

## When Truffles Become a Family Story

Valeria Vinci (December 15, 2013)



Behind the great variety of products presented by la Rustichella, there is an old recipe belonging to Nonna Maria and Sergio Brugnoli's great determination to bring high quality Italian products to the rest of the world. This is an interview with his daughter, Francesca Brugnoli, who, along with the rest of the family, works hard at bringing the brand abroad.

Here we are again; this is the story of an Italian family and its products. This time the story is about truffles, delicious underground tubers, and the Brugnolis, a family that for generations has dedicated



its life to the commercialization of these fungi around the world.

Just like mushrooms, truffles live in symbiosis with the trees: they feed on them and in return they give trees water and minerals. Harvest time is only once a year and it changes depending on the region. If we want to make a generic distinction we can say that there are two types of truffles: black and white. The latter is the most rare and the most prestigious of the two, but both kinds are heaven for your palate.

Italy is one of the world's major producers and exporters of this extraordinary culinary gem. There are nine different species of truffles and their marketing is strictly controlled throughout the country.

Rarely, truffles are commercialized whole and raw because of outrageous costs, shipping difficulties and conservation issues. Yet, Nature is our friend and luckily truffles can be used creatively... the results are extraordinary and unique flavor is guaranteed no matter how small the quantities used.

[La Rustichella](#) [2] is the trademark owned for decades by the Brugnoli family. They have been bringing Italian truffles all around the world, and New York is an important destination.

We have met Francesca Brugnoli, the young woman in charge of promotions throughout the United States. Driven by curiosity, we have asked her some information.

Her family's roots go back to Umbria and the Marche, and she immediately shares with us a nice anecdote: "My grandfather always gave us truffles for Christmas so we grew up adoring the truffle culture. Before deciding to commercialize them, my parents did something else. They were in the cured meats and pickles business."

"Everything started when, one day, my father decided he wanted to commercialize a product that could be transported abroad easily, with no logistics issues or severe deadlines. So he was thinking and thinking... he was constantly looking for this specific ingredient.

Then, one day, my mother gave the priest who was a teacher in my brothers' private school, some truffles. The priest asked her to prepare a sauce to be used in a dinner for 40 people.

She used an old recipe that belonged to my nonna Maria but she added some mushrooms to it. It was a great success and that's when she decided to experiment with other ingredients. The product to be commercialized abroad was finally found... truffles!

But why abroad? "That's what my father has always wanted to do. He wanted to put on the international gourmet market products that were still unknown. He also wanted to promote the Made in Italy sign of quality all over the world. He's always been determined and he did it."

He did it thanks to truffles and his intuition. Today the whole family is spread all over and is working on his project with great enthusiasm. The results have been positive everywhere.

"We have been in the USA since 1994... in Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Miami. But we also are in Europe and in the Orient, where they literally love us. We all work really hard: my brother, my sister and I are represent the new generation and we are even more determined than my father. My dad went to China to introduce Rustichella in 1991... they all thought he was crazy."

And the possibilities are endless: this extraordinary product can be savored in many different forms.

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La Rustichella has a wide variety of products you can choose from, all products that are characterized by their harmony of flavors.

What's the secret then? A great family first and foremost. An intelligent managerial policy that has led to the achievement of many ambitious goals. Research work paired with great curiosity and the will to experiment. A facility furnished with the top technological culinary tools. A respect for tradition that is always improved with time. The offering of a high quality product guaranteed to come from the rich and extraordinary Italian countryside. The determination of those who have wanted to commercialize something they believed in all through the world, thanks to creativity (a characteristic found in Italian DNA). And don't forget "All our products are harvested, perfected and packaged in our home country: Italy," Francesca tells us.

Therefore we invite you to visit Rustichella's web site and look through the different options that could give your dining table, no matter what season, that unique Italian flavor, a flavor nobody else can replicate.

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[2] <http://www.larustichellatruffles.com/>