


Gianluca Corinaldesi

An Evening With Author Valentina Cirasola and Italian Food



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 Photo: Photo Provided by Valentina Cirasola

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When the guests of “An Evening In Puglia” meet Valentina Cirasola on Monday, February 28th, 6.30 pm, they will enjoy both the presence of the author of two books about Italian cooking, as well as the food created by her recipes.

The special dinner, at [Paesano Restaurant in San Jose](#), is a promotion of Ms. Cirasola’s latest book, [“Sins Of A Queen – Italian Appetizers and Desserts.”](#) but it is also an opportunity to celebrate the food of Puglia, the southern region of Italy that [has recently become familiar in the Bay Area](#) and whose culinary tradition Ms. Cirasola brings into this book, as well as in the 2009 [“Come Mia Nonna – A Return To Simplicity.”](#)

Ms. Cirasola is a complex personality, whose publishing accomplishments complement a no less successful career as an Interior Designer. These are two professions where she uniquely connects an Italian aspiration to pleasure with an American entrepreneurial attitude that ensures her an admirable prolificacy.

When, years ago, Valentina Cirasola left Italy for her first experience as an Interior Designer in California, she realized that this was the right working environment for her. Here, in her recollection, “whatever suggestion you could make to a

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worker, you saw it executed within a few hours.”

Unfortunately Italy was different, and that was sometimes frustrating for somebody like Valentina, a sort of gentle multitasking professional who *really* likes to get the things done.

Nevertheless, there was still something of Italy, and specifically of Puglia, that she missed and wanted to bring to the culture here.

“When you get invited by an Italian family at 7:00,” she writes in her blog, “it always means dinner, not after dinner drink” (...). “In fact a few days ago, some friends of mine were telling me about their disappointment when they invite people of different race in their home for the evening and they come with a full stomach with the answer is “sorry we already ate, we can't eat anymore”(…) “Italians love to eat dinner with the moon rays, not sun rays.”(...) “Dinners in the evening will extend well into the small hours of the night.”

Italians—as you probably know—put food and *romance* (in all its meanings) probably before anything else.

That's why Valentina Cirasola is trying to bring an Italian spirit to her job and to her lifestyle. You can see this in her designs' inspiration (“Valentina's main profession is in interior designing with a special focus upon kitchen design!”), as well as in her passion for good traditional Italian cooking.

A passion, this latter one, that led her to develop her parallel life as a food educator and author.

All this hyperactivity shouldn't come as a surprise from a person who has always been studying and working since she was a teenager, then became a translator for the US Army in Naples, started her career in Design and finally moved for good to the Bay Area in the early '90s.

Now, although she admits that the crisis hit her like anybody else (“I was forced to lay off my employees, and keep on by myself, even working 18 hours a day”), the quantity of projects she produces is still impressive. And after this second book—“The Sins of A Queen”—came out last December, she has already announced at least two more upcoming titles on Italian cooking

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“I’m the master of my fate and the captain of my soul,” she uses as a mood message in her Skype account, quoting the English poet William Ernest Henley.

A cheerful and buoyant captain, though.

Because, as she puts it, “the good life comes always first.”

Suggested by the author:

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By Gianluca Corinaldesi

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