

Communicating Italy in the US: A Labor of Love

Letizia Airos (May 18, 2017)



A new magazine. Our design isn't the only thing different about us. After four years of covering New York, we've decided to reach out to readers in other American cities: Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Washington DC. And Miami, Philadelphia and Chicago are just around the bend... That means we won't just be talking about the New York area.

Italian America spreads like wildfire and we're on its trail. Italy lovers look for it everywhere they go and everywhere they go and everywhere they go they find it. As the Polish Nobel Prize winner [Henryk Sienkiewicz](#) [2]remarked, "How could you not love Italy? I think everyone has two countries: one his own, the other Italy." So it's with a dash of pride, a lot of nerve, and a pinch of presumption for being the first on the scene that we embark on this new adventure in search of Italy outside Italy, in America in particular. By now its presence is firmly rooted here, yet it has also become more various and complex, bringing together diverse experiences and stories with one common root: Italianità.

A major plank in the very fabric of this country's society, Italy's vast presence in the US is constantly growing nowadays—and it wouldn't be as powerful or visible without the contribution of diplomats,



cultural institutes, and organizations that form what is known as the “Sistema Italia” and their tireless work to bolster Italy’s cultural, artistic, scientific, and commercial presence in the USA. In fact, it was the Embassy of Italy in Washington that “challenged” us to become a national magazine roughly one year ago. And we have taken up that challenge. So we would be remiss not to thank [Ambassador Armando Varricchio](#) [3], his press office, and all of the Consul Generals and Directors of Cultural Institutes who have contributed to our national launch by giving indepth interviews, helping us explain their mission to readers, and providing us with a broader picture of the italians and italophiles in their districts.

So if you happen to be in a major city, keep an eye out for our free-press magazines in Italian places. You will find us in consulates, cultural institutions, Italian Studies Departments, and many others places with close ties to Italy, from art galleries to restaurants.

You can also subscribe to the magazine, visit our website (www.iitaly.org [4]) or follow us on social media. New Yorkers can tune into our TV show every Sunday at 1 p.m. on [NYC Life](#) [5] (Channel 25-HD 525). All our videos are also available on [WebTV](#) [6] and YouTube. And don’t just sit there reading! Send us articles, photographs, and videos. We want to reach you as much as we want you to reach us. None of this would be possible without the participation of tens of thousands of people who have followed us—online, in print, and on social media and TV—and helped shape our content. In order to continue, we need to build a strong network together.

A few years ago Piero Bassetti, a major Italian entrepreneur, coined the term “Italici” to describe people in the world who inhabit a way of being that transcends Italian citizenship or ancestry. “The Italica way is a pluri-identity that doesn’t place an ultimatum on being Italian, American, French or Argentine,” says Bassetti. “It’s a group that, as a world community, can become larger and more nuanced, and for that same reason, richer.” In the US, these Italici form a vibrant community. i-Italy knows that because they have been our audience since we started way back in 2008 as a spinoff of a European Union project that, courageously at the time, invested in information and new media. Many of these millions of Italici may speak English but they wear and eat Italian. They read Italian books, watch Italian movies, and listen to Italian music. Some are Italian citizens. Many have Italian relatives and ancestors. Many more simply love Italy and the Italian way of life. Italy is a major cultural and human capital, the foundation of a “soft power” that still seems insufficiently understood, even in Italy. We believe the reason for this is a lack of communication. And that’s the area in which we are trying to contribute. Communicating Italy abroad, especially in the US, is our job and our passion.

You, reader, are an Italico too. Even if you’re not connected by blood. For the sole reason that you’re interested in the italico world. And therefore interested in i-Italy. ;-)

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[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henryk_Sienkiewicz

[3] http://www.ambwashingtondc.esteri.it/ambasciata_washington/en/aboutus/ambasciatore.html/

[4] <http://www.iitaly.org>

[5] <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/media/schedule/schedule.page>

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