

Italian Food and Contemporary Design. All in One Night

Gabrielle Pati (March 17, 2010)



On March 11, 2010, Arclinea hosted the event "Italia in Cucina, Live Cooking Day" at the razor sharp Architects and Design building in New York. It was a night for sampling, schmoozing and taking notes on authentic Italian food products and modern kitchen design

Upon entering the [Arclinea and Nova Studio](#) [2] in the [Architects and Design building](#) [3] on East 58th street, one is immediately drawn into the warmth of apportioned rooms with blazing spotlights, with the sound of food being prepared from all angles stirs; the glamor of the decor and food stirs curiosity, and as one steps inside, it becomes apparent that the first ever "Italia in Cucina, Live Cooking Day" is going to be an Italian food-lover's free-for-all. At first it is calm, with only a few



dozen souls wandering around, vying for first dibs on the platters of [Parmigiano Reggiano](#) [4] accompanied by Chianti jam or balsamic vinegar of Modena, pitted Sicilian green olives, or cherry tomato spread with fresh toasted bread. Champagne bottles are popped open and the bartenders fill thin chutes, over and over, like a celebratory call and response to initiate the evening's event.

The space belongs to Arclinea, an artisan business that specializes in woodworking and quality of design for the contemporary Italian kitchen. Founded in 1816, Arclinea has made strides in "creating functional and modern furniture" with fine Italian attention "to design and precise planning to create a unique living and working experience."

The showroom was absolutely stunning, a microcosm of the finest Italian kitchenware and design that exists today. It showcased the culinary setting that the average cook dreams of, for example, the products of Lagostina, a manufacturer of premium stainless steel cookware, high tech sinks, ovens stoves and storage to make the joy of cooking even more accommodating.

As the host of the event, Arclinea was selected by the [Italian Ministry of Agriculture](#) [5] "for its international acclaim and innovative artistry in custom kitchen design", thus creating the perfect environment for a two hour long marathon of eating and drinking of authentic Italian products.

Executive Chef David Lopez and his crew of chefs from [Gabriel's Restaurant](#) [6] were hard at work in preparing aperitivo style portions for the deluge of hungry guests that flocked around the main cooking station.

Fresh gnocchi were made, step by step, under the watchful eye of Chef Lopez, with two sauces: one with lobster meat and tomatoes, the other with fresh veggies. Trying to nab a plate of the gnocchi con sugo took some cunning and skill, but was worth it.

In another room, products from the [Academia Barilla](#) [7] were made available for the sampling, including cured meats and a variety of cheeses.

Other sponsors that contributed to the exquisite food selection were Lupa Gourmet, an importer/exporter of artisanal food products; and [Ferrari](#) [8] (Trento), producer of D.O.C. sparkling Italian wine "Par Excellence" for over a century.

The dolci included fresh tiramisu, pistachio biscotti, and two types of fresh custard with fruit toppings. Unfortunately, there was no caffè to compliment the sweets, but beggars cannot be choosers.

Toward the end of the evening, Consul General of Italy Francesco Maria Talò appeared at the showroom; his speech emphasized the importance of recognizing authentic Italian products, and the [Italian Trade Commission](#) [9]'s stern commitment to preserving Italy's finest food products while, at the same time, diminishing the presence of imitations.

His support of the event signified even further the "Made in Italy" presence that is so prevalent in New York now, and will continue to develop with more and more people being able to distinguish real Italian food products from, often enough, blatant knock-offs. This is a bottom-up approach: recognizing the D.O.C. or D.O.P. label certainly assures the common consumer of the quality of a product and/or location in which it was produced.

The dizzying whirl of non-stop food-frenzy ended after only two hours, just in the nick of time to stop many people from toppling over in gastronomic delight. Yet the hard work of Arclinea's staff was commended and applauded, as well as that of all the chef from Gabriel's, who were so kind to dole out enough gnocchi to feed half of the Upper East Side. They and the generous sponsors who provided the delightful Italian products for "Italia in Cucina" left all guests sated yet wanting more. A special thanks is merited to Arclinea for hosting this wonderful event, giving New York a taste of some of Italy's proudest accomplishments in food and design.



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