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# Siamo Qui

ISSUE 628

JULY 2026

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UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

250 

— ANNIVERSARY —

★ ★ ★

— 1776 — 2026 —

★ ★ ★



# HAPPY 4TH OF JULY



## NEWS & EVENTS

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RISOTTO WITH BROCCOLI RABE





# SOCIAL CALENDAR

## July



7/03 ~ Friday Nights at the Pavilion (Special: Chicken Cacciatore \$17) 5 pm - 8 pm

7/04 ~ Independence Day / 4th of July BBQ at the Pool - 12:00 noon

7/06 ~ I.A.C.C. Pool: Early Morning Lap Swimming - M - F 7:30 am - 9:30 am

7/06 ~ Men's Bocce League - 6:30 pm

7/07 ~ Women's Bocce League - 6:00 pm

7/08 ~ Women's League Meeting - 6:00 pm

7/10 ~ Friday Nights at the Pavilion (Special: Cavatelli with Broccoli \$15) 5 pm - 8 pm

7/13 ~ Monday Night Grand Italian Buffet - 5 pm - 7 pm

7/13 ~ Men's Bocce League - 6:30 pm

7/14 ~ Women's Bocce League - 6:00 pm

7/17 ~ Friday Nights at the Pavilion (Special: Greens & Beans \$15) 5 pm - 8 pm

7/20 ~ Monday Night Grand Italian Buffet - 5 pm - 7 pm

7/20 ~ Men's Bocce League - 6:30 pm

7/21 ~ Women's Bocce League - 6:00 pm

7/24 ~ Friday Nights at the Pavilion (Special: Cheese Ravioli with Meatballs \$15) 5 pm - 8 pm

7/27 ~ Men's Bocce League - 6:30 pm

7/28 ~ Women's Bocce League - 6:00 pm

7/31 ~ Friday Nights at the Pavilion (Special: Chicken Parmigiana with Pasta \$16) 5 pm - 8 pm

### UPCOMING EVENTS

8/09 ~ Sunday Brunch to benefit the Children's Playground Fund (\$25) 11 am

8/15 ~ Ferragosto - 2:00 pm with bonfire @ 8:00 pm





# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## I.A.C.C. OFFICERS

PRESIDENT - JIM SANO

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VICE PRESIDENT - MARIA LAMORTE

(518) 456-4800

TREASURER - PETE SCAVULLO

(518) 869-8234

SECRETARY - MAGGIE PUTNAM

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## IACC OFFICE

HOURS: M-F 9:30AM TO 2:30PM

THERESA LAJOY - OFFICE MANAGER

PHONE # (518) 456-4222

EMAIL: IACCOFFICE@ITALIANAMERICAN.COM

As we Americans celebrate Independence Day and our nation's 250th anniversary, we can take pride in the contributions of Italians and Italian Americans to our story. The name "America" even comes from the Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci, whose writings helped the world recognize a new continent across the Atlantic. During the Revolutionary era, figures like Filippo Mazzei, a friend of Thomas Jefferson, influenced the ideals of liberty and equality that formed the basis of our nation. Generations of Italian immigrants and their descendants have left their mark on every facet of American life, from building cities and railroads to excelling in the military, medicine, science, the arts, and beyond. Their journey reminds us that America's strength has always come from diverse backgrounds united by a belief in freedom, opportunity, and hard work.

As we honor our Italian heritage and embrace our American citizenship, we recognize that our community's story is deeply intertwined with the story of our nation. For generations, Italian Americans have taken full advantage of the opportunities presented by this remarkable democratic journey while upholding the traditions, values, faith, and family connections that define who we are. At the IACC, we carry on this legacy every day by fostering a vibrant space where culture, friendship, and community flourish.

I was heartbroken to learn of the passing of my friend, Professor Philip DiNovo. Phil was an extraordinary man whose passion for Italian heritage and community touched many lives. He founded the American Italian Heritage Museum, a place for future generations to celebrate the rich history of Italian Americans. Beyond his achievements, Phil was a kind and generous friend who always found time to share a story or lend a helping hand. His dedication to our community was evident in all he did. He leaves behind a legacy that will continue to inspire for years to come. He will be deeply missed but never forgotten.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish you a happy, safe, and enjoyable Fourth of July. I look forward to seeing you at the pool, on the bocce courts, and at the Pavilion.

JIM SANO  
ITALIAN AMERICAN  
COMMUNITY CENTER  
PRESIDENT

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# WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Hello ladies!!

The beautiful summer weather is finally here!! This is my favorite time of the year. It is also the 250th celebration of the birth of our nation. July 4th is the day we adopted the Declaration of Independence. By doing this, the delegates to the Second Continental Congress declared that the 13 original colonies were no longer subject and subordinated to the Monarch of England and were now united, free and independent states. We all have so much to be grateful for in this wonderful country of ours.

Our June meeting was an Italian food fest catered by Fiorello's Importing-Luigi's Deli. As always, there was an abundance of food. We discussed planning an overnight bus trip to the Sight & Sound Theater in Pa, possibly in the fall/early winter. If interested, please contact Tina Simeone or me for more details. We also discussed that we would continue to collect items for the Caring Closet in Guilderland and Grassroot Givers.

We will have our next meeting on Wednesday, July 8th at 6 pm in the Pavillion. If the weather is too hot and humid, we will move our meeting into the Caruso room. That evening we will be having a potluck dinner. Please call Mary Lou Marando at (518) 482-8276 by Monday July 6th to make your reservation and to let her know what type of dish you will be bringing.

I hope that everyone will be able to enjoy their holiday and I look forward to seeing you all at the next meeting.

Happy Birthday America!!

*Georgeann Greene*  
President



# INDEPENDENCE DAY POOL PARTY & BBQ

JULY 4TH | 12:00 NOON





# The Longobards and Their Places of Power 568 – 774 A.D. A SINGLE SITE FOR SEVEN PLACES PART II

BY JIM SANO



CONTINUATION FROM LAST ISSUE

## BASILICA DI SAN SALVATORE (SPOLETO)

**The Basilica of San Salvatore** in Spoleto, Umbria, situated in the duchy of Langobardia Minor within the Perugia province, is a testament to early Christian and Lombard architecture. Originally dating back to the 4th or 5th century, this ancient Christian structure was entirely rebuilt by the Longobards in the 8th century. It is renowned for blending Greek and medieval Italian architectural elements, making it one of Umbria's oldest surviving Christian structures.

The basilica follows a traditional plan with three naves and a presbytery covered by a distinctive octagonal vaulted ceiling. The façade is elegant, featuring a rose window and a Romanesque portico. Visitors can admire an impressive Doric frieze, Corinthian columns, and three entrance portals. The interior is richly decorated, with well-preserved frescoes and a 16th-century wooden choir. The crypt houses ancient frescoes and remnants from the early Christian era, highlighting the basilica's historical and architectural significance.

The Basilica of San Salvatore is a prime example of how early Christian, Gothic, and Lombard influences were seamlessly integrated into a single monumental structure.

The exterior features a well-preserved 8th-century façade adorned with classical designs. Inside, the space is embellished with decorative elements, such as the striking Doric and Corinthian columns that encircle the presbytery and separate the three naves. The basilica has three main sections: a stunning chancel area with a vaulted ceiling. The apse, a semi-circular area at the rear of the church, is sealed by a straight wall. Within the apse, fragments of paintings from various periods remain, including a 16th-century depiction of the crucifixion and a monogrammed cross from the earliest series of frescoes.

To the west of the monastic complex lies the monumental area, which includes the Capitolium, the Republican sanctuary, and the Roman theatre. The Roman Forum houses the oldest religious building, dating back to the end of the 1st century B.C.

**The Temple of Clitumnus** is a small tetrastyle Corinthian temple near the Clitunno River between Spoleto and Foligno in Umbria. It features 7th-century



frescoes depicting religious themes and artistic motifs reflecting the community's spiritual life. The Temple is a remarkable example of early Christian architecture, blending classical and early medieval design elements. It dates back to the late 4th to early 5th centuries A.D., during the later Roman Empire. The Tempietto del Clitunno was built on a previous pagan sanctuary dedicated to the river god Clitumnus, known for the purity and sanctity of the Clitunno River. The river was famous for its clear waters and was believed to have divine properties, inspiring poets like Virgil and Pliny the Younger. During the Christianization of the Roman Empire, the Temple was repurposed as a Christian church, reflecting the transition from paganism to Christianity.

This remarkable monument combines Ancient Greek and Early Medieval styles, blending classical influences with Christian symbolism. Dedicated to the river god Clitumnus, whose clear waters flow nearby and have long been revered as a vital natural resource, the Temple's design and location reflect a deep reverence for the surrounding natural landscape. The simplicity



Basilica di Salvatore

and elegance of its rectangular plan, adorned with Corinthian columns and topped with a tiled roof, creates a harmonious and classical aesthetic that has captivated observers for centuries.

The Temple of Clitumnus is a remarkable blend of historical layers, showcasing the evolution of architectural and religious practices from the Roman Empire to early Christianity. Its significance lies not only in its architectural beauty but also in its representation of a pivotal era in Italian and European history. It was built using a mix of materials from an ancient Pagan sacellum and new creations, giving the Clitunno



Temple of Clitumnus

Tempietto a unique architectural style. While some sculpted decorations might have been reused from older buildings, many of the Temple's adornments are original, showcasing the skill and creativity of its builders. The Tempietto is considered one of the masterpieces of Lombard art for its skillful reuse of classical remains and reinterpretation of Roman architecture.

The Temple's exterior features a rectangular plan with a portico supported by four Corinthian columns. The front facade is decorated with a tympanum and classical entablature. The interior of the Clitunno Tempietto features a small apse, a vaulted ceiling, weathered Christian frescoes, and a rare example of monumental Early Middle Ages epigraphy. It stands out for its rare monumental epigraphy from the Early Middle Ages, particularly the large square Roman capitals. These provide essential information about the early medieval period and the site's significance. The Tempietto's rear apse walls feature faded eighth-century frescoes of Jesus and Saints Peter and Paul, making them the oldest in Umbria. These frescoes resemble those found in Rome's 5th-century Santa Maria Antiqua church. They were painted over in the early 20th century but restored in 1985. Additionally, the apse features a shrine and a column screen, similar to those in the Pantheon.

### SANTA SOFIA COMPLEX OF BENEVENTO

The Santa Sofia Complex in Benevento, Italy, is a historic site that represents the diverse cultures and civilizations of the early Middle Ages. It is located in Benevento, the capital of the Province of Benevento, in the southern Italian region of Campania. The complex includes the Church of Santa Sofia, a Roman Catholic church built in the 8th century with Lombard architecture, the Arch of Trajan, and the Roman Theatre.

The Church of Santa Sofia was founded by Arechis II of Benevento in the 8th century A.D. Modeled after the Palatine Chapel in Pavia, it became a refuge for Lombards after their kingdom fell in 774. The church, dedicated to Holy Wisdom, showcases Lombard, Byzantine, and Romanesque influences. It also includes a Benedictine convent and houses the relics of Saint Mercurius. The complex features an inner hexagon surrounded by a decagonal ring with white limestone piers. Original frescoes can still be seen on the side apses. The monastery, rebuilt in the 13th century, completes the complex.

Earthquakes in 1688 and 1702 damaged the Church of Santa Sofia. Under the supervision of Cardinal Orsini, the church was reconstructed in a Baroque style, featuring a circular design with two side chapels and changes to the apse, facade, and pillars. Unfortunately, many original frescoes were destroyed, but fragments depicting the Stories of Christ and Mary remain. With a diameter of 23.5 meters, the church's central plan is similar to the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Visitors can admire the crypt's intricate frescoes and ancient Roman sarcophagi. The Santa Sofia Complex represents a blend of Roman, Byzantine, and Lombard cultures, displaying the geopolitical and cultural landscape of the early Middle Ages. The church itself showcases exceptional craftsmanship and ingenuity.

The Arch of Trajan and the Roman Theatre within the complex provide insight into the site's layered history and the enduring influence of ancient Roman civilization. The Arch of Trajan is a Roman triumphal arch built



The portal of the church



Internal view of the church



Detail of the frescoes, with the Annunciation of Zacharias.



## MONTE SANT'ANGELO

Monte Sant'Angelo, in the Province of Foggia in Apulia, offers natural beauty and historical significance. Situated atop Mount Gargano, the town offers breathtaking views of the Adriatic Sea and the surrounding countryside. Monte Sant'Angelo has ancient roots and a rich culture, drawing visitors from around the world. The Sanctuary of San Michele, also known as the Sanctuary of Monte Sant'Angelo, is a religious and historical site dating back to the 5th century, when the Archangel Michael appeared to a local bishop in a cave on Mount Gargano. This divine encounter led to the establishment of the Sanctuary of San Michele, one of the oldest and most revered sanctuaries dedicated to Saint Michael in the Christian world. It became a popular pilgrimage site in medieval Europe, attracting travelers from across the continent. One of its main features is the Grotto of Saint Michael, a cave church transformed into a place of worship. The sanctuary showcases both Romanesque and Gothic architectural elements and features exquisite bronze doors with intricate depictions. The sanctuary holds great religious and cultural importance as the Archangel Michael is the patron saint of warriors and protector of the Catholic Church. In 2011, it was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Over the centuries, the sanctuary has grown into a complex of chapels and churches, visited by many popes and saints. The sanctuary of Monte Sant'Angelo also hosts religious and cultural events and houses a collection of frescoes, artifacts, and artworks that reflect its rich history. It includes a library and a museum that preserve ancient manuscripts and historical documents. The Cave of the Archangel Michael in Monte Sant'Angelo is a revered pilgrimage site that draws numerous visitors each year. Its frescoes and serene ambiance provide a peaceful sanctuary for pilgrims seeking spiritual solace amidst the beautiful Gargano landscape.

### Conclusion

These sites offer invaluable insights into the Lombards' cultural and artistic achievements in Italy. They showcase their ability to synthesize diverse artistic traditions and leave a lasting legacy that continues to captivate and inspire visitors today. □

between 114 and 117. It marks the entrance to the city along the Via Appia and has undergone several restorations. Constructed from limestone and clad in Parian marble slabs, it stands 15.60 meters high and 8.60 meters wide, with intricate carvings on both main facades. The bas-relief panels show scenes such as the homage of the province's divinities and the founding of colonies. Inside, Trajan is shown being welcomed by the Capitoline Triad and in the Forum Boarium. The arch represents Trajan's victory parade, reign, and key symbols such as the Danube River and Roman citizenship. At the top, there are carvings of Fortune and Rome. The arch also features sculptures depicting scenes from Trajan's life in Benevento and a decorated ceiling depicting the emperor crowned by Victory.

The Roman Theatre in Benevento was constructed during the reign of Emperor Hadrian, around the 2nd century A.D. Its diameter is about 90 meters and can accommodate between 10,000 and 15,000 spectators. The theater played a significant role in public entertainment and now serves as a cultural and historical attraction, hosting events and performances.

2026 IACC SWIMMING POOL SCHEDULE  
 POOL PHONE 518-250-4511 (TO CHECK CONDITIONS)  
 MEMBERS MUST HAVE THEIR MEMBERSHIP CARD  
 AVAILABLE WHILE AT THE POOL

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
May					22-Noon	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						
June	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
July			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
August						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
September		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Noon - 8:00 p.m.
10 a.m.- 8:00 p.m
Noon - 5:00 p.m.
Noon - 8:00 p.m.  
Lap swim 7:30 - 9:30 am



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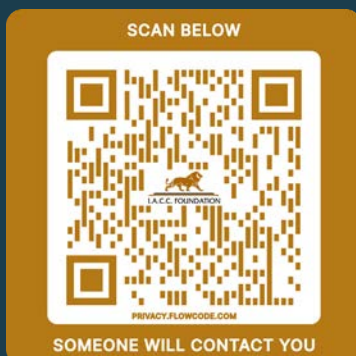
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BY JOE SANO

# HAPPY 250TH ANNIVERSARY AMERICA



## THE ITALIAN-AMERICAN WHO HELPED WRITE THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



Birthplace of Filippo Mazzei in Poggio a Caiano

**F**ilippo Mazzei was truly one of a kind. Some may say he was a complex man. Some may say he was a dreamer. Many believe he was a patriot. Regardless, he was at one time one of Thomas Jefferson's closest friends - a confidant.

Doctor Mazzei received his medical training in Florence and practiced throughout the then Ottoman Empire. Moving to London in 1755 he became a wine merchant. He saw great new opportunities in the British American colonies so he moved to Virginia in 1773. Upon his arrival he immediately began testing the area soils for wine grape and olive cultivation. He settled in as a neighbor to Thomas Jefferson's Monticello estate. Given their mutual interest in science, politics, agriculture and liberal principles the two men became good friends.

As tensions increased with British colonial rule, he began his entry into colonial politics and armed defense. He became a local militia man and government official.

Having developed a reputation as an ardent patriot, and with proven connections abroad, Mazzei was recruited as an official agent of Virginia by Jefferson and fellow Virginian founding fathers Patrick Henry and George Mason. It is even said that at one time he proposed the “red and white stripes in our flag” as he shared the “Ugo toscana” crest as a model.



As the conflict dragged on, he was dispatched to Europe in 1779 to secure desperately needed funds and supplies (namely from the Grand Duke of his native Tuscany) and gather military and political intelligence.

He was intercepted at sea by the British and imprisoned for three months but later escaped to France to continue his mission. He spent the next four years traveling through Europe in service to the patriot cause, meeting nobles, merchants, and even John Adams and Benjamin Franklin who had been deployed for similar revolution financing.

Returning in 1783 to the newly formed United States, he became a naturalized citizen and while financially struggling he preserved his close friendships with Jefferson, Madison and Monroe.

His ardent support for the American Revolution was further sealed when he published his four-volume history of the colonies and the revolution. He also translated many of Jefferson’s speeches and letters into Italian for his merchant and noble friends. By 1788 he returned to Europe and was appointed the Polish Minister to France. He continued to serve the Polish monarchy until it was dissolved. By 1792 Jefferson settled Mazzei’s remaining debt and holdings in America while the two continued their trans-continental correspondence.

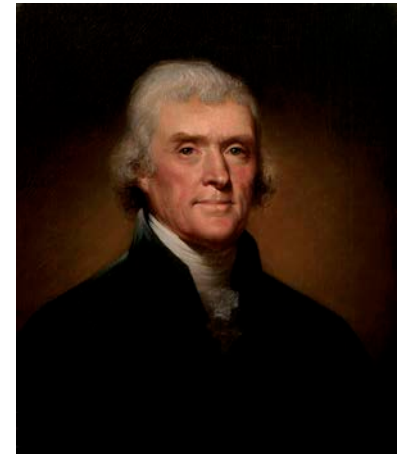
Jefferson’s private criticism of the Washington presidency shared with Mazzei somehow became public and that intercontinental link was broken along with the Washington - Jefferson friendship.

Truly there is a large record of the political talk between Mazzei and Jefferson but Mazzei’s lasting contribution to the Declaration of Independence was



his commentary used in the 1774 Virginia constitution which Jefferson carried over into the Declaration of Independence.

***Tutti gli uomini sono per natura egualmente liberi e indipendenti. Quest'eguaglianza è necessaria per costituire un governo libero. Bisogna che ognuno sia uguale all'altro nel diritto naturale.***



Thomas Jefferson, the 3rd President of the United States

***All men are by nature equally free and independent. Such equality is necessary in order to create a free government. All men must be equal to each other in natural law.***

Philip Mazzei an Italian American, while forgotten by most, should be remembered as one of the founding philosophers of American democracy.

**HIS WORDS LIVE ON!** □





**ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER  
PRESENTS**

# **ferragosto**

**Saturday, August 15, 2026  
2PM | Bonfire at Dusk**

**Lunch, Dinner, Dessert  
Coffee & Tea are Included.  
Other beverages are available  
for purchase.**

**This is a free member event.  
Guests of members & pool  
members are welcome for  
\$25.00**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [WWW.ITALIANAMERICAN.COM](http://WWW.ITALIANAMERICAN.COM)**

# Sunday Brunch

**Sunday, August 9, 2026**

**\$25.00 (adults)**

**\$15.00 (children)**

**11:00am to 3:00pm**

**Menu:**

**Scrambled Eggs**

**Smoked Bacon**

**Home Fries**

**Cinnamon French Toast**

**Assorted Breakfast Pastries**

**Penne Ala Vodka**

**Seasonal Vegetable Medley**

**Parmesan Encrusted Chicken**

**Deluxe Salad Bar**

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**Reservations Required**

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From 10:00am - 4:00pm

# CARING & SHARING

Sherri Bellucci  
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 Benedetto Cafaro  
 Luigi DeNitto  
 Dylan Ehrbar  
 Denise Halton  
 Dominic Indelicato  
 Maegan Knauf

Chris Larrabee  
 Ann Marie Lizzi  
 Pasquale Manzella  
 William McGill  
 Janet Miller  
 Laura Murray  
 Fortunata Paglialonga  
 Carmine Pezzula

Rachel Powell  
 Denise Severino  
 Grazia Simeone  
 Angela Trombly  
 Ricky Vincent  
 Joan Wallis  
 Nancy Wideman  
 Monica Wilkes

JULY *Birthdays*

## CONDOLENCES

**Professor Cav. Philip J. DiNovo** was a visionary educator, cultural leader, and tireless advocate for preserving the Italian American experience. In 1979, he founded the American Italian Heritage Association and the American Italian Heritage Museum in Albany, dedicating more than four decades to ensuring that the stories, sacrifices, and achievements of Italian immigrants would never be forgotten. A SUNY Morrisville professor for 32 years, founder of its Business Administration Department, and recipient of Italy's knighthood, Professor DiNovo combined scholarship with passion, inspiring generations to take pride in their heritage. Through his leadership, the museum became far



more than a collection of artifacts - it became a living tribute to the courage, faith, and perseverance of Italian Americans. His legacy endures in the institution he built, the community he nurtured, and the countless lives he enriched through his unwavering commitment to history, education, and culture.



**WELCOME**

*new members*

Cynthia Mosley  
 Karina & Victor Alicea  
 Heather Engelhart  
 Marcus Debergh  
 Fred & Janice Garavelli  
 Victoria Breen  
 Jeanette Cruz  
 Laura Murray  
 Diana Marino  
 Tara & Brian Foster  
 Nancy & Jeffrey Petersen





# Mangia Bene E Vivi Bene!

By FRANK ZEOLI



## Risotto With Broccoli Rabe



**C**reamy, comforting, and full of authentic Italian flavor, this Broccoli Rabe Risotto combines the earthy, slightly bitter notes of fresh broccoli rabe with the rich, nutty taste of aged Pecorino Romano cheese. Slowly cooked Arborio rice is stirred with warm broth until perfectly creamy, then finished with sautéed garlic, tender broccoli rabe, butter, and a generous helping of freshly grated Pecorino Romano.



### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, then add the broccoli rabe for 2 minutes. Remove immediately and set aside. Wrap in a paper towel and wring out as much water as possible. Place it in a food processor along with the parsley. Puree until smooth.
2. Pour the stock into a small pot and bring it to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer. In a medium, wide-bottomed, high-sided pan, melt the butter, add the olive oil, and sauté the shallot for a couple of minutes, or until translucent. Stir in the rice, coating each grain until butter slicked. Sauté for 2 minutes until brown; do not burn the rice.
3. Add the wine and reduce, stirring constantly. Once the alcohol has evaporated, lower the heat and ladle in the hot stock (one or two ladles at a time), stirring between additions until fully absorbed by the rice. Keep stirring until the rice is perfectly al dente (to the tooth), about 18 to 20 minutes.
4. When cooked to your liking, stir in the broccoli rabe puree and grated Pecorino Romano cheese, which should loosen the risotto up a bit. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES | COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES

### INGREDIENTS

- ½ pound broccoli rabe
- ½ cup flat-leaf parsley
- 4 to 5 ½ cups chicken broth (you can use bouillon)
- 1 cup Arborio rice
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 shallot (minced)
- ½ cup white wine
- ½ cup grated Pecorino Romano cheese



Look for more recipes in the next edition of the SIAMO QUI

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