Delizia! - The Epic History of the Italians and Their Food

Buon appetito! Everyone loves Italian food. But how did the Italians come to eat so well? The answer lies amid the vibrant beauty of Italy's historic cities. For a thousand years, they have been magnets for everything that makes for great eating: ingredients, talent, money, and power. Italian food is city food. From the bustle of medieval Milan's marketplace to the banqueting halls of Renaissance Ferrara; from street stalls in the putrid alleyways of nineteenth-century Naples to the noisy trattorie of postwar Rome: in rich slices of urban life, historian and master storyteller John Dickie shows how taste, creativity, and civic pride blended with princely arrogance, political violence, and dark intrigue to create the world's favorite cuisine. Delizia! is much more than a history of Italian food. It is a history of Italy told through the flavors and character of its cities. A dynamic chronicle that is full of surprises, Delizia! draws back the curtain on much that was unknown about Italian food and exposes the long-held canards. It interprets the ancient Arabic map that tells of pasta's true origins, and shows that Marco Polo did not introduce spaghetti to the Italians, as is often thought, but did have a big influence on making pasta a part of the American diet. It seeks out the medieval recipes that reveal Italy's long love affair with exotic spices, and introduces the great Renaissance cookery writer who plotted to murder the Pope even as he detailed the aphrodisiac qualities of his ingredients. It moves from the opulent theater of a Renaissance wedding banquet, with its gargantuan ten-course menu comprising hundreds of separate dishes, to the thin soups and bland polentas that would eventually force millions to emigrate to the New World. It shows how early pizzas were disgusting and why Mussolini championed risotto. Most important, it explains the origins and growth of the world's greatest urban food culture. With its delectable mix of vivid storytelling, groundbreaking research, and shrewd analysis, Delizia! is as appetizing as the dishes it describes. This passionate account of Italy's civilization of the table will satisfy foodies, history buffs, Italophiles, travelers, students -- and anyone who loves a well-told tale.

The Craft - How the Freemasons Made the Modern World

Insiders call it the Craft. Founded in London in 1717 as a way of binding men in fellowship, Freemasonry proved so addictive that within two decades it had spread across the globe. Masonic influence became pervasive. Under George Washington, the Craft became a creed for the new American nation. Masonic networks held the British empire together. Under Napoleon, the Craft became a tool of authoritarianism and then a cover for revolutionary conspiracy. Both the Mormon Church and the Sicilian mafia owe their origins to Freemasonry. Yet the Masons were as feared as they were influential. In the eyes of the Catholic Church, Freemasonry has always been a den of devil-worshippers. For Hitler, Mussolini and Franco, the Lodges spread the diseases of pacifism, socialism and Jewish influence, so had to be crushed. Freemasonry's story yokes together Winston Churchill and Walt Disney; Wolfgang Mozart and Shaquille O'Neal; Benjamin Franklin and Buzz Aldrin; Rudyard Kipling and 'Buffalo Bill' Cody; Duke Ellington and the Duke of Wellington. John Dickie's The Craft is an enthralling exploration of a the world's most famous and misunderstood secret brotherhood, a movement that not only helped to forge modern society, but has substantial contemporary influence, with 400,000
members in Britain, over a million in the USA, and around six million across the world.

**Italian Identity in the Kitchen, or, Food and the Nation**

How regional Italian cuisine became the main ingredient in the nation's political and cultural development.

**Italian Cuisine - A Cultural History**

Italy, the country with a hundred cities and a thousand bell towers, is also the country with a hundred cuisines and a thousand recipes. Its great variety of culinary practices reflects a history long dominated by regionalism and political division, and has led to the common conception of Italian food as a mosaic of regional customs rather than a single tradition. Nonetheless, this magnificent new book demonstrates the development of a distinctive, unified culinary tradition throughout the Italian peninsula. Alberto Capatti and Massimo Montanari uncover a network of culinary customs, food lore, and cooking practices, dating back as far as the Middle Ages, that are identifiably Italian: o Italians used forks 300 years before other Europeans, possibly because they were needed to handle pasta, which is slippery and dangerously hot. o Italians invented the practice of chilling drinks and may have invented ice cream. o Italian culinary practice influenced the rest of Europe to place more emphasis on vegetables and less on meat. o Salad was a distinctive aspect of the Italian meal as early as the sixteenth century. The authors focus on culinary developments in the late medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque eras, aided by a wealth of cookbooks produced throughout the early modern period. They show how Italy's culinary identities emerged over the course of the centuries through an exchange of information and techniques among geographical regions and social classes. Though temporally, spatially, and socially diverse, these cuisines refer to a common experience that can be described as Italian. Thematically organized around key issues in culinary history and beautifully illustrated, Italian Cuisine is a rich history of the ingredients, dishes, techniques, and social customs behind the Italian food we know and love today.

**Blood Brotherhoods - A History of Italy's Three Mafias**

MAFIA. CAMORRA. 'NDRANGHETA. The Sicilian mafia, known as Cosa Nostra, is far from being Italy's only dangerous criminal fraternity. The country hosts two other major mafias: the camorra from Naples; and, from the poor and isolated region of Calabria, the mysterious 'ndrangheta, which has now risen to become the most powerful mob group active today. Since they emerged, the mafias have all corrupted Italy's institutions, drastically curtailed the life-chances of its citizens, evaded justice, and set up their own self-interested meddling as an alternative to the courts. Yet each of these brotherhoods has its own methods, its own dark rituals, its own style of ferocity. Each is uniquely adapted to corrupt and exploit its own specific environment, as it collaborates with, learns from, and goes to war with the other mafias. Today, the shadow of organized crime hangs over a country racked by debt, political paralysis, and widespread corruption. The 'ndrangheta controls much of Europe's wholesale cocaine trade and, by some estimates, 3 percent of Italy's total GDP. Blood Brotherhoods traces the origins of this national malaise back to Italy's roots as a united country in the nineteenth century, and
shows how political violence incubated underworld sects among the lemon groves of Palermo, the fetid slums of Naples, and the harsh mountain villages of Calabria. Blood Brotherhoods is a book of breathtaking ambition, tracing for the first time the interlocking story of all three mafias from their origins to the present day. John Dickie is recognized in Italy as one of the foremost historians of organized crime. In these pages, he blends archival detective work, passionate narrative, and shrewd analysis to bring a unique criminal ecosystem—and the three terrifying criminal brotherhoods that have evolved within it—to life on the page.

**How Italian Food Conquered the World**

Not so long ago, Italian food was regarded as a poor man's gruel—little more than pizza, macaroni with sauce, and red wines in a box. Here, John Mariani shows how the Italian immigrants to America created, through perseverance and sheer necessity, an Italian-American food culture, and how it became a global obsession. The book begins with the Greek, Roman, and Middle Eastern culinary traditions before the boot-shaped peninsula was even called "Italy," then takes readers on a journey through Europe and across the ocean to America alongside the poor but hopeful Italian immigrants who slowly but surely won over the hearts and minds of Americans by way of their stomachs. Featuring evil villains such as the Atkins diet and French chefs, this is a rollicking tale of how Italian cuisine rose to its place as the most beloved fare in the world, through the lives of the people who led the charge. With savory anecdotes from these top chefs and restaurateurs: - Mario Batali - Danny Meyer - Tony Mantuano - Michael Chiarello - Giada de Laurentiis - Giuseppe Cipriani - Nigella Lawson And the trials and triumphs of these restaurants: - Da Silvano - Spiaggia - Bottega - Union Square Cafe - Maialino - Rao's - Babbo - Il Cantinori

**Cosa Nostra: A History of the Sicilian Mafia**

The Italian-American mafia has its roots in a mysterious and powerful criminal network in Sicily. While the mythology of the mafia has been widely celebrated in American culture, the true origins of its rituals, laws, and methods have never actually been revealed. John Dickie uses startling new research to expose the secrets of the Sicilian mafia, providing a fascinating account that is more violent, frightening, and darkly comic than anything conceived in popular movies and novels. How did the Sicilian mafia begin? How did it achieve its powerful grip in Italy and America? How does it operate today? From the mafia's origins in the 1860s to its current tense relationship with the Berlusconi government, Cosa Nostra takes us to the inner sanctum where few have dared to go before. This is an important work of history and a revelation for anyone who ever wondered what it means to be "made" in the mob.

**Al Dente - A History of Food in Italy**

Spaghetti with meatballs, fettuccine alfredo, margherita pizzas, ricotta and parmesan cheeses—we have Italy to thank for some of our favorite comfort foods. Home to a dazzling array of wines, cheese, breads, vegetables, and salamis, Italy has become a mecca for foodies who flock to its pizzerias, gelateries, and family-style and Michelin-starred restaurants. Taking readers across the country's regions and beyond in the first book in Reaktion's new Foods and
Nations series, Al Dente explores our obsession with Italian food and how the country’s cuisine became what it is today. Fabio Parasecoli discovers that for centuries, southern Mediterranean countries such as Italy fought against food scarcity, wars, invasions, and an unfavorable agricultural environment. Lacking in meat and dairy, Italy developed foodways that depended on grains, legumes, and vegetables until a stronger economy in the late 1950s allowed the majority of Italians to afford a more diverse diet. Parasecoli elucidates how the last half century has seen new packaging, conservation techniques, industrial mass production, and more sophisticated systems of transportation and distribution, bringing about profound changes in how the country’s population thought about food. He also reveals that much of Italy’s culinary reputation hinged on the world’s discovery of it as a healthy eating model, which has led to the prevalence of high-end Italian restaurants in major cities around the globe. Including historical recipes for delicious Italian dishes to enjoy alongside a glass of crisp Chianti, Al Dente is a fascinating survey of this country’s cuisine that sheds new light on why we should always leave the gun and take the cannoli.

**The Oxford Companion to Italian Food**

A comprehensive food reference covers all aspects of the history and culture of Italian cuisine, including dishes, ingredients, cooking methods, implements, regional specialties, the appeal of Italian cuisine, and outside culinary influences.

**Pomodoro! - A History of the Tomato in Italy**

"Frankly, I am amazed that no one has already written this book, It is a fascinating topic, and David Gentilcore does it justice, covering five hundred years in scrutinizing detail. There is probably no food so readily associated with Italy than the tomato, and yet its origin is in the Americas." KEN ALBALA, University of the Pacific, author of Beans: A History --