

Everyone is Italian this week: Lively festival continues through the weekend

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The lively and colourful Italian Week is in full swing and continues through this weekend, when Preston Street closes to traffic at certain times. On tap will be live music including opera, a car parade and vintage car show, soccer, bicycle racing, dancing and delectable food offered by restaurants and other vendors Friday from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m., Saturday from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m., and Sunday from noon to midnight.

In the middle of all the excitement, a hand-painted cart at Preston and Louisa streets will be offering delicious espresso, cappuccino, and latte mokaccino coffee under the name of **Francesco's Coffee Company Inc.**

Pietro Comino is the owner of **Francesco's coffee** shop, which he recently opened at 33 Winona St. (behind Mrs. Tiggy Winkles store on Richmond Road in Westboro). The logo and name honours his grandfather Francesco, who nearly 100 years ago operated a shop in northern Italy selling coffee. Later, he roasted his own beans using a hand-cranked roaster with a gas burner.

Mr. Comino says he can still remember the compelling fragrance of his grandfather's roasted coffee. Now, with his own coffee business, Mr. Comino is reminded every day of the pride and craftsmanship of his grandfather.

At the shop, Mr. Comino roasts the coffee every two days, then blends the beans. (Or, you may purchase green beans and/or a small machine to roast your own at home). His motto: Old World tradition, Old World pride, New World excellence.

He serves an espresso coffee without bitterness, with a creamy body, caramel scent and as much flavour as a cup of cocoa. To learn more, check www.francescoscoffee.com .

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It's interesting to see what some people are doing to support Alberta beef producers after a single cow was discovered last month to be infected with so-called "mad cow disease."

In fact, a dinner Monday for Prime Minister Jean Chretien and visiting Portuguese Prime Minister Jose Manuel Durao Barroso at the National Gallery was changed to feature Alberta beef instead of buffalo, which was originally on the menu.

A spokesman in Mr. Chretien's office said the prime minister is eager to show support for the Alberta beef industry. To

IMAGES



Brigitte Bouvier, The Ottawa Citizen
Pietro Comino, owner of Francesco's coffee shop in Westboro, carries on a coffee-making tradition started by his grandfather. (FPinfomart: Restricted, Canada.com: Restricted)

that end, Kurt Waldele, executive chef at the National Arts Centre, created the final menu using Triple-A grade Alberta beef fillet mignon.

Appetizers included Crispy Asparagus, Dim Sum Shrimp Wontons, Portuguese Fish Cakes, Tuna Tartare in Pappadam cups, Grilled Marinated Pepper and Feta Brochette, Air-Dried Beef with Melon, Fume of East Coast Fluke Flounder with Lobster Dumpling and Parmesan Crisp, Quebec Goat Cheese Cake with Oven-Reduced Tomatoes, Rocket Salad, Balsamic Drizzle.

For the entree, it was Grilled Filet Mignon of Alberta Beef with Niagara Merlot Reduction and Ragout of Ontario Mushrooms, Prince Edward Island Potato Cake with Sweet Potato Wafer and Melange of Spring Vegetables.

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The Royal Ottawa Health Care Foundation's Gala, including an auction, takes place tonight at the National Gallery. The evening begins with a cocktail reception offering duck and caribou canapes in the Tour Group Library at 6 p.m., followed by dinner in the Grand Hall.

The Rideau String quartet will perform during dinner with Juno nominees Bete and Stef, a Bossanova Jazz duo, performing after dinner. Tickets are \$275 and are still available by calling Carmen Sauve at 722-6521 ext. 6527. The funds raised will support mental health research.

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This Sunday is Do It For Dad, the fifth annual Civil Service CO-Op Father's Day breakfast in Anniversary Park, Carleton University, from 8:15 to 10:15 a.m. Last year, 400 plates of pancakes were served.

This year a plate of pancakes costs \$3 and all proceeds go to prostate cancer research at the Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre. More than \$350,000 has been raised in the past four years.

Breakfast begins after runners leave the starting gate for a five- and 10-kilometre event. Enbridge is providing the tents and grills while Doug Ward's Your Independent Grocers is providing the pancake fixings.

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The Vegetarian Dining Club is meeting at the Vietnam Palace, 819 Somerset St. W., Saturday at 6 p.m. Dinner includes spring rolls, hot and sour soup, mixed vegetables on noodles, fried tofu with black bean sauce, sauteed vegetables on a sizzling hot plate, and deep-fried banana and ice cream. Cost for members is \$22 including tax and tip; non-members is \$27. For reservations, call 825-0803 or e-mail vegetariandiningclub@rogers.com.

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Big Daddy's Crab Shack & Oyster Bar, 780 Baseline Rd., is spicing up summer with an authentic Louisiana-style lobster and corn boil during Bayou Festival this month until July 1. Former Ottawa Rough Rider Val Belcher, founder and chairman of Lone Star Cafe and Big Daddy's, will be on the patio tomorrow at 6 p.m. to preside over the lobster pot and demonstrate the art of Cajun cooking.

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Come to a fun cooking class with me June 19 and learn to make chilled mint pea soup, icy cold gazpacho, cool cucumber dill soup and frosty berry soup at Upstairs at Loblaws, Vanier, 100 McArthur Rd., from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Cost is \$25. To register, call 749-7100.

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A wine-tasting event to welcome summer takes place at Blasted Bottles, 1305 Wellington St., on June 19 from 4 to 8 p.m. Award-winning wines are from Kacaba Vineyards in the Niagara region, with a wide selection of cheeses and pates to complement the wines. For details call 761-5999, e-mail [info@blasted](mailto:info@blastedbottles.com)

[bottles.com](http://www.blastedbottles.com) or visit the Web site at <http://www.blastedbottles.com>.

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A reader requested the granola recipe (above) from the Green Door vegetarian restaurant, 198 Main St.

They were happy to provide it. Thank you.

Contact Gay Cook, 728-3253, fax 728-2285 or e-mail gay@gaycook.com or her Web site www.gaycook.com .

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Green Door's Granola

Makes about 6 cups (1.5 L)

- 3 1/2 cups (875 mL) regular rolled oats
- 3/4 cup (175 mL) almonds with skins, coarsely chopped
- 1/3 cup (75 mL) walnuts, chopped coarse
- 1/3 cup (75 mL) pecans, chopped coarse
- 1 teaspoon (5 mL) salt
- 1 teaspoon (5 mL) cinnamon
- 1/3 cup (75 mL) sucanat (natural, granulated sugar cane, at health food stores)
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) cold-pressed organic canola oil
- 1/3 cup (75 mL) lightly warmed rice syrup (natural sweetener with the consistency of molasses)

1. In a bowl, combine the oats, nuts, salt, cinnamon and sucanat.
2. In a separate small bowl, whisk together the oil and syrup. Stir into the dry ingredients and mix thoroughly.
3. Spread mixture evenly into two 9- by 13-inch (23- by 33-cm) pans, each lined with parchment paper. Do not spread the granola all the way to the sides.
4. Bake in preheated oven at 325F (160C) for 20 to 25 minutes. When done, granola should be golden brown at the edges and bubbly in the middle.

Illustration:

• Photo: Brigitte Bouvier, The Ottawa Citizen / Pietro Comino, owner of **Francesco's coffee** shop in Westboro, carries on a coffee-making tradition started by his grandfather.

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