

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Eataly in LA

Elisa Leonelli · Wednesday, November 1st, 2017

I had visited Eataly (Eat-Italy), the Italian marketplace in New York, seven years ago on November 4, 2010, not long after it opened on August 31st, and I was blown away. This huge collection of food shops and restaurants covered a large square city block at 200 Fifth Avenue and 23rd Street.

Other locations opened in Rome (2012), Chicago (2013), Boston (2016) and finally they are opening in Los Angeles at the newly remodeled Century City mall on Friday November 3, 2017, at 6pm.



Il Gelato. Eataly, Los Angeles (c) Elisa Leonelli

Eataly was founded in Torino, Italy by Oscar Farinetti in 2007, its US locations in partnership with Italian-American chef Mario Batali. Both hosted the LA press preview last Friday October 27.

Farinetti draws a rough map of the boot-shaped Italian peninsula on a board, talks about the great biodiversity of his country, how Eataly is a combination of market, school, restaurants, its motto “Eat. Shop. Learn.”



Lidia Bastianich. Eataly, Los Angeles (c) Elisa Leonelli

The cooking school (scuola) is lead by partner Lidia Bastianich; she explains that students will get to eat the food they prepared, accompanied by wine tasting, and that the fall lessons will be about pasta.

Another way to learn about homemade Italian pasta is through online classes by Craftsy, that include tortellini aka cappelletti from Modena.

A Eataly restaurant called Pasta fresca di Gragnano, displays a quote by Federico Fellini (born in Rimini, Emilia Romagna): “Life is a combination of magic and pasta.”

Batali reveals when I ask that the theme of their first Eataly in Manhattan was “doubt, we didn’t know if we were going to make it,” the second New York location by the World Trade Center (opened August 11, 2016) was dedicated to bread, and Los Angeles to water, because they installed a system to collect and recycle water.



Fulvio Marino, Mario Batali. Eataly, Los Angeles (c) Elisa Leonelli

The panetteria (bakery) by Fulvio Marino sells breads freshly baked daily in a wood oven after the dough has been left to rise for 24 hours, and pizza “alla pala” served on a wooden paddle, a street food from Rome.

Another food station offers [panigacci](#), a bread from the Tuscan town of Podenzana, made simply with flour, water and salt, no yeast, and baked inside terracotta bowls, then folded and filled with cheeses and salumi. I taste one with prosciutto and it reminds me of [piadina](#) from my region, Emilia-Romagna.

The Italian food company [Ferrarini](#), selling products from the provinces of Modena, Parma and Reggio Emilia, offers samples of their prosciutto and salami from Parma. I’ve been a regular at their [Café](#) since it opened in Beverly Hills in 2012; I love their prosciutto cotto, Italian-style cooked ham, that tastes very different from American baked ham.



Rossopomodoro, Eataly, Los Angeles (c) Elisa Leonelli

Then Mario leads us to taste Margherita pizza from [Rossopomodoro](#); he clarifies that authentic Neapolitan pizza, baked at 900 degrees Fahrenheit, has a soft dough with burnt puffy edges.

Finally we visit the Wine store (that California law allows to be inside Eataly with the food, which is not permitted in New York), where we are given tastings of a white Vespa Bianco from the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, and a red Barolo Fontanafredda produced by the Farinetti family. I ask and I’m delighted to find out that they also carry many varieties of Lambrusco, the sparkling dry red wine from Modena, and even Nocino, a liqueur made from green walnuts. For more about my hometown and its culinary specialties, please read “[Italian bread, Modena-style.](#)”



Lavazza Caffé. Eataly, Los Angeles (c) Elisa Leonelli

Dulcis in fundo, the tour ends with tiramisu and espresso, as it had started with a tasting of gelato fior di latte (sweet milk ice cream), and a coffee specialty from Torino -Bicerin, a mixture of espresso, chocolate and cream- from the Lavazza bar by the entrance on the lower level. You may read about my loyalty to Lavazza coffee in the article “[Chocolate on Robertson](#)” published in our neighborhood Reynier Village Blog.

Eataly will be open daily from 8am to 11pm. 10250 Santa Monica Blvd, Los Angeles, 90067 (213) 310-8000.

P.S. If you travel to Italy or live there, visit FICO (cool) [Eataly World](#) agri-food park, opening November 15, 2017 near Bologna.

Photos by Elisa Leonelli

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