

The Fabulous Fior

Over 100 Years in an Italian Kitchen

The Fabulous Fior – Over 100 Years in an Italian Kitchen is a lively tale of cookery and passion, illuminating the lives of immigrant families who created the Fior d'Italia, America's oldest Italian restaurant. The book chronicles the shenanigans of operating a restaurant during Prohibition, the complexities of serving an upstairs brothel and the requirements of pleasing VIPs such as Richard M. Nixon and Luciano Pavarotti. It offers a tapestry of American history, witnessed by Italian-American immigrants in San Francisco from the Gold Rush through the 1906 Earthquake and Fire and World War II to the 21st century.

"The Fior" has been a favorite of luminaries such as Tony Bennett, Joe DiMaggio and Tommy Lasorda. Since the Fior d'Italia opened for business in San Francisco in 1886, it has served presidents, ambassadors, governors, mayors, movie and sports stars, opera divas, business titans, sheiks, rock stars and great conductors. They have all been a part of the fascinating story that marks the Fior d'Italia as a living museum.

The Fabulous Fior also features traditional Italian recipes and photographs spanning more than 11 decades. The 30 recipes, most created by the Fior's chef Gianfranco Audieri, were tested by Tina Salter. They range from well-known dishes such as veal scaloppine to traditional favorites less familiar to Americans such as cabbage and bread soup. In addition, the book offers recipes handed down by the relatives of the founding families. The book opens with a foreword by mystery writer John Lescroart who has featured the restaurant in his novels *Guilt and A Certain Justice*.

The Fabulous Fior is a "fabulous read" says former San Francisco City Librarian and historian Gladys Hansen. "Francine Brevetti has woven a tale I couldn't put down. San Francisco's history has been immeasurably enriched by its Italian-Americans. They not only knew how to cook and how to eat, they knew how to work and work hard. She's got it all there. It's a keeper."

Francine Brevetti, a native of San Francisco, remembers listening to her mother tell her stories about the grandfather Brevetti never knew, Alberto Puccetti, who had been a waiter at the Fior d'Italia a century ago. Brevetti is a long-time journalist who spent her early writing career in New York at *The Journal of Commerce*. She freelanced in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia from 1985-1997 for US, UK, and Hong Kong publications. She returned to San Francisco at the end of 1997 and has been working for *The Oakland Tribune* since 1998.

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The Fabulous Fior – Over 100 Years in an Italian Kitchen

by Francine Brevetti



The Fior d'Italia of San Francisco

Est. 1886

America's Oldest Italian Restaurant