’s piazzas, Santa Croce is a space of historical significance and present-day importance.
A paradise of exiles is how Percy Bysshe Shelley described Florence, hinting at the anomaly of a city that exiled its most famous writer - Dante, creator of Paradise - yet has since nurtured countless foreign authors and poets. The English were among the first to be inspired by ‘the stones of Florence’: back in 1572, Queen Elizabeth I’s favourite courtier Sir Philip Sidney embarked on a Grand Tour, Florentia being a high-point of his two-and-a-half year sojourn. Aged just 17, Sidney sounds surprisingly like a contemporary teenager, with his aim to study ‘languages and international relations’. Yet the aspiration for most ‘grand tourists’ was to set foot on ‘Classic soil’ and thereby soak up the culture of Classical Antiquity.

Sidney started something of a fashion for the English writer-tourist in Florence and he was followed in later centuries by Tobias Smollett, James Boswell (friend and biographer of Dr Samuel Johnson), Lord Byron, the Brownings, Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, John Ruskin and innumerable others. There are too many English people in Florence; they will be my ruin if I have to invite them all to dinner!’ was the heartfelt concern of Sir Horace Mann, Embassy Secretary for England in Florence in the 1730s. Today, some would echo his view that there are simply ‘too many English’ in this village-cum-city (indeed, Florence became known as ‘une ville toute anglaise’), yet most visitors would agree that since the heady days of the Grand Tour a special Anglo-Florentine rapport has developed. Such empathy was memorably encapsulated by Robert Browning: in Florence, he said, ‘I felt at home with my own soul!’

Whatever its prosaic realities, Firenze has inspired Anglo-American writers through the centuries to wax poetical. But there have been illiberal views of my young countrymen abroad; especially wherever they are in numbers together.

No wonder Georgian teenagers were meant to travel with a tutor, tellingly called a ‘bear-leader’, whose duty it was to provide both academic and moral guidance. Philip Stanhope was one of many anxious parents concerned that their sons did not indulge in any unwise amours whilst abroad as venerable disease was rife. But the licentious James Boswell, who toured Italy in the 1760s, was forever going in search of courtesans and condoms. Quite often he found the former without the latter, and would inevitably pay the price, though it never seemed to cool his sexual ardour. In Florence, he was diagnosed with gonorrhoea, which prompted him to stock up on condoms and move on to Siena, where he found the women far more obliging than the ‘proud Florentines’. So much for his Classical education.

“Whatever its prosaic realities, Firenze has inspired Anglo-American writers through the centuries to wax poetical.”
The Fairest of Them All
Syracuse’s annual benefit is no fairytale
by Alexandra Reisner

Syracuse students, led by professor Vittoria Tettamanti-Harley, have spearheaded an effort to bring Operation: Do You Speak English? to local elementary schools. This aspect of the project, using the didactic approach developed by Tettamanti-Harley in conjunction with the volunteers, aims to encourage familiarity with the story for students in kindergarten through sixth grade via vocabulary exercises, storyboard images and active participation. Tettamanti-Harley began the project last year with a similar presentation of the Meyer Children’s Hospital of Syracuse, and visits are even scheduled to continue through the college students’ spring break.

In addition to the classroom visits, Syracuse University will host a day-long conference on the role of fairytales in the development of young children within a multi-ethnic society. Scheduled for March 10, the conference invites teachers, students, psychologists and parents to a series of lectures. Among those involved are Barbara Fiese, a developmental psychologist from Syracuse’s home campus in New York, Anna Sarfatti, an author of children’s tales, and famed Italian psychiatrist Paolo Crepet.

The project also encourages Italian elementary schools and students to do their own good deeds. In a scheme appropriately named ‘A book for an apple’, schools and students are encouraged to donate a copy of their favorite fairytale to a local library. In return, each young donor will receive an apple and a literary surprise in English to encourage the cultural exchange. The project will continue through the end of the semester in April.

Perhaps the greatest undertaking of the project is the staging of eight performances of Snow White at the Teatro del Maggio Musicale. Six sold-out matinees are scheduled throughout the month of March for elementary school children, who will have been prepared for this contemporary, English-language version through the classroom visits. The remaining two performances, on the evenings of March 19 and 21, are for adults and families. The former will be a gala performance, the proceeds of which will go to the Meyer Children’s Hospital.

While Syracuse has called in professionals such as director Vivien Hewitt, scenographer and lighting specialist Alex Koziaro and costume designer Regina Schrecker to bring the work to life, students enrolled in the studio arts program have been assisting with sets and costumes for the production. The performance itself will feature eleven student actors who have been preparing during the last few months at Syracuse’s home campus as well as a corpus of singers from the Florentine campus.
Four Seasons makes Grand Entrance
Renaissance palace is 5 star
by Victoria Miachika

Florence has more than its fair share of palazzi. These once opulent residences of the wealthy and noble have been transformed to accommodate the evolving needs of a crowded destination city and now serve as museums, offices, rental apartments, hotels and retail spaces. Expensive to maintain and renovate many have also been left sadly neglected and closed. Currently on the horizon is an unprecedented palatial project offering something different for the city and its visitors...a five star luxury resort!

The project first met with resistance from both the city and hospitality industry who claimed Florence had enough hotel rooms. The project’s proposal, however, underlined the lack of five star accommodation options alongside the unique features a resort offers. Fingen and the Four Seasons prevailed. The Palace and the neighboring defunct convent of Suor Maria Riparatrice were purchased in 2000.

Renovations are well underway with the intention to open the 118 luxury rooms and 10 exclusive historical suites in early 2007. Restoring a 550 year old Renaissance palace is no easy project. The governmental watchdog agency of the Belle Arti determines what artistic and cultural artefacts need be conserved and how. The palace’s long history is witness to many revolutions, the Belle Arti must ensure the quality of the project, engaging only reputable consultants and experts in its development. Architects Magris and Partners and Studio Noferi e Associati plan to maintain the integrity of the classicized architecture but address the daunting challenges of providing modern technology and services including the addition of 4 elevators. Landscape architect Giorgio Galetti is preserving the original botanical history and restoring the extensive 4.5 hectares of gardens. All rooms and common public areas will restore original frescoes, majolica tiles and coffered ceilings providing visitors a 21st century interpretation of the palace’s historical splendor. Implementing all the details is CPF, a well recognized construction firm boasting a portfolio of high profile projects and demanding celebrity clients.

The Palace’s restoration and commercial function may not please all puritan art historians and art conservationists but the resort project is positively sparing Palazzo della Gherardesca from a less glamorous fate and will doubtless catapult it from relative obscurity to the attention of a new ‘nobility’.

Photograph Florence...and Fly to SARDEGNA!!

Send your photo to info@theflorentine.net
Each week Ryanair will be offering two round trip tickets
Pisa-Alghero (Sardinia), which will be awarded to the photographer of the ‘Pic of the Week’.

The winner will be chosen by The Florentine editorial staff...and the winner is...

author: Brian Mars title: Yellow Cabs
Kissed by the Sun
A Sicilian Sojourn
by Jenni Brooks

Sicily is chalk to Florence's cheese. If you've headed there from the north, sometimes you wonder if you're still in Italy at all. The differences are hard to pin down – the cliché of a poor, pastoral cousin certainly sells this complex island short. Having been occupied by just about everyone from the Byzantines to the Normans, French, Spanish and Greeks, Sicily is a beguiling mish-mash of different influences. As the largest island in the Mediterranean, gateway between Europe and Africa, west and east, its strategic potential has been the source of both its triumphs and its tragedies. Yet today the turmoil is a distant echo and its traces leave a diverse medley of architecture, cuisine, culture and folklore for the visitor to revel in.

Like many islands, Sicily often seems all mountains and coastline, creating striking scenes and silhouettes. Cities and towns squeeze into the space between crags and sea. Mount Etna looms over the eastern side like a giant goddess, shrouded in mist and mystery, a permanent wisp of smoke from her lips is a reminder of her latent power. Most travellers stick to the edges, but a trip through the interior reveals a refreshing, time-stick to the edges, but a trip through the interior reveals a refreshing, time-lapse of contrasts – wide plains baked by the sun, patchwork farmland, craggy heights swept by the sirocco wind, and everything in-between. Soft hills roll in every shade of green, skimmed by swooping birds of prey, and multi-coloured wildflowers dust every available verge or hillock. Lemon and orange groves span the entire island – there seem to be too many fruit trees to ever be eaten, and rickety carts spring up on roadsides every-where stacked high selling them. In contrast, the cities hum with bus- and charm and chaos, mak-ing up with character what they lack in polish. Past blights have left Palermo a touch on the shabby side, but new funds poured into cleaning and some majestic restorations have started to make a difference. As all over Italy, churches provide a blank sheet for whatever styles and infl uences are around at the time. In Pal-eremo, the red cupolas of St John of the Hermits say mosque, but inside it's a church, one of many incongru-ous but iconic forms. Syracuse's 18th-century Duomo incorporates a pagan Temple of Athena from 2,300 years earlier. Adaptation and inter-dependence – whether by people or religions – is key to survival, and that's what Sicily does best.

Mosaic is an unexpectedly consistent feature across the cultures – colouring sparkling Arabic domes, twinkling from Byzantine religious artwork, and creating stunning Roman floor art at the villa at Piazza Armerina. There are innumerable archaeological sites in Sicily, most showing traces of several periods of the island's history, with Greek being the most prominent. Despite all efforts it seems you just can't get enough of them and each somehow delivers its own unique wow-factor. In the abandoned ancient city of Segesta, the Doric temple’s unspoilt hillside position and its fan-tastic state of preservation are magi-cal. You could get lost as you roam around the many ruins at Agrigento’s ‘Valley of Temples’. And at Syracuse, you can see three sites for the price of one: a Greek Theatre, an equally impressive Roman Amphitheatre, and the world’s largest altar to boot. The perfect white rock semi-circle of a Greek theatre invites you to sit awhile, no matter that there's no drama to see.

When it comes to food, strong ﬂavours abound in salty, hearty fare with a hint of chilly. Pizza bases are more solid. Pine nuts, raisins and fennel are prominent, cooking up unusual and delicious combina-tions. Initially used as a substitute for parmesan, breadcrumbs too have become an integral part of local dishes. And if you’re into fresh fish and seafood, of course this is the place to be, and you’re never far from a fish market displaying a mind-bog-gling array. In coastal villages a Fish Man does the rounds with the day’s catch, calling his wares as he goes. To my delight, Sicilians also have a sweet tooth and their pastries are as enticing as they are plentiful. Rows of sugared shaped temptations line every counter, almost always deliv-ering a shot of sweet creamy some-thing in the middle.

Like its Mediterranean neighb-ours, in Sicily the sunshine is a license to loiter. And seemingly, the older you are the better you get at this unique pastime. Old men draw their fold-up chairs to the kerb, perch on benches, or gather round upturned cardboard boxes to play cards. Or they simply stand on street corners for hours on end, doffing their caps at the familiar faces passing through. Life is different here. The closeness of communities can sometimes be off-putting, but when you’re in, it feels like the biggest, warmest family you could ever hope to be part of.

It’s not just the sun that makes Sicily worth lingering.
What’s in Store?
Sneak Preview of Summer Fashion
by Cassandra Brown

Although we are still clinging firmly to our coats and scarves to beat off the freezing Florence temperatures, the shops are already filling up with tantalising hints of Spring and Summer. For this coming season we are transported to a bygone era of femininity, losing some of the harsher silhouettes of the winter and settling into an easy elegance to see us through the Summer. White is undoubtedly the colour of the season and is simply everywhere, from complete outfits, to bags and shoes and hats. Ferragamo’s crocheted bag in white is set to be a ‘must have’ for the Summer. Shirts and dresses in white are big news, ultra feminine with ruffles, lace panels, and even the Victorian high necked style from last year. For those of us with champagne tastes and beer pockets, Zara, as ever, has come out with an amazing collection, with inspiration from the top designer names. Linens and cottons in creams, whites and soft blues are a staple for the warmer months, with Sisley providing comfortable and wearable basics. Lace and ribbons are found adorning dresses, skirts, shirts and even shoes. Scervino’s collection is simply beautiful, combining lace, ribbons, creams and whites, to create a girly girls’ paradise. Even Pucci, the master of prints and colour, has transformed the famous shift dress into a white lace masterpiece.

Black and white are teamed together across most collections, which range from nautical outfits to feminine floral designs. Gucci’s black and white tops, and white sailor trousers with gold chains, have made a huge impact on the high street collections, as have other sailor inspired outfits with blues and greens. Polka dots have also made a massive comeback – Miu Miu is full of fun, with flirty skirts and tops in polka dots of every colour. Dolce and Gabbana lead the way in one of the other major trends of the season, that of folk. They offer amazing displays of gingham, ribbons and flower corsages creating a sexy gypsy flavour, with ruffled lace and their trademark curves. Cavalli and Moschino Cheap and Chic pick up on this trend too, with evening-style shirts in cottons and lace, waistcoats and cropped jackets.

Colour-wise, silver and gold are real hits this Summer, both for day and night, and in nearly every collection of shoes. Armani, both Emporio and Giorgio, have the most exquisite peep toe shoes in silver, and for those who prefer flats, the legendary Ferragamo has the perfect pumps. Orange is also a firm favourite, and although it can be a difficult colour to wear head to toe, accessories in orange are everywhere. The new Accessorize store is a goldmine for accessories in all the colours of the season. There are also many pastel colours, particularly dusky rose which is bound to look sensational with a tan.

In keeping with the feminine feel for this year, many designers and high street stores are showcasing an impressive collection of shimmery, jewel-like dresses, with the big names, Versace, Prada, Missoni and Blumarine, creating some breath-taking outfits. Small bolero style jackets and cardigans with jewel-style trimmings are in the high street stores - Zara, once again, coming up trumps with these details.

As last season, broad, obi-style belts are once again in vogue. Just as before, metal plays a large part in these but this year we are also seeing belts made of multi-coloured ribbons. Raffia and straw effect belts are also perfect to complement the basket bags and wedge shoes for the Summer. Max Mara has a great collection of these.

So, even though it’s cold outside, take a stroll around Florence’s shops and dream of the Summer ahead. And with the flirty, fun and sexy designs to be found in all the shops, it looks set to be a great one.
T the next time you walk past that white bulb with the green fronds at your grocer’s, stop and appreciate that it is one of nature’s marvels. It is both an herb and a vegetable. Almost all of the plant is edible: seeds, foliage, stalk - with the variety known as Florence Fennel - the bulb. It grows easily and needs little cultivation. Best of all, it is available almost year round.

Fennel has one of the richest histories of any food. The Greeks called it marathon, after the battlefield where they defeated the Persians. We think of Greek athletes being crowned with laurel, but they also used fennel fronds in wreaths. In fact, fennel was their symbol for both victory and success, as it became for the Romans. According to Greek mythology, Prometheus, who brought fire to mankind, hid the fire he had stolen from the gods in the hollow stalk of a fennel plant.

The Roman historian Pliny wrote about the ‘villainous’ Venetian wine sellers who offered their innocent (or simple-minded) customers a nice piece of fennel to eat with their wine, instead of tasting it on an empty stomach.

In 1824, Thomas Appleton, the American consul in Florence, sent seeds to Thomas Jefferson with a glowing report. He even said, ‘I preferred it to every other vegetable, or to any fruit.’ Sadly, it does not appear Jefferson was any more successful with the fennel seeds than he was with the carnaroli rice he took back with him.

Today fennel finds commercial uses in perfume, toothpaste, soap and air fresheners. In natural health circles, it is recommended for indigestion, flatulence or colic. And nursing mothers are encouraged to eat fennel, as it is said to increase the production of milk. Its seeds are used to spice, especially cooked fish. They can also be used in bread, cakes and vegetable soups. The fronds, finely chopped, make an excellent seasoning or garnish for fish. But, in the market, we usually see just the bulb.

Fennel bulb can be eaten raw with a little salt as an appetizer, just as you might eat celery. In fact, it can be substituted for celery in almost every recipe. It can also appear raw in a salad, thinly sliced and dressed with some lemon juice and olive oil. A Sicilian variation adds orange sections, endive and ripe olives.

As a first course, serve wedges of fennel sprinkled with crumbs of Parmesan cheese. Or make a bed of paper-thin slices, then top with prosciutto or smoked salmon. A bit of freshly ground pepper plus some fennel seeds, and you have a healthy, fresh and oh so easy dish.

In Italy there is a long tradition of serving sliced fennel at the end of a meal, perhaps with some sliced apples or oranges, as it is thought to relieve digestive problems.

Many think of fennel as primarily a Summer vegetable, because it is almost always included in a Pinzimonio, that wonderful starter featuring lots of sliced raw vegetables with a dipping sauce of olive oil, salt and freshly ground pepper. But Gastronomy of Italy tells us that it is ‘the most commonly prepared winter vegetable.’ Fennel soups, risotto with fennel and shrimp, braised fennel… the list goes on and on.

When ready to select fennel, plan on about one medium sized bulb per person. The bulb should be firm to the touch and the outer layers crisp and white, not shrivelled or yellow. If the outer layer seems stringy, peel it with a sharp knife. Serve it early in the meal or late, raw or cooked, and just enjoy!

Award-winning author Lucia Barbini Falcone portrays the charm of Venetian culture in this collection of heart-warming tales depicting one family’s experience in the glassblowers’ community of Murano.

www.trafford.com/05-1443
Housing For Sale/Immobili Vendita

Loft For Sale in Prato. 2 lofts near historic centre, each 137 sq. m., ideal for home office. We can show projections and location. For information, e-mail marco@agilelogica.it

Housing for Rent/Rentare in Affitto

Two smart flats for rent at Porta Romana area. Fully furnished and very quiet. Must have good references. Tel. 334.3418636 or 055.284344

Florentineflats.com offers quality apartments in Florence city centre at affordable prices, short and long term rentals, minimum 3 days. Call Rachel 348.0457857 / 055.685661, rachadad@gmail.com

Leisure & Vacation/Tempo libero e vacanza

Panoramic colonial house in the hills of Chianti, 15 km from Florence. Surrounded by a large park and olive grove. Swimming pool. 4-6 person flats for rent for brief periods. Completely furnished. Quiet, family-style atmosphere. Landlords available on site. Tel. 333 2203265 Email fernanescc@tin.it

Business for Sale/Attivita Commerciali

Children’s clothing manufacturer looking to cease activities. Thirty-year-old establishment produces clothing for children from ages 1 to 12 and is equipped with the necessary equipment for production. The company has a large client portfolio with buyers in Italy and abroad. For more information send an email to gia@gi.com

Office Items for Sale/ Oggetti di Ufficio in Vendita

Office / School Furniture For Sale

Impeccably furnished 2 flat in via Mariti, 100 m. from University in a flat dellachiesa@theflorentine.net with use of kitchen & sitting room in a large edellachiesa@theflorentine.net room with use of kitchen & sitting room in a large & bright flat equipped with every comfort (also for very short period, close to piazza Gavannina), write to e.dellachiesa@theflorentine.net

Two large, bright rooms, in a flat equipped with every comfort, for rent in via Mariti, 100 m. from University also for short periods. Non smokers only. Tel. 055.353429.

Housing Wanted/ I Cerco Casa

Lady, English teacher seeks 3+ rooms apartment bright and light in center. Tel. 329.3389660

Useful Numbers and Classified Ads

Each form must contain just one announcement and refer to a single category. To publish multiple ads, photocopy the form or download the form at www.theflorentine.net.

CATEGORIES / CATEGORIE

Housing for sale / Immobili vendita - Housing for rent / Immobili affitto - Rooms for rent

Cameri in affitto - Help wanted / Offerte di lavoro - Vehicles / Veicoli - Private lessons, classes / Lezioni private, corsi - Leisure & vacation / Tempo libero e vacanze - Services / Servizi

COST INFORMATION (VAT INCLUDED) / TARIFFE (IVA INCLUSA)

Up to 20 words €21 / Finno a 20

Any additional cost €0,45 / Ogni parola in più €0,45

The cost is double for outlined ads / Il costo raddoppia col risaputo (€2)

Any additional cost €0,90 / Ogni parola in più €0,90

FREE CATEGORIES / CATEGORIE GRATUITE

Housing wanted / Cerco casa - Household items for sale / Oggetti in vendita

Jobs wanted / Cerco lavoro - Personals / Personali - Lost & found / Oggetti smarriti - Pets / Animali

Free ads must not exceed 25 words / Gianni gratis non possono superare le 25 parole

HOW TO ADVERTISE

Send classified and payment (cash, check, money order, or money transfer) to:
The Florentine c/o Agile Logica snc Via Santa Maria 32 r, 50126 Firenze Tel/Fax 055.2366616

annunci@theflorentine.net

The Florentine is only offering a service, and does not receive commissions or trades, is not responsible for quality, provenance, or accuracy of ads, nor for the direct or indirect consequences which could derive from such consequences. The Florentine reserves the right to unauthorised agencies to refuse or suspend publication of any classified ad. The Florentine will publish personal and/or sensitive information, in accordance with laws D.Lgs. 196/2003, only with direct and specific consent from the interested party.

Name / Nome

Address / Indirizzo

Tel. / Fax

Fiscal Code / N.iva Number / Codice fiscale / partita IVA

METHOD OF PAYMENT / MODALITÀ DI PAGAMENTO

Cash (send together with announcement) / Contanti (allegare in busta chiusa e spedire insieme all’annuncio)

Check written out to B’ Gruppo Srl / Assegno non trasferibile intestato a B’Gruppo srl

Postal Money Order for B’Gruppo Srl, Via Pratice 10, 50100 Prato / Pagaia postale intestato a B’Gruppo srl, via Pratice 10, 50100 Pra\n
Money Transfer to B’Gruppo srl, Credito Emilia, c/c 5642/9, ABI 03102, CAB 21500 (attach or fax a copy of transaction) / Bonifico bancario intestato a: B’Gruppo srl, Credito Emilia, c/c 5642/9, ABI 03102, CAB 21500 (allegare o inviare fax copia della contabilità)

CLASSIFIED / ANNUNCI

Write in black letters in English / Scrivere in stampatello in inglese.

I authorize THE FLORENTINE to insert and save this form in their electronic archives in conformation with editorial and advertising policy. I accept full responsibility for all of the data contained in this form.

Signature / Firma

Date / Data
Project “Uno scambio da favola”

A Co-production of Syracuse University in Florence and the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, in collaboration with the Meyer Children’s Hospital of Florence

A Fabulous Exchange: four initiatives to further cultural exchange and understanding

“SNOW WHITE”

Opera based on the fable by the Brothers Grimm (1819)
Music and libretto by Luigi Zaninelli (1996)

Conductor: Michele Mariotti
Director: Vivien Hewitt
Costume designer: Regina Schrecker
Set and Lighting Designer: Alex Kozlara

Piccolo Teatro, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino
Corso Italia, 16 - Florence

Matinees for schools: 15, 16, 18, 21-23 March 2006 at 10:30 AM
Evening performances: March 19 and March 23, 2006 at 8:30 PM

Benefit Gala for the Meyer Children’s Hospital
MARCH 19, 2006 – 8:30 PM

Information and tickets: Karen Wardzala, kwardzal@syr.fl.it
From an idea by Lisa Friend

Operation “Do you speak English”
English language from school to theater
Students from the SUF Volunteer Program give their time to teach “Snow White” in English to over 3,000 elementary school children who will be attending the matinee shows.

Project manager: Vittoria Tettamanzi, vwharley@syr.fl.it

“The Importance of Fairy Tales in Childhood Development”
Open to the public. Conference on March 10, 2 P.M. in the Villa Rossa, Piazza Savonarola 15, Florence
Introduction: Barbara Deimling, Director SUF, and Amy Kleine, Counselor-SUF
Speakers: Barbara Fieschi, Chair, Psychology Department, SU New York
Paolo Crespi, Italian psychiatrist and sociologist
Eugenio Bacchini, Pedagogist, Counselor and President of the Tuscan Counseling Association
Charlie Fantecchi, Psychologist and President of Dialogika School for Counseling
Anna Sartelli, Consultant and Teacher for Meyer Children’s Hospital

Information and Project Manager: Amy Kleine, askleine@syr.fl.it

“A Book for an Apple”

International students living in Florence and Italian elementary school students are asked to donate their favorite fairy tales to the Children’s City Library in Florence, the Biblioteca dei Ragazzi, in an initiative to encourage reading among children and expand intercultural exchange. SUF will accept the donations and present them to the library. In exchange, donors will receive a reproduction of a painting of an apple by renowned artist Marco Klee Fallerini, representing the Snow White project in its entirety.

Book drop: Syracuse University in Florence, Piazza Savonarola, 15 Florence - 10 March-10 May 2006 from Mon-Thurs. 9 am-6 pm; Fri 9-1 pm.

Information and Project manager: Annalisa Rossi, aarossi@syr.fl.it

Many thanks to: ASSESSORATO PUBBLICA
ISTITUZIONE COMUNE DI FIRENZE, INTER-
ATIONAL SCHOOL of FLORENCE Via del
Cantù 23/25 Bagno a Ripoli (FI), LIBRERIA
MCRAE BOOKS Via dei Nett. 332, LIBRERIA
PAPERBACK EXCHANGE Via delle Orte, 4
for their dedicated support to the project.