

assabesi [as-sa-be-zi] either shortbread biscuits flavoured with hazelnuts and cocoa powder, or chewy liquorice sweets, both named in honour of Italy's capture of the port of Assab in Eritrea in 1869. There was a fashion at the time for naming food items after Italy's colonies, and when in 1884 some unfortunate inhabitants of Assab were displayed at the General

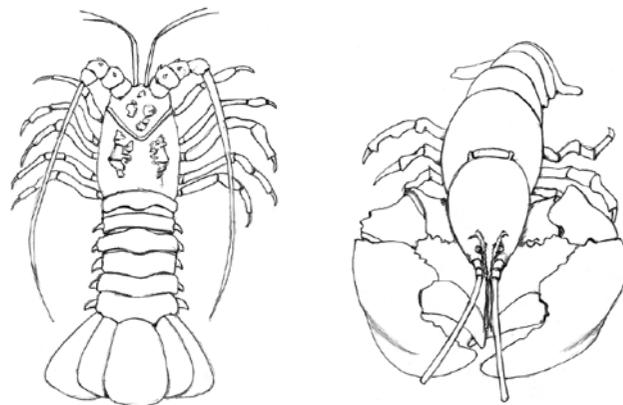
Exhibition of Turin like animals in a circus, pastry-cooks vied to invent memorable 'black' sweetmeats.

assaggio [as-sad-jo] a taster, from *assaggiare*, to try, to sample. **ASSAGGI** [as-sad-ji] are a selection of little tasters or small portions.

Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana the Authentic Neapolitan Pizza Association, a body dedicated to preserv-

Artusi, Pellegrino

A silk merchant from Forlì in Emilia-Romagna who wrote a best-selling cookbook, *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiare bene* ('The Science of Cooking and the Art of Eating Well'). Having made a fortune in silk, Artusi devoted himself to his favourite pastimes, eating and collecting recipes and published his collection himself in 1891, at the age of 71. By the time of his death in 1911 it had sold over 200,000 copies and remains in print in several languages to this day. The most extensive edition is edited by the historian Piero Camporesi. The book is important because it was the first major work on Italian food to appear since the unification of Italy in 1861. It was Artusi who identified turpentine as the best means of neutralising the smell of urine after eating asparagus. A few drops in a chamber pot, or these days in the lavatory pan, convert the strange aroma of asparagus into a flowery fragrance.



Above right: *astice*, true lobster, with pincers. Left: *aragosta*, the clawless lobster or rock lobster.

ing the integrity of local pizza, ensuring that makers who use the best local ingredients, such as DOP San Marzano tomatoes and DOP MOZZARELLA cheese, are granted due recognition. Neapolitan pizza is recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Tradition.

assortimento [as-sor-ti-men-to] an assortment.

Asti Spumante [as-ti spu-man-ti] a sweet to medium-sweet sparkling wine from Asti in Piedmont. Despite a harsh press from wine snobs,

Asti Spumante has a respectable pedigree. It was invented by the Duke of Savoy's jeweller, Giovanni Battista Croce, around the beginning of the 17th century. When Croce retired he embarked on a successful career as a viticulturalist, producing a varied and popular range of wines using the MOSCATO grape.

astice [as-ti-che] lobster (see illustration above).

attesa [at-te-za] waiting time, e.g. *attesa: 15 minuti*, sometimes found on menus beside

IV. BASIC QUESTIONS

Is there a fixed price menu?

C'è un menù a prezzo fisso? [che un me-nu a pretts-zo fis-so]

Can we bring the children?

Possiamo portare i bambini? [pos-si-a-mo por-ta-re i bam-bi-ni]

Is there a high chair?

C'è un seggiolone? [che un sedg-jo-lo-ne]

Do you have vegetarian dishes?

Avete piatti vegetariani? [a-ve-te pi-at-ti ve-je-ta-ri-a-ni]

I am allergic to...

...nuts.

...dairy products.

...gluten.

Sono allergico / allergica... [so-no al-ler-ji-co / al-ler-ji-ca]

...alle noci [al-le no-chi]

...ai latticini [a-i lat-ti-chi-ni]

...al glutine [al glu-ti-ne]

Can you prepare dishes without...?

Potete preparare piatti senza...? [po-te-te pre-pa-ra-re pi-at-ti sent-sa...]

Do you take credit cards?

Accettate carte di credito? [a-chet-ta-te car-te di cre-di-to]

V. ARRIVING AT THE RESTAURANT

If you have not booked and the restaurant seems busy, ask if you can wait. The manager will tell you if a table will be available soon or apologise if he is unable to accommodate you (*mi dispiace, ma siamo al completo stasera*: I'm sorry but we're fully booked this evening). Once a table is available, or if you have already booked, you will need to choose where to sit.

I have a reservation in the name of -----.

Ho una prenotazione a nome di -----. [o u-na pre-no-tats-yo-ne a no-me di]

Can we wait for a table?

Possiamo aspettare un tavolo? [pos-si-a-mo as-pet-ta-re un ta-vo-lo]

Can we come back in half an hour?

Possiamo tornare tra mezz'ora? [pos-si-a-mo tor-na-re tra mets-so-ra]

May we sit here?

Possiamo sederci qui? [pos-si-a-mo se-der-chi kwi]

Can we sit...

...inside / outside?

...by the window?

...in the corner?

Possiamo sederci... [Pos-si-a-mo se-der-chi]

...all'interno / all'esterno? [al in-ter-no / al es-ter-no]

...vicino alla finestra? [vi-chi-no al-la fi-ne-strà]

...all'angolo? [al an-go-lo]