

AUGUST 2024

EXPLORE THE
WONDERS OF
LOMBARDIA

THE CREATION OF
FERRARI - A LEGACY
OF SPEED AND
INNOVATION

UP...UP...AND AWAY!
THE RISING COST OF
GELATO

Italy

A&M CLUB

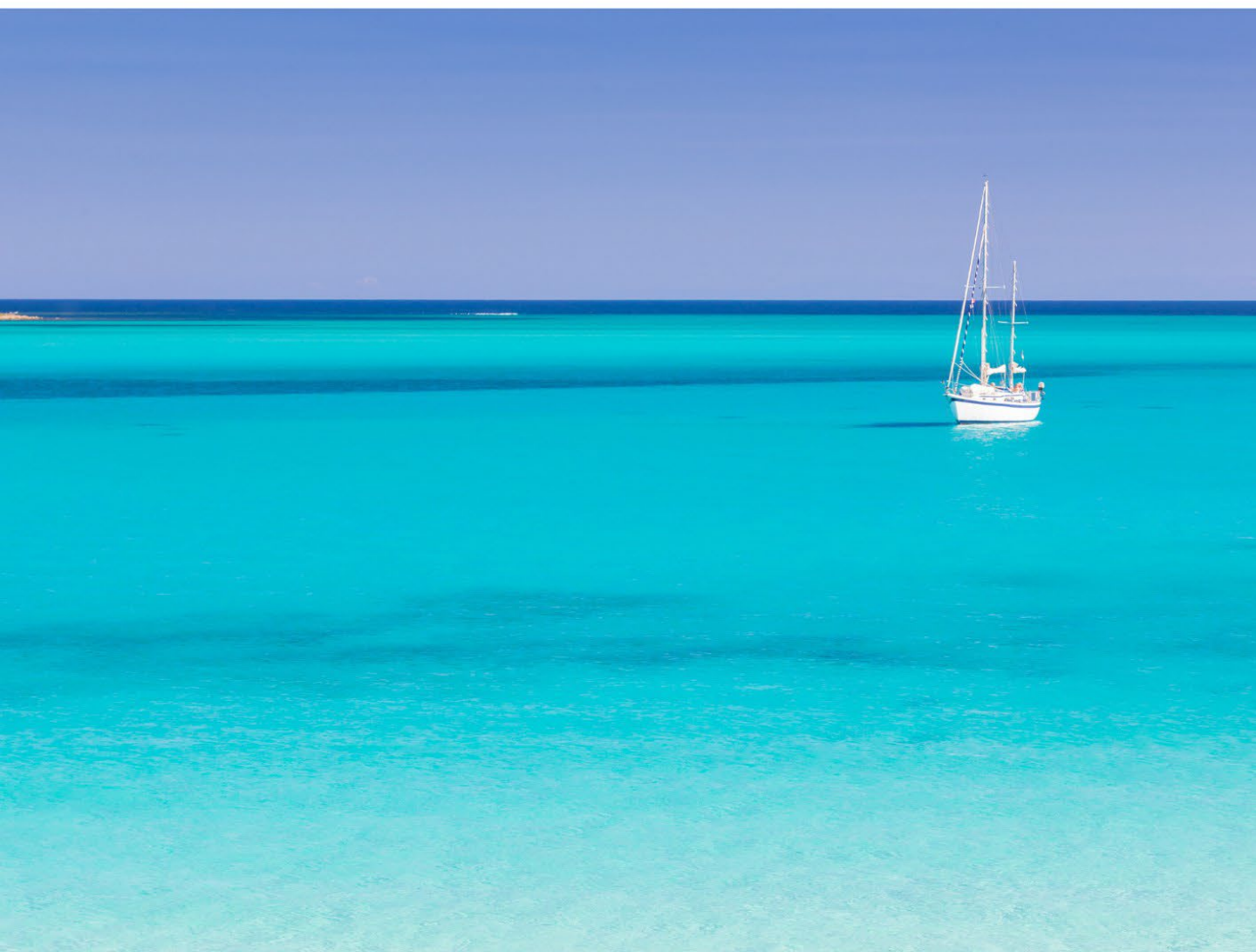


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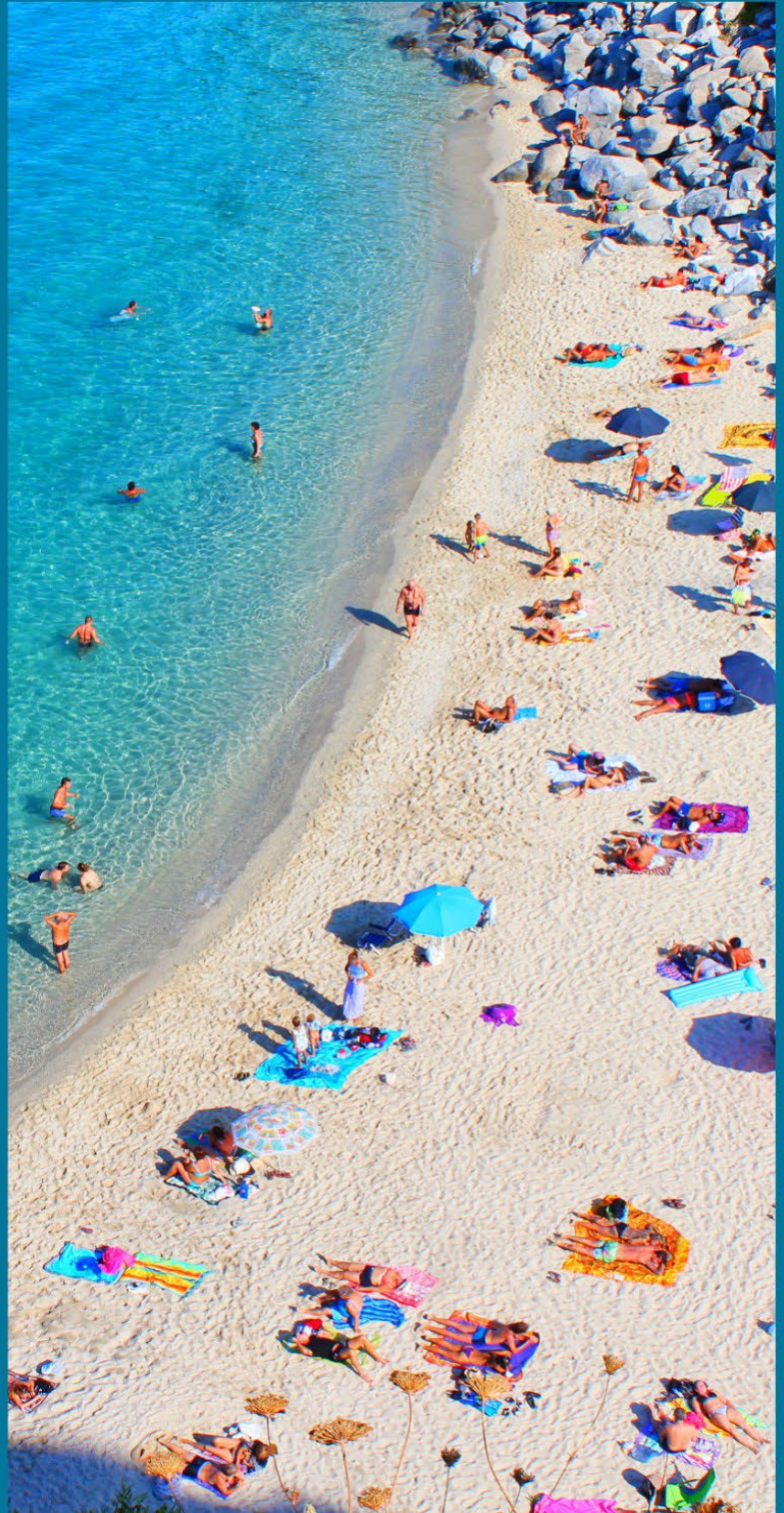
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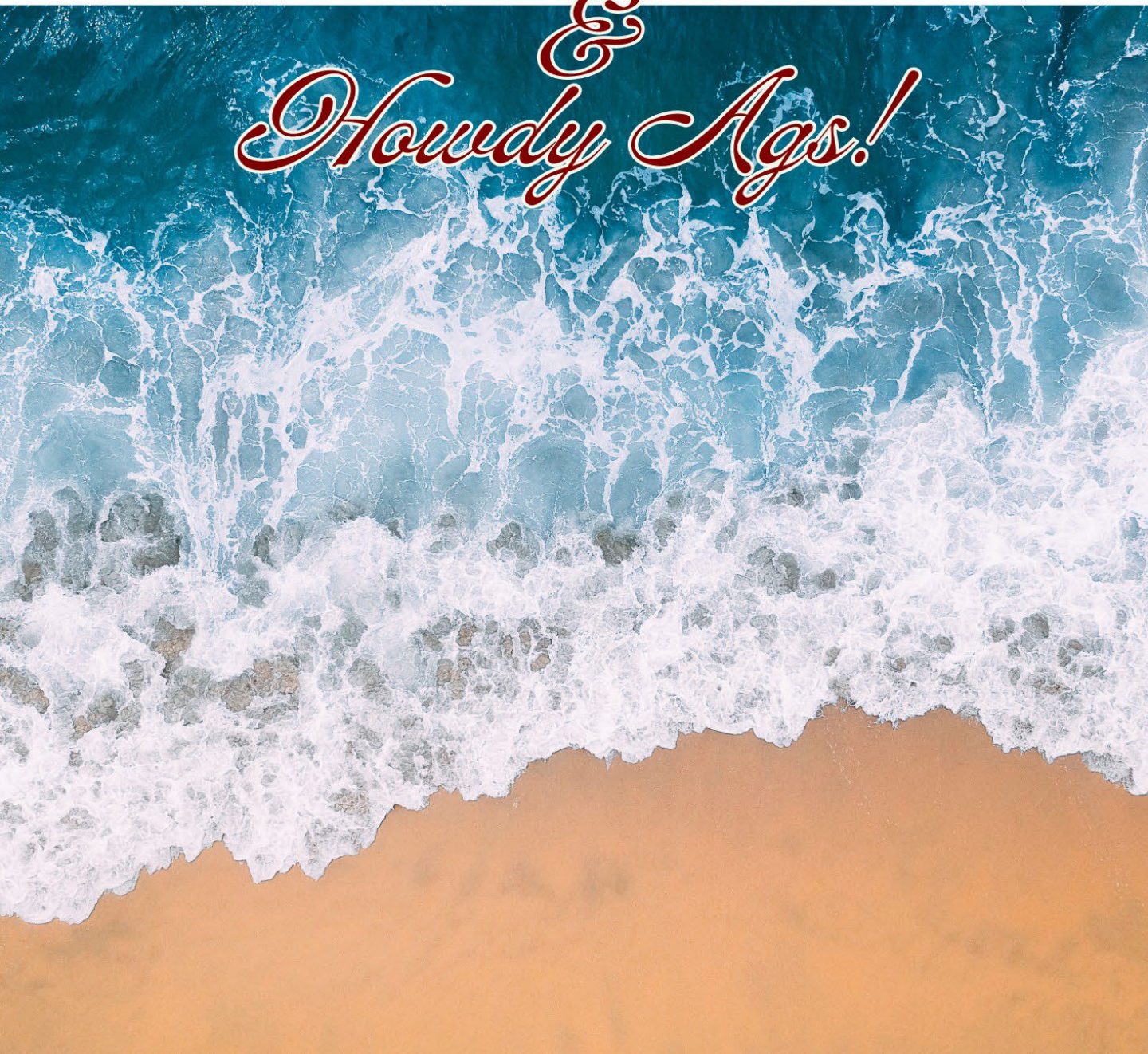
Parole Finali



Tropea beach, Calabria, Italy

CIAO A
TUTTI

*&
Howdy Ags!*





**“AUGUST IS LIKE THE
SUNDAY OF SUMMER.”
- UNKNOWN**

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

As the summer sun continues to shine brightly over the beautiful landscapes of Italy, we bring you the latest updates and happenings within our vibrant community. This month, we have exciting events, inspiring stories, and important information to share.

Whether you're exploring new adventures in Italy or reminiscing about your time in Aggieland, there's something for everyone in this edition. So, grab a cup of espresso, settle in, and enjoy the August edition of our Italy A&M Club e-newsletter.



TEXAS A&M CAMPUS REMEMBERED



MEMORIAL STUDENTS CENTER


*M*emorial Students Center (1951) commonly referred to as the MSC. The idea to build

the MSC came about in the aftermath of the world wars. Former students sought to create a memorial to honor all of the Aggies who lost their lives in battle, while the current students wanted a student center. The solution was to build the dual-purpose MSC, which was dedicated on Muster day — April 21, 1951 — to all Aggies who had made the ultimate sacrifice in wars past, and to all who would do so in the future. In front of the MSC, 70 trees surround Simpson Drill Field to honor the 70 Aggies who died in World War I. Inside the Honor entrance of the MSC stands the Aggies Lost in Service memorial that lists names of Aggies who have made the ultimate sacrifice since World War II. The Hall of Honor also memorializes eight brave Aggies who received the Congressional Medal of Honor for their distinguished acts of valor. The MSC also houses three art galleries, many eateries, a bookstore, piano practice rooms and The Flag Room. The Flag Room is a place where students gather to study, meet friends, have meetings or just take a nap between classes. Since the MSC is a living memorial, those entering the building are asked to remove their hats. Those walking outside are asked not to walk on the grass surrounding the facility, also as a sign of respect to fallen Aggies.

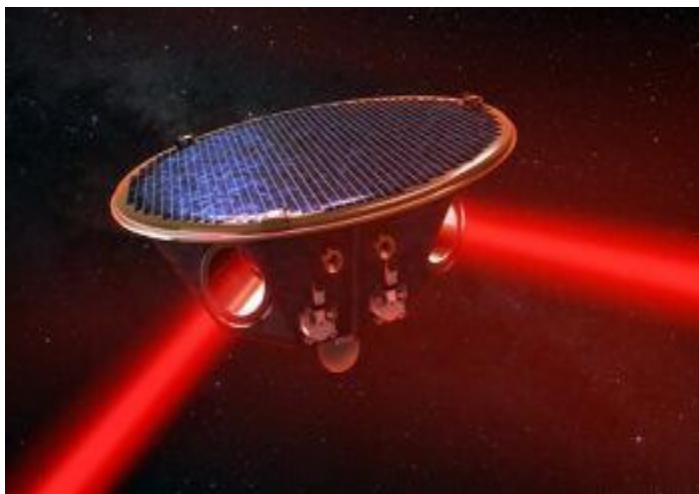


TEXAS A&M ASTROPHYSICIST NAMED TO EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY-NASA SCIENCE TEAM

Dr. Krista Smith will join fellow scientists in support of the LISA mission, an extraordinary effort to study gravitational waves in space.

 Dr. Krista Lynne Smith, an associate professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Texas A&M University, has been selected by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Astrophysics Division to serve on the joint European Space Agency (ESA)-NASA Science Team for the Laser Interferometer Space Antenna (LISA) mission, which is set to begin searching for gravitational wave signatures in space within the next decade.

Smith, an observational astrophysicist who studies supermassive black holes, is one of six U.S. scientists announced June 24 as members of the LISA Science Team tasked with providing scientific stewardship for the mission while also serving as ambassadors between the agencies and the scientific community.



According to NASA, Smith and her fellow US representatives will join 11 European scientists selected by ESA through an open call along with two interdisciplinary scientists and a representative from the LISA Consortium to the LISA Science Team. The team will be co-chaired by the ESA and NASA LISA Project Scientists. The full membership of the team will be announced by ESA later this summer.

The LISA mission was recently adopted into ESA's flight program and is targeted for launch in 2035. The ambitious space-based gravitational wave observatory will detect gravitational waves in space using lasers fired between three spacecraft, separated by more than a million miles and flying in a triangular formation, to measure how gravitational waves alter their relative distances. During its 4.5 year nominal mission, LISA will observe gravitational waves in the millihertz band as generated by compact binary systems, merging supermassive black holes and other exotic phenomena.

Smith joined the Texas A&M faculty in fall 2023 and is a member of the George P. and Cynthia Woods Mitchell Institute for Fundamental Physics and Astronomy. She earned her Ph.D. in astronomy in 2017 at the University of Maryland as a NASA Earth and Space Sciences Fellow, then completed a three-year Einstein Postdoctoral Fellowship at Stanford University's Kavli Institute for Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology prior to beginning her independent academic career as an assistant professor of physics at Southern Methodist University in 2020.

Born and raised in the suburbs of Dallas, Smith first became interested in the confluence of extreme physics across all wavebands in the central regions of active galaxies as an undergraduate student at the University of Texas at Austin, where she made her first major foray into optical spectroscopy and database analysis working with the huge active galactic nuclei (AGN) sample in the Sloan Digital Sky Survey. Her current research focuses on the behavior of energy and matter around supermassive black holes, time domain observations of black hole accretion disks and jets, the search for binary AGN and the effect of AGN on their host galaxies.

To read the entire article click [here](#). To learn more about the [LISA mission](#) click this link.

FIGHTIN' TEXAS AGGIE TO SOARING BLUE ANGEL

Former Texas A&M cadet James W. Perkins '13 is living his childhood dream as a member of the Navy's elite flight squadron.



Dreams of soaring through the skies often begin in childhood, but few have the determination to make them a reality.

James W. Perkins '13, also known as Wesley, was born in **Pordenone, Italy**, into a military family. Thanks to his father's extensive military career, Perkins had aviation in his blood from the beginning. After calling various places home, Perkins' family eventually settled down in Texas when he was ten.

Back in the States, he remained captivated by the roar of jet engines and the thrill of air shows, brewing the passion of becoming a Blue Angel.

"I always wanted to be a Blue Angel; it has been my childhood dream of mine," Perkins said.

When it came time to choose a college, Perkins knew he needed a place that could turn his dreams into reality. Texas A&M University, with its robust ROTC program, became his launch pad. The decision was strategic: Texas A&M offered one of the highest success rates for commissioning naval aviators.

Life at Texas A&M was a whirlwind of academic rigor and discipline. As an ocean engineering major and member of the Corps of Cadets, he was constantly balancing priorities. "I did a lot of growing up there," he said. His busy schedule taught him the importance of time management and striving for excellence — all of which would serve him in his journey to become a Blue Angel pilot.

To read more about how Perkins '13 became a member of the elite Blue Angel's click [here](#).

AS TEMPERATURES RISE, SO DOES RISK FOR HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

Sun protection, hydration and shade are key to staying safe as temperatures hit dangerous highs.

As we get further into summer heat and humidity will impact

millions of people. When the temperatures rise and humidity increases, so does the heat index, which is how hot it feels to the human body—and that raises the risk of developing a heat-related injury.

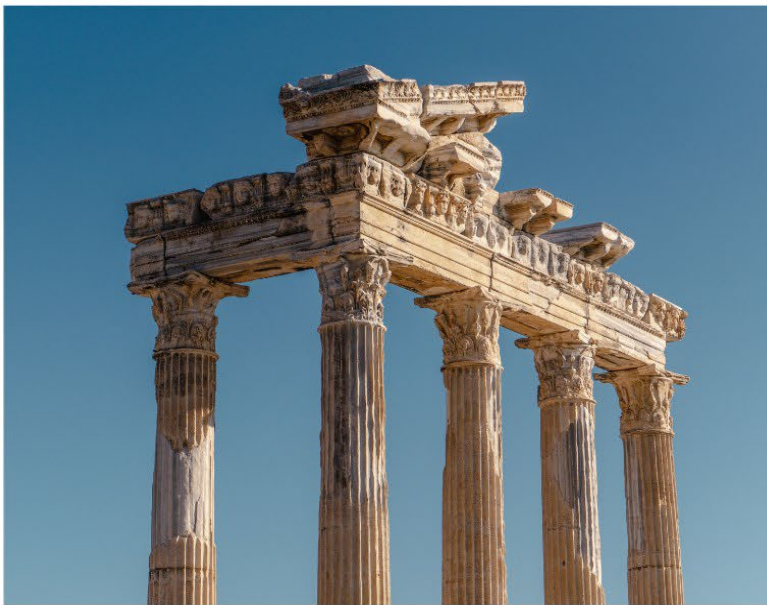
Dr. Gabriel Neal, clinical professor and head of primary care and rural medicine at Texas A&M University School of Medicine, provides advice for staying safe during the summer months.

To read more about ways to stay safe during the hot summer click [here](#).



Concrete, a composite material of aggregate bonded with a fluid cement that hardens over time, is an invention that has transformed construction throughout history. While modern concrete has seen extensive use and continuous development, it was the ancient Romans who truly mastered and perfected the art of concrete-making. Their innovations not only enabled the creation of iconic structures that have withstood millennia but also surpassed many modern materials in durability and sustainability.

The Mastery of Concrete by the Ancient Romans and Its Superiority to Modern Materials



The Roman Recipe for Concrete

The Romans developed a unique formula for concrete, known as *opus caementicium*, which primarily comprised lime (calcium oxide), volcanic ash (pozzolana), and water, with aggregates like stone or brick pieces. This mixture proved to be a revolutionary combination for several reasons:

1. **Pozzolana's Role:** Volcanic ash from the Pozzuoli region near Naples was critical. It reacted with lime and water to form a robust, cohesive binder that significantly enhanced the durability and hydraulic properties of the concrete.
2. **Hydraulic Properties:** Unlike modern Portland cement, Roman concrete could set underwater, making it ideal for constructing harbors, aqueducts, and other water-related structures. This hydraulic setting was crucial for the long-term durability of many Roman constructions.





Technological and Architectural Feats

The Romans' mastery over concrete enabled them to construct enduring edifices that showcase both technological prowess and aesthetic brilliance. Notable examples include:

- **The Pantheon:** The Pantheon's dome remains the largest unreinforced concrete dome in the world. Its oculus and coffered ceiling are testaments to the ingenuity of Roman engineering, distributing weight efficiently and enhancing structural integrity.
- **The Colosseum:** Utilizing a combination of concrete and stone, the Colosseum's complex design, including its vast amphitheater, demonstrates the versatility and strength of Roman concrete.
- **Aqueducts and Harbors:** Roman aqueducts, like the Pont du Gard, and harbors, such as Portus, benefitted from the hydraulic properties of Roman concrete, allowing them to endure for centuries.

Roman concrete exhibits several characteristics that, in many ways, make it superior to modern materials:

01. Durability

Roman concrete structures have stood the test of time, with many still in use or largely intact after nearly two millennia. This longevity contrasts sharply with modern concrete, which often shows signs of deterioration after just a few decades due to factors like corrosion of steel reinforcement and environmental wear.

02. Sustainability

The production of Roman concrete was more environmentally friendly than modern Portland cement. The use of pozzolana and less intensive heating processes meant lower carbon dioxide emissions. Today, cement production accounts for approximately 8% of global CO2 emissions.

03. Self-Healing Properties

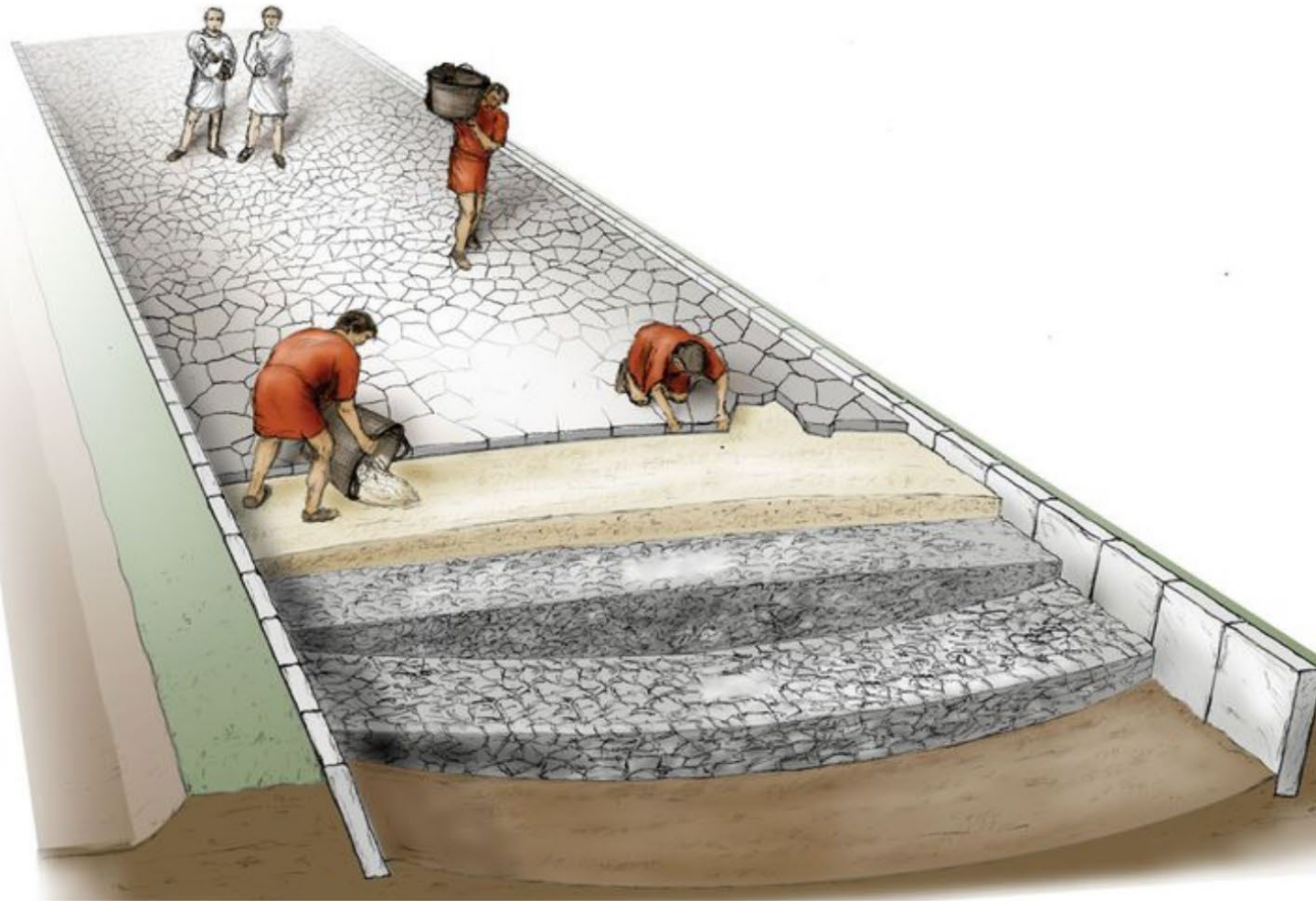
Recent studies have revealed that Roman concrete possesses self-healing capabilities. The pozzolanic reaction continues over centuries, allowing cracks to fill and the concrete to maintain its integrity. This is a feature modern concrete lacks unless specifically engineered with additional materials or technologies.

04. Modern Context and Lessons

While modern concrete offers certain advantages, such as higher initial strength and ease of production, the long-term benefits of Roman concrete's durability and sustainability are compelling. For example, modern constructions in marine environments, such as offshore oil rigs or coastal defenses, can benefit from incorporating pozzolanic materials to enhance longevity and reduce maintenance costs.



Revival of Ancient Techniques



Today, there is a growing interest in revisiting and adapting ancient Roman concrete techniques to modern needs. By studying the composition and properties of Roman concrete, scientists and engineers aim to develop new formulations that combine the best of both worlds: the strength and versatility of modern concrete with the longevity and environmental benefits of Roman methods.

The ancient Romans perfected concrete in a way that allowed their constructions to endure for centuries. Their innovative use of materials,

particularly pozzolana, resulted in a building material that was not only strong and durable but also environmentally sustainable.

Modern concrete, while technologically advanced, often falls short in comparison, particularly in terms of longevity and environmental impact. As contemporary construction seeks to balance performance with sustainability, looking back to Roman techniques offers valuable insights that could shape the future of building materials.



If you see me talking to myself. just
move along...I'm self-employed...We're
having a staff meeting!



The Rising Costs of Gelato in Italy

Italy, renowned for its culinary delights, holds gelato in a special place within its rich gastronomic culture. However, recent years have seen a noticeable increase in the prices of this beloved treat, leaving both locals and tourists questioning the reasons behind the hike.

Factors Contributing to Gelato Price Increases

Raw Material Costs:

The primary ingredients of gelato, such as milk, sugar, and fresh fruit, have seen significant price increases. Global supply chain disruptions, crop yields, and inflation have all played a part in driving up costs. For instance, dairy prices in Europe have surged due to higher feed costs for cattle and decreased milk production.

All of these and many other factors naturally increase costs.

Energy Prices:

The production of gelato is energy-intensive, requiring consistent refrigeration and specialized equipment. The spike in energy prices across Europe, particularly driven by current geopolitical tensions and a shift towards renewable energy sources, has directly impacted operational costs for gelato makers.

Labor Costs:

As with many artisanal products, the labor involved in making high-quality gelato is considerable. Italy's labor laws and the push for fair wages have led to increased labor costs, which are subsequently reflected in the prices consumers pay.

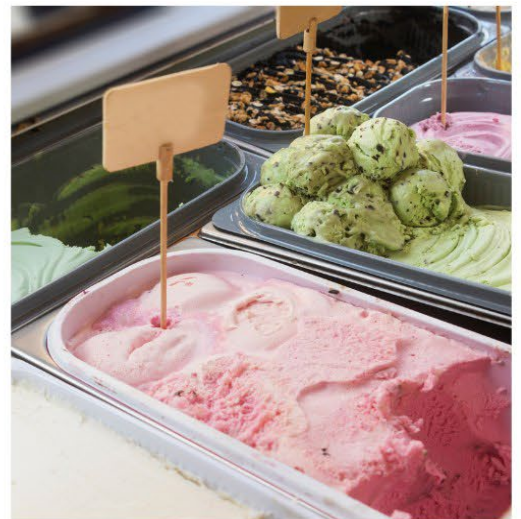


Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic:

The pandemic had a severe impact on the global economy, including the food and beverage sector. Lockdowns and reduced tourism affected the sales volumes of gelaterias, leading many to increase prices to offset losses and sustain their businesses.

Historical and Contemporary Pricing Comparisons

A few years ago, the average price of a small gelato cone in Italy ranged from €1.50 to €2.00. Today, that same cone can cost anywhere from €2.50 to €3.50, depending on the location and quality of the gelateria. In major tourist cities like Rome, Florence, and Venice, prices can soar even higher, reaching up to €4.00 or more for a small serving.





For example:

- **Rome:** In 2018, a small gelato at popular spots like Giolitti or Gelateria del Teatro cost around €2.00. Today, the price has risen to approximately €4.50.
- **Florence:** Renowned gelaterias like Gelateria dei Neri and La Carraia offered small cones for €1.80 in 2018. Now, prices hover around €4.00.
- **Venice:** Prices in Venice were traditionally higher due to the city's tourist influx. A small gelato that cost €2.50 in 2018 now often exceeds €5.00.

*"Life is like a cone of
gelato. You have to
enjoy it before it melts." ~*

Unknown

Finding Quality Gelato at Reasonable Prices

Despite the general price increase, it is still possible to find excellent gelato at reasonable prices if one knows where to look. Here are some recommendations:

- **Florence:** Gelateria La Sorbettiera in the Oltrarno district offers high-quality gelato at more affordable prices compared to the more tourist-heavy areas. Another great option is Gelateria dei Medici, which is slightly off the beaten path but worth the visit for its rich flavors and fair pricing.
- **Rome:** Gelateria Fatamorgana, known for its unique and natural ingredients, provides a good balance of quality and price. Gelateria del Viale, located in the Trastevere neighborhood, is another excellent choice for those seeking delicious gelato without the premium tourist prices.
- **Bologna:** Often overlooked by tourists, Bologna offers some of the best gelato in Italy at competitive prices. Cremeria Funivia and Gelateria Gianni are top recommendations where one can enjoy exceptional gelato without breaking the bank.
- **Naples:** In Naples, Casa Infante and Gay Odin are renowned for their superb gelato and reasonable prices, making them favorites among both locals and visitors.






The increase in gelato prices in Italy can be attributed to several interconnected factors, including higher raw material costs, rising energy prices, increased labor costs, and the economic impacts of the pandemic. Despite these challenges, it is still possible to enjoy high-quality gelato at reasonable prices by exploring less touristy areas and seeking out local favorites.

By understanding the reasons behind the price hikes and knowing where to look, you can continue to indulge in Italy's beloved frozen treat without overspending.

*"The only thing
better than a gelato is
a second gelato."* -

Unknown





“ S U R E L Y ,
O F A L L T H E
W O N D E R S O F
T H E W O R L D ,
T H E H O R I Z O N
I S T H E
G R E A T E S T . ”

– FREYA STARK



FAST LANE

The Creation of Ferrari

A Legacy of Speed and Innovation

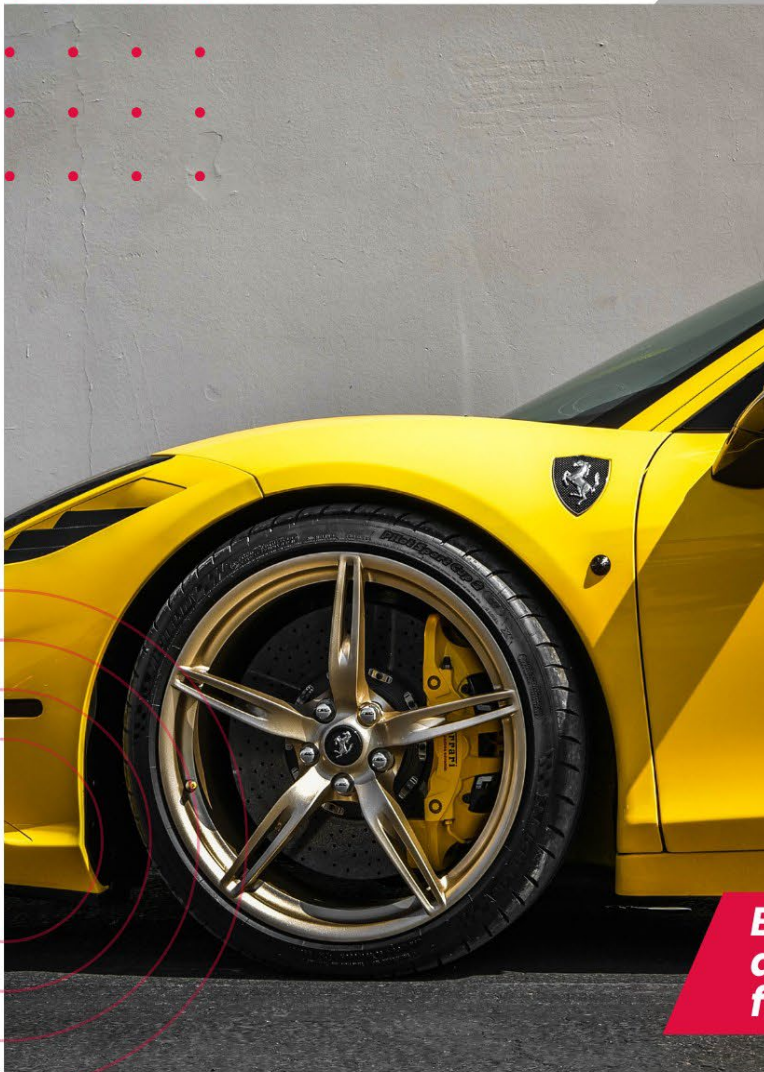
THE EARLY YEARS OF ENZO FERRARI

Ferrari, one of the most iconic and revered names in the automotive industry, has become synonymous with luxury, speed, and engineering excellence. This essay delves into the creation of Ferrari, tracing its origins from the vision of its founder, Enzo Ferrari, to its emergence as a world-renowned brand in the automotive and racing world.



Enzo Ferrari was born on February 20, 1898, in Modena, Italy. From a young age, he was captivated by the world of motorsports. His fascination with cars and racing grew as he witnessed Felice Nazzaro win the 1908 Circuito di Bologna. This passion would later drive him to pursue a career in the automotive industry.





THE BIRTH OF SCUDERIA FERRARI

Background and Passion for Racing

Enzo Ferrari's career in racing began modestly. After serving in World War I, he joined the Costruzioni Meccaniche Nazionali (CMN) in Milan as a test driver in 1919. His racing talent soon became evident, and in 1920, he joined Alfa Romeo, where he achieved significant success as a driver. However, his ambition extended beyond racing; he aspired to create his own cars and team.

In 1929, Enzo Ferrari founded Scuderia Ferrari in Modena. Initially, Scuderia Ferrari functioned as a racing team and a sponsor for amateur drivers. It provided technical support and prepared Alfa Romeo cars for competition. Under Ferrari's leadership, the team quickly gained a reputation for its competitiveness and innovation.

By the late 1930s, Enzo Ferrari's relationship with Alfa Romeo had evolved. In 1937, Alfa Romeo took over the racing operations of Scuderia Ferrari, integrating it into their racing department. This transition marked a turning point for Enzo Ferrari. He left Alfa Romeo in 1939, determined to create his own car manufacturing company. World War II delayed his plans, but in 1947, Ferrari produced its first car, the 125 S.



The Emergence of Ferrari as a Car Manufacturer

The First Ferrari Car: 125 S

The Ferrari 125 S, introduced in 1947, marked the beginning of Ferrari as a car manufacturer. Designed by Gioachino Colombo, the 125 S featured a 1.5-liter V12 engine, a configuration that would become a hallmark of Ferrari's engineering prowess. The car made its debut on the Piacenza racing circuit, and although it did not win its first race, it laid the foundation for Ferrari's future success. In the years following the introduction of the 125 S, Ferrari quickly established itself as a force in motorsports. The brand's dedication to performance, innovation, and meticulous craftsmanship became evident in every vehicle produced. Ferrari's cars began to dominate races across Europe, solidifying the brand's reputation for excellence.

Entry into Formula One

Ferrari's entry into Formula One in 1950 was a pivotal moment. The team's success in the championship further elevated the brand's status. Ferrari secured its first Formula One World Championship in 1952 with driver Alberto Ascari. This victory marked the beginning of a legacy that would see Ferrari become one of the most successful teams in Formula One history.

"I don't sell cars; I sell engines. The cars I throw in for free, something has to hold the engines in."

Enzo Ferrari

Ferrari's commitment to technological innovation has been a cornerstone of its success in Formula One. The team pioneered advancements in aerodynamics, engine design, and materials science, continually pushing the boundaries of what was possible. These innovations not only contributed to Ferrari's dominance on the track but also influenced the development of its road cars.

Ferrari's road cars are renowned for their performance, design, and exclusivity. Models like the 250 GTO, Testarossa, F40, and the more recent LaFerrari have become symbols of automotive excellence. Each model embodies Ferrari's dedication to combining cutting-edge technology with timeless design.

Ferrari's commitment to craftsmanship and exclusivity has made its cars highly coveted. Each vehicle is meticulously handcrafted, with an emphasis on detail and precision. Ferrari produces a limited number of cars each year, ensuring that ownership remains exclusive. This approach has contributed to the brand's allure and desirability.



*"What's behind you doesn't matter."
Enzo Ferrari*



The creation of Ferrari is a story of passion, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. From Enzo Ferrari's early years as a racing driver to the establishment of Scuderia Ferrari and the production of the first Ferrari car, the brand's journey has been marked by a relentless pursuit of speed, performance, and beauty. Today, Ferrari stands as a testament to the vision of its founder, continuing to inspire and captivate automotive enthusiasts around the world.

EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF

LOMBARDIA



CULTURAL RICHNESS

NATURAL BEAUTY

CULINARY DELIGHTS

LOMBARDIA

A Journey Through History, Culture, and Culinary Delights

Nestled in the heart of Northern Italy, the Lombardia region is a captivating blend of bustling urban centers, serene lakes, historic towns, and stunning natural landscapes. Whether you are a history buff, a food enthusiast, or an avid traveler, Lombardia offers a plethora of experiences that are sure to enchant you. Let's delve into the must-see places, delectable foods, vibrant festivals, and rich culture of this remarkable region.



CITIES AND MONUMENTS TO VISIT

Milan

Milan, the cosmopolitan capital of Lombardia, is renowned for its fashion scene, but it offers much more than just haute couture. The iconic Duomo di Milano, a Gothic masterpiece, is a must-visit. Climb to its rooftop for breathtaking views of the city. Don't miss Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper" at the Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie. The Sforza Castle, with its museums and art collections, is another highlight.

Bergamo

Bergamo is divided into two parts: the upper town (Città Alta) and the lower town (Città Bassa). The Città Alta, with its medieval walls, offers a charming old-world atmosphere. Explore the Piazza Vecchia, the heart of the old town, and visit the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore with its stunning frescoes.

Como

Famous for its beautiful lake, Como is a perfect blend of natural beauty and architectural splendor. Take a boat ride on Lake Como to admire the scenic vistas and visit the luxurious Villa del Balbianello. The town itself boasts the impressive Como Cathedral and the charming Broletto.

Mantua

Mantua, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is rich in Renaissance art and architecture. The Palazzo Ducale, with its stunning frescoes by Mantegna, and the Palazzo Te, a masterpiece of Mannerist architecture, are must-visit sites.

FESTIVALS TO ATTEND

Carnival of Viareggio

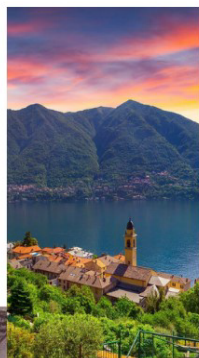
Although not in Lombardia, the nearby Carnival of Viareggio is one of Italy's most famous and is worth the trip. Known for its elaborate floats and vibrant parades, it is a spectacle of creativity and fun.

Festival of Sant'Ambrogio

Celebrated on December 7th in Milan, this festival honors the city's patron saint, Sant'Ambrogio. It features religious ceremonies, markets, and cultural events, offering a glimpse into Milanese traditions.

Mille Miglia

This historic car race passes through Lombardia, attracting vintage car enthusiasts from around the world. It's a thrilling event that showcases classic cars and the picturesque landscapes of the region.



CULINARY DELIGHTS

Lombardia's cuisine is hearty and rich, reflecting its agricultural heritage. Here are some must-try dishes:

Risotto alla Milanese

A creamy risotto made with saffron, giving it a distinctive golden hue. It's often served with ossobuco, a delicious braised veal shank.

Polenta

A staple in Lombard cuisine, polenta is a versatile cornmeal dish that can be served soft, fried, or grilled. It pairs wonderfully with rich meat stews.

Panettone

Originating from Milan, this sweet bread is a Christmas favorite. Studded with candied fruits and raisins, it's a delightful treat during the festive season.

Bitto Cheese

This unique cheese from the Valtellina valley is aged in mountain huts, giving it a distinctive flavor. It's a must-try for cheese lovers but be aware its expensive.





Lombardia is a region that seamlessly blends the old with the new, the urban with the rural, and the cultural with the natural. Whether you're exploring the streets of Milan, savoring a traditional dish, or enjoying a lakeside view, Lombardia promises an unforgettable Italian experience. Plan your visit and immerse yourself in the rich tapestry of history, culture, and beauty that is Lombardia.

LOMBARDIA

Italy's Most Expensive Cheese

Bitto Storico

Bitto Storico, also known as Bitto or Storico Ribelle, is a semi-hard, alpine cheese made in the Valtellina valley of Lombardia, Italy. It's made from cow's milk and goat's milk, and aged for a minimum of 70 days, but can be aged for up to 18 years. That is not a typo...yes 18 years. The average Bitto cheese wheel is 10 years old.

Stamped on the side of each wheel, you'll find the date it was produced and the name of the alpine meadow it came from.

There are only 12 producers of Bitto Storico, and they are all in one valley named after the Bitto River that runs through it. The milk used to make the Bitto Storico cheese is all from free range cows and goats; they aren't allowed to be fed feed or anything unnatural. They spend the summer grazing on the mountain pastures, and depending on the year, what the cows were grazing on can change the flavor of the cheese from one wheel to the next.

Unfortunately you won't find Bitto Storico in your local supermarket like you will other sought after cheeses like Parmigiano-Reggiano or Gruyère for fondue. You'll need to travel to the small town of Gerolo Alta high in the Bergamo Alps to find Bitto Storico. As there are only 12 producers of Bitto Storico, you can imagine it being hard to come by.

The cost is about \$150 per pound or about \$350 per kilogram.

But it is worth the trip and the price.

Panna Cotta ai Frutti di Bosco



Panna cotta is a type of pudding made with cream and gelatin and can be flavored in a variety of ways.

This dessert is wonderful to make during the warmer months as it is very light and refreshing, and it is one of my favorite desserts to make when entertaining as it needs to be prepared ahead of time to allow it to set. Any dish that you can make ahead of time when having guests over is a winner in my mind!

We doubled this recipe when we made it since we had a large group for dinner, but this recipe serves four.

Panna Cotta ai Frutti di Bosco



Servings: 4



Preparation Time:
15 minutes



Cooking Time:
20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 Teaspoons Unflavored Gelatin
- 3 Tablespoons Cold Water
- 1 1/2 Pounds Frozen Mixed Berries, Thawed & Divided
- 1 Cup Sugar
- 1/2 Cup Whole Milk
- 1 Cup Heavy Cream

TOPPINGS

- Berries From Above
- 1 Cup Heavy Cream
- 1 Teaspoon Unflavored Gelatin
- 2 Tablespoons Cold Water

GARNISH

- Fresh Berries
- Small Mint Leaves

PROCEDURE

- Combine the berries and sugar in a saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat.
- Cook, mashing the berries with a spoon until syrupy, about 10 minutes.
- While the berries are cooking, place the cold water in a small bowl, then sprinkle the gelatin on top and let stand for five minutes.
- Strain the berry mixture through a fine strainer, removing 1 cup of berry juice to use for the topping.
- Return the berry mixture to the pot along with the milk and heat until small bubbles form along the edges.
- Add the gelatin mixture and whisk until completely dissolved.
- Remove from the heat and stir in the heavy cream, stirring until blended.
- Pour the mixture into individual ramekins or glasses, and refrigerate for three hours.
- Once the panna cotta has begun to set, make the topping.
- Place the water in a bowl and sprinkle the gelatin on top.
- Whip the cream until soft peaks form.
- Add 1/2 cup of the berry juice along with the softened gelatin and beat until blended.
- Spoon the topping on the panna cotta with a spoon or pastry bag and decorative tip.
- Refrigerate the panna cotta until the topping has set, another three hours or up to eight hours.
- To serve, spoon a little of the remaining berry syrup on top of each ramekin, then garnish with fresh berries and mint leaves as shown.

SWIMMING



ASK AN ITALY AG

Alice Marini
'25

From Italy to Aggieland - see what drives Alice Marini '25 to excel in the pool and the classroom.



Ask **An Italy Ag** - 12 Questions **Alice Marini '25**

1. Tell us a little about yourself. Where you grew up, what your interests were, family, pets what you do now?

A. Howdy, my name is Alice Marini, class '25! I was born in 2002 in Brescia, a beautiful city in Lombardy (Lombardia) in the North of Italy. However, I grew up and I'm still living in the small town of Bagnolo Mella. I love my town because everybody in my close family lives here so it is easy for me to see them often. My dad Marco and my mom Laura are my biggest supporters, they have always been by my side, and they always believed in me. I also have a little brother, his name is Francesco, he is 16 and he is a swimmer too. Also, my grandparents have always played an important role in my life. I am grateful to have them, and I couldn't imagine life without them. When I was younger, I used to have two water turtles, but I have no pets now. As a kid, I loved to go get gelato with my family and I was interested in learning new things, and I also loved the ocean and swimming. Drawing was also a big part of my childhood. My dad is an artist, he paints on canvas, and I've always admired him. Growing up, my interests didn't change much. I still love getting gelato and good food in general. I still love learning new things, in particular foreign languages and cultures. I love going to the beach (especially the ones in Sardinia) and watching sunsets. I love swimming, and it is also the main reason why I get the chance to become an Aggie. I don't draw much anymore, but I really like to take pictures because I believe they can hold memories.



2. Why did you choose to attend Texas A&M, what are you studying and why did you choose this field of study?

A. Before answering this question, I need to take a step back. When I was younger, I remember I had the "American dream". I loved the idea of going to the US and I was also amazed by the American swimmers. But I was always telling myself that the States were too expensive, they were just a dream. However, at the end of 2020, an Italian agency contacted me, telling me that I could have received a scholarship to go to the States to study in a college thanks to my swimming results and my grades at school. At the beginning I was not sure I wanted to accept, I was scared, and I was scared it was going to be too much to handle for me and for my family. But after a few days, my parents were telling me that going to the States was a once in a lifetime opportunity, so I accepted, and I started my commitment process. After two months during which I had to have video calls with 21 colleges, after having doubts and fears, I decided to commit to Texas A&M. My family helped me a lot during the process, my dad even printed me a map of the USA and he was placing the different colleges on it, by adding information, pros and cons about them. Texas A&M was my final decision for many reasons. The athletic history and the success that the swim team had in the past made me want to commit, because I could see from the results how swimmers were improving. Also, the security of the campus and the academic resources played an important role in picking Aggieland. In college I decided to pursue a Modern Languages (French) major with a double minor in Spanish and Tourism Management. I chose languages because I already had a good knowledge of them thanks to high school and I've always liked to learn foreign languages. I believe they are a very powerful tool and connector. I know we have online translators nowadays, but just being able to fully and independently immerse myself in a culture

made me want to continue studying languages. Another reason why I chose this academic path is that with the knowledge of different languages I can always work in different countries and have more opportunities around the world. I added the Tourism Management minor to my degree because I think it could be an interesting field to follow, in particular if you know four languages.

3. What is the hardest challenge you've had to overcome in your life?

A. The hardest challenge I've had to overcome so far is probably my freshman year in college. If I look back now, I realize that I was just 19 and I was starting a new life on the other side of the world away from my family. It was a brave decision, and I was really excited to start this adventure. The first month in Texas was filled with new things, practices, getting to know new friends, so I was almost overwhelmed by the excitement. Later during the semester, I started to feel homesick and knowing that I was not going back home for Christmas was making me feel even more lonely. I was also always tired; the hard practices were taking away all my energy and I was also struggling with some of my classes. Not being able to reach my academic and athletic goals was another challenge I had to face during that time. As a consequence, my mental and physical condition were not optimal. Even if my family was just behind a flat screen, they helped me, reminding me that if I was in Texas, it was because I deserved it and that I could find a way to stand up again. My sport psychologist also helped me through this period of my life. Having great teammates around me was also another factor that helped me not to give up, because at the end of freshman year I wanted to quit swimming. However, the motivation, the love for the sport and for Texas A&M gave me the strength to not give up and go back stronger than ever for sophomore year.

4. You are on the Texas A&M Swimming and Diving team but tell us how did you get into swimming?



A. Before even going to kindergarten, my dad used to take me to the swimming pool on Sundays. I don't remember much about those times at the pool, but my dad always tells me that I was always calm in the water. I've always been in touch with water. In kindergarten, with my school, we started to go to the pool in my town to have some swimming lessons. I clearly remember I was the only kid who was brave enough to go in the "big pool". The instructor later talked with my teacher and parents telling them that I should have tried to start swimming. It was 2008 when I started swimming. Since the beginning, my passion and love for the sport were big. Even if I was only 6 years old, I was not missing a single practice. On the contrary, if I had to skip a practice because I was not feeling good or I was sick, I would cry because I didn't want to miss the fun of swimming. I started later to have my idols such as Federica Pellegrini from Italy, Michael Phelps and Ryan Lochte from the US, and Katinka Hosszu from Hungary. I really wanted to be like them one day, I was a little girl with big dreams. Along my athletic journey, I had to face challenges, but at the same time this sport made me live short moments that will live forever in my heart, for example when I won the gold medal at the Junior Italian Championships in 2019. Swimming can be exhausting sometimes, because the practices are long and difficult. Sometimes it almost feels like the practices are not worth it. However, when you succeed in your event, you realize how worth your sacrifices were. And the sacrifices were not only mine. Until the end of middle school, my parents or my grandparents would have to drive me to the pool and sometimes we would get home around 8PM. Only at that time we would eat and then I would do my homework until midnight. With the start of high school, I had to get the train every morning at 6.53AM from my town to get to Cremona, the city where my high school and new club team were. And every day I would have to bike around the city for almost 3 miles to get to the pool and every day I would get home around 7PM. I don't want to sound negative, but swimming took time away from me, time for example to spend with friends or my family. But at the same time, swimming gave me a lot - new friends, emotions, experiences, resistance, patience, and gratefulness. This sport taught me a lot. So now, 16 years later, I can say that swimming can be defined as something bitter-sweet, but most importantly it is something that helped me grow and it helped me be who I am now. In addition, swimming also gave me the opportunity to come to the US and in particular to commit to Texas A&M. So, I'll always be grateful to my parents who gave me the chance to start swimming and I'll always be grateful to swimming for everything that it made me live.

5. What is your favorite Aggie Tradition?



A. It is difficult to only have one favorite tradition at Texas A&M. This is why I have two favorites - the Aggie Ring and Muster. I believe they fully represent what our university is about, with its unique values and traditions. The Aggie Ring is the symbol of the university and I love it because it connects me to every other Aggie around the world. In such a small object, such a strong power is held. It makes me feel like I have a family everywhere I go, because Aggies are everywhere. On the other hand, I love Muster for the respect and connection that this tradition shows. I've attended two Muster so far and it is a unique experience. During the whole ceremony I had goosebumps, because the spirit of Aggieland is palpable and you feel like being part of something bigger than yourself and it feels like the Aggies who are being remembered are, in fact, there.





6. What do you miss most about Italy when you are in Aggieland? And what do you miss most about Aggieland when you are in Italy?

A. When I am in Aggieland the things I miss most about Italy is being close to my family and the good food. just miss the simplicity of my Italian life, with the lunches at home or at my grandparents, the tiny streets with pebble stones that make my bike rattle, and of course I miss the Saturday pizza nights at my grandma's house and the gelato. Of course, I also miss the hugs and love from my family and relatives. On the other hand, when I am in Italy the thing, I miss most about Aggieland is being with my teammates. I just spend so much time with them during the year that when I am home, I just feel like something is missing. Having someone to race or to talk to during every single practice, going to get an iced coffee and do homework together, hanging out with my teammates, these are the things I miss the most.



7. WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING A STUDENT ATHLETE, WHAT'S HARD, WHAT COMES EASY, WHAT SURPRISES YOU?

A. Being a student athlete requires a lot of sacrifices, hard work, resistance, and will to do. However, I believe that even if it is a challenge, it is also an experience that not many people get to experience, so I'm always grateful to be one. The hardest thing is probably waking up at 5.20 in the morning, knowing that you have a two hour practice at 6, a weights session, classes, and another two hour practice later in the afternoon. I know it might sound weird, but to me it comes easy to organize myself even if I have a lot going on during the week. What surprises me the most is how I can go through hard practices, and just in general going through such a tough week for nine months straight.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE AMERICAN FOOD AND WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ITALIAN MEAL?

A. My favorite American food is the food you can get for brunch. I just love having steaming hot banana and pecan pancakes with maple syrup and some avocado toast with eggs and bacon. In Italy we don't really have the idea of brunch, so whenever I'm home I miss going to Snooze or First Watch. I know this answer is typical, but my favorite Italian food is pizza. I love the fresh taste of the tomato sauce combined with the tasty mozzarella and the quality ingredients.





"Receiving the Aggie Ring is like receiving a part of Texas A&M, I know I was, I am, and I will always be an Aggie, no matter where I go."



9. What are your plans after graduation?

A. This is a question I've been asked a lot in the past few months. Unfortunately, I still don't have a specific plan after graduation. However, I know I would be open to having work experience in the US. If not, I would like to find a job in Italy or in Europe, preferably in the tourism industry, that allows me to travel and that keeps me in touch with the US.

10. What was it like when you received your Aggie Ring?

A. I've been dreaming about the Aggie Ring since day one. As soon as I discovered this tradition, I was already excited to do good in school to get it. I got mine in April 2024 and it was such a good day. My family couldn't be there unfortunately (even though I video called them when I got the Ring), but the family I found in Aggieland was. I asked my teammate and friend Kaitlyn if her father, an Aggie as well, could give me the ring since they are a second family for me. I can't really put into words how I felt that day, but I was proud of myself and of the hard work that paid off. Receiving the Aggie Ring is like receiving a part of Texas A&M, I know I was, I am, and I will always be an Aggie, no matter where I go.

11. If you could go back in time and give your younger self one piece of advice before coming to Texas A&M what would it be?

A. If I could go back in time and give my younger self one piece of advice before coming to Texas A&M would enjoy every moment. Sometimes we take things for granted, but in life we get things because we worked hard and we pursued them with all our heart. Another piece of advice would be to be strong, because challenges would occasionally get in your way, but from the mistakes and challenges we can learn a lot. The last piece of advice would be to try to go beyond your limits. It is important not to be scared to fail if you know you tried with your whole heart and abilities.



12. TAKE SIDES – WITH THIS QUESTION YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE YOUR PREFERENCE BETWEEN THE FOLLOWING DICHOTOMIES. THE BOLD AND MAROON COLORED ARE ALICE '25 SELECTIONS:

- Pasta or **Pizza?**
- **Rome** or Milan?
- **Aggie Football** or European Soccer?
- Ice cream or **Gelato?**
- Facebook or **Instagram?**
- **Study in the library** or study in your room?
- Energy drink or **Caffe?**
- **Travel by train** or travel by bus?
- Guided tour or **explore on your own?**
- Sunrise hike or **sunset watching?**
- **Wired headphones** or wireless earbuds?
- **Home cooked meal** or Restaurant Reservation?
- Would you rather **meet your great-great grandparents** or meet your great-great grandchildren?
- **Swimming in a pool** or swimming in the ocean?
- **Vanilla** or chocolate?
- Hotel or **Airbnb?**
- **Historical sites** or Modern attractions?
- **Shopping in-store** or buying things online?
- **Hiring a stunt double** or doing the stunts on your own?
- **Meet your favorite singer** or favorite actor?

You didn't come this far, to only come this far.



AGGIE SPORTS UPDATE



24 Aggies Competing in Paris 2024 Olympics

The athletes and coaches consist of current and former students and represent at least eight different countries.

[Click for more information](#)

Two-Time Texas A&M All-American Tony Franklin Named to SWC Hall of Fame

Franklin will be inducted into the Southwest Conference Hall of Fame on August 13 at the Texas Sports Hall of Fame.

[Click for more information](#)

Texas A&M Names Michael Earley as Head Baseball Coach

Michael Earley, former Texas A&M hitting coach, has been named the 21st head baseball coach at Texas A&M.

[Click for more information](#)



HEADLINES

GENERAL: [TAMU Lands Record 101 Aggies on 1st SEC Academic Honor Roll](#)

FOOTBALL: [Three Aggies Earn Preseason All-SEC Accolades](#)

VOLLEYBALL: [TAMU Head Coach Morrison Leads USA U19s to NORCECA Title](#)

SWIMMING & DIVING: [Eight Aggies Set for Competition at Paris Games](#)

SOCCER (W): [‘Aggie Soccer Hour’ Returns August 20 at Rudy’s BBQ](#)

FOOTBALL: [Texas A&M Football Season Tickets Sold Out for 2024](#)

EQUESTRIAN: [Equestrian Announces 2024-25 Schedule](#)



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DELICIOUS

CALABRIAN PEPPER PESTO GRILLED CHICKEN

As summer winds down
August is a perfect
time for grilling

This easy marinade uses Calabrian chili pepper pesto, which can be found online or at the grocery store and fresh limes, garlic, and olive oil. The limes help to tenderize the chicken and add brightness, while the chili pepper pesto adds a gentle heat.

BUON
APPETITO



Calabrian Pepper Pesto Grilled Chicken



4 servings



3 hours prep
time



10 minutes
cook time

INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 Pounds Boneless, Skinless Chicken
Thighs

1/4 Cup Fresh Lime Juice

1/3 Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

3 Tablespoons Fresh Parsley Leaves,
Chopped

2 to 3 Tablespoons Calabrian Chili Pepper
Pesto (Depending On Desired Spice)

4 Garlic Cloves, Minced

Salt & Pepper To Taste

Lime Wedges For Serving

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl or casserole dish, mix together the lime juice, olive oil, parsley, chili pesto, garlic, salt and pepper.
2. Add the chicken and stir to coat.
3. Cover and marinate for at least 3 hours.
4. Preheat the grill to medium high heat, and grill the chicken turning once, brushing the marinade on the thighs as it cooks. (About 5 minutes per side)
5. Once the chicken is golden brown, serve immediately with lime wedges.



DISCOVER THE ENCHANTMENT OF CHIENA DI CAPAGNA'S WATER FESTIVAL



Nestled in the heart of southern Italy, the picturesque town of Chiena di Capagna comes alive each summer with a unique and refreshing celebration – the Water Festival, or "La Chiena." This vibrant event, steeped in tradition and community spirit, transforms the town's streets into flowing rivers, creating an unforgettable experience for locals and visitors alike.



A Tradition Rooted in History

La Chiena has been a cherished tradition in Chiena di Capagna for centuries. Its origins date back to the early days of the town's history, when residents would divert the Tenza River's waters into the streets to clean and cool the town during the scorching summer months. Over time, this practical solution evolved into a joyful festival, celebrated with fervor and enthusiasm.

The Festival's Highlights

The Water Festival typically takes place in July and August, attracting thousands of visitors who come to immerse themselves in the festivities. Here's what you can expect:

THE FESTIVAL'S HIGHLIGHTS

1. The Water Parade: The festival kicks off with a grand parade, featuring beautifully decorated floats, lively music, and traditional dancers. As the parade winds its way through the town, the streets gradually fill with water, setting the stage for the main event.

2. Water Fights: One of the most anticipated activities is the friendly water fights. Participants of all ages arm themselves with buckets, water guns, and anything else that can hold water, engaging in playful battles that leave everyone soaked and smiling. It's a perfect way to beat the summer heat and bond with friends and strangers alike.

3. Music and Dance: Throughout the festival, the air is filled with the sounds of traditional Italian music and contemporary tunes. Local bands and performers take to the streets, encouraging everyone to dance and revel in the joyous atmosphere.

4. Street Food Delights: No Italian festival would be complete without a feast. Street vendors offer a delectable array of local delicacies, from savory arancini and pizza to sweet gelato and pastries. Savoring these treats while strolling through the water-filled streets is an experience to remember.

5. Nighttime Celebrations: As the sun sets, the festival takes on a magical quality. The town is illuminated with colorful lights, and the reflections in the water create a mesmerizing scene. Nighttime concerts and performances add to the enchantment, making the evenings just as lively and enjoyable as the days.





A Community Affair

La Chiena is more than just a festival; it's a celebration of community and togetherness. The residents of Chiena di Capagna take great pride in their heritage, and this festival serves as a reminder of their shared history and culture. It's a time when families come together, old friends reunite, and new friendships are forged.



Plan Your Visit

If you're planning a trip to Italy, make sure to include Chiena di Capagna's Water Festival in your itinerary. The festival typically runs from mid-July to mid-August, with specific dates and events varying each year. To make the most of your visit, consider staying in one of the charming local accommodations and exploring the town's historic sites and natural beauty.

Experience the Magic

The Water Festival in Chiena di Capagna is a celebration like no other, offering a unique blend of tradition, fun, and community spirit. Whether you're splashing through the streets, dancing to lively music, or savoring delicious Italian cuisine, you're sure to create lasting memories at this enchanting event. Join the locals in celebrating La Chiena and discover the true essence of Italian summer festivities.



Texas

TIDBITS

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



Answer 1: Padre Island. Named after Father José Nicolás Ballí, the 113-mile-long island is the longest barrier island in the world. Since 1964, the island has been divided by the artificial Port Mansfield Channel about 30 miles north of the southern tip.

[\(See the Full Story\)](#)

Answer 2: Luling. The annual festival, which began in 1954, includes a seed-spitting contest and prizes for the largest watermelon. The 4-day event regularly draws around 30,000 visitors to the town of about 5,000.

[\(See his Story\)](#)

Answer 3: 3,233 miles, the most of any state in the country.

[\(Click here for more details\)](#)

Answer 4: Howard Hughes. Born in Houston in 1905, Hughes inherited his father's fortune at the age of 18, going on to produce hit films like *Hell's Angels* and *Scarface* before embarking on an aviation career that included building the largest float plane in existence—the H-4 Hercules, dubbed the “Spruce Goose” by critics—and flying around the world in a modified Lockheed 14 in three days, 19 hours, and 17 minutes between July 10 and 14, 1938.

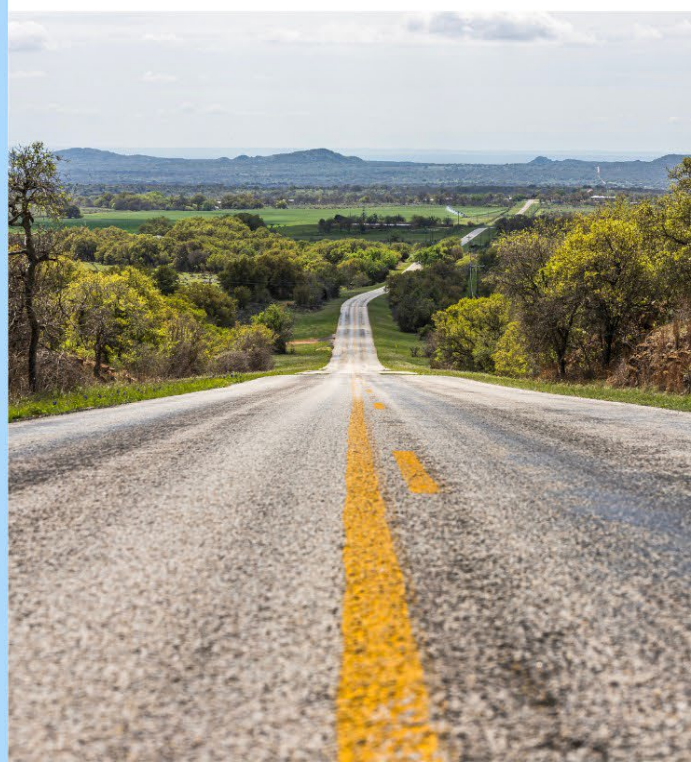
[\(See the Full Story\)](#)

QUESTION 1: WHAT IS THE LARGEST ISLAND IN TEXAS?

Question 2: Question: What town in Texas is known for its annual “watermelon thump”?

Question 3: How many miles of interstate highways does Texas have?

Question 4: What Texas-born film producer and aviation enthusiast broke the speed record for flying around the world in 1938?





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 1,400 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*.

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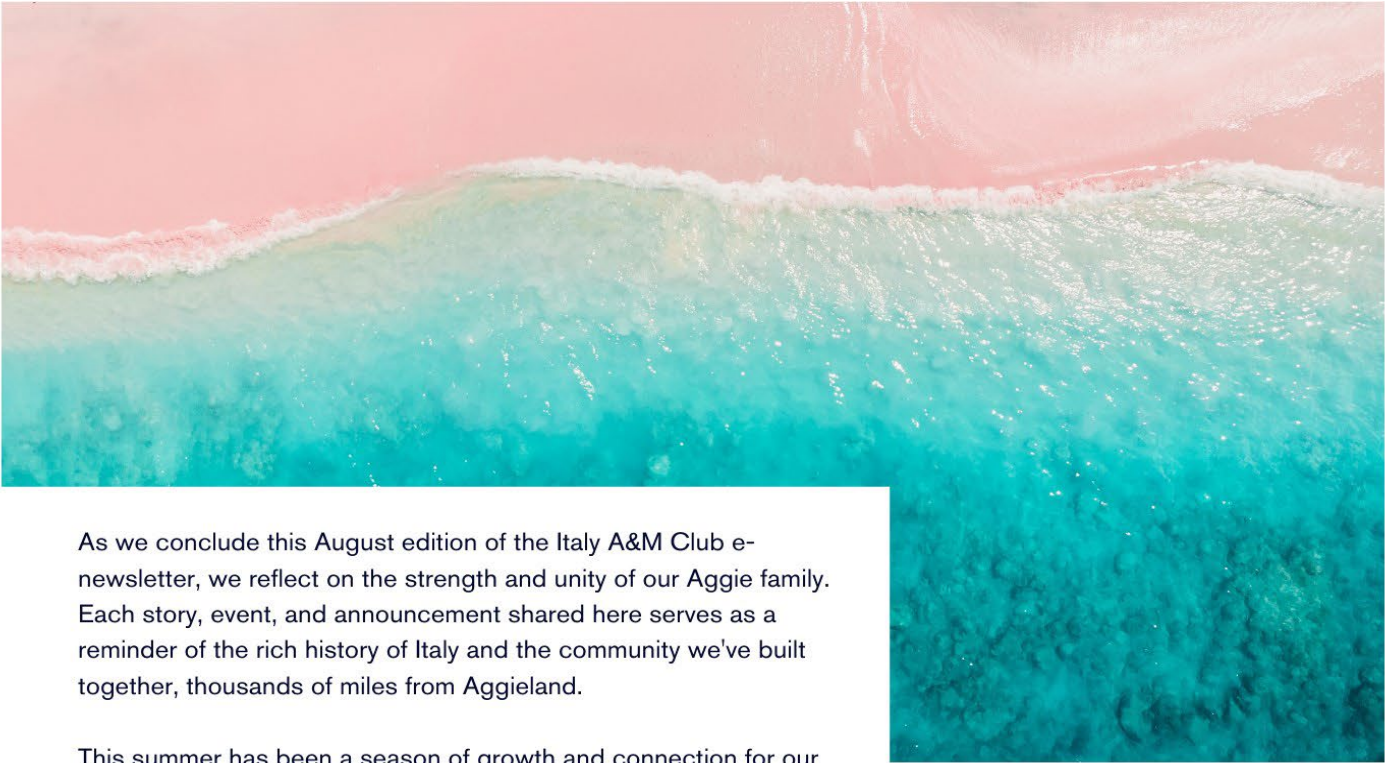
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PAROLE FINALI



As we conclude this August edition of the Italy A&M Club e-newsletter, we reflect on the strength and unity of our Aggie family. Each story, event, and announcement shared here serves as a reminder of the rich history of Italy and the community we've built together, thousands of miles from Aggieland.

This summer has been a season of growth and connection for our club. From adding new members to our Adopt-A-Highway program. Whether through our shared experiences in Italy's beautiful regions, our collective efforts in professional and personal development, or simply our joy in gathering as a community, we've demonstrated the true spirit of the Aggie network.

Looking ahead, we have much to be excited about. The upcoming months promise new opportunities to engage, learn, and celebrate Italy and Texas A&M. We encourage you to stay connected and continue contributing to the club's success. Your involvement is the heartbeat of our community, and we are grateful for each one of you.

Thank you for being a part of the Italy A&M Club. Together, we make a difference and uphold the values that define us as Aggies. Let's carry this momentum forward, supporting one another and embracing the adventures that lie ahead.

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.