**TYPICAL PRODUCTS**

**Parmigiano Reggiano** is a hard, semi-fatty cooked cheese with a long maturation period (18-24 months), made in round forms weighing between 24 and 34 kg. It is produced in the provinces of Parma, Reggio Emilia and Modena as well as some parts of the provinces of Bologna and Mantua. This product makes the very best milk from farms located in the area, an art handed down by master cheese makers and a long natural maturing process. Parmigiano Reggiano contains no preservatives, colourings or anti-fermenting agents: these unique characteristics are guaranteed by the Consortium, an official body that ensures the products characteristics are safeguarded, and is certified with the famous dotted branding. Parma ham. Parma’s cured ham has a flavour and particular sweetness which is provided by the area’s weather conditions, perfect for the natural drying and maturation process. Indeed the air on Parma’s hills carries the fragrance of Verna’s pine forests and chestnut forests. It loses its brackishness against the karst mountains of the Gisa and in turn acquires the unique characteristics essential for obtaining Parma ham. It is excellent as an appetizer or snack and also makes for a complete, light and highly nutritious main course. To see the ham production and processing techniques close up, the Parma ham Consortium offers groups the possibility to visit a ham producer. Culatello of Zibelio: the most outstanding of all Parma’s deli meats, Culatello is made from the leanest part of the thigh of selected local pigs. These are boned and part of the meat is removed whilst still fresh, leaving only the very finest part. The skill of the pork butchers and the climate of Parma’s plains make the perfect combination for this deli meat, the unique qualities of which are safeguarded by the Culatello of Zibelio Consortium. The slices are thin and round, pale pink, with streaks of white, compact fat; the flavour is sweet and silky. The Strada del Culatello or Culatello Road is an itinerary that follows the banks of the river Po through the various municipalities of Parma’s plains; by following it one is able to explore the areas where this unique product is made. The Borgortano mushrooms: it grows in the Val Taro and Val Mgra area in 4 species: red, dark, magnum and cold-weather mushroom. All having an intense, clean smell which is not pungent. In 1993 the Borgortaro mushroom was awarded Protected Geographical Indication status and is protected by the Borgortaro Mushroom Consortium. For those wishing to acquaint themselves with these mushrooms, the Consortium has set up a circuit of restaurants in Parma and the province which are dedicated to using fresh IGP mushrooms and to indicating their use in menus; mushrooms prepared with Borgortaro mushrooms from those made with uncertified products. The Porecini or Cep Mushroom Road unfolds in the upper reaches of the Val Taro valley and allows visitors to mountain traditions of yore as well as castles, churches and medieval hamlets.

**FOODS**

**THE FOOD MUSEUMS**

**PARMIGIANO REGGIANO MUSEUM**: the museum’s material has been gathered from across all five of the provinces in which Parmigiano-Reggiano is produced. The objects on display mostly date from the second half of the nineteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century. The exhibition is housed in the old Moli-Lapi dairy; the oldest part of the building finds objects required for the transformation process, whilst the more modern part sees an exhibition with sections dedicated to the maturation and marketing as well as those dedicated to gastronomic use of the cheese and its history. The end of the tour finds an area for tasting and buying products.

Corte Castellazzi
Via Volta, 5 Soragna tel. 0524596129
From March to October, on Monday to Friday for groups only, by prior appointment; Saturday, Sunday and holidays from 9.30am to 12.30pm and from 3.00pm to 6.00pm; from November to February it is only open to groups by prior appointment.

**HAM MUSEUM**: a tour featuring the reconstruction of the production process, from the pigs to the cured meats, of the fine products made according to Parma’s art of curing deli meats. The museum is located in Langhirano, the home of Parma ham, in the vast building which was once the Foro Boario. The tour takes in exhibits on a variety of supports including audiovisual displays, presenting the area, pork butchery; the gastronomic use of deli meats, the evolution of the techniques and areas for processing ham, ham processing in the second half of the twentieth century and present-day transformation phases and concludes in the tasting room.

Ex Foro Boario
Via Bocchialini, 7 Langhirano tel. 0521315137
From Tuesday to Friday: for groups with minimum 15 visitors only, by prior appointment; Saturday and Sunday open from 10.00am to 6.00pm; looking for groups required.

**SALAMI MUSEUM**: dedicated to Italy’s most famous salami and housed inside Felino Castle, the museum features a display of period tools, equipment and images. The tour is divided into two sections, from the art of pork butchery to the processing stages and salting of the meats and the maturation and gastronomic use of this delicacy.

Felino Castle
Strada al Castello, 1 Felino tel. 3332362839
Saturday, Sunday and holidays from 10.00am to 12.30pm and from 3.00pm to 6.00pm; from Wednesday to Friday visits only by prior appointment; closed on Monday and Tuesday.

**TOMATO MUSEUM**: located in what was once an agrifood transformation plant on the right-hand bank of the river Taro about half-way between Fornovo and Pontetaro, the museum houses memories of people, machinery, plants, product packaging and graphic and advertising images. Corte di Giara – Parco del Taro (the Park of the River Taro) Strada Giara, 11 Collecchio tel. 0522182812
The Museum may not be visited as yet, but is due to open in 2007.

**PARMESANS EAT...**

**HORSE MEAT!**

The custom of eating horse meat is a recent one, and met with fierce opposition for a long period of time. Italy’s first horse butcher’s shop was opened in 1865, whereupon it was surrounded by the protesting local population whilst the guards defended it with difficulty. The Council authorised the slaughter of horses for meat in Parma in 1873, but it was only in 1881 that one Orlandelli opened the first horse butcher’s in Via Farnese, in the Oltrontore area: the shop is still located here and is surrounded by the local population of the area. Since then consumption has increased. Horse meat is generally eaten fresh and often raw in the form of pesto, where the meat is chopped and ground. It is often dressed with oil and lemon and is sandwiched between two slices of bread, or else it is seared over a flame.

AND PIGEONS!

The bomba di riso or rice-bombe typical of Parma’s cuisine features baby pigeons amongst its ingredients, the meat of which is mixed with the rice and along with the meat sauce and generous amounts of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese.
**THE REZDORA’S RECIPES**

**ANOLINI**

The prince of Parma’s cuisine is the dish that sees in Christmas and New Year dinners, and is to be found in many restaurants and delis in and around Parma. Woe betide anyone failing to serve it up to the Parmigiani on festive occasions. Whether served in broth or accompanied with a sauce, anolini have become a fixture in Italian cuisine. Anolini is a typical first course dish, these tortelli d’erbetta or Swiss a world used exclusively in Parma to refer to the stuffed pasta which in the rest of Emilia Romagna is known as the cappelletto, tortellino or raviolo. Parma’s anolini are round discs without a fringe measuring 2.8 cm in diameter, made up of two overlapping layers of pasta. The delicious filling is a mixture of extra mature grated Parmigiano Reggiano, breadcrumbs, egg yolks and a stewed beef sauce flavoured with nutmeg. It’s the filling that makes the anolino, not the pasta, and is what distinguishes it from other products. The secret of a good anolino lies in the right dosage of the ingredients, which only the real rezdore know.

**INGREDIENTS**

For the pasta:
- 1 kg of flour
- 3 parts grated Parmigiano Reggiano of 3 different types (one of which should be extra mature)
- one part breadcrumbs
- 2 whole eggs
- nutmeg
- salt

For the filling:
- 8/10 eggs
- stewed beef sauce
- salt

**PREPARATION:**

To make the filling, scale the breadcrumbs with boiling milk, stewed beef sauce or broth, add the eggs, salt, grated Parmigiano Reggiano and a sprinkling of nutmeg. Make up the anolino and cook in the special broth known as the “terza” or third, owing to the presence of three types of meat: capon, beef and salami or calf’s head.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 kg butter
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 glass dry white wine
- 400 gr rice
- 1 litre good meat stock
- 2 baby pigeons, 1000 grivers or other chicken giblets
- 1 spoon of triple-concentrate tomato sauce
- 2 small onions, 1 carrot, sage salt, a little pepper, breadcrumbs

**PREPARATION:**

Chop a small onion and brown in half the butter, add the rice and broth gradually until nearly cooked. Place the rest of the butter, oil and chopped vegetables in a frying pan along with the chopped giblets and the cleaned and washed pigeons. After 15 minutes add the wine, a ladle of broth, salt and pepper; leave to cook until the meat comes away from the bones easily. Remove the pigeons and bone. Grease a tin with butter and sprinkle the breadcrumbs on the bottom, spread half of the rice so that it leaves a well in the middle into which the meat sauce should be placed then cover with the rest of the rice and dot with flakes of butter. Bake at medium heat for thirty minutes and serve with grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese.

**TORTELLI D’ERBETTA**

A typical first course dish, these tortelli d’erbetta or Swiss chard tortelli can be eaten all year round and are to be found in every restaurant. In the villages around Parma, it is traditional to celebrate the evening of San Giovanni on 23 June with the obligatory tortellata or tortelli fete. Popular tradition has it that good tortelli must be “longh col so covvi, tignis sensa vansaj, foghe in al bletter e sughe col formaj” (literally meaning “long with a tail, firm without being hard, drenched in butter and dried with cheese” in local dialect). Indeed in town tortelli must bear no resemblance to the stubby square ravioli with filling right up to the edges that are sold pre-packaged; they must be rectangular with a “tail” and made with firm pasta so that they do not open while cooking. Care should be taken when adding nutmeg as the pungent aroma often masks the flavour of the filling.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 6 hg of soft, fresh ricotta (for S. Giovanni, some dairies prepare it with a little cream)
- 3 hg of spinach or just the green parts of Swiss chard (uncooked weight)
- 2 eggs (although can be made without)
- 3 hg of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
- 3 eggs

**PREPARATION:**

Boil the spinach, drain, fry in a little butter and chop with a mincing knife, then mix with the other ingredients. When the filling has been made, set out on the strips of pasta that are then folded so that the filling remains on the inside. The tortelli should be cut down the three sides using a serrated pastry cutter, then cooked in boiling water. Once cooked, drain and place in layers in a warm dish; cover with melted butter and sprinkle with grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese.

**INGREDIENTS**

For the pasta:
- 1 kg fl our
- 3 parts grated Parmigiano Reggiano of 3 different types (one of which should be extra mature)
- one part breadcrumbs
- 2 whole eggs
- nutmeg
- salt

For the filling:
- 8/10 eggs
- stewed beef sauce
- salt

**PREPARATION:**

Chop a small onion and brown in half the butter, add the rice and broth gradually until nearly cooked. Place the rest of the butter, oil and chopped vegetables in a frying pan along with the chopped giblets and the cleaned and washed pigeons. After 15 minutes add the wine, a ladle of broth, salt and pepper; leave to cook until the meat comes away from the bones easily. Remove the pigeons and bone. Grease a tin with butter and sprinkle the breadcrumbs on the bottom, spread half of the rice so that it leaves a well in the middle into which the meat sauce should be placed then cover with the rest of the rice and dot with flakes of butter. Bake at medium heat for thirty minutes and serve with grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese.