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Antica Dolceria Bonajuto, Modica's Chocolate and More

Katia Amore | Thursday, February 26, 2015 - 20:00

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Modica's chocolate is as Baroque as the city's architecture. It is rich, dramatic, unabashedly opulent —and unique. There are many excellent chocolate makers in Modica, but Antica Dolceria Bonajuto is the best one and is now regarded as an institution in town.

We love their dark grainy chocolate and all the other incredible treats you can find in this little alley off Corso Umberto I in Modica.

If a stop at Maria Grammatico's Pasticceria in Erice is a must when touring Western Sicily, a visit to Antica Dolceria Bonajuto cannot miss on the perfect itinerary of the South-Eastern corner of the island.

Founded in 1880 by Francesco Bonajuto who had learned the art of pastry making by his father, it went on to win a gold medal for its confections at an exhibition in Rome in the early 20th century. A hundred years later, the wooden-panelled shop still makes heavenly award winning cinnamon, vanilla and chilli chocolate in true Aztec style.

An ancient tradition from the New World

Only in Modica, chocolate is still made with an old technique without conching, tempering or adding any extra fat. The cocoa mass is worked at a low temperature with caster sugar and spices. With the heat never getting over 45 C°, the sugar's crystals do not melt, resulting in a grainy, dull brown, highly textured chocolate. The origins of this unusual recipe are ancient and linked with the conquest of the New World. The Spanish, who once ruled over Sicily, introduced this chocolate-making technique, which they had learned from the Aztecs, to the county of Modica.

Today, this production method has vanished from virtually anywhere else in the western world, but it

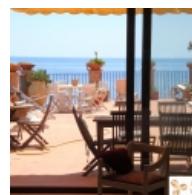
<http://www.italymagazine.com/featured-story/antica-dolceria-bonajuto-modicas-chocolate-and-more>

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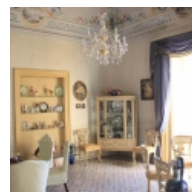
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5 Bedrooms
€ 230,000



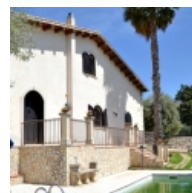
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260 m²
4 Bedrooms
€ 850,000



Town - City Home in Modica, Val di Noto

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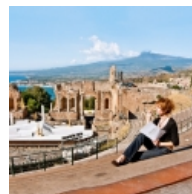
remains alive in Modica—even though the cocoa mass is now worked in a modern raffinatrice rather than the Aztecs' metate stone slab (mortar). Like in ancient Mexico, chocolate is traditionally flavoured with chilli, cinnamon or vanilla, though Antica Dolceria Bonajuto has introduced many other flavours, from nutmeg, to white pepper, from cardamom to salt. Preserving traditional recipes does not stop them from researching new ideas and tastes.

Sweet Past, Present and Future

As custodians of such important cultural heritage, Franco and Pierpaolo Ruta are proud of the way in which they have managed to keep this important tradition going making it famous all over the world. The family history is very fascinating too.

Francesco Bonajuto and his wife did not have children, but they were known in town for helping the community as much as they could at a time when Sicily was extremely poor. When he died, his wife adopted a girl they had helped during those years.

She married Francesco's best 'student', who had started working at the dolceria when he was just five years old learning all the Bonajuto's secrets. It is thanks to the love for this young couple, Franco's mom and dad, that Francesco and his wife saved the dolceria and the recipes of such wonderful



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delights we can still taste today.

This is why Franco and Pierpaolo care so much about making everyone taste the many other wonderful treats the dolceria has been making for decades: Qubaita and Aranciata, a sesame seeds nougat and an orange peel and honey delicacy of arab origin, Nucatoli an S shaped biscuits filled with almonds, honey, dried figs and quince



jam, Dolcetti da riposto small marzipan morsels to have with rosolio, 'Mpanatigghi, pastry stuffed with an incredible mixture of ground meat (beef fillet), chocolate and a mixture of spices, almond biscuits, cannoli as well as the latest creations like Maris, an interesting chocolate with tuna row, seaweeds and white chocolate.



We have only a couple of suggestions for you, keep room for some of these specialties in your luggage or ask them to ship them for you. Family and friends love it and think about it, you are not shipping just a sweet, you are shipping an edible piece of history!

Topic: Made In Italy Antica Dolceria Bonajuto Food + Wine

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