

# Café au Lait to Latte: Charting the Acquisition of Culinary Capital by Italian Food in the United States

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Imagine an advertisement for an Italian cheese in the pages of the food magazine *Bon Appétit*. The ad shows a darkened shelf with old-fashioned glass containers. Instead of the more modern, Ball-jar-type screw-on metal lids, they have wire bales holding down glass lids or even corks. “Basil” and “Black Pepper” are handwritten on their labels. The large, bold headline text announces that “real Italian flavor is within reach,” while the copy below includes the phrases “authentic Italian” and “the tradition of Old Italy.” The authentic cheese readers are encouraged to buy to make their dishes taste like the old country stands next to the spices: a tall canister of Kraft 100% Grated Parmesan Cheese. The cursive script below the word “Cheese” reads “Italian type” (Kraft 1985, 150). Anyone reading *Bon Appétit* today would be quite surprised to find this advertisement among articles about farm-to-table restaurants or gourmet coffees, recipes for authentic zabaglione, and new hints for ossobuco. Italianate<sup>1</sup> food is very present on the pages of the magazine, but Kraft’s Parmesan is not part of that canon anymore. Why not? This article seeks to identify when and why Kraft Parmesan cheese could no longer be placed beside glass jars of dried basil in such an advertisement. In other words, it asks the question: When did Italian food go from being comfort food to status food?

In its consideration of the history of Italianate foodways in the United States, this article does not take sides in the battle over whether these foodways compose a valid cuisine or whether they are “authentic,” but rather it identifies and analyzes what I call the “takeoff moment” of the current popularity and cultural significance of Italianate cuisine. As recently as the 1980s, Italianate food had just slightly more cultural cachet than Mexican food in the United States, when a green canister of cheese from Wisconsin merited the adjective “Italian,” rucola was unknown, and coffee in hot milk was called a café au lait (Levenstein 2003; Kamp 2006). The last few decades, and especially the last twenty years, have seen a tremendous rise in the status of Italianate food. It has not only achieved a comparable status to French-inspired food as a chic cuisine, but it has also enjoyed enormous popularity among middle-class Americans.

In the post-World War II period in the United States there was a dichotomy in Italianate food: While there was widespread popular acceptance

of what might be considered “Italian-American” fare—baked ziti, spaghetti with meatballs, California-made Chianti in a flask—high-status Italianate cuisine was restricted to a relatively small number of fine Italian restaurants. Fine dining—or, more appropriately, *haute cuisine*—meant French food almost by definition (Cinotto 2013; Ferguson 2004). At some point in the recent past,<sup>2</sup> Italianate cuisine closed the gap between red-and-white checkerboard tablecloths (low brow) and red-coated waiters (high brow). The most obvious reasons for this transition—that Italianate food is inexpensive, that Italy is a popular tourist destination, that Italian food is delicious and “simple” as well as healthy—immediately run into a problem of chronology. Italianate food’s low cost has attracted American consumers at least since Prohibition, as will be discussed below. Italy has been a popular destination for American tourists since they began participating in the Grand Tour in the early 1800s; while the protagonist of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* dreams of Italy in a novel set in the mid-1950s, it was René Verdon whom the Kennedys hired for the White House in 1960, not an Italian chef. As Harvey Levenstein observed, this helped put French cuisine at the “pinnacle of status” (Levenstein 2003, 140). Similarly, many of the most popular Italian dishes have been around in some form or another for a century if not longer, and Ancel and Margaret Keys’s book promoting the so-called “Mediterranean diet” was published in 1959. Why then was Italianate cuisine able to acquire culinary cachet—not only with the upper crust but also with a broad swath of upper-middle America—only so late in its developmental history?

Former *Esquire* food-and-wine correspondent John Mariani acknowledged this culinary victory in his 2011 best-seller *How Italian Food Conquered the World*, but Mariani was ultimately unable to point to the historical moment when Italianate food began to rival French-inspired food or to explain why (Mariani 2011). The present investigation determines the chronological takeoff point of Italianate food and suggests a conjuncture of historical variables responsible for this takeoff. Crucial to this investigation is the fact that this conjuncture was not invisible and subtle but instead quite evident, a result of the rising “culinary capital” of Italianate food. Naccarato and LeBesco, in coining this phrase, provide us with a conceptual framework to investigate “how and why certain foods and food-related practices connote and, by extension, confer status and power on those who know about and enjoy them” (Naccarato and LeBesco 2012, 3). The rising power of Italianate food to endow its consumers with culinary capital meant that it would be conspicuously advertised and discussed. As this article will show, there is not a simple, linear relationship between an increase in representations of Italianate food and the distinction (*a là*

Bourdieu) that it embodied. Discourse about Italianate food did not simply create this culinary power: The rise in Italianate food's culinary capital was a complex interaction among Americans' historical understandings of Italianate cuisine's place in the U.S. culinary hierarchy, advertising by food corporations and Italian government-sponsored boards as well as food writers' and publishers' perceptions of consumer desire.

In order to explore this thesis, this article is divided into two sections. The first section traces the historical process by which Italian food was both transplanted to the United States and reinvented there. It discusses both the real and imagined conditions in which this happened, as well as the ways in which this food (and the Italian immigrants who brought it to America) was incorporated in the American cultural and culinary landscape. In this section I'll discuss the effects of American abundance on the many cuisines brought along as part of the meager baggage of Italian peasant emigrants. I'll then follow Italianate food from the disdain it met with from Anglo-Americans, their grudging acceptance of it in the 1920s and 1930s, and its incorporation as a somewhat homogenized part of the post-World War II foodscape. This first section also discusses Italianate food's status vis-à-vis the dominant French-inspired cuisine; that discussion provides the framework for the second section in which I analyze a representative sample of *Bon Appétit* issues from the last forty years. Pierre Bourdieu (1984 [1979]) explained how elites attempt to reinforce class boundaries with naturalized standards of taste; the danger for elites is that their fine tastes can be imitated by the middle class, erasing the class lines.<sup>3</sup> *Bon Appétit*, then, is the ideal archive to explore: Less elitist than its cuisine publication *Gourmet*, *Bon Appétit* was the vehicle for writers and advertisers to reach the part of the American middle class that aspired to attain the culinary markers of upper-class grace. An evaluation of the advertising rhetoric, culinary discourse, and the visual culture of this important middle-class culinary publication makes clear that there was indeed a rising popularity and then a distinct "takeoff moment" where Italianate food overtook its French-inspired rival cuisine and distanced itself from its older, red-and-white checked self.

### The Historical Context of Italianate Food in the United States

In order to understand the evolution in the status of Italianate food that is evident in the *Bon Appétit* advertisements discussed in the second part of this article, it is important to trace the process by which it arrived in the United States. Unlike other "ethnic" cuisines now popular in the United States (e.g., Thai, Ethiopian), Italianate food has been present and

widespread geographically for more than a century but has had until the last two or three decades a rather low status. Important then to the present discussion is this cuisine's arrival and development in America. Previous research has discussed the historical factors in Italy that set the stage for the creation of a new cuisine in North America (Diner 2001) as well as its evolution in the last 125 years (Levenstein 2003; Albala 2012). A persistent theme in discussions of Italianate food in the United States is the debate about what is "authentic" or "real" Italian cuisine. In other words, the question has been whether a suite of ingredients, processes, and dishes was simply transplanted to the New World from the Italian peninsula or represented a new cuisine entirely, with little to do with peasant fare in the Old World. Despite the seeming logic of poor southerners bringing their tradition of pasta, salami, and good white bread, the reality is quite different. Italian immigrants of the late nineteenth century were by and large very poor. They were those who had the least to lose and the most to gain emigrating from impoverished agricultural areas. Their daily fare in Italy had been anything but pasta, cuts of salami, and what we now think of as "Italian bread" (Diner 2001; Levenstein 2003). Indeed, as David Gentilcore points out, the canonical dish of spaghetti with tomato sauce was still a relative novelty for Italian peasants (Gentilcore 2010, 102). The so-called *cucina povera* (poor people's or peasant food) was not the healthy, hearty meal a farmer was happy to come home to after a hard day in the fields, but rather a fare based on monotony and malnutrition that historians connect to deficiency diseases and concomitant short life expectancies (Riley 2007, 149). Pasta in nineteenth-century Italy was far from being a national food: Indeed, it was still an expensive one, out of reach of the poorest laborers for most of the week. If pasta was an occasional food, the meatballs (and meat in general) were even more rare. Hasia Diner, in her important work on emigrants and their food, describes how Italy's poor were effectively vegetarians for most of the year, except Christmas and saints' days (Diner 2001).

But while the *braccianti* and *contadini* (the poor rural farm workers) who left Italy had only rarely eaten pasta, salami, and white bread, they had certainly seen and desired them. As Diner says, "All over the peninsula, the poor made the food, saw it, knew how to assess its quality, but could only eat what those in power allotted" (Diner 2001, 34). The Italian poor's culinary dreams were to be fulfilled, however, in the United States. America was no paradise, but the relative food abundance and higher wages allowed immigrants to realize some of their dreams. Italian immigrants could now enjoy foods that had been limited to the upper-middle and upper classes in the old country: Pastas, cheeses, olive oil, beer, and

all kinds of meat (both cured and fresh) graced immigrant tables. The very abundance and relative inexpensiveness of these foods, however, created the first adaption of these “dreams realized,” the *carnificazione* or “meatization” of dishes. Meat, once enjoyed only a few times a year, could now be eaten frequently and added to any plate (Diner 2001, 102). One of the best examples is the dish we see our two diners ordering in the film *Big Night*: that classic of Italian-American cuisine, spaghetti with meatballs (Tucci and Scott 1996).

It was not only the abundance in the American culinary environment that shaped Italianate food; the homogenization of the Italian emigrant communities themselves left its mark as well. Even today we recognize that the term “Italian cuisine” is something of a misnomer: Though there are some dishes that are now truly “national,” Italianate cuisine in the United States is a composite of many smaller regional and even municipal cuisines, as well as culinary novelties created here (Zanger 2013, 348, and *passim*; Diner 2001). This was, of course, even more the case 120 years ago. Immigrants who arrived in the United States had their own culinary dreams—that special dish prepared for each saint’s day, a certain pasta shape, a special dessert. With the passage of time, these distinct dishes and traditions were blended and amalgamated into Italian cuisine in the United States.

Despite its revolution and consolidation in the United States, Italianate food in the late nineteenth and well into the twentieth century had a status similar to that of its producers. As Levenstein points out, while earlier Italians had been skilled laborers from the north, “as the deluge of unskilled and poverty-stricken immigrants from the Mezzogiorno struck America’s cities, Italy no longer merely connoted Renaissance palaces and happy gondoliers to the native-born mind” (Levenstein 2002, 77). As “Italy” became associated with crowded tenements, manual laborers, and crime, the status of “Italian food” sank accordingly. As William Grimes commented in *Appetite City*, “French cuisine arrived in New York with its credentials in order. Italian cooking was another matter. [. . .] Italians were automatically described in the press as dark, dirty, and dangerous” (Grimes 2009, 96). Drawing on the records of the benevolent associations that attempted to “help” new immigrants in New York, Levenstein shows in painful detail how aid workers tried unsuccessfully to convince Italians to give up their cuisine. Some Italian food products such as semiwild greens and pasta were associated by Americans with poverty. Conversely, olive oil and imported Parmesan cheese were costly items and were looked down on by these aid workers as a luxury that the Italians should forgo. These items, now fundamental elements of Italianate cuisine, then represented

the wrong food for those seeking to acquire culinary capital as a means of satisfying their middle-class pretensions.

Advances in nutrition research accorded grudging approval, if not wholesale approbation, to Italian food. The discovery of micronutrients and their presence in fruits and vegetables raised the culinary value of Italianate cuisine. This led to the shifting of the liminal space between American and Italian food cultures: The meeting point between the two moved from the grocery store to the Italian restaurant (Levenstein 2002, 87). Sicilian and Neapolitan and Piedmontese restaurant owners offered “Italian” dishes that wouldn’t offend the sensibilities of their customers: As Franco La Cecla has pointed out, ethnic restaurants are a sort of compromise between both parties (La Cecla 2007, 59–60). The diners are theoretically looking for “authenticity,” though certain characteristic ingredients or even successions of dishes would appear too strange. Thus, the restaurant owner must provide something halfway between “authentic” and “familiar.” An example of this compromise might be a tomato sauce without any garlic in it, or perhaps with sugar, coming closer to the familiar ketchup that American diners already knew. Thus, Americans’ expectations took the culinary “rough edges” off of Italianate cuisine, moving it further toward indigenous, less threatening (and, one could say, more bland) American palates.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the appearance of Italian restaurants led to greater homogenization of what was considered Italian but did not improve the associations with Italian food products. Italian wine was still “Dago red” rather than wines distinguished by the names of regions.

A big push toward the public’s acceptance of Italianate cooking came in the 1920s and 1930s with two events that pushed regular Americans into closer contact with both Italian immigrants and their food. The national prohibition on alcohol created an economic incentive for surreptitiously making and serving alcohol. Italian Americans, who had been making their own wine in urban contexts for decades and who often were proprietors of restaurants, were extremely well-placed to capitalize on Prohibition. Their speakeasies were not simply bars but restaurants as well, and it was here that the average American got to know Italianate cooking (Okrent 2010, 208). While Prohibition created a more widespread familiarity with Italianate food, the Great Depression provided an economic reason to eat it. The economic downturn and widespread unemployment made pasta (and meatballs made out of inexpensive ground beef) a cheap alternative to more traditional meat-based American meals. Cheese was a viable alternative to meat for animal proteins, and the vegetable- and fruit-filled diet of Italian immigrants was popularized by nutritionists eager to help Americans maintain a balanced diet in the face of poverty (Levenstein

2002, 84–85, 87–88). It's important to note that the cuisine that more and more Americans were being introduced to in the interwar and immediate post-World War II period had already been evolving for over forty years: What was presented to them as Italian food had already been adapting to American tastes for a long time. American diners, like those in *Big Night*, were blissfully unaware of this, though. They saw the food they ate (spaghetti with meatballs, veal parmesan, chicken cacciatore) as Italian food, not as the product of cultural adaptation.

*Big Night*, set in the 1950s, portrays a middle America just beginning to become interested in foreign food. As Levenstein points out in *Paradox of Plenty*, this was less a result of GIs returning with a taste for pizza, Roggenbrot, or couscous, but rather the rise of mass media (Levenstein 2003). For several decades after World War II, Italianate cuisine enjoyed a quiet popularity based on a perceived relationship between price and value: inexpensive food that tasted good. At some point in the waning twentieth century, this perception changed: Italianate food acquired value not only because of its price-taste value but also because of its value to those eager to acquire culinary capital. Simone Cinotto explains that Italian restaurants were able “to provide a safe, comfortable space where non-Italian middle-class Americans could enjoy Italian customs and culture, to share in the experience of ‘being Italian’” (Cinotto 2013, 181). In this way, Italianate food conquered the middle ground between popular and elite, earning the reputation of a simple yet sophisticated cuisine that a large swath of the American middle class enjoys today. These aspiring culinary sophisticates, eager to impress their friends, had to not only consume the food itself but also acquire intimate knowledge of it. This explosion of interest is clearly visible in *Bon Appétit*'s pages.

### Italianate Takeoff: The Latte Edges Out the Café au Lait

The preceding historical review has identified two processes in the evolution of Italianate food's appeal to Americans. The first was long and quite slow, the incorporation of Italianate food into the panoply of American ethnic foods—a place at the table, but certainly not at the head. In the last decades of the twentieth century, however, incorporation became lionization. Instead of being one of the options for an inexpensive but vaguely exotic meal out, Italianate cuisine acquired an enormous amount of culinary capital as it emerged as a cuisine embraced by American sophisticates while still enjoying popularity with the less culinarily aspirational mainstream diner.

As was shown in the first section, Italianate food was widely known in the United States for a long time prior to its takeoff. Italianate food

occupied a low-return niche and had scattered production. From the 1880s until sometime in recent decades, Italianate food in the United States was discount food without much culinary capital. In other words, while some Americans might have turned to pizza or baked ziti for an inexpensive meal out, there was no conception in the broader middle class that eating Italianate food allowed the consumer to accrue status. If French-inspired cuisine was analogous to going to the opera, Italianate food was listening to FM radio. At some point, however, Italianate food acquired enough culinary capital to initiate a chain reaction: It was suddenly “in,” not simply a patch on the fabric of the American culinary quilt. Like the need for steam engines creating more demand for coal, which in turn created yet more demand for steam engines to drain mines, the relationship became auto-catalytic: Interest in Italianate food created the demand. The dramatic increase in demand for it—and its rise from family restaurant to bistro and top-chef fare—created a correspondingly wide increase in distribution. Italian wines began occupying more spaces on wine lists, Starbucks adopted the term “barista” for its coffee preparers, and Pizza Hut began offering a pizza called “Prosciutto e Rucola.” Advertisers sought effective channels to connect with consumers, and monthly culinary magazines that discussed current trends were an ideal choice. While all Americans are now intuitively aware of this dramatic increase, it has yet to be isolated chronologically.

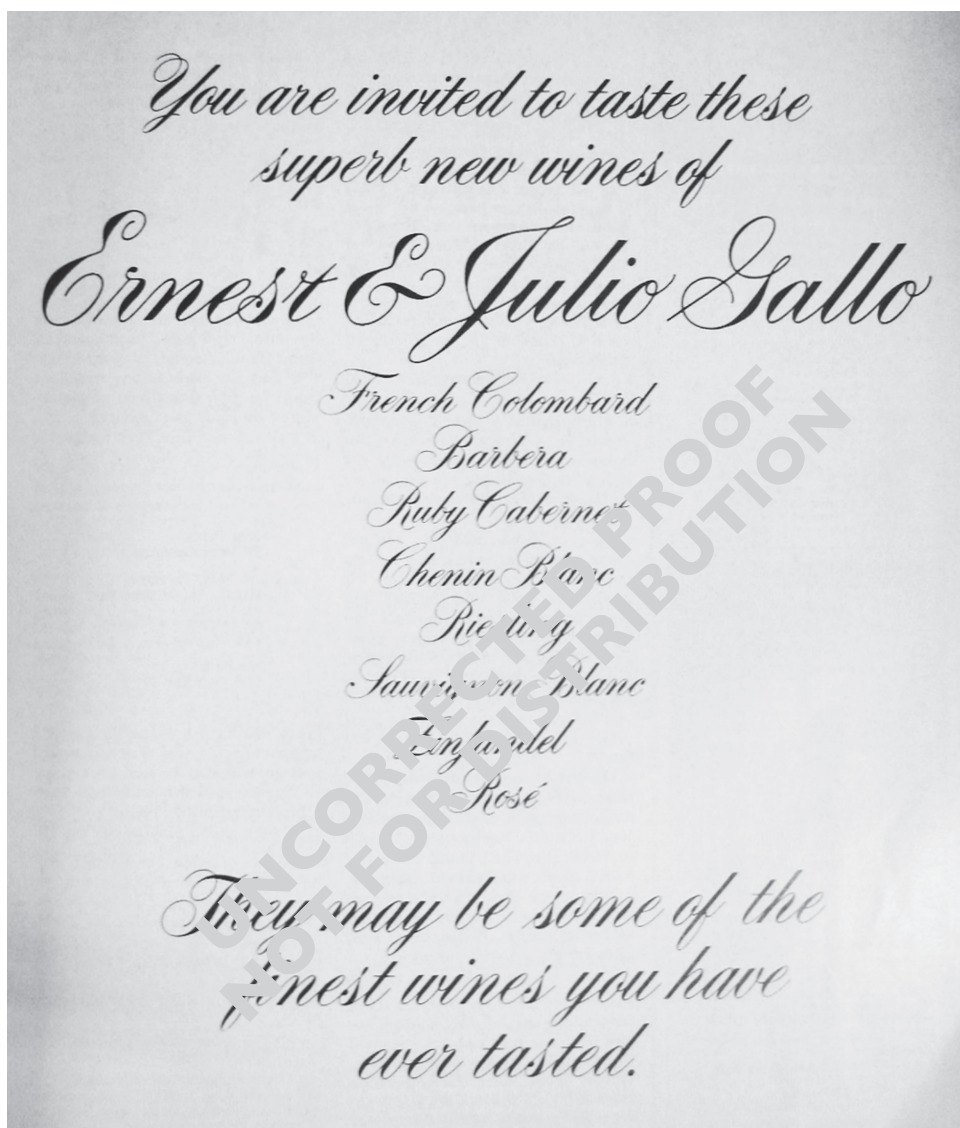
To investigate Italianate food popularity in middle-class America, the second part of this study offers a content analysis of *Bon Appétit*. This culinary magazine was launched in 1956, though it discussed only wine until 1970. Even a qualitative examination of the content and the advertisements in the magazine over the decades—wine and hotels in exotic locations, but also Kraft cheese, Grey Poupon, and Kahlua—suggests that it is aimed at a mixed audience. The magazine currently claims that it has a monthly print reach of over 6.5 million people, and its readers’ median household income is \$86,000 (compared to a U.S. median of around \$50,000), and 46 percent of them graduated from college, compared to the U.S. median of 30 percent (*Bon Appétit* 2012). In their book about distinction in the food world, Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann include *Bon Appétit* in their list of the three leading epicurean magazines, which, they write, “have to walk the line between presenting themselves as culinary authorities, and providing an accessible, chummy, more populist approach to food culture that resonates with a broader readership” (Johnston and Baumann 2010, 45). This broader readership includes not just the culinary elite but also a significant portion of the middle and upper-middle class in the United States.



The present research used an analysis of the January and June issues of *Bon Appétit*, every five years from 1970 up to 2010.<sup>5</sup> What is immediately striking in the earlier years of this sample is the dominant place in the culinary discourse of French-inspired cuisine. Priscilla Ferguson has discussed the reasons for this hegemonic position (Ferguson 2004), and the story of Julia Childs's popularity over the last sixty years is only a symbol of that. That French-inspired was the "in" cuisine for middle-brow American food culture is obvious from its appearance in recipes, full-article coverage, references to chefs' preparation, and in the advertisements in the earlier years of this sample. The editor's note of the first issue of the magazine that covers both food and wine (January 1970) offers the reader a passport to culinary adventure, asserting that "the wonderful world of food and drink with all the international excitement and adventure is as close as your kitchen." Despite this internationalist tone—even including the exhortation to use the phrase "international dishes" instead of "foreign food" ("Welcome . . ." 1970, 1)—the emphasis placed on French-inspired food is pronounced. One of the main articles (and the only one that deals with wine) is about the new Bordeaux vintage chart; in an aside, the author also mentions how everyone has a favorite Italian restaurant "with checkered tablecloths" (Rubin 1970a, 12). The June issue of the same year underlines the low prestige of Italianate food in the United States, mentioning that only 4 percent of Italian wine is exported, and "to many, Italian wine was nothing but Chianti" (Rubin 1970b, 12). The relative positions that French-inspired and Italianate cuisines occupy in the American culinary hierarchy are also clear in a strangely dissonant example from the last page of the June issue: In a column titled "Bon Café," there is a mention of an Italian soprano who runs a New York restaurant called "Chez Vito" (35). The first acknowledgement of French-inspired supremacy is the name of the column; the fact that an Italian soprano would find it necessary to use French in the name of her restaurant only underlines this. The name of the (perhaps fictive) chef is Italian, but while the reader is left to guess about the provenance of the food, the nod to the mid-century restaurant-naming customs (Chez Vito as opposed to Da Vito or Trattoria Vito) is a signal to the discerning customer that despite the owner's background, the cuisine available might include French-inspired items.

The situation five years later is much the same. An article called "Gifts of Good Taste from California Wineries" is dominated by French varietal names (Rubin 1974, 14-19), as is an advertisement for Ernest and Julio Gallo wines (Gallo and Gallo 1974, 35).

In the June/July 1975 issue there is a list of "Restaurants of Good Taste": Of the forty-three U.S. restaurants named, sixteen have obviously French



Advertisement for Ernest and Julio Gallo wines.

names, while there are only two restaurants whose names are Italian. The implications of the percentages are clear: Italianate food, while worth mentioning in a magazine dedicated to “international dishes,” does not possess enough cultural capital to be a selling point for a restaurant. Italian food is mentioned in an advertisement but only to suggest that Pillsbury dough be used to make “Crafty Crescent Lasagne” (Pillsbury 1975, 32). While the text is simply a recipe for the lasagna, the ad assumes that an Italian recipe’s ingredients are flexible to the point of being fungible—indeed the copy above the photograph asserts that this is “Another way to

bake with Pillsbury fresh dough.” Far from being a culinary language with its own grammar, Italian food is flexible enough to be made with improvised ingredients. While inviting the advertisement’s intended viewer to engage with Italianate food, the ad does not inspire an awe of that cuisine’s immutability or a respect for imagined authenticity that is evident today. That French-inspired food is not so flexible is clear from an advertisement for a publication called *The Wine Reporter*. Playing on readers’ fears of insufficient knowledge, the ad suggests the publication will “help you avoid embarrassment” because it will “tell you which bottles to avoid, which petit châteaux (there are so many of them) are mediocre and overpriced, and which American varietal wines have character” (*The Wine Reporter* 1975, 35). The offer of “expert knowledge” to cut a good figure in front of friends is explicitly linked to French wines. Another example from the previous issue (April/May 1975) of the clear link between French-inspired food and its culinary capital is an article titled “A Black Tie Dinner.” The feature describes an annual black-tie dinner hosted by CBS engineer Steve Nelson and his wife. Nelson himself writes the article, making occasional references to choices his wife made in preparing the meal, and to the guests (a wine and cheese store owner, a former PBS broadcaster, a computer expert, a CBS news announcer, an engineer, and a former Prentice-Hall editor). The menu includes six wines, of which one is a port and one a Madeira; the other four are all French. The dishes on the menu are all generically English (e.g., creamed spinach, pineapple sherbet) or French-inspired: Vintage Tomato Bouillon, Shrimp St. Jacques, Potato Vert Gallant, and even Green Salad with French Dressing (Nelson 1975, 59). Even if *Bon Appétit* readers could not afford to recreate a dinner like this, with an eighty-year-old Madeira, they internalize the message that a dinner among the American elite must have a heavily French-inspired menu to be considered prestigious.

In addition to being perceived as too lowbrow for the aspirational middle-class diner, in this period some Italian restaurants are seen as inaccessible to them, as evidenced by an advertisement in the January 1980 issue. It indicates that a restaurant called Ristorante Chianti is open for business for the distinguishing gourmand, but the entire ad (from name to invitation to opening hours) is entirely in Italian (Ristorante Chianti 1980, 8B). That this ad is largely illegible to *Bon Appétit*’s readership flatters those few who can decode it, but it simultaneously places the restaurant (and its cuisine) beyond the reach of a broad swath of the magazine’s audience.<sup>6</sup> Though the appearance in the advertising at the end of the magazine of more Italian names is at first surprising, a closer examination shows some degree of “piggybacking.” While there are five with Italian names

(compared to six restaurants with obviously French names), one of the restaurants proposes “French and Italian cuisine,” while another advertises “French and Northern Italian cuisine.” This curious distinction—today almost completely absent from discourse about Italianate cuisine—is perhaps a remnant of the U.S. immigration categories, which separated northern and southern Italians into two “races” (Cinotto 2012, 187–193).

The issues of *Bon Appétit* from the 1980s show a hesitant opening to Italianate food, **an example of which can be found in an ad from the Italian Wine Promotion Center**. The ad (in the June 1980 issue) features a husband and wife—Max and Fran Weitzenhoffer—in the art gallery that they own. Max looks confident, standing behind and over his wife, whose face wears an almost questioning expression. Despite their apparent co-ownership of the gallery, the copy makes it clear that Fran has a second shift as a cook at their home: “My wife Fran cooks wiener schnitzel and sauerbraten like a Rhine maiden. But some of our best wines are Italian.” All of the text is written in Max’s voice, and while it attempts to connect the enjoyment of Italian wine to the appreciation of fine art, it fails to challenge not only gender roles about food preparation but also the reputation of French food. While Max refers to a meal without wine as “a frame without a painting,” the framing of the article does not set up a challenge to French-inspired food or wine, preferring to use the *non sequitur* of pairing Italian wine with Germanic food. The large text over the picture—“Some of our best wines are Italian”—is obviously an attempt to convince a skeptical public (Italian Wine Promotion Center 1980, 60).

Contrast this advertisement to that issue’s cover story about “America’s greatest restaurant,” which begins just two pages after the plaintive assertion about Italian wines. The restaurant, Le Français, is run by Chef Jean Banchet, who explains that “it’s quite simple, I want to serve the very best. We have a good reputation and I want to keep that and my quality” (Harris 1980b, 62). Neither the copy written by article author Diane Harris nor Chef Banchet in his quotations makes explicit that links to French-inspired food guarantee the reputation, and with it the culinary capital, that the restaurant can transmit to its diners. That link is simply an unspoken assumption made clear through the training of the chef (in Vienne at La Pyramide), the names of the recipes (almost exclusively French), and even the reliance on ingredients and preparations like Périgord truffles and *glace*.

Some of the gender assumptions that are clearly subtly associated with Italianate food also contributed, in the 1970s and 1980s, to its lack of culinary capital. An example of this is a June 1980 news item about an Italian woman married to an American who reveals that she’s written a cookbook of American cuisine because “my husband and son don’t like

# "Some of our best wines are Italian."

Max and Fran Weitzenhoffer, Gimpel & Weitzenhoffer Art Gallery, N.Y.C.



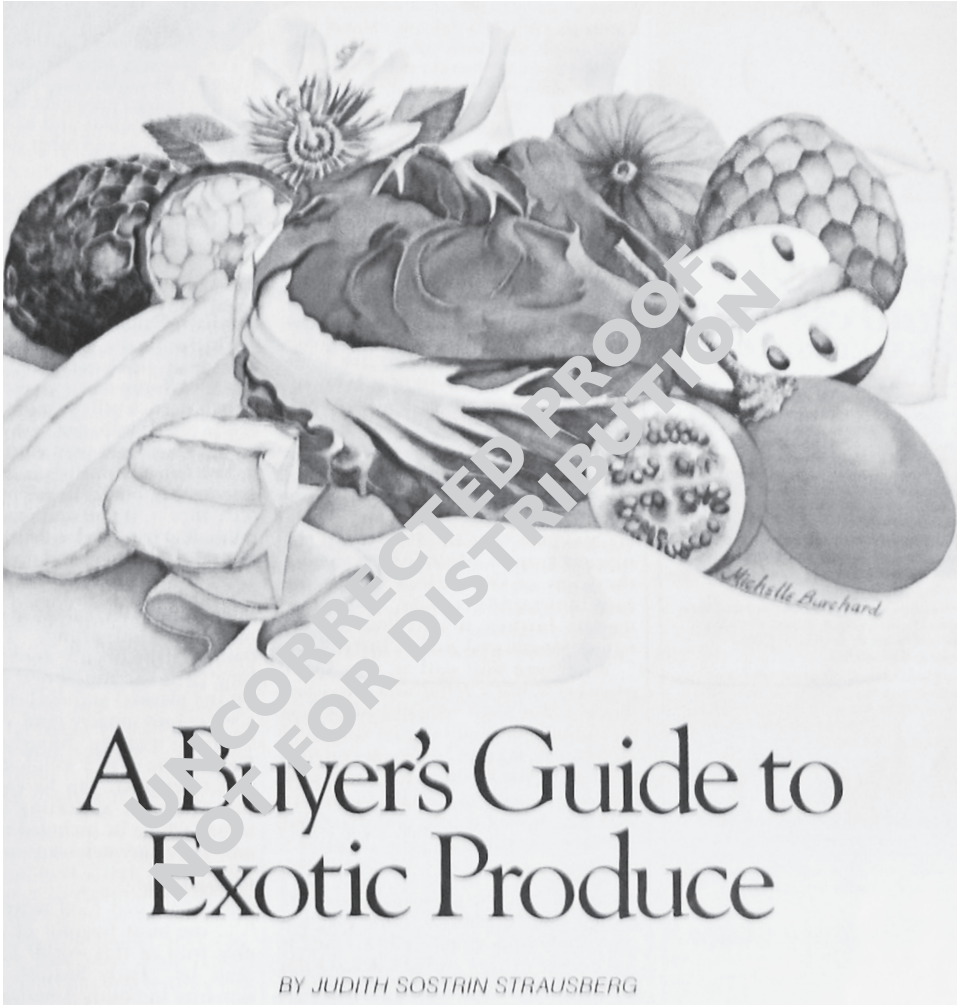
"My wife Fran cooks wiener schnitzel and sauerbraten like a Rhine maiden. But some of our best wines are Italian.

wines. Last week we drank a vintage red and a sparkling white wine that were masterpieces"

*Advertisement from the Italian Wine Promotion Center in the June 1980 issue of Bon Appétit.*

any other [Italian dishes], other than spaghetti" ("Book Talk" 1980, 19). The low value that Italianate food had at the time is clear in this example: In addition to the reputation of budget rather than refined food, Italianate food also had the stigma of being a readily accessible food vocabulary (domestic food, prepared by women) that did not require professional training (restaurant food, prepared by male chefs). This is in stark contrast to the culinary capital that celebrity chef Giada De Laurentiis has acquired in the last ten years, mainly by sharing a culinary repertoire based not on professional training but rather precisely on food traditions that are seemingly gendered, supposedly passed down to Giada through her female ancestors. Indeed, De Laurentiis downplays her professional credentials and cultivates her culinary inheritance from her family, cooking in a domestic kitchen for friends and family on her show (Naccarato and LeBesco 2012, 54–55). Contrast De Laurentiis's culinary biography with that of former Chez Panisse chef Jeremiah Tower as told in an article that appeared in the June 1980 issue of *Bon Appétit*. The article includes a number of Tower's recipes, four of which have French names (Harris, 1980a, 90–91). Tower does refer to domestic, female-gendered experiences, having been introduced to "good eating" by, among others, "his spirited aunt who was a superb cook, and his mother," but he underlines that "it was not until I was in college that I really started cooking" (Harris 1980a, 91). These maternal, domestic influences were a starting point, but the article states that "to achieve just the right balance of tastes, textures, and colors, Tower often makes small changes in familiar recipes" (Harris 1980a, 91–92). These are not the recipes he learned at home but rather variations on classic French dishes developed by male chefs—Tower refers to two giants of French cuisine, Georges Auguste Escoffier and Guillaume Tirel (known as "Taillevent"), explicitly.

In January 1985, *Bon Appétit* does mention a "rustic Italian dinner for eight" and gives recipes, but after the recipe for gelato, it provides the reader with a translation for that word: "Italian ice cream" (Field, 1985a, 82–88). That Italian ingredients are still unfamiliar to American readers is obvious too from the article titled "**A Buyer's Guide to Exotic Produce.**" The guide explains both arugula and radicchio, two Italian ingredients that are commonplace today (Strausberg 1985). The June 1985 issue includes the Kraft ad mentioned above, dominated by a green Parmesan cheese canister with the words "Real Italian Flavor" written underneath (Kraft 1985, 150). While humorous to the present-day reader, the advertisement makes two assumptions about Italian food. The first is that an association with Italy is a selling point even with the demographic in question. The second assumption is that the reader will be unfamiliar with European



## A Buyer's Guide to Exotic Produce

BY JUDITH SOSTRIN STRAUSBERG

*An article in the January 1985 issue of Bon Appétit.*

Protected Denomination of Origin (PDO) classifications and therefore will not dismiss the assertion of the cheese's authenticity. On page 17 an ad for a wine importer has six labels, of which only one, a Barolo, is Italian (Kobrand Corporation 1985, 17). Another article mentions "a trip that would fulfill just about anyone's idea of a dream vacation": a voyage on a barge through the canals of northern France (Handle 1985, 23). There is a long article titled "A Bountiful Mediterranean Buffet," though there is no mention at all of the Mediterranean diet (Field 1985b, 88-97). Finally, we find an advertisement for a book called *How to Read and Speak a French Menu and Wine List* (Allen Publishing Corporation 1985, 144B). The discursive premise of these food advertisements and editorial content is clear: In 1985 the way to eat prestige was to eat mostly French.

The relative space devoted to French-inspired cuisine vis-à-vis Italianate, as well as the unspoken assumptions that frame both articles and advertisements, makes it clear that in the period surveyed (1970–1990), the culinary dreams of the aspiring middle-class American cook and diner are in French. That French-inspired cuisine was a model to be consumed (at restaurants) and imitated (in one's own home) is just as obvious from these ads and articles as is today's enthusiasm for Italianate food. French dominance was, however, ephemeral. The Italianate challenge to French-inspired culinary hegemony in America is evident in 1990 and in full swing by 1995. While many of the new generation of chefs profiled on page 30 of the January 1990 issue have French training, a lengthy article on Chef Jasper White reveals a shift away from this (Kaplan 1990, 84–87). White says that while he “was immersed in and impressed by French classical cooking,” he and his fellow chefs had to chart a new path (Kaplan 1990, 87). The writer states, “While Jasper rebelled against the European hegemony, he forged his own style by going back to the basics . . . the things he had learned from his [Italian] grandmother” (Kaplan 1990, 87). This article subtly marks the shift in the acquisition of culinary capital by the reader of *Bon Appétit*: whereas in the earlier period surveyed, status could be acquired through knowledge of classic French recipes and famous wines, now a more personal, traditional, and (perhaps most importantly) nonprofessional cuisine is gaining ground. In addition, while cooking that was gendered female (e.g., the Italian-born cookbook writer in 1985) was once placed in a lower position in the culinary hierarchy, White specifically connects his cooking with not only an Italian tradition but also with his Italian grandmother. In his interview, White underlines the fact that he has left the school-taught techniques behind to reconnect with a simpler, much more personal cuisine. This strategy to become a successful chef is based on the national and gender shift in culinary capital.

The rising tide of Italianate food status is also evident in the “Best Bets” for the wine lover: of the twenty listed, nine are French and seven are Italian, though all those in the premium “For the Cellar” subcategory are still French (“Best Bets” 1990, 32). While these references clearly show an increase in the popularity and elevated status of Italianate food in the readership and in top chefs, an advertisement from the pasta company Contadina is a more subtle indication of the same. It shows a dish of tomato-sauce-covered pasta, and the bold statement is “Contadina Fresh: The first ravioli for adults.” The copy explains that Contadina's new product “doesn't look or taste anything like the mushy kidstuff that has been around forever” (Contadina 1990, 30). The implication is that pasta (like Chef Boy-Ar-Dee) has graduated from being a meal for children to



being something that middle-class readers can consider for dinner. While there are some subtle references to a higher standard of quality in the copy (a reference to “imported cheeses” and “fine meats”), the idea that Contadina’s product is worthy of a fine European restaurant is cleverly placed just at the edges of the frame. The plate of ravioli occupies much of the center; around it we see a tablecloth, cloth napkin, a crust of bread, and (most tellingly) bottled water. The implication here is that eating Contadina is not making lasagna from freezer dough, but rather like going to a restaurant in Italy, an association that is more appealing to the women to whom preparation may still be left. The Contadina ad is still referencing the older conception of food with a high culinary value (professionally prepared by mainly male chefs), rather than drawing on the newer, female-gendered positive associations that Jasper White expressed.

That Italianate cuisine (albeit in its updated American interpretation) has extended its reach from the working class to the aspirational middle class and upper class is more apparent in the June 1990 issue, though there are still some ingredients that require advertising or editorial copy to explain. This issue has the first advertisement for olive oil in the sample examined. What is striking about this article is how it suggests (both in the text and visually) that with Bertolli, you can “eat well, live long, and be happy.” The first two are obvious benefits of olive oil, a product that will become the avatar of Italianate cuisine; though still not explicitly referring to it as part of the Mediterranean diet, the copy explains the links of olive oil to lower cholesterol levels. The main photograph is the centerpiece of the advertisement’s appeal: In it a seated older man raises a glass to a younger man who appears to be his son, the son’s wife and child, and an older woman. The copy is almost redundant: “When three or more generations gather for dinner, it is a heartwarming experience, indeed. And when you bring a meal prepared with Bertolli olive oil [ . . . ] you’re helping everyone eat well, live long, and be happy” (Bertolli 1990, 33). Bertolli is selling not only health and good taste but also access to a family dinner, very much a part of the middle-class collective imagination. Again, while the patriarch is at the center of the advertisement, the association is with the family and by extension with food traditionally prepared by the women.

This is followed by an ad placed by the Italian Government Travel Office that makes reference to the country’s art and architecture and then explains to the reader that “one of the greatest art forms in Italy is food” (Italian Government Travel Office 1990, 39). Italianate food, then, is not the equivalent of the hot dog but rather a higher form of active aesthetic appreciation—the ad is not subtle about this, beginning with the words “I always hear about Italian good taste. I wanted to taste it” (39). The

idea of “good taste” as a skill to be developed, not something intuitive in everyone, is quite old. Italian food historian Massimo Montanari describes how the Italian urban elite in the seventeenth century used this concept—taste as something *learned*, knowledge not to be shared with everyone—to distance themselves from the rich elements of the peasantry (Montanari 2010). This idea of good taste as something that is acquired reinforces the central assumptions of the advertisement, the magazine itself, and the larger culinary context: Choosing Italian food is a demonstration of good taste, and *Bon Appétit*’s mission is to instruct readers on how to be more knowledgeable about it. The public demonstration of this knowledge—ordering Italian wines, buying Italian cheeses for the dinner parties that are so often featured in the magazine’s pages—will bring esteem to consumers of Italianate food.

These are followed by the first full article on pasta in the sample analyzed (a longer-than-average four pages), followed directly by two full-page ads for pasta (from Borden and Contadina). Despite the increased attention given to them, it is clear that the reader is still not familiar with dishes that are today well-known: A recipe for risotto, for instance, places that word in quotation marks (“Wild mushroom . . .”, 1990, 56). Contrast this reference in June 1990 to a reference to the same dish in the January 1995 issue: “Risotto: This classic Italian rice dish went mainstream in 1994” (Birnbaum 1995, 48). The “Editor’s Choice” for the January 1995 issue is pizza, and one of the ten hot trends for the past year is “Mediterranean cooking.” “Yes, we know a Mediterranean meal has been spotlighted in this feature every January for three years now,” the editors explain, “It is clearly one hot trend that just won’t cool down” (Kidd and Kaplan 1995, 36). While every cuisine can be thought of as being in a state of constant evolution, the change in the 1990s was clearly less the actual change of ingredients and more within the perception of the prestige with which they could endow a consumer.

The culinary capital of Italianate cuisine was complemented by “dietary capital” as well. Naccarato and LeBesco (2012) have investigated the links between culinary capital and a “hierarchy that privileges certain food and food practices over others” (88). Another event that highlights this link and may have catalyzed the “Italian[ate] revolution” was the now-famous *60 Minutes* report in 1991. The piece reported on new research that seemed to explain the apparent paradox of the high French consumption of dietary saturated fats but low cardiovascular rates. The story suggested that moderate consumption of red wine was responsible (Safer, 1991). Cornell University researchers soon claimed to have identified a naturally occurring substance in red wine that allowed the French to

eat so much saturated animal fat and not have high cholesterol (Siemann and Creasy 1992). The reports led to a great deal of interest in red wine and in healthier diets. A year later, in 1993, Harvard University (along with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization) sponsored a conference titled “1993 International Conference on the Diets of the Mediterranean.” The conference had a much wider impact than most academic conferences and led to a cookbook (Jenkins 1994) and a great deal of interest in popular food writing on the so-called Mediterranean diet. This combination of foods—little red meat; some fish, legumes, olive oil, and cheese; and moderate amounts of wine—was billed as the “traditional” diet of Mediterranean peasants and had been linked by some researchers to lowered rates of coronary disease (Keys and Keys 1959). While there is considerable debate about the historicity of the diet—that is, whether or not “Mediterranean” peasants ate this combination of foods—there is no debate about the impact of the popularization of the Mediterranean diet (Crotty 1998; Nestle 2000). Italianate food benefited doubly from these findings: Its culinary capital rose because of its association with health (one marker of elite status, and an aspiration for the middle class) and the relative cost of some of the foods needed to recreate the diet in the United States. Legumes are inexpensive, but imitating a Mediterranean diet by drinking wine and eating olive oil every day put this cuisine outside of the mainstream.

Had these findings been published in the 1980s, they might have solidified the place of French-inspired cooking, but their post-1990 emergence reinforced the growing popularity of Italianate cuisine. Not only could consumers of mozzarella di bufala, Apulian olive oil, and Sangiovese wine demonstrate their membership in a small but growing club of elite connoisseurs, they could also improve their health. Although not the focus of this article, the health advantages of the Italianate diet might be yet another, more subtle class distinction. As Kathleen LeBesco points out, “fatness” (to some extent marked as the opposite of “healthiness” in the United States) marks the individual “not of the dominant social class” (LeBesco 2004, 58–59). However health fits into the causation, the chronological conjuncture changed Italianate food from a trend to a stable part of American middle-class culinary aspirations. Italianate food was normalized in the early 1990s because the trends for organic, local, and authentic foods that food writers have both chronicled and fueled (Pollan 2006; Kamp 2006) led the American middle class to take Italianate cuisine as the organic-local-peasant-traditional-Mediterranean-authentic food avatar. The Slow Food movement, which went international in 1989, was perhaps perfectly timed to connect Italian food with “real food.” In addition, as

Simone Cinotto has suggested, “financially secure third generation Italian-Americans interested in ‘rediscovering their roots’ ” may have helped with the initial demand for a higher-end version of Italianate food (Cinotto 2013, 214). This food leapt into the gap and, while not totally eclipsing French-inspired cuisine, captured a larger share of the attention devoted to cuisine in magazines like *Bon Appétit*.

The two issues of *Bon Appétit* examined for the year 2000 show Italianate food firmly entrenched as the object of desire and the means of acquiring culinary capital for the aspiring middle class. While the Mediterranean diet is not in the January issue’s list of top food trends, we can assume that it and its avatar—Italianate food—have been so thoroughly accepted as to not merit being labeled a trend anymore. Proof of this is the advertisement for Grana Padano cheese: The copy reads “Grana Padano: The cheese Italians keep (mostly) to themselves” (Consorzio Grana Padano 2000, 169). This text suggests that the reader is in the know if he or she chooses Grana Padano; the assumptions about what the average reader knows about Italian cheese are vastly different than the 1985 Kraft advertisement that suggests the green canister contains cheese with “real Italian flavor.” That French *fromage* too is now feeling the culinary challenge of Italian *formaggio* is clear in an article about a cheese store in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The name of the store is Formaggio Kitchen, the only cheese mentioned explicitly is Pecorino Romano, and one of the two restaurants named is called the Rialto (the other is The Blue Room) (“Shopping” 2000, 22). The use of Italian words in names is significant: Whereas in 1970 an Italian restaurant owner felt the need to name her restaurant *Chez Vito*, now food-related businesses signal their attachment to the dominant culinary trend using Italian names.

That Italianate cuisine has superseded or at least equaled the status of French-inspired cuisine is even clearer in the June 2000 issue of *Bon Appétit*. An article about where noted “foodies” (the first appearance of this term in the sample) go to shop has more references to Italianate food than any other ethnic cuisine, despite the fact that only enough space is given for each expert to make a few recommendations. One of those polled, a cookbook author, talks about a shop with Ferrero chocolates from Italy and sandwiches named after Fellini films (and mentions arugula as an ingredient). This salad green is now used without any quotation marks, a far cry from its appearance in the January 1985 “A Buyer’s Guide to Exotic Produce” (Strausberg 1985). Another foodie (a cooking school owner) eats roast chicken at Gira Polli; a food critic waxes poetic about the best importer of Parmesan cheese; a chef-owner talks about Sicilian pizza just like “my granduncle used to make it”; an executive chef mentions a

place to get a great focaccia sandwich; a vineyard owner describes a store that sells “freshly milled polenta flour.” A seventh expert (of eleven total) says, “I go to Wally’s for all of my wine—especially Italian, since I have become an Italophile” (Fairchild 2000, 36–37). The appeals to status here are clear. The preferences expressed are not merely “person on the street” nor are they advertisements, rendering Italy and Italianate foods as the objects of desire of food experts, and thereby making these judgments even more likely to inspire imitation. In contrast to the famous French-inspired restaurants mentioned in the earlier part of the sample, the acquisition of culinary capital is now linked to finding the off-beat food suppliers that only “foodies” know about. Discussing foodies, Johnston and Baumann (2010) suggest that the core characteristic of a foodie is being on the cutting edge of a trend: Once it filters down and goes mainstream, the trend loses the culinary capital once available to avant-garde foodies.

Another important detail about the survey of the foodies in the issue mentioned above is gender: Of the eleven experts, four men are listed as chefs, while there are only two female chefs. The other three women on the panel are either cookbook writers or involved in cooking schools as owners or teachers. The title of *chef* seems still to imply a male and perhaps with it masculine authority. Counterposed to male authority, however, is female legitimacy, and while there is only a reference to a granduncle above, the increasingly female-gendered anecdotes (e.g., Jasper White above referring to his grandmother, Giada De Laurentiis and her mother) connect status in cuisine not to professionalization of preparation but rather to a “lived,” often matrilineal authenticity. While Johnston and Baumann assert that “food can be made significant when it resides in the domain of men . . . [and] the realm of everyday eating and sustenance has been linked with the private, seemingly less important world of women” (Johnston and Baumann 2010, 32), these examples show an inversion of the gendered locus of culinary capital toward the female realm, seen to be more authentic. Andrew Potter framed the shifts in food trends in the first decade of the twenty-first century as being the result of what he calls the “competitive and highly lucrative world of conspicuous authenticity” (Potter 2011, 126). As a result, much French-inspired food, the product of highly formalized training in notoriously hyper-masculine settings, lacked culinary capital in a 1990s world focused on finding something “real” in everyday life.

The fraught nature of these shifting trends is evident in an ad for the Olive Garden, which makes its first appearance in the sample in this same issue. In the search for authenticity, the Olive Garden’s self-fashioning as an “authentic Italian” entity exposes both the constructed nature and ambiguous signification of its corporate identity. The ad shows a plate of

mussels labeled *Mussels di Napoli*; while still unsure of its potential clients' ability to understand the word *cozze* (mussels), the Olive Garden tries to capture the cachet that a regional dish might offer. The dish is not simply one with Italian ingredients, but rather one that is specific to a place, and only customers in the know—i.e., those who can decipher “di Napoli”—will enjoy it. In addition, while the advertising copy does not specifically use gendered language, the slogan at the bottom, “When you’re here, you’re family,” is a subtle appeal to the rising culinary capital of a female, even matrilineal, culinary authenticity. Yet the chain’s investment in the historical pre-eminence of the male chef and the corresponding esteem placed in professional education is illuminated by its oft-advertised program of “training” in Italy. Ironically, this training program has become the focus of the most vigorous critique of the Olive Garden’s claims to authenticity. A 2011 exposé by a former Olive Garden chef-manager inspired considerable scorn for the chain, and one blogger’s response confirmed that its marketing efforts had, even beforehand, failed to secure its reputation for authenticity among any but the most naïve diners: “Seriously, if there’s anyone out there who thinks the Olive Garden really serves authentic Italian cooking, then boy have we got a trash bag full of authentic Louis Vuitton purses to sell you” (quoted in Friedman 2011). Worth underlining is that the problem with the Olive Garden is not that the food tastes bad, but rather the perception that those making—and marketing—it remain primarily invested in professional (read: male) training rather than drawing on authentic (read: female) traditions. This is quite a dramatic reversal in the locus of distinction and one that pointedly queries what is held to be the performance of chef skills as opposed to the more esteemed embodiment of a culinary heritage. The implication is clear: While the Olive Garden might continue to be a viable destination for the truly uninitiated diner looking to ape the culinary sophistication of his or her foodie betters, no self-respecting Italianate food enthusiast could acquire culinary capital by consuming the Olive Garden’s inauthentic food.

For the rest of the sample (2005 and 2010), the references to Italianate food—in recipes given, advertisements, and articles—become so frequent as not to be worth mentioning individually. The zero-sum game of advertisements and copy space allocated to French-inspired vis-à-vis Italianate cooking has, in the forty years of *Bon Appétit* issues surveyed, shifted decidedly toward the latter. The premise of this research has been that this shift has been driven by changing perceptions of the culinary capital of Italianate food. Originally a hybrid of many regional cuisines, reinterpreted by poor emigrants who suddenly had access to abundant food, Italianate cuisine gradually became more acceptable to the American mainstream.

The primary drivers of this acceptance were material necessity (an inexpensive cuisine in economically depressed times) as well as a forced acquaintance that turned into appreciation—if not love—during Prohibition. In the post-World War II decades in the United States, Italianate cuisine was a familiar standby but never enjoyed the cachet of French-inspired cuisine. In Naccarato and LeBesco's (2012) words, certain foods and food-related practices conferred status and power, and these were those that could lay claim to French provenance, however tenuous.

The pages of *Bon Appétit* reflect this French hegemony in the earlier part of the sample examined. The magazine was able to sell its not-too-snobby, not-too-plebian style to a relatively broad readership in the middle and upper-middle class. This style demanded a blend of articles that were essentially new variations on old favorites as well as the cutting edge of food fashion. This combination of the traditional and the trendy was reflected too in the advertising: Ads for Pillsbury dough and Kraft cheese coexisted with those for fine wines and expensive culinary tourism. A close read of both the copy and the advertising—looking for articles and ads that promise *Bon Appétit* readers the products they needed to acquire culinary capital—allows us to establish an ultimately dynamic hierarchy of culinary capital for French-inspired vis-à-vis Italianate cuisine. Early on in the sample (in the 1970s and 1980s), French-inspired food is consistently linked to products or discourse that is flagged as “high quality,” “the best,” “black tie,” or simply elite. Whether the example is French names dominating lists of wine importers' products, restaurants with “Chez” in their names, or celebrity chefs underlining their French training or sharing their French recipes, France is the key to establishing culinary capital. Italianate food, while certainly present in both articles and advertisements, is clearly marked as less prestigious and less desirable in the early part of the sample. French-inspired food sits on plates on white tablecloths; Italian-inspired food has red-and-white checks in the background. While middle-class Americans have, as Simone Cinotto calls it, wanted to “feel Italian” through consuming Italianate food, this performance was not intended to garner culinary capital. Italianate food was also repeatedly linked to a domestic, female-gendered tradition rather than the professional, male-gendered world of French chefs. This linkage, in decades where culinary capital had to be acquired in the formal settings of culinary academies and in long apprenticeships under primarily male authorities, did little to help the status of Italianate food.

At some point in the late 1980s and early 1990s (and certainly by 1995), this situation had changed dramatically. The space given to French-inspired foods and beverages had shrunk, and Italianate foods were both explicitly

labeled “hot” or “trendy” and were beginning to be normalized as popular with food authorities. While causality is difficult to establish even with this better chronological localization of the Italianate takeoff—the health craze around the so-called Mediterranean diet seems to have reinforced Italianate food’s climb, not started it—the effects of the takeoff are clear in *Bon Appétit*’s pages.<sup>7</sup> This shift in the culinary capital of Italianate food is also contemporaneous with (and perhaps partly attributable too) a revaluation of female-gendered foodways. Standing in stark contrast to earlier examples in the sample, many of the articles about celebrity chefs, reviews of restaurants, and food advertisements seek to use the familial, female-gendered Italianate tradition (real or imagined) as a marker of culinary capital. The authenticity of the *cucina povera*, ostensibly handed down from mother to daughter orally, provides its consumers with a prestige no longer afforded to professional training.

While most previous research has contributed to a better understanding of the creation and evolution of Italianate foods, this article has sought to historicize its current overwhelming popularity. Having established the early 1990s as the moment of *il takeoff*, more research is now necessary to further refine the chronology. This could involve triangulation with cookbook titles, Google Ngram research, or statistical analysis of restaurants in old phone books.<sup>8</sup> This data may make analyses of causality clearer and may even reveal a weakening in the popularity of Italianate food in the past few years vis-à-vis new food trends such as organic and local.

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### Notes

1. In order to avoid debates about whether food prepared in the United States can be considered authentically French or Italian, this article will refer to this food as “Italianate” and “French-inspired” throughout.
2. The vagueness of the periodization is the reason for this article, which seeks to answer the question of when in the recent past Italianate cuisine overtook its French counterpart in the United States.
3. For an instance of how even packaging of the lowly potato chip can be marked for class-appropriate consumption, see Freedman and Jurafsky (2011). For a broader discussion of middle-class culinary aspiration, see chapter 4 in Andrew Potter (2011).



4. For a further discussion of garlic as a negative signifier for Italians in the United States, as well as the object of culinary objections in contemporary Italy, see Rocco Marinaccio (2012).
5. The magazine was and remains a monthly publication. When the January and June issues were unavailable, the December issue from the year before or the July issue from the same year were substituted, respectively.
6. Ironically, those who could actually read the ad would be unimpressed: The short Italian text is replete with errors.
7. It is perhaps not idle speculation that had it been founded in 1990, the magazine might have been called *Buon Appetito*.
8. For an example of this last technique in establishing chronology and causality, see Alan Nash (2009).

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