# TALY





WILDFLOWERS IN ITALY

> Best Places to See Wildflowers in any Season

April 2024 Monthly E- Magazine

AGGIE MUSTER

A Tradition of Rememberance

#### BASEBALL IN ITALY

UNO... DUE... TRE - STRIKES you're out — way out — in baseball in Italy



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MY WIFE ASKED WHY I SPOKE SO SOFTLY IN THE HOUSE. I TOLD HER I WAS AFRAID MARK ZUCKERBERG WAS LISTENING. SHE LAUGHED, I LAUGHED, ALEXA LAUGHED, SIRI LAUGHED.

#### CIAO & TUTI! & HOWDY ACS!

S April dawns upon us with its promise of new beginnings and blooming

possibilities, it is with great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to each of you to the April edition of our e-magazine. In this season of renewal and awakening, we find ourselves surrounded by the boundless beauty of nature and the ever-present spirit of camaraderie that defines our club.

As we embrace the changing landscapes and vibrant hues that this month brings, let us also take a moment to celebrate the bonds of friendship and shared experiences that unite us as Aggies. Whether through lively conversations over a glass of wine or the shared excitement of our upcoming **Muster**, its our collective spirit that truly makes our club a beacon of warmth and hospitality.

With spring upon us we take a look at **Baseball in Italy**. Come along as we explore **the region of Umbria**, a wonderful recipe for **Creamy Tortellini Soup** and a **Strawberry Rhubarb Pie**. We take a look at **Wildflowers in Italy and not just in springtime**, **Aggie Muster History**, and get to know two Aggies who have gone before us but are not forgotten in our **Roll Call Stories**. We hope as many club and family members, former and current students, and friends of Texas A&M can join us for our clubs **Muster on April 20, 2024 in Florence**.

Additionally, we have a *Campus and Aggie Sports Update* and a few other *Texas Tidbits* along the way.

We hope you enjoy the format and if you have any questions let us know. Take a moment to give us feedback on our periodic updates and be sure to download the material. Over time the issues will roll off and not be available for review.

Thanks, Ciao and Gig'em!

Ryan '91

# The History of Cipolla Rossa di Tropea

AN ONION SO SWEET YOU CAN BITE IT LIKE AN APPLE

#### The Red Onion of Tropea

Known for their amazing sweetness and aroma, the origins of the Tropea onion are largely unknown, but they almost certainly didn't begin life on the Tyrrhenian coast. There's a consensus among food historians that the onions probably arrived on the Italian peninsula via the Phoenicians and Greeks, who sailed and traded across much of the Mediterranean sea some 3,000 years ago. By the medieval period, Tropea had well and truly claimed the bright red allium as its own – numerous accounts from this period refer to red onions from Tropea. Though the onions grow all over the region, the sandy soil and more moderate climate near the coast produces the sweetest onions of the bunch. A good Tropea onion is far, far sweeter than your average red onion, but contrary to popular opinion, this isn't because they have a higher sugar content. In actual fact, they have a much lower pyruvic acid content, which makes them much less harsh and pungent and lets the natural sugars shine through. According to the locals, the sign of a good Cipolla Rossa di Tropea is that you can eat it like an apple!

We often think of Tropea onions all being the same, but they actually come in three distinct types. First, there's the cipolla fresca - harvested in April - with a long stem and reddish-purple bulb. In June, the cipolla da serbo is harvested - this is the bright red, torpedo-shaped onion that we usually think of as a Tropea onion. And finally, the sweet white cipollotto arrives in October, resembling a spring onion in both appearance and flavour.

# TEXAS ALAN CAMPUS REMEMBERED

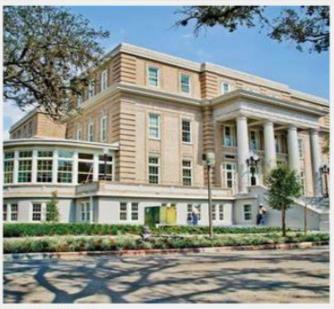


## YMCFI BUILDING

McA Building (1914) was designed by architect S.J. Fountain, for the Young Men's Christian Association and is significant for its use of materials and excellence in detailing. The building was financed by funds donated by students, former students and the John D. Rockefeller Foundation. It served as the student center until 1950. Originally a two-story brick building with a basement, a third floor and two semicircular rooms were added in the 1920's. Four limestone Doric columns and an entablature mark the main floor. The rear of the building contained a chapel, which was lost to the construction of offices, as was the basement bowling alley and pool.















## TEXAS WILDLIFE FEEL IMPACT OF STATE'S LARGEST WILDFIRE

Texas A&M AgriLife experts are focusing on landscape response and wildlife resiliency following the Panhandle fires.

Humans and domestic animals

weren't the only residents facing danger and displacement as flames roared across the Panhandle. Wildlife populations were also affected by the recent historic wildfires.

However, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service experts are optimistic on recovery, focusing on



the long-term positive ecological response following fire that benefits wildlife.

"This is an unprecedented event with a widespread impact on wildlife habitat and food availability," said Dr. Jacob Dykes, AgriLife Extension wildlife specialist, Corpus Christi. "When we typically discuss the positive impacts of fire on wildlife and their habitat, we focus on smaller, controlled burns."

It is important to recognize that native wildlife and vegetation have evolved alongside fire for millennia, said Dykes, also an assistant professor in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management.

Historically, these fires were caused by lightning strikes and other natural events.

To read more about the wildfire impacts click here.



## MAKING AI SAFER: TEXAS A&M JOINS NATIONAL CONSORTIUM

Members include Amazon, Apple, Adobe, Intel, Google, Meta, Microsoft and OpenAI (creator of ChatGPT), plus Johns Hopkins, MIT and Stanford.

Sexas A&M University will join more than 200 major

corporations, academic institutions, nonprofit groups and federal

agencies in a national effort to improve the safety and reliability of artificial intelligence (AI), the Division of Research announced today.

The U.S. Department of Commerce, through its National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), selected Texas A&M as an initial member of the new Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute Consortium (AISIC). Members include tech giants Amazon, Apple, Adobe, Intel, Google, Meta and Microsoft, as well as OpenAI (creator of ChatGPT); research institutes such as The Johns Hopkins University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University; and the nonprofit Linux Foundation.

To read more about the complete article and learn more about the future of AI click here



#### GEORGE STRAIT TO PERFORM AT KYLE FIELD ON JUNE 15

Tickets go on sale to the general public March 28 for the show that also includes Parker McCollum and Catie Offerman.

Country music superstar George Strait will perform in concert at Texas A&M University's Kyle Field on June 15.

Strait, known as the King of Country Music, will be joined for the in-the-round performance by Parker McCollum and Catie Offerman. The show, being called The King at Kyle Field, will be Strait's only Texas concert for 2024. Since his *Cowboy Rides Away Tour* in 2014, Strait has performed a limited number of concerts outside of his *Strait to Vegas* shows at T-Mobile Arena. In addition to the Kyle Field performance, Strait has nine concerts with Chris Stapleton scheduled for 2024, starting with Indianapolis on May 4. Other cities on the stadium tour include Chicago, Detroit and Charlotte, North Carolina.

Strait has sold more than 105 million albums and has 60 No. 1 singles over his career. He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2006.

Tickets for the Kyle Field performance went on sale to the general public on March 28 at 10 a.m. at thekingatkyle.com. American Express cardholders could purchase tickets beginning March 22 at 10 a.m.



The announcement comes one week after the Mexican

national men's soccer team announced Kyle Field would be included in its annual five-city U.S. tour in 2024. Tickets for the June 8 match against Brazil go on sale April 5 at somoslocales.com

To read the full article click here.

#### SPRINGTIME BLISS: KEEPING YOUR PETS SAFE FROM POISONOUS PLANTS

With Springtime comes a few dangers, a Texas A&M veterinarian reminds us that lilies, as well as other springtime plants, are toxic to pets.



Spring brings a burst of color and new life to our surroundings, but the

very things that make spring so vibrant can pose serious threats to our beloved pets.

Dr. Murl Bailey, a senior professor at the Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, provides valuable insights into common poisonous plants pet owners should be mindful of, whether indoors or outdoors, during the spring season.

To read the full article click here.

To contact or follow the

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## **AGGIE MUSTER:** A TRADITION OF REMEMBRANCE



Aggie Muster is a time-honored tradition deeply rooted in the history and culture of Texas A&M. This solemn occasion, held annually on April 21st, brings together Aggies from all walks of life to remember and honor fellow students and alumni who have passed away in the played the Texans. However, since preceding year. With origins dating back to the late 1800's, Aggie Muster Aggies "rewrote history" and has evolved into one of the most cherished traditions at Texas A&M. embodying the core values of the university community.

The tradition of Aggie Muster traces its beginnings to the Battle of San Jacinto, a pivotal moment in Texas history where Texan forces, secured victory over Mexican forces in 1836.

In the early days of Texas A&M, April 21, was celebrated as the anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto, a Texas

holiday that celebrates the state's defeat of the Mexican Army. As part of the celebration in the 1890s, the Corps of Cadets was invited to portray the Mexican Army in a reenactment of the battle for Texas independence. The State Guard Aggies cannot stand to lose, the continually won the battles. In 1897, the cadets were no longer invited to participate in the reenactment; they decided to continue the celebrations away in the previous year are called on campus in 1899.

These celebrations would evolve into what we now know as Aggie Muster. Aggie Muster has grown from a small gathering of cadets to a widespread tradition observed by Aggies worldwide. Today, on April 21st, Aggies gather in various locations across the globe, from College

Station, Texas, to military bases, cities, and even foreign countries, to participate in Muster ceremonies. The largest of these gatherings takes place at Texas A&M University, where thousands of Aggies converge at Reed Arena to honor the memory of their fallen comrades.

The centerpiece of the Aggie Muster ceremony is the roll call, where the names of Aggies who have passed aloud. As each name is read, a friend or family member answers, "Here," symbolizing that the spirit of the departed Aggie is present among the living. This powerful tradition serves as a reminder of the enduring bonds that unite the Aggie family, transcending time and distance.

## "SOFTHLY CALL THE MUSTER, LET COMRADE ANSWER HERE!..."

Beyond the roll call, Aggie Muster is a time for reflection and celebration of the lives and legacies of those who have gone before us. It is a time to share stories, honor achievements, and pay tribute to the indomitable spirit of the Aggie community. From distinguished alumni who have made significant contributions to society to students who exemplified the Aggie spirit during their time at Texas A&M, each individual remembered during Muster represents a unique chapter in the university's rich history.

In addition to honoring the departed, Aggie Muster serves as a reminder of the values instilled by Texas A&M University: integrity, leadership, respect, selfless service and excellence. It is a call to action for Aggies to live out these values in their daily lives, carrying on the legacy of those who have come before them. Whether serving their communities, excelling in their careers, or upholding the traditions of Texas A&M, Aggies around the world strive to honor the memory of their fallen brethren through their actions. Aggie Muster is more than just a tradition; it is a testament to the enduring spirit and camaraderie of the Aggie family. Through the solemn observance of Muster, Aggies past, present, and future come together to honor the memory of those who have gone before us, ensuring that their legacy lives on for generations to come.

As we gather each year in April, we reaffirm our commitment to the values of Texas A&M University and celebrate the bonds that unite us as Aggies.

Gig 'em!

HERE!

# December 12, 1917 - January 24, 1944



# ROLL CALL STORY

Harry O. Schellhase '43, 1st Lt. USAAF

Harry was born on December 12, 1917, to Oscar and Helene *Spenrath* Schellhase on the family ranch in Kendal County, near Comfort, Texas.

Harry was raised in San Antonio Texas and graduated from Brackenridge High School in 1934. Here, Harry was a member of the Hi-Y club which was a young men's Christian service group and he also played football and ran track.



Comfort, Texas - 1917

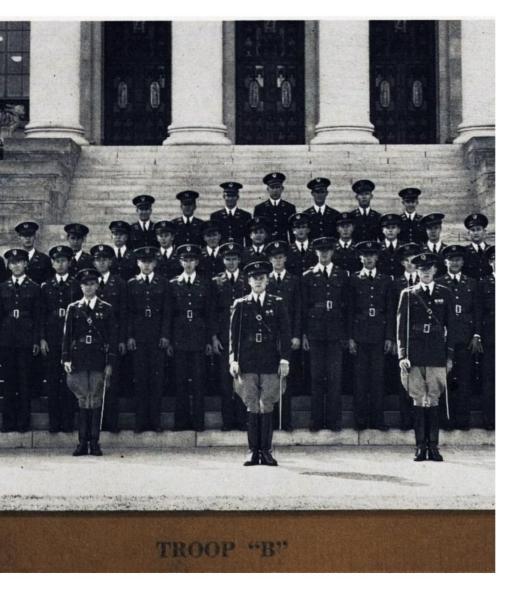


#### Hi-Y Club

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# College Years

Harry attended Texas A&M College and in 1941 he was a member of the Cavalry, First Squadron, Company B. He was also a member of the San Antonio A&M Club.

When WWII broke out, Harry like many of his classmates joined the war effort. Approximately 20,000 A&M students and former students fought in World War II, 14,000 of them serving as officers. According to the Corps guidebook, more Aggies served as officers than any other school, "including the combined totals of the United States Military Academy and United States Naval Academy."

A&M's enrollment was around 6,600 before the war in 1941, according to a June 1994 *Eagle* article, enrollment dropped to approximately 2,000 by fall 1943. Exact numbers are inconclusive because many Aggies did not graduate before entering the service.



Harry in the ready room in before one of his missions. He's the second from the right. - 1943

# **Military Service**

On January 22, 1944, Allied forces launched **Operation Shingle: The Allied Landing at Anzio Beach, Italy.** 

Two days later on 24, January, the Germans counter attacked both by land and in the air. Harry and six other Spitfire pilots took off from their base at Serragia Airfield in Corsica, France. His Spitfire was shot down while proving air support for the Allied troops. They took a heavy toll that day, four of the six planes were lost. 1st Lt. Schellhase's plane went down in the Tyrrhenian Sea off the coast of Italy on his return to base in Corsica.

His aircraft and his remains were not recovered.

After entering the military, Harry became a fighter pilot and flew Spitfires.

He was a member of the 12th Airforce, 2nd Fighter Squadron, 52nd Fighter Group.

Here he flew escort, patrol, strafing and reconnaissance missions.



Harry and his plane

Harry's 2<sup>nd</sup> FS patch



Harry during WWII



1st. Lt. Harry O. Schellhase, Aggie class of '43 was declared dead and MIA on January 24, 1944. He is memorialized on the tablets of the missing in alphabetical order at the Florence American Cemetary, Impruneta, Italy.

The memorial has two open atria, or courts, joined by the Tablets of the Missing upon which are inscribed 1,409 names. Rosetts mark the names of those since recovered and identified.

Harry was awarded the Purple Heart and the Air Medal ribbon for his efforts.



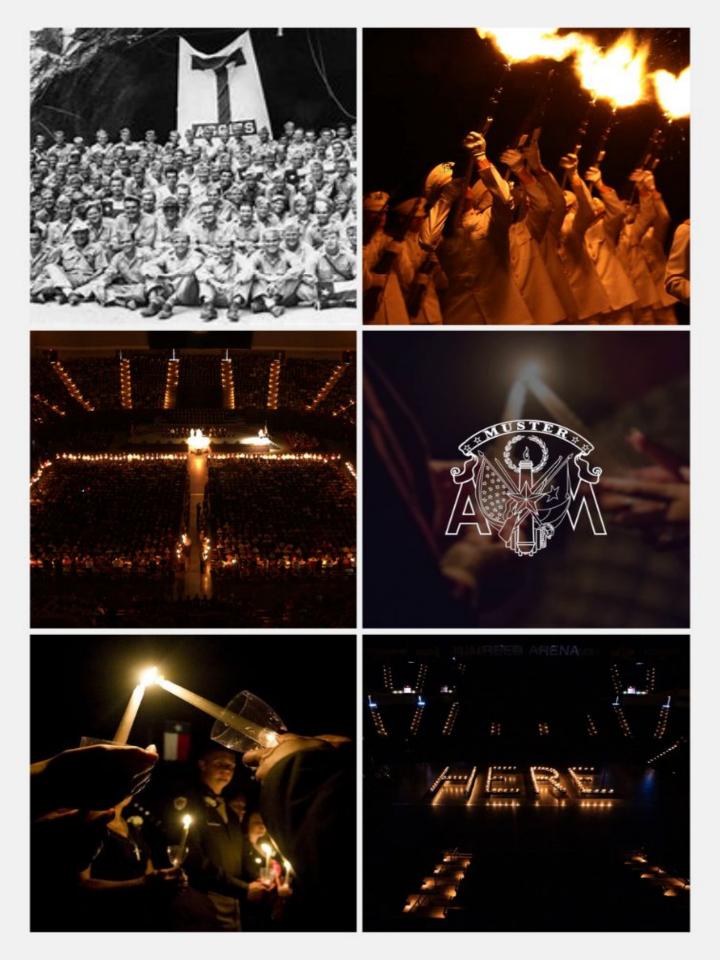
wream plated at the fabrets of the wissing , norence American Centerry - April 21, 2023 – Italy Adviv Cub Musler

"Time will not dim the glory of their deeds."-General John J. Pershing

# 1st. Lt. Harry O. Schellhase Aggie class of '43

December 12, 1917 - January 24, 1944

Here.



# ROLL CALL

- 1ST. LT. HARRY O. SCHELLHASE '43
- CRAIG ALAN JACOBSEN '71
- MICHAEL "MIKE" SHURLEY '72
- DAVID FLEMING '75
- ELIZABETH "BETSY" SMITH '81
- DELLA MAY BOOTH COLBURN '82
- TERRENCE "TERRY" PRICE '90
- HEATHER DIANE (GLENN) ERWIN '91
- ANDREW "ANDY" WINKLER '92
- RHETT TIDWELL '08
- JOSEPH NUNEZ '16
- JACOB TAYLOR BAKER '21
- JOEL VAZQUEZ '23
- LOGAN JONES '24
- SAMUEL "SAM" JACKSON '25
- DRAKE BARRETT HARDISON '26
- BRITNEY ROMERO '27

Friend of Texas A&M University

GERALD EBANKS







# OF THE ABSENT

# March 9, 2003 - May 18, 2023



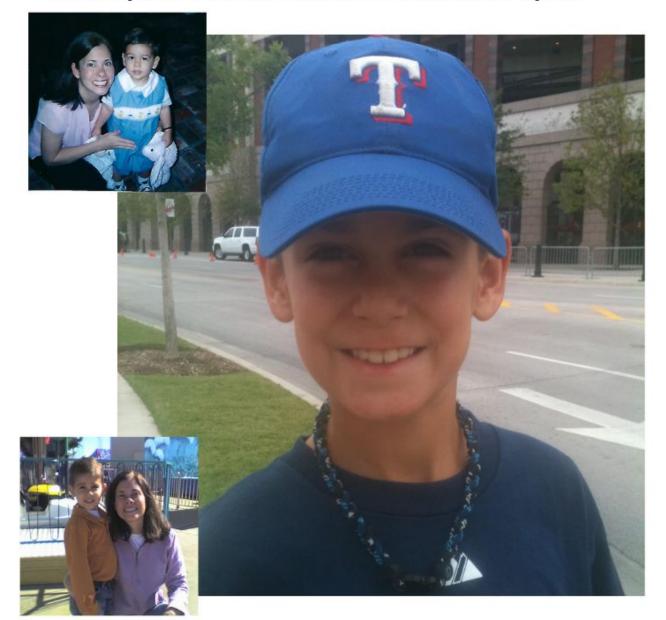


Samuel "Sam" Hartsfield Raines Jackson '25

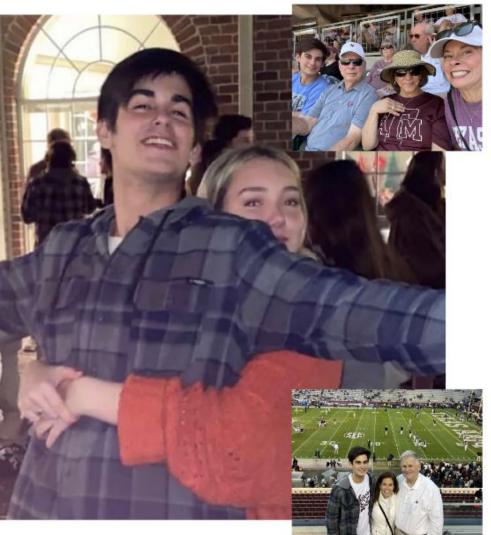
Sam was born on March 9, 2003, to Fred Hartsfield and Angela Raines Jackson in Dallas Texas.

Growing up Sam was a big baseball fan but turned all his efforts toward basketball as he grew. At 6'4" sports came naturally for Sam and he was a great athlete.

Sam was just always happy. He was satisfied with whatever we were doing. He LOVED Camp Ozark and later as a counselor at their Texas location, Camp OTX.



# Early Years



High School & College Years

Sam and his parents before the LSU game.

Sam attended Jesuit College Preparatory School of Dallas, where he made lifelong friends and appreciated being in a Christian atmosphere, where a cross hung in every room. Sam personified Jesuit's motto -Men for Others.

Sam was an engineering honors student at Texas A&M University in College Station. At the end of summer 2023, Sam would have had 90 hours, enough to order his Aggie ring. He was a petroleum engineering major, with two minors, Math and Spanish. He was planning to apply to the Master of Finance program the summer of 2024.







# Mr. Samuel "Sam" Hartsfield Raines Jackson Aggie Class of '25

March 9, 2003 - May 18, 2023

Here.

# ITALY A&M CLUB AGGIE

# MUSTER

Schedule Date: April 20, 2024 Aperitivo/Dinner Location: IL GRANDE NUTI TRATTORIA, Via Borgo S. Lorenzo, 22 /24 Firenze (Florence), Italy 6:00 PM - Fellowship & Drinks. 6:30 PM - Muster Ceremony 7:00 - ??? PM - Dinner

## ITALY A&M CLUB AGGIE MUSTER

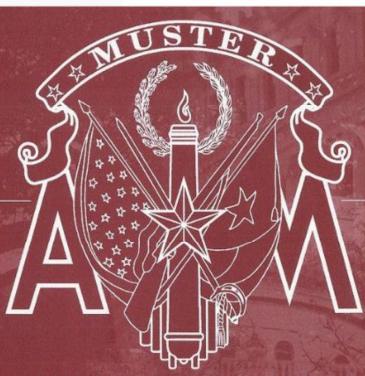
The Italy A&M Club is excited to invite you to its 2024 Muster on Saturday, April 20, 2024. Hosting on Saturday evening will allow more members to attend based on individual travel requirements.

The Italy Muster celebration will take place at **IL GRANDE NUTI TRATTORIA**. In the heart of Florence, Italy, just a few steps from Piazza Duomo. All current, former students and friends of the university are encouraged and welcome to attend, along with their family and children.

To help plan for the Muster event, we kindly request that you RSVP by emailing the number of guests in your party as soon as possible. The RSVP is for head count only.

#### Schedule

Date: April 20, 2024 Aperitivo/Dinner Location: IL GRANDE NUTI TRATTORIA, Via Borgo S. Lorenzo, 22 /24 Firenze (Florence), Italy 6:00 PM - Fellowship & Drinks (meet other club members, talk about old army stuff with new and old friends. Aggie version of the Italian afternoon aperitivo).



"If there is an A&M man in 100 miles of you, you are expected to get together, eat a little and live over the days you spent at the A&M College of Texas."

- March 1923 issue of the Texas Aggie

#### 6:30 PM - Muster Ceremony 7:00 - ??? PM - Dinner

Dinner Cost: Reasonable costs are sponsored by the club however donations are welcome. Please have some cash available in the event its needed.

\* Meeting location is less than a 10-minute walk from the Florence train station or the Duomo.

If you have a friend or family member who should be included in the Italy A&M Muster Roll Call, please send his/her full name and class year to our club's email (italyags@aggienetwork.com).

In the meantime, please feel free to reach out with any questions you might have. We are looking forward to seeing you at the 2024 Italy A&M Club Muster to remember and celebrate our time in Aggieland and to honor those we lost in the past year.

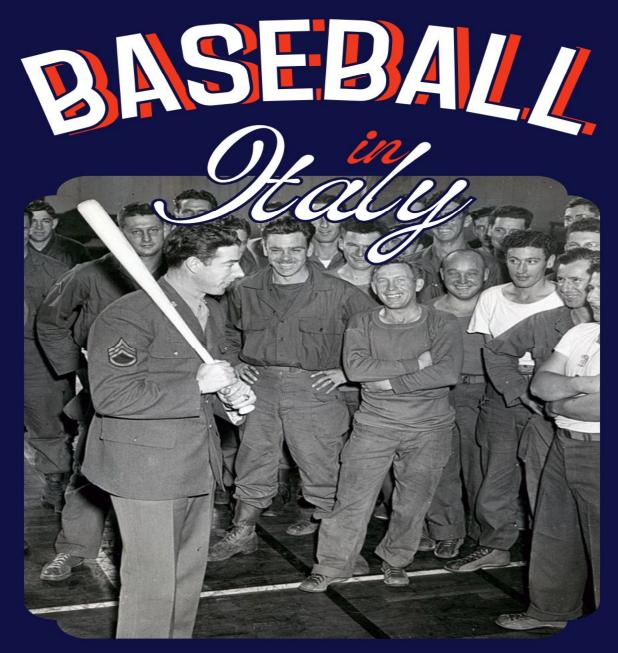
Thanks, Ciao & Gig 'Em!



LIFE IS short, AND THE WORLD IS wide.



# STOP SAYING TOMORROW



### UNO. DUE. TRE STRIKES YOU'RE OUT — WAY OUT — BASEBALL IN ITALY

BASEBALL REALLY TOOK OFF IN ITALY DURING WORLD WAR II AS AMERICAN G.I.'S BROUGHT THE GAME WITH THEM, TEACHING IT TO LOCAL CHILDREN.



SEE

#### There's pizza, there's pasta, there's wine, there's Rome, there's soccer, there's Leonardo da Vinci and in Nettuno there's baseball.

1:35

When you think of Italy, baseball probably isn't the first thing that comes to mind.

One of the more famous is a place down along Italy's southwest coast. It's about an hour from Rome, home to about 50,000 people. It's a vacation spot along the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Even with the crystal-clear waters distracting you off to your left and the Italian villas showing off atop the hillsides to your right, it's hard to miss the road into Nettuno. In between a couple of big, breezy palm trees, there's a giant sign that'll catch your eye.

Nettuno first fell in love with the game about 80 years ago. American soldiers landed on the beaches of Nettuno during World War II, ready to fight the Nazis who occupied the city.



### "I watched the game and it started to all make sense,"

Nettuno resident and ABMC cemetery worker Rolando Belleudi said - "It's an incredible thing. That's when I started to love baseball." There was an intense battle between U.S. and German forces for months, resulting in some of the worst casualties during the sixyear war. The area was decimated and thousands of lives were lost. Eventually, though, this initial American invasion led to an allied takeover of Rome and, thus, control of the entire Italian peninsula.

After the war, a temporary cemetery (now <u>a</u> <u>beautiful memorial</u>) -- run by the American Battle Momuments Commisssion (ABMC) -was set up in Nettuno to honor the allied lives who were lost. Grateful to the Americans for liberating their city, the Nettunese felt a kinship with the soldiers on-site. They talked to them and wanted them to feel a part of their culture, while also feeling the desire to adopt many aspects of theirs. One of those major aspects, one of the activities American soldiers partook in on almost a daily basis was, of course, baseball. While there have only been seven Italian-born Major Leaguers, some of the biggest stars in baseball history can trace their roots back to Italy, including National Baseball Hall of Famers such as Joe DiMaggio, Yogi Berra, Mike Piazza, Tony Lazzeri, Roy Campanella, Craig Biggio, Ron Santo and Phil Rizzuto, not to mention a trio of Hall of Fame managers -- Tommy Lasorda, Tony La Russa and Joe Torre.

TALIA

ALLAN



NETTUNO BASEBALL LEGEND RUGGERO BAGIALEMANI TOLD ME IN PERSON -

"THE FIRST SPORT IS BASEBALL AND SOCCER IS THE SECOND ONE. THE ONLY PLACE IN ITALY LIKE THAT. ... EVERYONE USED TO HAVE A GLOVE IN THEIR HOUSE."

The GIs were happy to teach Italians the game and play against them. A stadium was built with military equipment, teams were formed and the town immediately fell in love with the game. The simplicity, the difficulty, the beauty of it.

The game not only spread within the town, but it also branched out to different parts of Italy. Through word of mouth, various other U.S. military bases dotted along the peninsula and Italian tourists who saw the game while visiting Nettuno, a league began to organize. By the late 1940s, there were teams almost everywhere and the official Lega Italiana Baseball was formed. TAGLIABOSCHI HAD A STRANGE, HERKY-JERKY, LEFT-HANDED WINDUP, AND HE QUICKLY, AND SHOCKINGLY, GOT TWO PITCHES PAST THE FORMER YANKEES SUPERSTAR. PLAYERS THERE AT THE TIME WERE A BIT SKEPTICAL IF DIMAGGIO WAS AS GOOD AS THEY HEARD HE WAS.

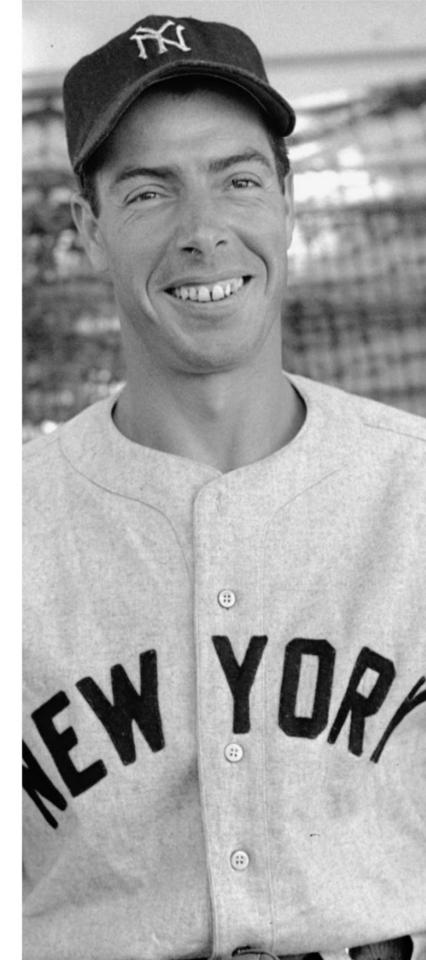
But one of the most famous baseball moments in the city's history has nothing to do with any players on any of the local teams. It has to do with one very famous Italian-American MLBer who visited in the late 1950s.

Joe DiMaggio, then 42 years old, had been retired for six years and was visiting Rome on vacation when, apparently, someone told him about this baseball-obsessed place called Nettuno just an hour south. He immediately <u>dropped his fork and knife</u> and asked to be driven down to see it for himself. He arrived in the middle of a league game, but at the crowd's urging, proceeded to step up to the plate (in his suit) and take at-bats against Carlos Tagliaboschi, one of Italy's best pitchers.

The Yankee Clipper then took off his jacket and told Tagliaboschi to bring it.

The story changes with whoever tells it, but witnesses say DiMaggio then crushed six or seven straight home runs out of the small Nettuno confines, across a nearby farm, out over some cliffs, above the beaches and into the sea. The teams had to eventually stop the hitting clinic because they were afraid they'd run out of baseballs. As spring time comes aliive so does baseball.

What better place to reignite that love than the City of Baseball, Nettuno Italy.



# UNVEILING THE CHARMS OF UMBRIA: ITALY'S GREEN HEART



# UMBRIA

Situated in the heart of Italy, Umbria beckons travelers with its lush landscapes, medieval hilltop towns, and

rich cultural heritage. Often overshadowed by its more famous neighbor, Tuscany, Umbria offers a tranquil retreat away from the crowds while enchanting visitors with its hidden gems, delectable cuisine, and timeless beauty.

#### **Unveiling Umbria's Sights & Iconic Landmarks**

**Assisi:** Home to the stunning Basilica of St. Francis, Assisi is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a spiritual center. Explore the winding streets of the medieval town, visit the Basilica, and soak in panoramic views of the Umbrian countryside.

**Perugia:** The vibrant capital of Umbria, Perugia is renowned for its well-preserved medieval architecture, art galleries, and chocolate. Don't miss the Palazzo dei Priori, the National Gallery of Umbria, and the annual Eurochocolate festival.

**Orvieto:** Perched atop a volcanic rock, Orvieto is a charming hill town known for its magnificent Duomo, intricate frescoes, and underground tunnels. Take a guided tour of the Orvieto Underground to delve into its fascinating history.

**Spello:** Often overlooked by tourists, Spello is a picturesque hill town adorned with colorful flowers, narrow alleyways, and medieval churches. Wander through its charming streets, visit the Baglioni Chapel to see Pinturicchio's frescoes, and enjoy amazing views of the surrounding countryside.

**Montefalco:** Known as the "Balcony of Umbria," Montefalco offers panoramic vistas of the Umbrian valley and is renowned for its Sagrantino wine. Explore the town's medieval walls, visit the Church of San Francesco to admire Benozzo Gozzoli's frescoes, and indulge in wine tasting at local vineyards.

**Gubbio:** Steeped in history, Gubbio is a medieval town characterized by its well-preserved architecture and Roman ruins. Ride the funicular to the top of Mount Ingino for sweeping views, explore the Palazzo dei Consoli, and experience the traditional Corsa dei Ceri festival.



#### Spring time Splendor

Swinter loosens its grip, the rolling hills and valleys of Umbria become adorned with rolling green hills

and vibrant wildflowers, creating a breathtaking mosaic of hues. The Fioritura, a spectacular blooming phenomenon, transforms the landscape into a veritable canvas of life, with delicate poppies, golden daisies, and purple lavender carpeting the fields. Against the backdrop of ancient olive groves and medieval hilltop towns, the Fioritura of Umbria is a sight to behold, evoking a sense of wonder and reverence for the natural world.

Moreover, springtime in Umbria heralds a season of cultural festivities and traditions that breathe new life into the region's historic towns and villages. From the solemn processions of Easter in Assisi to the lively street festivals in Perugia, the air is filled with the sound of church bells, folk music, and laughter. As locals and visitors alike gather to celebrate the arrival of spring, the spirit of camaraderie and joy permeates the atmosphere, fostering a sense of community and belonging.

Moreover, spring is a time of culinary abundance in Umbria, with the season's fresh produce inspiring a plethora of mouthwatering dishes. Asparagus, fava beans, and artichokes grace the tables of local trattorias and osterias, offering a taste of the region's rustic yet refined cuisine. From earthy risottos to delicate primavera pastas, Umbrian chefs showcase the bounty of the season, infusing traditional recipes with seasonal ingredients and culinary creativity.

Amidst this natural beauty and cultural vibrancy, spring and summer in Umbria offers abundant opportunities for outdoor exploration and leisure pursuits. Hiking trails beckon adventurers to discover hidden valleys and panoramic vistas, while tranquil lakes provide a serene backdrop for boating and picnicking. Whether wandering through blooming vineyards, indulging in alfresco dining, or simply basking in the warm sunshine, spring in Umbria is a time of renewal and rejuvenation, inviting travelers to embrace the splendor of the season in all its glory.





In addition to the mesmerizing floral spectacle, Umbria is also marked by rich cultural traditions and

festivities. As Easter approaches, the towns and villages of Umbria come alive with religious processions, ancient rituals, and vibrant celebrations.

In Assisi, the birthplace of St. Francis, pilgrims and visitors gather to pay homage to the patron saint of Italy, participating in solemn ceremonies and witnessing the splendor of the Basilica di San Francesco illuminated by the soft spring sunlight.

#### Pull up a chair for foods in Umbria that should not be missed

**Torta al Testo:** A traditional Umbrian flatbread made with flour, water, and salt, cooked on a terracotta griddle and typically served with cured meats, cheeses, or vegetables.

**Strangozzi al Tartufo:** Hand-rolled pasta served with a rich truffle sauce, a delicacy that showcases Umbria's bounty of truffles.

**Porchetta:** Slow-roasted, savory pork seasoned with garlic, rosemary, and fennel, a flavorful specialty found at local markets and festivals throughout Umbria.

#### **Summertime Serenity**

As the sun climbs high in the azure sky and the gentle breeze carries the scent of lavender and olive groves, Umbria unveils its summertime serenity, offering travelers an array of enchanting experiences to savor under the warm Mediterranean sun. From leisurely days spent lounging by tranquil lakes to vibrant cultural events that animate historic towns, Umbria beckons visitors to embrace the season's tranquility and vibrancy.

One of the quintessential summertime activities in Umbria is to seek refuge by the shimmering waters of its picturesque lakes. Lake Trasimeno, Italy's fourth-largest lake, provides an idyllic setting for swimming, sunbathing, and water sports. Visitors can rent paddle boats or kayaks to explore the tranquil waters, or simply unwind on the sandy shores, taking in panoramic views of the surrounding hills and islands.

# UMBRIA

For those seeking a cultural immersion, Umbria's calendar is brimming with festivals and events that showcase the region's rich heritage and artistic prowess. The Umbria Jazz Festival, held annually in Perugia, attracts world-renowned musicians and jazz enthusiasts from around the globe, transforming the historic city center into a lively hub of music and revelry. Similarly, the Spoleto Festival dei Due Mondi offers a diverse program of opera, theater, dance, and visual arts, captivating audiences with performances in stunning outdoor venues.

Outdoor enthusiasts will find ample opportunities to explore Umbria's lush landscapes and scenic trails all year long. The Apennine Mountains offer an array of hiking and mountain biking routes, ranging from leisurely strolls through shady forests to challenging ascents to panoramic viewpoints. Guided excursions to the region's nature reserves, such as Monte Subasio and Monte Cucco, provide insights into Umbria's rich biodiversity and geological wonders.

Moreover, Umbria presents year-round opportunities to indulge in the region's culinary delights, from alfresco dinning in quaint village squares to wine tastings at local vineyards. Umbrian cuisine, characterized by its use of fresh, seasonal ingredients, shines throughout, with dishes like bruschetta topped with ripe tomatoes and basil, grilled meats, and refreshing salads. Visitors can also sample the region's renowned wines, such as Orvieto Classico and Sagrantino di Montefalco, at vineyard tours and tastings.





#### TRAVEL TIP 01.

# ENJOY THE JOURNEY

Saint Martin Cathedral – Lucca, Italy

# TORTELLINI

EMI

HERE'S A SOUP THAT WILL MAKE PEOPLE COME FLOCKING AND MIGHT **RESULT IN A FEW MARRIAGE PROPOSALS: THIS CREAMY TORTELLINI SOUP! THIS IS** ONE FOR THE BOOKS. YOU **CAN MAKE IT IN UNDER 30** MINUTES, AND THE FLAVOR THAT RESULTS IS SIMPLY **KILLER, TOMATOES, BASIL,** PARMESAN AND CREAM MAKE A LUSCIOUSLY FLAVORED BROTH THAT FLOATS WITH DOUGHY ORBS OF TORTELLINI. IN FACT, WE THINK YOU WILL PUT DOWN **OUR SPOONS IN** AMAZEMENT AT FIRST BITE. THEN MAKE A MENTAL NOTE TO PUT IT ON THE REGULAR ROTATION...STAT.

## **ZUPPA DI TORTELLINI CREMOSO**

📿 Serves : 6 - 8 🛛 🕺 Prep Time : 5 Mins 🛛 🕜 Cook Time : 25 - 30 Mins

## **CREAMY TORTELLINI SOUP**

## Ingredients

- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1 lb spicy Italian sausage
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¾ tsp kosher salt
- ¼ tsp freshly cracked pepper
- ¼ tsp dried basil .
- ¼ tsp dried oregano •
- ¼ tsp dried thyme •
- 2 tbs tomato paste .
- 2 tbs all-purpose flour
- 4½ cups chicken broth
- 28 oz can crushed tomatoes
- One 10-oz. package of cheese tortellini
- <sup>3</sup>⁄<sub>4</sub> heavy cream or half and half
- handful roughly chopped spinach
- Basil, for garnish
- · Grated parmesan cheese, for garnish



## Directions

- 1. Add the olive oil to a large casserole pot set over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, and cook until soft, about 4 minutes.
- 2. Add the italian sausage and cook, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, until browned. Add the tomato paste and cook for 2 minutes. Sprinkle the flour over the meat and cook until the flour dissolves into the meat, about 1 minute.
- 3. Gradually add the chicken stock, crushed tomatoes, dried spices, 34 tsp kosher salt, and ¼ tsp freshly cracked pepper, and mix to combine. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a gentle simmer. Let simmer for 15 minutes.
- 4. Add the tortellini and the heavy cream, and let simmer for 5-7 minutes, or until the tortellini is cooked.
- 5. Add spinach, mixing a few times to incorporate it into the soup. Add any additional salt or pepper as needed.

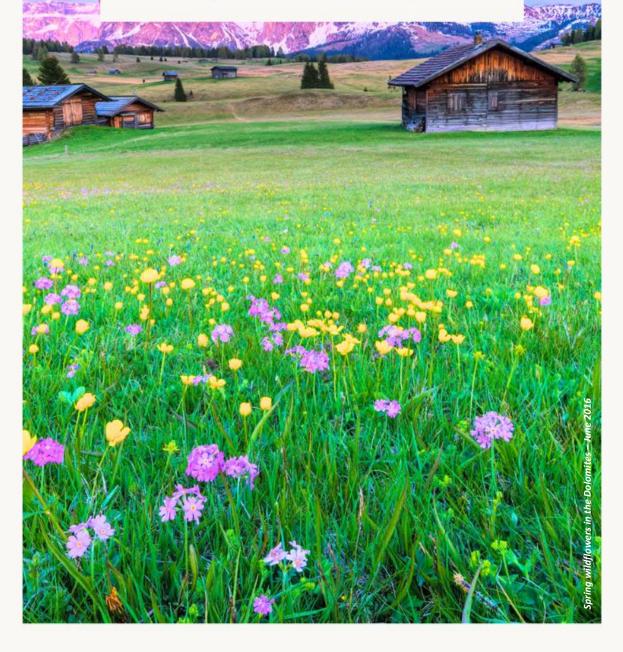
Enjoy while hot!



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# Wildflowers of ITALY

Life is short. Take that trip.



There are many reasons to visit Italy in spring and one of them is the many flowers that blossom all along the peninsula, filling Italy with colors, perfume and even more beauty.

While traveling through Italy, we have been rewarded with seeing beautiful wildflowers all year round and not just in spring – you just have to choose the season and the place, so don't look for wildflowers in Sicily when the countryside is parched by the brutal August sun.

But where exactly can you see flower fields in Italy?

Here's a guide to following the wildflower season throughout Italy.





## Wildflowers of ITALY

#### SICILY

Wildflower season in the southern coast of Sicily begins in January and February, with fields of bright yellow sorrel and tiny blue iris carpeting the almond orchards in snowy-white bloom, all especially beautiful at the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento.



#### MAREMMA

In the Maremma in southern Tuscany, March brings yellow primrose and pink cyclamens in the shady woods, while late in the summer white lilies bloom on the beach at the Parco dell'Uccellina.

#### DOLOMITES

Wildflowers in the Dolomites offer a spectacular display of colors in June, July and August, with masses of buttercups, forget-me-nots and vanilla orchids. Above Cortina in the high alpine meadows, hikers will be rewarded into September with deep blue gentians, yellow alpine poppies and soft delicate edelweiss

#### TUSCANY

May in Tuscany brings daisies and hyacinths in the vineyards in Chianti, while in southern Tuscany between the hill towns of Pienza and Montepulciano, the glorious green hills are painted with streaks of bright red poppies.



#### MT. ETNA

November is off-season in Sicily, when Greek sites are full of orange calendula instead of tourists, while on the Mt. Etna volcano look for delicate saffron crocus poking through the black lava.Christmas in Sicily at the seaside brings huge red poinsettias growing 12-feet high, in contrast to tiny delicate crocus blooming in the sand.



#### RAGUSA

In March and April, the countryside around Ragusa bursts into bloom with a riot of colors making it a perfect time for a walking tour in eastern Sicily, when blue borage, pink valerian, and yellow margheritas grow shoulder high, and its easy to pick a bouquet of 50 different flowers!

#### UMBRIA

Walking in Umbria in spring and summer brings gorgeous fields of sunflowers in the foothills above Assisi, while later in the season you'll find cheery sunchokes – the sunflower's wild cousin – growing to a towering height.



#### MARETTIMO

On the roadless island of Marettimo, off Sicily's western coast, early May is the best time to see the Mediterranean scrub in bloom, when the air is scented with the perfume of rosemary, rock roses and sweet yellow broom, or near Palermo, the same flora blooms in the Zingaro Park, where you can take a dip in the turquoise sea.

#### PIEDMONT

Autumn in Piedmont means truffle hunting, but don't forget to stop and admire the clusters of brilliant yellow narcisi (sometimes called "autumn crocus," though crocus they are not!) that pop up amongst the hazelnut groves.





One of the best places to see wildflowers in Italy is the area of Castelluccio in Umbria. Each year, these usually green plains see the blooming of thousands of flowers that create fields in the colors of the rainbow, creating a natural show like no other!

## **TEXAS' TOP FIELD GUIDE**

We all get home sick for Texas in spring. Wildflowers dot the plains and brighten the mountains. They carpet the hills, line the roadways, and spring up where the sunlight pierces forest canopies. They are tall, short, subtle, or showy, and—in a state that is home to an abundance of blooming plants—we are grateful for all 5,000 of them. Here are 9 of our favorites.

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Bluebonnet (Lupinus texensis) begins blooming early spring, but the Big Bend bluebonnet can bloom as early as January. The Texas Legislature designated all six species that grow in the state, which are members of the large lupine genus, the State Flower.

Indian paintbrush (Castilleja spp.) blooms early spring throughout the state. There are several species, whose colors vary from scarlet to orange, cream, yellow, and occasionally purple. The bright tips of the petal-like bracts look like they've been dipped in paint. The genus name honors Spanish botanist Domingo Castillejo (1744-86).

Indian blanket (Gaillardia pulchella), also called firewheel, blooms April to June across much of the state. Not often seen in large masses, the flower's brilliant combination of red, orange, and yellow resembles brightly woven fabric.



Drummond phlox (Phlox drummondii) blooms early spring. They occur most frequently in spectacular masses of color among sandy post-oak woods and along roadsides in south-central Texas and are named for Scottish botanist Thomas Drummond, who collected the plants on a visit to Texas in 1834. The most common color is red, but pink, blue, and purple are also seen. Also called wild phlox.

Prairie verbena (Glandularia bipinnatifida) blooms most profusely in spring, but may flower at other times of the year depending on rainfall. Found throughout the state; they're among Texas' most abundant wildflowers.

Pink evening primrose (Oenothera speciosa) blooms April to June across much of the state. The drought-tolerant flower opens at dusk in northern portions of Texas. Flowers wither each day, replaced by new blossoms each evening. Elsewhere in the state, blooms stay open all day. They're also known as pink buttercup.



Common sunflower (Helianthus annuus) blooms March through December in vacant lots, fields, pastures, open stream banks, and along roadsides and railroad tracks throughout the state. Texas boasts some 19 species of wild sunflowers, including Maximilian sunflower (Helianthus maximiliani) and swamp sunflower (Helianthus angustifolius).

Winecup (Callirhoe involucrata) blooms early spring into summer, in most parts of the state, except the west. They grow in sandy soils in open woods and scrublands. A droughttolerant, mat-forming plant, it grows up to 1 foot high and bears many dark, wine-colored flowers.

Mexican hat (Ratibida columnifera) blooms May to July, or later with favorable weather. Common throughout most of the state, the flower is named for its resemblance to the traditional high-crowned, broad-brimmed Mexican sombrero.

I may look like I'm having deep thoughts but 99% of the time I'm thinking about what I'm going to eat later.

Z

<

Some days I do several loads of laundry, work in the garden, make the beds, mop the floors and have dinner ready.

Other days I eat a box of Oreos and call it a day.

It's all about balance.

Do more of what you love

- 900 -

## ACCIE SPORTS UPDATE



#### Trev Alberts Introduced as Director of Athletics

Texas A&M President Mark A. Welsh III has named Trev Alberts as his new director of athletics

**Click for more information** 

#### Mexico and Brazil Set to Face Off in First International Soccer Match at Kyle Field

Texas A&M's Kyle Field is set to make history this summer as the men's national soccer teams for Mexico and Brazil will face off on June 8 at the historic venue.

**Click for more information** 

## Aggies Drop Overtime Thriller to Cougars in NCAA Second Round

The Texas A&M men's basketball team erased a double-digit deficit to force overtime but dropped a hard-fought 100-95 decision to the top-seeded Houston Cougars to end its 2023-24 season

**Click for more information** 



BASKETBALL (W): Lady Aggies Nearly Erases 17-Point Deficit – NCAA Tour. VOLLEYBALL: Texas A&M Volleyball Team European Trip – Including Italy FOOTBALL: Texas A&M's 2025 SEC Opponents Announced FOOTBALL: Watch: Spring Football Weekly Press Conference BASEBALL: Texas A&M baseball continues to rise in the polls. BASKETBALL (M): Texas A&M Legend Alex Caruso has a career night for the Chicago Bulls

Strawberry Rhubarb Pie Derfect for Ingredients



Make this old-fashioned strawberry rhubarb pie! It's sweet, tart, and so good with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Perfect dessert for spring or summer!

## **Ingredients :**

- 2 pie crusts
- 4 c. chopped rhubarb
- 2 c. chopped strawberries
- 3/4 c. granulated sugar, plus more for sprinkling
- 1/4 c. cornstarch
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice 1 tsp. zest
- Pinch kosher salt
- 2 tbsp.
- cold butter, chopped
- 1 large egg, beaten
- Vanilla ice cream, for serving

## **Direction:**

Step 1. Preheat oven to 375°. Using a rolling pin, roll out both pie crusts to about 16" across.

Step 2. In a large bowl, mix together rhubarb, strawberries, sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice, zest, and salt until mixture begins to look juicy. Place one crust into a pie dish and pour in fruit mixture. Dot with pieces of butter.

Step 3. With the other sheet of pie dough, make a lattice top. First, cut the dough into 3/4" strips. Then, weave strips over and under each other in a criss-cross formation. Using kitchen shears, trim the top and bottom crust so there's a 1" overhang, then fold under and crimp edges together. Brush crust with egg wash and sprinkle with sugar.

Step 4. Bake until pie is golden and filling is bubbling, about 1 hour to 1 hour 20 minutes. If crust is browning too fast, cover with aluminum foil.

Step 5. Let pie cool slightly, then serve with vanilla ice cream if desired.

Enjoyed best when shared.

# AND BRANS

TEXAS STORIES, FACTS AND HISTORY PLUS A LITTLE FUN TOO. BLUEBONNETS AND BEEF, OIL WELLS AND FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS.



Answer 1: Miriam 'Ma' Ferguson served as the first female Governor of Texas from 1925 to 1927—then again from 1933 to 1935. (See the Full Story)

Answer 2: The Battle of Gonzales, often referred to as the "Lexington of the Texas Revolution," was the first military engagement of the Texas Revolution. It took place near the town of Gonzales on October 2, 1835. See the Full story

Answer 3: Sam Houston was elected president of the new republic. He served from October 1836 to December 1838 and was elected again in 1841, serving until 1844. (See the Full Story)

Answer 4: Audie Murphy was a renowned figure in both the US Army and Hollywood. He demonstrated remarkable bravery during his service in the Second World War, ultimately becoming the most decorated soldier in American history. Following his military service, he achieved success in Hollywood, starring in several highly acclaimed films. (See his full story)

## **QUESTION 1:** WHO WAS THE FIRST FEMALE GOVERNOR OF TEXAS?

**Question 2:** Which battle sparked the Texas Revolution?

**Question 3:** Who was elected as the first President of The Republic of Texas?

**Question 4:** Which native Texan became the most decorated soldier in U.S. History?





## THE ITALY A&M CLUB NEEDS YOUR Assistance



### The Italy A&M Club Needs Your Help!

#### • BREAKING NEWS

UPDATE – The Association of Former Students has finished helping us with our website! Here's the link www.italyags.aggienetwork.com

We have down loaded each of our e-newsletters along with other content. I can't thank them enough for the help. In the future we will be adding a *Facebook* page to accompany our *Instagram* postings. These mediums will allow us to post news articles, our monthly newsletters, *Instagram* postings and other social media. So everyone is aware our newsletter reaches out to OVER 1,300 readers each month. Thank you all for your contributions to it's success.

#### Italy A&M Club Scholarship

The club is exploring the possibility of establishing a scholarship program. The scholarship would be available to club members who live in Italy but are attending Texas A&M, their family members who are attending Texas A&M or possibly students who are studying abroad from Texas A&M in Italy (semester abroad program).

We are considering hosting a silent auction to help raise funds for the scholarship. If you are interested in donating to the auction or in the establishment of the scholarship please reach out to me directly.



• News – Extra, Extra Read All About it!

Please feel free to share any photos, news articles, announcements, births, graduations, Silver Taps, career changes or any other news you would like to share with the club. We will find ways to include them in the regular updates.

• Logo

We are looking to create our clubs logo and we need your help. We need to generate a few ideas for our logo. If you have any ideas or thoughts please let me know.

Recipes

Feel free to submit your favorite recipe(s) to be include with the monthly/periodic updates. We would love to share them with the group.

• Feedback

Please provide feedback on this format, the content and any ideas you may have on ways we can generate additional engagement. Please encourage other people to join the club and to follow us on *Instagram*.

### **Contact Information:**

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# PAROLE FINALI

s April gently slips away, I find myself reflecting on the

moments of beauty, connection, and discovery that have colored this month with each of us. From the blossoming of spring flowers to the shared laughter of gatherings among friends, both old and new at our Aggie Muster, it has been a time of joy and renewal for us all.

In this month's edition, we sought to capture the essence of April's magic through captivating stories, interesting insights and tantalizing culinary delights. It has been a privilege to curate these pages and to witness the spirit of camaraderie that flourishes among our members.

As we turn the page on April and eagerly anticipate the adventures that await us in the months ahead, let us carry with us the lessons learned and the memories cherished during this fleeting season of growth and transformation. May the bonds forged within our time in Aggieland continue to serve as a source of strength and inspiration, guiding us through the journey of life with grace and resilience.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering support, enthusiasm, and commitment to making the Italy A&M Club the vibrant and dynamic enclave that it is. Together, we have woven a tapestry of shared experiences that enriches us all, and I am honored to be a part of this remarkable journey with you.

As we bid adieu to April and eagerly embrace the possibilities that lie ahead, may the spirit of fellowship and adventure continue to light our way forward.

Thanks, ciao and Gig'em!

Ryan '91

P.S. Be sure to follow us on **Instagram** at: Italy\_am\_club and please visit our web page at www.italyags.aggienetwork.com