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## **BUON APPETITO WITH THE FRESH MARKET'S AUTHENTIC ITALIAN CUCINA**

**GREENSBORO, N.C.** – Oct. 8, 2019 – October is Italian Heritage Month, National Pasta Month, as well as National Pizza Month and specialty grocer The Fresh Market is celebrating by offering guests the best of Italian cuisine imported direct from Italy, including single-sourced Parmigiano Reggiano, artisan pastas and sauces, vino, pizza, gelato and more.

### **Formaggio**

Parmigiano-Reggiano has been made in the Parma region of Italy for over 800 years and is a very tightly regulated process. It is known as ‘the king of cheeses’ because every wheel must be crowned perfect before it receives the Consorzio seal of approval.

The Fresh Market sources their Parmigiano-Reggiano from a single dairy in Parma, Italy for all 160 stores. Andy Harvell, Cheese Specialist for The Fresh Market, personally visited numerous dairies in Parma to view their cheese-making process, meet the head cheese makers and taste the quality of the cheese.

The dairies were asked to send a whole wheel of Parmigiano Reggiano (weighing in at 85 pounds each) to The Fresh Market’s headquarters for the rest of the cheese team to taste as part of a “cutting” – the curation process used by merchandisers to find the best tasting products. The winning dairy was 2121 and stood out for its perfect balance of both nutty and fruity flavor profiles and creamy mouthfeel. The wheels are aged for a full 24-months in Italy before being brought into The Fresh Market, and the new dairy is making its debut in stores this month. To learn more about the team’s visit to Parma and see how it is made, watch [Meet the Curators: Parmigiano Reggiano](#).

### **Pasta and Marinara**

Similar to Parmigiano Reggiano, The Fresh Market recently underwent the same curation process for their pastas and tomato sauces. While not all hail from Italy, the pastas are all artisan-made, come in unique varieties and many are exclusive to The Fresh Market. Here are some of our favorites:

- ***Gentile Bucatini Pasta***  
Gentile Bucatini is an organic pasta made in southern Italy and is one of the historic artisan factories that made the city of Grangnono famous for its pasta. Bucatini is a thick spaghetti with a hole in each strand so the noodles can capture a mouthful of sauce and flavor in every bite.
- ***The Fresh Market Frozen Ravioli***  
Imported from Italy, these frozen ravioli come in traditional flavors as well as Pumpkin and Sage, Porcini Mushroom, Mediterranean Eggplant Parmesan and Basil & Mascarpone Mezzelune.
- ***Agromonte Cherry Tomato Sauce***  
This sauce uses cherry tomatoes (a non-traditional tomato for pasta sauces) that were grown, handpicked and culminated in Sicily. The sauce is gluten free and combines the sweet taste of cherry tomatoes with basil for an authentic Italian pasta sauce.

## **Pizza**

The Fresh Market recently introduced under its private label brand two new Neapolitan frozen pizzas made in Italy, following the traditional recipe and baked in a wood-fired stone oven, giving the crust the perfect chew. Available in Roasted Vegetable and traditional Cheese, these pizzas pair perfectly with a glass of Italian Prosecco, which is bottled in the same region where the pizza is produced.

## **Olio Extravergine d'Oliva**

The Fresh Market only carries Extra Virgin Olive Oil because it is the highest designation an olive oil can receive. In Italy it is used to finish soups and pastas, as well as to cook and dress vegetables. Olive oil from Italy will have a clear Protected Designation of Origin seal on the bottle. Learn more about how to select high quality olive oils from The Fresh Market's olive oil expert, Emily Reass, in this '[Meet the Curators](#)' segment, or try one of Emily's favorites from Italy:

- ***Gianfranco Becchina Olia Verde Extra Virgin Olive Oil***  
Made in Sicily, this extra virgin olive oil uses hand-picked olives from a single varietal, Nocellara del Belice, and contains a fruity, peppery, herbaceous and rich flavor.

## **Aceto Balsamico**

Just as authentic Parmigiano Reggiano is only made in Parma, Italy, authentic balsamic vinegar is only made in Modena or Reggio Emilia, Italy. The Fresh Market's private label balsamic vinegar bears the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), both which attest the authenticity of the region where it is produced and bottled. Additionally, the vinegar is rated with three leaves as part of the *Leaves System*, which was developed by AIB (Italian Balsamic Tasters). It is aged in wooden barrels of different types of wood, resulting in a smooth, full-bodied consistency that is perfect for finishing meat or fish, served warm in dressings or sauces, or drizzled on Parmigiano Reggiano as the locals like to do.

## **Gelato**

Italy's version of ice cream, gelato is richer and creamier, since it has less air. The Fresh Market's Gelato is imported direct from Italy, using Italian ingredients and flavors, and available in dark chocolate, caramel & cookies, limoncello and sea salt caramel.

## **The Primo**

In Italy, pasta is the first course (or primo) of the meal, served as an appetizer, not as the main dish. This cacio e pepe (literally cheese and pepper) recipe features our Parmigiano Reggiano and bucatini pasta.

### Cacio E Pepe

*Ingredients (serves 4)*

2 tbsp butter

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2 tsp freshly ground pepper\*

Kosher salt

1 lb bucatini (or another long pasta)

2 c Parmigiano Reggiano, finely grated, plus more for serving

### *Directions*

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. While waiting for water to boil, combine butter, olive oil and pepper in a large skillet over medium low heat so the butter melts and the pepper becomes fragrant, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

Once water is boiling, add a generous handful of salt, and then add the pasta, cooking until al dente, about 8 or 9 minutes. Remove from heat.

Add 1/3 c of pasta water to the skillet with the melted butter and olive oil. Using tongs, quickly add pasta directly from the pot and toss well to thoroughly coat with sauce. Add the cheese, continuing to toss pasta well, adding a bit more pasta water (1-2 tbsp) to achieve a creamy consistency. Season to taste with salt and more pepper if desired. Portion into bowls, grate fresh Parmigiano Reggiano on top and serve immediately.

*\*This is traditionally a very peppery pasta, but if you don't like as much pepper, feel free to cut the amount back to 1 1/2 or 1 tsp instead.*

Mangia!

**About The Fresh Market, Inc.**

Since 1982, The Fresh Market, Inc. has helped guests make every day eating extraordinary with time-saving meal solutions, unique ingredients and delicious food for any occasion. From fresh produce and exceptional meat and seafood, to signature baked goods and thousands of organic options, this specialty grocery retailer has something to please every palate. The Fresh Market currently operates 160 stores in 22 states across the U.S., inspiring guests to discover new flavors and cook with confidence. For more information, please visit [www.thefreshmarket.com](http://www.thefreshmarket.com) or follow the company on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest.

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