

Fred Plotkin. Story of an Endless Love

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Interview with Fred Plotkin. Expert in Italian culture, especially food, wine and opera. The occasion was the celebration of the month dedicated to the Marche region in New York. Thursday evening, at La Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, Plotkin made our mind travel back to this wonderful Italian territory

He is American but we could say he is more Italian than Italians themselves. Fred Plotkin, an expert in Italian culture, especially food, wine and opera, in occasion of the celebration of the month dedicated to the Marche region in New York, made our mind travel back to this wonderful Italian territory and experience Marche's history, tradition, culture, food, architecture and music. On Thursday evening, at La Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò he delighted us with a speech about Marche revealing the best kept secrets about this region and its people, from the past until today.



From food to wine, from Rossini to Pavarotti, Plotkin seduced the participants with details, stories and personal experiences in such a wonderful region. The event, entitled Marche, Food and Opera: A Love Story with Fred Plotkin, ended with a special tasting of food and wine typical of the Marche region. After serving ourselves from the attractive buffet, we asked Mr. Plotkin to answer a couple of questions about what is special for him about Marche and in general about one of the loves of his life: Italy.

“The fact that this is a small region, with only about a million people, and inaccessible to many people, means that it has preserved many of the best qualities of what everyone loves about Italy,” said Plotkin. “It’s modern, but it also feels like once upon a time. You go out for the passeggiata, the cafes are beautiful, the food is not troubled by fancy alta cucina but is just delicious genuine food that comes from three kilometers away. So, the freshness of the food is unlike anything you find in other places.” While showing us his book about Italy, its regions with their own traditions and many other curiosities, you could feel his passion in the words used to talk about Italy. “I love almost everything Italian,” says Plotkin.

“There is a logic about Italy that is thousands of years old. And Italians, some of them, know the logic, but they don’t analyze it. I understand the logic and that’s what drove me to Italy.” According to such an amazing Italian expert, everything in Italy “is built on top of something else.” “Via Salaria is an explanation about how commerce happened, about how people moved from one place to another, how food customs developed, and throughout the entire country there is this logic, that is different from place to place but the foundation is the same.” However, says Plotkin, “I think Italy has been corrupted by Europeanization and Americanization. When they try to emulate things from outside the country, they corrupt the logic.” But, concludes, “I think even now we have more to learn from Italy than Italy has to learn from us. We need to better understand Italian logic to do things better.”

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