

The bittersweet charms of tiramisu

“Tiramisu,” murmurs Rob Reiner’s character knowingly to Tom Hanks in “Sleepless in Seattle”. “What is tiramisu?” asks Hanks, a **widower** venturing back into the world of dating. “Some woman is gonna want me to do it to her and I’m not gonna know what it is!” “You’ll love it,” Reiner assures him. When the film was released in 1993 tiramisu was an obscure **confection** unheard of even in an America rich with Italians.

widower 鳏夫

confection 糖果；蜜饯

Today it appears on Italian menus everywhere, from the **trattorias** and ristoranti of Venice to red-sauce joints of Boston’s North End. But the supposed Italian classic probably dates back only as far as the 1960s. The name means “pick me up” in Italian: Ada Campeol, an exhausted young mother and owner of Le Beccherie restaurant in Veneto in northern Italy, is said to have come up with the dessert. Others credit Carminantonio Iannaccone, an Italian chef who ran a bakery in Baltimore’s Little Italy and brought the recipe with him to America.

trattoria 饮食店

Whatever its origins, **shattered** parents everywhere can attest to the reviving qualities of **lavish** quantities of caffeine and sugar. Start with savoiardi biscuits, Italy’s version of ladyfingers, light, **crumbly** and eager to absorb other flavours. **Sodden** (but not to the point of **mushiness**) with **espresso** and brandy, marsala or rum to form the dark heart of the dish. Layers of zabaglione — mascarpone whipped up with eggs and sugar to a light custard — provide contrast. A thick dusting of cocoa finishes it off, like moleskin on the tongue. The perfect way to seduce anyone.

shattered 破碎的；极度疲劳的

lavish 浪费的；丰富的

crumbly 脆的；易碎的

sodden 浸透的；湿透的

mushiness 糊状物

espresso 浓咖啡