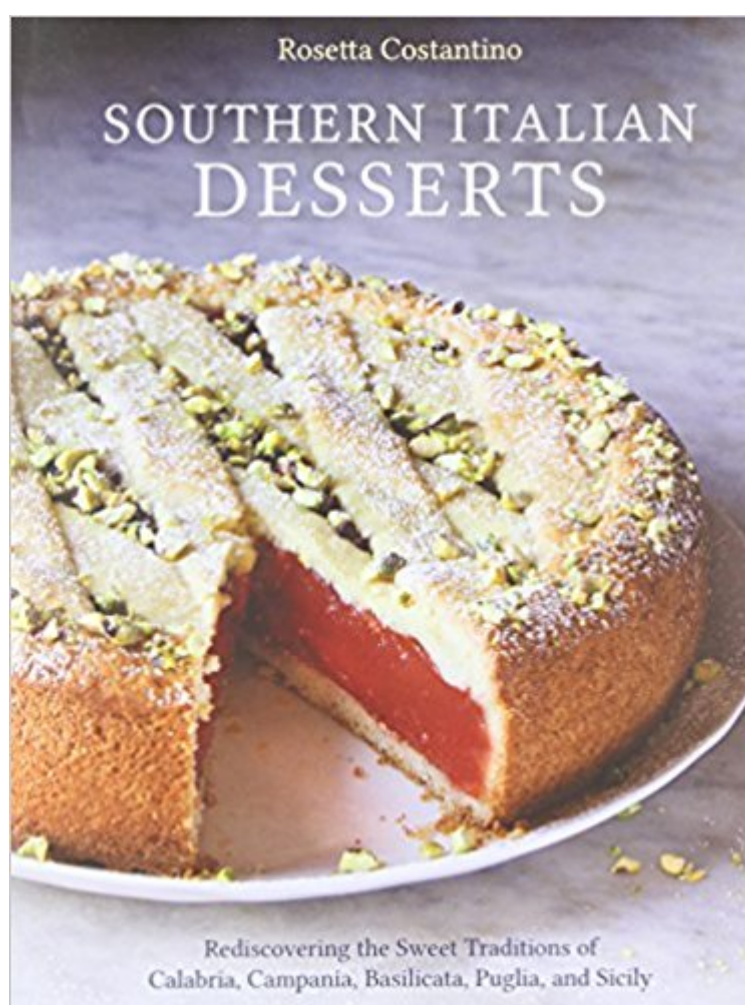


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Southern Italian Desserts: Rediscovering The Sweet Traditions Of Calabria, Campania, Basilicata, Puglia, And Sicily



Synopsis

An authentic guide to the festive, mouthwatering sweets of Southern Italy, including regional specialties that are virtually unknown in this country as well as variations on more popular desserts such as cannoli, biscotti, and gelato. In *Southern Italian Desserts*, author of the acclaimed *My Calabria*, Rosetta Costantino, collects seventy-five favorite recipes from the regions of Calabria, Campania, Basilicata, Puglia, and Sicily. These picturesque areas have a rich history of beautiful desserts, many of them tied to holidays and festivals. For example, Zeppole di San Giuseppe are doughnut-like pastries topped with cream and cherries, traditionally made in Campania for the celebration of Father's Day. And the Sicilian chilled watermelon pudding Gelo di Mellone is a refreshing dish served in summer for the festival of Palermo's patron saint, Rosalia. Other desserts such as persimmon gelato, chocolate-dipped figs stuffed with almonds and candied orange peel, and chocolate-hazelnut cake rolls celebrate Southern Italy's local bounty and traditional foods. With recipes for more familiar Italian desserts such as cannoli and gelato, as well as deliciously obscure sweets such as rich cassatas, almond-flecked cookies, and flaky cream-filled sfogliatelle pastries, *Southern Italian Desserts* features a treat for every occasion. In addition to explaining the regional history, symbolism, and lore behind the desserts, Costantino teaches you how to stock your dessert pantry and provides all of the foundational recipes you need to embark on a sweet tour of the Italian south from your kitchen. This delightful confection of a cookbook will expand your dessert repertoire and leave you dreaming of Italy. Buon appetito!

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â œRosetta has given us a sweet and soulful taste of the land and culture of Southern Italy-flavors and fragrances practically leap off the page. From the simplest three-ingredient walnut cookies (that you will want to jump up and make immediately, as I did) to more elaborate celebration desserts-all are made doable with well-written recipes and beautiful photos. Fig syrup and dolci di noci now have a permanent place in my repertoire.â • â "Alice Medrich, author of Bittersweet and Sinfully Easy Delicious Desserts Â â œâ ™ve been chasing down Southern Italian dessert recipes for thirty years, and my dear friend Rosetta just saved me another decade.Â She is truly one of the best Italian cooks I know!â • â "Michael Chiarello, chef and owner of Bottega and Coqueta Â â œReading this book, I pictured Rosetta moving between bakeries and homes throughout Southern Italy, her impeccable sweet tooth and culinary knowledgeÂ guiding her to the special sweets of each village.Â Brava to Rosetta for creating a book thatâ ™s original, tantalizing, and embodies the culture and spirit of her region.â • Â â "Carol Field, author of The Italian Baker

I spent 24 hours reading this book (okay, e-book)straight through. I live in Calabria, very near the author's birthplace. She's correct - I have also wandered Calabria, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, e Sicilia and found these desserts to be some of the finest anywhere. Now I have an easy source for making my own! Recipes are easy to follow, authentic to what is found in my pasticcerie in Scalea, and I have gained at least fifty pounds drooling over the pages! It was the pears filled with ricotta and drizzled with chocolate that did me in. It's good to be Italian. Enjoy the book!

What I know about traditional southern Italian desserts, you could put in a pistachio shell. Gelato. Cannolis. That's about it. Sad, huh?The picture on the front of this book stopped me in my tracks. What WAS that? Watermelon? In a pie or pudding? Whoa. That sounded like the best kind of food crazy. I needed to know more.Not only is this a beautiful book with clear instructions and unusual (to us here in the US who are not Italian) desserts, but it's a wonderful introduction to some parts of Italian cuisine that are grossly and unfairly under-represented in most articles and books on Italian cooking/food. I enjoyed reading this as "just" a book before ever taking it into the kitchen; however, do take it into the kitchen, I certainly did.The lemon cookies I made were delicious, as were the pear ricotta cake and the other four recipes I've made. (The pistachio mousse cake? Oh yeah! Be still,

my heart.) In my opinion, this is a cookbook for an adventurous cook because the flavor combinations are not common to American menus. For one thing, there is not much chocolate in here, so if you're one of those people who cannot conceive of a dessert that doesn't involve cocoa beans, you're going to be disappointed unless you can bring yourself to think outside the chocolate box. Fortunately, I don't care much for chocolate, and I love fruit, nuts, and citrus. As for the recipes' skill level, more than half likely will be a challenge for an average cook and possibly frustrating for a beginner cook, at least one short on patience and attention. You aren't going to knock out any of these in half an hour while having one eye on the TV or Angry Birds. These recipes require paying attention to what you're doing. I consider myself a slightly above-average cook, and so I enjoyed the challenge of making something I'd never made before. There are a few recipes I find intimidating, but having had success with the recipes I made, the more challenging ones give me something to look forward to. (If I can get those peach cookies to come out looking anything like the photo, I'll know I've accomplished something impressive.)

I love this cookbook. True, as mentioned in some reviews, this is not for beginners or the faint of heart. But the recipes are accessible to someone with reasonable kitchen skills. The desserts are unique and not ones your friends or family are creating. You'll never find these desserts in the local PTA book. Plan on multiple steps and the need to pay attention, but the rewards....

Wonderful recipes, clear directions, good illustrations—all the things I value in a cook book! I have already made several of the cookies and was delighted with the results. I look forward to trying some of the others. This will be the book I'll be going to for desserts. The author gives a great deal of background information which makes the book a pleasure to read even if you're not in the mood to bake.

I eagerly bought this book to expand my baking knowledge of Southern Italian desserts. Yes, I am always on the lookout for the perfect cannoli, sfogliatelle and other somewhat traditional recipes. Not surprisingly, this volume delivers on those, but the greatest surprise was to find a delicious looking, fabulously sounding recipe for Ricotta and Pear Cake. WOW!! I was bowled over by how terrific it was and easy, to boot. Every page in this special book is worth doing, and then some. Grazie Mille, Rosetta!

My father was born in Tricarico in the province of Matera, Basilicata. Finding this dessert book really

brought my dad back to his home town and allowed him to relive his childhood. This made me so happy to find the old desserts he use to love as well as become my new favorites. The pictures are gorgeous and really make baking simple.

My family is from the same town in Calabria as Rosetta. Many of the recipes remind me of the deserts my Nonie and Zizi made but we never archived the written recipes. It's a beautiful book. Most of recipes are for a more experiences baker/cook. They are worth the time and will be a revelation to your family. It is an excellent gift for anyone who's roots are from Southern Italy/Sicily.

I have really enjoyed this book. The recipes come out great. Lots of useful information and it's a good read. I work as a baker at an Italian restaurant and we have used many recipes from this book and reference it to keep our dessert menu traditional Italian.

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