

Title:

Italian Sweets

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515

Summary:

The regional cuisine of Italy is surely a delight to the senses. With the pasta, seafood, savory meats and cheeses, and delicious crusty breads, it is hard to stop yourself from eating until you are packed full. However, if you do not remember to save a little room, you may miss out on the best part: dessert. No one does desserts quite like the Italians. From simple fruity finger foods to savory layered tortes, the Italian's make desserts for every palette. From the chocolate...

Keywords:

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Article Body:

The regional cuisine of Italy is surely a delight to the senses. With the pasta, seafood, savory meats and cheeses, and delicious crusty breads, it is hard to stop yourself from eating until you are packed full. However, if you do not remember to save a little room, you may miss out on the best part: dessert. No one does desserts quite like the Italians. From simple fruity finger foods to savory layered tortes, the Italian's make desserts for every palette. From the chocolate lover to someone looking for something lighter and more refreshing, you are sure to find something to your looking in an Italian bakery.

One of my favorite Italian desserts has been a staple of my Grandmother's dessert table at holiday dinners for as long as I can remember. The best part is that it is something that I was always able to help with. Stuffed dates were always a task that the kids could do, by simply taking the pre-sliced dates and stuffing about a tea spoon full of cream cheese into them and then dotting them each with a pecan, we could be happy to know we had helped. Even if we ate a date or two along the way.

A variation on this dessert, which is popular in Milan takes a little bit more grown up help. After the dates are stuffed with the cream cheese, a grown up can dip the date into a mixture of bittersweet chocolate and milk and then let them harden. The product is a delicious, almost candy-like concoction that appeals to the sweet and the salty taste buds.

There are desserts that many people take for granted. Rice pudding, for example, is one of the simplest pleasures for Italian households. Milk, sugar, rice, and cinnamon are the staples of this favorite, but it can be substituted to taste with extra sugar, honey, nutmeg, or raisins. My personal favorite is with extra cinnamon and dried cranberries. Another simple that many people forget about, or perhaps even loathe, is the Panettone, otherwise known as fruit cake. A staple on many Christmas tables, the Panettone has gotten a bad rep in the United States, perhaps because of its strong Anise taste. When done right though, a Panettone can be truly delightful.

Other than the cannoli, the most popular Italian dessert is undoubtedly Tiramisu. This alcoholic spongy cake has taken the world by storm with relatively young origins. No one seems to know exactly how the Tiramisu was invented, or by who. What does seem to be agreed upon is that it was invented sometime in the 1960s in the Veneto region of Italy. The ingredients of Tiramisu are basic, but everyone seems to do it a little bit different. Mascarpone, espresso and zabaglione cream make up the complimentary tastes of this delicious dessert, but it would be impossible to create without the base of savoiardi cake, otherwise known as lady fingers. These spongy biscuits make trouble for pastry servers with their delicate spongy nature, but like all Italian desserts are well worth the trouble.